

KN 2015/70

Redovisning  
Internationellt Kulturutbyte Dans  
Maria Nilsson Waller

Dublin Dance Festival, Maj 2015.

Mitt stöd á 6000kr fördelade jag enligt följande.

Tågresa Östersund - Arlanda t/r: 571kr  
Flyg Stockholm - Dublin t/r: 2638 kr  
Flygbuss: 129 kr (14€)  
Traktamente, normalbelopp Irland x 7: 3934 kr

Totalt: 7272 kr

Hur?

Jag reste till Dublin en vecka tidigare än musikerna för att repetera och genomföra vissa ändringar i stycket tillsammans med videodesigner José Miguel Jimenez. Detta gav mig även chansen att se mer av utbudet under själva festivalen, ta del av klasser osv, träffa flera av de övriga artisterna och inbjudna gäster. Jag valde alltså att spendera två veckor, trots att jag bara ansökt om stöd för en. Vi hade två dagars teknik rep och spelade sedan tre föreställningar av Blanca vid Dublin Dance Festival mellan 28e och 30e maj, 2015.

Resultatet

Samtliga föreställningar var slutsålda och folk stod på väntelista för att få plats. Vi fick väldigt god respons från publik och det kändes uppskattat och positivt att spela där. Själva framförandet från vår sida kunde inte gått bättre, och samarbetet med festivalen kring teknik och marknadsföring fungerade mycket smidigt och bra. En av dagarna genomförde vi även en "postshow-discussion" ledd av Dylan Tighe, en irländsk musiker och teater regissör som även blev god vän med musikerna. Vi hade roligt.

Erfarenheter

Detta var första gången jag varit programmerad vid sida av stora internationella namn som tex Meg Stuart. Jag upplever att det stycke vi producerat i Jämtland, långt ifrån etablerade

scener faktiskt håller måttet, och att det fanns ett stort intresse från publiken och kring de ämnen som stycket representerar. Detta i sig var en positiv och viktig erfarenhet. Att delta i en festival av den här storleken genererar en hel del administrativt arbete. Det var en nyttigt och lärorikt för mig att hantera detta, och allt fungerade smidigt.

Det är alltid givande att möta nya människor, dansare och koreografer och lära mer om deras intressen och arbetssituationer i olika länder. Självklart är jag också tacksam över alla tillfällen att se mycket dans. Det mest inspirerade för mig var Meg Stuarts stycke Build to Last, Irländska koreografen Liz Roche och skotska Robbie Synge.

### Vilken betydelse kan det få/har det fått för din konstnärliga verksamhet?

Det är alltid svårt att säga såhär nära inpå, men jag hoppas att det genererar fler speltillfällen för Blanca och kanske även andra projekt och samarbeten i framtiden. Julia Carruthers gav mig en lista på några intressanta namn främst i U.K som jag enligt henne borde hålla kontakten med - vissa har även vid tidigare tillfällen sett mitt arbete, och jag tror att min återkommande närvaro har betydelse. Jag har också fått inbjudan från två Irländska scener (Dance Limerick och Firkin Crane) att spela Blanca där i December och hoppas kunna få två till intresserade för att göra en eventuell resa över rättvisa.

### Hur har stödet från Konstnärsnämnden redovisats vid offentlig presentation?

Konstnärsnämndens logotyp var tryckt i vårt programblad och även nämnt i vår tack-text.

Övrig marknadsföring innebar 2 radiointervjuer, blogpost på Dublin Dance Festivals hemsida, intervju med mig i LeCool magazine, och recension av stycket i the Examiner och the Irish times.

Irish Times Dance review | Flamenco to reality TV at the Dublin Dance festival

From the Andalusian plains of flamenco to the TV reality shows and the snowy terrain of northern Scandinavia, performers and choreographers gave us modern twists on classic concepts and responses to music.

**Seona MacReamoinn**

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Edad de Oro- Israel Galvan \*\*\*\*\*

Blanca \*\*\*\*\*

Re-Presenting Ireland \*\*\*

Triple Bill\*\*\*

Double Bill \*\*\*

Hybrid worlds continued to unfold through the final week of the Dublin Dance Festival. From the Andalusian plains of flamenco to the TV reality shows and the snowy terrain of northern Scandinavia, performers and choreographers gave us modern twists on classic concepts and responses to music. Splashes of visual magic, ironic humour and youthful exuberance illuminated theatres and open spaces. And this accomplished fringe strand - often entertaining, if not radical - has undoubtedly contributed to the continued increase in audiences for this festival under outgoing director Julia Carruthers.

Pulsating rhythm was nowhere more evident than in the bravura performance of flamenco artist Israel Galván and his Edad de Oro. A disconcerting showman style start soon gave way to a mesmerising concert performance of a Golden Age of Flamenco. Galván's whole body became his percussive instrument. His fingers castanetted and thrummed from cheekbone to flicked heel, while his feet scuffed and pawed the ground like a restless stallion. Macho staccato struts developed into intense dialogues and duels with the floor of the stage, his own shadow but most eloquently with the fusion of accompanying fine guitarist Alfredo Lagos and singer David Lagos. Movement was unembellished, but melded with a contemporary fluency.

Trademark haughtiness was matched with self-irony (he switched to a pair of gleaming white shoes, resting one gently on a chair for perusal by the audience.) Grand knowing gestures; the knife edge spins, dramatic body arching or frenzied careening across the stage, were counterpointed with miniature almost lyrical moves. Even the highly controlled abrupt stops were as arresting as the photo finish of a horse race as though Galvan's emotional engine suddenly has been switched off. The passion and wildness of flamenco were pervasive; sometimes he paused, knees bent like a bird poised for flight or with the thunderous voice and music rising to a crescendo, the dancer's body launched in full throttle, part animal, part human and we witnessed the evocation of the duende, that distilled emotional spirit emanating from authentic gypsy flamenco.

The heat and dust of flamenco terrain is a planet away from the snowy darkness evoked in Blanca, a completely absorbing solo from Maria Nilsson Waller. This meditative, entrancing work drawing on the culture and struggles of the indigenous Sami people of northern Scandinavia was created and performed by Waller with an eerie electronic soundscape composed and played live by Magnus Vikberg. Yet it was also work of visual magic as the dancer's body and movement were swathed in a magnetic 3D visual design of José Miguel Jiménez drawing the performer and audience into its spinning gyres of black and white, darkness and light.

So much was finely suggested in this coherent mix of dance, music and image; an Arctic terrain with hibernating darkness or the sudden blinding white brightness, snow as protector and enemy with delicate snowflakes careering gently followed by engulfing avalanches. We sensed the struggles of nature and humans as Waller's body became a canvas for Jiménez and Vikberg; emerging tendrils of plants or dense snow laden forests, an enormous nuclear style explosion of sound and distorted image left Waller's body prone. The shifting and dissolving images, sound and dance evoked a familiar conflict of traditional and modern; the disco beat of encroaching urbanisation counterpointed with a puddle of blood seeping on the screen; indigenous peoples and culture hunting for survival while anxiously seeking identity.

Some of these anxieties seemed to pervade many of the solo pieces abounding in the festival. Young dancers and choreographers are now transients working across borders and cultures, an experience which leads to questions about identity, home, time, self, community. Luke Murphy's Your Own Man/Mad Notions (Re-Presenting Ireland) brooding on cultural identity as he joined an imaginary Irish pub quiz was on point while Lucia Kickham's inventive solo In This Now, from the same platform, showed a concern about the wasting and passing of time. Indeed restless questioning clawed at the choreography in all of "The Triple Bill". Israeli born Meytk Blanaru and Italian Claudia Catarzi were watchable performers but they were strongly edged out in impact by the more accomplished Thomas Hauert. His Bitter/Sweet explored the concept of impossible love in an interplay again with the body, music and technology as he danced and deliberated, to the strains of a baroque Monteverdi. His moves were constantly interrogating as he sought to find equilibrium with himself and the music. Doggedly he rearranged the space, the neon strip lighting, the pace, even his clothing but to no avail.

Hopeless love is timeless, while searching for connection has become an affliction of the modern age. Both were wittily and athletically articulated in Tabea Martin's Field which formed part of "Double Bill". This was a deft, smart-ass work for three dancers performed here by her trio of young, lithe, technically fine dancers Stephanie Bale, Luca Cacitti and Carl Staaf. They mined the concept of togetherness and separation, equality and "the three into two won't go" conundrum and they gave it their best shot. Bodies, hugged, cleaved and wrapped, lips and limbs insinuated themselves around each other, and the spaces in between at marvellous frenetic speed, All to a Sixties throwback choice from their eclectic 100 Best Love Songs playlist - Happy Together by The Turtles.

Back in the 1960s it was all about experiment and the people's revolution. In the age of the internet and YouTube, the technology revolution is taking over the people. Fantasy and reality blur. Pantastic by Deirdre Griffin (Re-Presenting Ireland) was a slick duet for dancer and frying pan, a domestic goddess mirroring her TV heroine, while BOKKO - The Ultimate Fusion one of the festival's last offerings, took this concept to dizzy heights. This was both a hilarious recreation and an ironic deconstruction of a South Korean dance craze, conceived and performed with detailed surreal accuracy by Karel Van Laere and Vanja Rukavina.

## Blog

### Preview 2: Maria Nilsson Waller talks video games and the creation of tiny universes

Fri 15 May 2015



Where does the name of the piece, 'Blanca', come from?

We had this idea of working with video games and we had created a kind of video game character within the piece, so we were looking for a name for her. We tried a few different female names and ended up with Blanca, which is nice because it plays with the word white – we felt we had something unwritten, a blank page to work with.

What sparked the idea for the piece?

I was asked to make the piece by a theatre in Jämtland, northern Sweden, and they wanted a piece that was small and portable enough to tour the inlands of that area. So I needed to make something basically 3 by 4 metre, which is really, really small - so that was a huge influence. It resulted in the desire to bring in live musicians and a video designer to try to make something more of such a tiny space - to make something really rich, an entire world or universe.

Another big influence was these dance workshops I'd been giving to kids in that same region of Sweden, driving around from school to school. At the end of each workshop, the children were asked to create a little dance about something they'd experienced. And a lot of the kids, especially the guys but also some of the girls, made video game dances - they'd come out and do a little dance like a Minecraft man or other video game characters, so that was obviously a very real experience to them. I think it's great the way a video game is a full on adventure. We wanted to make a piece that would be an adventure for the audience - that would suck you in, that would engage your senses.

What's the mood of 'Blanca'?

I think the mood is really influenced by nature and all those hours I spent driving through forests and this abandoned, snowy landscape in northern Sweden. I really wanted to try to capture the mood of the landscape of that region.

You've mentioned the Sami (a Swedish nomadic people) and creation myths as influences, along with video games. What interested you about these themes?

I've always been interested in nomadic people and the idea that we are influenced by our surrounding environment, everything we see... that's been following me for a couple of pieces now, and this time it felt natural to look at the Sami people, who are local to this area. I think it has to do with questions of sustainability and nature and how a nomadic approach seems more sustainable perhaps. Maybe I'm questioning the way we live now.

And then, I think the creation myths and the video games... It all comes from this longing to create a universe on stage. When researching, we read a lot of creation myths from a lot of cultures, including the Sami people's, and they all talk about creation in different ways. Some start with a water world, and maybe there's the sacrifice of an animal, or maybe a god speaks, the sun comes... there are so many rich and very different stories. It's a really multi-faceted way of how we explain the world we are in as human beings.

And those questions are the same in a video game - you land in this new world and you don't know where you are or where you have come from, what's your mission, and you try to discover the world as you go. Those questions, where am I, where am I going, are kind of linked between video games and creation myths.

So you're working with live musicians and a videographer. What does working with collaborators from different disciplines bring to a creative process?

Firstly, it brings all the skills I don't have, such as music and video, but it's also the richness of trying to create a world as full of details and with as many elements as possible - four minds are better than one.

Has the contribution of videographer José Miguel Jimenez's work then influenced the direction of Blanca, or was it a response to what you had already developed?

Even though I knew I wanted to work with a video game designer from the beginning, I didn't know it was going to grow into something as significant in the piece as it did. The visual stuff has really created the matrix of the entire work, so it's really as present as the dance and as the music. But José's also doing the graphics live, just like the musicians and myself are performing live. We wanted to keep an element of liveness to it, like a jam session. It wasn't the original plan to have live video elements, but it works really well.

*Blanca runs from May 28th - 30th in Project Arts Centre, Cube - book tickets here:*

<http://bit.ly/1HU7UPJ>

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Photo: Patricio Cassinoni