



BIRCA

BÆKKELUND INTERNATIONAL RESIDENCY CENTER FOR ARTISTS

ANNUAL REPORT FOR BIRCA 2021

2021 has been a super busy year for BIRCA. The place has unfolded in many ways with many exciting projects, record number of residencies and artists using the place. We have been awarded a grant for 4 projects in total DKK 300.000 by the Danish Arts Foundation: **Island Connect**, **BIRCA Women**, **BIRCA Kids** and **The Climate Crucible**. We have also been supported indirectly by the Metropolis project **Walking Landscapes**. Island Connect has lifted through support from Creative Europe, so the partnership has become stronger while especially the international artists have been supported more consistently. There have been self-organized residencies by: Acting for Climate, LocationX and AniMaNi as well as several individual visits.

We have developed and strengthened the 3 tracks we are working with. The local island identity, nature connections and climate reflections as well as gender identity. In the process we have learned a lot of new things. BIRCA has buzzed with art, creativity, enjoying the nature, love, and children.

Island Connect



The first Island Connect was with the Danish Lalla La Cour and Norwegian Eivind Øverland as well as Greek Zoe Mastrotheodorou and Eirini Tiniakou

Island Connect is a joint project between 5 European residency centers for performing arts situated on islands. Bornholm/Denmark, Mallorca/Spain, Cres/Croatia, Naxos/Greece, and Limerick/Ireland. It has taken place 4 years and this year it is supported by a grant from Creative Europe. The Island Connect project in Denmark is also supported by the Danish Art Foundation and Bornholm Municipality.

The first Island Connect took place from the 3rd - 16th May and there was a small performance on the 15th where a small group of people participated because there was still Corona restrictions.

Zoi Mastrotheodorou and Eirini Tiniakou/Greece - Kolyva

The artistic project has its name from "Kolyva" a traditional meal which in Greece relates to death and rebirth. It symbolizes the earth where everything grows and is resurrected in a natural cycle. The artists Zoi

and Eirini had been exploring the landscape of Bornholm and observing the natural and social landscape as background for the performance. The dancer Zoi created movements based on their joint observations in relation to the processes of nature. Eirini "dressed" it with organic material and "relics" of human activity found along the roads of Bornholm and at garage sales.

The Amazing Other/Denmark – Like Lichen

The circus performers Lalla La Cour and Eivind Øverland are fascinated by lichen. The natural robust organism which grows everywhere and covers 8 % of our planet. Lichen always grows on something e.g., trees and rocks. But lichen never harms the host it grows on. Lichen has its own ecosystem created by an equal symbiosis between fungus and alga. The performers had examined different sorts of lichen on Bornholm in order to get inspiration for their next performance from this special ecosystem. They were working with how to recreate the equal symbiosis which is found in lichen in the relation between performers and the audience. For this purpose, they used special clickers which the audience used to activate the performers.

Lalla and Eivind also participated in a 2-week residency with our Irish partners I.A.C.C. in Limerick where they continued their examinations, but had the possibility of working intensely with ariel dancing supported by the center's expertise in this field.

The second Island Connect residency at BIRCA took place 6th- 20th September and there was performances 19th September under Bornholm Culture Week and with the participation of an audience of 69.



The second Island Connect-residency at BIRCA: two ariel artist participated – Beverly Grant/Scotland and Kathleen Doherty/Ireland

In this residency participated Beverly Grant from Scotland and Kathleen Doherty from Ireland together with Alexander Duarte from Portugal sent by I.A.C.C. BIRCA was also host for the Croatian part of a new project we call Islander Focus, with photographer Dea Botica.

Kathleen Doherty/Alexander Duarte/Ireland/Portugal “ –Martyr”

Kathleen continued working with her performance “ Martyr” together with Portuguese Alexander Duarte. They expanded and refined the project as well as included a lot of natural elements, they found around BIRCA – true to the time of year lots of apples and hay. The performance showed a woman's struggle with her dark mind in occult and esoteric symbols.

Beverly Grant/Scotland

Beverly Grant worked solo with her Cyr Wheel to find her own artistic expression. She combined it with examining the clay and the tradition for ceramics on Bornholm, she participated in several workshops in connection with Makers Island – Bornholm Craft Weeks which took place at the same time.

Dea Botica/Croatia – Islander Focus with photography

Dea came directly from investigations in Ireland and had various themes about Bornholm that interested her. The investigations after a while focused on stone, subsoil, and clay. She went with Susanne as guide and Beverly as keen secondary on excursions around the island and it resulted in a beautiful series of pictures. An extract of these pictures was shown at BIRCA under Bornholm Culture Week. They will be further processed. Here is a small coverage from our investigations.



Visiting ceramic artist Anne Mette Hjortshøj, photographer Anne Lass and Helligdomsklipperne



Visiting Louisenlund, Kødtønden and the ceramic workshop Hej Keramik

Ida Marie Tjalve and Carolina Nilson from Bornholm, Islander Focus objects/ installation

Ida and Carolina started their Islander Focus project "Øtopia" with a two-week residency at C.I.N.E. on Mallorca, where they collected and found various materials and ideas in the local island society. They showed a living installation focused on the Sineus skyline and the local creatures. Parts of the installation was brought home to Bornholm. Here they made an installation which was shown in the hayloft during Bornholm Culture Week 19th September together with Dea's exhibition in the entrance of the white hall. They continued working on the project for two weeks on Naxos Greece.



The Island Connect group together with Ida and Carolina at BIRCA and the installation is worked on in the hayloft.

Partner Meeting in the Island Connect network 19th - 21th September

BIRCA and our culture week performances was the basis for our first live partner meeting under the Creative Europe support. Participants were Susanne Danig from BIRCA, Petra Begovic from Domino, Marilli Mastrioni from Entropia, Biel Jorda from C.IN.E. and Chantal McCormick from I.A.C.C. They saw all the Island Connect productions and exhibitions as well as the other performencens from the culture week events. Evaluation and feedback was made afterwards. Then we talked about follow-up, communication, dissemination, accounts and a new call. Then it was time for a good dinner from Bornholm at Stammershalle Seaside Hotel – they were also shown parts of the island so they had a better idea about their partners from Bornholm.



The Island Connect project is developing and we look forward to 2022 where we still are supported by Creative Europe as well as Danish Art Foundation.

BIRCA WOMEN residency 17th – 30th May

The following 7 women participated in the residency:

Karolina Wojtowicz, Swedish–Danish circus artist

Jasmin Sofie Sabroe, Danish–French circus artist and dancer (as well as the dog Luna)

Alice Presencer, Irish-Danish dancer and singer.

Tanya Rydell Montan, Swedish – Danish dance artist

Birgitte Lundtoft, Danish dance artist

Lene Kreilgaard, Danish dance artist

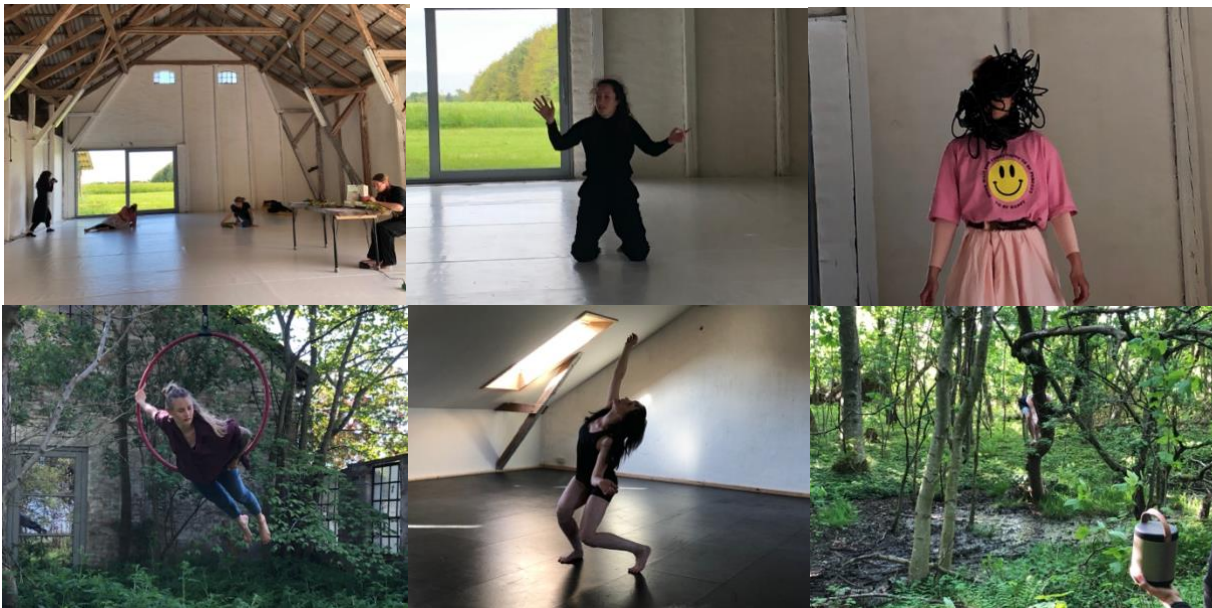
as well as local Nike Herrberg, German circus artist living on Bornholm

The seven actors worked from 17th -29th May with their own projects while they at the same time exploring the possibilities of creating together. We tested and worked with a lot of tools and structural processes which opens creative actions. We worked together with Rikke Lund Heinsen from The Danish National School of Performing Arts. The BIRCA Women group made their own shared morning training which they took turns in leading. They made showings and communicated about their art. We were pleased by making a joint experience-based gathering up every afternoon and planning the next day together. It was a big, beautiful room filled with female energy and creativity. It has created a strong reference for the next years projects and residencies.

On the 29th May we had a work-in-progress-showing with an audience of 18. Birgitte had left her installation "Fjordkyst", Alice showed "Me, mig" so we laughed loudly, Karolina showed her soul in her dance, Jasmin showed her beautiful "Freefall", Lene danced the movements of anorexia, Nike unfolded as a standup comedian, Tanya brought us out in the wood with paper birds – and then there was wine, talk and reflection.

3 of the artists have afterwards made a shared performance in Dansekapellet.

"Thanks for the most wonderful time at BIRCA, with the most wonderful women. We had so many talks, delicious meals and precious times of reflection"



Atmosphere at the performances



Rikke

Guides in protreptik, morningtraing outside, bathing, excursions and evening "hygge"

BIRCA Kids residency 21st -26th June & 27th June-4th July

The following 4 artists participated in a week's residency with their families:

Camilla Graff Junior with daughter and father

Burmester & Wium with two daughters

Esther Wrobel with son and artistic partner Sam Moore with son

Ilon Lodewijks with partner and two children as well as friend.

BIRCA Kids has been developed together with choreographer My Grønholdt to make a space where performing artists can share their artistic processes with their partner and kids and experiment with new involving ways of reaching their artistic development. My made individual conversations with all the families to prepare them as best possible. The experiences with this quite experimental field of involving children in the creative work has been amazing, and we are waiting to see how it will reflect in the performances from now on. There are elaborate evaluating accounts of all processes and My is writing a larger article about the project. To safeguard the interests of the children we only had intern performances.

"Thank you for the hospitality. Thank you for the care. Thank you for the light in the white hall. Thank you for Life in the garden"

"It was thought-provoking and a celebration of family life and acting"



Atmosphere from the first BIRCA Kids



Atmosphere from the second BIRCA Kids

The Climate Crucible 22nd August-4th September

The Climate Crucible gathered 12 women – 6 in location and 6 online working together with femininity and climate using art as method and tool. The process was facilitated strongly and gently by the Australian performance artist Moira Finucane. We had two hours online sessions most of the days with presentations, provocations, workshops, wise-councils and finally showings of our processes and of our works of art. It was connected to a Slack room, where we shared the processes and gave each other gifts every day consisting of songs, photos, videos, texts, ideas, and books. The result was 12 works of art and a ritual for the chestnut tree (in BIRCA's garden). Works of art which intertwined with each other. It became a collective work of art which was shown public online. It is still alive in the form of several Video works of art and input for future performances. The artistic process and our work of art created hope for a future where we live in balance with nature in a loving resonance with each other. The project showed visions for the future and how we can meet across location and culture. We are working with plans for a follow up of The Climate Crucible in Australia and The United States as well as at BIRCA.

6 women in location: Tanya Ryddell SE/DK, Josie Dale-Jones/UK, Madeleine Kate McGowan/DK/IR, Linh Le/DK, Amanda Tonna/Malta, Ana Bauman/Paraguay/DK

6 online: Moira Finucane/AUS, Elizabeth Doud/USA, Raina Peterson/AUS, Yumi Umimare/AUS+Japan, Rachel Lewindon/AUS, Violeta Luna/Mexico,

*We rise up like water – we burn like fire
– we are howling like the wind – we stand on earth. Solid.
For the ones to come and the ones before
we will be here still keep on loving more.*



"Thank you for the beautiful, strong, gentle, provoking, and enchanting time."



Lovely portraits taken by artist Madeleine Kate McGowan of artists in location: MK, Tanya, Linh, Ana, Amanda, Josie



Atmosphere from our research

Other residencies

Acting for Climate was here from 5th -19th June with Abigail, Frøydis, Amund, Lucie, Linh, Freja, Zelda, Jakob, Heidi, Karolina, Villads, William, and Leon. They made workshops with among other things masks and exchanged methods concerning climate strategies- they only ate vegan and gluten free.

"Thank you so much for these lovely weeks, full of singing birds, crazy good energy, important and empowering talks and so much love"



Taneli Törmä/Location X was here 18th July-1st August developing and showing the performance "Alien" – Taneli, Lone, Amalia, Cecilie, Mikäel, Marie, Louise, Sarah, Tine, Annamaija, Chris and Cirkeline. There was a showing 31st July. We had full house an audience of 50.

"Thank you for creating this place and opportunity for life/dance and development of human awareness and vision"



AniMaNi was here 1st-7th August with a development workshop of the performance "Fishtail" – Astrid, Stine, Victor, Emil, Troels, Ida, Line and Line

"Wonderful place, wonderful place wonderful nature. Wild process."



Keren Rosenberg was here with the dog Lemmy 8th -16th August working with her platform in the Netherlands and finding new energy for her projects. She was accompanied by Dorte Petersen, who took a weeks' vacation at BIRCA.

"I evolve, grow and expand taking with me so much love and nourishment."



Matilde Flor Usinger and **Nanna Finding Koppel** from Berlin were here 3rd-7th November working with the project "Hej Far".



Walking Landscapes – walking tours 11th -19th June as well as workshop day 17th April

In 2021 the large project Metropolis Landscape started. BIRCA is partner for 3 years. It is a large national project which takes place in 12 municipalities with strong support from the Nordea Foundation as well as the Danish Art Foundation. The first year was called Walking Landscapes and 10 artists walked around Bornholm: One artist every day for 10 days. For 12 hours they walked in the landscape of Bornholm and you could follow them - in the landscape or livestream them on Facebook. They streamed every hour. The 10 artist all had a special relation to Bornholm. With this knowledge in the backpack they took us to hidden and forgotten places on a journey into the nature of the island, myths, atmosphere, phenomena, and secrets. The journey was supported by Bornholm Municipality. You can read more about the project [here](#) on Metropolis' website. The videos from the walks can also be found on Facebook.

The project started with a big workshop day 17th April hosted by BIRCA with all 10 artists participating (1 on zoom), Trevor Davies, Katrien Verwilt, Louise Kaare Jacobsen, Stine Fløe Dalby as well as visiting lecturer Anne Sofie Poulsen/The Danish Society for Nature Conservation and Finn Hansen/367 walks.

The program was as follows:

11th June: Emma Harris walked from Bølshavn to Årsdale

12th June: Lene Degett walked from Sandvig Bay to Klondyke

13th June: Manon Siv walked from Ekkodalen to Hammeren

14th June: Ben Woodhams walked from Rømersminde to Kærgård bird tower

15th June: Anna Pedersen walked from Oksemyr along Højlyngsstien Northwest

16th June: Ninna Lund Westerdahl walked from Bavnehøj to Vang Granite quarry

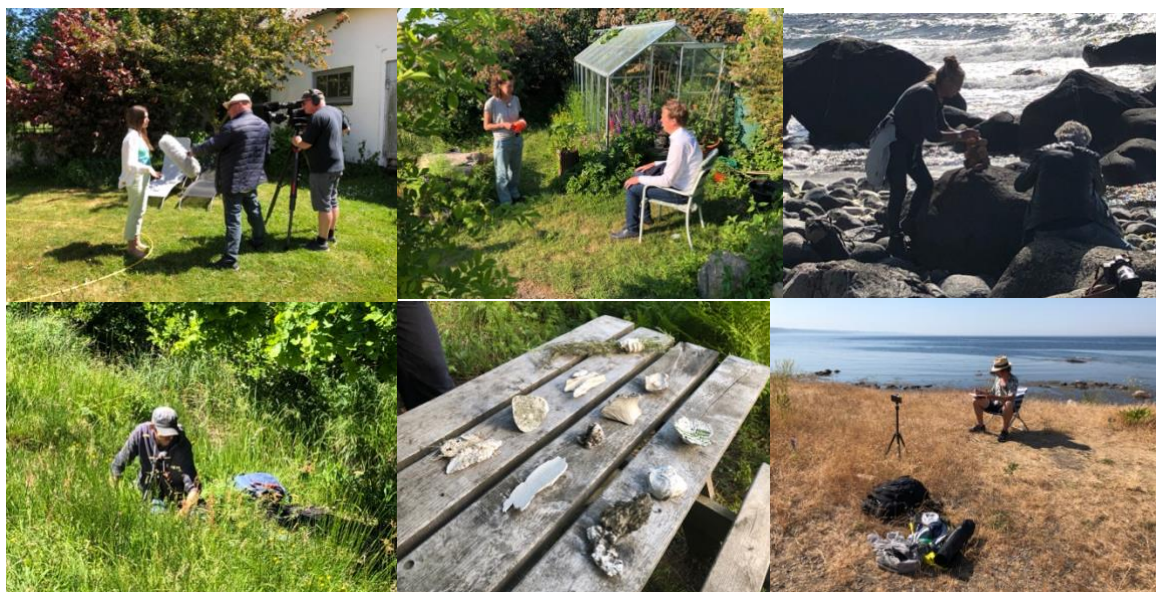
17th June: Ilon Lodewijks walked from Gamle Borg to Madsebakkerne

18th June: Franz Bomberg walked from Svaneke to Hammerhus

19th June: Samuel Collins & Sho Murayama walked in patterns at Mønstergård in Østermarie

20th June: Annelie Grimwade Olofsson walked from Bobbe Å to Årsdale harbour.

It has been big opportunity for BIRCA to participate in this project. It has created working relationships with larger institutions on Bornholm. So the Walking landscapes project is followed up with an exhibition Bornholm Art museum from February to August 2022 to which the next phase of the project Talking Landscapes is connected.



Glimpses from walks – Manon interviewed by TV2, Ilon interviewing a politician in the People's meeting, Lene is being photographed, Ben ready in the field. Anna's castings and Franz with equipment.

Bornholm Culture Week 19th September

Sunday the 19th of September BIRCA's Culture Week Festival was held. Apart from all the Island Connect artists Israel Aloni and Nike Herrberg participated. 69 people came – quite a lot more than we have room for, but it is wonderful that our contribution to the Culture Week is such a big success.

Nike Herrberg German/Danish” To twerk or not to....” – world premiere

Nike Herrberg is a comedian and actor from Germany but living on Bornholm. She had her first performance of her new one woman show about being so woke that she wished she could cancel herself. German (!) cis woman (!) white (!) hetero (!) and barely tattooed. The only thing worse is old white men! Unfortunately, the result of her annulment was so boring that she had to open her mouth again. And dancing! Twerke (!) Altogether, is Nike allowed to do it? Twerk is African cultural heritage. Identity policy is wonderful, but it poses a lot of questions - Nike brought them all up in the funny solo performance and concluded in Denmark everyone twerks.

Israel Aloni/Swedish/Israeli - ” My Body, My Nation”

Dancer and choreographer Israel Aloni, who is the leader of the Swedish dance company iIDance and is partly based in Australia, showed the beautiful solo performance that was developed at BIRCA in 2018. A performance which seizes a decolonization of the body. A way of examining what marks our bodies during our growing up.

BIRCA was also visited by **Ung Gnu** with “Limbo” during the culture week where Mads Emil and Kasper danced. Last of all Helga Rosenfeldt-Olsen and Alaya Riefensthal from **Wunschmaschine** stayed at BIRCA after they had shown their performance “Farvel” in the churchyard in Rønne.



Nike do twerk, Israel is dancing and Ung Gnu plays

Other things

Susanne used BIRCA during the winter months with COVID19 closedown to write her book “A Book on Love”, it was published on the 23rd of April. At the same time a new member came into the family – the grandchild Theodor.

Under a limited Peoples Meeting we were visited by Anika Barkan and Ann-Jette Caron for a couple of days. Simon Heinsen came and participated in Walking Landscapes during the same days.

30th October to 3rd November the Danish National School of Performing Arts, KA Dance, and Participation had a workshop headed by Laura Navndrup Black and with participation of Raphael, Carolina, Søren, Polena and Erik.

Collected numbers

All in all, 102 adult artists with 8 children and 2 dogs used BIRCA professionally in 2021. 72 of these were women. It is a calculated strategy to as much possible to support female artists in their development. Almost half of the artists - 48 - had an international background and the came from the following counties:

Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Greece, Croatia, the Netherlands, Ireland, England, Spain, France, Malta, Scotland, Portugal, Paraguay, Israel, Japan, USA, Mexico and Australia - artists from 4 of these countries have only participated online on account of the COVID19 restrictions. Overall, the big intake supports that we are an international place of residency which attracts a lot for people with different backgrounds.

We have had 3 extern showings – some with a nice number of visitors - as well as the Culture Week event with 67 guests. In addition, the large Walking Landscape project with visibility both online and in the landscape. BIRCA kids only made intern showings and Climate Crucible was shown online for about 30 spectators.

We have had articles in Bornholms Tidende, Denne Uges Bornholm as well as been in local radio and local TV several times. We have sent newsletters frequently and been active on Facebook. We have 1209 followers (a rise of 233) there.

The artistic activities at BIRCA are held under the auspices the association BIRCA Residency, you can become a member if you want to support the place. BIRCA's buildings are owned by Susanne Danig and her husband Niels Secher, the running and commercial management take place through Danig Performing Arts Service.

The association BIRCA Residency is headed by a board consisting of **Ida Marie Tjalve** (chairwoman), **Jens Svane Boutrup** (deputy chairman), **Kirsten Laurberg Lund** and **Bente Larsen**. **Susanne Danig** is appointed to conduct the daily running and paid according to the activities held at BIRCA.

2021 was also a year with building and expansion. In the spring we renovated the white hall and whitewashed it. Now it is white all the way round, we also had new windows and made a new entrance, new lightning, and new vinyl for dancing. We installed new theater lights with support by Brdr. E., S. and A. Larsens Grant and Bornholms Brand. In the autumn we had a new heating system in the main house, in the future we are sustainable with our air to water plant and can ensure stabile heating. Finally, in November we had to fight drill beetles in the stable area. We also had a new washing machine and a new dishwasher.

"Here at BIRCA I feel that there are many opportunities to connect. We come from difference, and we continue into difference, but for at time we share a joint place and time, we gather, we are gathered. These connections allow us to converse and converge. Thank you for facilitating this place and these times for us all" Israel Aloni

