

SDU DESIGN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR APPLIED THEATRE



WHEN: 28 JUNE 19.00 – 1 JULY 14.00 2014

*University of Southern Denmark, Kolding
2½ hours by train from Copenhagen Airport
or 45 minutes by car from Billund Airport*

SDU Design at the University of Southern Denmark invites researchers, teachers and professional actors to attend a seminar on how applied theatre methods can contribute to developing learning and research methods in the university. For the past 20 years, applied theatre methods have been used in public and private companies to support organisational development, innovation and learning. Result oriented businesses and improvisational theatre have found common ground – this kind of collaboration can be beneficial also for Universities!

At the PIN-Conference 2013 in Lahti, 16 theatre people worked with 100 researchers, which generated a mutual interest in developing a deeper collaboration between people with very different backgrounds, skills and knowledge.

SDU has used theatre over the past 5 years to advance learning and research in both business and public organisations and higher education. There is now a growing interest to further explore the educational and research potential of applied theatre. It is generally recognised that the inclusion of theatre when working with students, involves them in ways that foster a focus on learning that is more concerned with the development of personal skills and reflexive capabilities, in particular when dealing with the social dimensions of working together. This, as opposed to considering learning solely as the acquisition of factual knowledge. When working with design research, we have seen that theatre enables students and researchers to grasp levels of complexity in the social processes otherwise difficult to work with or observe. It seems that through the simultaneous cognitive, bodily and sensory aspects of doing an inquiry together, neglected or ignored dimensions of learning are brought into play.

As much as this use of applied theatre in higher education and research projects appears to work and generates alternative learning for students and researchers alike, it raises questions and engenders a number of possibilities as to how to move forward. How and why does it work and how can its use further higher education student learning? What can we do to integrate the use of applied theatre into university education and research?

We would like to further explore these fields in collaboration with researchers and educators who have used theatre, are researching on the use of theatre methods, or are interested in doing so, and actors and theatre practitioners who have experience in applied theatre.

In the Applied Theatre seminar there will be no keynote speakers or presentations of papers, but lots of experimental activity. The program will be created based on what experiences participants bring along. The agenda includes:

1. Short introductions to the main themes of the seminar.
2. Workshops where actors, researchers and teachers work in separate groups to exchange experiences and thoughts which leads to questions that enter into -
3. 'Open Space' workshops where participants explore issues of interest and challenge each other. Participants organize the workshops on the spot.
4. Discussions in plenum where we try to gather and formulate findings from the workshops and talk about how to use this in our work. Hopefully this will also lead to concrete research projects in the future.

Participants: 20 Theatre Practitioners and 20 researchers/teachers (some of you may see yourself covering all three – fine!). To participate, please send a brief position statement, detailing your take on theatre, and your CV.

Seminar fee: 200 €. Covers participation, three lunches, a party dinner; coffee a.s.o.
B&B and hotels are available for between 50 € - 150 € a night.

Registration: Before 15 May 2014 by email to Preben Friis, SDU Design Theatre Lab
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Organizing Committee:

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