

FOR WANT
OF A
BETTER

STRANGER IN A FAMILIAR LANDSCAPE



DANSE-VOICE-IMAGES

Direction and voice : Deborah Lennie

Dance : Annie Hanauer, Ingvild Marstein Olsen

Sound creation : Patrice Grente

Film : Christophe Bisson

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STRANGER IN A FAMILIAR LANDSCAPE is an exploration of the relationship between body, sound and landscape.

The body, like landscape, carries its own history. Even before our birth, we receive information about the world we are about to enter. Our surroundings are inscribed in flesh and bone, muscle and tendon, tongue and foot and skin. Each element of the environment in which we evolve affects us and contributes to the construction of our identity and our relationship with others.

Artists from different landscapes and geographical origins - Wahroonga in Australia for Deborah, Minnesota, USA for Annie and Brumunddal in Norway for Ingild - we will question our relationship to body and landscape from a sensitive point of view, drawing on our personal experiences, to create a narrative of anchoring and wandering. How has our physical and sonic environment shaped us, in our bodies, our voices and our imaginations? How have our relationships with others been affected? Is the strangeness of our bodies the same for everyone? These questions form the basis of our work.



Annie Hanauer, Deborah Lennie, Ingild Marstein Olsen

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Stranger in a Familiar Landscape emerged from the collaboration between Deborah Lennie, Annie Hanauer, and Ingild Marstein Olsen while working on PUSH, the company's latest production. Each telling stories from their respective countries, they realize that they have very different relationships to the concrete, physical things in everyday life: sensitivity to light, coldness, relationship to open/closed spaces... Together, they explore the roots of these very different sensibilities. Each has lived the experience of exile, when, for long periods, they are called upon to work far from their country of origin, where these differences are felt most acutely. Convinced that our relationship with the world is not just a personal or family affair, the question then arose: how does the physicality of the place where we live affect our relationship with our own bodies and with others? They decided to work on this together.

At the end of 2022, Annie Hanauer was invited by *Greccio 2023 - Comitato Nazionale per l'ottavo centenario della prima rappresentazione del presepe / MiC Ministero della*

Cultura (Italy) to create a performance related to the Greccio landscape. She asked Deborah Lennie to collaborate with her on the project, particularly on the sound, it became an opportunity to begin their research into the body/landscape relationship. Updraft is an in-situ creation based on the geographical and historical elements of Greccio articulated with elements of Annie's life-view, which premiered in June, 2023 and is adaptable to different sites. It can be considered as a first chapter in landscape work that will be continued in STRANGER IN A FAMILIAR LANDSCAPE.

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

There are many avenues of research in such a vast subject, but we have identified two that we feel are worth pursuing as starting points:

1. The physical and sonic elements of the landscape, with particular attention to the female body in relation to architecture, climate, geology, geography...
2. The body as a metaphor for the landscape in its relationship to history.

History with a capital H, linked to social and political issues and history with a small h, linked to our personal experiences.



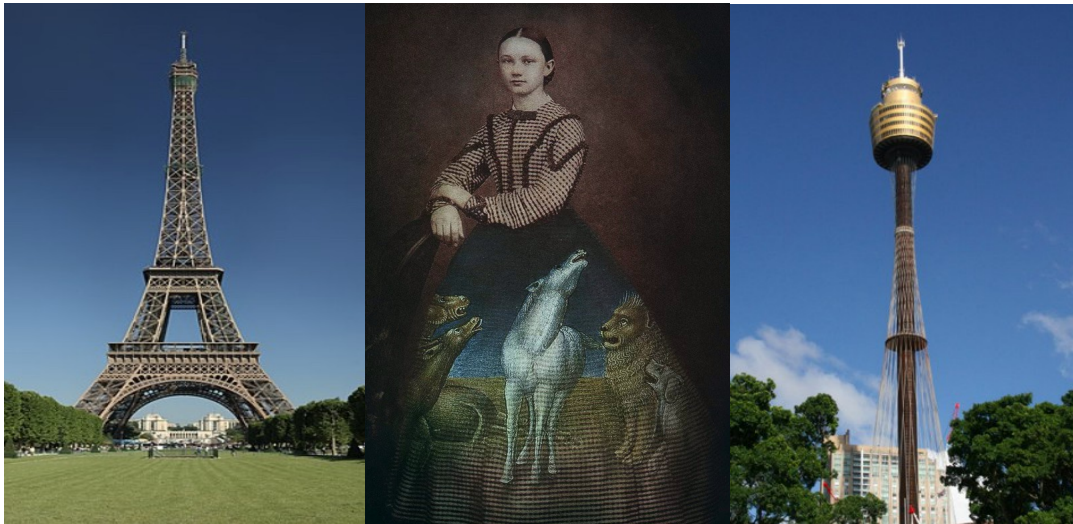
Aboriginal stone engraving in the area near Wahroonga in Ku-ring-gai, Australia

1. THE PHYSICAL ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE: AND IF I FALL, WILL I HURT MYSELF?

The physical and acoustic aspects of the landscape will be the broadest field of our exploration. During our stays in our respective countries, we will seek to inscribe in ourselves the characteristics of these through elements such as the brightness of light, the crushing heat that slows everything down, the terrifying cracking of ice, the smell of burning eucalyptus, the starry vault, the polar night, the deep forests, the skyscrapers-modernity-concrete-glass? What is the nature of these elements in everyone's landscape? Climate: are temperatures extreme or mild?

Is the weather very changeable, or fairly stable? Is the soundscape hushed, as in Norway, or shrill, as in Australia? Are there untouched natural spaces where we grew up, and are they a source of physical danger: precipices, raging seas, a killer sun, deadly

cold... or, on the contrary, a place to rest and recharge our batteries by a lake, or in tranquil grasslands? And how does the body come into contact with physical materials: rocks, concrete, sand, pastures? When playing as a child, did we fall on concrete? How does the sun rise in the morning? Gently or abruptly? At Wahroonga in Australia, for example, the morning awakening is frighteningly brutal: all the wildlife wakes up at the same time, like an explosion. There are no gentle twilights either: in 10 minutes, night follows day. All these factors contribute to a physical universe that puts different demands on our bodies. So, when we're confronted with other types of landscape, other relationships with the sky/sun/weather/materials: how do we react? How can we accept or reject these differences?



We also want to take a more distant look at the urban landscapes that we are familiar with. More more specifically, we're interested in post-industrial revolution architecture, in particular the question of the predominance of a certain masculinity in modern urban landscapes. The physical forms of our most imposing buildings are quite equivocal. What are the implications of the omnipresence of erected forms, the use of hard materials (concrete, metal, glass...) that soar powerfully toward the sky ? And how do these forms in the landscape affect women's bodies, how do they determine the relation women may have to exteriority ?

Deborah Lennie took part in the Archipel 2022-23 project in Caen, Normandy. She was sponsored by the National Choregraphic Centre of Caen. Here she met Elisabeth Taudière, architect and director of the architectural organisation « Territoires Pionniers ». Deborah was already thinking about this question and they exchanged ideas on the subject, with Elisabeth suggesting several eco-feminist works on these very issues. In *Stranger in a Familiar Landscape*, this research will be continued in a sensitive way, through dance, image and sound.

2. HISTORY / LANDSCAPE / BODY

The body as a metaphor for landscape. Each body has its own history and bears its traces. Stigmata, if you like. Some are visible, others less so; some remain on the surface, others deep down. The history of the body, inside and out, is similar to that of the landscape: abused, cared for, fed, watered, rested, pushed to its limits, exploited, pampered... What happens to our bodies, we bear traces of, just as natural and human events leave traces in the landscape.



There are very direct and personal links that we are already beginning to see.

Annie Hanauer, a native of Minnesota in the northern United States, wears a prosthesis on her right forearm. At the time of her last renewal, she realized that in her region there were some of the best prosthetic experts in the USA. Why is this expertise to be found precisely here, in her state? As is often the case, the history of technology is closely linked to economic priorities, and prosthetic manufacturing is no exception. The logging industry experienced an unprecedented boom in the 19th century. It was lumber that first attracted European settlers to Minnesota. In this nascent sawmill industry, workers were not protected by safety standards, and many accidents occurred while sawing logs. Minneapolis entrepreneurs, many of whom were amputees themselves, relied on local needs and made the city one of the leading producers of prostheses in the United States. Although the forestry industry is now in recession, prosthesis production continues. Annie was able to obtain a quality prosthetic thanks to the history of her region's landscape. Her body bears witness to this. The very intimate link between her body and the history of the landscape is direct.

The link between body and landscape is not always so direct, but also exists on a more subterranean level.

Deborah Lennie's relationship with the sea, for example, as she bathes in the English Channel in summer and winter, is partly attributed to a need to maintain this link with her native landscape. Sometimes archaic fears arise during her swims, straight from the Pacific Ocean. On several occasions, she has been brushed on the leg by seaweed, and

the terror of the shark fills her with adrenalin, like a buried memory resurfacing. There's nothing rational about it - there are no sharks in the English Channel - but it's a direct effect of memory in relation to the Australian landscape.

For her part, Ingvild, in her recent project "River Being" (creation 2022, produced by Oslo Kommune, Kultur Stadt Bern, Schweizerische Interpretenstiftung SIS, Gesellschaft zu Schuhmachern Bern) worked in-situ on the body's relationship with rivers. This body-to-body work with the elements of nature leads him to think concretely about climate danger. How does the relationship between the body and endangered nature work? Ingvild grew up in Norway, where nature and the landscape can be rather hostile. The cold kills. Glaciers are extremely dangerous places, and winters are long and harsh. This same nature today is more than threatened, and paradoxically needs our protection. Are we becoming Mother Nature's caretakers? And what real physical changes will take place in our bodies in the future, when our culture is so closely linked to extreme climatic conditions?



The landscape affects us individually, in the intimate history we share with it, but also in a history that goes beyond our individual lives.

Each of our places of origin (Australia, USA, Norway) has been the site of colonization, where indigenous peoples were forced to leave their territories to make way for invaders. The American Indians, the Australian Aborigines and the Norwegian Sami. Our project is not about colonization, but we can't ignore the presence of these peoples in the history of these landscapes. What if my street had been an aboriginal song-line for thousands of years? What if, like Kubrick's *The Shining*, we're standing on a Native American burial ground? Stories of sacred sites destroyed to promote settler construction abound on every continent. Are our bodies sensitive to them? Our relationship with the physical places where we live cannot exclude the part played by this history.

THE BODY **SOUNDS** LIKE A STORY

"Our perception of space depends as much on what we hear as on what we see."

Max NEUHAUS



Glacier Jostedalbreen, Norvège

The creation of a soundscape is central to the research for this performance and an integral part of its dramaturgy. Patrice Grente will compose the soundtrack in direct relation to the work on stage, after a period of gathering, research and recording with Annie, Deborah and Ingild.

In *La Haine de la Musique*, Pascal Quignard writes: "Ears have no eyelids". Indeed, we cannot choose what enters us through our earholes and what does not. And this is true long before birth. Waves penetrate right into the womb, bathing us in a very specific and individual universe of sound that affects us physically:

"In utero, it is around 30 weeks that the first motor responses to noise are stably recorded: from eyelid blinking to more or less generalized startle, depending on the intensity and frequency composition of the stimulus; and cardiac: acceleration." (Birnholz, Benaceraff, 1983; Kisilevsky, 1995). Carolyn Granier-DEFERRE, Marie-Claire BUSNEL, *L'audition prénatale, quoi de neuf ? Spirale* 2011/3 (n°59) p. 17 to 32

Sound is a landscape in itself: the Australian bush has nothing to do with Norwegian glaciers or Minnesota lakes. The anguish that fills your belly at the sound of approaching forest fires. Or of ice cracking on the glacier. Emotional ties to sound are inevitable. And yet, over the course of our lives, we learn to unconsciously filter the sounds that reach us. Our ears pick out familiar and foreign sounds, and process them in different ways; we learn to develop symbolic eyelids. Patrice Grente will work with the very matter of these little sounds that our ears ignore, but which have an effect on us.

What are these sounds that we block out?

"The physical aspect of a soundscape consists not only in the sounds themselves, the waves of acoustic energy that permeate the atmosphere in which people live, but also in the material objects that create, and sometimes destroy, these sounds. **The cultural aspect of a soundscape** incorporates scientific and aesthetic ways of listening, the listener's relationship with his or her environment, and the social conditions that **decide who gets to hear what**".

Emily THOMSON , *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2004, p. 1-2.

Our relationship with sound carries something of our history. And when sound becomes language, this history continues to be written. We'll be looking at the physical side of language, the voice. Each language resonates in different parts of the body: some languages resonate more in the nose, others in the pelvis, for example. In *Stranger in a Familiar Landscape*, all three of us have a different relationship to language, oscillating between French, English and Norwegian. Do the specific sounds of our languages affect our bodies and emotions?



To work on sound, Patrice Grente does field-recording, improvisation and writing. Sometimes, during the creative process, pieces are composed. We don't refuse. The three performers have different soundscapes within them, and the sound sources for the piece will be drawn from these differences. Between the sounds of the Australian bush, folk-songs from Minnesota and Norwegian glaciers, low-tech recordings, voices and languages, and urban ambiances... a soundscape is constructed. Like the background noise of life coming to the fore.

Chute. D'eau. Straight road. Ours hirsute. **Strømnett**. Glace. Collarbone. **Colibri**. Cumulous clouds. Concrete walls. Waterfalls. Fougère. Béton. Bush-fire. Bjørnen. Chair. Falaise. Fossefall. **Ice**. Mudpools. Marteau piqueurs. **Hummingbirds**. Hairy bear. Bare. Flesh. Fish. Ferns. Cumulus. Glacier. Rivière debout. Ravine. **Barrière. Barrière. Barrière**. Chemin de terre. Chaud underfoot. Blinding light. Terrain vague. Cabin. L'odeur de l'iode. Le vide.

Text in progress, D. Lennie

IMAGE

The work on image in Christophe Bisson's films lies somewhere between documentary and the history of painting: on the verge of reality. In *STRANGER IN A FAMILIAR LANDSCAPE*, his images will not seek to illustrate, nor serve as moving decoration. They will be films in their own right, yet deeply connected to the bodies, space, light, and sound.

During our creative process, particularly throughout our residency periods, we film movements, dance, gestures, journeys, and landscapes – in locations identified beforehand. We often consider an idea for a sequence with a simple directive or constraint, such as: "*WALK TOWARDS SOLITUDE*", "*EVERYTHING IS DISJOINTED*", or "*WHERE'S THE WIND COMING FROM?*" What occurs once the camera is rolling is often something entirely different. It is not a scripted process: the script is written through the filmmaker's sensitivity and eye, in direct engagement with reality.

In parallel, we conduct archival research. The question of our relationship to History is central to this project and resonates through the cinematic approach. Archival footage and sites of memory will also be the subject of filmic experimentation.



Image : Christophe Bisson. Rock cracks in Australian bush

BIOGRAPHIES OF ARTISTS

DEBORAH LENNIE

<https://www.forwantofabetter.com/>

<https://deborahlennie.bandcamp.com>

Deborah Lennie was born in New Zealand and grew up in Australia. After studying singing and classical piano at the National Conservatorium of Music in Sydney, she went on to train as an actress at the Actors' Centre Sydney. In 1996 she moved to France. She is interested in the relationship between voice, body and space and has worked and toured extensively throughout Europe and the world. She has collaborated with choreographers Rachid Ouramdane, in film with Christophe Bisson, Fred Hocké; in sound poetry with Sonia Chiambretto, Luc Bénazet and Benoît Casas; and with musicians Patrice Grente, Jean-Baptiste Julien, Naoto Yamagashi and François Chesnel, among others. She directed for 5 years the experimental music festival « PAN » in Normandy.

In 2011, she founded the company "FOR WANT OF A BETTER... and is now its artistic director. The company has performed in France, Norway, Macedonia, Russia and Ukraine and is funded by the French Ministry of Culture, the Regional Council of Normandy, the urban Community of Caen la Mer Normandy, the City of Caen, the Institut Français, l'ODIA Normandie, Chorège CDCN, the Théâtre du Champ Exquis Scène Conventionnée d'Intérêt National, and the National Choreographic Centre, Caen Normandy.

From 2020-23 she was associated artist at the Théâtre du Champ Exquis, a National Conventioneed Théâtre for the arts and youth.

ANNIE HANAUER

<https://www.anniehanauer.com/>

Annie Hanauer is an independent dance artist born in Minnesota USA. Now based in

London, UK, Annie has performed, choreographed, toured, and taught extensively around the world for 15 years. She is a member of the UK's Equity Dance Committee and is interested in the power, wisdom, creativity, and resilience of people who have been 'othered', stemming from her own experience as a disabled person.

As a dancer Annie frequently performs internationally with long-time collaborator Rachid Ouramdane, choreographer & director of Chaillot Theatre National de la Danse (France) and has in the past performed with the Paris Chamber Orchestra, Cie For Want of a Better, Emanuel Gat Dance, Lea Anderson, Wendy Houstoun, Boris Charmatz among others.

Annie's choreographic work has been supported by LAC - Lugano Arte & Cultura (CH), Teatro Danzabile (CH), Migros Cultural Percentage Dance Festival Steps (CH), IntegrART(CH), Arts Council England (UK), Siobhan Davies Dance (UK), CCN2 Grenoble (FR), Candoco Dance Company (UK), and The Place (UK).

In addition to her own choreography, Annie has created touring work for Candoco Dance Company (*soft shell*), Theater Münster (*Madrigale von Krieg und Liebe*), Mobius Dance (*Curious Playground*), ZHdK Zurich University of the Arts (*paper landscapes*), and as Cowles Visiting Artist 2020 at the University of Minnesota (*IMPULSE*).

INGVILD MARSTEIN OLSEN

<https://www.movingidentities.eu/artists/ingvild-marstein-olsen-no>

Ingvild Marstein Olsen is a Norwegian dance artist, performer and choreographer who works across Norway and the European dance scene in theatre, site-specific, and gallery contexts. Ingvild is interested in collaborative work across different cultural fields. In 2022 she created the multidisciplinary work *River Being*, which currently tours across Europe.

Ingvild is also working on a collaborative production Økohelter, an immersive performance about Norwegian forest ecosystems. In 2019 she worked closely with Panta Rei Danseteater in an evolving role as a performer, choreographer, and coordinator. Since 2017 Ingvild has worked with choreographers: Katrine Kirsebom (CODA 19), Pell Ensemble, and IJAD Dance Company, she has collaborated with and toured the work of Rahel Vonmoos and Alison Curtis Jones. She co-choreographed PUSH for the french company For Want of a Better (2022) Ingvild has also choreographed and toured her own work SMACK (co-choreographed with Vera Stierli and Olivia Edginton), and solo work In Series and En Som Lytter.

In 2015 Ingvild graduated from Laban with a BA in Contemporary Dance, and again in 2016 with an MA in Dance Performance (Transitions Dance Company). During her time with Transitions she collaborated with choreographers: Dog Kennel Hill Project & Theo Clinkard.

Her artistic practice has been recognised in Hedmark (Norway) where Ingvild received Sparebanken Hedmarks Talentstipend in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

PATRICE GRENTE

<https://festival-interstice.net/>

<https://fiasco-records.bandcamp.com/>

Patrice Grente is a double bass player who has worked extensively in jazz and improvised music for many years. He has toured throughout Europe and the world in different groups and has created soundscapes for theatre, dance, installations and film. In his personal research, he explores sound as an entity and works with electronics, field-recording, musique concrète and sound installations. He has worked with artists such as Phil Niblock, Jérôme Noetinger, Pan Huysen, Paul Dunmall, Luc Bénazet, Deborah Lennie, Jean-Luc Capozzo, Benoît Casas, Sonia Chiambretto, Yumiko Nii, Fred Hocké, Guillaume Bellanger and others in the fields of art, dance, theatre, sound poetry and performance.

In 2011 he created the independent label FIASCO RECORDS, devoted to improvised and experimental music. He is a member and programmer of TYMPAN, a jazz and improvised music collective based in Normandy, France.

He is co-founder and programmer of the international arts and performance festival INTERSTICE in Caen, France.

CHRISTOPHE BISSON

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christophe_Bisson

Christophe Bisson, born in 1969, lives and works in Caen. After studying philosophy at the Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, where he obtained a DEA with first-class honours in 1994, he turned his attention to the visual arts and has had numerous solo exhibitions in France and around the world (Paris, Budapest, Barcelona, Kiev, Vilnius, New York, Moscow, etc.).

In 2007, with New York filmmaker Maryann De Leo, (Oscar for best documentary film 2004), he made the documentary *White Horse*, which attracted considerable attention at international festivals. Nominated for a Golden Bear at the Berlinale, the film was subsequently broadcast on the American network HBO.

His films have been shown on television (HBO, Canal+) and at prestigious French and international festivals such as the Viennale, Berlinale (nomination for a Golden Bear) Cinéma du Réel and FID Marseille ; In-dieLisboa ; Queens University, New York; As Vozes do Silêncio - Porto, Portugal ; FESDOB ; Festival du Film Documentaire de Blitta, Togo ; Festival Doc en Courts, Lyon, Akipel, Jakarta International Documentary & Experimental Film Festival, Indonésie ; CINECOA - Festival Internacional de Cinema de Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Portugal ; Projection spéciale à la SCAM, Paris, France ; Exposition «Bâtard - Pour des rencontres interspécifiques» ; Karlovy vari International Film Festival ; FID Marseille (2016) PRIX DES LYCEENS, CINEMA IN TRANSGRESSION COMPETITION - SPECIAL MENTION FOR THE NIGHT AWARD, International Festival Signes de Nuit, Quito & International Festival Signes de Nuit, Paris ; Séance spéciale à la Villa Medici, Rome ; Festival Porto/Post/ Doc, Porto ; Festival First Look, Museum of the Moving Image, New York ; «O Solitude», Beursschouwburg, Bruxelles ; États généraux du film documentaire, Lussas ; DOC LISBOA ; Museum of the moving images, New York...