

MYTHO? Lure of Wildness

By Anna Kohler



Project Description

Theater artist Anna Kohler, longtime associate member of The Wooster Group, presents her new interdisciplinary performance work, MYTHO? Lure of Wildness.

Directed by Caleb Hammond created with a team of artists from New York and Boston, MYTHO? explores the relationship between muse and creator, subject and object, model and artist—and what is at the center of the creative mind. The work combines live performance, video, aromas and intimate, three-dimensional sound in order to create moments of the euphoric experience of Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) in the audience while transporting them through Kohler's memories.

MYTHO? is an unabashedly passionate celebration of Kohler's experience of both creating and consuming art. In the performance, she recalls her own artistic awakening as a young model in France, and the audience, immersed in a sensory experience of enhanced stimuli and vivid images, experiences that world of heightened vulnerability and sensuality through the model's lens. Kohler evokes the artists who originally ignited her own sense of self as an artist, and draws their work into the production's disciplined visual aesthetic.

Artist Statement



I have always been fascinated by the complex, crazy relationship of model and painter in art - or actor and director in film and theater, just how the sparks between these two poles make the artistic self suddenly burst open and turn into a wild animal.

The artists that really made that fascination click were Henri Matisse - how his muses set his mind on fire - and Robert Bresson, who developed a whole philosophy for the performers in his movies and their relationship to him as director. With Caleb, I was able to take all my experiences in France that instigated the longing for wildness in my life, mix them with these influences of Matisse and Bresson, and turn them into material for this piece.

Hapi became a complete chameleon performer, as he embodies the painter who is sometimes Matisse, or what I think Matisse dreamed of being, as well as so many other characters from my imagination. There are several other performers who embody different versions of people in my imagination, particularly my younger self.

The "wildness explosion" happened in two phases: first when I arrived in Paris, where my eyes were opened to art, then when I arrived in the South of France - where my eyes were opened to color and sensuality.

Just like Matisse.

- Anna Kohler

Creative Team



ANNA KOHLER - CREATOR/PERFORMER

Anna joined the New York experimental theater scene in 1982, she has worked on stage with some of America's most respected playwrights, actors and directors, and was a longtime collaborator and associate member of America's foremost experimental theater company The Wooster Group. In 2003, when she reprised her role as Natalya in the Group's revival of *Brace Up!*, her performance was praised in *The New Yorker* as the "emotional center" of the show. Her film work includes Raoul Ruiz's *The Golden Boat*, Hal Hartley's *The Book of Life*, Bruno de Almeida's *On the Run* and Peter Sellars' *The Cabinet of Dr. Ramirez*, among others. As an author/director, she has conceived and directed plays that have been performed in Austria, Germany, Brazil, and the United States.



CALEB HAMMOND - DIRECTOR

Caleb has worked variously as a director, actor and visual artist at venues worldwide including the Nishida Art Museum Toyoma Japan, the New Haven festival of Arts and Ideas, Satellite Art Fair Miami, Highways Performance Space Santa Monica, The Kitchen NYC, Maison des Arts Paris and the National Theater of Hungary.

His directing work includes: *Prop 8*, staged reading at Carnegie Mellon, featuring *The Book of Mormon's* Rory O'Malley; *1000 Wolves* at Incubator Arts Project, NYC; *Walks Through Walls* at Highways Performance Space, Los Angeles; *How Delightful to Know Mr Lear*, in the New Haven Festival of Arts and Ideas; *Mac Wellman's Antigone* at Carnegie Mellon; *SICK* at UndergroundZero Festival NYC and *FIRE* (sex and death), at Divaldo Kampa, Prague.

CREDITS

MYTHO? was presented at Abrons Arts Center in 2016 with video design by Automatic Release and Sound by Almeda Beynon.

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Terminology and Technology

Autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR)

MYTHO? investigates Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR), a reaction that some people have to certain kinds of sensorial stimulus. Low sounds create an intimate, pleasurable physical experience. ASMR is increasingly popular online, where it is experienced by just one person at a time; MYTHO? attempts to evoke the response in an entire live theater audience. Sophisticated audio technology enables the audience to hear actors on stage seemingly in very close proximity to their own ears; a soft-spoken, pleasant voice and other sounds provoke feelings of relaxation and exaltation, causing each audience member to share a unique sense of intimacy.

LINKS

Anna's Website - annakohler.com

Video - <https://vimeo.com/204937532> (PW: Kohler)

Shaun and Lauren's Website - automaticrelease.org

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Touring Specifications

VENUE MEASUREMENTS:

A site visit may be required. The set is adaptable to a variety of spaces and will premiere on a stage 26 x 37 feet (or 8 x 11.2 meters).

SAMPLE SCHEDULE (subject to change depending on location, venue, season and technical capacities.):

Day 0 - Tech team arrives.	Day 5 - Performance #2.
Day 1 - Load in. Performers arrive.	Day 6 - Performance #3.
Day 2 - Load in continues. Technical rehearsal.	Day 7 - Performance #4.
Day 3 - Technical rehearsal.	Day 8 - Performance #5 - Load out.
Day 4 - Technical rehearsal. Performance #1	Day 9 - Depart.

TRAVELING COMPANY:

9 people (5 performers, 3 creative/technical team, 1 director)

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

The production requires 3 projectors and a standard theatrical lighting and speaker package. Access to workshop may be required (or provisions made for some light building). Other specialized equipment will be brought by the company. Wardrobe facilities are required.

RUN TIME: 100 minutes

CONTACT:

Anna Kohler akohler@mit.edu +1 917 447 2035