



# BIRCA

BÆKKELUND INTERNATIONAL RESIDENCY CENTER FOR ARTISTS

## BIRCA ANNUAL REPORT 2023

2023 has been an exciting year for BIRCA, where we started new residency formats while completing the large Metropolis Landscapes project. We once again had support from the Danish Arts Foundation for this year's residencies under the title **New Horizons** of a total of DKK 300,000. We had hoped that the year would also be supported through Creative EU, but it took time to get the new Island Connect project through, so the new round does not start until 24. Therefore, the season had to be completed with the grant from the Danish Arts Foundation. The support were used for a smaller format of **Island Connect**, for the old formats **BIRCA Women** and **BIRCA Kids** as well as for the new **BIRCA Queer** format. Then we also added a new exciting residency with support from the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Program for Culture, namely **BIRCA Baltic Sea**, where we had artists from Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Latvia on a residency to investigate ecological performing arts and build networks.

The biggest project of the year was undoubtedly our Performing Landscape's project **Klippekroppe**, which was created in collaboration with Metropolis with support from the Danish Arts Foundation, Nordea, Bornholm's Regional Municipality and Bornholm's Culture Week. It was massive and we got around the whole island with 7 artists - and at the same time were part of a national network with 9 other projects/organisations. There is a lot of learning that will continue into the venture we are now gearing up more and more towards – namely to be a laboratory for the new ecological performing arts. BIRCA is becoming more and more aware of its role as a dissemination and knowledge platform and is looking at opportunities to raise awareness and make this even more visible.

There have been fine self-organized residencies with **Nordic Beasts**, **Two Destination Language** and **Myka**. Finally, we have started the network **RØSK** – Reflection room for the new Ecological Performing Arts.

In total, 51 performing artists with their 10 children have visited us in 2023. And we have made 7 external presentations at BIRCA with approx. 100 audience, and over 500 spectators came to see KlippeKroppe, including a number of children and dogs.

We have strengthened the 3 tracks we work with: The local/island identity, nature connections/climate considerations and gender identity. We have created space for an even more nuanced understanding of the concept of gender and are happy that there have been queer and BIPOC artists at several residencies. And we continue to be happy to embrace parenthood and welcome children as much as possible. We have also continued the work on our sustainability strategy. We have limited our carbon footprint from buildings as much as possible, but still have a high footprint from travel. We have supported artists in traveling by train and ferry where possible, but has also realized that the ferries have a significant footprint.

### **BIRCA WOMEN RESIDENCY 22. May - 6. June**

#### Participating artists

Moira Finucane (AU) who join as an artist as well as facilitated the whole residency.

Katherina Radeva (BG/UK)

Katrina Dūka (LV)

Nana-Francisca Schottländer (DK)

Elise Williams (US)  
Daniela Pasquale (BR/FI)

*My heart too sings at Bornholm – It has been such a joy to share time with all of you! I can feel something has shifted, and I feel deep trust in my process. I am so grateful for the time and experiences we bring with us, we take with us. So much knowledge, so much BEATY. I will always remember the green wheat fields, the ocean, the moonlandscape, the cliffs, the quarry, the trees, the birds, the flowers, the outdoor shower, the deer.*

BIRCA Women was again this year a beautiful and rewarding residency. We had chosen a group with great diversity and also chose that Moira Finucane stayed for the entire residency. This made it more facilitated than we usually do and has given us some thoughts about what we do in the future. We had also chosen for the entire residency to be focused on the relationships with nature around BIRCA. We went on excursions to Hammerknuden and to Hasle and Svartingedalen. We also participated in the exhibition opening at the Sol exhibition in Nexø, went to motorcross and to Circus in Soldalen.

On June 2, everyone made a beautiful and rewarding presentation of their work process and results with approx. 15 spectators. Here *A Nett*, the fishing net Katerina Düka had worked with, as well as *Miss*, Kat Radeva's costume, had their final display, after which they came up to hang in the barn. Nana-Francisca Schotländer tried out the flamingo with stones, Daniela Pasquale searched for myths about our connection with the earth, Elise Williams chose to address blackness based on her own experiences as a black performer at the residency, and finally Moira Finucane performed in her room and addressed the climate crisis on her very own way.



## BIRCA QUEER RESIDENCY 19. June – 2. July

### Participating artists

Israel Aloni (SE) - who join as an artist as well as facilitated the whole residency.

Priiya (IN)

Phillip Adams (AU)

Tis Aly (BR/DE)

Kat Staub (DK)

Viljar Moe (NO)



*Ask questions. Then, question the question, do it again. But, different. Repeat. Thank you for offering a place for questioning.*

*To be here. To arrive, to stay, to be visited by magicians, kissed by moths, butterflies, bees, Nancy and trees. To have space, make space & leave. The kindness of strangers becoming loved ones.*

*To see the world in multiplicities.*

BIRCA Queer was held for the first time this year and was a very special residency, where a vibrating space was created of sensitivity and exchange of what it means to be a queer artist today - also faced with history. A fairly diverse group of artists from many continents and with many different experiences in identity had been selected. We were hiking on the Hammerknuden with Lene Degett, around the Bornholm nature and with Thor on a sunset cruise to the Helligdomsklipperne. And we held a very special queer midsummer party.

30/6 there was a public viewing where 10 participated. Here the artists showed what they had worked with, among other things: fluid gender identity, what spirituality means in queer lives, how the queer body is experienced - all created in dialogue with the surrounding Bornholm nature.



## **BIRCA KIDS RESIDENCY 24. July - 6. August**

We had 2 weeks with BIRCA Kids this year, the first week was defined as a self-organized residency, the second was facilitated by My Grönholdt, who did a workshop with her son Mio. We had visits from a total of 4 artist families. My Grönholdt was also responsible for selecting the families and preparing them.

### Participating artists families

Week 1: Henriette Aarup & Signe Løve Anderskov with Mona/3, Arthur/8 og Emil/4

Week 2: Anna Hubner with Lian/3 and grandmother Gisela and Avon Bashida with Leo/2,5

The two residencies were quite different. In the first, Signe and Henriette worked quite focused on their own around the island, in the second, Anna and Avon were concentrated with the small children at BIRCA and with great interaction with each other and BIRCA. We continue to learn new things about children's creative perception and participation in processes, we continue to explore the format and make changes in relation to how we best host and support the families' processes.



*First residency: Investigations of falling  
Sea, sand, water, studies in the space, rocks, climbing, sore knees, playing in the garden, sea eagles in the air and cranes in the field. We are inspired and look forward to immersing ourselves further in the sensations of falling – Signe & Henriette*

*Thank you for a fantastic start to the thoughts that will form AMFIBIA, and for creating spaces where it is possible to finally be able to work, explore and play together with your child. Leo is the best choreographer I could wish for - Avon*

*Focussing on exploration within nature and choreography – nests and feathers – Anna*



## ISLAND CONNECT 14-27. August



Island Connect 23 with Danish artists Linh Le and Charlotte Østergaard as well as Italian Alessandra Grieco/Alex

Island Connect, our joint European project with residency centers on islands, slowed down a bit in 23 as we had not gotten the grant from Creative EU in place. But we were informed during the season that we have received €1 million for the joint project with 7 partners in the years 24-26 – so we are coming strongly back and this time with an increased focus on island identity.

We decided to stick with Island Connect in 2023, and therefore made an isolated exchange with the new partner for the project **Sardegna Teatro** in Sardinia/Italy. It was held first at BIRCA 14-27/8 and then at Sardinia 1-10/11. The 3 artists work closely together at BIRCA, and a lot of material was collected and archived in the form of installations and video based on an investigation of light and darkness. We went on many excursions and had meetings with, among others, costume designer Pernille Vestergård and head of Bornholm's Art Museum Tine Nygaard - and we made a lot of bonfire food. We did a very sensory based presentation 24/8 with 8 participants.

*The Day and night – in search of the light.*

*The sun shines, the sea of shadows, dislocated shifts, wandering glades - Island Connections.*

*The fire, the food, the conversations, the excursions, the experiments - energetic days between 4 women.*

*Thank you for hosting, community, camaraderie, nature*

*The bonfire queen Charlotte*

*Thank you so much for one of the best residencies. You have been the best tour guide, facilitator, dramaturg and co-host. Imagine that we now go home with all the memories: Danish 80s music in the living room, fog o'clock, the horse stones, Olsker and Østerlar's round churches, Dueodde, a trip in the water, etc. etc. Linh*



## PERFORMING LANDSCAPES - KLIPPEKROPPE MAY AND SEPTEMBER

Klippekroppe were the culmination of three years of work around the landscape. A project Metropolis started and invited us into as a partner, together with 9 other locations around the country - you can find everything about the project [here](#). From Bornholm's side, the project was supported by Bornholm's Regional Municipality, and it was shown during the Bornholm Cultural Week, which had also provided financial support.

At BIRCA we had already had the first development residency in September 22, and 1-5. May we met again at BIRCA with all 7 artists, the babies Arturo and Ro and father Simon, sister Ro and mother Isabelle participated. Also, Trevor and Louise from Metropolis were with us for the first few days, when we drove around the island and looked at locations.

And then from 11/9 we started to complete all the work on the locations on the island. 21/9 we had a presentation at BIRCA with a little preview, where TV2 Bornholm broadcasted live at the same time. 23/9 we had the premiere and drove around the whole island together – Susanne and Niels with 2 Baltic Sea artists and Linh, Trevor with Bente Larsen and Kevin Doyle who reported from the trip. And then we repeated the trip on Sunday 24/9, where, among other things, 4 other Baltic Sea artists as well as Katrien and Louise from Metropolis drove along. There were over 500 people in the 2 days - including quite a few children and dogs.

Klippekroppe was a celebration of the equinox and of the Bornholm underground – a story about the rocks and their encounter with our bodies. A project that will resonate with us all for a very long time. Reflections on the days can be read here: [Kevin Doyle](#) and [Bente Larsen](#) - on the map below you can see where we were with which artists.

Forestillingen KLIPPEKROPPE graver gennem performance, dans og billedkunst ned i Bornholms undergrund – dette udtømmelige, gådefulde skatkammer af sagn, formationer og fortællinger – for at komme i kontakt med alt det, vores verden er bygget af.

### Program

Kl. 8.30 – Helleristninger ved Madsebakke – Ilon Lodewijks  
Mødested: Madsebakke, P-pladsen (1)

Kl. 10.00 – Helligdomsklipperne – Dorte Bjerre Jensen  
Mødested: "Værkstedet" lige overfor Bornholms Kunstmuseum (2)

Kl. 11.30 – Frennemark Bautastene – Lene Degett  
Mødested: Parkering på Nordre Grisbyvej (3)

Kl. 13.00 – Frederiksstenbrudsøen ved Halleklippene – Ben Woodhams  
Parkering på Stenbrudsvej (ved Kunstakademiets Designskole eller Konservesfabrikken) (4)

Kl. 14.30 – Dueodde – Peter Vadim  
Mødested: Parkering ved fyrtårnet (5)

Kl. 16.00 – Kyllingehønen & Hanen ved Klintebakken – Katinka Wissing  
Mødested: Parkeringspladsen ved NaturBornholm (6)

Kl. 17.30 – Rønne Vesthavn Fyldeområde – Manon Duquesnay  
Mødested: For enden af Remisevej, parkering på Remisevej (7)

Kl. 19.00 – Ringebakkebruddene – alle kunstnerne  
Mødested: Parkering ovenfor Nevada/Himalaya (8)



Et samarbejde mellem





Maker Ilon Lodewijks at Madsebakken



Choreographer Dorte Bjerre Jensen at Helligdomsklipperne



Visual artist Lene Degett at Frennemark

Visual artist Ben Woodhams at Halleklippen



Choreographer Peter Vadim at Dueodde



Choreographer Manon Duquesnay in Rønne Havn



Performer Katinka Wissing with Laure at Klintebakken

Ringebakkebruddene - everyone

## BIRCA BALTIC SEA RESIDENCY 25. September - 8. October

### Participating artists

Liene Jurgelane (LV)

Ilze Mazpane (LV)

Henri Hüt (EE)

Tuulia Ritsilä (FI)

Korina Kordova (BR/SE)

Sylar Robert Ssempijja (UG/SE)



We gathered 6 artists who are based around the Baltic Sea - from Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Latvia - with support from the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Program for Culture funding for residential visits. This is the first time we have had a residency focusing on the Nordics, and it was very successful both in terms of gathering knowledge and methods around the ecological performing arts, but also in terms of starting network building in our immediate area. BIRCA Baltic Sea was facilitated by Linh Le, who helped select artists and facilitated a workshop with the artists on the first day. We started by inviting all artists to arrive so that they could experience the Klippekrøppe project, and in this way we both showed them Danish art in the field, gave them input on methods and thinking, showed them Bornholm and created connections to the Danish field. The project involved many trips in the countryside and visits to Bornholm's facilities - hiking on the hammer with Bodil Egeberg, herb tour with Thomas Guldbæk, sailing trip with Thor, visit to costume designer Pernille Vestergaard and the ceramic workshop Cassius Clay, a performance at Bornholm's Theater and a visit to the ethnological collection at Bornholm's Museum - and the forest were "un-roped" and Henri activated us all. 7/10 we held an open house where installations, interactive processes, performance lectures, video and a natural beauty spa were shown. We created an open space where people could walk around and experience as they wanted inside and outside, and it was a super good format – 15 participated. Linh came back to see the display and make an evaluation with the artists.



## OTHER RESIDENCIES

### NORDIC BEASTS 7. - 21. May



Choreographer Noora Hannula and her Nordic Beast – Lauri Loni (FI), Thea Kallhed Möller (S), Bjartey Elin Hauksdottir (IS), Shelmuth Øseth (N) and Rune Nis Klenø (DK) were at BIRCA working on their new performance *Waiting for the bad things to happen*, which later premiered on Campus during Bornholm's Culture Week. Presentation 20/5 for, for a younger audience – 25 people.

*Life is intense and then you die  
Thank you for the beautiful spaces. I loved creating and dancing here in the most beautiful studio I've been to.*

### TWO DESTINATION LANGUAGE 6. - 14. August



Kat Radeva, who had been here at BIRCA Women, returned with her partner Alister Lownie (UK) to research the new show *Hope and Ponies*.

*It has offered us an opportunity to write and move and listen and think, to be in nature and in the cultural traditions of this place too. It is such a privilege to be part of it.*

### MYKA 27. August - 3. September

Under the direction of My Grönholdt, the entire Danish-Swedish crew for the new *Mycelium* performance was gathered: Sophia Wickman (SE), Joel Frizon (SE), Stina Resting, Anne Sofie Vermund, My Nilsson (SE) and Julie Rasmussen with little Ronja and the first seeds for the show.

*Mycelium* will be a sensorial journey of experience with dance and installation for both babies 2 – 24 months and their adults. The performance is about the magical abilities of mushrooms to create connectedness, care and balance in nature's ecosystems. There was a viewing for babies and adults on 2/9 – unfortunately no babies came, but 10 adults attended. Premiere at Anemonen on February 24.

### ANDRE AKTIVITETER:

#### FOLKEMØDE 12. - 18. June

We had rented out BIRCA to the Association of Visual Artists, there were a total of 7 people here. In addition, Christian Gade Bjerrum stopped by once more and thanked for the opportunity to have time in silence, where you can hear the voices of birds and insects.

#### LINH LE & TOM BAILEY 18. - 20. June

Linh came again when she was researching a project for Kultippen and had brought the English performer Tom Bailey, who is coming again for residency in 24 as part of collaboration with the Passage Festival.

#### HELGA ROSENFELDT 16. - 18. September

Helga performed during Culture Week with her new project about birds, and took the opportunity to stop by BIRCA and spend the night.

## **RØSK AND PASSAGE PLANET**

In the winter of 22-23, BIRCA started the network RØSK – Reflection room for the new Ecological Performing Arts. This happened through a series of dinner conversations which gathered a language around methods and concepts for working with other perspectives to address the climate crisis with an artistic starting point. A group of approx. 20 artists, organizers and mediators meet and the conversations were, among other things, expressed in a vision paper. But many other new conversations and collaborations have arisen on the basis of this. This has meant an increased collaboration with the Passage Festival in Helsingør, where in the summer of 2023 we created and participated in the Passage Planet platform.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

In 2022, we began to look more generally at BIRCA's CO2 and environmental footprint. We use the DANISH Agency for Culture's CO2 calculator. This shows that we have used 15 tons of CO2 this year, which is at the same level as in 22 – figures are not directly comparable because we have not included audience transport and overnight stays outside this year. Almost 1 ton comes from the house during the period we do residencies, i.e. heating (which takes place with heat pumps combined with a wood-burning stove, where we use our own firewood), electricity, water and waste. We limit part of our waste because we sort a lot and have our own composting. We use the remaining 14 tons on travel activities and driving on Bornholm for the projects. This year we have had an increase in footprints from travel, which is mainly because we had more participants from Australia/USA. In the event that people come from outside Europe, we have ensured that their journeys are combined with other activities – meetings or presentations on the CPH Stage, for example (here we only count 50% in our CO2 account). We have increasingly supported artists traveling by train/bus/ferry - this sometimes requires increased expenses and time - but it has turned out that the footprint for ferries is really large - so 7 tons from travel activities are from ferries. BIRCA is located on 3 hectares of land, half of which is forest, and it is said that 1 hectare of forest absorbs 10 tons of CO2 per year. We also consciously work with biodiversity and wild nature in the outdoor areas. This year the Baltic Sea artists helped us remove rope, metal and glass from the forest area.

## **NUMBERS AND DATA**

A total of 51 adult performing artists with 10 children and 4 accompanying family members used BIRCA professionally in 2023. This is fewer than in previous years, but on the other hand, several of them have been here several times. We have big diversity, with many female and/or queer identifying artists as well as several ethnicities and nationalities represented. Many of the artists have an international background and they came from the following countries: Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, Germany, Bulgaria, Italy, Scotland, England, Israel, India USA, Australia, Brazil, Uganda. There has been a greater emphasis on the Nordics than before, but several have also come from afar.

We have held 7 external presentations in the season with between 10 and 25 for each event - the small groups have meant that they have been intense experiences that have given people sensory and emotional experiences and many conversations afterwards. There is also the Performing Landscapes project with over 500 participants.

We have had press articles in Bornholms Tidende, Denne Uges Bornholm as well as been on local TV, especially about Klippekrøppe. In September, Susanne Danig wrote a major debate article about Island culture in Bornholms Tidende. We have sent out newsletters regularly and been active on Facebook and now have 1474 (increase of 125 from 22) followers.

The association BIRCA Residency is led by a board consisting of **Ida Marie Tjalve** (chair), **Bente Larsen** (vice chair), **Tine Nygaard**, **Lars Rømer** and **Jens Frimann Hansen**. **Susanne Danig** has been appointed to lead the association's daily operations and is paid according to the activities that are held.