

NO FRIEND BUT THE MOUNTAINS

Humans & Soil

Photos by Kenneth Ly, Ubmeje and Daerna 2023

Women, war, ecofeminism

This dance performance by Humans & Soil is a work in progress, with the aim to tour in 2025. Its name stems from the Kurdish notion: *'No friends but the mountains'*, which emphasize Indigenous peoples' search for sanctuary from war and injustice. It is a performance with an emphasis on demanding justice for all disregarded lives with a connection to earth such as; non-human animals, nature and women of oppression. We do so by revitalising Indigenous knowledge, approach to ecological feminism and respect to nature.

This project intends to work long-term, inviting artistic and academic networks to nourish the need for passing on Indigenous knowledge without geographical limits or borders. We include aboriginal practices, ecofeminism, dance and music that may reveal the truths about governmental domination over Indigenous bodies. With this performance, we want to dance for those who are silenced speaking in their own language, or sing their own songs.



Artistic team:

Marit Shirin Carolasdotter, Dancer (SE)
Melisa Diktaş, Dancer (NL)
Luna Ersahin, Musician (DE)
Ingá Márjá Sarre, Yoik Artist (NO)
Paz Moreno, Dancer (AR)
Stella Blanc, Dancer (SE)
Anthony Rice Perttunen,
Artistic Advisor (US/FI)

Supported by:

Norsk Kulturråd 2024
Davvi - Senter for Scenekunst 2024
Konstnärsnämnden 2023
Dansinitiativet i Luleå 2022
Dotra Art Centre, Umeå 2023
SITE Sweden, Stockholm 2022
Garage29, Brussels 2022
Dansens Hus, Stockholm 2022

Link to presentation:
(password: NFBTM24)

<https://vimeo.com/904714653>

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Dance and commonality

The aim is to explore dance practice as a unifying force between humans and nature. If we were to be free, what would we want our world to look like? Will we have the ability to see what is invisible, or hear what is unheard?

In this performance, we are exploring a body that comes from a world estranged from Mother Earth and that has overcome its human behavioural crisis by forming a bond with earth, river, and non human beings. Our process involves dance as a way to unify an audience/observer with the performance through ceremonial, Indigenous philosophy.



Our goal is to create a dance performance with a premiere in 2025. Our aim is to bring methodologies that are challenging a myriad of colonial manifestations that have influenced the relationship between performer and audience. Instead, we want to create a relationship to the spectators that is not tied to the traditional space of the theatre, but rather share a common space where transcendental dances and musical dialogues can resonate with the audience. Therefore we are welcoming alternative spaces to the traditional black box for our performance. The aim is also to work with a simple set up of technical requirements, prioritising sound over light design.

The goal is to create a performance that inspires thought about Indigenous peoples' relationship to women, life and freedom.



Photo by Arnaud Beleen

Implementation and timetable

The ambition of this project is to create a performance that combines music, voice and dance. The aim of the project is to explore how dance and music in our cultures are linked to ecofeminism, body and rituals. Therefore we'd like to create research opportunities and test containers to experiment with our material, through residencies and artistic research. Our wish is as much as possible, to co-create in the studio and to find our commonality in developing a practice based performance. In connection to our artistic process and showing, we are offering spaces for discourse with international researchers and/or local audiences through talks, ceremonies and workshops.

21/5-6/6 2024, Northern Norway/Sápmi

2 week period in residence in Guovdageaidnu through Davvi - Senter for scenekunst where we will work together with musical practices and dance in this pre-project period. We will establish the structure of a co-creative space, methods of emotional safety and how to encourage creative and artistic freedom in the group. Establish networks in the Barents region and plan for a Nordic tour in 2025.

Work with choreographic methods based on historical research among our communities and have sharing sessions open to the public. Explore musical similarities between joik and Kurdish music, such as singing and drumming.

We are willing to collaborate with the local community in Sápmi by facilitating an open work-in-progress display and artistic discussion with a participating audience.

12/8-17/8 2024, Northern Sweden/Sápmi

A one-week period in Umeje where we continue with choreographic methods and conversations about research and ceremonial practice among indigenous peoples. Together with Ingá Márjá Sarre, Marit Shirin Carolasdotter and Anthony Rice-Perttunen we will invite the local population in Umeå to an artistic conversation about indigenous people and performative practices. During this period we will follow up on previous work in the spring and further develop our artistic practice. We explore the possibility of hosting workshops for the public and connect to previous artistic research through Humans & Soil, by offering a lecture on the project's themes. We summarize our year of pre-project and rehearsal and plan for next year's completion of the performance.

4/11-16/11 2024, Copenhagen/Vuollerim

A one week period where we work in Copenhagen to expand our musical and choreographical composition together with Danish based musician Luna Ersahin, following up our previous residency in Karasjok in May. We strive toward realising the project for our premiere -25. The goal is to apply for longer residency periods in Denmark during the month of November. Between 11-16/11 the project will facilitate a discourse and work in progress of the project at the Sámi Dance Centre in Vuollerim, Sweden, hosted by Sámi artist Liv Aira.

Early Spring 2025, (Place to be confirmed)

A rehearsal period of at least 3 weeks where we finalize the performance and its choreographic structure with 4 dancers on stage, if economically possible with a live musician (Luna Ersahin). At the moment we are in contact with Davvi - Senter for scenekunst in Hammerfest about a residency application. By this time we plan to have a main co-producer for the performance.

June 2025, Kautokeino

Performances following a national and international tour. (Premiere date to be confirmed) At this moment we are planning a partnership with Norrlandsoperan in Umeå, where we will have one residency period and a performance. Dates to be confirmed. We are also planning a collaboration with Dansinitiativet in Luleå and The Sámi Dance centre in Vuollerim. Following the performances, we are planning to tour with the performance in Sweden and internationally, this is still in its planning stage during 2024.

Expectations from collaborating partners and residencies 2024:

Our agenda is to work from an experimental point of view with dance and choreography. This includes choreography of the audience and spectator. Meaning, we wish the residencies and production houses can provide us with an openness and willingness to accommodate with alternative set up for audiences from the traditional theatre space. We would like to invite the spectators into the performance, with for example placement of chairs in a semi-circle, and the possibility of maintaining a ceremonial and intimate space between audience and performer. We expect our hosts to have a sufficient level in English and that communication with oral and administrative can be conducted in English if needed. This includes technical staff, administrative and production related personnel. We are an artistic team that needs a safe space for Indigenous peoples to create freely, and sensitivity to the project is highly advised from our partners - keeping an open and curious dialogue with the artistic team and its needs. Thank you.

Support 2024:

