



Photo: Anne Hübertz Brekne
Aline Sánchez, Sara Fdili Aloui and Annika Kompart in Vintage Dance, Connection residency 2019



Overview

Connections 2017-20
– the artists and their residency projects

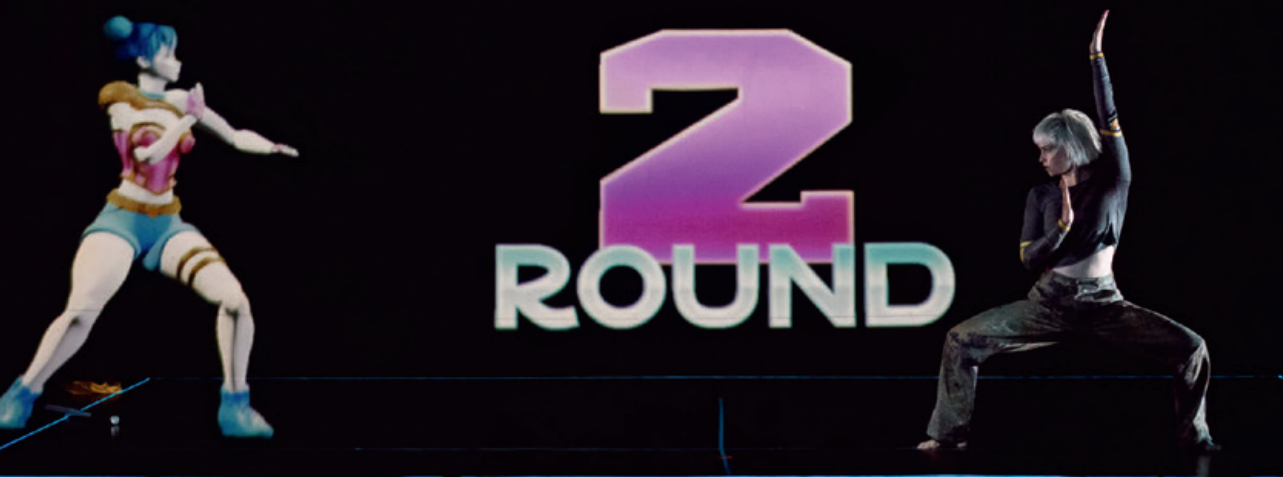


Photo: Søren Meisner
The Ultimate Battle by the Nordic Beasts

Connections 1.1 / 2017

The Nordic Beasts: VR and Dance

What happens when gaming aesthetics meet performative dance theatre? When hard-core physical dancers clinch with animated female characters inspired by Lara Croft, Miss Startling from *Lollipop Chainsaw* and VR dating character Nene Anegasaki from *Nintendo Love Plus*?

The Nordic Beasts were in residency to test and develop choreographic material in the intersection between game-play, animation and dance, e.g. through the use of a motion capture suit from the Danish tech company Rokoko.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Noora Hannula (FIN/DK)

Elín Signy Ragnarsdóttir (ISL)

Sophia Mage (US/DK)

Animator: Belinda Larsen (DK)

Musician: Ida Duelund (DK)

Mentor: Digital media artist Signe Klejs

Connections: The Animation Workshop in Viborg via creative director, producer and mentor at ANIDOX Michelle Kranot.

The residency

The group worked in the studio to motion capture movement sequences on which to base the animated character. The advantage of motion capture is that the animated character gets a far more dynamic and realistic movement pattern than with ordinary animation. They also started to develop principles for the choreographic material. The movement quality of this work is special because the physical dancer is up against an animated character who is not physically present. It requires development of principles for falling, throwing and lifting - without any physical contact with a partner. The artists did a morning briefing on the thoughts behind their work, which led to a dialogue about some of the philosophical and ethical aspects of Virtual Reality vs. the physical world. They also conducted a talk at The Animation Workshop in Viborg for approximately 50 students, where the focus was of a more practical nature. The Nordic Beasts ended their residency with an open studio sharing and dialogue about the movement principles, the challenges and the wider perspectives.

Production

The material was later developed into a solo performance *Noora Hannula Vs. Soma the Augmented-Reality Girl – The Ultimate Battle!* The work premiered at Click Festival in Elsinore, followed by performances at Bora Bora in Denmark in 2018 and has since toured in Denmark and abroad.



Photo: Nadia Sofia Karvonen
My Piece by Augustine Collective

Connections 1.2 / 2017

Augustine Collective: My Piece

Where does the joy of owning things come from? Can one own an idea, a story, a work? Augustine Collective were in residency to explore and develop methods and material for the performance *My Piece* – a co-created work on ownership, co-creation and human's relationship to things, body and identity.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Birgitte Lundtoft (DK)

Or Avishay (ISR)

Clea Onori (CH)

Marie Andersson (SE)

Ayelet Yekutieli (ISR)

Visual artist: Amir Meyer (ISR)

Mentor: Dramaturg Tine Voss Ilum

Connections: Mads Thimmer CEO of Innovation Lab, visual artist duo Jens & Morten, the professional local dance community, as well as local volunteers from Aarhus 2017's Rethinkers network.

The residency

Augustine Collective worked in the studio with frequent visits by dramaturg Tine Voss Ilum, who contributed with important perspectives in particular in relation to the involvement of audiences. The group opened their doors for joint morning classes with the local professional dance community and for Saturday sessions with non-dancers to test and develop strategies for audience participation. The group attended the Nordic Beasts' final sharing, they did a morning briefing and had several meetings with venues around the city. Performing Arts Platform arranged a one-day workshop with Mads Thimmer, CEO of Innovation Lab, who offered his perspectives on co-creation and on his definition of Innovation Lab as an organism, rather than an organisation. Augustine Collective concluded their residency with a work-in-progress showing with a strong element of audience participation and co-ownership.

Production

The material was since developed further into a finished performance. *My Piece* had its Danish premiere at Godsbanen/Aabne Scene in Aarhus in 2019.



Photo: dance for plants
dance for plants in the studio

Connections 1.3 / 2017

dance for plants

Humans do not know what plants know, but perhaps they have something important to tell us? dance for plants were in residency to examine, cultivate and reflect on the relationship between humans and other living beings. For whom or what are we dancing? For someone, something, an audience, a plant, an idea? The group wanted to use their residency to further develop dance for plants as a collective, a concept, an artistic practice, a lifestyle.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Snorre Jeppe Hansen (DK)

Loup Rivière (formerly Jean Roux) (FR)

Éloïse Dogustan (FR)

Johanne Merke (DK)

Katrine Staub, (DK)

Stella Faelli (FR)

Azahara Ubera Biedma (ESP)

Mascot dog: Lui (DK)

Mentor: Dramaturg, performer and artistic director of Secret Hotel and Earthwise Residency, Christine Fentz

Connections: Black Box Dance Company in Holstebro, Earthwise Residency in Mols, people's house plants, AURA - Aarhus University Research on the Anthropocene and Dome of Visions.

The residency

dance for plants started their Connections residency with a retreat at Earthwise Residency in Mols in close dialogue and exchange with artistic director Christine Fentz. They then re-located to Aarhus, where they started to work in a studio populated by green plants. They attended Augustine Collective's final sharing, did a morning briefing and received ongoing sparring from Performing Arts Platform. As part of their research, dance for plants offered home visits to people's houseplants, and they participated in a 'slow seminar' organised by AURA (Aarhus University Research on the Anthropocene). Performing Arts Platform arranged a one-day workshop and exchange between dance for plants and four dancers from Black Box Dance Company in Holstebro. The workshop took the form of a studio picnic followed by a physical session based on dance for plants' practice. The group finished their residency with a Soup & Sharing session at the Dome of Visions in Aarhus, whose green, experimental and sustainable profile seemed like the perfect match.

Production

dance for plants has since developed further and is an international network and research group that facilitates workshops, perform at people's homes for their plants, take part in exhibitions and conferences, collaborate with artists, activists, institutions, scholars, witches, gardeners, pets - humans and nonhumans alike.



Photo: Performing Arts Platform
Sense of Space by Stretching Roots

Connections 2.1 / 2018

Stretching Roots: Sense of Place

Stretching Roots is a get-together of dancers with roots in street dance, who were in residency to explore the *Sense of Place*. The group wanted to work site-specific around the city – from open spaces to narrow alleys - to explore how spaces, places, atmospheres, physical surroundings, textures and surfaces affect the body and language of movement - both physically and mentally.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Amund Bentsen (DK)

Theresa Gustavsson (SE)

Benjamin Skop (DK)

Raffael Bender (DE)

Maria Huotari (FIN)

Fredrika Burvall (SE)

Mentor: Mette Aakjær, performer and artistic director of Wunderland.

Connections: The Cultural Entrepreneurs, HeadRoom Festival/Aarhus Festuge, ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Studio Olafur Eliasson, Institute for X, local historian Doron Haahr.

The residency

Two of the members were on a 2-day reconnaissance in Aarhus prior to their residency to get a feel of the city and to find relevant site-specific locations. The visit led them on a city walk on Aarhus Ø, a guided tour at the Institute of X, excursions to MOMU Moesgaard Museum, the South Harbour a.o. When the whole team gathered in Aarhus, they started off with a morning briefing for the local performing arts community. Performing Arts Platform arranged a city walk with local historian Doron Haahr to hidden places in Aarhus, to which Stretching Roots returned several times during their residency.

The group worked on the sloping rooftop of Godsbanen, which physically obstructed their usual movement patterns and challenged their physical capabilities. In addition to exploring physical locations, their mentor Mette Aakjær introduced them to working with the senses as a tool to open up the history and atmosphere of a given place, and to interpret this sense of place through a personal expression.

Performing Arts Platform and Stretching Roots made a unique collaboration with ARoS Aarhus Art Museum and Studio Olafur Eliasson. The collaboration consisted of two parts; an open dance session in the architectural frames of ARoS, and one day of video recording inside the Aarhus icon Your Rainbow Panorama, where the group focused on how colors affect movement quality. Stretching Roots finished their residency with a talk and a workshop where the audience was invited to get a taste of their sensory approach to physical spaces.

Production

Stretching Roots had not planned to make a production on the basis of their research residency. However, when the opportunity to film inside Your Rainbow Panorama arose, they decided to put time and effort into creating a choreography for that particular space. The result was an 8-minute dance film titled *Your Rainbow Panorama in Motion*, which was released in 2019.



Photo: Christoffer Brekne
aNorange Collective

Connections 2.2 / 2018

aNorange Collective: Photography and Dance

How does a still image ignite the viewer's imagination and play with expectations - and is it possible to transfer this concept to dance and choreography? How can the associations, intentions and atmospheres of a photograph be translated onto stage? aNorange Collective were in residency to explore and develop choreographic methods in the intersection between dance and photography. Their work was a form experiment in which the two choreographers aimed for a high degree of experimentation and testing in order to develop a tool box for future use.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Sebastian Pickering Pedersen (DK)

Iris Boer (NL)

Mentors: Barbara Simonsen, dramaturg/artistic director of Theatre Seachange, Christoffer Brekne, filmmaker/photographer, and Anne Hübertz, dramaturg and Connections project manager.

Connections: The Animation Workshop in Viborg, the local professional dance community, locations around the city.

The residency

aNorange Collective worked in the studio and on location in the city in close collaboration with photographer/visual artist Christoffer Brekne. Their research was about transferring techniques from the world of photography to the world of choreography. Working with framing, focus, space and time - what happens before, between, and after a still image?

Sebastian Pickering and Iris Boer attended Stretching Root's final sharing session, and conducted a morning briefing. They offered open joint morning classes for the professional dance community in Aarhus in order to train expand their network, and they had meetings with several venues in the city.

They worked closely with visual media artist Christoffer Brekne and received ongoing sparring from dramaturgical consultant Barbara Simonsen, and occasional visits by dramaturg/project manager Anne Hübertz. Performing Arts Platform arranged a one-day excursion to the Animation Workshop in Viborg, which included a show & tell for the students, plus a guided tour and dialogue with the students about their working methods in relation to storytelling, stop motion techniques, frame rates, etc. Topics that were also of interest for Iris and Sebastian. aNorange Collective concluded their residency with a raw work-in-progress sharing.

Production

The material was since developed into a finished production.

The work *Shoot to Still* premiered in 2019.



Photo: Christoffer Brekne
As if I have missed myself

Connections 2.3 / 2018

Fabio Liberti & Emanuele Rosa

Fabio Liberti and Emanuele Rosa were in residency to explore a phenomenon called 'depersonalisation' - a disturbing state in which body and mind seem to be out of sync. They wanted to look into this phenomenon, not as a clinical disorder, but as an existential issue of individual and personal identity. The residency was the starting point for their artistic collaboration and formed the basis for the performance *As if; I have missed myself*.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Fabio Liberti (DK/IT)

Emanuele Rosa (IT)

Composer/musician: Per-Henrik Mäenpää (SE)

Mentors: Signe Klejs, digital media artist and Anne Hübertz, dramaturg and Connections project manager.

Connections: Black Box Dance Company in Holstebro, photographer Toke Hage, video artist Christoffer Brekne, stage technician Frederik Eberhardt and the local professional dance community.

The residency

Fabio Liberti and Emanuele Rosa had followed each other's work for a number of years, but had never worked together physically on stage. During their residency they spent time in the studio creating material, they participated in aNorange Collective's final sharing, did a morning briefing and offered a series of free morning classes to the professional dance community. From the beginning, they were in close dialogue with visual artist Signe Klejs, who contributed with artistic input (for example the introduction of a latex material), and with a concrete portrait project, that partly documented the process, partly functioned as an independent video work. The video work was exhibited in connection with Fabio and Emanuele's final sharing.

Performing Arts Platform arranged a mini-residency at Black Box Dance Company in Holstebro with workshops and classes, in which Fabio and Emanuele had the opportunity to test their choreographic material on other bodies.

Composer and musician Per-Henrik Mäenpää participated in rehearsals and created the soundscape of the performance. The final sharing consisted of two parts: A performance installation/happening at Performing Arts Platform's premises, including a short 'second skin' performance with the latex material and Signe Klejs' video work, as well as a 25-minute work demo of the choreographic material. The event was followed by a dialogue with the audience, which included Black Box dancers from the workshop in Holstebro.

Production

After the residency at Performing Arts Platform, the project was granted a co-production residency at Bora Bora, where Emanuele and Fabio finished the piece. *As if, I have missed myself* had its premiere at Bora Bora in the fall of 2020, and was selected for Ice Hot Nordic dance platform, 2022.



Photo: Niels Plotard
The Farmor Project

Connections 3.1 / 2019

The Farmor Project

The Farmor Project was a journey through the notion of ‘home’ – an exploration of the universal feeling of longing and belonging. The starting point for the project was an old film clip of the grandmother of one of the dancers. A clip that, to her, really embodies a feeling of home. The residency programme involved interviews with people of all ages and from all walks of life, the development of an extensive database with all the collected material, as well as the processing of this material into a performance installation in progress.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Marie Keiser-Nielsen (DK)

Niels Plotard (FR)

Florinda Camilleri (MT)

Mentor: Dramaturg Inge Agnete Tarpgaard

Connections: A statistician from the University's department of ethnology, DOKK1 public library, international students at Studenterhus Aarhus, the nursing home Thorsgården and Café Møllestien, museum curator Pernille Taagard Dinesen, ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Flux Factory New York, and Vestjyllands Højskole.

The residency

The group kickstarted their residency with a visit to Marie Keiser-Nielsen's family, for conversations about her grandmother, who was the direct inspiration for the project. In Aarhus, Performing Arts Platform organised a 2-day installation in the foyer of DOKK1, the public library. A space for the group to meet people of all ages and in all walks of life to hear their stories. These stories were collected and documented in various ways; through audio recordings, in written form either by hand or on an old retro typewriter and through photos. An extensive archive that informed the group's artistic work in the studio. The group made a similar installation at Café Møllestien and at the elderly home Thorsgården in Aabyhøj, where they got in contact with senior citizens. They also visited a group of young, international students at Aarhus University. Some of these people – both young and old – accepted the group's invitation to participate in further conversations and exchange in the studio.

The group did a morning briefing, participated in open morning classes for dancers, saw performances at dance venues and was also in contact with the performance collective Flux Factory from New York, who were artists-in-residence at ARoS, Aarhus Art Museum during that same period.

The group had regular sparring sessions with mentor and dramaturg Inge Agnete Tarpgaard (both before, during and after their residency) who specialises in social choreographies and participatory practices. Inge Agnete also invited the group on an excursion to West Jutland, where Inge is based. Here they stayed at Vestjyllands Højskole, and met musician/composer Niels Bjerg and dancer/choreographer Kirstine Kyhl for inspiration and exchange.

Last but not least, Performing Arts Platform arranged a morning briefing with curator from ARoS, Pernille Taagard Dinesen on curating live performance installations, which provided important knowledge for the group's work going forward. The group ended their residency with a performance installation of audio collages, video projections, choreographic material and an exhibition inspired by all the stories collected.

Production

The project was since developed further and presented in Malta in the spring of 2020.



Photo: Christoffer Brekne
Vintage Dance

Connections 3.2 / 2019

Vintage Dance

Vintage Dance is about bringing new life to old rags, while still taking care of the heritage and what goes before. The group wanted to explore dances from different genres, cultures and traditions through sharing, borrowing, donating and reusing dance in new contexts and new choreographies. Partly through workshops with local traditional dance groups, partly through new technology. The idea was to collect dance through a newly developed app that, in addition to short video and audio recordings, could archive other types of information about the dance. The goal was to collect and archive different types of dances via this app - and to reuse a part of this donated material in a final performance collage.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Annika Kompart (DE/DK)

Sara Fdili Alaoui (FR/MAR)

Aline Sánchez (DK/CU)

Mentors: digital media artist Signe Klejs and dramaturg/project manager Anne Hübertz.

Connections: REUSE recycling station, Gobaad Somali Cultural Association in Gellerup, the classic Indian trained dancers Eva Esmann Behrens and Ketaki Deshpande.

The residency

The group started out with a morning briefing about their project and the new app that Sara Fdili Alaoui (who is also associate professor in Interaction Design and Dance & Technology at the Université Paris-Sud) was developing at the time. After the briefing everyone was invited into the studio by Annika Kompart to recreate a very famous dance sequence from *Nelken* by the German choreographer Pina Bausch, which is a part of Annika Kompart's somatic heritage.

Performing Arts Platform linked the *Vintage Dance* project with the inauguration of REUSE's new premises at the South Harbour. Two Saturdays in a row, the three artists set up a "video booth" in a recycling container at REUSE, where people could literally come in from the street to donate a dance on the app - or to take a recycled dance home with them. Surprisingly many people ventured into the container. The donated material was included in the archive of the app, was reused in the studio and integrated into the team's final sharing.

Sara Fdili Alaoui is trained in modern dance (Laban), but has Moroccan roots and African rhythms in her blood. Annika Kompart has a background in standard dance and (German) modern dance, while Aline Sánchez, who was born and raised in Cuba, masters both ballet, modern dance and a variety of Afro-Cuban styles. Their individual somatic heritage became very clear in the meeting between them – and was further challenged in the meeting with two local dance groups; respectively Gobaad which is located in the ghetto-labeled Gellerup area and two classically Indian trained dancers. Performing Arts Platform organised workshops with both groups for the artists to exchange movement language and enter conversations about tradition, history, heritage and culture - and about dance as a contemporary, living and social art form.

The group, now including the Somali and Indian dancers, finished with a collage of collected dances, followed by artist talk, traditional Somali food and dialogue with the intercultural audience that participated.

Production

The *Vintage Dance* project lives on, not as a finished stage production, but as a continuously developing archive, as a method for community outreach and as knowledge stored in the three artists.



Photo: Christoffer Brekne
For Ludwig

Connections 3.3 / 2019

For Ludwig

How can you translate classical music into an artistic expression that can also be experienced by the deaf or hard of hearing? *For Ludwig* was a research residency to develop tools and choreographic material for an upcoming dance performance and a series of other events planned to take place in 2020 on the occasion of the 250th anniversary Beethoven's birthday. The project took its starting point in Beethoven's life and music – in particular how his struggle with increasing deafness affected his music. The group wanted to explore different ways of processing and translating Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* into other forms of expression; labanotation, sign language, visual images and sound vibrations.

The team

Choreographers/dancers:

Jernej Bizjak (DK/SI)

Joan van der Mast (NL)

Dramaturg Sara Zivkovic (SI)

Mentors: Digital media artist Signe Klejs, dramaturg and project manager Anne Hübertz.

Connections: Sign language interpreter Camilla Røber, labanotationer Thomas Schallmann, Lab manager Rasmus B. Lunding from Information Science and Digital Design, Aarhus University, Delphini-1 at the Department of Physics and Astronomy, Aarhus University, photographer and visual media artist Christoffer Brekne, stage technician Frederik Eberhardt, as well as the local professional dance community.

The residency

The group participated in the *Vintage Dance* sharing session, and attended performances at Bora Bora and at Aabne Scene (where Augustine Collective presented the premiere of *My Piece*). The group did a morning briefing, gave classes to the professional dance community and generally reached out to a vast number of sparring partners or collaborators to develop and test ideas. Among these an excursion to the Department of Astronomy and Physics (AU) and the control room for the nano-satellite Delphini-1. Here they met with project manager Victoria Antoci for a talk about stellar sound and space images, which were the direct inspiration for the video sequence in the groups' final sharing. Another crucial collaborator was sign language interpreter Camilla Røber, who specialises as a performance interpreter for the deaf. She participated in rehearsals, provided valuable input, and was eventually incorporated as a performer in the final sharing.

The sharing consisted of three parts: 1) a work-in-progress of *For Ludwig*, 2) A performance installation which was a mix of festive celebration with glitter and cheesecake and a macabre deathbed, 3) Artist talk.

Production

Following the residency at Performing Arts Platform, the project was granted a co-production residency at Bora Bora, where the work *For Ludwig [Re:birth]* premiered in August 2021.



Photo: Karine Bergeron
Circuit-Est Centre Chorégraphique, *What We Leave Behind*

Connections 4.1 / 2020

What we leave behind

What we leave behind is an exploration of the traces and signs we leave behind as human beings. Both in an abstract or poetic sense and as a concrete reality in the light of the climate changes we are facing. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however, the residency was re-worked into a 'long-distance residency' between Aarhus, Denmark and Montreal, Canada via an online workspace. The group was in residency a) to establish and develop a new international collaboration, b) to study traces as a concept and as a physical phenomenon by working with different materials (plastic, clay, sand, water) and exploring how materials and bodies mutually affect each other, and c) to explore opportunities for artistic co-creation in a global world with travel restrictions and social distancing.

The team:

Choreographers/dancers:

Anna Stamp Møller (DK)

Marilyn Daoust (CAN)

Birgitte Lundtoft (DK)

Mentor: Producer Sigrid Aakvik
from Art & About

Connections in Montreal: Visual artist Audrée Lewka, video artist Robin P. Gould, dance artist Karenne Gravel (CAN) and Circuit-Est Centre Chorégraphique.

Connections in Aarhus: videographer Simon Beyer-Pedersen, Dansehallerne/Kora and ARoS Atelier.

The residency

Covid-19 put an abrupt stop to the organising of the program in the spring of 2020. It was decided to postpone the program to August 2020 and rework the initial concept into a 'long-distance residency' with Marilyn Daoust in Montreal, and Anna Stamp in Aarhus. The time difference meant that Anna and Marilyn rarely worked at the same time, and their work process therefore became a kind of 'Chinese Whispers' - where the day's practice and insights were passed on to the other through conversations and via an online workspace. As a digital platform, they used Miro, a virtual whiteboard that can accommodate both text, video, images and commentary tracks - and which proved very suitable for their work process.

Due to restrictions in Montreal, Marilyn was not allowed to work physically with another dancer in the studio, and instead invited scenographer/visual artist Audrée Lewka in. Audrée put different materials into play, among these a large inflatable plastic bubble that could give Marilyn some physical resistance. The huge plastic bubble also became a strong metaphor for the project's focus on climate and on human impact on the environment. Marilyn also worked with filmmaker Robin P. Gould, who filmed and documented the process.

In Aarhus, Anna Stamp Møller and Birgitte Lundtoft investigated traces and imprints through different materials (chalk, sand, plastic, clay), but also in a more abstract sense; the emotional imprints and influences we have on each other and on the environment. The group also invited Simon Beyer-Pedersen into the studio to film material, which was later included in Robin P. Gould's video work of the process.

Due to restrictions, the group did not conduct a morning briefing and kept networking events to a bare minimum. Performing Arts Platform facilitated a meeting with Ole G. Jørgensen from ARoS about the framework, practice and curation to ARoS Atelier in relation to a possible further development residency there.

Anna, Birgitte and Marilyn (online) also received sparring sessions with producer Sigrid Aakvik on opportunities for transatlantic/arctic cooperation, co-production, festivals and residencies in the future. The final sharing session was open to a selected group of people and included a work demo with Birgitte and Anna in the studio in Aarhus, followed by an artist talk about the online residency format, and an online presentation of Marilyn's work in Montreal.

Production

The recorded video material has been edited into a short research essay film. Marilyn and Anna finally managed to meet physically in Denmark in December 2021, for a residency at Forsøgsstationen in Copenhagen and at Aabne Scene in Aarhus. *What we leave behind* (working title) is still in progress [2022, ed.].