

Abstract BIN Norden -oktober 2007

Temaet:

Det estetiskes betydning i medier, kunst og kultur for barn: I kulturformidling i møtet mellom teater spilt av ungdom og barnepublikummet.

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Biografi: Rikke Gürgens Gjærum (1972)
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Research experience:

- Applied theatre; Disability and theatre. Theatre in the working life.
- Communication and problem solving.
- Deaf culture, empowerment, sign-language.
- Identity and belonging.
- Including theatre and the intellectually disabled.
- John Dewey and Hans-Georg Gadamer 's aesthetic theories.
- Direction and theatre organisation.
- Culture politics in Norway.
- Hermeneutics, action research, grounded theory and research interview.

Inclusive Theatre Research

- based on children's experience with extraordinary/(dis)ability theatre

This paper emphasizes the importance of including young actors with a disability in the research on disability theatre in the means of "inclusive research methods". The Norwegian applied theatre researcher Gürgens Gjørøum will present a new study on the audiences' experience with extraordinary theatre productions. The background of this study is her previous studies and doctoral thesis on disability theatre with deaf and intellectually disabled actors

127 questionnaires, from adults and children, and focus group interviews of 21 children from 7-9 years old, is the data that the research project is built on. The data will be discussed up against the theories of John Dewey, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Hans-Thies Lehman and the Swedish disability art-studies of Lennart Sauer (2004) and Jens Inland (2007).

The children audience seems to be more aware of the *ability* that the disabled actors show on stage in relation to the theatres aesthetic dimension, than the adult audience. The adults try to categorize *who is disabled* on stage, while the children are *sucked into* the mystical arena of theatrical narratives in the performance. The most interesting result in the study is the importance of interaction on stage between theatre, music and stage design as experienced by the audience. The post-dramatic theatre as Lehman describes it, seem to be an accurate way of communicating the fact that every human being is able to use her ability on stage in the framework of professional art producers. In this type of theatre it is possible to turn (dis)ability to ability, in an aesthetic experience of both the audience and the actors.