

# How Little is Enough?

## Sustainable Methods of Performance for Transformative Encounters

Steinunn Knúts Önnudóttir



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Doctoral thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts at Lund University to be publicly defended on 27th of September at 13.00 in Bryggeriteatern, Malmö Theatre Academy, Bergsgatan 31 B.

*Faculty opponent*  
Professor Rebecca Hilton

Organization LUND UNIVERSITY	Document name Doctoral Thesis	
	Date of issue <b>2024 – 09 - 27</b>	
Author(s) Steinunn Knúts Önnudóttir	Sponsoring organization	
Title and subtitle <b><i>How Little is Enough? Sustainable Methods of Performance for Transformative Encounters</i></b>		
<p>Abstract</p> <p>At the core of this artistic doctoral thesis are four performance projects designed to counter the consumer-driven nature of contemporary performance-making while also addressing the need to develop sustainable methods of performance. Guided by the question: <i>how to construct sustainable methods of performance for transformative encounters?</i> the inquiry transcends the different layers of performance-making to explore the potential of performance as a catalyst for societal change. As a part of the Agenda 2030 Graduate School, an interdisciplinary research initiative at Lund University, the project focuses on existential sustainability and investigates how performance can enhance participants' sense of meaning and motivation for adopting sustainable lifestyles and increasing sustainable awareness. The thesis output is presented in three categories; a <i>performance archive</i> documenting, detailing and analysing the performances and their impact; <i>research publications</i>, disseminating findings and key concepts through different public formats; and <i>method development</i> accounting for the methodological approaches that have emerged through the process.</p> <p>The four performance works of this artistic research are: <i>No Show</i> (2020), <i>Island</i> (2020), <i>Strings</i> (2022), and <i>Pleased to Meet You</i> (2022/2023). The three publications of the project are: <i>How Little is Enough? Embracing and Porous Dramaturgies for Transformative Encounters</i>, a video article; <i>How Little is Enough? A Quest for Existential Sustainability</i>, a video article; and the podcast series <i>Transformative Encounters</i>. Utilizing <i>Me-thod</i>, a pluralistic situated methodology grounded in the artist's personal background and skillset, together with the <i>how-little-is-enough</i> approach, which minimizes production and focuses on essential needs, the project has collected insights into how performative encounters can initiate transformation in participants and foster connections to the world around them, thereby enhancing existential sustainability and nurturing care for the environment. Through repeated cycles of action-based artistic research, employing qualitative materials and autoethnographical approaches, rich data was generated. The findings emphasize the importance of personal engagement, embodiment, and authentic exchange as catalysts for transformation within performative encounters.</p> <p>Through this investigation, the thesis aims to contribute to the development of sustainable approaches to performance-making that facilitate profound and meaningful human experiences in an era marked by unprecedented societal and environmental challenges.</p>		
Key words Relation-specific-performance, Participatory-performance, Sustainability, Existential-sustainability, Porous-dramaturgy, Embracing-dramaturgy, Site-specificity, Human-specificity, Agenda 2030, Ecology, Do-it-yourself-performance, Performative-encounters, Transformative-encounters, Theatre, Performance.		
Classification system and/or index terms (if any)		
Supplementary bibliographical information	Language	
ISSN and key title ISSN 1653-8617:32	ISBN9 78-91-8104-106-4	
Recipient's notes	Number of pages	Price
	Security classification	

I, the undersigned, being the copyright owner of the abstract of the above-mentioned dissertation, hereby grant to all reference sources permission to publish and disseminate the abstract of the above-mentioned dissertation.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_