

S

dance
for
children

deStilte



preface

*If you fail in copying from a master you succeed
in birthing an original art*

Being an artist from a time when originality was the first condition to mark a work of art as successful, I initially watched the developments of the last decennia with some astonishment. What used to be considered unauthorized plagiarism, was now labelled a 'citation' without impunity.

When someone stirs up issues from the past, the Dutch compare it to 'pulling old cows from a ditch'. Well, here the old, milked bovines were being dragged to dry land to have their udders pulled all over again with little compassion. Painful for the animal, painful for the arts. Or perhaps just hurtful for old artists. I am an old artist. Fortunately, in my process of increased understanding, it has dawned on me that these once strictly separated concepts of imitation and imagination effortlessly blend in with each other.

Well then...:

Imitation and imagination in a nutshell

Imitation and imagination aren't clearly distinguished. Does the flawed imitator in fact show his originality? Is deviant behaviour original by definition? Do we, as Kandinsky claims, create from nothing?

Imitation versus imagination. Reality is clear when the options are reduced to black and white. However our desire for clear answers may be: there's no better way to violate reality than polarisation. In the words of philosopher Cornelis Verhoeven: 'Once the idolization of clarity starts, victims will fall.' Without nuance, without a sense of complexity or the pursuit of depth, the grass is green, the sky is blue and God with us.

There's no sense for us in reinventing what is already here. The existing is the board from which to jump into the new. Imitation and imagination feed off each other. It's fun to paraphrase Pippi Longstocking: 'I have never tried that before so I think I should definitely be able to do that'. Long live (over)confidence, but hardly ever is a symphony written without historic reference. We lavish ourselves on an almost immeasurable multitude of impressions that connect within our thoughts and feelings.

Through the failed attempt to copy the master, the apprentice succeeds in birthing original art... Imitation and imagination, failure and success. Chance opens many doors. In search of the wrong, the right was found.

This calls for modesty. Place the art on a pedestal and have the artist stand beside it.

Jack Timmermans, Breda, October 31, 2024



motivation

reality

Without imagination, reality is inconceivable. An intense inner world determines the universe, an individual's inner world.

'All my life, from the earliest days, I have experienced imagination, my own as well as that of others, as salvation. That is the source of de Stille.'

– Jack Timmermans, artistic director de Stille

the world

Children are born into a world that's been around for a long time. A world turning, with everything fixed. Each and every one in it has found their place, for better or for worse. To educate means to introduce, to prepare and to show the way in what already exists. Imitation and imagination are characteristic for all children, and used to conquer a place in that world.

The ability to imitate serves the purpose of survival: nothing is easier than doing what others do. It's a pragmatic skill that leads to safe, levelled paths.

Imagination takes us to new grounds, summoning new vistas and broadens our understanding. Without imagination, there is but one reality: the one we already know. In a rapidly changing society, that is not enough. If we want peace, we'll have to embrace the unknown.

mission

de Stille has the ambition to get children acquainted with dance as an eyeopener to the unknown. To touch children. To affirm children, to stimulate and reassure them in their state of vulnerability, in their 'otherness', their creativity. Nothing as encouraging than the realization you're not the only one; that in shared experience, there's solidarity to be found, and empathy.



European projects

BABEL

From 2023 to 2027, de Stijl is a partner in the European project BABEL. BABEL, or the Art of Listening in Theater for Young Audiences, is a collaborative project involving 14 European partners working within the realm of youth theatre. BABEL aims to investigate the communication process, intercultural dialogue, and fostering mutual understanding in the creation of performing arts for young audiences.

Mapping

For the European project Mapping, de Stijl collaborated with 18 companies and festivals in 17 countries all over the continent. Together, we gave an impulse to performances for early years: babies, infants and toddlers.

Eyecatchers

for the very young | age 1 – 6 | stage-on-stage

In the beginning, the world was uninhibited.

Life was so pristine, curiosity triumphed
over fear and anger.

Like the open mind of the one observing the world, that pristine. The sound of water, the stream of movement, nature was wordless. To explore was easy-peasy; every touch a new adventure.

Two dancers and a musician go back to that beginning. Unusual instruments and unusual encounters become evident, simply because they are around.

“After the show, everybody heads for the hallway to put on their shoes. An excellent opportunity for me to have a chat and collect some opinions. Most parents are particularly surprised by their own fascination being so fully captured throughout the performance. Time flew by in a blink. From the parents, nothing but positive response. Most of all, of course, they enjoyed how much the children liked it all. For my part, it was very nice to see that non-Dutch-speaking moms and dads bring their children to this performance as well.”

– Maike Kanen, [Kidsproof Eindhoven](#)

Up close to the performing area, the audience is seated on sheepskins, benches and the first few rows of the theatre stands. Audience capacity depends on the possibilities of the venue.

concept Helene Jank, Gertien Bergstra en Femke Somerwil

choreography Gertien Bergstra, Femke Somerwil

musical composition and performance Helene Jank

dance performance two members of our ensemble

costume design Aleksandra Pershay

lighting design Twan Mensen, Rob Touwslager

set design Bert Vogels

More information: [Eyecatchers](#)



Come and Go

family performance | age 4 – 14

A singer and a dancer meet

It's not easy to get acquainted with each other. To reach out and let go again. Especially if one of them is a singer and the other a dancer. How awful the singing, so horrible the dancing! It's a lot easier to make fun of the other. To silence that voice. To turn your back. Preferably, you make the other fall on her face and get yourself out of here.

Before you know it, the two of you start getting familiar, and nothing is strange anymore. You can come and go and stay together forever and ever. Until it's time to let go.

choreography Jack Timmermans

assistant choreography Gertien Bergstra

dance member from our ensemble

live vocals Kelly Poukens

lighting design Pink Steenvoorden – Einstein Design

set design Jack Timmermans

Worldwide copyrights to the music of George and Ira Gershwin as used in this production are licensed by the Gershwin®-estate

More information: [Come and go](#)



Down To The Wire

family performance | age 4 – 14 | new version

How closely connected are we?

In darkness and in the light, tables and chairs are flying through the air. Fine lines run between a boy and a girl while the world comes tumbling down. The two of them are in the same boat, live in the same house. If they give each other space, it's big enough for the two of them. And time will pass

So much can happen, that you can't even remember who you were and who you have become. But the table, those chairs and that bed remain the same.

“With their engaging, energetic performance, Pilvi Kuronen and Gianmarco Stefanelli know how to captivate the audience, both young and old. This is poetry, not in words but in motion.”

– Emmanuel Naaijken, [Brabant Cultureel](#)

“In large, clear movements, the choreography unfolds to music composed especially for this production by Stevko Busch for piano, cello and accordion (...) It's unlikely that the children can fully comprehend to the poetic content of the choreography but undoubtedly a seed has been planted - or a thread spun.

– Francine van der Wiel, [Theaterkrant](#)

choreography Jack Timmermans

assistant choreography Femke Somerwil

dance two members of our ensemble

music Stefan Busch

costume design Aleksandra Pershay

lighting design Pink Steenvoorden - Einstein Design

set design Bert Vogels, Jack Timmermans

More information: [Down To The Wire](#)



Half Stories

family performance | age 6 – 14

With a bunch of unfinished stories, it's not easy to match the right halves. Semi-truths hardly ever go together. To assume, that together they'll form one whole truth is an illusion

The stage features a large revolving disc, divided in two. A bookcase on one side, a wall on the other. Two worlds, one inner and one outer world, oblivious of each other. In front of the bookcase are two chairs where one can read in peace. Music is coming from behind a cabinet.

With the wall gradually breaking down, peace and order disappear. Undivided, the universe expands into chaos and turmoil. Can a new puzzle be solved with the old pieces? Which pieces still belong together? Which people belong together? What are the consequences if the order is broken and the trusted division collapses.

Half Stories is a coproduction by de Stijl and TOEAC. Formed by Pieterl Berkers and Renée Bekkers, TOEAC is an internationally acclaimed accordion duo, known for their groundbreaking interpretations and versatile collaborations. From prestigious stages worldwide to innovative music theatre productions, the duo brings a dynamic repertoire, uniting classical music with contemporary influences.

new performance

concept & choreography Jack Timmermans

dance three members of our ensemble

musical composition and live performance TOEAC

lighting design Pink Steenvoorden - Einstein Design

set design Jack Timmermans

set realization Einstein Design, Noest Creatieve Projecten

More information: [Half Stories](#)



1-2s

all ages | dance at school

An encounter between two dancers

Dance duets on location, performed on a surface of 3.5 x 3.5 meters, surrounded by the audience on three sides.

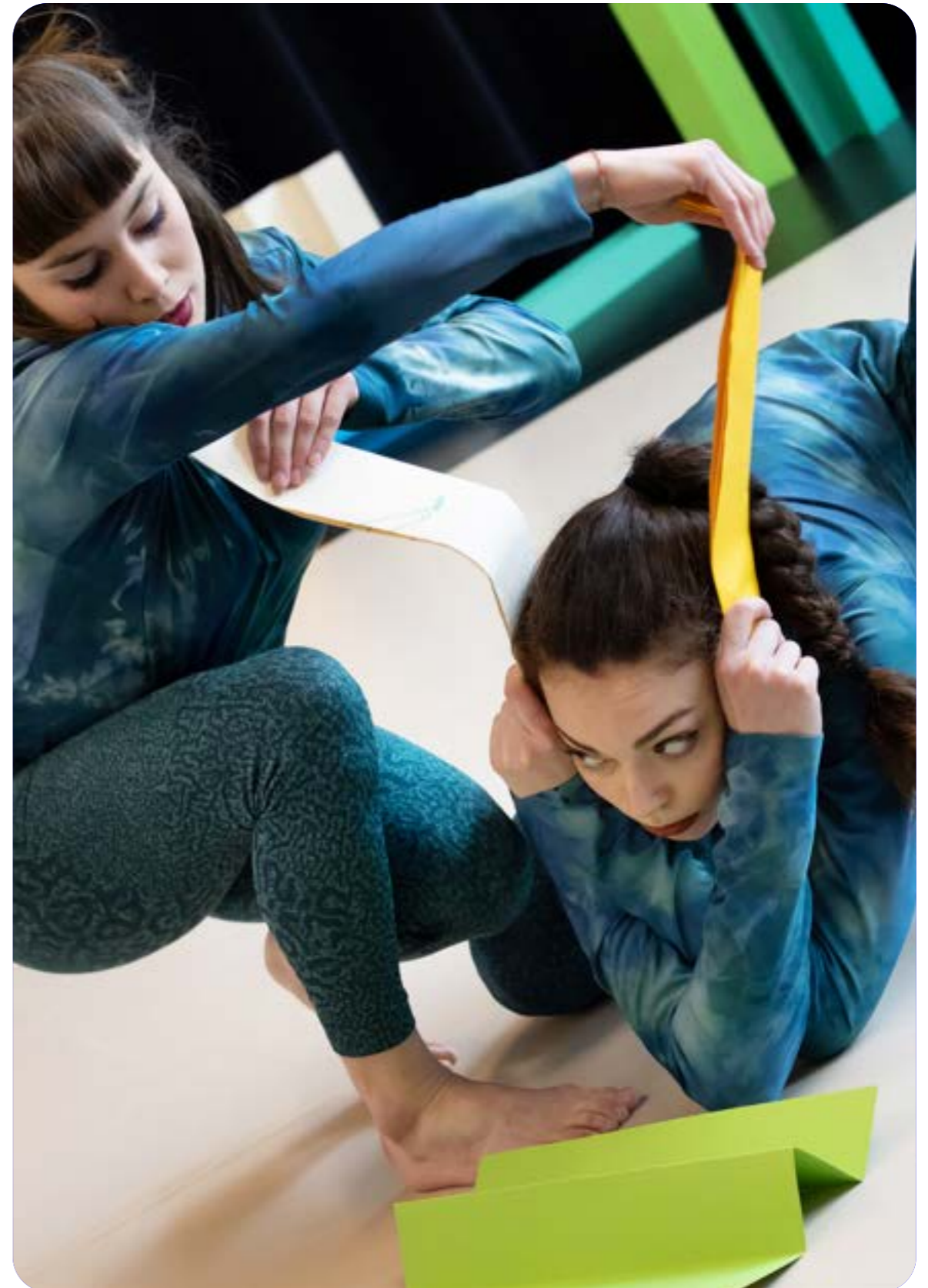
Right in front of the spectator, a confrontation between two dancers unfolds. In a time span of ten minutes dance is being studied. The experience of what you see can be doubled in the workshop that follows.

Choreographed by Jack Timmermans, Christelle Dreyer, Gertien Bergstra, Nche L Lethhogonolo, Femke Somerwil and Lidia Wos, de Stille offers duets for various age groups.

“The children were welcome with all their personal ‘baggage’ and, within clear boundaries, they were allowed their space. By inviting the pupils to dance and move themselves, the performance came to life even more. An excellent combination!”
– Marieke, primary school teacher at de Dromenvanger

choreographers Jack Timmermans, Christelle Dreyer, Femke Somerwil, Nche L. Lethhogonolo, Gertien Bergstra, Lidia Wos
dance two members of our ensemble

How does it work? Watch the video: [1-2s](#)



information

performance	age	capacity	live music from	dancers	duration	playing surface
Eyecatchers	1 – 6	stage on stage 75 visitors	Helene Jank	2	45 min. inclusive epilogue	6 x 6 x 5 m. 9 x 9 x 5 m. inclusive audience arrangement
Come and go	4 – 14	scholen 180 visitors	Kelly Poukens	1	45 min.	9 x 9 x 5 m.
Down To The Wire	4 – 14	schools 180 visitors		2	45 min.	9 x 9 x 5 m.
Half Stories	6 – 14	scholen 180 visitors	TOEAC	3	50 min.	9 x 9 x 5 m.
1-2s	all ages	class activity to a maximum of 35 visitors		2	60 min.	3.5 x 3.5 x 3 m. space 6 x 10 x 3 m.



For more information about booking a performance, contact Maarten van Herwijnen at maarten@destilte.nl



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Gemeente Breda

Colophon

Photography Hans Gerritsen, Rosa Meininger, Erwin Penners, Sammie Goijarts

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