



Press release, 6th September 2009

**METROPOLIS has now had its Copenhagen breakthrough and has come across as a cultural acupuncture of the metropolis of Copenhagen. 24 different nationalities have left their marks on Copenhagen and its inhabitants.**

With METROPOLIS 2009 one can safely say that the festival broke through to a wider audience. Thus silencing the critics of 2007, one of which was Politiken's Monna Dithmer who compared the festival with the game "Find Holger" from a children's book, because it had not presented enough "large scale for large audience", both of which have been in abundance at this year's METROPOLIS. At the same time, the festival has managed not to betray the artistic connoisseurs, inasmuch as it has also featured several artistic works appealing to a smaller audience. One such was "Wasteland" by Lotte van den Berg, the Netherlands. Generally, the METROPOLIS festival has been characterized by the smooth transition between small scale and large scale, by the delicate balance between a number of new, original hybrid forms of art, performance, film installation and city walks.

*"This year it has been important for us to reach out to the general public, and this has been accomplished to a large extent. If you want to create a genuine cultural acupuncture of a city, it is important to be able to reach and influence many people"* says the artistic direction of METROPOLIS, Trevor Davies and Katrien Verwilt.

### **Cultural acupuncture**

"Cultural acupuncture" can be characterized by bringing energy into anonymous and perhaps unsafe neighborhoods and public spaces through cultural activities, which embed in people's everyday life and existence. It may be anything from city walks to staged urban city scapes, happenings and lighting installations, and METROPOLIS has shown a great diversity in its artistic approach to the city and its inhabitants.

Specifically, the cultural acupuncture has consisted of focus points scattered across the city, like when La Marea turned Blågårdsgade into a film set with recognizable everyday situations, or when African dancers, with umbrellas, move along Nørrebrogade like cheeky fauns. The Sortedams Lake was transformed into enchanting wizardry, and for a long time after when you drove past the lake you couldn't help fantasizing about Ilotopia's fairytale characters which opened METROPOLIS 2009 with a blast. A lively rabbit on a bicycle through the streets of Nørrebro blended into the neighborhood pattern. A deep red tent was erected at the far end of Nyhavn and offered you the chance of a trip to Moscow. Along the way, it was obvious to draw parallels to the situation in your own city. The same happened when Mexico City's street vendors suddenly materialized on Nikolaj Plads. Street noise and garbage directly imported from one of the world's largest cities. While some of Copenhagen's most interesting buildings, VM Bjerget and Tietgenkollegiet in Ørestad went into artistic clinch with circus actors and aerial dancers. All this culminated at a temporary industrial wasteland at Refshaleøen, where Dutch performers redeemed a dystopian image of hopelessness and emptiness. The cultural acupuncture has served as an eye opener towards new ways of using the city, new dimensions of exploring urban spaces and not least, it has shown the fantasy playground of the city.

### **Major international impact**

2009 was the year when Copenhagen International Theatre could really feel the international resonance, which the METROPOLIS project has created since 2007. Among others, a delegation from Budapest visited Copenhagen during METROPOLIS, because they too are very interested in importing the METROPOLIS concept to Budapest. Representatives from Leipzig have also paid a visit to get inspiration and sparring with regard to their own new festival concept, which also focuses on art and performance in public space.



### **Cityscape Prospects**

Copenhagen International Theatre has through METROPOLIS not only exerted influence on the city through its festival practices, but continues to do so through its co-operation with various professionals working with urban space. The summer of 2010 will feature a METROPOLIS LABORATORY. Once again the laboratory will amass experience, and the network between the architects, city planners and artists working with and in urban space will be strengthened even further. Another project revolving urban space is the LIGHTSOUND project, which Copenhagen International Theatre is the manager of: a 3-year EU-funded project, which initiates local practice in urban space projects with actors such as artists, creative professionals, urban planners and municipalities. This August the LIGHTSOUND project presented the first wave of 11 temporary urban space projects ó alongside of METROPOLIS.

Several of the LIGHTSOUND projects have been so successful that they may even acquire a permanent status; one such is the Dutch light sculptor Tamar Frank's project. Her works have thrown a remarkable playful light on the tunnels in Albertslund. February 2010 sees the presentation of the 2nd round of LIGHTSOUND's urban space projects. The overall focus of LIGHTSOUND is the development of an urban space practice, where art is a major player. This makes the whole learning aspect, in the shape of seminars, workshops and evaluations - before, between and after the concrete urban space projects - very significant for all the project partners.

### **METROPOLIS has left its mark on Copenhagen**

Journalist Malena Forsare, of Kvällsposten (Sweden) completes a review of METROPOLIS with the words: "the attitude at Copenhagen International Theatre is remarkably sincere ... all while the city will never be the same again" And METROPOLIS has left its mark on Copenhagen. The impression becomes quite authentic at Byparken, Ørestad, where Architects of Air's luminary left a pattern in the grass that makes us wonder whether the magical Light Luminary wasn't a visit from outer space after all.

### **METROPOLIS 2009 in figures:**

106 Danish and 187 international artists, a.o. from South Africa, Brazil, USA, Mexico, the Netherlands, France, Argentina, Croatia, Germany, Belgium, have been part of METROPOLIS 2009.

A total of 24 different nationalities have influenced Copenhagen and its inhabitants with cultural acupuncture.

Around 35,000 Copenhageners and tourists have watched and participated in 23 different productions in METROPOLIS 2009.

Thanks very much for now!

### **Contact**

For press photos from METROPOLIS and interview appointments with KIT's artistic direction please contact communications assistant Louise Kaare Jacobsen on 3315 1564 or [lkj@kit.dk](mailto:lkj@kit.dk).

Sincerely

**Copenhagen International Theatre**

[www.cph-metropolis.dk](http://www.cph-metropolis.dk)