

WHS
VILLE WALO:
PHANTOM LIMB
www.h-s.fi



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Contact:

WHS

Unioninkatu 45 LH 1-2, 00170 Helsinki, Finland

Tel. +358 50 339 8598 / +358 50 370 5123

contact@w-h-s.fi

www.w-h-s.fi

Ville Walo:

PHANTOM LIMB

Director & performer: Ville Walo

Set & costume design: Anne Jämsä

Lighting design: Eero Alava

Sound design: Lau Nau & Pekko Käppi

Production: WHS

Language: Japanese

Subtitles: English

Age recommendation: +16

Duration: approx. 45 minutes

Premiere: 17.1.2020 in Helsinki

Ville Walo:

PHANTOM LIMB

The performer has an extra limb. It's so familiar that it might share his heartbeats, and yet uncannily foreign.

The performance situation is intimate and voyeuristic as if it happens in a room with paper thin walls that let the voices of neighbours pass through. A solitary human figure reacts to the sounds that penetrate the space like they would originate in himself. He transforms from one speaker to another, listens, moves on tiptoe. The sound originates in the immediate vicinity, yet in another reality, in a past time, and in a different culture. The foreign language of recorded speech is cut short by sudden sighs and croaks. Invisible horrors and pleasures take over the stage.

The performer balances with agile and shaky steps on the verge of shamelessness. Love and narcissism intermix to concoct a phantom pain that targets an absent beloved as one's own bodypart. Can the yearned other be reached by becoming her? The gaze in the mirror replies through an unrecognizable mask in a stolen voice.

Fragments of soundscape are borrowed from a 1960's Japanese counter culture film. The Funeral Parade of Roses by Toshio Matsumoto is a mixture of passionate fiction and seemingly documentary interviews of characters with diverse gender identities active in the underground and queer subcultures.

This is circus artist Ville Walo's third solo performance. Waloville premiered in 2002 as the first full length juggling show ever made in Finland. Walo's next solo Mortimer in 2010 combined narrative object choreographies with digital sensors and projections. The third leg of the development summarizes the distance travelled in the last ten years toward the yet uncharted territories of performing art.

Premiere on 17th of January 2020 in WHS Teatteri Union, Helsinki, Finland.

REVIEW

Ville Walo is a maverick juggler

The third solo performance Phantom Limb is a freak prancing through the field of arts

HELSINGIN SANOMAT
Jussi Tossavainen 19.1.2020

Contemporary circus

Phantom Limb. Director and performer Ville Walo, set and costume design Anne Jämsä, lighting design Eero Alava, sound design Lau Nau and Pekko Käppi. WHS Teatteri Union.

IF Ville Walo didn't exist, he would have to be invented. He is a phenomenon on the Finnish art field, making Finnish contemporary circus so original, genuine and peculiar, that without him the genre would be weak and bland. Walo makes circus dada, surprising and strange.

Ville Walo is a juggler, but juggling has in his hands acquired a new usage and a new significance as a concept. His way to make art escapes all definitions.

Phantom Limb is Walo's third solo piece. I must say that while watching it, I myself was at times quite confused as I tried to understand it. But that's exactly where the spectator is mistaken – everything doesn't need to be understood, one can just go along with it. Sometimes it's good to be lost.

The performance's title stems from the performer having an extra limb. We might have heard of the concept of phantom ache: an amputated limb hurts and gets symptoms. It feels pain as though it still existed. Here Walo has incorporated the extra limb as a part of his artwork.

Phantom Limb has developed as far from traditional juggling, as is even possible. It's visual theatre, in that the performer himself is the object, manipulating himself.

THE PIECE challenges the spectators while placing them in a nearly embarrassing situation. Do I have the permission to peep at something as intimate and strange as this?

But since the artist has placed himself in this position and subjected himself to our gazes, the answer must be: yes. I may look, enjoy and admire this freak that prances in the marginals of the field of arts.

Walo doesn't give the spectator viewing directions or even an end to grasp. This is a take it or leave it situation.

On the other hand his charisma is strong enough to completely fill the stage and at the same time also the auditorium of the intimate former porn cinema. As he juggles with his extra limb, he keeps his distance from the spectators, but still lets them very close. Scales get distorted.

STRANGENESS and otherness are supported also by the sound design, which according to the program handout features fragments from "alternative film of 1960's Japanese underground and queer subcultures". How does one get this kind of ideas, I can't imagine. At least it isn't the usual clichée soundscape worn to shreds in performing arts.

Ville Walo doesn't spare himself in his work. He exposes his whole body without compromising his ambitions. With his third limb he is at the same time crude and very humane. The performance has a cocktail of oddity and familiarity to an extent that makes it wonderfully captivating.

It differs from the customary, and therefore fulfills one of art's purposes.

Ville Walo is a pioneer of Finnish contemporary circus, and his company WHS is one of the most internationally active performing arts groups in Finland. Walo has performed in nearly 40 countries in numerous circus, theatre, dance and puppetry venues and festivals around the world. Walo is renowned for his original juggling style that balances on the boundary surfaces between juggling, puppet theatre and dance. He has expanded the expression range of circus towards visual theatre and object theatre. Walo has received several awards and artistic grants from Arts promotion Centre Finland, Finnish Cultural Foundation, Niilo Helander Foundation, Helsinki City and National Council for Interdisciplinary Art, Diversity and International Activities.

WHS is a contemporary circus / visual theatre group from Finland, formed by magician Kalle Nio, juggler Ville Walo and set & costume designer Anne Jämsä. The productions of the group have been the propelling force behind the rapid rise to fame of Finnish contemporary circus in the past decade. In the performances of the group circus has become a modern, independent and constantly changing form of expression that other arts, video in particular, complement. In the press the performances have been called avant-garde also in the larger contexts of theatre and art in general. The performances have been on the sharp edge of the latest developments of theatre as well as circus.

The circus group has grown known for the juggling style of Walo that balances on the boundary surfaces between juggling and puppetry, and the scale of expression of Nio that reaches from visual arts to magic. The group has taken their performances across more than 40 countries, visiting well over a hundred world-famous festivals, circuses, theatres and puppet theatres in Europe, Asia, South America and North America.

Lau Nau aka Laura Naukkarinen, is one of the more interesting names in the contemporary music scene in Finland. Her songs are imbued with a cinematic breadth of vision and her idiosyncratic, finely honed sound world builds on fragile, spectral otherness. She works using both acoustic and electronic instruments, from field recordings to analogue synthesizers, from vocals and traditional instruments to musique concrete and found objects.

Anne Jämsä is a costume and set designer and a founding member of Finnish visual theatre and contemporary circus company WHS. She is interested in developing visually expressive ways of using objects on stage. She has designed costumes, props and sets especially for dance, circus and visual theatre productions. She has a Master's degree in Scenography and a Bachelor's degree in History.

Eero Alava is a freelance lighting engineer and designer. He has studied lighting design at Tampere Polytechnic. Eero Alava has worked as a technician, designer and photographer for dance, music and circus performances.

Technical Rider – March 2020

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR QUESTIONS / ADAPTATIONS technic@w-h-s.fi

PHANTOM LIMB

STAFF ON TOUR

1 performer, 1-2 technicians

STAGE / SPACE

Dimensions required

Height: 3,5 meters minimum

Width: 5-15 meters

Depth: 5-15 meters

No more than 1% tilt of floor

MASKING (black box not necessary)

- 2 opening curtains, on a curtain rail, minimum size 3m x 3m, split in the middle (black preferred) PLEASE LET US KNOW, IF NOT AVAILABLE
- dance carpets (or smooth floor)

SET

The set is composed of various accessories:

1) Rigged: a curtain (brought by the company), hanged behind black back curtains

Please provide:

- a bar for hanging the curtain at approximately 3,5 meters height
- 10 elastic straps or short ropes for tying the curtain
- black gaffer tape

2) On stage floor: a chair (provided by the venue)

sturdy and stable, preferably old wooden spoke chair, with a back rest
Please let us check the chair by sending a photo before, if possible.

3) Behind curtain:

- a stable chair for a person to stand on, with a high back rest, preferably black (provided by the venue)
- a dining table height table for small accessories, small enough to fit behind curtain, preferably black (provided by the venue)

Additionally we will use props (brought by the company):

Prosthetic leg, knife, plastic lips, earrings, high heel shoes, costume

SUBTITLES / VIDEO

For subtitles we need a bright high contrast HD projector and a screen.
Video signal comes from a laptop in FOH technical control booth.

Projector: (PLEASE LET US KNOW, IF NOT AVAILABLE)
Preferably full HD, minimum 5000 ANSI-lumens, hdmi connection

Screen:

16:9 or wider, either roll-down, on stand or suspended
Size for subtitles approx. 150-200cm width x 15-20cm height, or larger

Optional:

The ideal solution is using a roll-down screen, or a screen rigged on a motorized bar above stage, positioned down stage or middle stage. The screen would be down in the beginning and of the performance (with video) and up during the performance (with subtitles).
Size for video approx. 500cm width x 280cm height

But many different solutions can be possible. Lets plan together.

We might be able to use a LED screen or similar instead of projector and screen. Please contact us for checking compatibility and suitability of the screen.

Consider visibility from audience seats to screen. Screen may need to be self-standing above floor level or suspended from ceiling to place it high enough for good audience visibility of performer and subtitles simultaneously.

For video we need:

- Screen, projector and video cables
- Video cable or ethernet connection line (to be supplied by venue) for the video signal from FOH to projector (Please contact us, if cables are not available.)
- 2 Direct electricity lines for video projector and signal converter
- Direct electricity (5 schuko sockets) for computers and video equipment in FOH

LIGHTING

We will bring 3 x Astera Titan tubes with wireless DMX.

- Direct 230V power needed above stage

GrandMa2 required.

If there's no comparable desk available, company needs to be informed.

Lanterns (provided by venue):

3 x 1kw fresnel with barndoors rigged above stage

1 x Profile 25-50° rigged above stage

6 x profiles 25-50° on floor stands, on different heights

Light contact:

Eero Alava

eero.alava@gmail.com

SOUND SYSTEM

- Sound Desk with 2 input channels
- Sound is coming from a laptop computer located in FOH, next to light control desk
- 1 miniplug to 2 mono jack cables to connect the computer to the sound desk
- PA: about 2x1 kw per 300 people
- Sufficient stage monitoring

DRESSING ROOM

- A dressing rooms with shower (near the place of performance, heated if necessary, well lit, lockable or guarded, with chairs, a mirror, a WC)
- Bottles of water (minimum 3 small bottles for each performance)
- catering: bananas and other fruits, coke, water, fruit juice, coffee, chocolate, sandwiches or snacks for 2 persons during set-up, and for 3 persons 3 hours before performance
- 2 towels
- hangers (5) for clothes
- ironing board and iron

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation and board for 2-3 people on the days of set up and performance

- 2-3 hotel rooms: 2-3 single rooms, min. 2 stars

TECNICAL STAFF

Set up takes approximately 8 hours (minimum 6 working hours excluding breaks) and requires:

- 2 lighting technicians (3 if light has not been prepared before we arrive)
- 1 sound technician
- 1 stage technician

During the show

- 1 sound technician / house technician familiar with venue

Duration of show: approx. 45 minutes

Strike down of the equipment brought by the company takes approximately 2 hours.

The technical needs can be adjusted to fit in the venue's specifications so If anything needs to be clarified or any questions appear, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Technical contact: technic@w-h-s.fi