

Pauline Curnier Jardin. Banana Children Orchestra, 2007

Pauline Curnier Jardin

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Following the same idea that I will be in the country of my dream, and contenting this childishness, I could explain why I wanted to work with children... Maybe I wanted to confront myself as a child, with the "real ones"!... But there is a real link between this vision and the work I was going to do with the children... First I had some very precise images in my mind that I really wanted to make, take and film. I made these images finally both into drawings, into photos and into a video. But most of all, I attempted to "test" my own work-processing with children, and transmit them to some contemporary performance and dance methods I've crossed by myself.

I used to collaborate with different choreographers, and the contemporary dance and performance is my closer universe. It's funny to see how all these young choreographers use to work with non-professional dancers and actors using some experimental methods which could look like children's game...

My project started with a proposition of the Rauma environmental school's teacher Laura Puolamäki. As I knew already that I will be writing this central nuclear story, I was glad to work with environmental subject with the children. I liked very much the idea and the contrast. My project was to make them write and sing some experimental songs about plants and biology, but keep some fantasy in the texts.

I decided to divide the sessions in 2 weeks differently. The first one was a work-shop. The second one shooting outside in the landscape I have chosen. First we collected together some electronics toys and instruments: an old accordion, and some classical school instruments (triangle etc.). We called this collection "the laboratory" and the children were invited to make it like a chemical solution.

Then we had long conversation about science fiction subject, and started to invent some unlikely stories. I asked them to illustrate some story they have invented with the instruments we had in "the laboratory". They made some 3 minutes concerts, trying to follow this idea.

We made two visits at the environmental school, where I have asked Laura to talk about exotic plants like she would be telling tales. Children wrote some stories, mixing their own language and some scientist words Laura taught them. Coming back at the theatre where we used to work, they made some short concerts with the lyrics/stories they've written at the environmental school.

I showed them some movie extracts and asked them to remake precisely the sound track with the instruments of the laboratory from "Les vacances de monsieur Hulot" by Jacques Tati, "West Side Story" by Robert Wise and "Fort Apache" by John Ford. From "West Side Story" by Robert Wise I asked them to remake what they've extracted from the first fight-dance between the two bands.

In the second week I took them to the construction area where I wanted to film them. They were disguised to white overalls and with their instruments they played and acted following my directions.

Banana Children Orchestra and The Palm three projects were filmed and the final movie **White Ferals** was part of the Common Ground exhibition at the Lönström Art Museum in fall 2007.



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