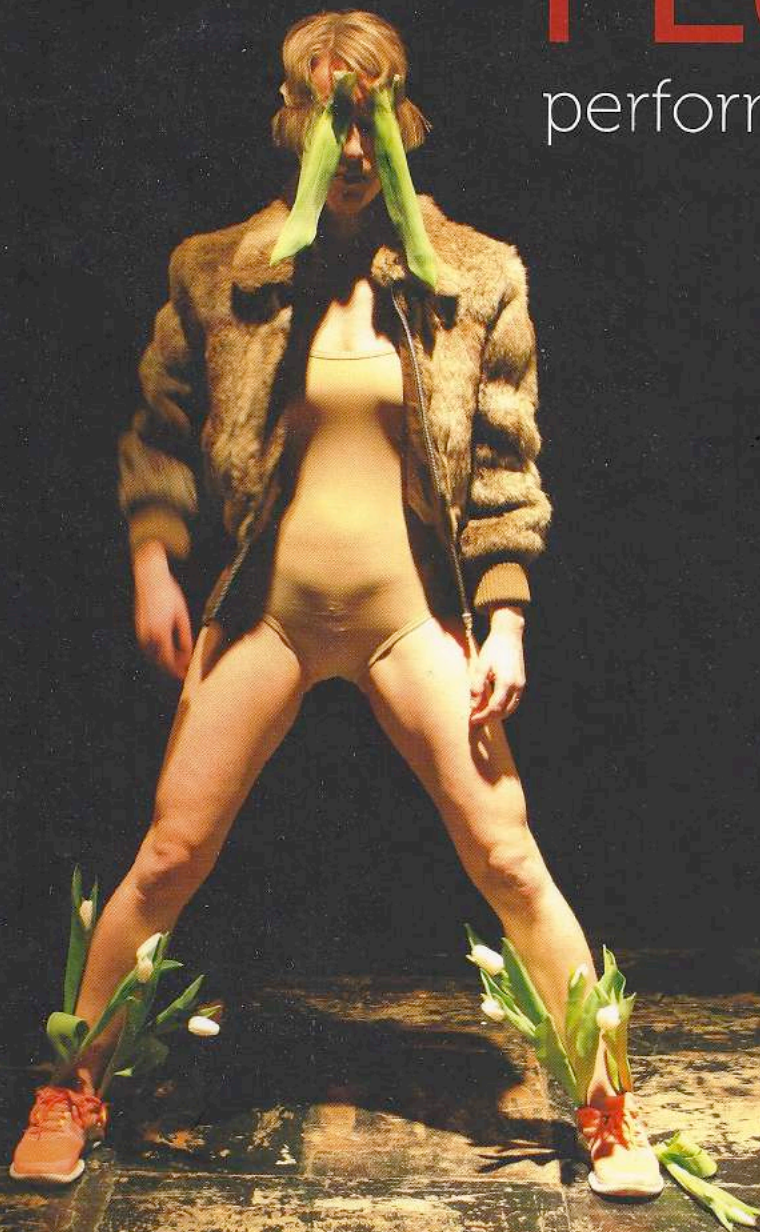


FLUXEE

performance decade



Edited by Aapo Korkeaoja and Hannah Yoken



Sara Letourneau 2011

Facts about Fluxee

A contemporary arts venue established in 2003 by artist Aapo Korkeaoja and curated with Laura Mannila 2004-2009 and Leena Kela 2010-2013.

Shows performance art, live art, media art, experimental music and all cutting edge artwork.

Organized in Turku, Finland 4 times a year at TEHDAS Theatre. Over 200 national and international artists or artistgroups have visited Fluxee over the 10 years.

www.fluxee.org, www.tehdasteatteri.com

Aesthetic of primitive emotions

Aapo Korkeaoja and professor Michaël LaChanse are interviewed regarding Korkeaoja's performance in Art Nomade by Catherine Bouchard.

Aapo Korkeaoja : In improvisation, you rely on darkness, that you dive into. To me it is a basis of performance art, also a basis to study performance art. You have to lean on to something that you don't know about, lean on something insecure. You have to lean on to it, and use the little impacts that come during the moment of improvisation

In the construction of the studies (Aapo Korkeaoja is the head of Ba in Live art, Satakunta university of applied sciences), I have found that improvisation is in the core of performance art. It's the only way to recreate the associative primitive/ intuitive mind of human being, a part of animal culture, away from the rational built up of high culture. This becomes possible in performance art, in work, which uses the body. You have to relearn how to be primitive. It helps you to maximize your capacities. But at the same, for this work, it's a kind of modulation of the primitive [in you].

Because when you let yourself go, you find that you can maximize your capacities.

The act of improvisation is built upon sensitivity, a perfect balance between yourself and the situation. You can create something that goes way beyond our rational everyday life, by accomplishing the aesthetic of the primitive. You have to be able to be very sensitive because there is a fine line between sensitivity and violation. It's a question of a capacity of being present and reading the situation well enough to stay on the good side. Go far but never over.

[...]

And to analyze what happened yesterday,

C: I might have been a little bit... not shocked but, you know, disturbed I'd say.

A: Because it could have been you.

C et M: Yes!



Apo Korkeaojas's
performance at Valeri
Lavone.

A: Or somebody else. Basically, the same things would have happened. Of course it's improvisation, so nothing is decided beforehand and your personal reading depends on it. When a woman, a beautiful young woman, chooses to come on stage as a volunteer, it's not my choice, nor a question of seduction or erotics, even though it would be the easy reading of the piece.

M: Especially considering that the action would have been the same with a man.

C: Have you done the same thing [with a man]?

A: Yes.

M: you would have done the same thing anyway.

[...]

A: Something like that.

[...]

M: This girl, I did not know her name, I have seen her in different situations, appears to be always in a sort of peaceful and dreamy state. Her face reflects this dreamy state, there is something of a glow about her. A sort of a sleeping beauty. And then you come around and bring out a variety of expressions and reactions out of her. As if you came along to write these emotions on her face, and her dreams come alive. Prince Charming came to kiss the sleeping princess. Suddenly we see all these expressions floating like clouds passing over a landscape: her eyes glow, she is so slightly bluish. Suddenly she came alive with a great range of emotions and she also kept her halo of dreaminess. It was not broken.

A: She wanted to come on stage. That counts out the people that don't want to. The artist leads the situation secure enough for anyone to come on stage. That is something that I have in mind, I'm not there to hurt anybody ever. The work would never work if it wasn't built upon the idea of supporting each other and relying to each other.

M: To me, it's creating beauty.



Aapo Korkeaoja's performance
"experience 25" at Le Lieu, Quebec.
Photo Francis O'Shaughnessy.



A: That's right. I think that the power of improvisation is to expose the codes of our culture. And when the codes of the culture are exposed, we enter something that is brutal, that is primitive, and also very emotional.

M: Organic, like Boris [Nieslony] would say.

A: Showing emotions in front of people like that, it's a little bit too much for many. I make an aesthetical point with exposure. So when it comes to performance art, it's a question of a living human being, not a piece of art that is being exposed. It is about using exposing as means to create aesthetics. The audience reflects the performance especially, when it's participatory. Then it's more a matter of what goes on in your head, than a matter of what realistically happened there. This creates emotions of restriction and prevention. Some people don't even want to ask the artists / person participating what they thought about the situation, but merely stick to their own reading.

[...]

M : so the audience starts to shout : « Watch out ! Watch out ! He's going to pull the life out of you ! » « You poor girl ! »

C: If you had been wearing your own clothes, it would have been totally different.

A: Absolutely. It allows me to draw the line between a performance and everyday life.

M: It's partly a gesture of respect. One dresses up to show respect. I'm old fashioned, when you dress up that means that you expect to meet important people. There this a Zen saying that says: « Live every day of your life as if you were going to meet someone very important ». Imagine the Dalai-Lama is



Aapo Korkeaoja at Art Nomade. Photos by Valerie LaVoie.

going to come through that door : how do you prepare yourself ? So when you start a performance like this one, you put on a suit, which create a contrast between conventions and the act of exploring sensitivity, of becoming animal again. Its all about going back to bodily warmth, which is really animalistic.

A: It's a contrast in itself. Because, that suit is very masculine, which in this case bends the situation even further. Like I said, it's really important to emphasize ethical, aesthetical, improvised exploration. Of course, the audience doesn't know about the idea of exploration. They only see the result, which is happening right there.

[...]

M: I liked the fact that sometimes you stopped.

A: Its a strategy actually, which I use it with students : when you have, even a short instinct of not being where you should be, it's better to stop and make the situation blank. And then let the impulses surround you and reanalyze where you are.

M: It is great « Void », « impulse », « analyze ». Everything's there.

A: And therefore, it makes it possible to stay within yourself, even though there would be 200 eyes watching, and you would be in a kind of a perverse situation where you are supposed to react very normally and very sensitively even though you are pushed into a corner. It also secures the person that relies on your decisions.

M: Rely on. You become responsible of that person at that time.

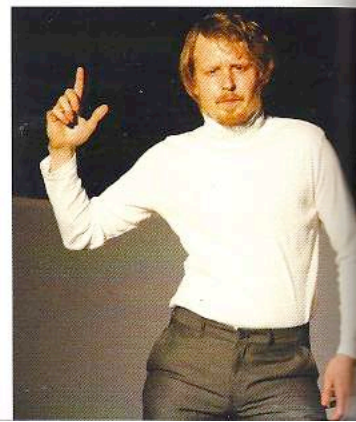
A: There's the law of habeas corpus, the ancient principle : you cannot inflict bodily harm. A human being is constructed with a physical body, which is the only thing that we can really ever own. It creates a demanding and very interesting situation when the only thing that we own is being exposed in reflection with another habeas corpus. Then there is an audience of habeas corpuses, that reflect their rights, needs and desires to the artist and the person participating. It creates a reciprocity, which is important especially for performance art. The art of the body.

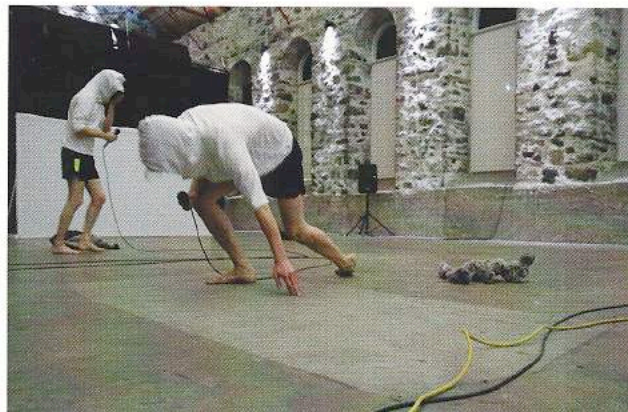
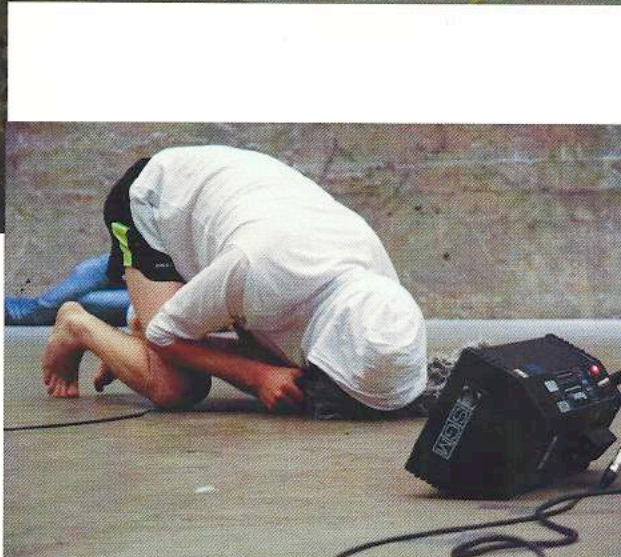
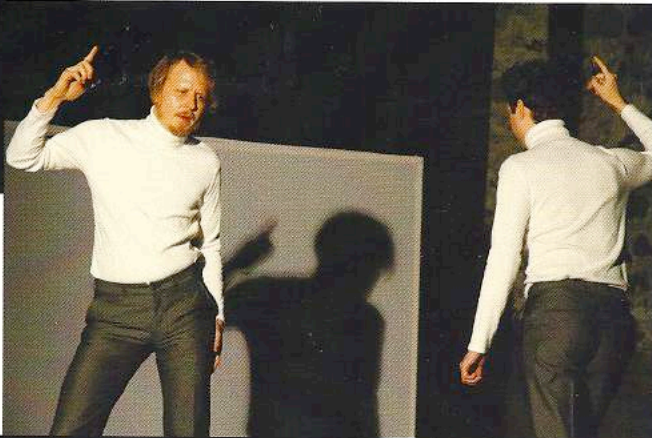
Catherine Bouchard.

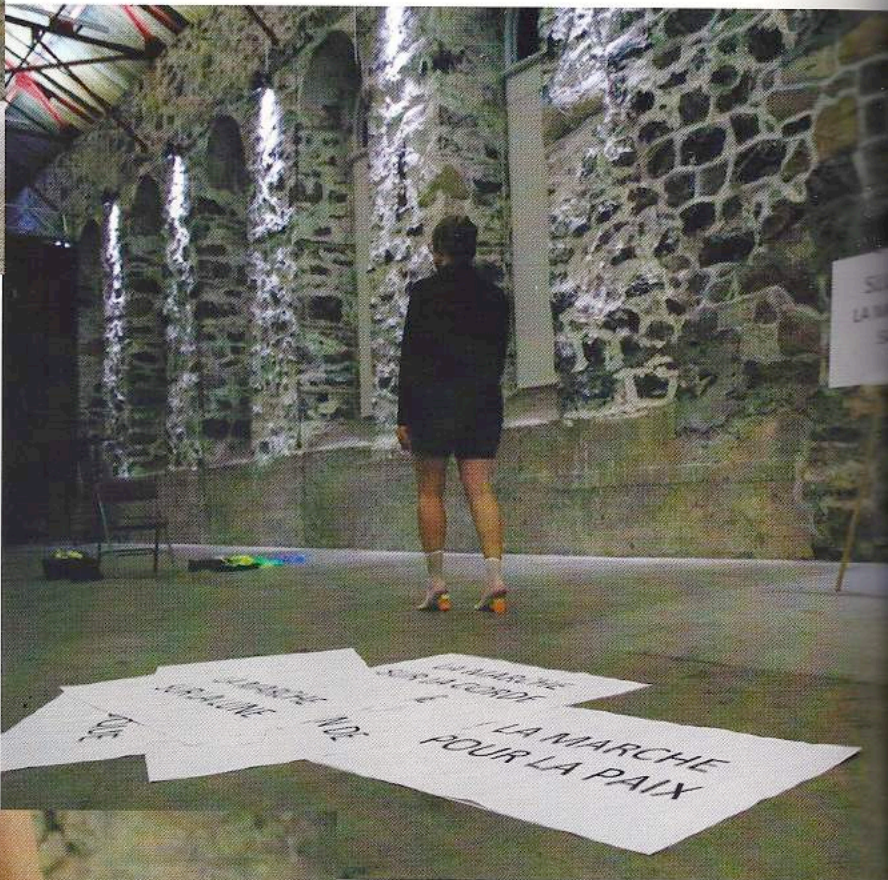


Antti Jussila and Jari Kallio - Underground
Congregation Sings performance in Art
Nomade, photos Valérie Lavoie.

There's the law of
habeas corpus, the
ancient principle :
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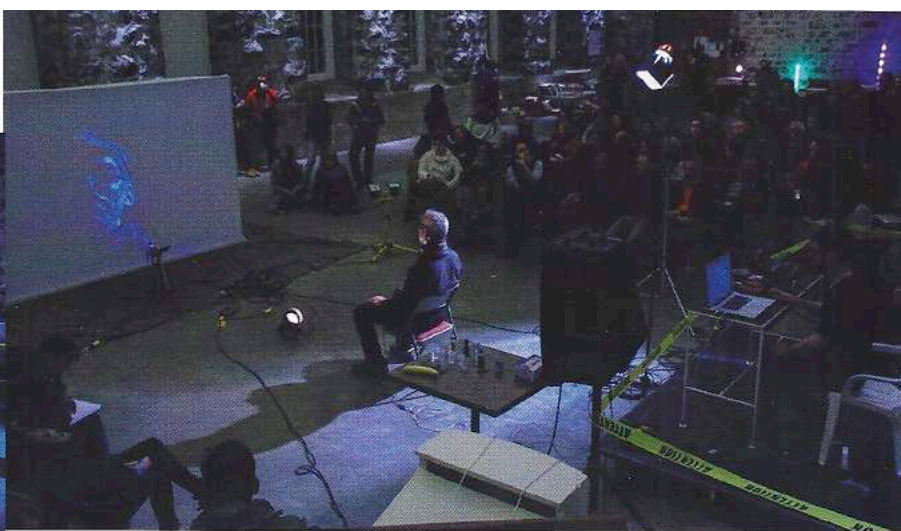
Leena Kela's performance in Art Nomade,
photos Valérie Lavoie.





Marko Alastalo's performance Brainwave music lab in Art Nomade, photos Valérie Lavoie.







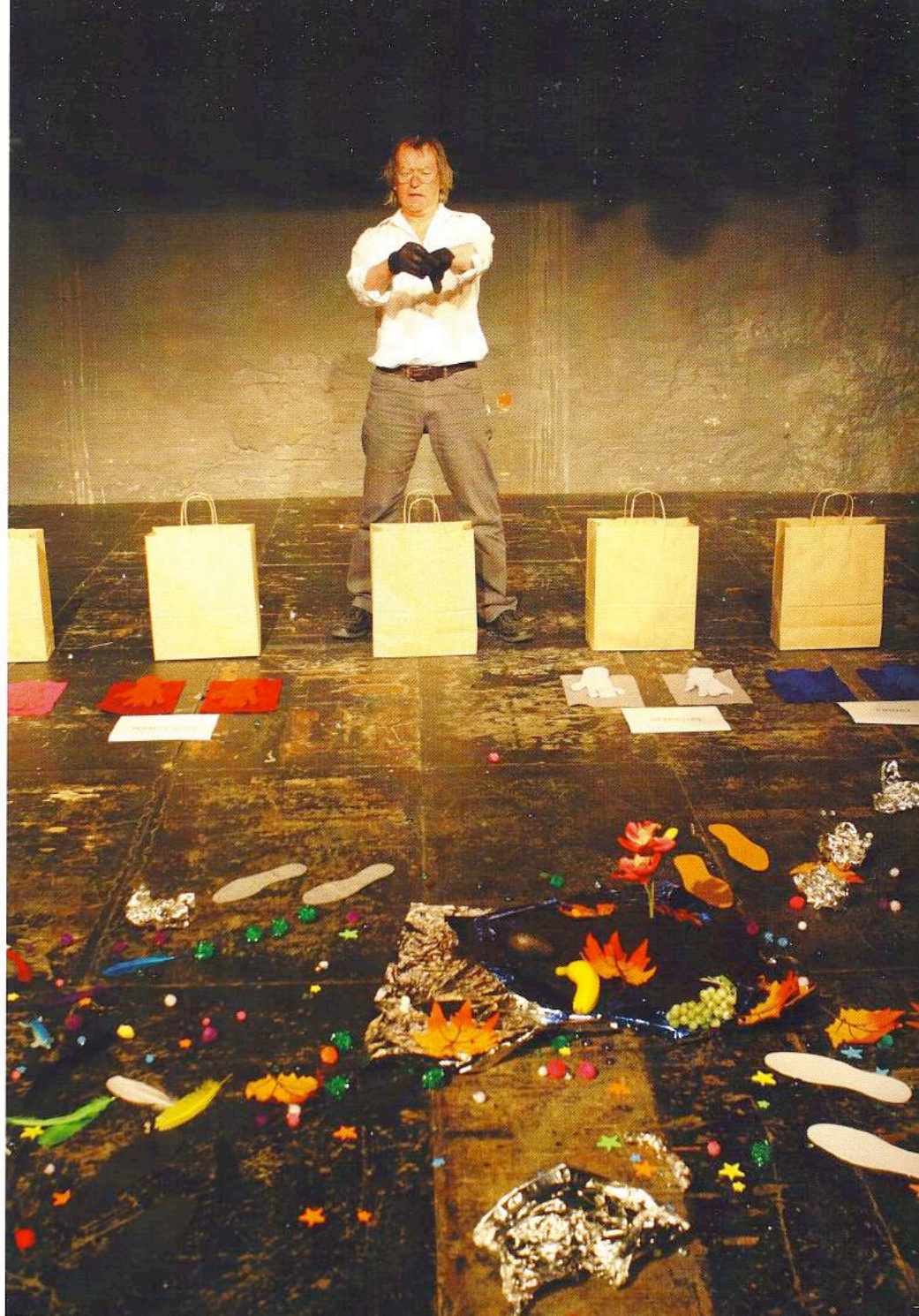
Tero Nauha performing at Le lieu, Quebec, photos Francis O'Shaughnessy.



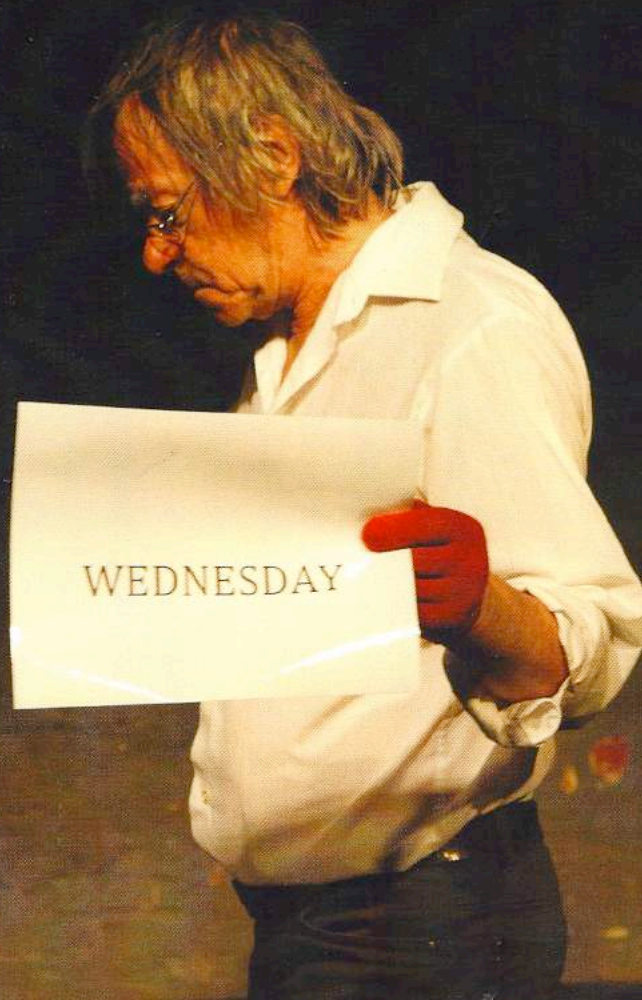




Doyon & Demers performing in Fluxee.



Richard Martel performing in Fluxus.



Amélie Laurence-Fortin

Born in Canada

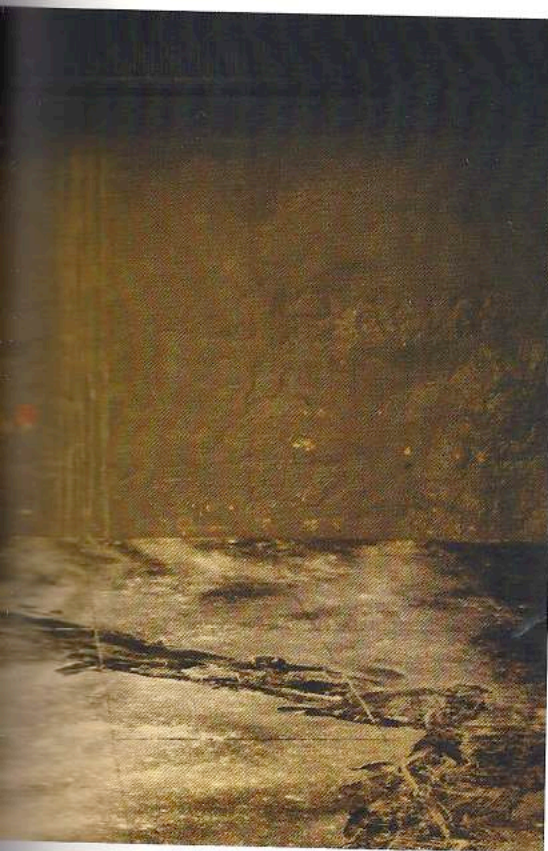
Performed at FLUXEE in 2013

Amélie Laurence-Fortin is a vibrant (and undeniably hilarious) storyteller with a passion for nature. Her work is often multidisciplinary, combining her main practice of drawing with sculpture and performance art. This results in a complex creative cycle. For Laurence-Fortin performance art is often at the beginning of a new cycle: "Combining performance and visual art is a good thinking exercise. It challenges the traditional."

Laurence-Fortin's road to becoming a performance artist has been full of unexpected events. In 2006 Laurence-Fortin was invited to take part in the Festival International In the Context of Arts in Warsaw, Poland, where she was expecting to construct a visual art installation. Due to lack of space Laurence-Fortin was told that she would have to get in front of an audience and perform instead. A self-proclaimed shy person, Laurence-Fortin didn't initially feel comfortable with the situation she had been placed in, but all this changed after (or rather during) her first attempt at performance art: "My first performance went very well. It felt very natural. I explored the theme of physical imbalance. I balanced sticks into a circular shape. The first two sticks I tried to balance fell down, creating this amazing sound. I, along with the audience, held my breath in suspense." Laurence-Fortin explains vividly, "Since then I have frequently worked with the aspects of sound and suspense, creating entire performances based on them. But it is very stressful. I didn't smile much during my first performance. Creating an installation in front of an audience was something entirely new for me and required a high level of concentration. I put so much energy into being in the present that I was sick for a week." Laurence-Fortin says with a smirk.

Laurence-Fortin finds inspiration from nature. Before a performance she prefers to be surrounded by trees rather than other artists. Finland provided the perfect setting for Laurence-Fortin when she performed at FLUXEE in May 2013: "I had everything I need-





ed. I was fully prepared." Laurence-Fortin says with an air of fulfillment. Prior to taking part in FLUXEE Laurence-Fortin had performed in Poland, working with the elements of height and balance. This time around Laurence-Fortin felt the need to do something secure. She created a simple performance based on her forte, drawing. By crawling on the floor Laurence-Fortin found the ability to go back to the earth and find her roots as a performer.

Staying grounded is a very important element in Laurence-Fortin's work. After performing vigorously for two years, Laurence-Fortin had to reassess her relationship with performance art. "You could see a dip in my CV." Laurence-Fortin says, motioning up and down rapidly. "So many artists were working on documenting destruction and pain, and I kept thinking to myself 'Why not go out into the real world? Why not overcome real challenges instead of imitating them?'" Laurence-Fortin found clarity where she always does. In nature - sea kayaking. "You have to be present in yourself and aware of the waves surrounding you if you want to survive. In the same way, if you wish to demonstrate more than just your own idea during a performance, you need to be true and constantly present."

amelialaurencefortin.com

Francis O'Shaughnessy

Born in Canada

Performed at FLUXEE in 2013

Francis O'Shaughnessy is a Quebec-based artist whose work combines research with performance. He constructs his art in a style called "haiku performatif." The topic of his research is "ideal love."

"I base my work on what I read - my preoccupation is in real life," O'Shaughnessy says pensively. "I use art as a tool to express something I don't know. My work represents the essence of an idea."

Performing in Turku was an extremely positive experience for O'Shaughnessy: The reception was positive and the artists got the quiet preparation time they needed. According to O'Shaughnessy Finnish audiences are at times cold, but always present. They are respectful and tentative.

O'Shaughnessy's visit to Finland in the spring of 2013 marked the beginning of an artist exchange between Canada and Finland. By spending time together Canadian and Finnish artists were able to discuss life and art: "It was a huge amount of work, but FLUXEE made it worth it." O'Shaughnessy says and continues: "Contacts like this make it possible to confront other cultures and new publics."

francisoshaughnessy.wix.com/performance

