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To: Konstnärsnämnden
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Redovisning av internationellt kulturutbyte inom dans

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Between December 5 and 17 Abdalla Omari and I worked together in one of the studios at the Fabrik Potsdam. This residency was first planned to take place in Tbilisi. But this plan was changed to a studio in the South of France after Abdalla had left Georgia to apply for a residential status in France as a refugee. Then this plan was changed another time because Abdalla had moved to Brussels instead to apply there for a residential permit as a refugee. We had to postpone one more time the period to work together from September to December, a period in which it was not any more possible to work in the studio in France since it was not heated. I then contacted the Fabrik in Potsdam and they generously offered us the use of one of their studios plus technical support.

Arriving in Potsdam on the 5th of December, we spend the first day of work to prepare the studio, buy materials for Abdalla to paint with, set up lights, cameras and projectors, put up plastic on one of the wall to protect it from getting paint spoiled on it. The next day we started to explore different ideas to combine dance and life painting. Most days we had two working sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In each session we explored another specific idea or approach.





There were a number of question and difficulties that we needed to find answers to.

- How to find a workable balance of focus between the act of painting and dancing. There is another necessity in the concrete movements of a visual artist and the more abstract movements of a dancer.
- The movements of Abdalla his act of painting have an immediate verifiable result: the painting on the canvas. The dancing is far more volatile and does not leave tangible traces, apart maybe in the memory.
- How long time does Abdalla need to create a large painting on a screen of 8 to 10 meters wide and 2 meters high.
- What relation can we imagine between the painting and the performance that we will make in 2015 with children from refugee camps in Georgia, "Waiting in the Margins".
- What other strategies can we find and play with to create the scenography of painting in real time, other than painting on a big canvas.
- What dramaturgical possibilities and problems are arising from working with dance and life painting together sharing the same time and space.

During these two weeks we have found a number of exciting starting points that will help us to approach the work that we are going to make together in Georgia. Through the practical work we did together, the hours of dancing and painting, we developed a strong understanding of how to work together. Much time was spent in analysing the improvisations we did together. We both see the result of the dancing and painting as an improvisational meeting, a synergy of our abilities and creativity.



Apart from the improvisations in which Abdalla was painting on a big canvas, we worked with him painting or drawing on a piece of paper on a table, filming this through a camera that is connected to a video beamer. We developed a series of interesting interactions between the dancer that moves inside a changing painted and projected environment.





We also worked on creating different shadows or contours on the big paper on the wall, Abdalla painting these contours and then completing the painting in and around these contours.



Another main question that we wanted to find some possible solutions for is how to stage the act of painting. At first we thought to create a big canvas as a background on the stage. Apart from some technical difficulties, we agreed that this would not be the most interesting way to integrate Abdalla his painting into the piece that we will create. The idea was developed to build a construction of four interconnected screens on wheels. These four screens could create different spaces on the performance floor. They could become a closed space, like a house. They could become a wall, a barrier. We started to develop some exciting first ideas of how these four screens could be used to change the dramaturgical space of the performance.



Apart from working for the project in Georgia, the residency definitely inspired us to look into other future projects. We are interested to look into the creation of a duet or trio with Abdalla being one of the protagonists. We also started to discuss the possibility to create a bigger project in Sweden that is directed towards refugees.

Looking back to the two weeks of working together, it is clear that we have build a strong connection and understanding of some of the possibilities that will definitely help us when we start working on the project in Georgia. We developed an understanding not only of the many practical technical issues related to painting on stage, but also an understanding of the dramaturgical possibilities and problems.

During the last days of our residency we had some invited guests from the Fabrik watching us working together. Their feedback was helpful to test our ideas. The technical staff of the Fabrik has been extremely helpful in supporting our work and to give us practical advice on how we could build the set of four interconnected screens.

Värmdö, 2015-01-08

Budget:

Resor:	7 025 kr.
Kost och logi:	9 000 kr.
Summa:	<u>16 025 kr.</u>

The travel expenses include the flight of Abdalla from Brussels to Berlin and my travel from Stockholm. The expenses for "kost och logi" include the expenses for Abdalla. The budget was made for a residency in Tbilisi, where Abdalla was living at the time. Because we now both had to travel to Berlin/Potsdam, I paid for the expenses of Abdalla from the financial support that I received for the residency from Konstnärsnämnden.

