

Culture

Dance review: The Swedish dancers in *The Playground* makes the children play and laugh

Jane Iltanen



The children did balance exercises in Seikkailupuisto 'Seikkis' under the leadership of Annasara Yderstedt.

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The Playground is a site-specific work and the movement material is improvised. Rebecka Jonsson was inspired by the slide.

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FINFRINGE

ANSADANS: The Playground

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After the Stockholm ensemble Tyst Teater had to cancel its Thursday performance when the truck driver with their props did not arrive in Turku, the new festival for performing art FinFringe began on Friday with the performance *The Playground*, aimed for young children. It is an interactive dance work, where the children in a playground get a taste of dance camouflaged to play.

The Swedes Rebecka Jonsson and Annasara Yderstedt arrive at Seikkailupuisto 'Seikkis' a little stealthily, but the children soon discover that something interesting is going on.

The dancers move across the area and improvise their movement material together with the children and by utilizing the park's lay-out facilities. No one has to participate, but the children let themselves be attracted by the dancers so eagerly that there are few who do not want to be where it happens. "What is she going to do now?" and "Where did the other disappear?" the children ask each other.

Both the slide and the climbing frame as well as a stone lying on the ground give inspiration to fascinating material.

The Playground is a brilliant work. It is undoubtedly skillfully performed but also gives the children a natural opportunity to dance. They are not encouraged or taught to perform movements, but the dancers' wordless dance is simply so attractive that the children want to mimic Jonsson's and Yderstedt's movements. Rarely do you see such a successful and holistic interactivity that has nothing artificial or contrived in itself.

Occasionally, the speed and the noise increases, but at no stage do the dancers depart from the sensitive and light character of their movements. Yet they manage to keep the crowd of dozens of children in their grip.

The beneficial effect of art has been discussed for years. This is *The Playground* a good example of. During and after the performance, both the children and the adults have a big smile on their faces. Thanks to the dancers, the children also got their exercise for the day.

After seeing *The Playground*, I have the desire to recommend daycare centers and schools to make greater use of dance artists in their activities. Go at least and see the *The Playground* on Saturday at 11 am in Barkerinpuisto - unless otherwise for the laughing children's sake.

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