

Mentors Vilnius IP 2018

Karl Ágúst Þorbergsson



Karl Ágúst Þorbergsson is a performance maker and an assistant professor in performance making at the Icelandic University of the Arts. Karl graduated with a BA in Contemporary Performance Practice from the Iceland University of the Arts in 2008. He finished with a master's degree from the Institute for Art in Context at Berlin University of the Arts in 2014. Karl works both independently on solo works and collaboratively and has taken part in group exhibitions in Iceland and in Berlin. He is one

of the founding member of the Icelandic performance collective 16 Lovers and has work as a dramaturg and director in performances and theatre productions. The emphasis in Karl's work is often cross disciplinary and he tries to push the boundaries of the performance medium and explore the creative potential of the performance. Karl has been an assistant professor and programme director of the Performance making course at the Theatre and Performance Department of IUA since 2016.

Ulf Friberg



Ulf Friberg Has a PhD in Dramatic performance and has been working as an actor and director in film and theatre for 30 years, still active. Teaches in acting. Also teaches in "acting for camera". Is responsible for and teaches in the theoretical discipline "reflection and society".

A couple of words about your interests and background in work and life.

I'm interested in collectivity in art and the cracks in life where the art is siphoning in.

I was a late starter in art and for many years I thought I was expected to be a civil engineer. But fortunately, theatre interrupted that path.

What does sustainability mean to you (in relation to your artistic and pedagogic work)?

It means to create a working atmosphere where people have a sense of security and are able to grow in their own pace. It creates artist with sustainable methods and sincere artistic input.

Some words about your teaching philosophy?

Be in time, have fun and do wrong.

Other?

I like carpentry.

Jonathan Paul Cook



In a career spanning more than five decades, Jonathan Paul Cook has worked as actor, director and/or playwright in fourteen countries and taught theatre in ten.

As he likes to put it, his work has taken him from Vancouver to Viljandi, from Tampere to Tabarka, From San Diego to Slovenia, from New Orleans to both Nykøbing Falster and Nykøbing Mors!

At DDSKS he teaches theatre within an expanded definition of Jacques Lecoq's pedagogical framework. He works with what has come to be known as the actor's "super text" - the various (and impossible to hide) reasons for an actor to be standing up there on the stage - as the

authentic source of stylistic transformation and the key to ensemble play. JPC is more interested in training that which happens between actors rather than inside them, as this is where the expressive stories lie.

Thoughts on the future of acting training:

I feel that is important to create a European approach to acting that is distinct from the Russo-American paradigm of action defined by character objectives. These conventional early twentieth-century methods appeal narrowly to the actor's (and in particular, the director's!) intellect and only indirectly to their bodies and broader selves. I hasten to add though, this is not to suggest the abandonment of narrative, nor should it, if for no other reason than history is alive and thrashing. Indeed, I reject the outdated post-modern, post-dramatic buffet that was a product of my own generation's experimentation in the sixties and seventies. It is important to encourage our students to understand that theatre is constantly evolving, to search beyond what we can teach them, and to ask themselves, "Well that was nice, but what next?"

In my own research I am exploring a theory of "influence" as a tool to connect the actor's body and mind with dramatic structure.

Thoughts on "sustainability:"

Peter Schumann's "Cheap Art Manifesto" is genius. (Bread and Puppet Theatre.) It is the definitive statement on sustainability in the Arts.

I have written, directed and/or acted in several plays that concerned the respect for, and protection of the environment. The most discouraging experience was inside an oppressive New Orleans school system. The most joyful was at Paulo Soleri's Arcosanti, an experimental town in the Arizona desert combining enlightened principles of architecture and ecology. Ah, what a buzz it is to preach to the converted!

The unsustainable actor usually ends up as an alcoholic waiting for the telephone to ring.

What might promote the sustainable actor is the personal life satisfaction that comes from ownership of their art. This inevitably means taking power out of the hands of directors, producers, agents, and casters; all recently arrived parasites who live off the life blood of the actor.

As a solution to career sustainability it has become modern to talk of "entrepreneurship." As someone who has been involved in many start-up projects, including starting a couple of alternative theatre companies that have sustained themselves for over forty years, I have to say that to encourage student actors to think of themselves as "entrepreneurs" is dangerously misleading and an unfortunate choice of words. It is to put the cart before the horse, because the

driving force is the inspiration and need to make art, not to pose as a Silicon Valley smart-ass. Words like "innovator" and "indie" and "outside the box" are far preferable because they direct the attention towards the essential, the art itself. When the will is there, artists do work out a way. They find the help and advice they need to further their projects without assuming alien identities. The world doesn't need more hustlers, and "hustlership" shouldn't become a prerequisite for making art as it is in the USA.

Sadly, this "entrepreneur" development is a product of a neo-liberal agenda that goes back to Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. I have watched this evil poison spread from America to Europe over the last decades. The idea is that governments should abdicate their historical responsibilities to the Arts and dump them on private enterprise. But the businesses never cough up the money except for safe vanity projects. It just doesn't work.

Culture and art are the end reason we have an economy. It should be a privilege and a joy for governments to spend money on sustaining them.

Tine Damborg



An actor's career becomes sustainable when they understand the value of rest:

R is for Restitution (allowing your body to repair and return to equilibrium)

E is for Ease (to be at home in yourself and on the stage)

S is for Silence (and to listen)

T is for Transformation (to alter your perspective, position, place etc...)

Tine Damborg (DK). Born in 1970. Currently finishing the two year MFA program in Movement: Teaching & Directing, at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, in London. From 1992 to 1995, educated as a contemporary dancer from what is now known as The Danish School of Performing Arts. Has since worked as a freelance dancer and performer in dance shows, performances, rock-musicals, touring children's theatre and site specific works, simultaneously choreographing and dancing her own work, which in 2003 earned her the Danish Actors' Union Choreography Grant. Besides working as a dancer, she has also been teaching. From 2005 – 2013 TD founded and was the artistic director of the Danish youth contemporary dance company, "U-kompagniet". Currently (since 2008) is a movement specialist teacher at The Danish School of Performing Arts, Acting department in Odense (ddsks.dk).

In teaching and rehearsal situations I use an amalgam of somatic movement practices such as Authentic Movement, guided movement improvisations, Contact Improvisation, developmental movement patterns, hatha yoga and contemporary dance to develop a heightened sense of attention as well as the ability to take notice of sensorial feedback that evolves from these movement practices. This feedback can be used for performance purposes to create original and personal material, or deepen the understanding of ones own (habitual) movement patterns and bring more clarity to the quality of ones movements. By being sensorially open the performer

experiences the reality of the present moment instead of having to pretend. Performance takes place in the freshness of the now, not in the echo of yesterday's rehearsal.

In class, I alternate dynamically between educator guided and student influenced teaching. I believe that we learn best by exchanging and interacting with each other.

In my research I'm exploring how the theory of 'Embodied Cognition' can be applied to actor movement training, and how this understanding can help me assist the development of an even more embodied actor. Embodied Cognition argues that cognition not only takes place in our brains and peripheral nervous systems, but also in the interaction with our social and physical environments. We are minded bodies that live our experience of each moment through both our dynamic brains and our intelligent bodies.

I grew up in Dar-es-salam and from 1975 to 1980 was a student at the International School of Tanganyika. As a ten-year-old I fell in love with ballet but, unable to attend classes, instead took up horseback riding and voltigering (acrobatics on horseback). In 1989 I discovered Contemporary Dance and have since developed an extensive movement practice, comprising elements of modern and contemporary dance, jazz, ballet, choreography and composition, improvisation, Authentic Movement, contact improvisation, Klein, Butoh, Iyengar/Ashtanga/Yin and Vinyasa Yoga, Pilates, bio-energy & tremor, Feldenkrais, and period dancing.

Sirkka Lamminen



My name is Sirkka Lamminen and I have a soprano voice with dramatic coloratura qualities. I am performing on an international level as a concert and an opera soloist. I am a lecturer at the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts (Uniarts) Helsinki. I teach singing and guide portfolios for students in the Acting programme. I am preparing for a Doctoral degree in the Arts Programme at the DocMus unit of the Sibelius Academy. I am also the artistic director of the Toivo Kuula Singing Competition in the city of Alavus in West Finland. Sustainability means to me a holistic approach to teaching. It actualizes in fostering unique voices of the people I am working with by helping them to sustain and develop their vocal abilities in a way that their voices can endure and flourish throughout their careers.

In a wider perspective sustainability stands for a multidisciplinary cultural transformation process, which includes ecological, social and economic sustainability. Guiding portfolios gives me a superb vantage point in the versatile artistic work of the students in the Theatre Academy. Many of the artistic projects handle the subject of how to achieve a holistic cultural change or how to foster the vitality of the ecosystem. There are also critical viewpoints to the economic and political decision making. In order to progress the idea of sustainability, I would find it very vital to see opening gambits to conversations where people would genuinely try to understand each other in the future. In the era of juxtaposition it would be refreshing to see confrontation replaced with listening, hearing, understanding and rhetoric in all fields of art.

Jenni Nikolajeff



My name is Jenni Nikolajeff and I'm a senior lecturer in dance at the Theatre Academy, University of the Arts, Helsinki.

I'm a dancer, initially trained in classical ballet and modern dance, but influenced by many other diverse dance styles and dramatic influences. I hold a Master of Arts Degrees (Dance) and I'm a founder member of the renowned dance company Gruppen Fyra, which has toured worldwide.

FISHING. My all-time favorite hobby. I love the idea that I don't know what to expect and actually that's not even the point. My ideal fishing day is just be by the lake, feel the nature, sky, air, water and possibly catch some fishes. A lot of happiness, joy, excitement of the moment of waiting.

There is actually a bigger idea behind the fishing. It somehow a metaphor for me. I throw a fishing rod far away, I'll wait and I'll dwell on it back to me. I'll repeat that action over and over again and suddenly I'll realized that the day has gone.

In my artistic and pedagogical works, I have always throwed my inner fishing rod to the future, waited and caught up the meaningful moments which has guided me and helped me.

I have struggled with the fishing rod, I have lost the focus, I have noticed that I have to be patient, I have understood that I have to respect the nature and I can't be ready before I have understood circumstances where I'm working.

In my inner sea I'm concerned about the plastics, pollution and sustainability because I'll still want to continue fishing with my child.

And This Is Not A Tall Story.

Laura Sipilä



My name is Laura Sipilä and I'm currently working as Lecturer in Acting specialized in voice and speech training. My professional background in Voice and Speech is in Vocology. I have graduated from University of Tampere with a major in Speech communication and Voice research.

I have been working in Theater Academy Helsinki since 2011.

With my experience I see myself as a pedagogue more than an artist.

I also think that developing my ways of teaching voice in the context of theater is my art right now.

I consider sustainability as a combination of commitment, slow learning, progress and constant movement. By this I mean that as a teacher I want

my students to know their voice organ so well that they can be independent and creative with it. To achieve this, one has to work patiently, make a lot of repetitions and that takes time. At the same time, I don't want to be "ready" as a teacher and keep on repeating the same exercises year after year. I try to encourage myself to think different every time I teach. I also want to see colleagues from other countries teach and get inspired with them.

I think that this is also something that young actors and theater professionals should do – they should be open to the world. We never get ready, theater is never ready. How do colleagues in

different countries and Academies process the same things that you do? What could we create together? What topics interest them? Are they the same as mine? And if not, why?

Through curiosity we can create Art that is sustainable.

Giedre Jankauskiene



I'm a mover. I'm endlessly curious and fascinated by movement and human body. And not only body, but by the way how the essence of the person reveals itself through body and movement.

I teach dance and movement improvisation in Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre.

For me, sustainability is a question: how much is enough? And when or in what quantity or volume does an insignificant action become harmful? Sustainability in dance for me means being respectful to body and its state here and now. Making a conscious decision on if and how much to force it for artistic reasons.

Arnolda Noir



Arnolda Noir is a performance artist, filmmaker from Lithuania. Her education ranges from MA in Law studies to theatre and film studies in New York Conservatory for dramatic arts which allows the artist use a stage as one of her mediums in her artistic work.

Currently, she is teaching in Lithuanian Music and drama academy and doing site specific performances.

Whether through film, music, dance or whatever medium may be readily available to her, the artist finds beauty from the moments otherwise known as "in between" states of being.

Interested in the act of unlearning, Arnolda through her art and teaching encourages conversations of time, synchronicity, spatial analysis, paradoxical realities, and explores the body. Arnolda is inspired by tradition, superstition, revolution, connection to land and the spiritual undercurrent of contemporary society. She is very interested in creating a safe space for the audience where the aim is to have the change happen on the inside of every person, for the audience to leave lighter than they came in. Her true goals now in performance, contain creating a safe space inside and cultivating a sense of „home“ in various communities, working towards real listening and contact with the audience as participants, and releasing some built in tensions throughout history in certain places throughout site specific events.

Ele Viskus



I am a lecturer of applied performing arts in Viljandi Culture Academy and try to mix-n-mingle with theory and practice of the world of performing arts.

As a child I took interest in physical activities so logically I started doing some sports, but then ended up also in a dance class and stayed. Found my first love which I've kept through the studies and analysis in any field.

Sustaining your interest in your works and keeping a dialogue with the rest of the possible worlds - that is what sustainability means to me. I like to stay in dialogue or question more than just teaching what I know. I believe uncomfortable situations take me further than only the correct ones, so failure is also a good way to learn!

Pauliina Hulkko



Hi. I'm Pauliina Hulkko, currently working as professor of the acting programme at the University of Tampere, Finland. I'm a dramaturge, a director, a researcher, a mother, – and most recently also a grandmother!

In this photo (taken by Esa Kirkkopelto), me and my dear friend Pelle admire soil sometime in the early summer this year. Soil is very important to both of us. I am committed to making a difference through performance, and art in general. Posing tough questions, but not necessarily, solving them is my duty as an artist-citizen. Music and sound form my most natural environment. For me, pedagogy is first and foremost about change. It means changing together while bearing in mind the past and the future.

Samuli Nordberg



My name is Samuli Nordberg.

I am lecturer at Degree Programme in Theatre Arts in University of Tampere. I teach theatre work specializing in movement and dance. I am doing my doctoral thesis - Shared authorship – bodily approach in University of Tampere.

Along with my lecturers work I am working as freelance choreographer, director and performer.

I have more than 60 dance and theatre works in my resume as choreographer, director and performer. Variety of works shows my interest in different positions of artists in collaboration to achieve

something together. My late works have been especially influenced by research questions of collaborative methods and understanding of performers bodily understanding of artwork that they are creating.

At the moment I am searching for technics and methods to empower performers bodily knowledge to be acknowledged and noticed as essential part of creation process of performative art work.

Iceland University of the Arts

- Karl Thorbergsson

Luleå University of Technology

- Ulf Friberg

The Danish National School of Performing Arts

- Jonathan Paul Cook
- Tine Damborg

University of Tampere

- Samuli Nordberg
- Pauliina Hulkko

University of the Arts Helsinki

- Laura Sipilä
- Sirkka Lamminen
- Jenni Nikolajeff

UT Viljandi Culture Academy

- Ele Viskus

Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

- Giedre Jankauskiene
- Arnoldas Augustaitis