

BILLEDSPOR, THEATRE OF THE SOUL

For nearly twenty years Billedspor (Traces of Images), Theatre of the Soul, has been working with theatre, dancing, masks and music. The idea of the work is to put social and cultural experiences into a professional artistic expression and present it for the outside world. We have a focus on the work – in this case the performance.

Billedspor is working with personal expressions of the body and the music in order to create performances. The performances are build of the actor's work finding other languages for telling stories that have a sense. This work often creates a bigger knowledge of our mind's eye.

The identification of our theatre has for many years been the mask – the face we apply to the outside world. The mask both hides and unveils. It hides the individual identity and unveils concealed aspects of the individual (and the collective unconscious). It helps the actor to make a movement from the private room to a personal room and thus make a relation between him and the public. We have noticed that often common human themes will arise. Besides the mask for the actor presents a possibility to obtain contact with unknown aspects of his own personality and thereby improve more authentic relations to himself and his surroundings. For instance these aspects could be anger, pain, joy, sorrow, fear, silence, shouting, rage, poetry, crying, dreaming, take up space, roughness, mildness, hate and love. In a magic way the mask helps the actor to reconcile himself to aspects he hardly didn't know were part of him. In this way life grows bigger and the differently appears as a possibility – not an obstacle.

Another main focus or identification of our work is the body. Billedspor's performances are based on the actor's work finding his own bodily expressions. The dance is the actual condition, not a means of achieving something else, not some kind of hidden agenda, nor an easier way to greater self-confidence. Focus is not a kind of new therapy – we take the expression of the body for granted. The dance is the image, the story, that is being told.

So we work with the body beyond the functional, the body is playful, dancing, creative and narrative – the body is at once story and storyteller.

Of course this type of theatre calls for a great degree of involvement from both the actors and the director. Everyone has to be prepared to work with images of life, which are not necessarily comfortable and welcome. The director's roll is to open space for this work. And very important: everyone is participants, working "on the floor" – as we say.

One of many visions in this work is to transform, a kind of enlightenment – or perhaps better, as one actor said: “I feel free when working on the floor, the demons are out of sight.”

Always Billedspor has kept the autonomy. Professional artists and people with mental problems creating performances together, away from a traditional structure well-known in hospitals and institutions. In our work we have a focus on the personal resource, not on the mental problems. The mental problems might sometimes be part of the work, thus it appears as a strength in the creating of a dance, a character or a piece of music.

The pain, the fear, the crying applied as a resource might seem as a paradox, and it is. As told in one of our performances: “I travel in the dark to find rest in the light.”

One thing to be sure of, we share being different.