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PARtir

*Creating a Cultural Roadmap
Towards Responsible
International Mobility*



4 projects in 4 cities over 2 years

The pARTir programme of the Finnish Cultural Institute for the Benelux (2024–2025) **supported Finnish and Finland-based artists in developing international collaborations, presenting experimental projects, and fostering socially and ecologically responsible practices.**

The Institute facilitated **four major projects in Belgium and The Netherlands**, promoting cultural mobility while prioritising sustainability, inclusion, and cross-disciplinary engagement.

2126 audience members

**50,000+ views on
instagram**

58 artists

6 performances

1 exhibition

6 mentoring sessions

5 networking events

2 talks

1 workshop



One Drop

by **Sonya Lindfors** & working group

Project type: Performance

Date: 18–19.10.2024

Partner: Beursschouwburg, Brussels

Audience: 255

Talk: Post-performance talk with **Olave Nduwanje**.

Networking: Dinner with **Daniel Blanga Gubbay** (Kunstenfestivaldesarts), **Marie Umuhoza** (Africa is/in the Future) and **Karliën Vanhoonacker** (Pianofabriek), and study visit to Pianofabriek.

Mentors: Caravan Productions and Hiros

Media hits: 1



Photo: Yohannes Henriksson.



Photo: Yohannes Henriksson.

One Drop

One Drop is a speculative summoning, a decolonial dream, an autopsy of the Western stage and an operetta. Slipping in meanings, leaking through different categories the work dives into the poetics and politics of relations, creating a stage that awakens the ghosts, connections lost or forgotten. It continues Lindfors' series of works dealing with power, representation and Black body politics.

Performers: Isabella Shaw, Maele Sabuni, Geoffrey Erista, Selina Jones, Deogracias Masomi, Marlon Moilanen, Miranda Chambers, Alen Nsambu, DK Fashola

Premiere: Tanssin Talo, Helsinki, 2023

Sonya Lindfors

Sonya Lindfors is a Cameroonian - Finnish choreographer and artistic director that also works with facilitating, community organising and education. In 2013 she received an MA in choreography from the University of the Arts Helsinki. She is the founding member and Artistic Director of UrbanApa, an interdisciplinary and counter hegemonic arts community that offers a platform for new discourses and feminist art practices.



Photo: Yohannes Henriksson.

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The Brussels community greatly benefited from the performance, finding deep resonance with its themes and representation. The after-talk was invaluable, and Sonya and the crew built a strong network with local activists and artists, creating mutual benefits for all involved.

– Beursschouwburg staff member

When I grow up, I will become a coat rack

by **Jenni-Juulia Wallinheimo-Heimonen**

Project type: Exhibition

Date: 7.2-13.4.2025

Partner: 1646 Experimental Art Space, The Hague

Curated by: **Clara Pallí Monguilod** and **Johan Gustavsson**

Audience: 1452

Talk: Sensory lecture performance [*Artificial Sauna Stories*](#)

Networking: Networking dinner with local cultural professionals and VIP preview

Mentors: **Kemal Gorey** and **Amanda Cachia**

Publications: [In conversation with **Christopher Samuel**](#) (in collab. with 1646) and [in conversation with **Josefien Cornette**](#) (in collab. with the Institute)

Media hits: 3





“Emotional”

“An exhibition that stays with you”

“Hilarious, but quietly so”

“Eye opening, eerily beautiful”

- Exhibition visitors at 1646





Photo: Maija Lindström.

When I grow up, I will become a coat rack

Blending activism with richly detailed textiles, film, and installation, *When I grow up, I will become a coat rack* offers a provocative and imaginative look at the systemic marginalisation of disabled people. Across three immersive rooms, each carefully designed in colour, texture, and sound, visitors encountered layered, non-linear narratives that challenged conventions around care, agency, and access.

1646 commissioned composer **Kemal Gorey** to create a score for *How Great Is Your Darkness?*, an originally silent piece made mostly by disabled artists and activists, critiquing hate speech about people with disabilities in social and health care.

Jenni-Juulia Wallinheimo-Heimonen

Jenni-Juulia Wallinheimo-Heimonen is a multidisciplinary artist and disability activist who works with textile art, installation, film and performance. In 2024 she was one of three artists selected to the Pavilion of Finland at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia.

She has osteogenesis imperfecta as a piquant characteristic.



“

We will carry the insights gained from this collaboration forward, applying them to our future exhibitions as we continue working towards greater accessibility and inclusivity.

– 1646 staff

Parachorale

by **Teo Ala-Ruona** and working group

Project type: Performance

Date: 17-18.5.2025

Partner: Vleeshal Contemporary Art Center, Middelburg

Curator of Dutch programme: Jim van Geel

Audience: 94

Networking: 50 curators and cultural professionals from Amsterdam and Rotterdam invited to performance

Mentors: Legacy Russell and Simona Castricum

Media hits: 1



Photo: Fabian Landewee.



Photo: Fabian Landewee.

Parachorale

Parachorale continues Ala-Ruona's series of works addressing the psychosomatic extremes of transcorporeality and paranormal potential. As the sequel to his solo *Lacuna* (2021), it speaks to the experience of inner dissonance. At its heart lies the desire to share an under-the-skin world and to create a new understanding of reality with the audience.

Performers: Teo Ala-Ruona, **Caroline Suinner**, **Anni Puolakka**, **Pauliina Sjöberg**, **Tuukka Haapakorpi**

Premiere: Baltic Circle, Helsinki, 2024

Teo Ala-Ruona

Teo Ala-Ruona is a multidisciplinary artist based in Helsinki, working in the fields of performance, contemporary theatre, and choreography.

Ala-Ruona's work has recently been shown in The Biennale Architettura 2025 (Venice), Performa Biennial (New York), and Fundació Joan Miró Museum (Barcelona).

In 2025, Ala-Ruona was awarded the Linnamo Foundation Award for openness in artistic work.

"It's wonderful to bring Parachorale to the Netherlands for its premiere, as this piece is very dear to me and I've never performed there before. I find the Dutch performance art scene very interesting, and I think it's important for the work to reach new audiences beyond Finland."

- Teo Ala-Ruona





Renaissance

by **WAUHAUS**

Project type: Performance

Date: 30–31.5.2025

Partner: SPRING Performing Arts Festival, Utrecht

Audience: 325

Networking: Invited guests **Gregor Runge** (Theater Bremen), **Thomas Edlinger** (Donaufestival Krems) and **Santa Remere** (New Theatre Institute of Latvia).

Study trip to Toonelhuis, DeSingel and VIERNULVIER in Flanders organised for 10–12.12.2025

Mentors: Hiros and AnAku

Workshop attendees: 13

Media hits: 4

Renaissance

WAUHAUS made its long-awaited Dutch debut at SPRING Performing Arts Festival with *Renaissance*, a ritual of transformation, radical imagination, and pleasure. The audience was invited to surrender to wonder, change, and play—an ode to dreaming and the power of the unknown.

Performers: Samuli Emery, Samuli Laine (WAUHAUS), Alen Nsambu, Ritni Ráste Pieski and Kauri Sorvari

Premiere: Dance House Helsinki, 2024

WAUHAUS

WAUHAUS is a Helsinki-based multidisciplinary arts collective founded in 2016. Their work moves between different artistic genres and has been presented in a wide range of venues, from galleries and intimate black box theaters to urban spaces, large stadiums, and the main stages of renowned theater houses.

Known for their comprehensive audiovisual aesthetics and collaborative creative process, WAUHAUS consists of scenographers **Laura Haapakangas** and Samuli Laine, director **Juni Klein**, sound designers **Jussi Matikainen** and **Heidi Soidinsalo**, choreographer **Jarkko Partanen**, and managing director **Julia Hovi**.



Photo: Sofia Okkonen.

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pARTir is a very well designed programme supporting the international exposure of artists as they step into the international market.

- SPRING staff



Key Impacts of the pARTir Programme

1. International exposure & sustainable artistic mobility

- Artists presented their work to new audiences beyond Finland, gaining visibility in the Benelux.
- Supported career development at a critical stage, furthering entry into the international cultural field.

2. Audience engagement & cultural resonance

- Audiences experienced deep connections with the themes of the works, stimulating reflection and dialogue.
- Talks and interactive formats strengthened community engagement and cultural impact.

3. Institutional learning & accessibility

- Partner institutions identified barriers in physical accessibility, communication, and programming.
- Insights gained are being applied to future programming, enhancing equity and accessibility across the arts ecosystem.

4. Networking & collaborative capacity-building

- Strengthened professional connections between Finnish and Finland-based artists and Benelux-based cultural actors, activists, and organisations.
- Mentoring sessions and workshops expanded skills in international touring, conceptual development, and audience engagement.

pARTir – Creating a Cultural Roadmap Towards Responsible International Mobility was a collaborative project between the Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes (SKTI) and ten Finnish cultural institutes operating abroad.

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture awarded a special grant of €726,000 to the pARTir project as part of the European Union's cultural and creative industries structural support (Rescue and Recovery Facility RRF) in the fall of 2023. The RRF is one of the programmes under the European Union's Next Generation EU recovery instrument.

Partners from the Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes network included: FinnAgora – The Finnish Institute in Hungary, Finnish Cultural Institute for the Benelux, The Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland, the Finnish Institute in Japan, The Finnish Institute in Madrid, the Finnish Cultural Institute in New York, The Finnish-Norwegian Cultural Institute FINNO, Institut finlandais – the Finnish Institute in France, Finnland-Institut – the Finnish Institute in Germany, and the Finnish Institute in Estonia.



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