



NTGENT

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NTGent eXtraSpace

28 October - 23 November 2024 | Ghent, Belgium

NTGent XS is a residency to the rhythm and beat of a new generation of creators.

The project consists of an installation created by Gilles Pollak ("Through walking alone") combined with a text ("The hooligan within you") written by Sarah Ringoet and performed by Sjoerd Koolma.



Dates of the show: 21, 22 & 23.November 2024
Minnemeers Theatre (Minnemeers 8, B-9000 Ghent)

ARTISTS INVOLVED

GILLES POLLAK

Gilles Pollak (°1996) received his master's degree in Scenography from HKU and his bachelor's degree in Stage Techniques from RITCS. He works as a lighting designer, scenographer and theatre maker with several companies in the Netherlands and Belgium, and is a member of theatre collectives WOLF WOLF and Camping Sunset.

Pollak shares his expertise on light in workshops and at various theatre schools where he supervises students. At Theater Aan Zee, Gilles collaborates as a location scenographer and works on the sustainability of the festival.

In his own works, Gilles searches for a dramaturgy of light and how light changes can tell a story.

SJOERD KOOLMA

Sjoerd Koolma (they, them) (°1994) studied at the MBO Theaterschool in Rotterdam after training as a chef in Gouda. Sjoerd then followed a musical theatre course at Codarts in Rotterdam and a teacher's theatre course at Artez in Arnhem. The desire to become an actor remained however, and Sjoerd decided to continue studying drama at KASK in Ghent.

About their work, Koolma says: 'I think what differentiates my work at this point is the search for how the self can be given a deeper and honest space on scene. How can I make vulnerability and sensitivity part of the performance?'

SARAH RINGOET

Sarah Ringoet (°1977, Belgium) is a theatre maker, performer and playwright.

She studied at De Kleine Academie in Brussels and at the Mime Opleiding in Amsterdam, where she teaches physical theatre and text. She is attached to the programme as a teacher, mentor and supervisor. As a performer, Ringoet has appeared in the work of Mime Groep Amsterdam (MGA), Olivier Provily, Lucas De Man, De Gemeenschap, Lotte van den Berg (Het Toneelhuis), SPACE, among others.

Under Sarah Ringoet Performances, Ringoet made many performances at various theatres and festivals in Amsterdam. In 2014, Stripped was published, a first collection of Dutch-language theatre texts, followed by M2 in 2015. In 2020, Ringoet wrote the official Dutch-language theatre text Jihad of Love, based on the book 'Een Jihad van Liefde' by Mohamed El Bachiri & David van Reybrouck. In 2021, NOT | STILL was published, Ringoet's first English-language work: a trilogy of raw, intimate and poetic monologues about desire and loss. In 2022, her second English-language collection was published: .in which dimension are we dancing. A collection of poetry and theatre texts; darkness, loneliness and the search for genuine connection. In recent years, her work has been nominated for the Ton Lutz Prize, BNG New Theatermakers Prize and the VSCD Mime Prize. The performance

Jihad of Love was selected for the Dutch Theatre Festival 2023.

Her raw and poetic pieces expose the complex inner world of her main characters in surprising and moving ways.

THE RESIDENCY

As the natural light we experience through direct sunlight begins to fade, we start with the first edition of the NTGent - eXtra Space, centered around the overarching question: What does it mean to be human now? In this specially designed artist - in - residence, we aim on one hand to take time to explore the role of natural phenomena like rain, light, and darkness in our daily lives as artists. On the other hand, we seek to examine the circumstances that largely shape how we work, create art, and live: how can we bring natural phenomena like rain, light, and darkness to life in theater? How can we envision our temporary, shared togetherness as humans and transform it into an interconnected system based on connection, recognition, and care? Could cloud gazing be considered as a healing practice for people with mental health issues?

Connected to those questions and as a starting point, we create space, time and means for new generations makers and their artistic practices. The outcome of the residence program will be shared with our audience to create awareness on topics like climate change, mental health issues. The aim is to examine the function of theatre as a social weaving & healing practice for sustainable future.

For four weeks, three new generation makers share their journey in finding their artistic voice and the story they wish tell. Each day they meet at NTGent where they focus on their own artistic practice and research. During the final week of the residency they will bring their work and world together. Whether they clash in fragility or fuse in individuality, it promises to be a surprising and uncompromising whole. Without having to meet the expectations of a full-fledged performance.

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DOOR ALLEEN TE WANDELEN [THROUGH WALKING ALONE] – GILLES POLLAK

Raindrops race down the window of a passing train. The landscape shifts, flows, and the seasons change. What role do water and wind play in our ever-evolving surroundings? What does a sunrise in Antarctica look like?

Inspired by the cloud studies and artworks of painters William Turner and Caspar David Friedrich, scenographer Gilles Pollak creates the poetic backdrop for NTGent eXtra Space.

#Nature #Theatre #Cloud-gazing #New-scenographic Ritual

ER SCHULT EEN HOOLIGAN IN MIJ – SJOERD KOOLMA & SARAH RINGOET

Er schuilt een hooligan in mij (There's a hooligan in me) is a text written by Sarah Ringoet. Ringoet wrote this text in 2008. Sixteen years later, she and Sjoerd Koolma explore a new perspective for this monologue during her XS residency at NTGent.

How can a performer reach a state of true vulnerability? What does that vulnerability entail regarding being in a spectrum? This piece explores an authentic, open, and sensitive vulnerability—one that lies deeply hidden.

#human #mental-health #storytelling

GOALS OF THE ARTISTIC RESIDENCY

- Supporting young theatre makers to create a new work based on their own background, workfield and methodologies
- Transformation of an existing work/concept into something new by putting it in a completely new setting
- Create an immersive installation to recreate the outdoor indoors, using the available resources in the theatre
- A production made in the spirit and following the guidelines of the ETC Theatre Greenbook
- Create a safe space where makers, performers and audiences can be vulnerable, open, authentic and sensitive towards each other's experiences

CHALLENGES & QUESTIONS RAISED AND ANSWERED DURING THE RESIDENCY

During this residency, 3 makers who never worked together before, were given a quite short timeframe to look in a different way at the creation process. The author of the text (Sara Ringoet) is not the director, the performer (Sjoerd Koolma) is not being 'directed', the scenography (Gilles Pollak) is as such not based on the text but on Gilles' own idea of imitating the nature elements and bringing the outside world inside the theatre, as an immersive installation.

To achieve this, they were split in two groups and were working in two different venues, to

avoid any chances to be influenced by each other. This was very challenging for the makers: would the text and their interpretation suit the new context they were suddenly confronted with?

And if not, what adaptations were needed to match both worlds? Or did they just prefer a clash between both worlds, and if yes, what would then be the underlying message of that choice? All makers had only 3 days together with full technical support to answer these questions.

The final result of this collaboration was not the most important aspect of this project, the process to get there in contrary was what it was all about. How do they deal with those challenges? How do they communicate and express their opinions, in order to find a shared language?

To guide and support them in this intense 4 weeks, there were also extra initiatives, such as lectures of Kristof van Baarle (dramaturg and lecturer at KASK Ghent) on “Dramaturgies of the end” in which he discusses a number of end scenarios developed by contemporary performers, a lecture-workshop by Peter Aers, the so-called ‘social dreaming matrix’ which is an artistic research project, an exercise to bridge two worlds, to make nighttime dreams flow into the day. As another example of this support for young makers, it’s worth mentioning our collaboration with Karl Van Welden, a visual artist often including performative elements in his artworks and installations, mainly as a soundboard for Gilles Pollak.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) LINKED TO THE WORKSHOP

