

Report from the residency

Date: November 26 – December 3 2023

Venue: Waldstein Loggia

Project: Future Species, Øy

Participants: Maiken Rye, Annike Flo, Ellen Jerstad, Alejandro Chellêt, Georgiana Dobre

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESIDENCY

The project "Future species" emerges from a longing for more nuanced ways of coexisting, co-creating, and envisioning futures through performing arts. In light of ecological collapse and species extinction, we experience rhetorical greenwashing as a contributor to maintaining distance, simplification, and narrow imaginative spaces.

With the intention of broadening the narrow idea of a "green shift," we, in the light of the anthology "Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green," aim to explore aspects of ecology and biodiversity that go beyond the colour green. Through "Future species," we want to deconstruct, engage with, and artistically examine complex challenges and thereby problematize them from a perspective that is more than anthropocentric. By sharing and developing our methods using a multifaceted ecological prism, we aim to explore the potential of performing arts to envision alternative future scenarios.

CONTENT AND PROGRESS OF THE RESIDENCY

The residency was organised by the performing arts collective Øy (www.oyteateret.com). The team arrived at Waldstein Loggia on Sunday the 26.11.23 and left back to Norway on Sunday the 3.12.2023.

Monday 27.11.23

Maiken Rye led the first half day using somatic exercises interwoven with the sharing with the theory she shed light on the chapter "**X-Ray**" from the book "Prismatic Ecology" which is our main source of theory for this project.

Georgiana Dobre led the session after lunch by using movement exercises and somatic practices in the unpacking of the chapter "**Red**" from the book. The session bridged key concepts such as blood and consanguinity as a shared bodily substance between human and non-human species and as alliance with the earth. The movement exercises shaped these concepts into a color study of red that flows

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through the body as blood, emotions and voice. Two by two we shared to each other a story about a place we are missing, danced a mirroring dance while looking into each other's eyes, and sang a song collectively.

Tuesday 28.11.23

Milestone: The morning of Tuesday we collected our clostridia gut bacteria by collectively puking outdoors. Clostridia is one of the first bacteria which starts breaking our human body down from the inside out after death, and are closely linked to both the beige and grey ecology sessions of the day.

Ellen Jerstad led the morning session based on the chapter "**Beige**" as well as the text "The Performer" by Jerzy Grotowski. This session was about the correlation between spirituality and pornography in light of these two texts. Ellen focused on the relationship between submissive attitudes among kink and fetish practitioners as well as the ideology of submission as part of a spiritual practice. After shearing the texts Ellen led a writing session and the group combined reading of text with dance improvisations.

Annike Flo led the evening session based on the chapter "**Gray**" from "Prismatic Ecology". Grey is the colour of fading life and fading light. This session looked critically at imagined death and apocalypse scenarios, particularly studying the recent boom of zombie apocalypses in popular culture, and what this says about our society, tracing the zombie back to its colonial birth. We looked into death and life as a sliding scale instead of a binary, and how life is abundant in the bodies of the recently deceased. By combining the chapter with the morning puke exercise, the making of deathmasks and an interview with Nick Cave on loss, the session asked how we can better incorporate and mourn both human and more than human deaths in our work with ecology.

Wednesday 29.11.23

Alejandro Chellêt led the session based on the chapter "**Gold**" from the book. In the afternoon we walked and visited town.

Thursday 30.11.23

Milestone / Bringing together the chapters: The team spent the day bringing the chapter together and putting it into the contexts of our individual practices to map out how to move forward in the creation of a piece together. We emphasized the importance of the prismatic (the complex) perspectives in our work and meeting with more than human life. Questions like: What does life itself want? When did life begin? Concepts like *Redestruction, Recreation, Genesis, apocalypse, body matter, monstrosity, decay,*

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sexuality, othering, decolonization, sacrifice, desire. We shared and noted down visions we have had for our future work together.

Seed Cake ritual led by Maiken Rye. In the afternoon session we started a ceremony preparing a seed cake ritual led by Maiken.

Friday 1.12.23

Milestone / Closing the seed cake ritual: We brought the dissolved seed cake in its beer to the fields and up the hill to the shrine of St Anne.

Meeting – we organized a brunch with the Waldstein Loggia staff to share the outcome of our project and learn more about their artistic work. This was really nice!

Saturday 2.12.23

The Group returned to Prague where we visited the DOX and found other sources of inspiration.

THE SPECIFIC BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES OF THE RESIDENCY

On a personal level several of the members experienced this residency as a nourishing and inspiring place to be, and facility that helped us get into the right space for the artistic work. The residency allowed us to give our full focus and time to the project for the duration of the stay without having to think about family or other obligations. As a group we have come closer to each other as people and practitioners and have laid a foundation for future work together. We found common ground within the topics and experienced how we can co-create, and what skills we both have and lack in the group.

The communication with Waldstein Loggia was absolutely wonderful. They were dream hosts. We were worried about sharing the same room to start off with, but they were so kind and hospitable and arranged for us to sleep in different places. The spaces were absolutely wonderful and fitted our needs perfectly. The landscape and historic buildings were also extremely inspiring to stay in.

FUTURE VISION

We will apply for funding from the Norwegian Arts Council in February 2024 in order to continue the work with "Future Species" AKA "The Big Dig". We plan to continue the work in the summer/fall 24.

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CONCLUSION

This residency was important to us as a group, and as a perfect platform to start the work of creating a completely new project. Waldstein Loggia felt like a monastery where we could dedicate ourselves to the work and where we felt completely free and undisturbed by our hosts. They left us to ourselves and offered help when asked.

6. 12. 2023
Ellen Jerstad



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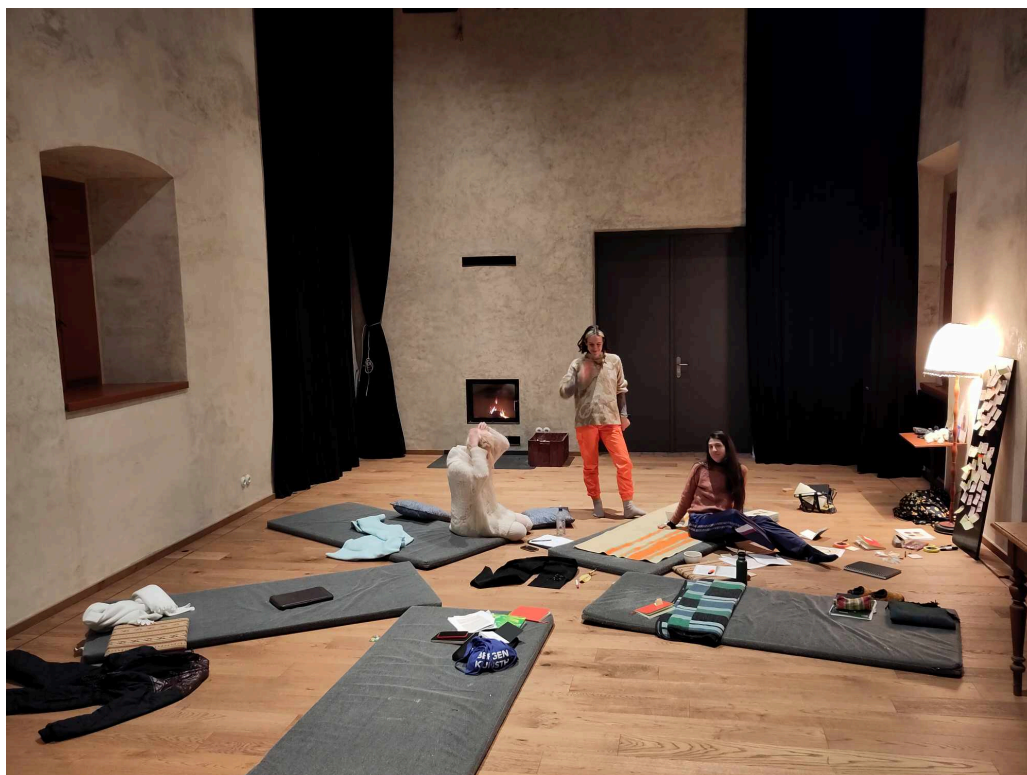


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