

danzon_eng

a blog about performing arts by mehmet kerem ozel. for the turkish version please visit danzon2008.blogspot.com.tr

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chats in ten questions 11: Mette Edvardsen



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In this series of interviews we try to get to know the artists who will be the guests at the [Arter's Performance Programme](#) in Spring 2020. Our next guest is Mette Edvardsen.

Ayse Draz, Art Unlimited Performing Arts Editor & Mehmet Kerem Ozel, Writer
[The Turkish translation of this interview is published and can be accessed on art.unlimited]



Mette Edvardsen - Portre (Photo: Antero Hein)

What is the essence of performance in your opinion? How do you define contemporary performance today?

I think of it as a form of listening. There is something specific in the being present, sharing the space. It can be a really great thing. Performance makes other spaces possible.

Do you believe in the transformative power of art? How?

Yes, but – it's not a single gesture operation. It's a process, something we need to be continuously engaging with.

When you consider the current state of the world in every sense, what is the most important and urgent issue for you as an artist?

To continue.

When you are working on a piece, what sources inspire you? Do dreams play a role in your works?

I believe that we process a lot while sleeping and dreaming. Some dreams might make it into my work, but it's not about dreaming as a phenomenon or state. Then there are many things that inspire me, and for some works there are specific sources. It's about finding the conversations partners to make a certain work possible, to think with, a lens to look through.

When do you decide to give a title to a work you are working on if it already does not have one?

Sometimes the title is there to begin with, other times it comes while working. Usually it's rather early in the process. But I have also experienced once that two weeks before premiering a piece I understood that I needed to change the title, that it wasn't right anymore.

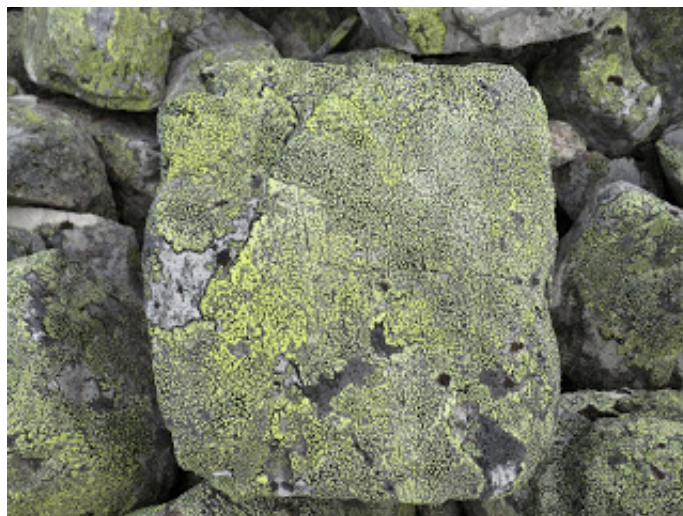


Photo: Mette Edvardsen



Photo: Antero Hein

What's your favourite moment in this performance, and why?

To feel that the space has opened, widened. That there is something there which wasn't there before.

When we look at the page on "oslo" on your website, we see just an image of a mossed stone? When we see your performance will we grasp the significance of this image or does that image signify a personal relationship you have to your work?

The image of the stone is probably as opaque as the stone is. It doesn't reveal its inside, but holds it. For me it's not a personal relationship to the stone but rather an abstract relation and a thought coinciding in time. And to me it was interesting to follow this, what is an image of a performance there to do, to communicate, to illustrate? Can there be other criteria?

"oslo" is conceived as a piece affiliated to a trilogy. Could you tell us the relationship between and the common aspects of these four works since we have not seen the trilogy?

The piece "oslo" comes after a trilogy of works all dealing with language, voice and writing. The first one, "Black" (2011) was about making things appear by naming them. There was no idea of a trilogy to begin with, that came later. In "No Title" (2014) I was working with negation and making everything disappear. "We to be" (2015) was written as a play. All these works are working with language as material, and addressing different capacities of language, not only meaning.

You have a background in choreography but your works span over quite a wide selection of mediums/formats ranging from video, books and writing to performance. Yet you mention and it seems that even in your works that work with language as material, for example the aforementioned trilogy "Black", "No Title", "We to be", you work on them as a practice and situation in relation to performing arts, that you approach language as movement as well. Could you please elaborate on this?

I am always searching for a language, how to make something, to be in dialogue with, to

make something else appear. I am not interested in language as such, but what it makes possible to do, in different ways. For me the medium or the format can also be a way to find a language, a way to generate or open a way in. So even if I sometimes write, it is not as a 'writer'. I am making pieces. So rather than investigating the relationship between language and movement, I am interested in what kind of writing it makes possible. What is this 'writing in space and time'?

Is there anything in particular you want to tell people before they experience this performance? Is there anything particular you would like to tell the Istanbul audience?
No, I don't want to tell the audience anything. I don't know something I think they don't know, or that I need to tell them. It's about another space for me, of experiencing, listening, feeling, thinking, and being.



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