



**Artistic Practice, with hybrid artist Nathalie Mellbye:  
“If you really want to develop something new, failure is the  
greatest gift.”**

Spanning the gamut – from scenographer to Theater Director to Artistic Director. Watch the new “Artistic Practice” film, with hybrid artist Nathalie Mellbye, a film that revolves around Mellbye’s developmental journey.

Nathalie Mellbye is the newly appointed Artistic Director at Sort/Hvid Theatre, located in Copenhagen’s former meatpacking district. Working out from her background as a scenographer, she has managed, in the past few years, to distinguish herself as a stage designer with her expressive visual and immersive works, which are simultaneously poetic and mercilessly raw.

As a hybrid artist she combines an array of professional specializations and formats – within herself and embedded in collective creation practices – as dance performances, theatrical presentations, music, performance art and installation art all come into being as new forms of experience.

*“What is very interesting to me is how we can combine formats and how we can challenge frameworks and skills, so that we create new forms for art. As far as I’m concerned, it’s a matter of constantly continuing to play a part in developing the performing arts and pushing for what one might expect to be able to experience in the theater,”* says Nathalie Mellbye, Artistic Director at Sort/Hvid and previously resident artist at Aarhus Theatre.

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In the new film, *Artistic Practice with Nathalie Mellbye*, you can hear Nathalie as she speaks in greater depth about her cross-disciplinary work, and you can experience its impact in several artistic processes.

### **Expressive aesthetics and the inspiration from Stanley Kubrick**

During her teenage years, it was Stanley Kubrick's film works and his saturated aesthetics and scenographies that were effective in arousing Norwegian-born Mellbye's interest in scenography's potentials and eventually led her to want to study in Denmark.

In 2021, Mellbye returned to Kubrick's stylized and effective visuality, humor and theatrical universe with her staging of "A Clockwork Orange" at Aarhus Theatre. Here, the scenography's steel scaffolding and diabolical graffiti murals on rough-wrought aluminum foil set the scene for the seamy sides of human life that were being brought to view in the performance.

*"As a scenographer, I devise an aesthetic that needs to be a universal framework for a performance. I'm interested in collective processes, and it's precisely in the collaboration on a production that I figure out what the core universe essentially consists of, and start to build it up,"* elaborates Nathalie Mellbye, who, as Artistic Director at Sort/Hvid, quite precisely wants to continue with the exploration of new forms of collaboration and sensuous music-dramatic worlds.

### **Human vulnerability is both a management method and an artistic goal**

For Nathalie Mellbye, it's not a matter of attaining perfection. However, she does see beauty in the imperfect and perceives vulnerability and the courage to fail as some of the most important elements in a work process.

In as much as Nathalie Mellbye is constantly building further on her artistic reservoir, she is accompanied by her tacit belief that what can give the most to the audience is when the art works' developers and performers allow themselves to be courageous, vulnerable, and intuitive. She regards the imperfect as a field of opportunity that renders it so that something greater is at stake, and this gives rise to intimacy, heartfelt vigor and energy. And these elements can be generously conveyed to the audience in the theater's present-tense and relating space.

*"Nathalie Mellbye has already shown the audience her huge artistic potential, and as a hybrid artist with a distinctly cross-aesthetic ambition, her practice represents a meaningful and important aspect of the future's performing arts. I am really looking forward to seeing how she is going to unfold her practice as Artistic Director at Sort/Hvid,"* says Dina Vester Feilberg, Director of Art in The Bikuben Foundation.

This will also be manifest through her artistic leadership at Sort/Hvid, where Nathalie Mellbye is nurturing a distinct ambition aimed at continuing to work further with human management methods that can embrace vulnerability and promote experiments and collective development power.

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Watch the new film: *Artistic Practice with Nathalie Mellbye*

### **About Nathalie Mellbye**

Nathalie Mellbye was born in Norway and has been educated in Oslo, Malmö and Copenhagen.

Since September 2023, she has been the Artistic Director at Sort/Hvid in Copenhagen, which aims to create music-dramatic pieces that confront their own contemporary time.

She has been Aarhus Theatre's resident artist from 2020-2022, where she also directed and created performative events at Studio Scenen. Moreover, she has worked as a scenographer at the Royal Danish Theater, the Royal Danish Opera and Nørrebro Theater.

Together with Anja Behrens and Patrick Baurichter, Mellbye has also created "Logen" – an experimenting and cross-artistic collective, which has been especially unfurled under the auspices of "Toaster".

Nathalie Mellbye has been educated as a scenographer. However, throughout the trajectory of her career, she has continued to grow as a performer, auteur, theater director and stage producer, through an assortment of collective and workshop-oriented, processual praxes.

### **Central works**

Traum, The Aarhus Theater, 2023

Frankly My Dear I Don't Give a Damn, The Aarhus Theater, 2022

Odysseen [The Odyssey], The Royal Danish Theater, 2022

A Clockwork Orange, The Aarhus Theater, 2021

En fortælling om blindhed [Essay on Blindness], The Aarhus Theater and Sort/Hvid, 2020

Symposion [Symposium], The Royal Danish Theater, 2019

### **For more information:**

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You can read more about Nathalie Mellbye and about Sort/Hvid by clicking onto:

<https://www.sort-hvid.dk/>

### **About Artistic Practice**

Artistic Practice is a close-up-to-the-person and close-up-to-the-work film-portrait of a Danish artist, artist duo or artist group showing particularly promising practice and potentials. Bikubenfonden is making Artistic Practice available to artists as a link in an

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internationalization of Danish art. The objective is to contribute to elevating and strengthening the artists' visibility in their on-going careers.

*Artistic Practice with Nathalie Mellbye* has been produced by Meeto Film for Bikubenfonden.

Read more about Artistic Practice [here](#).

**Upcoming artists in the Artistic Practice series:**

Set designer and artist Sif Freya Hestnes

Visual artist Jessie Kleemann

Visual artist Hannah Heilmann

Visual artist Lina Hashim

Visual artist Tove Storch

**Previous releases in the Artistic Practice series**

Visual artist Kristoffer Akselbo

Director Anja Behrens

Visual artist Linda Lamignan

Visual artist Marie Munk

Visual artist Jens Settergren

Artist studio HOW TO KILL A DOG

Artistic director Marie-Lydie Nokouda

Visual artist Jakob Kudsk Steensen

The artist duo Astrup and Bordorff

Choreographer and designer Gunilla Lind

Theater director Sargun Oshana

Visual artist Alexander Tillegreen

Visual artist Hannibal Andersen

Visual artist and choreographer Jules Fischer

Choreographer Hilde I. Sandvold

Scenographer and costume designer Ida Grarup