

# Five Encounters

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8 - 12 August 2023

Vildskud Teaterfestival @ Huset KBH

Curated and produced by Copenhagen Platform

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## Project overview

In *Five Encounters*, audience members experience five interactive one-to-one performances around the theme of **power**. The five performances happen one after another, creating a high-impact experience in which the theme of **power** is experienced and explored from a range of different perspectives.

The theme of **power** has never been more relevant than it is right now. #MeToo revealed the endemic abuse of power in many contexts: the movie industry, politics, big business, even charities. Big Tech promised to liberate and democratize the world through freedom of information and then did the exact opposite - creating Surveillance Capitalism, in which every step we take is monitored and monetised. And politics ... where to begin with that?

Suffice it to say, the question of **power** is an extremely hot topic right now, and there's a feeling of urgency around how to engage with and tackle these problems. With this as the context, *Five Encounters* invigorates and mobilises its audience by experientially deepening their understanding of **power**.

## Relationship between form and content

This theme works well because the question of **power** is inherent to a one-to-one performance. The audience member is placed in a vulnerable position, not knowing what is expected of them or how they should behave. The artist places themselves in a position of **power** but it is a fragile one, as audience members can do something unexpected and even potentially dangerous – as Marina Abramovic discovered in her performance *Rhythm 0*.

It feels particularly exciting to develop this piece in Copenhagen, where little interactive one-to-one performance is currently happening. One-to-one performances offer exciting and challenging possibilities, disrupting audience passivity and mobilising them to become more engaged. This form is closely linked to the theme of **power**: through this shift into engagement and action, real and lasting change can happen.

*Five Encounters* is Copenhagen Platform's first offering of this type of work – a step towards building a vibrant culture of interactive one-to-one performance in Copenhagen.

## Who is this performance for?

We have placed *Five Encounters* at Vildskud Teaterfestival because it attracts a young engaged audience looking for surprising and innovative theatrical experiences. This young audience is ready to step outside its comfort zone and be challenged. They are also deeply engaged with how to make meaningful change around the problematic issue of **power**.

Through its format, which invites interaction, engagement and courage, *Five Encounters* invites its audience to consider that they have more **power** than they imagine. It also makes them face their complicity in these problems.

*This age is our age  
But our age is rage sinking to beige  
And yes our children are brave  
But their mission is vague - Kae Tempest*

Through this powerful experience, the young audience at Vildskud Teaterfestival can feel empowered and perhaps get a little clearer on the work ahead of them.

It is a privilege for us to explore this theme with this audience, and we are confident that the learning will be mutual. This is a common experience when making one-to-one performance, because unexpected and surprising things happen in the interaction between the artists and the audience members.

## The Artists

The encounters are created by four reputed international artists (Denmark, Germany, Australia, Belarus). These artists have been chosen for their bold, progressive, experimental approaches to theatre-making. They are artists with strong track records of creating interactive experiences and performances, in both theatrical and non-theatrical contexts.

The artists are invited to interpret the theme of **power** through the lens of their own practice. Copenhagen Platform's founder J Newman Allen works as a dramaturg, bringing cohesion to the overall experience by teasing out the intersections, overlaps and points of friction between the individual pieces.

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