

Research and networking project:
Study trip in France
2021-2022

Description of activities at Les Moulins de Paillard



Studio space at Les Moulins de Paillard

From 16.08.21 to 29.08.21, I was in residency at the French Art Center Les Moulins de Paillard directed by Shelly DeVito and James Porter. It is an institution that runs exhibitions, performances, residencies, workshops, public presentations and more.

I was joined by filmmaker Louis Hothothot who documented the process, was involved in the feedback sessions and created film material for the research project.

My overall research looks at the representation of female bodies and/or femininity in mass culture. Princesses, Nabakov's Lolita and female icons are female characters and archetypes that inform my artistic practise, specifically the tension between their innocence and sexuality. I like to deconstruct the gestures and images of these figures that are depicted in mass media (social media, music videos, advertisements, etc.)

During the first week of my residency, I focused on practicing different dance improvisation tasks. They were guided by a selection of images and music from pop culture and youtube tutorials. I could then observe the movement vocabulary that emerged and reflect on its visual connotations. Gentle movements, yoga exercises and booty moves were the first output from those improvisations. Some props present in online tutorials such as a yoga mat, a foam roller used in pilates and fitness integrated some of my movement research.

This week was also for me to clarify the main idea of the project. After the archetype of the nymphet, the image of the princess became an important stereotype in my research project. Here 'princess' is defined as an influential figure whose body and way of living are attractive, creating desire and spreading beauty ideals. It is also a very Western title and influence.

Throughout the week different references came in. After some discussions with Louis Hohothot, I drew a parallel between princesses portrayed in fairy tales (litterature, Disney animations, films) and female influencers (members of the Kardashians' family, Ariana Grande, ...) on instagram, youtube, tiktok.

During the second week, I closely worked with video material that I had found on the internet and that Louis had shot. This included youtube tutorials on exercising to have a nice round butt but also images that we found in fairy tales: animals, dungeons. etc. The horizontal plane became an important element in the research: sleeping princesses in fairy tales such as Snow white and Sleeping beauty but also in paintings and advertisements are often represented laying down.

I played with several monitors, tablets in space.

I had a feedback session and discussions about my research with director and theater maker Shelly DeVito.

At the end of the week I focused on preparing the public presentation. The latter was announced in the regional newspapers.

PONCÉ-SUR-LE-LOIR

Les « fées » modernes inspirent la danse à Paillard ce week-end

Deux séances de « Sundance » s'inspirent des nouveaux contes de fées nés sur les réseaux sociaux.

Que serait la Belle au bois dormant de nos jours ? Une influenceuse sur Instagram ? Une réalisatrice de tutoriels en beauté ? Artémise Ploegaerts et Louis Hothothot posent la question dans une collaboration originale, à l'issue de leur résidence d'artistes aux Moulins de Paillard.

Des échanges le dimanche entre les artistes et le public

« Une après-midi, la Belle au bois dormant se réveille dans le monde contemporain... » suggèrent les deux chorégraphes. Ils ont nommé leur projet - toujours en cours - « Bbbidi Boo ». Une création qui mêle danse et vidéo en s'inspirant du corps féminin tel qu'il apparaît dans les médias d'aujourd'hui : « tutoriels de beauté, images d'influenceuses, clips vidéo... »

La séance de dimanche sera plus axée sur « la place des contes de fées dans les chorégraphies du XIX^e au XXI^e siècles » à travers des vidéos, des images et des échanges entre les artistes et le public. « Notre programme Sundance permet de découvrir les recherches des chorégraphes en résidence, et les univers très divers de la danse » explique Shelly de Vito, responsable des Moulins de Paillard et de sa résidence d'artistes.

Samedi 28 et dimanche 29 août à 17h, entrée libre, infos 06 20 21 49 89 ou contact.paillard@gmail.com



Artémise Ploegaerts en « Belle au bois dormant » victime d'une surconsommation de mode vestimentaire.

Photo: La Mère Lait

Page from 'Ouest-France' newspaper

On the 28th, I had a public presentation in which I shared my discoveries. The first part consisted of showing the material created with a performance and a screening, the second was to engage in a discussion with the public. We talked about the research content and audience members shared their personal experiences relating to the subject treated.



Discussion with the public - Photo by Anne Bleauwart



Pictures of Louis Hothothot's screening - Photos by Anne Bleauwart

Professional impact

- Stronger artistic content

My practice and theory have definitely evolved. Every time I am in the dance studio to practice, I clarify my methodologies based on intense improvisation work. The movement material allows me to distort certain references used but also to add some humor to the research subject.

During my stay at Paillard, some theoretical references came in as well: 'Tale of tales' by Giambattista Basile, 'Psychoanalysis of fairy tales' by Bruno Bettelheim, as well as online articles about instagram's history and its use in daily life.

- Feedback

The after talk with the public showed me that spectators were sensitive to aspects of the work which I hadn't fully discovered. This would give me great material to develop during the next residency.

The public mentioned interest in the way I was playing with different visual images and the way they were transformed and decontextualized. For instance, I used facial beauty filters from instagram. By moving in a certain way in front of the smartphone camera, I distorted them making them monstrous or ridiculous.

Shelly DeVito also shared her experience with me. I was particularly interested in knowing how she felt about the duration of the different sections I had created.

- Collaborative skills



Working with video and screens - Photos by Anne Bleauwart

Louis Hothothot and I had collaborated before but not in a long time and we were often missing the right equipment to develop our research. This time was a great time for us to work together.

- Future opportunities

Shelly DeVito was very enthusiastic about the project and would like to program it when it is finished and can be shown as a piece. She also talked to a representative of the choreographic center CDCN La Briqueterie. I am hoping to be able to collaborate with them in the future.

Description of activities at SPAM! Rete per le arti contemporanee



SPAM!'s dance studio

My residency at SPAM! was slightly longer than the one in Paillard. I was there from 12.04.2022 to 27.04.2022. SPAM! is a choreographic center based in Porcari Lucques in Italy. It is directed by choreographer Roberto Castello. This center focuses on dance, theater and performance practices. Due to the covid measures it had been postponed from October to April 2022. The two residencies were therefore far apart, giving me time to reflect and to take some distance from my previous rehearsals. Before going to SPAM! I therefore had time in Amsterdam to go over what I had done in France.

The first week of the residency I worked with new visual images. For instance, I work with some of Louis' video material that we didn't use during the first research period. I particularly wanted to work with images of trees and forest, elements very present in fairy tales.

I was in the suburb of Lucques city and decided to visit and film some palaces for my 'princess' research. I was particularly interested in soft hand gestures present in some paintings and sculptures, as well as ideas of symmetry within the architecture. In the studio this inspired me to develop my work on gentle movements as well as ballet pantomime. I also felt it was important to physically experience those spaces that shows how important and wealthy those royal families were. My body felt tiny and simple compared to the size of the doors, rooms and the rich Barocco decorations and paintings present in every room. This experience informed some of the material created in the studio.



Palazzo Mansi



Palazzo Mansi

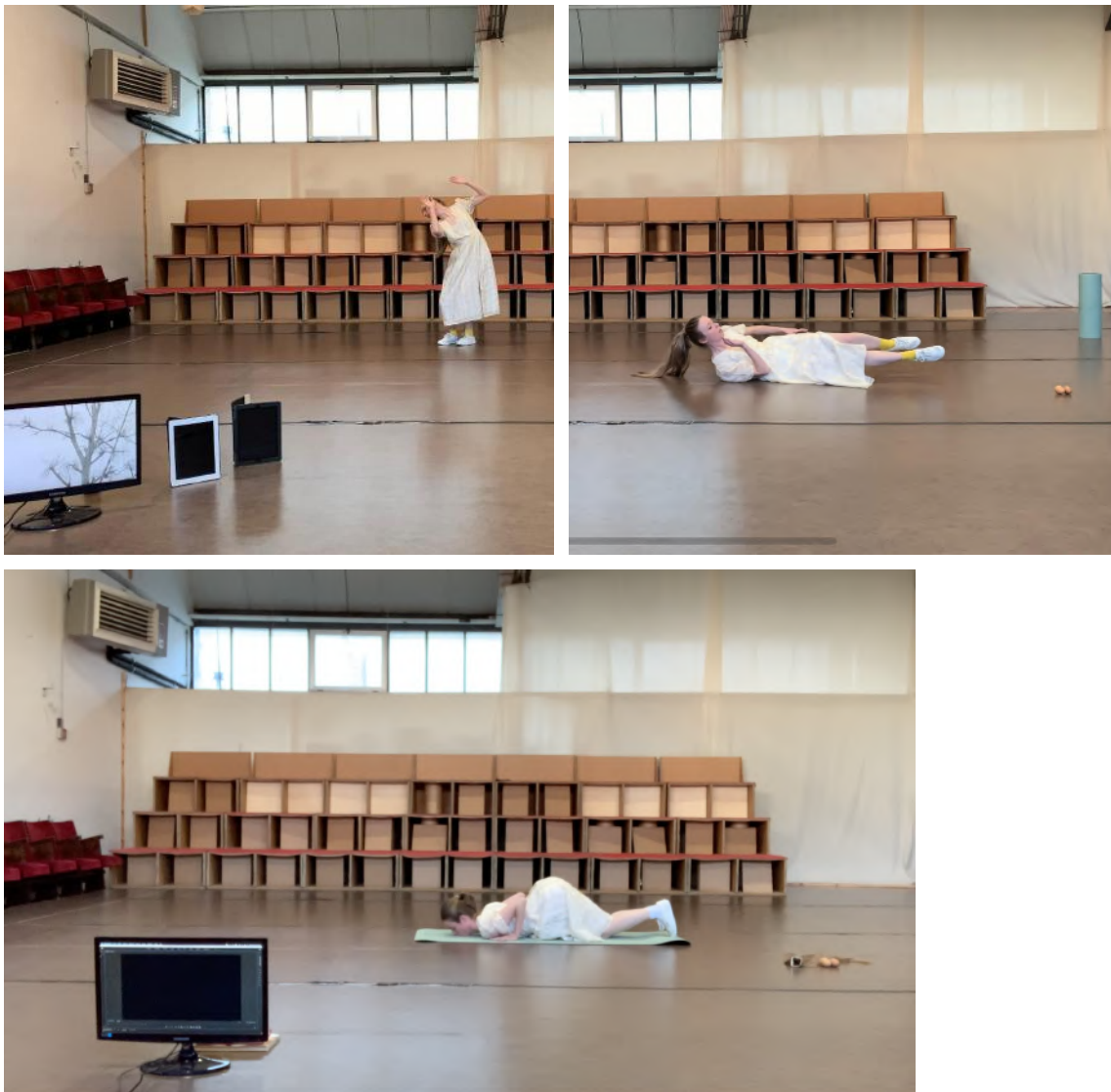


Palazzo Pfanner



Details of paintings from Palazzo Mansi

During the second week and a half I brought all ideas together and physically remembered the movements and improvisations I had developed at Les Moulins de Paillard. I also worked with objects such as eggs, a long ponytail, etc. linked to a certain idea of femininity. Those are objects with which I interact with but that will also be part of the scenography.



Stills from rehearsal footage

I was invited to see Roberto Castello's new piece 'L'inferno' in Lucques theater. I am not familiar with the contemporary dance scene in Italy. This gave me the chance to know a little more.

At the end of the residency I had some discussions with Roberto Castello who directs the choreographic center. I was therefore able to articulate my research to him.

Professional impact

- Research content

As for the first residency, my time at SPAM! gave me time to reflect and develop the content and form of my project. The readings of and on fairy tales brought me inspiration to develop the first part of the project. For example metaphors about sleep which often relates to puberty, a change from childhood to adulthood. But also forest or danger which symbolize the ups and downs of teenagehood away from the security of childhood. It is also apparent that those tales were told by men as they often refer to girls to passivity and boys to activity.

It also gave me time to discover texts in relation to some visual references part of my work. This includes the book 'Post-butt: The power of the image' which analyzes the booty trend in social media and music videos from the 2000s to today.



Pages 94-95 from Post-butt: The power of the image

- Future opportunities

Roberto Castello was not able to see my work at the end of the residency. I will nevertheless send him the video documentation of the work. He was interested in my project and would like to present it to a festival he organizes every summer. He also suggested that I come back regularly for residencies in the future.

As the research developed, another residency program in France got interested in the project. This last residency will lead to the finalization of the research into a piece. At its completion, the project will be presented in the Netherlands, France and Italy in 2022-2023.