

The Antidote

15 - 26 October 2024 (5 performances)
LiteraturHaus, Møllegaade 7, 2200 KBH N

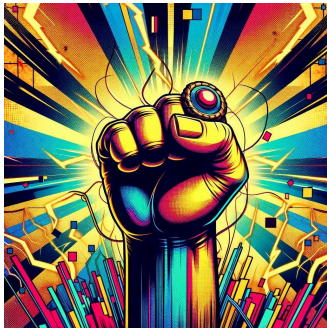
A [Copenhagen Platform](#) and [LiteraturHaus](#) co-production

Project overview

The Antidote is an interactive performance event that explores human connection, creativity and citizen engagement. It imagines a near-future where Copenhageners, mediated by a domineering AI, are even more disconnected from each other and glued to their screens than they are today. In this world, being together is a dangerous act of rebellion.

By exaggerating the problems we face today, **The Antidote** addresses many of our pressing social issues: the epidemic of loneliness, our declining focus and a steep rise in mental health issues. Rather than discussing these issues, the project gives audiences a lived experience of how to counteract them.

Having made a successful first version in March, we are applying for funding to expand the show. This time we'll work in partnership with an established venue to deliver 5 performances for up to 400 people, increasing and improving the immersion and interactivity.



All Hail **The Antidote 2.0!**

*In the shadowed corners of a world usurped by an iron-fisted AI, **The Antidote** emerges not just as a rebellion but as a canvas of human resilience.*

*Beyond the revelry, it is the profound sense of unity that leaves its mark. **The Antidote** is not just a party; it is a microcosm of our potential to rediscover, to connect, to frolic. In the dance of anarchy, hedonism and hope, we find a mirror to our collective soul.*

– Michael Barner-Rasmussen reviewing The Antidote v1, March 24

What we learnt from the first version

With generous support from København Kommunes Scenekunstudvalg, we staged the first version of ***The Antidote*** at Bobuska in March.

The original project description can be found here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1l-Q5TQ5YK8gtpis3_PkF3FeZE8h984VC/view?usp=share_link

Documentation of the performances can be found on our website here:

<https://www.copenhagenplatform.com/antidote-v1-docu>

Following the performances, we asked our audience for feedback through a range of channels. This is what they told us:

- the subject matter is highly topical and relevant to Copenhagen audiences
 - it is powerful to surrender smartphones for the evening
 - the interactivity and participation is enlivening and connecting
 - people appreciate the quality of the cabaret, its diversity and its queer focus
 - there can be more roleplay and a fuller deeper immersion
 - there can be a greater sense of impending danger
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What will ***The Antidote 2.0*** look like?

We can see that Copenhagen audiences are excited by the kind of interactive event we've created: a combination of LARP, immersive performance, cabaret show and party.

The Antidote 2.0 builds on what we've made and takes it up to the next level.

A bigger and more broad-ranging cabaret show

The audience loved the cabaret at the heart of ***The Antidote*** and they want more of this. For this version, the core crew will create 1-2 pieces each for the cabaret, and we'll have a range of guests appearing on the cabaret stage.

Keeping our queer focus and tapping into the strengths of our expanded crew, the cabaret will include contemporary dance, performance art, spoken word, burlesque, Iranian traditional singing, jazz vocal and more.

More interactivity and roleplay

Our audience want to engage more deeply with their roles and characters – in fact, they consider this the most exciting element of the show. In version 2.0 we'll make the Live Action Role Play (LARP) elements more integral to the design of the show.

To realise this, we have engaged a world-renowned LARP designer to serve as consultant on the show. She will help us design the LARP elements to be as impactful as possible.



Increased scale and size

The first version of ***The Antidote*** sold out a week before we opened and many people contacted us for cancellations and returns. To meet the clear demand, we'll move the show to a bigger venue, enabling us to increase the number of people who can enjoy the show and the number of performances.

To support the show's growth, we are excited to co-produce ***The Antidote 2.0*** with LiteraturHaus, a well-established venue with a great track record in theatre, performance art, live music and queer cabaret.

Who is this performance for?

We correctly surmised that this interactive cabaret party attracts a young queer audience deeply engaged with our themes of playfulness, presence and connection.

Based on this, we will continue to focus our marketing efforts on this target group, using our strong connection with The Lighthouse Association to bring in about half the audience. This includes those who attended the first version, many of whom told us they are looking forward to the upgraded version.

Our marketing strategy is developed in partnership with LiteraturHaus, so much of the marketing will be embedded in their email and SoMe marketing. LiteraturHaus has a diverse audience, including many queer and non-binary folk, that are a great fit for the show.

By mixing Lighthouse members with the LitHaus audience, we continue our mission of engaging, exciting and empowering Copenhagen theatre-goers to engage with the kind of immersive and participatory work we love to make.

Who is behind this performance?

The Antidote is a co-production between LiteraturHaus and Copenhagen Platform.

LiteraturHaus is Scandinavia's first literature house, a meeting-point for established and budding writers as well as musicians, artists and all those interested in literature. LiteraturHaus hosts and co-produces **The Antidote** as part of its annual programme, that brings together literature, music and theatre events in its stunning centrally-located House. <https://www.literaturhaus.dk/>

Copenhagen Platform is a collective of artists and theatre-makers led by Newman Lønbæk Yellen. It is a vehicle for interactive performance with a leaning towards the uncanny and the bizarre. CPHP has presented its work at Vildskud Festival, Bobuska, Illutron and Huset-KBH. <https://www.copenhagenplatform.com/>

To ensure continuity as we expand the show, this version includes most of the original crew, as well as new collaborators with broader experience. For this production the lead artists are:

Matilde Kjær Hilligsøe



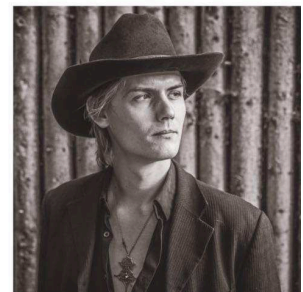
Peiman Fallahian Sichani



Anna Thim



Harald Tokværd



This exceptional group brings together a wide array of experience, including jazz and Iranian folk singing, theatre and performance art, games theory and design, feminist theory and contemporary dance. They were all involved with the first version of **The Antidote**.

In addition to this core group, we have confirmed two of the artists from the first version of **The Antidote** to continue developing the show with us:

Morten Skovgaard Andersen
Aragorn Xavier Nikolei Damgaard.

Newman Lønbæk Yellen (formerly J Newman Allen), who originated ***The Antidote*** and was a lead artist in the previous version, steps into the director's chair for this new version. Newman is an experimental theatre-maker and performance artist with more than 20 years' experience, making genre-defying participatory performances and workshops that provoke and delight. His work combines cabaret, theatre, performance art, personal development and arty party in surprising and unusual ways.

Newman is supported in the creation of ***The Antidote*** by Nina Runa Essendrop, one of Scandinavia's leading makers of Live Action Role Plays (LARPs). Nina will work as a consultant on this project, helping us to create simple yet dynamic ways to deepen audience engagement through character and roleplay.

CVs for the co-creators are included with this application.

What makes this show so relevant right now?

As governments around the world realise the dangers of social media and the existential threat posed by AI, new legislation is being proposed to protect people from harm. This is very important because platforms like TikTok and Instagram cause serious and enduring mental health problems, reduce attention spans and distort reality; and AI is a technology moving so fast that it could be a force for good or ill, depending on how it is evolved.

It is good that legislation restricts the use of SoMe and controls how AI is developed. However, it is important that people are also shown alternatives to technology that are equally engaging and stimulating while causing them less harm.

Although ***The Antidote*** depicts a situation where AI is in control, the show's true focus is on giving people a lived experience of four aspects of our humanity: engagement, playfulness, presence and connection.

Engagement is given a boost in ***The Antidote 2.0***, through the increased gamification of the show. The engagement audiences experience at the event is like a rehearsal for engagement outside, helping to counter the powerlessness that many feel. Participatory events invite a move from passive consumption to vibrant co-creation.

Countless studies have shown that **play** is a vital ingredient in developing creativity, promoting mental flexibility and countering aging in a healthy, natural way. ***The Antidote*** creates an environment where adults of all ages can rediscover the joy of play together.

Over the past two decades, clinical trials have shown the importance of **presence** for mental health and inner peace. Whatever the activity – whether it be yoga, mindfulness or dance – doing something with our full attention is good for our minds and bodies. By taking people’s phones away and giving them a vibrant participatory environment to engage with, we support the audience to develop their presence in a group setting.



Finally, we help to counter the epidemic of loneliness that haunts our society by creating a supportive social environment in which folks can experience **authentic connection** with each other. Our audience told us that this was one of the best things about ***The Antidote*** – a social space in which they could explore being braver versions of themselves.

Through these four qualities, people get to discover the value of their humanity, temporarily freed from technology. We feel that few topics are more important and relevant right now.