

ROSANA CADE

WALKING:HOLDING



IMAGE CREDIT: ROSIE HEALEY

Created by Rosana Cade
With Laurie Brown

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ARTS ADMIN.



WALKING:HOLDING FILM STILL

WALKING:HOLDING

“It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognise, accept and celebrate these differences.” – Audre Lorde

Walking:Holding is a subtle, experiential performance that involves one audience member at a time walking through the city holding hands with a range of different people on a carefully designed route. Born out of a series of ‘holding hands experiments’ in Glasgow, with both same sex and mixed sex couples, the piece asks people to challenge prejudices in the flesh, and experience what it is to walk in someone else’s shoes - or hands. The work is focused on exploring the experience of queer and minority identities within a city, and at the same time is a broader experiment into what can be learnt when two strangers share an intimate moment in public. It also asks questions of the social diversity and cultural codes within each city that it takes place.

The participants, or hand holders within the piece are a group of local people from a range of different sections of the community. The aim is to get people who are different ages, races, genders, sexualities and social backgrounds to participate, to create a diverse and rich experience for the audience member. This performance is about bringing very different people together to walk hand in hand in public. It’s about flesh to flesh experiences of difference. It hopes to encourage greater understanding amongst people who experience it, and to open up new possibilities for ways of being in public space, and ways of being with each other.

Walking:Holding was first created in Glasgow in 2011 and has since toured to over 35 cities across the UK, Europe and to Hong Kong, working with local participants in each place.

A creative documentary based on the project, made in collaboration with film makers Claire Nolan and Charlie Cauchi, is also available for touring along with a participatory workshop adaptable to different groups and contexts.



IMAGE CREDIT: BAS DE BROUWER

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

Audiences sign up for an individual slot starting every 15 minutes. The performances can either be scheduled as a single 3-hour block (12 audience members), or 4.5 hours (18 audience members) spread out across a longer period of time with a break e.g. 11.00-13.30 - break - 15.00 - 17.00.

At the time of their slot, audience members are taken by an usher to a starting point in a public space. Here the usher asks them to close their eyes, take three deep breaths, and then open their eyes and the performance begins. Whilst their eyes are closed the usher will leave them and the first participant will start walking towards them, greeting them once they've opened their eyes. They are then invited to go for a walk holding hands with the first participant, and told that they can talk and they can be silent and both are fine.

They walk together for about five minutes along a pre-designed route, before being handed over to the second participant. They spend five minutes with each participant, before meeting the next one and taking their hand. This continues through the town until the final participant leaves them at the end point, normally a short walk from the starting point. The experience normally lasts 30-40 minutes with 6 or 7 participants taking part.

The hand overs between the participants and the route of the walk are carefully designed, but the interactions between participant and audience are unscripted, leaving space for genuine connection and response to what happens around them, be that in silence or through conversation.



IMAGE CREDIT: BAS DE BROUWER

PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

The experience of the participants is central to **Walking: Holding**, and they are led on a carefully considered process across the week. Many participants have had profound personal experiences through taking part and also made new connections with people in their local town.

Firstly, there is an exploratory workshop where they have a chance to get to know each other, explore their relationship to the town/city they are in, share experiences and ideas surrounding identity, holding hands and intimacy. The group should be comprised of people with a range of different experiences, which creates a rich intersectional dialogue around these themes.

Two days later they come back together for the rehearsal. In the interim Rosana and her assistant will have planned the route for the performance partly based on the information they took from the group in the workshop. In the rehearsal the performance is discussed in more detail and they are taken around the route and each shown where they will be positioned. The rehearsal is dedicated to making sure everyone feels confident and comfortable in what they're doing, with plenty of time for any questions that come up.

Across the performance days emphasis is placed on the well-being of the participants, with plenty of discussion and reflection time built into the experience. There is always an importance placed on there being ample refreshments. The performance can be exhausting and intense, however Rosana and the team are well experienced in caring for a wide range of participants and making sure it's an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for those who get involved.

FURTHER INFORMATION

DOCUMENTATION

Short film about the project: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6z_BjZRXuJl

QUOTES

“Everyone acknowledged the astute provocation in Cade’s seemingly simple concept, with its flesh and blood challenge to prejudices and its honouring of individuals and their differences.” – The Herald

“Cade’s gorgeous embrace of a piece forms a meditation on intimacy and difference, offering the attractive promise of a pause within the constant noise of the urban space... What eventually emerges from the experience, on a personal level, is a spirit of quiet defiance, of refusal to be deterred by others’ looks or opinions.”
– Exeunt 2013

“Walking: Holding was for me a project of enacting the simplicity of love. An act so simple as holding hands with another human being. For me the experience was very touching and emotional. The energy and the care of the group lifted me up and made the distance to the people in the street a bit smaller somehow.”
– Participant in Copenhagen in 2016

PREVIOUS TOUR DATES

Tanzquartier, Vienna, Austria	2019
Kampnagel, ‘Gender Mainstreaming’, Hamburg, Germany	2019
Valletta 2018, Malta	2018
Pugs in Love at Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany	2017
Wildwuchs Festival, Basel, Switzerland	2017

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- 3 people on the road
- Minimum 1 week preparation time for workshops with participants, route design, rehearsals and performances
- Participants to be recruited locally
- Studio space provided for workshops
- Private space provided on the performance route for participants to gather before and after the performance



IMAGE CREDIT: PARI NADERI

ROSANA CADE

Rosana Cade is a Glasgow based artist who mainly works in live performance. Their practice is rooted in a queer feminist discourse and straddles performance, live art and activism. They are drawn to liveness as a potent site for connection with an 'other', and their work often dances between the joy and difficulty of connecting intimately with others. They create work in a range of forms and contexts to reach different people with varying approaches, and are passionate about collaborative practices.

Rosana was part of the SPILL National Platform and Showcase in 2013, a National Theatre of Scotland and Arches 'Auteur' in 2014, when they also received a Culture2014 commission to travel to India to make a new work. They were an Artsadmin artist bursary recipient 2014/15, and artist in residence at the Marlborough Theatre in 2015. Their work has been shown extensively in UK, and they also regularly tour across Europe, with strong connections to Kampnagel in Hamburg and Gessnerallee in Zurich.

Rosana collaborates with their partner as Cade & MacAskill. In 2017 they were commissioned by Fierce Festival, The Marlborough and The Yard Theatre to create 'MOOT MOOT', which is currently touring and will be part of the Made in Scotland and British Council Showcases at the Edinburgh Fringe 2019.

Rosana is a co-founder of the radical performance collective //BUZZCUT// who support live art and experimental performance in Glasgow with a strong community focused ethic. Rosana regularly creates and performs work under the direction of Nic Green, with Laura Bradshaw, and also works in various other collaborative partnerships.