

NOBA network meeting in Reykjavik August 30th 2014

The fourth NOBA network meeting was hosted in Reykjavik, Iceland during the Reykjavik Dance Festival.

Venue – Tjarnarbíó, Tjarnargötu 12, Reykjavík

Date – August 30th at 10:00–15:00

Theme – The current status in the Nordic and Baltic countries

The main theme for this edition of the NOBA network meeting was to present practical tools in the form of presentations on the current situation in the Nordic and Baltic countries, sharing stories regarding touring and how to approach potential buyers and some basic marketing and communication tools.

Estonia

Presentation by Raido Bergstein, Eesti Tantsuagentuur

At the moment there is no structure to talk of regarding dance for young audiences. But it is slowly getting better and the field has been acknowledged by the cultural minister. The dance field in Estonia is slowly getting more and more base funding and not just for one-off projects. All in all there are about 5-6 choreographers and 1 company active in Estonia today creating dance performances for young audiences. The company, United Dancers of Zuga, has been around for about 10 years and has created at least three performances for young audiences.

The dance community is now slowly starting to see this as an actual field of dance, but the main

problem is still the lack of structures regarding touring. The schools are all very excited to present dance, but due to the lack of structure for this, each performance takes a lot of time and effort to get together. There are venues for guest performances and now the artists themselves are more and more starting to approach schools with their performances. In general the artistic and performative level is very high, but at the same time this is a very new field in Estonia.

In Estonia there is Eesti Tantsuagentuur (Estonian Dance Agency) who coordinates the activities of Tantsutuur (dance performances), Koolitants (festival School Dance), E.T.A Tantsukool (dance school) and Starlight Cabaret. They have just started to build a touring system for dance for young audiences in Estonia and the first performances are touring during fall 2014. This will also include workshops for teachers which gives them a closer relation to the actual performers. Teachers also need vocabulary on how to talk about the performances with the kids. They need tools to lead the discussion with the children about their experience. The bottom line in all this is that you have to build your own networks and your own structure.

Norway

Presentation by Anki Overland

Scenekunstbruket

Scenekunstbruket is Norway's largest distribution platform for culture for young audiences. Scenekunstbruket itself doesn't produce performances, they make a selection

of performances to offer to schools around the country.

Den Kulturelle Skolesekken (The Cultural Rucksack) is a national program for art and culture provided by professionals in Norwegian schools. The project started 15 years ago and provides cultural experiences for around 800 000 children every year. The various regions are responsible for their own tours that they choose from a selection of productions. Last year there were 56 productions in performing arts and for the last couple of years dance has been in high demand.

There is also Markedet for Scenkunst (The Market for Performing Arts) which is a national arena for the presentation, purchase and sales of professional Performing Arts for children and young audiences. There are also a few festivals (such as Showbox) and some guest performances at for instance Dansens Hus in Oslo. Today there are around 40 companies in Norway working with dance for young audiences.

Iceland

**Presented by Gunnar I Gunnsteinsson,
 Sjálfstæðu Leikhúsin**

In Iceland there are virtually no one working in this field and so far only two (2!) productions has ever been presented. There is funding from the city, but mainly project funding.

The schools are given 150 ISK per child and year (roughly 1 Euro) for cultural experiences and this

is meant to cover both the cultural experience itself and the bus fare to get to the theatre... There are parent organizations pitching in their own money as well, but touring is very hard in Iceland. As there are quite a few venues, there are possibilities of co-producing performances, but there is no national funding to obtain for this.

There are currently two performances being produced, and active participation in networks such as Assitej and NOBA is a good way of learning and to raise awareness about the field in Iceland.

Finland

Presented via e-mail by Riitta Aittokallio

Glims & Gloms dance company

Around 40 dance companies operate in Finland and less than 10 of them make performances for young audiences. 70 percent of dance artists work as freelancers. 65 percent of artists live in the Helsinki region.

Overall, the joint financial responsibility of the state and the municipalities is one of the pillars of Finnish cultural policy and dance receives about 1 % of all the public funding for arts. Approximately 30 companies are funded by discretionary grants and production-related funding. All in all 12 dance theatres receive regular state subsidies. Since 2013 Glims & Gloms has been one of these companies.

However, the future looks quite sad and dark unfortunately. The art field in Finland faces

cutbacks and companies and theatre houses are already under extreme pressure. For example the city of Espoo (where Glims & Gloms are based) is proposing major cutbacks in its grants for next year. We'll know the amount and percent in September. At the same time we're waiting to hear final financial news from the Ministry of education and culture. But we can definitely expect more cutbacks. Finnish companies have had a rather passive role in fundraising until today. Most companies do not actively fundraise from individuals, but rather concentrate their efforts on grant applications to different foundations. The current economic climate is increasing the importance for strategic fundraising. Unfortunately cutbacks also mean less money for international touring.

A nation wide network of regional dance centers was established in 2004. The network consists of six regional dance centers: Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Regional Dance Center of Western Finland, Central Finland Regional Dance Center, Regional Dance Center of Ostrobotnia, Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland and Regional Dance Center in Northern Finland. The regional dance centers are not a touring network. Their aim is to further the availability and accessibility of dance as an art form and to increase employment among dancers and to promote cooperation. Because we don't have any touring network for dance or theatre, touring in Finland is extremely difficult. Of course, we're trying to establish a proper one but it's not easy and this is more or less a financial issue. The truth is, if

you want to be a part of a network, you have to create your own network.

If you want to know more on Finnish dance – visit Dance Info Finland's web page:

<http://danceinfo.fi/about-dance-in-finland/facts-and-figures-about-finnish-dance/>

Sweden

Presentation by Malin Enberg

Producentbyrå

Sweden is divided into counties, regions and municipalities. Each county has its own subsidiary system, often with a culture coordinator and sometimes a dance advisor working solely with culture for young audiences. The role of the dance advisors is to support the practitioners and to network with and connect the practitioners to the market. However, they do not function as an agency per se, their function is more a supportive one.

On a national level you can get base funding, project grants and mobility grants from The Swedish Arts Council. Also the choreographers themselves can apply for grants from the Swedish Arts Grants Committee. On the regional level you can apply for project grants and on a local level you can apply for base funding and project funding. There's also the quite heavily criticized project Skapande Skola where the schools themselves can apply for project funding from the Swedish Arts Council for working with a professional artist or dance company or just buy

a performance.

Each county has its own structure in terms of regional tours. All in all there are about 20 county organizations that has some kind of responsibility to program or coordinate culture for young audiences. This is administered by regional and local coordinators. There are currently two regional institutions that produce and tour performances for young audiences: Regionteater Väst near Gothenburg, and Norrdans in the north. There are two guest venues: Zebradans in Stockholm, that is their own venue and the only one in the independent sector, and Dansstationen in Malmö, Swedens largest guest venue for dance. There are around 5-10 companies and/or choreografers who receive base funding each year, of them about three has 3-year funding. There are quite a few regional and local showcases per year. There are also national initiatives such as Dansmässan. There are a few festivals such as Satellit, BIBU and Salto presenting mainly dance for young audiences.

In general, if you want to approach Swedish buyers, schools or festivals make sure you have a good rider specifying things like contact information, where you are based, performance time, rig time, age or target group etc. The bottom line is: make it as easy as possible to choose your performance.

Denmark

Not represented at this meeting.



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General conclusion

It is very important that the people working in the field in the Nordic and Baltic countries get the opportunity to meet and share experiences, good and bad, in an informal setting such as the NOBA network meetings.

NOBA
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