

Final report from the residency

Date: July 4 – July 13 2023

Venue: Surnadal Billag AS, Surnadalsora, Norway

Project: Cradle, Fragments (Kólébka, Útržky)

Participants: Nitish Jain, Mara Ingea, Katja Vaghi, Raghav Dhingra

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESIDENCY

The objective of the residency was to develop the dramaturgical framework for the performance Cradle, Fragments. It is a multi-sensory, participatory piece for 10 audience members. The purpose of the project is to offer a sensory alternative from the excess of visual culture that surrounds us. We propose this through an experience that caters to our non-visual senses, to encourage being imaginative and curious together with overall well-being. We want the focus to be on slowing down, to create a space for our audience to be present, be aware, be in tune with the senses, create space to sink into the stories and engage playfully with the tactile materials that they are presented with in the show.

CONTENT AND PROGRESS OF THE RESIDENCY

4. 7. Travel to Norway and arrive at Surnadal Billag. Meeting with the director of Surnadal Billag – Jon Arne Mogstad and visiting the space and atelier.

5. 7. a) Presentation of the first iteration of the work Spoonfed by Mara and Nitish for the other team members. Spoonfed is an earlier performance, and Cradle, Fragments is based on expanding Spoonfed. b) Sharing of existing work on Cradle, fragments; setting up objectives for the residency.

6. 7. a) Presentation of Spoonfed for the director of Surnadal Billag – Jon Arne Mogstad and the visual artist Cecilie Nissen. b) Sharing of research on the textual, storytelling part of the work: animal stories, meditation etc. c) Composing sample soundtracks for enhancing storytelling.

7. 7. a) Katja Vaghi shares somatic breathing and movement practice with the team. b) Brainstorming on stories, tactile materials, performative actions, meditation techniques, sound frequencies we want to use in the performance. c) Sharing of research with the team. d) Visit to the Surnadal Culture House and tour the space.

8. 7. a) Brainstorming on above mentioned aspects. b) We organised a yoga session for our team at the Surnadal Culture House. c) As the aim of the work is to provide well-being to the audience, we researched the PERMA model of positive psychology and how it can be integrated in the performance.

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9. 7. a) Playing with tactile objects and materials that should happen along the storytelling. b) Listening to sound samples created by Raghav Dhingra and sharing feedback. c) A dramaturgical outline begins to take shape.

10. 7. Going around the fjord to collect materials and sounds outdoors.

11. 7. a) Development of the dramaturgical framework. b) Yoga and somatic breathing practice at Surnadal Culture house. c) Testing one-to-one format with new stories, touch and object manipulation.

12. 7. a) Tuning in for the last working day with yoga and somatic breathing practice at Surnadal Culture House. b) Testing the performance frame for one performer + 3 audience system. c) As the work we are making is kind of a ritual and meditation, we made performative rituals for goodbyes to the most frequented places in the village and around – practice led by Nitish Jain.

13. 7. Travel from Surnadal to Prague.

THE SPECIFIC BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES OF THE RESIDENCY

The residency at Surnadal Billag allowed for a concentrated period of work between the four members of the group. Particularly important for the positive outcome of the residency and the development of a sense of community and belonging among the group has been the fact of also sharing the private time with the group (cooking and eating together, excursions in the surroundings). The work requires a very intimate approach to audience members and the group needed to have a similar intimate, protective, and secure dynamic.

The host organisation has a great facility that allows for focused work with several rooms at disposal, close by housing with private rooms, and the possibility of using the Surnadal Culture house for activities which could not take place at the Surnadal Bilag AS. We were also given a car which facilitated our mobility for groceries and excursions.

The nature and landscape were exceptional allowing for additional ideas and material to be generated.

We learnt that the audience needs some time to process this work for a day or so and then give feedback. This was made possible because we performed Spoonfed for our hosts Jon and Cecelia on our 2nd day in Surnadal Billag and since their atelier was close to our work space, we saw each other regularly on all days. It was exceptional (and something we haven't experienced before) that they didn't have any feedback right after the show but the next day, after they had processed what they experienced, they were very positive and gave us great reviews for our work. When we perform in festivals, this is not always possible as people come and go, but since we were in a residency, it showed us the importance of creating a debriefing segment after the performance.

Not complications or disappointment to be mentioned.

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FUTURE VISION

Future steps of the projects are the following

- Finalising the storytelling, recording and defining the movement of the performers associated with it. (September 2023 – February 2024)
- Finalising the soundscape for the storytelling. (December 2023 – February 2024)
- Development of first prototype performance to be experimented on audience. (March 2024)

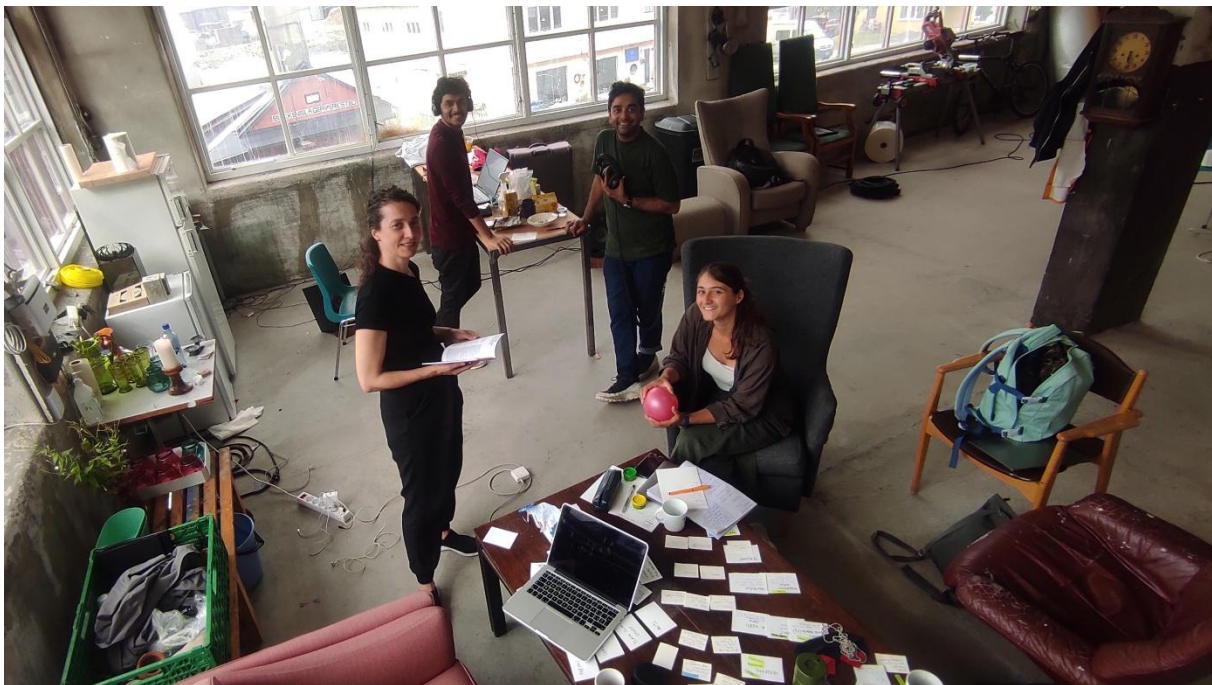
CONCLUSION

The residency has been successful both from a work and also personal point of view. It is exceptional that four international artists from diverse cultural backgrounds could come together to create a meaningful project. Workwise the group achieved the goals that were set at the beginning (dramaturgical arc, definition of soundscape, exploration of material and touch). The group, heterogeneous in age, and not acquainted before, developed into a well-coordinated team, playing on the strength of each member.

27. 8. 2023

Nitish Jain,

Studio MoreThanThat



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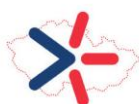
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