

The Finnish National Theater in Kontula

– an example of a local project in
suburbs

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KANSALLISTEATTERI

Routes to Kontula (Reittejä Kontulaan) is an audience participation project of the Finnish National Theater

- Kontula is a big, multicultural suburban area in Eastern Helsinki which has no theater activity on its own.
- The *Routes to Kontula* project aims to create joy, community and well-being to the area of Kontula and the whole Mellunkylä.
- In the course of the project we have done several performances, workshops and other activities in the area with local residents.
- The project is partly funded by the City of Helsinki Cultural Office, and it is an example of the new Helsinki model.

Routes to Kontula 2013: what is the identity of Kontula?

- **The first year** the aim was to get people from different background to meet each other, *The era of Kontula (Kontulan aika!)* play was written by a dramaturg and performed by the local residents.
- Different workshops with schools, elderly people's day care center, football club, different local associations for example with pensioners.
- Every month we participated in public events in Kontula – Mellunkylä area.



Kuvataiteen iveri!

Työssä ja vapaa-ajan Facebookissa!

Kuvataiteen iveri!

Raitteiden Kontula







Routes to Kontula 2014: home

- In the **second year** the main goal was to explore the bad reputation of the area by doing a site-specific performance on the Kontula shopping mall. We also aimed to reach youngsters living in the area.
- *Destination Kontula* - a theatrical guided tour to the Kontula shopping mall (*Matkakohteena Kontula*) and *Territories – a play about youngsters living in Kontula* (*Elinpiirejä*).
- We also did workshops with different immigrant groups, which we aimed to connect with native Finnish groups through our common topic: home.







Routes to Kontula 2015: Moving and migration

- **Third year** the aim is to try reach the migrant backgrounded people living in the area and to create encounters between them and native Finnish people.
 - *"Let's get together"* -workshops with migrant class in Kontula premiere school and with Kontula pensioners.
 - *Muuttajat* workshops during spring 2015 where migrant share their stories about moving.
 - *Muuttajat* play coming on October 2015 featuring people from the previous workshops and a professional actor
- We also aim to help the TeKo group to start their independent process in creating theatrical activity to the area after our project officially ends.



Olemme turisteja!
Etsimme paikallisopasta!
Näytä meille mielestäsi
näkemisen arvoinen
paikka lähistöltä.
Valitettavasti emme puhu,
mutta ymmärrämme ja
kuuntelemme kyllä
kiinnostuneina.

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NOPS

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Ennen reikyyk.







How to do a successful local project?

- A clear aim for the whole project.

What does the project give to a participant, not what does it give for the project.

- Co-directors with pedagogical skills and interest to work with challenging groups.
- Enough time to gain the trust.
- Financial resources.
- Pre-studying phase, what kind of area this is and what does it need? A constant dialogue with the residents and organisation in the area.

Challenges

- To find and to motivate the people to work with you.
 - Different ways to motivate with different groups
 - Group process challenges in a new group
- Drama as a tool to make people to meet each other.
 - Can drinking coffee be a part of a drama workshop?
 - Finding different ways to commit.
 - Using a variety of applied drama tools (playback theater, forum theater, image theater, street theater, activism, document theater, bodywork, writing...) depending on the group.

The effects?

- Report coming in Spring 2016
- Some people might have changed their opinion about their own residential area or neighbors.
- Drama is a good tool to create conversation.
- TeKo group has started their own process on creating theatrical activities.

Outreaching theater?

- To be part of public conversation on the society.
- National Theaters Touring Stage and previous audience participation work have helped to establish the importance of it in theater.
- Touring Stage aims to take small-scale touring performances to locations which have little or no access to theatre. The Touring Stage's programme also focuses on topical issues which are developed through community research and interaction, reaching out and giving voice to marginalized sectors of society.
 - Exemples: Prisoners project, performances in elderly centers, project with asylum seekers
- To emerge the "silent" in the society
- Also to bring theater and drama more approachable for the people



Reittejä Kontulaan

Kansallisteatteri jalkautuu Kontulaan! Reittejä Kontulaan on Kansallisteatterin alueellinen yleisötyöhanke, joka alkoi 2013 ja jatkuu vuonna 2015! Projekti toteutetaan yhdessä alueen toimijoiden ja asukkaiden kanssa. Tule mukaan!

Etusivu

Projektin vetäjät

Kevään 2015 toiminta

Hankkeen historia

Brief in English

Elinpiirejä-esitys

Matkakohteena Kontula -esitys

Kontulan aikala -esitys

Maailman synty -esitys

Videot ja valokuvat

TeKo - teatteriryhmä

reitejakontulaan.blogspot.fi