

## RESEARTCH IN OVERVIEW

Lately I have decided to put some attention into making my personal work more explicitly described through various media. This coincides with that this work during 2018 has found a formal term, which to me frames well what it is about. In this text below, I endeavor to give some overview and insight into my Research, it's background, process and inspirations. I make use of quotes from my Master thesis in Theatre Pedagogy, "Towards Personal Growth" (2012), for further context.

### Background of my Research 2012-2018

For the continuity of my Research, tracing a smooth line from source to source is preferable. To begin the overview of the Research-process from earlier on than 2012 would be closer to the full truth, however, this text aims to make more clear the contents and motives of the Research as such, rather than to give a complete overview of it's entire drama of being.

The workshop-concept *Crea* (prototyped as Crea 0 (Odense 2010), Crea I (Nørre Snede 2011), and Crea II (Århus 2012) with mentoring from, mainly, Finn Hesselager, during my Master-studies in Theatrepedagogy 2009-2012), itself a continuation of previous work with other early Research-projects such as Magusteatern (Malmö 2005) and keen participation in Per Brahes (- with friends) Mask and Taksu workshops on Bali, prepared and equipped me for the years that would come, during which I gradually reached the point, where *Research* found it's actual name, the original vision of *Crea* hatched naturally in a more solid and balanced form, and my own process of transformation reached a tipping-point into which it slid into some kind of grounding into convinced conclusions of conduct in regards to knowledge gained in actuality by this continuous work, in relation to the whole picture as *life* on a personal, overall level.

Loyal to my dream as stated in my Master Thesis;

"This thesis is concerned with a project aiming to develop a method for facilitating opportunities by which individuals can experience personal growth. Personal growth is here defined as manifesting one's *being* through *action*, in a process which, initiated by theatre pedagogical means, ultimately aims at becoming self-generating, making the individual able to continue his development, independent of the original facilitating agent. The research, as well as the thesis itself, has a double nature, spanning between art and science. Science, in the sense that it strives to use, gather and produce empirical data. Art, in the sense that the process is conceived of as a manifestation of it's creators personal values, to a high extent being pursued as an experimental, aesthetical project.

("Towards Personal Growth", Peter Tommila 2012)

I reached a point where I knew that I was able to bring my work through fruitful channels, benefitting others on the way, to a place worth its salt in this world of multiple life-expressions. A point where I saw my knowledge and curiosity becoming worthy of a name, and the name came as had it always existed. A point from which it was worth writing a few words about the essence of the journey. A point from which the journey could continue with confidence and a sensation of ease (after all, I once began this work, in order to change the channels on my own screen, not to screen the change of general channels, other than by natural proxy). A point from which I could teach, equipped with the tool that once was dubbed the concept *Crea*, now called a *Workshop in Performance Art and Creativity*, marrying two concepts, both of which I have been working with during all this while.

A brief tour through the process since 2012 will make the picture more clear. The summer following my final exams and promotion to Master of Arts in 2012, saw the continuation and growth of the Borderland movement in Scandinavia, an inspiring development filled with the notion of co-creation and radical expression, personal and collective explorations into creativity through playfulness, in an escalatingly expanding network of fun characters – all of which rhymed well with the ooze of the *Current* as I perceive it, and as it has been manifesting in different guises in my life ever since the beginning of Café Cyklon (Malmö) in 2001. Likewise, the activity of general DIY-culture in Copenhagen kept on being strong and present in my everyday life, something which once more brought me into manifestation together with my creative playmates in the performance group Club de la Faye as in the summer of 2012, the performance group Hijas del Mal (HDM and CDLF have common roots in SIGNA) visited Copenhagen, taking up base at the Candy Factory at Lærkevej in Copenhagen and initiating a collaboration with Club de la Faye from there, which by the end of the summer brought the two groups as one to Bremen in Germany, where we manifested the performance *The Dreamoscope / Suenoscopio*. This sparked, in conglomerate with my recently finished education as Theatre Pedagogue, a drive in me to develop a workshop in Performance Art by the methods of Club de la Faye, which I created collectively (in equal collaboration and work-share, with CDLF-members Iwona Rejmus and Inga Gerner Nielsen) and manifested this workshop with them for the first time in Haparanda, Sweden, by the end of 2012 under the name of Club de la Faye.

By the beginning of 2013, Research went on in several parallel strands – one being the work as Framesetter together with Yaa Lioness, of Club de la Faye's next and so far last performance, and

third version of the *Embassy of Untrue Reality* (“*Dark Questions Matter – Rituel du Papillon*”, which manifested in Bremen, Germany, in October 2013), one being an ambitious attempt to bring Per Brahe and Finn Hesselager together in a shared mask-workshop (a beautiful idea which failed due to an insufficient business strategy on my part, but still brought fruits to the Research), one was my own personal transformation work, bringing me for the third time to Bali, this time participating in a workshop on Taksu, Clowning, Voicework and Balinese Dance, with Aole T Miller, Micha Espinosa, Ida Bagus Alit and Ida Bagus Anom. During this journey to Bali, I also made preparations on site, to return later with my own team (which I did two years later). In Denmark, my work with understanding Flow Theory (Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi) led to a series of interviews with flow-researcher Frans Ørsted-Andersen, during which my ideas about *Autopoiesis* as practical metaphor for the creative, cognitive process, as briefly stated in “Towards Personal Growth”, were confirmed and developed further. I also put work into experimental group-experiments designed together with Håkan Magnusson, in exploration of creative flow through post-dramatic events in the Dome of Visions (Copenhagen).

By autumn 2014, I saw that the western world was changing much faster towards the point of violent historical return, than I had expected, and hence I decided somewhat hurriedly, to rush to collect material on Bali as planned, while the world was still in relative peace and predictability. I gathered a crew of chosen comrades (Jonas Bræmer-Jensen, Simon Anker Larsen, Robert Bolin) and returned once more to Bali by the summer of 2015, this time with the mission to go deep with the question of Taksu by the aid of mask-work with Per Brahe and teaching in Balinese Dance with Ida Bagus Alit, and further interviews with Ida Bagus Anom and visits to the former school by Ulf Wayan Gadd with family in Sawan, while simultaneously documenting the work on camera for further development later on of the educational-promotional aspects of the Research. This project however, happening too early in my overall process, exerted my energies and resources to the utmost, and by autumn 2015, I soon felt myself coming to a full stop, from there falling for a long period of two years into existential and emotional despair, when there was no more work possible to be done, except internally and in personally formative dimensions. Club de la Faye had at that time ceased to be a frequently active group, Borderland had found a shape with which I saw no direct way to intersect with my own work at present, the DIY-culture of Copenhagen had faced severe setbacks and turned increasingly into classic competition-driven patterns over the scarce room left for it to breathe, and I felt in a state of growing misogyny, that the world was too ugly – hardly a good standpoint for dedicated work with other peoples inner lives, creativity and collective imagination.

This place of Weltschmerz was my home for 1,5 years. Then I came out, into the spring of 2017, a new person with marks of fire in his brows from many dark nights of wondering and wandering. During this journey I had come to many realizations, and my dreams and visions had been tried from every angle possible to my abilities. I had found in myself an immense voice and a gaze capable of discerning things as they were, quite unmasked. I was ready to create art and manifest again, but now on my own terms. For many months, in nurturing of my creative spirit and of my existential need of healing, I created a work of art in expression by installation and holistic interaction – hence, immersive performance art as done by Club de la Faye, spiced, transformed and further developed through my Research, before and during my recent period of crisis, and then within the frame and in the context of the Sisters Academy by the manifestation of the SHIP at Den Frie Udstillingsbygning in Copenhagen: this process and experience of developing and manifesting the SHIP, was to me a cathartic return to the top of the circle, and a fresh deep new breath into a new morning of further work with human essential inspiration, imagination, charisma, aesthetic awareness, competence of creativity in manifestation by movement, thought, action, poetic intention and - attentiveness, by which I regained hope for my original intentions and decided to continue, equipped with the new tools and insights which I had developed on my way, since falling into despair some 2 years earlier.

The following year of 2018, was a year of anchoring and expansion of what I had developed and discovered. Here, I experienced the very transformation-work that I had all along been making tools to pursue, as coming out of myself in corrosives of expressions in everyday life more strongly than in a long while, if ever before. I finally felt that I understood what I needed to understand, in order to let my Research once more bring me into making the kind of workshops, that *Crea* originally had been aimed at. The work with specifically CDLF-workshops and performances, with the SHIP and with his work in the Sisters Academy, the constantly underlying Research in all it's aspects, including Occulture, Flow-theory and Taksu-work, the personal transformational work as life in engaged general, as well as sporadic engagement into other projects of immersive performances and theatre pedagogy over the years, the Master-studies and their concluding thesis, and not to forget, the passion for the *Current* that runs in humanity and is expressed by it's burning individuals, all of it, gathered softly in me.

As I made the schedules and chose the exercises to the workshop in performance art and creativity, which by the end of 2018 was to be given in Copenhagen, to a group of four members of the staff at Melt, I realized that what I was having in mind, was in fact some kind of *Crea III*. I was coming full circle in my original intention from the days of "Towards Personal Growth" and earlier, of creating

a basic frame for advanced work with individual creative drives and the manifestation thereof by transformational means, with chosen tools from all over my long process into this delicate and deep matter.

I hence felt that the Research had found it's first complete form as originally dreamed: a continuous personal activity of art and research, manifested sometimes as art-works of different kinds – some more visible than others, some collective some not - sometimes as workshops, the Research being all the time educational, activist and performative to it's nature, sometimes as lived adventure in natural and intuitive loyalty to the walking of this talk in my personally deepest possible sense.

Those were the words about what happened between those days of 2012, and these days of 2018.

The Research, having been described by the process during which it found it's name, can now be described more closely by it's elements and by it's nature.

Looking more closely at that: since 1996, I've been intentionally interested in practical applications to the notion of transformation on a personal and existential level, originally based on traditions of mysticism, shamanism, yoga and ritual magic, gradually turning towards theatre and other forms of art. This has since 2001 and 2002 respectively, branched and grown into the direction of cultural, social and artistic manifestations through various projects of activism and research, parallel with a deepened holistic practice centered in physical theatre, energy-work and applied techniques of various ritual traditions. In 2012, I wrote my Master Thesis in Theatre Pedagogy, "Towards Personal Growth" as a foundation for continuous work in the direction of transformation through art and pedagogy, using tools from different locations within the lore of art, philosophy and that of personal development, within a frame of engaged, physically applied imagination, contextual to flow-theory and creativity research. Significantly present in the process since 2007, has been on the one hand mask-work (Per Brahe, Finn Hesselager) and the Balinese Tradition of Sacred Art-practice (Per Brahe, Aole T Miller, and local masters of Bali), and on the other, immersive performance art centered within a recurring question on the perspectives of transformation of identity, embodied imagination, and fiction (Club de la Faye), and since 2009, adequate use of theoretical bridges into the fields of progressive theatre pedagogy and artistic action-research, to pursue and explore my intuitive and proto-logical intentionalities, within various esthetic and activist cultural frames, in a continuous intentional and artistically conscious step-by-step intuitive manifestational process, which during 2018 found it's name.

Tools for transformational work are thus gathered from several areas and brought into the Research. Art (especially theatre and performance art), positive psychology, DIY co-creation, philosophy and esotericism being the main goldmines. Mainly, the question that I am pursuing, can be summarized as that of the manifestation of ones *being* by *heartful action* in everyday life.

"We can begin by stating that an individual has daydreams, phantasies, perhaps wild visions about what she wants in life. These have their source somewhere within her. In this thesis, we shall call that source her **being**. Even if the dreams of the individual has not taken shape in her mind as defined goals, she still has an intuitive sense for what she wants to invest her attention into, and what not, at any given time. I am not speaking of a rational sense of what could be "practical" or "smart", to put attention into. Nor am I speaking of what could be "satisfying" or "relieving", in a so called crude sense. I am rather speaking of what might be perceived as "inspiring", or to use an even more defining term; "heartfelt"."

"What I observe is, that when the individual invests her attention and her activity in that *heartfelt* direction, something starts to emerge from within her. She finds, that she becomes more in tune with her being. Her actions, be it speaking, moving, shaping or addressing, begin to happen with expanded spontaneity and ease. She is aware of, that this is "right" somehow. By going with this *urge*, she gradually becomes more aware of her own *being*. As she finds this phenomenon happening to her again and again in different life-situations, she becomes more familiar with this heartfelt state of being and doing. By exploring this state, the individual becomes more refined in answering questions such as "What is the meaning of life?", "What is my thing?" and "Who am I?" to herself. Not as an intellectual conceptualization as much as an intuitive sensation of actual self-awareness. As her self-awareness grows in this manner, she finds it easier to make decisions big or small, that affects the ongoing development of her life. This process is what my research is about."

(*"Towards Personal Growth"*, Peter Tommila 2012)

Research is pursued as a personal process of intuitive and heartfelt, gradual work towards greater understanding of these topics, and greater efficiency and beauty in the manifesting of solutions to the releasing of the *urge* of manifesting *being* through *heartful action*. Everything discernible in any moment is potentially material for this work, a work which spans between art and research – hence, everything discerned at any moment, is potentially subject to investigation and / or potentially considered as artistic material, visible or invisible. The work is carried out against a backdrop of a world about to tip into it's own demise, hence, hope goes into the thought of contributing to coming generations, who will live in this world one day and be in need of tools that can bring them in touch with their own deep human potential. I see, in the sources and main areas of my Research, an intricate web of interconnected memes and perspectives, which together shows the contours of rich age-old traditions, traditions out of which it is my pleasure to prototype, try out and make available, new variations as they happen in my own time and in my own tempo. The line between the artistic and the researching aspects of the Research are constantly overlapping and shifting in ways that make them impossible to separate and discern entirely from each other – the term Research hence contains not as much a combination of the terms *art* and *research*, as it contains an actual term of it's own, defined by my works own nature – the word itself is merely built with suitable etymological qualities, somewhat pointing to that nature. When closely considered, the direct translation of *Research*, would be "autopoietic process of heartful continuity" or "autodidact pursuit of undeniable vision", rather than "art and research". This to me is so, since my Research comes from

deep within me and is pre-rational, even as it also meets with the shared world of human ideas in flux and the rational demands of that world (words, words, words).

In Research, art and research intermingle in every aspect as a matter of course, rather than as a matter of intention or even method; the intention lies deeper, goes beyond concepts, grows and transforms by the moment, and is itself both source and object of the process: it lies within my own *being* and *urge*, as something to be explored and to find strength in for further Research. The method is in constant development and in the appliance thereof, I strive for simplicity and directness, substituting tools and perspectives with other tools and perspectives, based on personal discernment and understanding in development – with frequent returning to the main goldmines as stated above. Research is in the action of Research, as much as in the being of Research, in it's being, as much as in it's image – in it's spell as much as in it's object. Research is my own heartfelt action, in manifestation of my own being and urge.

It exists independently of participants, partakers and observers – but not independently of my own thoughts of these. Ultimately, my Research can be seen as my response to having come to this world, without being the first human nor the only or last human, to live in it.

"This thesis presents the basic version of a theatre pedagogical method for training, teaching and research, designed to find ways to make it possible for an individual, to connect consciously with her *being*, become better equipped to follow her *urge* to manifest it through action, and furthermore, to establish that connection in an ongoing process of *personal growth*.

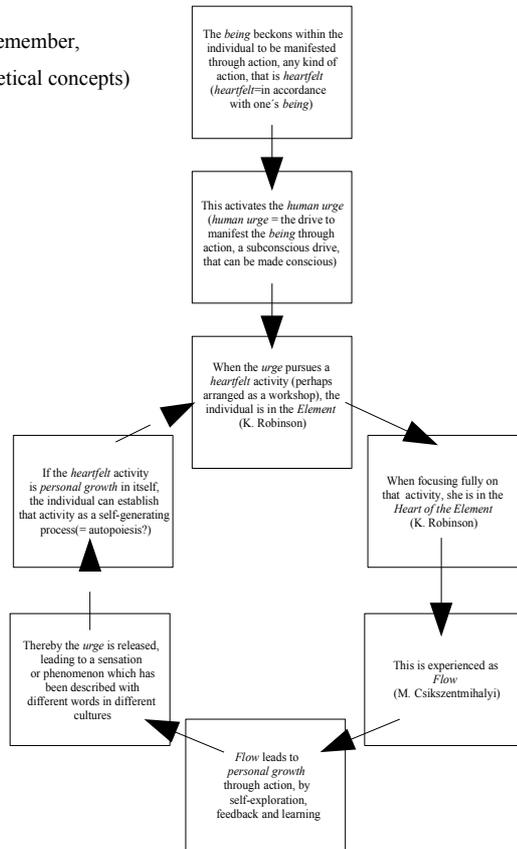
To consciously pursue work through such manifesting actions, can in terms of flow-theory be described as to establish a "negentropy" – a frame of attention on certain information which thereby becomes structured in the mind – all regarding the pursuit of manifesting the *being* in the world. Once the negentropy itself is established, all other factors required to reach *flow* are within reach, provided that the working tools are adequately designed and used. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p.29) My interpretation of this is, that the individual would be able to reach a state of *flow* in the overall activity of "manifesting her being", through all sorts of actions, all united in that single *heartfelt* purpose. The point would be, since "the world is a stage", when seen in the sense, that our lives are full of self-exploration through narratives (Crossley, 2000), that it would be possible to apply theatre pedagogical methods, in a specific setting, of the right circumstances, for manifesting *being* through action. The setting could, as the connection with the *urge* increases, be opened up gradually, until the individual is equipped to continue the work – her chosen negentropy, her intention – in the events and circumstances of her everyday life, on her own. It would furthermore be possible, to use tools of theatre pedagogy to teach an individual acting skills, in order to make her more aware of the signs, that she uses in her self-expression. These acting skills, or rather her possessing of them, would then in itself be a setting for the human urge to be released through.

A process such as this, being successful, could possibly elevate the individual into a state of discovery, liberation and growth, which would be self-generating. It would be a state closely related to the various terms listed above. The individual, immersed in the activity of expressing herself; of manifesting her being through the heartfelt action of "manifesting her being" intently by various means, (of which not all would have to be directly "heartful", required that they are part of a heartfelt whole to the individual) could enter a state of *flow* in that activity. When in *flow*, the individual would increase her ability to pursue the action in question, and thereby grow further. If the action pursued is "personal growth", then my theory points to the potential of reaching a new level, where the process of personal growth regenerated itself, in theory perpetually.

The term *Autopoiesis*, introduced into sociology (from biology) by Niklas Luhmann, might apply. An Autopoietic system is one that continuously produces the components that specify it, while at the same time realizing itself to be a concrete unity in space and time (Dittrich & Artmann, 2006 p.31). This term would be welcome in formulating this theory, for the simple fact, that the terms above are all coloured in different ways, mostly by

cultural context, whereas "Autopoiesis" is a technical term. The "concrete unity in space and time" would then be the *process of personal growth* itself, rather than the individual, that pursues the process. These two could however be seen as inseparable."  
 ("Towards Personal Growth" Peter Tommila 2012)

(the reader is advised to remember,  
 that *being* and *urge* are hypothetical concepts)



(model by Peter Tommila, "Towards Personal Growth" 2012)