

Miff Moore

On My Way



In between travelling is waiting. Some say life is a journey and others say that life is what happens to you while you wait. But what about travelling itself? Well that's just waiting to arrive somewhere.

The main thing people were asking me before my departure from New Zealand was whether I was really excited or not. I might have been, but that could easily have been confused with a state of paralytic fear as well. I left by myself.

I flew direct. No looking around. A three hour stop over in Hong Kong. Airports are relatively uninteresting places. Nobody wants to be looked at or to look at anyone else. I sat in a sea of grey carpet and linoleum which seemed to be rising up to swallow the walls and ceilings. I tried to strike up a conversation with some Australians who were on their way to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, but they were mostly uninterested and uninteresting.

I arrived in a heat-waved London and wandered confusedly about for three days before heading numbly north to the Fringe Festival. I felt as if I hadn't actually landed still, and I had been staying with a friend who seemed at odds with herself over whether she should help me or not. "It's tough here mate!" No free rides. I didn't know what I was doing. I just knew I had to keep moving until the panic in my head had dissipated and I could begin to look at my options more calmly. Eventually, after a trip to see an old friend of my sister's in a small town near Belfast, and a pilgrim-like walk down the long road to Jill Greenhalgh's house, I found enough strength and good advice to return to London.

Quite quickly through a line of contacts consisting of my sister's friend's friend's flatmate's friend, I got a job as a follow-spot operator on a dreadfully boring and doomed musical at the Victoria Palace. It was dark and uncomfortable. There were fleas. We sat around waiting to be told to do something and while we waited we drank endless cups of tea and talked about how bad the show was. We laughed a lot about how the lead singer had one ear bigger than the other and about the crazy ninety-six-year-old woman with whom I had ended up lodging. Those were simultaneously some of the most beautifully hilarious and horrible days of my life thus far.

A way out of this flea-ridden, soul-flattening existence came in the form of an email from Geddy Aniksdal of Grenland Friteater, Norway. I had emailed her in awe after having seen her solo-performance *Blue is the Smoke of War* at the Magdalena Aotearoa International Festival (March 1999). She suggested that I could come to her colleague Anne-Sophie Erichsen's acting course to be held for four weeks in November 1999.

I hesitated. I hummed and harred. I worried excessively, but in the end I

threw caution (financial and otherwise) to the wind and decided to go.

Once I had decided to go to Norway I felt, in that secure tummy-located way, that this was the right thing to do. It felt like this in a way prophetic even. I had known that this NZ\Aussie go to London, get a job, drink lots of flat English beer and save money to go look at the world thing, was wrong wrong wrong and only amounted to a lot more misguided waiting for the weekend, for the planned trip to Greece and return home. I didn't want to take two years off from my life, I wanted to feel like I was continually moving forwards. Making the decision to go to Norway was like sticking a finger in the eye of waiting.

The flight to Norway was simple and direct. Gardemond (Oslo Airport) was enormous and exhibited Norway's national preoccupation with cleanliness. It felt really empty after the overcrowded everything of London. I loved it.

Grethe (Grenland Friteater's administrator) met me at the train station in Porsgrunn even though I had only sent her a vague email that said I would hopefully be on that train. I was so impressed and relieved to see her waving hand and smiling face. She took me to her lovely house down by the river and in a way it felt like coming home at

the same time as being completely foreign.

I have been in Norway for two years now. I am often asked how long I am going to stay in Norway and *why* (!!!) have I stayed at all. I can't answer the first part of the question, but what I do know is that for all the deprecatory things Norwegians will say about their own country, I will only say that I stay because of the people I have met here. They are warm, friendly, talented, generous and - well - fantastic.

I have travelled through time and space and within myself and all because of theatre and the existence of The Magdalena Project. There is a time to wait and a time to move (turn, turn, turn) but recognising when this is, that's when I take my life into my own hands.

MIFF MOORE (Aotearoa New Zealand) studied drama at the University of Christchurch, then became a technician for the Theatre and Film Studies Department. In 1999 Miff moved to Wellington in time to work on the Magdalena Festival and a few months later left New Zealand. She is now training with Grenland Friteater in Norway as an actress and working as technician with Guandaline Sagliocco.

Monica Borg Fure Away from It All

To work with concentration, to do the show and then sit with the others in the group - to have a beer after a day's work - is both beautiful and tiring. It is all right to be homesick as long as the tour is going well. I find a certain peace when I am travelling, it is like coming home. I sit there feeling that the world flies by. I let my thoughts wander, not

focusing on anything in particular. My eyes rest with my thoughts, as I look out of the car window at the road. One is stuck, there is no place to go, so why not lean back and let the mind wander.

Nothing compares to leaving one place in search of another. It does something to you! You leave daily family life and get to