

# Why theater work in the SWW?

- The SWW expanded their statutes 10 years ago. Our important new task is to operate and promote arts and culture in the SWW.
- We consider professional acting as a form of emancipation and an opportunity to create a distance from the usual social space where MDVIs normally spend their lives
- All arts, including theatre, is a niche which the MDVI can occupy to really feel integrated and included .
- To achieve this goal, it is important to maintain certain criteria.

## Whom does the theater troupe consist of?

- Adults MDVIs, based on the general labor market, have no chance to get a proper job.
- They work 3 days a week in a shelter workshop and two days in the Theatre workshop.
- Currently there are 7 people in the current SWW Theater Company, including 6 men's and one woman.
- Three men have been doing theatre-acting for 10 years and are now very advanced actors. The other three men still have to improve themselves and to perfect their acting skills
- All the participants really aspire to become professional actors

## **Professional theater with MDVIs also requires a team of professionals**

Basis of our work is:

1. imagination without limits.
2. the desire to act, because it is all about the theater.
3. a playful / serious, uncompromising work on artistic expression of the actors and the performance itself

## **Professional theater with MDVIs also requires a team of professionals**

Our core team consists of:

three professionals from the theater branch and three colleagues from the educational branch with additional training in the field of arts.

Sacha Anema, the director, Susann Bieling a stage and costume designer, Susie Wimmer a professional dancer, Marc Eitel a event engineer, Christiane the teacher with additional training in assistant director and Kuni Frey the cultural producer manager

## Which attitudes and qualities should the team have?

- they should be minded open
- they should enjoy breaking taboos
- they should like experimenting
- they must be able to listen
- they should be able to give ground
- they should have a feeling for the interpretation and the expression of the actor so that things on the stage fall into place
- they need to understand the theater and art in general as exceeding the previously existing forms

## Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW

- The theatre can be very versatile and it's hard to prioritise its forms or cast them in a mould.
- Generally, an essential part of theatre, is a collective reflection on reality. A part of reality is not perfect, so theatre with disabilities should therefore not really be unusual, but rather representing this reality and giving us a slice of it.

## **Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW**

- We do not perform for social institutions, parents of the MDVI`s or their educators.
- We want to perform for an open minded audience that is ready to be inspired to think, an audience is willing to get involved into powerful emotions, which is keen on surprises and receptive for the novelty.

## Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW

- We don't want our actors to be pitied by the audience but to be admired in their own right. Pieces that don't move the audience have no place on the stage.
- For professional theater with MDVI's it means that you should think twice about where you should show the theater piece as your final product.



## Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW

- Arts, including the theater, need no justification. It is not pragmatic, it is playful and it crosses the boundaries and taboos of every day life. New perspectives open up.
- This also applies to the art with MDVI's. Art with disabled people doesn't have to be justified, we don't have to "defend it" by emphasizing its therapeutic or educational value. **It's art for art's sake**

## Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW

- Theater with disabled actors, if it is a good one, should not have the therapy in mind, but art for art's sake, to please the audience. The therapy is conducted here as a nice byproduct so to speak, the primary focus here is in the artistic process itself.
- As for the involuntary therapeutic effect, if at all, it should be felt both by disabled and able-bodied participants actors & spectators alike!

## **Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW**

- The theater with MDVI`s should involve quite different learning methods, relying on the individual perception of an actor amongst other things. We have to understand special, symbolic expression of the actors and bring out their unique worldview and show it to the audience.
- Other views, other expression, styles of the actors should be taken seriously. This style might strike one as unusual, perhaps overstepping the usual boundaries or contradicting the formal logic, but it is precisely this style that creates tension& suspense

## Style and goals for professional theater work with MDVI from the perspective of the SWW

- The theatre with disabled players embrace two important factors: it aspires to offer a professional standard at the same time emphasizing the particular manner of the artistic expression of these specific actors .
- Even though the theatre is self-contained, public performances should be our ultimate goal.

## Basis of our work

- “We make use of the available potential”. We try to show what the actors do best, what sets them apart from all other actors.
- We find themes that inspire the imagination and enhance their self-expression.
- We aim at the authentic, rather than glamorous expression. These also include, for example loudness, bold expression, unrestrained power alongside with quieter and more delicate forms.

## Basis of our work

- The main goal of our theatre work is not to change people, like the main goal of therapy.
- But we take the artist as they are, we acknowledge all their skill, contributing to their power of expression.
- In the work process, we encourage, and support the actors, we are patient with them and we learn a lot with and from them.

## Basis of our work

- If we succeed in showing the actors "otherness", their authenticity, their unique perspective and perception by allowing them to fully express themselves, it will make them unbeatable.
- Nearly every professional actor is afraid of this.



## Basis of our work

- Do we want to rob them of their authenticity, which of course we can do and adapt ourselves to conventional acting, to become “controlled agents” in a general sense, the MDVI’s will never give their best. Imagine someone is not good at articulation having to recite long texts.
- We don’t want to reduce disabled actors to a common denominator.



## **How will the development look like?**

Theatre with MDVIs naturally belongs to our culture, it is recognized and promoted like other arts within our culture and it is measured by standards of art.



**How will the development look like?**

**What we do not want?**

That the theater with MDV`s is bound to an educational and an therapeutic areas only, being represented just in social institutions like some kind of “art of solace”.



# Greetings from the “Blindgänger” from Munich

Thank you for your  
understanding and your  
attention!