

PRISON THEATRE IN SWEDEN

Report for the EU project "Teatro e Carcere in Europa"

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Contents

	Page
1 Introduction	3
2 Issues	3
2.1 Background	3
2.2 Research questions	3
2.3 Purpose and scope	4
3 Method	4
4 The Swedish Prison and Probation Service	5
4.1 Swedes' attitudes towards prisons and probation	6
5 Legislation	6
5.1 The Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions	6
5.2 The Ordinance on Correctional Treatment in Institutions	8
6 Riksteatern and prisons	9
6.1 Pioneer Theatre	9
6.2 Riks Drama	10
6.3 JAM	11
7 Acclaimed prison theatre productions	11
7.1 <i>Waiting for Godot</i>	11
7.2 <i>SJU TRE</i>	13
8 Theatre at prisons in 2005 — an overview	14
8.1 In-house theatre productions	14
8.2 Guest theatre performances	15
8.3 The Service's attitude towards theatre	16
9 Hinseberg	17
9.1 Facts about the institution	17
9.2 Theatre activities	17
9.3 <i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> project	19
9.4 Guest theatre performances	20
10 Storboda	20
10.1 Facts about the institution	20
10.2 Theatre activities — some background information	21
10.3 Theatre activities today	22
10.4 Guest theatre performances	23
11 Österåker	24
11.1 Facts about the institution	24
11.2 Theatre activities	25

12	Hall	27
12.1	Facts about the institution	27
12.2	Theatre activities today	28
12.3	Theatre activities in 1996• 2001	28
13	Gotlands Teater	30
13.1	Background	30
13.2	Activities	31
14	Theatre activities with ex-convicts	33
15	Conclusion	34

List of sources

Annex 1: Organisation of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2004

1. Introduction

Since its foundation in 1999 Riks Drama, part of Riksteatern (Sweden's nationwide theatre), has had ample experience of prison theatre, with productions like *SJU TRE* ('Seven Three') and *The House of Bernarda Alba*.

In early 2005, Riksteatern joined the EU 'Theatre in Prison' project initiated by the Italian cultural body Carte Blanche and supported by the European Commission. The purpose of this project is to investigate and compare various countries' prison-theatre efforts. Project members are responsible for carrying out research on theatre in prisons in their home countries, holding seminars and attending all the relevant international seminars and conferences. Alongside the initiator Carte Blanche in Volterra, Italy - and Riksteatern in Sweden - organisations from France, Germany, the UK and Spain are involved.

This report is the first product of the research on prison theatre in Sweden that Riksteatern will present. The present report is based on a survey carried out during April and May 2005.

2. Issues

2.1 Background

In the 1960s, socially oriented theatre burgeoned in Sweden. Reaching out to new audiences, performances took place in libraries, classrooms, conference rooms, hospitals and prisons. Pioneer Theatre led the way, touring institutions nationwide, and several other independent groups followed suit in the 1960s and '70s.

Pioneer Theatre's aim was to stage for its audiences a representative mix of plays, preferably classics, for therapeutic purposes and as high-quality entertainment.¹ Others, such as Teater Fem from Gothenburg, sought to protest against society's view of how offenders are treated, which was seen as non-caring and punitive. The aim was, through theatre at the institutions, to support the inmates' struggle for freedom and show that the real villains were not prisoners themselves but the holders of top positions in society.²

At Långholmen — now no longer a prison — in Stockholm, the inmates themselves formed a theatre group in the 1960s and rehearsed a series of productions. Revues written by the inmates themselves made up almost the entire repertoire.³

The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs even planned a special report — 'Culture in the Nick'. But sundry discussions and a few memoranda were all that came of the idea.⁴

2.2 Research questions

What is the state of theatrical activity in Swedish institutions in 2005?

¹ Arvidsson, Ann-Mari, *Pionjärteatern – teatern bakom galler och grindar* ('Pioneer Theatre — the Stage behind Bars'), Department of Theatre Studies, Stockholm University, 1971, pp. 3 and 46.

² Interview with Carl Otto Evers, director and dramatist, former member of Teater Fem, 24 May 2005.

³ Tove Asplind & Siri Beer, *Teater ett pedagogiskt medel?* ('Theatre: a Teaching Aid?'), Department of Theatre Studies, Stockholm University, 1998, p. 4.

⁴ Discussion with Sten Månsson, statistician at the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs, 23 May 2005.

This report investigates the Swedish prison and probation system to see whether any theatre activities exist at prisons in this country at present and, if so, what forms they take.

The following questions have been selected as interesting lines of inquiry for the survey:

- Are any theatre activities currently under way for inmates at these institutions?
- If so, what is the nature of these activities?
- Are there any visits to these institutions by touring theatre groups?
- What is the attitude of employees in the Prison and Probation Service towards theatre in institutions?
- What relevant laws and ordinances exist?

2.3 Purpose and scope

The purpose of this report is to survey how far theatre activities exist at Swedish institutions in 2005 and to describe these activities, if any. The report also provides an overview of the Swedish prison and probation system, and its institutions, and an account of some key theatre productions at institutions over the past few years.

The report is based mainly on discussions and interviews with employees in prisons and probation, and the individuals actively engaged in theatre at the institutions involved. In other words, no prison inmates have been interviewed about theatre activities. The author has also opted not to include press opinions about theatre in prisons.

3. Method

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service is divided into five regions and 35 local Prison and Probation Authorities. These authorities are responsible for their respective areas' closed, open and non-custodial institutions and remand centres.

The survey of theatre in correctional institutions was based on discussions with inspectors and heads of theatre programmes, and recreational leaders in charge, at the Prison and Probation Authorities concerned. The author was in touch with all 35 of the authorities nationwide. In many cases, the author also conferred directly with officers with corresponding functions at the institutions.

Following the overview, the author opted to conduct in-depth interviews with people who are currently, or have previously been, involved in theatre at prisons. The interviews were largely based on the questions listed in the questionnaire compiled for the EU 'Theatre in Prison' project. The interview results are presented here, along with information on the institution in which the activity concerned was being conducted.

Information about the prison and probation system in general has largely been taken from the website of the Prison and Probation Service and its own publications. Similarly, facts have also been sourced from Riksteatern's website. In the past, very little was written on the subject of theatre in prison in Sweden. However, the author has found it useful to read dissertations on the subject and also anthologies about theatre or correctional treatment of offenders, where short passages touch on the topic.

To date, no statistics or information have been compiled on theatre activities in prison by cultural institutions and organisations such as the Council for Cultural Affairs, Teatercentrum

and the Swedish Centre of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), or by the Prison and Probation Service itself.

4. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service⁵

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service is part of the Swedish judiciary and seeks, in cooperation with the police, prosecutors and law courts, to reduce crime and increase security in society. The Service is responsible for:

- remand centres
 - for people suspected of offences, who are remanded by courts pending trial
- prisons
 - for people sent to prison for committing offences
- non-custodial treatment (probation)
 - for people suspected of offences (personal investigations in criminal court cases)
 - for people with sentences other than imprisonment (e.g. community service)
 - for people who have been released from prison (who are under supervision).

In April 2005, there were 4,732 inmates in Swedish prisons. Roughly one convict in five has committed a drug offence. Almost as many have been convicted of violent crimes. People convicted of murder or manslaughter make up only a few per cent. Of all inmates, 93 per cent are men and 54 per cent have been in prison before.

There are 59 prisons in Sweden, from Haparanda in the north to Ystad in the south. The oldest prison in the country is the Norrköping institution, which opened in 1790. The last prisons to be built were erected in the 1980s, while many old prisons from the 19th century were simultaneously closed.

There is currently a shortage of places in prisons. This is because the number of inmates has risen in recent years, which in turn is due partly to the longer sentences meted out by the law courts. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service therefore plans to build 1,100 new prison places in the years 2005•08. Just under 9,000 people — mostly warders — are employed in the service.

The objective of the service is to reduce crime and enhance security in the community. People who serve their sentences must be able to do so in a safe way, and it must be impossible for them to commit new offences during this time. By exerting influence in the form of programmes to change a criminal lifestyle and treatment for drug abuse, the Prison and Probation Service seeks to reduce the risk of a person committing further criminal acts.

The Swedish prison and probation system is intended to be humane. The focus is on helping convicts achieve lives free from crime and drugs. The aim is that they should be better equipped to cope with a life in freedom when they leave their institutions than they were before. The vision of the service, in a nutshell, is therefore 'Better Out'.

4.1 Swedes' attitudes towards prisons and probation⁶

Early in 2005, the Swedish Prison and Probation Administration (which runs the Prison and Probation Service) conducted a nationwide opinion poll of popular attitudes to the prison and

⁵ Swedish Prison and Probation Service, www.kvv.se, 21 May 2005.

⁶ Swedish Prison and Probation Service, www.kvv.se, 23 May 2005.

probation system. Between 27 January and 6 February, 1,063 randomly selected respondents aged 15•99 answered a few brief questions about their opinions of Swedish prisons and probation.

A massive majority, 92 per cent, proved to be of the opinion that Sweden's correctional treatment of offenders is humane. The gender distribution of responses was, moreover, even. In reply to the question of what they regarded as the function of the prison and probation system, punishment or rehabilitation, 66 per cent thought it should be rehabilitation while 32 per cent opted for punishment.

5. Legislation

An account of the legislation concerning prisons and probation, and the inmates' obligations and rights in terms of employment, leisure, parole, etc, is given below. These aspects can be linked to the question of whether it is possible, in the legal sense, for inmates to take part in, for example, theatre activities at or outside their institutions. In prisons and probation, theatre is usually classified as a recreational, specially arranged or other structured activity.

5.1 The Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions⁷

Swedish Riksdag

Swedish Code of Statutes (SFS) No. 1974:203

Ministry: Ministry of Justice, Division for Crime Policy (KRIM)

Heading: Act (1974:203) on Correctional Treatment in Institutions

Issued on: 19 April 1974

Amendments: up to and including SFS 2005:43

Reprint: 1990:1011

Section 4

Correctional treatment of offenders in institutions shall be designed to promote the adjustment of inmates to society and counteract harmful effects of the deprivation of freedom. In so far as this can be done without the requirement of community protection being neglected, activities should focus from the start on measures that prepare inmates for life outside the institution. Their release shall be prepared in good time. (Unofficial translation of the Act, 1981:213)

Section 5

Correctional treatment of offenders in institutions shall be planned and implemented in close collaboration among the various bodies of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. In so far as realisation of the purpose of offenders' treatment requires inputs from other community bodies, the requisite collaboration shall take place with representatives of such bodies.

In the planning of inmates' treatment, consultations with the same shall take place. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 2003:410)

Section 7.3

/.../ For anyone serving a prison sentence of four years or more, a special decision shall be taken concerning the conditions applying to its implementation with respect to institutional placement and full or day parole, temporary absences and implementation outside the institution. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 2001:510)

⁷ Swedish Parliament, www.riksdagen.se, 16 May 2005.

Section 10

Inmates shall, during working hours, be given opportunities for employment, instruction, education, work training, specially arranged activities aimed at counteracting crime or substance abuse, or some other suitable occupation that is, as far as possible, conducive to their prospects of becoming integrated into the community after their release. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 1998:559)

Section 11

To facilitate their adjustment to society, inmates may be granted day parole outside the institution during working hours to perform work, attend instruction or education, receive treatment or participate in some other specially arranged activity.

However, day parole may not be granted if, owing to specific circumstances, it may be feared that the inmate will abscond, relapse into crime, or engage in abuse of alcohol, drugs or other addictive substances... /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 1999:46)

Section 12

Inmates are obliged to take part in the activities and engage in the occupations assigned to them. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 2002:307)

Section 14

Inmates shall be given opportunities for suitable leisure activities. They should be encouraged to pursue interests of their own that can contribute to their development. In so far as it can be suitably arranged, they should be enabled to follow what goes on in the outside world by means of the press, radio and television. Their need for diversion should be satisfied on a reasonable scale.

If it can be suitably arranged, inmates should be given opportunities for temporary absence from the institution in order to participate, in their spare time, in associations, clubs or other, similar activities that are devoted to facilitating their adjustment to society. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 1999:46)

Section 17

During the time in which they are obliged to engage in occupations, inmates shall remain with other inmates. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 1990:1011)

Section 24

In so far as it can be arranged without detriment, inmates may have personal possessions and obtain or receive books, magazines, newspapers and other materials that can provide diversion during their spare time. /.../

Section 32

To facilitate their adjustment to society, inmates may be granted permission to leave the institution for brief temporary absences (normal parole) unless there is an evident risk of further criminal activity or substantial risk of substance abuse. /.../

Temporary absences may also be granted if there are particular reasons for so doing other than that referred to in the first paragraph above (special parole).

For normal or special parole, conditions may be imposed that may be regarded as necessary in terms of location, obligation to report back or other matters. If thorough supervision is necessary, it may be prescribed that the inmate shall be under surveillance during the parole.

Section 36

Within the constraints of current regulations and agreements concerning activities in the Prison and Probation Service, inmates are entitled to negotiate with the management of the local

Prison and Probation Authority on issues of common interest to inmates. They are also entitled to hold meetings with one another in appropriate forms to discuss such issues. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 1998:610)

Section 44

Inmates shall be remunerated according to norms laid down by the Government or the public agency appointed by the Government for the work they carry out, unless this is done on the inmate's own account or for an employer outside the institution. Remuneration shall also be paid when inmates, according to the individual decisions taken concerning them, attend courses, participate in other specially arranged activities or treatment, or engage in private studies, during working hours. /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Act, 2002:307)

5.2 The Ordinance on Correctional Treatment in Institutions⁸

Swedish Riksdag

Swedish Code of Statutes (SFS) No. 1974:248

Ministry: Ministry of Justice, Division for Crime Policy (KRIM)

Heading: Ordinance (1974:248) on Correctional Treatment in Institutions

Issued on: 26 April 1974

Amendments: up to and including SFS 2005:138

Reprint: SFS 1990:1021

Section 6

For each inmate, a treatment plan shall be drawn up. The plan must focus, taking into account the duration of the institutional stay and other circumstances, on measures that are designed to promote the inmate's adjustment to society and that prepare him for life outside the institution.' /.../ (Unofficial translation of the Ordinance, 1995:494)

Section 7

/.../ Treatment teams shall cooperate in drawing up the treatment plans. The teams' cooperation must relate particularly to the issues concerning inmates' participation in specially arranged activities aimed at counteracting crime or substance abuse, and in other suitable activities that are, as far as possible, conducive to the inmate's prospects of becoming integrated into society after release. It must also relate, in particular, to issues concerning the inmate's work placement, instruction, education, work training, full and day parole, moving to another institution, recreational activities, temporary absences from the institution /.../ and other matters concerning preparations for the inmate's release. (Unofficial translation of the Ordinance, 1998:628)

⁸ Swedish Parliament, www.riksdagen.se, 16 May 2005.

6. Riksteatern and prisons

Riksteatern is a popular movement that arranges and promotes the performing arts, and also owns a touring theatre. Riksteatern's ambition is to enable all Sweden's inhabitants, wherever their location, to see live, high-quality performing arts in an easily accessible way. Riksteatern is both a producer of theatrical performances and an extensive theatre-arranging organisation. Its national repertoire is presented by five sections: Riks Drama, Tyst Teater (the Silent Theatre), Unga Riks (the youth theatre), Riks Gästspel (for guest performances) and JAM (non-stop modern culture). The Cullberg Ballet and Södra Teatern in Stockholm are other parts of Riksteatern.

After nearly 70 years' touring, Riksteatern has a network of contacts in almost every municipality. It is itself a network of 240 local and regional theatre associations and their members. These work on a largely voluntary basis to present a broad theatre repertoire with everything from dance, drama and comedy in their respective home towns. In every region, theatre consultants are also employed to promote coordination of events in the areas and counties concerned. Riksteatern aims to inspire, stimulate and encourage theatre activities throughout Sweden, and to boost both understanding of the performing arts and interest in theatre.⁹

Since the 1960s, Riksteatern has embarked on a number of joint ventures with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The first was Pioneer Theatre, and this was followed by Riks Drama and JAM.

6.1 Pioneer Theatre¹⁰

Pioneer Theatre plays a substantial part in Swedish outreach theatre. The group was founded back in 1952 by two actors, Arthur Hultling and Lars-Erik Liedholm. The original idea was to tour with theatre in such widely disparate venues as nursing-homes, sanatoria, prisons, residential centres for alcoholics and young people, and military installations. However, the focus rapidly came to be on prisons and hospitals. The group was strongly supported by both categories of institution, and received government funds and other grants for its work. In 1965, Pioneer Theatre became a freestanding part of Riksteatern, which took over the group entirely in 1968. Some of Riksteatern's regular productions also came to be played at the Pioneer Theatre's performance venues.

In 1970 an imprisoned actor and writer, Lasse Strömstedt, wrote of Pioneer Theatre in *Teater*, a theatre magazine: 'We've toured in prisons, Pioneer Theatre and I. We've met many times on the stages that represent the world — prison corridors, prison churches and prison assembly halls.'

'From running pioneering activities aimed at bringing theatre into prisons, Pioneer Theatre has moved on to the next stage and brought social debate into prisons,' Strömstedt added.

He also wrote: 'Pioneer Theatre is a very important contact for us. Through it, we reach out into the community. We feel that Pioneer Theatre has an ability to rouse people.'

⁹ Riksteatern, www.riksteatern.se, 21 May 2005.

¹⁰ Claes Englund, *Världens största teater: Riksteatern 1958–1976* ('The World's Biggest Theatre: Riksteatern, 1958–76'), Claes Englund and Riksteatern, Jönköping 2003, pp. 156–157.

6.2 Riks Drama ¹¹

Since its foundation in 1999, Riks Drama has been highly controversial. It has been acclaimed, criticised and debated after such productions as *Personkrets 3:1*, *SJU TRE*, *If This is a Man*, *The Seagull*, *The Investigation* and *Kyla*. Riks Drama's function is to examine the hidden spaces within and around human beings, and to describe the contemporary scene through stage performances and productions that captivate and touch audiences and that take a stand. Themes in the first few years of Riks Drama's existence were crime and punishment, good and evil, health and sickness. Riks Drama sets out to explore the world outside theatres and beyond the stage. It works to bring depth to democracy by cultural means, and strives to serve as a cutting edge in terms both of art and of cultural policy. Riks Drama is headed by the dramatist and director Lars Norén and Ulrika Josephsson, in charge of production.

The following productions by Riks Drama have either involved players who are convicts, been performed to prison audiences or dealt with theatre work at prisons.

- *SJU TRE*

In 1998•99, Lars Norén worked with three inmates at Tidaholm prison (and later at Österåker). This was Riks Drama's first coproduction with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The play was also performed 23 times outside institutions, to audiences totalling 1,600 people (see section 7.2).

- *Stunder av verklighet* ('Moments of Reality')

Jan Jönson, the actor and director, worked in drama at Kumla Prison in Sweden and San Quentin in the USA in the 1980s. With Riks Drama, he staged the one-man show *Stunder av verklighet* — the story of his encounter with Kumla, San Quentin and Samuel Beckett. The monologue is an entertaining, real and profoundly serious reflection on people and their lives. Jan Jönson relates memories of his two prison productions of Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot*. He also shares with the audience some memories of his many meetings with Beckett himself in Paris. The show lasted nearly seven hours, with Jan Jönson alone on the stage. Its première was on 25 September 1999, after which it went on tour and was performed to Riksteatern's audiences in various parts of Sweden.

- *The House of Bernarda Alba*

In a coproduction by Riksteatern, the Prison and Probation Service and the women's prison in Hinseberg, the actor and director Jan Jönsson staged *The House of Bernarda Alba* by Federico Garcia Lorca at Hinseberg in 2001. The director worked with eight inmates for a year. The only performances were at the institution (see section 9.3).

- *Kyla* ('Cold')

Lars Norén's play *Kyla* had its première on 23 March 2003, and was performed for more than a year to regular Riksteatern audiences, schoolchildren, festival visitors and others. There was also one performance for inmates at the prison in Härnösand.

Kyla is about a few short hours of an ordinary summer evening in Sweden. Three youths — tipsy, frustrated and contemptuous of everything and everyone in their surroundings — drift aimlessly around. Their neo-Nazi opinions are manifested when they come across a fourth boy with a foreign background. Soon they are caught up in a rapidly spinning spiral of violence with a fateful outcome. Featuring Björn Bengtsson, Kristofer Fransson, Tito

¹¹ Riksteatern, www.riksteatern.se, 21 May 2005.

Pencheff and Ulf Rönnerstrand, the play is a frighteningly realistic, shocking account of modern times.

6.3 JAM¹²

JAM is Riksteatern's venture in new, alternative dramatic art. JAM's vision is to be the hub and inspiration for the creation of new performing-art forms in Sweden. Since it began in 2000, many alternative forms and artists have found new stages and reached new audiences: spoken word, live and poetry slam; streetdance, skateboard ballet and working-class dance; debate boxing, new circus and political revues. JAM 'susses out' tomorrow's forms of expression and artists, and makes it possible for the whole of Sweden to benefit from new, exciting developments in the performing arts.

- *Lo Kauppi • Bergsprängardottern som exploderade* ('Lo Kauppi — the Rock-Blaster's Daughter Who Exploded')
- In 2004, with the support of the the National Academy of Mime and Acting in Stockholm, JAM produced *Lo Kauppi • Bergsprängardottern som exploderade* by, and with, the actress Lo Kauppi. Following the première on 4 February 2004, the play was performed for nearly a year to audiences throughout the country. One of the venues was the Hinseberg women's prison. In autumn 2005 it will be performed again at more prisons, including Ystad and Kumla, as well as Hinseberg again.

Lo Kauppi (b. 1973) graduated from the Academy in spring 2003. Her seven years' writing culminated in *Lo Kauppi • Bergsprängardottern som exploderade* ('The Rock-Blaster's Daughter Who Exploded'), an autobiographical story of class differences, rootlessness and a society with distorted feminine ideals. It is a true but utterly improbable tale by, about and starring Lo herself. She has had the story in her ever since the day she left bulimia, amphetamines and the Hassela collective behind.

7. Acclaimed prison theatre productions

In Sweden, two cases of prison theatre have attracted attention far beyond the institutional walls. In both, the rehearsals and the finished performance as such have been discussed and debated. But what sparked the most attention, above all, were the dramatic and tragic events that ensued from the theatre work itself.

To this day, these two productions exert a negative influence of the view of theatre in the prison and probation system. They have prompted cuts in, or withdrawal of, theatre grants and tightening-up of security measures. Nowadays, for instance, it is out of the question for inmates to perform plays outside their institutions.¹³

7.1 *Waiting for Godot*

In the mid-1980s, the actor-director Jan Jönsson toured Sweden with a monologue that he had the opportunity of performing to inmates at Kumla prison. After the show, a few of the men with an interest in drama stayed and asked him to return and teach them drama. A study circle was formed, and Jönsson presented various proposals for plays to perform. Eventually, it was

¹² Riksteatern, www.riksteatern.se, 21 May 2005.

¹³ According to many representatives of the Prison and Probation Authorities, May 2005.

agreed that Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* would be staged. The five inmates who constituted the ensemble were Francisco from Spain (Vladimir), Zoki from the former Yugoslavia (Estragon), Rafael from Honduras (Pozzo), Misha from Russia (Lucky) and Kim from Hong Kong (the Boy).

Initially they rehearsed twice a week for an hour and a half at a time, in the Kumla assembly hall. The rehearsal time was successively increased. They started by reading the play many times; next, they took to the stage and went on reading the play there, without props; and finally the stage elements specified by Beckett were added. Altogether, Jan Jönsson rehearsed with his ensemble for a year. After the year of rehearsals, the first act of the play alone was performed on two occasions. The stage sets had been built in the prison gym, and the audience consisted of other inmates, staff, the actors' relatives, the press, theatre people and representatives of the Prison and Probation Administration. Lennart Wilson, the prison director, wholeheartedly supported the project. He ascribed great value to the work, which he saw as true correctional treatment.¹⁴

A month after the project ended, Lennart Wilson and Jan Jönsson began wondering whether performing the play outside the walls of Kumla prison was possible. In Lennart Wilson's view, it would benefit the prison and probation system and the actors themselves for other people to see what they had achieved. The Prison and Probation Administration approved the plans and the ensemble resumed their rehearsals. They then went on tour to Gothenburg (Gothenburg City Theatre) and Malmö (Studioteatern). During this time, the actors stayed at prisons in the various localities they visited. Everything went smoothly, and the production aroused interest and was well received.¹⁵

After this tour, Jan Jönsson visited Samuel Beckett in Paris. There, he obtained the rights to the play, which meant that the second act too could be staged. Supported by the prison and the Prison and Probation Service, Jan Jönsson spent five months in 1987 rehearsing the second act with his ensemble at Kumla. This time, the Boy was played by Joseph from Germany since the previous player, having served his time, was now free. Bolstered by the previous successes, the participants embarked on another tour outside the prison walls. Two trial performances took place in Örebro (at Gamla teatern, 'the Old Theatre') and the group then set off for the planned première at Gothenburg City Theatre. The prisoners spent the night at a local prison and, in the morning, were transported to the theatre.

A few hours before the performance was due to start, four of the five convicts in the ensemble absconded. The performance was cancelled and Jan Jönsson was summoned by the police for questioning.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, this incident created a great stir in the media and is still discussed to this day.

An employee at Kumla relates that Jan Jönsson did a superb job, had lofty visions and was given a free rein in many respects. Once he had obtained permission to tour with his production outside the prison walls, this was sanctioned at government level. But when everything went wrong Lennart Wilson, the prison director, was made the scapegoat.¹⁷

7.2 SJU TRE

¹⁴ Jan Jönsson, *Stunder av verklighet*, Commedia Art, Värnamo 2004.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Discussion with an employee at Kumla, May 2005.

In spring 1998, the actress Birgitta Palme worked at Tidaholm prison with a drama group composed of four inmates. They were known as ‘7.3’s’ (*translator’s note*: this refers to Section 7.3 of the Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions, cited on p. 7 of this report), i.e. people imprisoned for four years or more. The project was initiated by the head of the Prison and Probation Service for the Gothenburg region, Birgitta Göransson. The group wanted a play for four men. One of the inmates had found the televised performances of dramatist and director Lars Norén’s plays strongly moving. He wrote a letter to Norén, inviting him to the prison for a discussion on the choice of play.¹⁸

Lars Norén accepted, and the first meeting at Tidaholm took place on 26 March 1998. After a few discussions, Norén proposed that, instead of using one of his previous plays, he should write a completely new one based on the inmates’ own experiences. Work began, and in spring 1998 Norén made a total of 11 visits to the prison, during which he conducted in-depth interviews.¹⁹

In the spring and summer of 1998, it was decided that rehearsals would be filmed in coproduction involving GötaFilm, Swedish Television and Riksteatern.²⁰

Before rehearsals began in August 1998, the actor Reine Brynolfsson joined the project. One of the inmates decided to drop out and Lars Norén rewrote the script, reducing the number of roles from five to four. The ensemble now consisted of Reine Brynolfsson, Mats Nilsson, Tony Olsson and Carl Thunberg.²¹

During the autumn, some 30 full days were spent on rehearsals at Tidaholm. In addition, five or six more days were devoted to the filming.²²

In December 1998, the three inmates were moved to Österåker prison, where the rehearsals continued. At this institution, some 30 km north of Stockholm, theatre work had been under way for several years. One of the inmates, who was shortly to be released, received a ‘Section 34’ placement with a family in the Stockholm area. (*Translator’s note*: under Section 34 of the Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions, prisoners may be permitted temporary absence from the institution for measures — especially care or treatment for substance abuse that the institution is unable to provide — that may be assumed to promote their subsequent integration into society.) In mid-January 1999, rehearsals were moved to Riksteatern’s premises in Botkyrka. On 28 January, a dress rehearsal took place in the Riksteatern building.²³

On 6 February 1999, the première of *SJU TRE* took place in Umeå, followed by three performances. Two of the inmates stayed at Ersboda prison in Umeå, while the third lodged in Umeå under surveillance. Three performances at Riksteatern in Hallunda ensued, followed by a long break. In April and May 1999, there were 16 performances at Riksteatern in Hallunda (Stockholm), the last performance was given on 27 May 1999. Altogether, *SJU TRE* was performed 23 times and seen by audiences totalling some 1,600.²⁴

On the day after the last performance of *SJU TRE* one of the convicts, Tony Olsson, absconded after a parole and then took part in an armed bank robbery that finally culminated

¹⁸ Programme for the film *Rehearsals* (‘Rehearsals’), a coproduction by Riksteatern and Sveriges Television.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

in the murder of two policemen in *Malexander*. In summer 2000, Tony Olsson received a life sentence for the murders in *Malexander*. Another of the inmates who took part in the production was sent to prison after coming into possession of the stolen money.²⁵

In the subsequent media debate, both Lars Norén and Isa Stenberg, the producer, came in for severe criticism in which the theatre work was associated with the murders. Before the tragic event in *Malexander*, the *SJU TRE* production was widely criticised. The critics of the play felt that working on the drama strengthened the Nazi identity of the two convicts who were National Socialists, since they were able to express their opinions in front of an audience. There was also disapproval of the fact that portions of the play contained documentary fragments from the inmates' lives, both inside and outside the prison — and that they themselves performed on stage.

In *SJU TRE*, Riks Drama and Lars Norén tried to depict part of our society that is seldom visible: the prison and probation system. In this case, it was a closed institution whose inmates had committed grave crimes of violence. The aims of the production were to show reality in present-day prisons and to trigger a debate on correctional treatment as a whole. The play describes the encounter between Lars Norén's alter ego, John, and three convicts, and their efforts to stage a play together. In the course of the work, discussions and meetings take place and the three inmates talk about themselves.²⁶

8. Theatre at prisons in 2005 — an overview

To date, no coordinated statistical survey of theatre activities at prisons in Sweden has been carried out. Nor has much been written on the subject. What may be found on this theme deals mainly with two controversial theatre projects, *SJU TRE* and *Waiting for Godot*. The literature that refers to the subject as a whole does so primarily by stating that using the arts and personal creative work in an attempt to reform clients of the prison and probation system has, to date, been a relatively unused form of influence²⁷.

This survey, based on discussions with representatives of Sweden's 35 Prison and Probation Authorities, shows that the absence of information on the subject reflects to some extent, quite simply, the lack of theatre at Swedish prisons.

8.1 In-house theatre productions

Following discussions with representatives of all the Prison and Probation Authorities in charge of Sweden's 59 prisons, it emerges that there are **three** prisons today where theatre activities for inmates are under way. These are the prisons at **Storboda** and **Österåker**, which are both located in the area subject to the Prison and Probation Authority in North Stockholm, and the women's prison at **Hinseberg** in the area supervised by the Örebro Authority. Information about activities at these prisons is given below, in sections 10•12. A fourth prison, **Högsbo** — within the Central Gothenburg authority's area — plans to start its own theatre activities in autumn 2005. Here, the initiative came from one of the convicts, and the aim is to engage three or four men in the activities concerned.

²⁵ Programme for the film *Rehearsals*

²⁶ Riksteatern, www.riksteatern.se, 18 May 2005.

²⁷ Ekblom, Engström, Göransson, *Brott, straff och kriminalvård* ('Crime, Punishment and Correctional Treatment'), Natur och Kultur, Stockholm, 1999, p. 292.

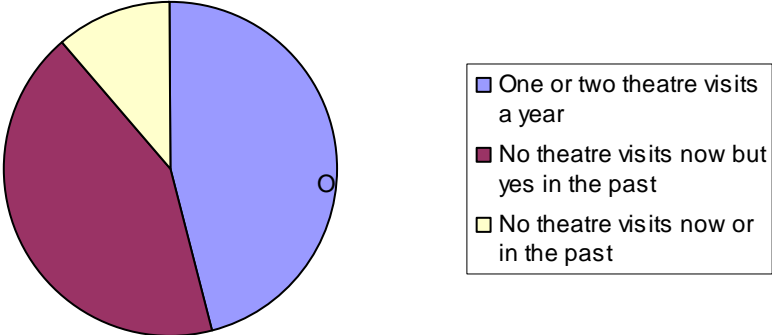
Regarding activities over the past five to ten years, several Prison and Probation Authorities state that they have previously had theatre activities at institutions in their areas. These prisons are **Beateberg, Hall** (see section 12), **Håga, Kalmar, Kumla** (see section 7.1 and below), **Linköping, Norrtälje** and **Tidaholm** (see section 7.2).

The example of Kumla indicates a trend that many institutions appear to share. At Kumla, where a large-scale leisure activity was initiated, what was a major activity has given way to a minor one. Three people were formerly employed solely to run the ‘leisure activity’, as it was termed, that included drama (today only one remains). In 1994 a gang of convicts set fire to Tidaholm prison, which prompted greater security awareness on the part of the Authority. In the long term, this meant that the activities were split up, i.e. the prisons were divided into smaller sections. In 1996, this trend began in earnest. The division process meant, in turn, that it became more difficult to arrange activities like theatre.

Parallel to this trend, the financial basis deteriorated: grants decreased and there were staff cutbacks. With the shortage of money and staff, it became more difficult to conduct theatre activities and also to host visits from external theatre groups. Attitudes in society, and in the prison and probation system as well, have changed since the 1970s. The prevailing approach has changed from soft to rock-hard, and security is now the number one priority.²⁸

8.2 Guest theatre performances

Of Sweden’s 35 Prison and Probation Authorities, 16 state that touring theatre groups visit their prisons once or twice a year. Fifteen say that they do not have such visits at present but that guest theatre performances used to take place, and four state that they have never had any such performances at their prisons.



Closer investigation reveals that the great majority of prisons have been visited by a single group, Gotlands Teater (see section 13). Other visiting theatre groups mentioned are Riksteatern, Stockholms City Theatre and various amateur drama groups.

8.3 The Service’s attitude towards theatre

Representatives of the Prison and Probation Authorities and the prisons are generally very much in favour of prison theatre activities. Seventy-four per cent have a clearly positive

²⁸ Discussion with an employee at Kumla, May 2005.

attitude, while 26% remain neutral. No negative views of theatre within prison walls are expressed.

The aspect most approved is the value of discussions that may be prompted by the themes a theatre production covers. Some respondents see theatre activities as a healing and rehabilitation process that aids the development of inmates and their personal growth. Others see theatre as good entertainment and a suitable leisure pastime.

Håkan Lingblom, the programme inspector at the Stockholm North Prison and Probation Authority (which is responsible for two of the three prisons where theatre activities are under way), considers that working through theatre enables people to talk about tough subjects that are filled with conflicts for inmates. It is easier to start with what people have seen as members of the audience, or participated in as members of the cast during a performance, than to speak directly about their own painful experiences. The purpose is to give inmates an understanding of their own problems and show them that they must take steps to deal with them.²⁹

Nonetheless, despite the favourable basic attitude towards theatre on the part of staff in the Prison and Probation Service, only three out of Sweden's 59 prisons conduct any theatre activities of their own at present. The following reasons for not having such activities or hosting visiting theatre groups are cited. The numbers of respondents who cited these as reasons are given in brackets.

- Poor finances (23)
- Lack of interest on the part of staff or inmates (8)
- Lack of prime movers to make things happen (6)
- Too much work and not enough staff (6)
- Unfavourable experience from *SJU TRE* and *Waiting for Godot* (6)
- Security considerations (5)
- Inadequate skills among the staff (3)
- Unsuitable content of guest performances (3)
- Splitting of prisons into sections (3)
- Lack of premises (2)
- Theatre not a management priority (2)
- Inmates' prison sentences too short (2)
- Prison too small/too few inmates (2)
- Inmates convicted of graver crimes than in the past (1)
- Trend towards a 'harder line' (1)

9. Hinseberg

9.1 Facts about the institution³⁰

Hinseberg is a combined closed and open institution, with 107 places for female inmates only, located some 20 km north-east of Örebro. Originally a manor, it dates back to the 15th century. In the 1940s, the manor was used as a residential home for boys with mental-health problems. In 1956, Hinseberg was purchased by the Swedish state and the Prison and

²⁹ Tove Asplind & Siri Beer, *Teater ett pedagogiskt medel?* (Theatre — A Means of Education?), Department of Theatre Studies at Stockholm University, 1998, pp. 20–21.

³⁰ Kriminalvården, www.kvv.se, 16 May 2005.

Probation Service, and since 1960 it has been Sweden's largest women's prison. The inmates are mainly women with long sentences from all over the country. In the open places, there are also women from a more local catchment area. Of the 120 employees at Hinseberg, 77 are women.

Hinseberg has three closed units and an open section, Båtshagen:

- a unit with the usual sections (50 places), including one for deportees and one for participants in treatment programmes, and nationwide catchment
- a somatic and psychiatric nursing unit (13 places)
- a motivation and treatment unit (18 places)
- Båtshagen (26 open places).

Programmes:

- Employment: textile printing, with training, assembly and packaging, a central canteen, work with animals and the environment with responsibility for park maintenance and animal care and some services, occupational training.
- Education: a learning centre with basic and upper-secondary adult education, computer courses and Swedish for immigrants. There are also university studies at a distance.
- Programmes related to crime and substance abuse.
- Courses in parenthood.

Recreation:

Hinseberg has a well-equipped sports hall that also houses solariums and a sauna. There is also a library, a café and a newsagent's.

9.2 Theatre activities³¹

Theatre activities at Hinseberg are headed by a pastor of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, Iván Czitrom, who has worked at Hinseberg since 1997. Today, 50% of his working time is spent at Hinseberg, 25% at Tillberga prison and 25% at the remand centre in Västerås. Iván grew up in a children's home in Hungary and, at the age of ten, was allowed to go and live with his aunt and her husband. The aunt's husband was an actor, and this was how Iván's interest in theatre was awakened. He has worked a great deal with young people and, for example, staged performances with confirmation candidates. He was and is still active in amateur dramatics, and has written a musical. Iván has worked as a pastor for 30 years and never encountered such good groups, with such a strong commitment, as the Hinseberg inmates.

As far as Iván knows, there had been no in-house theatre activity at the institution before he began working there in 1997. Fairly soon, however, he started his own drama activity for inmates who were interested. The first production was a modernised Christmas story about Jesus and the Virgin Mary that had its première at Christmas 1997. In 1998, the next play staged was one about the prisoners' own experience and life at the institution. The inmates told their stories and Iván wrote the hour-long play *Hotell Hinseberg*, which was performed to fellow inmates.

The tradition of annual Christmas productions continued until the year 2000, when the major task of producing *The House of Bernarda Alba* (see section 9.3) began. In 2003 Iván resumed

³¹ Interview with Iván Czitrom, pastor of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, at Hinseberg on 18 May 2005.

his drama work with a group of immigrant women at Hinseberg. This time, the focus was on using well-known comic Swedish texts, such as sketches by Galenskaparna, Kardemumma and Hasse and Tage; the outcome was a revue. During summer 2005, work has been resumed with the plan of continuing during the autumn and culminating in a performance in December 2005. Iván still does not know whether a text that has already been written will be used or whether a new one will be written, but he has his sights set on a one-act play.

Iván initiated this drama work because he is a strong believer in theatre as a form of treatment and a good way of getting in touch with one's feelings. He reads various texts and poems with inmates, and they talk about the feelings they arouse. He believes that inmates who belong to a drama group can get help in expressing themselves. The need to scream, fight, express one's anger, act out one's feelings and enter a role other than one's own is enormous in an institution. This is impossible in ordinary institutional life, but it is permitted during theatre work. Another aim of theatre in prisons is to enhance participants' self-esteem and status, and enable them to develop as individuals. It is also important not to underestimate the importance of laughter and of helping people, through humour, to get away from their own problems for a while.

Since Iván is not trained in theatre, he uses no established method in his work. However, he makes much use of play, and of exaggerated physical movements and voices. Working through emotions is the focus. Although the sessions culminate in a production, this is not their actual objective. It is the journey that counts, not the destination. Over the years, work on the productions has combined acting with stage and costume design, make-up, mime, music and belly-dancing.

Drama activities are conducted in a classroom, in a building where the inmates would otherwise be studying. The works are performed for other inmates in the assembly hall at the prison. Two and a half hours have been allocated for drama activities weekly, and roughly five months' rehearsing takes place before a performance. At present, Iván Czitrom is running the drama activities at Hinseberg alone, but he points out that the inmates in the group are involved in the work to the highest possible degree, not only on stage but also as directing assistants, costume makers, property managers and so forth. Assisting the ensemble are often several inmates who are engaged in the project, but the ensemble itself never exceeds eight in number. The actresses are first selected by Iván himself, who directly approaches the ones he thinks may be interested in theatre work. Those who apply to join the group on their own initiative are, of course, also included. Most of those who join the drama group are serving long sentences, so the group can often comprise the same members for a whole year, for example. However, one never knows when one of the actresses may suddenly be moved to another institution. From time to time, this happens without notice.

Relations with staff at the institution are good and the audience, consisting of inmates, is faithful to the theatre productions. Basically, everyone comes to see their fellow inmates on stage. No theatre courses are provided at Hinseberg. Nor do the inmates have any opportunity for attending such courses outside the walls of the institution, since it is a closed one.

The theatre work costs the institution virtually nothing — just 'coffee money', as Ivan Czitrom puts it. His pastor's salary is paid by Hela Människan, a non-profit organisation in Västerås that cooperates with the Prison and Probation Authorities in Örebro and Västerås. Hela Människan carries out lay community work on behalf of the churches in Sweden. The organisation exists at local, regional and national level. The inmates' pay (an average of about SEK 9 or 1 per hour) is the same as they would receive from carrying out any work or programme activity whatsoever at the institution.

9.3 *The House of Bernarda Alba* project

In a coproduction by Riksteatern, the Prison and Probation Service and Hinseberg, the actor and director Jan Jönsson staged *The House of Bernarda Alba* by Federico Garcia Lorca at Hinseberg prison. This director, who had worked at several prisons previously (see sections 6.2 and 7.1), spent a year working with eight inmates at Hinseberg.³² Riksteatern was responsible for Jan Jönsson's salary and travel expenses, and also for providing the technician who was needed during the performances.³³ Jan Jönsson started by visiting the institution for one day a week, and then increased the rehearsals to a full working week. For the inmates, this was paid working time. Staff at Hinseberg helped the ensemble and Jan Jönsson with various practical matters during the production process, but did not take part in the artistic work.³⁴

The play is about passion, longing and restrained ardour. The mother, newly widowed Bernarda Alba, governs her daughters with an iron hand and deprives them of their freedom by keeping them locked up in the house, subject to her tyrannical rule. The ensemble — Patty, Ulla, Agneta, Susanne, Kim, Lena, Alicia and Rosita — also provided the costumes, while Jan Jönsson was in charge of the stage design. The première was held as planned at Hinseberg on 1 April 2001, with the audience composed of inmates and staff. A number of performances were also given for the public at the institution, and the media were also invited. Altogether, there were six performances for a total audience of 360.³⁵ There was ample media coverage, which is exceptional in terms of the previous situation at Hinseberg, when the aim has been rather to keep the media out of the theatre activities.³⁶

Iván Czitrom is delighted that the project got off the ground and thinks it made a superb performance. But he also thinks that, to some extent, it 'took a lot out of the girls' and his ongoing drama work was hard to sustain after this major initiative. He also wonders how necessary it is to strive for professionalism at an institution. Perhaps there are other, more important values, he thinks.³⁷

One employee at Hinseberg says that the Prison and Probation Service was very much in favour of this project, although clashes sometimes arose between creative people and rigid bureaucracy. The requirement for getting a project of this calibre off the ground is the existence of a prime mover linked to the institution who is capable of running the whole activity. Obviously, it is also a cost issue.³⁸

9.4 Guest theatre performances

At Hinseberg, an attempt is made to choose productions that reflect a female standpoint. Examples of this are Lo Kauppi's and Riksteatern's production of *Lo Kauppi* •

³² Riksteatern, www.riksteatern.se, 16 May 2005.

³³ Discussion with med Ulrika Josephsson, Riksteatern's head producer, May 2005.

³⁴ Discussion with an employee at Hinseberg, May 2005.

³⁵ Riksteatern, www.riksteatern.se, 16 May 2005.

³⁶ Interview with Iván Czitron, pastor of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, at Hinseberg on 18 May 2005.

³⁷ Interview with Iván Czitron, pastor of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, at Hinseberg on 18 May 2005.

³⁸ Discussion with employee at Hinseberg, May 2005.

Berggsprängardottern som exploderade, which visited the prison during 2004 (see section 6.3). Guest visits by theatre groups take place once or twice a year.³⁹

10. Storboda

10.1 Facts about the institution⁴⁰

Storboda is a closed institution with 91 places 30 km north of Stockholm. The prison opened in February 1988, when it had 42 places. Since then it has been progressively extended. Inmates at Storboda come mainly from the Stockholm region. Their sentences are relatively short, and on average their prison stay lasts six to eight months. Most are convicted of offences relating to substance abuse, such as drug offences, and those involving financial matters and traffic offences, as well as crimes of violence. The average age of inmates is about 30, and the staff at Storboda number 50.

Storboda has three units:

- Normal unit (42 places)
- Normal unit (25 places): this unit is linked to the partially EU-funded Equal 'Better Release' project: in brief, this is aimed at ensuring that Storboda and its various partners jointly devise ideas, ways of working and methods to make it easier for ex-offenders to find jobs
- Motivation unit (24 places): this unit has special places for drug abusers and methods of assessing clients' motivation for change.

Programme activities:

- Employment — assembly work in the workshop and work in the kitchen
- Education and training — corresponding to school education at various levels
- Treatment — 'Motivating Talk', a set of programmes with a cognitive approach, focusing on impulse control and crime, and also self-care in groups or individually
- Programmes relating to offences and drug abuse.

Leisure activities

In the inmates' spare time, they can receive visits from relatives and engage in strength training and ball games in the prison gym. Representatives of spiritual groups, the visit group, Crisis and other non-governmental organisations also pay regular visits.

Combating drugs

The prison's motivation unit assists the Prison and Probation Service's efforts to combat drug abuse. This unit's aim is therefore to create an environment that supports change in the client. Means of achieving this include national programmes and survey methods, and guaranteed freedom from drugs through various control methods. There is also cooperation with external care providers and correctional institutions with special treatment units.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Swedish Prison and Probation Service, www.kvv.se, 16 May 2005.

10.2 Theatre activities — some background information⁴¹

Since 2002, there have been permanent theatre activities for inmates at Storboda. The person in charge is the actor and director Igor Cantillana. Igor has worked in theatre at prisons since 1996, and he has experience from Hall and Norrtälje as well as Storboda.

Igor Cantillana originally came to Sweden from Chile as a refugee from the Pinochet regime in 1977. He was trained at the Theater Department of the University of Chile. The importance of theatre at prisons was brought home to Igor for the first time when he was himself incarcerated for two years in one of Pinochet's concentration camps. There, he and a few friends formed a theatre group that performed for their fellow prisoners every Friday. At first, they acted out texts that they were able to compile from memory; later, they managed to smuggle scripts into the camp; they staged Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade*, for example. Through his own experience, Igor grasped the key role that theatre can play in such extreme situations: the importance of theatre in sustaining interpersonal communication, preserving human dignity and conferring a sense of freedom.

In Stockholm in 1979, Igor founded Teater Sandino, a Latin American theatre group. Initially, this group performed in Spanish; later, there were productions in Swedish as well. In 1990 the group began working in theatre for young people with problems in Rinkeby, a suburb of Stockholm. This was part of a community care programme in cooperation with the social-welfare authorities. Six 'Section 12' teenagers (*translator's note*: residents at 'Section 12' homes, i.e. special compulsory treatment centres for young offenders in Sweden. 'Section 12' refers to the section in the Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions.) were taken on each year and put to work on film projects, CD recording, etc.

In cooperation with Stockholm Park Theatre, the group toured the city parks putting on performances in which these teenagers took part. The young people met with an appreciative reception and were suddenly seen with entirely different eyes, which meant a great deal to them. Activities were highly successful and are still under way to this day.

In 1996, Teater Sandino wrote to the then Minister of Justice Laila Freivalds, offering its services. The offer was to work free of charge in theatre activities at prisons, and the group were given the chance to do this at the Hall and Norrtälje prisons. For a year, Igor and two other actors from the group worked at the two institutions for eight hours a week, and this culminated in productions of Dario Fo's one-act farce *Non tutti i ladri vengono per nuocere* ('The Virtuous Burglar') and *Le mariage forcé* ('The Forced Marriage') by Molière. After a year's unpaid work, the two prisons were so pleased with the result that Igor and the others began to be paid to continue their work. Since then Håkan Lingblom, the programme inspector, has supervised the activity, and a few years ago it was transferred to Storboda prison itself.

10.3 Theatre activities today⁴²

Since 2002, then, there have been continuous theatre activities at the motivation unit in Storboda. The people in charge are Igor Cantillana, who is the director and adapts the texts, and his wife, the actress Karin Wiklund, who performs all the female roles.

⁴¹ Interview with Igor Cantillana, director, at Storboda on 20 May 2005.

⁴² Interview with Igor Cantillana, director, at Storboda on 20 May 2005.

Rehearsals take three hours a day, three days a week. Each rehearsal period lasts for two months, after which it is time for the première. Once this is over, work starts on rehearsing with a new ensemble for the next production. At this pace, Igor succeeds in staging no fewer than five productions a year. The reason why the ensemble is replaced is, in almost all cases, that most inmates are serving relatively short prison sentences, with an average of six to eight months and an absolute maximum of two years. Inmates apply voluntarily for theatre activities, and on average six inmates take part in each production.

Since the rehearsal time is so short, it seldom happens that any participant has to stop working in mid-project. If it does occur, it is because the inmate concerned is banned from taking part, or moved to some other institution owing to unsuitable conduct. The participants are highly committed to the projects and think being involved in theatre — which, basically, none of them has ever been before — is great fun. The rehearsals are also a social event with coffee breaks and conversations that enable the inmates concerned to socialise as friends.

The rehearsals start with one or more readings of the text. The participants then take it up on the stage. Igor encourages the inmates to make use of their own life experience and empathy, and to recognise themselves in the characters. He describes the acting style as realistic, but with a stylised element. For the performances, the costumes, lights and props are borrowed from various sources. All the productions are filmed and photographed, and the participants then receive their own copies of the film and photographs. On a few occasions, Igor has brought a mime artist into the prison to instruct the inmates in mime.

Each production comprises three performances, one for each unit at the institution (a maximum of 40 people at each performance). The audience includes both inmates and staff at the institution. In general, the audiences are highly positive about the performances and the prison management is proud of the activity. In the performance context, a whole new situation is created between the inmates on the stage and the staff in the audience. The inmates are seen with different eyes by the staff, and a dialogue may arise between them. No outsiders are invited to watch the performances, nor do any take place outside the institution. As for the rehearsals, the venue for all the performances is the prison gym.

The repertoire at Storboda consists solely of comedies and farces. Igor Cantillana thinks that, in this situation, people cannot cope with topics that are too weighty. Through laughter, they can more easily attain a discussion about more serious subjects as well. So plays by Dario Fo alternate with the works of Molière and the Swedish dramatist Olof Willgren. At the time of writing (May 2005), the première of Olof Willgren's play *Farsor* ('Dads') has just taken place and rehearsals of *Un Morto da Vendere* ('Corpse for Sale') by Dario Fo are starting. Which play is selected depends on the number of people in the group and what would suit them best.

The aim of theatre activities is to help create a better life for the people involved. For those who are deprived of their freedom, theatre sets them free for a few hours. Another key point is that the inmates, perhaps, surprise both themselves and others by doing something they did not at first think they could achieve. By staging their productions for other inmates and staff, the people involved obtain the attention, love and praise they need so much. They get to be 'minor heroes', one could almost say, at the institution.

In Igor Cantillana's view, the chosen objectives are amply fulfilled. Theatre has the ability to generate, within a short space of time, such meaningful experience for inmates that it may exert a decisive influence on the rest of their lives. He also thinks that, as a form of treatment, theatre yields fewer recidivists than other forms. In his personal experience, only one out of

ten inmates has committed further offences after becoming involved in theatre at prison. Recent statistics from the Prison and Probation Administration show that in Sweden today, an overall proportion of four out of ten people at prison or in probation relapse into crime and are again sentenced to correctional treatment within three years⁴³.

Igor Cantillana and Teater Sandino take pains to stay in touch, too, with interested inmates after their release as well. Over the years, several ex-convicts have obtained jobs at the theatre. The next planned project involving 'ex-cons' is the *Molière 2005* project, for which funding is now being sought. This project involves working on three Molière plays for a year, with a view to going on tour and performing them in the Stockholm region and other parts of Sweden. The ensemble comprises of seven ex-cons who, after being 'demobbed' in this way, will — it is hoped — be reintegrated into the community.

The Prison and Probation Service remunerates Igor and his wife, at an hourly rate. The inmates who take part receive a standard sum for work and programme activity (on average, some SEK 9 or 1 an hour). Otherwise, theatre activities are not costly, since everything needed in the way of props, costumes, etc is borrowed.

10.4 Guest theatre performances at the institution

Once a year, the prison is visited by Gotlands Teater, which then usually stages a monologue performed by the actor Anders Peedù.

⁴³ Swedish Prison and Probation Service, www.kvv.se, 16 May 2005.

11. Österåker

11.1 Facts about the institution⁴⁴

Österåker prison is a closed institution for men located some 30 km north of Stockholm. Within it is the Österåker remand centre, with 63 places. Altogether, including the latter, there are 210 regular places at Österåker. In addition, there are a number of overcrowding and ‘doubling-up’ places.

The prison’s 147 places are distributed among four units:

- motivation unit (43)
- treatment unit (68)
- ‘Pavilion’ transition unit (21)
- waiting unit (15).

Since 1 September 2002, Österåker prison has been among the institutions engaged on behalf of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service in a special initiative to combat drug abuse. Activities include motivating discussions and programme activities.

The motivation unit at Österåker receives clients with substance-abuse problems. The main thrust of its work is to motivate inmates to take the decision to admit themselves to the treatment unit.

At the Pavilion transition unit, activities comprise self-care, studies, self-administration, work in the textile and carpentry workshops at the institution, and some internal services. Since October 2002, activities have been expanded with a training course in building technology under the aegis of the Swedish National Labour Market Board (AMS). Discussions with a psychologist may be offered, following needs assessment by a psychiatrist.

Inmates in the motivation unit are serving long prison sentences: on average, they spend two to three years at the institution. They are convicted of abuse-related crimes — drug offences, for example, but also grave crimes of violence. Those admitted to the unit come from all over Sweden, with Österåker being their initial placement, or are transferred from the treatment unit at the institution.

Inmates of the treatment unit also come from the whole of Sweden. They too are serving long prison sentences and spend an average of two to three years at Österåker. They are convicted of abuse-related crimes, such as various forms of drug offences, but some inmates are also serving time for grave crimes of violence.

Inmates admitted to the Pavilion transition unit come mainly from the treatment unit at the institution. On arrival at the Pavilion, they have undergone the treatment programmes offered and are often in the final stage of serving time, and also in line for parole. The majority of inmates are convicted of abuse-related offences involving, for example, violence, drugs and property crime.

⁴⁴ Swedish Prison and Probation Service, www.kvv.se, 16 May 2005.

Programme activities

Programme activities consist of programmes relating to crime and substance abuse, on the one hand, and courses in parenthood on the other.

Leisure activities

Representatives of religious welfare work at the institution. Inmates can meet an employment officer one day a week. In their spare time, they can receive visits or play ball games and engage in strength training at the prison gym or fitness centre. During the spring and summer, they can play football in the local Korpen (Swedish Sport for All Association) team.

Recreational opportunities vary from one unit to another.

11.2 Theatre activities ⁴⁵

Theatre has been an established activity at Österåker since 1990. It was started by the director, Kaj Ahnhem, who still runs them to this day. In his youth Kaj studied law, but then took up employment in theatre. He has worked as a stage manager and director's assistant at Stockholm City Theatre, an artistic director of Marsyas Teatern in Stockholm's Old Town and a director at Helsingborg City Theatre and elsewhere. In the 1990s, Kaj also worked at Beateberg prison and HMP Send in Surrey, near London. Kaj, now aged 70, was invited to Österåker by the then prison director, Ann-Britt Grünewald.

Since its inception the Österåker Ensemble, as the group is called, has staged some 40 productions and, over the years, become a well-established part of activities at Österåker. The group has its own premises, complete with theatre equipment, and its director has an office at the institution and has his fee paid by the Prison and Probation Service. In the past, the theatre even had its own producer. This person has now, however, retired and not been replaced.

The first production of the newly formed Österåker Ensemble was a play by Fernando Arrabal. Since then, it has performed works by Chekhov, Strindberg, Molière, Pinter, Lady Gregory, Slawomir Mrozek and others, but also plays by contemporary Swedish dramatists such as Kent Andersson, Bengt Bratt, Sandro Key-Åberg and Kaj Ahnhem himself. In selecting the repertoire, Kaj has chosen 'difficult' plays that require hard work on the participants' part, with edgy language, and one that has interesting relationships and subjects to discuss. He wants the performances to offer their audiences more than just a good time.

At the time of writing (May 2005), the première of the monologue *Spegel...spegel...* ('Mirror, mirror...') by Kaj Ahnhem, with Magnus Johansson as the sole performer, has just taken place. The piece shows what drug abuse is like from the inside.

The purpose of Kaj's work is to attain artistic quality in all the productions at Österåker. To him, it is important for them to be so thoroughly worked through and coherent that the audience perceives no difference between them and their professional counterparts. Work continues on each production until, quite simply, this level has been reached. Only then is there a première. Kaj believes that, thanks to the high ambitions and efforts to achieve high artistic quality, the participants also attain quality in their awareness of themselves as people. The venture is taken seriously — and only then can anything positive come out of it. In talking to inmates who aspire to join the ensemble, he is always careful to emphasise that it requires a great deal of work and the work must be as good as possible.

⁴⁵ Interview with Kaj Ahnhem, director, at Österåker on 27 May 2005.

The purpose of the theatre activities is for the inmates to develop self-knowledge, empathy and trust; to learn how to follow directions and cooperate with others; and, in the encounter with the audience, to receive appreciation and a positive response to their efforts. Another key factor is that theatre in prisons can have a favourable impact on attitudes towards the inmates involved, both in the community and within the institution. Kaj also sees the rehearsal period as a drama school for those taking part. Most of them have never engaged in theatre before, and therefore need to acquire basic knowledge. Kaj is opposed to the view of theatre as therapy, since his opinion is that having a therapeutic purpose in the work generates expectations of outcomes that cause the inmates to adjust their behaviour. It infantilises them and means that they do only what the leader expects, which puts a stop to genuine, solid personal development.

The Österåker Ensemble has cooperated with the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm for many years. From time to time, it supplies the Ensemble with equipment. For the past 12 years, one of the Theatre's lighting technicians, Hasse Zander, has assisted in every production at Österåker. Hasse also provides artistic support and serves as a sounding-board for Kaj. This has had the result of making lighting very important in the productions, while essentially the same stage design is used from one production to the next. Basically, it consists of black surrounds and a black stage, with a few colourful items such as a red chair. In many productions music — on some occasions, composed specially by the inmates — features prominently.

In the first few years, rehearsals took up two half-days a week, but this has now been increased to three whole days weekly. Kaj often rehearses with two separate groups in parallel: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The rehearsal period varies, depending on whether beginners are taking part or not and how long it takes to attain the desired quality. On average, the rehearsal period is somewhere between four and six months. The ensemble usually comprises four or five participants and a few other people engaged in sound, lighting and stage design. Kaj prefers not to work with a large ensemble because he then lacks the time to concentrate on each player at a time. Prison officers sometimes used to take part in the productions but these days, with staff cutbacks and shortages, it is no longer feasible.

The rehearsal period starts with reading of the text, for four to six weeks. During this time, the participants do a great deal of voice work, to transform the written word into colloquial speech and practise pauses, stressing keywords and making the lines one's own. The actors then take to the stage and, during the rehearsals, try out all the suggestions that come up from the ensemble and director alike. Kaj's method is, when a player has found an expression that works, to ask him to try the diametric opposite. This way, he thinks that whatever emotion or form of expression the participant eventually adopts, he will achieve richer expression and greater depth.

The works are performed for the inmates one unit at a time. On occasion outsiders are also invited — representatives of the prison and probation system, lay assessors, people from the municipality and others who have shown interest in the activity. After the performances, the audience can remain, have some salad and discuss what they have seen. In the 1990s, the ensemble also toured schools and performed plays dealing with topics like bullying to youth audiences. Today, for security reasons, this is no longer possible. The debate about the *SJU TRE* production has also damaged the reputation of theatre activities as a whole. However, Kaj hopes to be able, in the future, to invite senior-school pupils to Österåker for a performance of *Spegel... spegel...*, which is about substance abuse, on the spot. In his view, both the setting and the subject-matter should have a deterrent effect on the young people and perhaps prevent them from trying drugs.

Österåker is the only prison in Sweden that has, or has had, regular theatre activities for such a long time. Kaj thinks this has been made possible by supportive staff and prison managers that do not use regulations and legislation to put a stop to these activities. Above all, he thinks it is the quality approach to the productions that has enabled the Österåker ensemble to survive for 15 years at the institution. Despite financial pressure, Kaj has been able to keep his work going and this itself, considering what has happened at other prisons, is exceptional.

12. Hall

12.1 Facts about the institution ⁴⁶

Hall prison is located five kilometres from central Södertälje. It dates back to 1875, when it became a home for 'delinquent' boys, and became a prison in 1940. The institution has been successively extended, and recently underwent renovation. It is therefore now an extremely modern facility, with high security. The Hall prison authority is a 'specialist' one, running prisons only, and it includes two prisons: Hall and Håga. Hall comprises various units with a total of 208 prison places and 14 segregation places. The clients are men serving long sentences, the average being 8.7 years. There are 240 permanent staff members, 30% of whom are women.

Raised-security units

The hospital unit has 18 places, the high-security unit six, the special seclusion unit 14 and normal units 70. The segregation unit is to have 14, and in the near future there will be a unit with six places for particularly difficult inmates.

Units with normal security levels

These comprise a psychiatric unit with ten places, the motivation unit with 56 and a normal unit with 28.

Programme activities at Hall

- Industrial work: laundry, carpentry, assembly/packing and ceramics production.
- Education and training: teacher-led courses in basic subjects at compulsory-school level.
- Programmes relating to crime and substance abuse.
- The 'Religious Welfare Board' (*Nämnden för Andlig Vård*, NAV), which operates in all the units, through one-to-one discussions, arranging of group activities, religious services and visits from representatives of other religions and faiths.
- Library activities: these are housed in modern premises, and an abundant range of books and magazines are on offer. At present, activities are being conducted under the aegis of the Södertälje Library Service, which provides librarians and an administrator for the activity. Within the scope of this activity there are, for example, opportunities to invite various authors who can lecture on a range of topics.

Leisure activities:

Leisure activities at the institution are headed by a recreation leader with the assistance of two prison officers attached to the prison sports hall. These activities consist mainly of various sports. Teams from the municipality visit the institution through the agency of the local

⁴⁶ Swedish Prison and Probation Service, www.kvv.se, 16 May 2005.

Korpen (Swedish Sport for All Association) club to play against the inmates in, for example, football and floorball. There are also facilities for strength training.

12.2 Theatre activities today⁴⁷

At the time of writing, in May 2005, the prison has neither any theatre activities of its own nor visiting theatre groups who perform at the institution. These activities were discontinued three years ago. Before that, there were lively drama activities in which various directors were employed. Their work with the inmates yielded tremendously successful results — ‘the guys’ growth was amazing’. The activities were recurrent, with the same director working on up to three or four projects in succession. The drama activities usually culminated in performances for the benefit of the other inmates and some guests who were invited from outside. Gotlands Teater visited the institution and performed there on a few occasions, and the same is true of Stockholm City Theatre.

The fact that theatre has disappeared completely from the institution is due to its splitting-up into units, the strict timetabling and the fact that the prisoners are not allowed to get together on the same scale as they used to do. Everything is subject to security considerations and division. With security as the top priority, all else suffers and it is extremely difficult to run a theatre project in such circumstances. Premises for programme activities are also lacking: there is only the sports hall, which is mainly taken up by sports. Strained finances also play a part. It depends, of course, on who is heading the institution and how the director opts to distribute the funds available. Formerly, the director was Håkan Lingblom, who was interested in culture and is now in charge of Österåker prison. At Hall, the current director is not particularly interested and gives priority to other matters. It would have been easier to get drama activities going if one of the inmates had been a prime mover. In general, theatre activities are suitable for prisons like Hall, where the inmates remain for long periods.

12.3 Theatre activities, 1996–2001

The start⁴⁸

Activities at Hall were initiated in 1996 by Igor Cantillana, who is now working with inmates at Storboda (see section 10). After a while, Igor handed over the project to two actresses, Anna Knutsson and Linda Birgersson. Linda, who was 23 when she first went to work at Hall in 1996, after which she worked for six years in theatre activities at various prisons, such as Hall, Håga and Storboda. At Hall, she helped to manage three theatre projects and one film project. Today, Linda is employed as an actress at Riksteatern.

In the first production Linda was involved in at Hall, she was engaged as an actress. The script was written by one of the inmates, who also served as codirector with Anna Knutsson. Another five inmates belonged to the ensemble. After five weeks’ rehearsals, the inmate who had written the play was suddenly transferred to another institution. Since he was the prime mover of the project, the decision was taken to change the play. Ann Jellicoe’s *The Knack* was chosen, and radically abridged. Linda directed the play and Anna acted in it, with four inmates. Other prisoners were in charge of the lighting, sound and stage design. The production, which was an hour and ten minutes long, was performed to the various units and staff members in the gym.

⁴⁷ Discussion with an employee at Hall, May 2005.

⁴⁸ Interview with Linda Birgersson, former actress and director, at Hall on 25 May 2005.

The rehearsal periods for the various productions were fairly similar. The participants started by reading and discussing the text, and then rapidly took it onto the floor. Linda also worked with a large number of drama exercises for the voice, breathing and confidence, for example. The only difference compared with what goes on at a theatre is that working at the institution called for more flexibility.

After each performance, the project was shelved for a while. Linda and the inmates had to keep pushing and nagging for the work to be resumed. The next two productions — the Macedonian play *Krutdurken* ('The Tinderbox') by D. Dukovski and *The Hothouse* by Harold Pinter — were staged in 1997 and 1998 respectively. Linda describes Pinter's plays as perfect for putting on in prisons. They are light and fun to tackle, and once you have begun studying them in depth you find many layers and levels to discuss and work on. The plays often contain unexpected twists and turns, and are funny in a clever way.

The purpose of the theatre activities was always, regardless of what happened, to stage productions. Neither lack of money, transfer of an inmate nor stage fright at the première was allowed to make any difference. On one occasion, someone set off the fire alarm and hid in the sauna just before the première to avoid having to perform. But he was found and, at last, the première took place. In Linda's opinion, the kick it gives you to show other people what you've been working is something so special that the actual target of bringing off the première is a very important one.

Staff at the institution thought it was quieter and there was less fighting among the inmates because of the theatre work and the presence of Linda and Anna. Theatre was seen as a good occupation for inmates that could seize their interest. One of the inmates described the theatre work as providing a breathing-space, a creative sanctuary where the prison walls ceased to exist. A striking result for the inmates whose knowledge of Swedish was scanty was also that, bit by bit, they learnt the language by familiarising themselves with their lines.

One major problem at Hall was that there were no real premises allocated for theatre activities. There were constant moves from the lounge to the pottery room and the gym, and back again. Equipment such as props and costumes was mainly borrowed, but sometimes there was also a small production budget for the hire of lighting and purchase of secondhand clothes.

Linda's and Anna's hourly fees were paid by the Prison and Probation Service.

The end⁴⁹

Daniela Svensson, the actress, seems to have been the last person to engage in theatre activity at Hall. She had previously worked a great deal as a drama teacher at various study associations, and today she is an actress at Uppsala City Theatre. Daniela came to Hall through Igor Cantillana and Teater Sandino, and in July 2001 she took over the drama group Igor had already formed at the institution. Daniela then worked with the group until December 2001. Her hourly fee was paid by the Prison and Probation Service. After she left, not only the theatre activities but also other cultural activities, such as photography, were discontinued. According to Daniela, the inmates were very upset about this.

The drama group met twice a week for three hours at a time. The group fluctuated in size from one occasion to the next, with anything from three to nine participants. Igor had worked with the inmates on texts by Dario Fo, and Daniela continued to use comic texts such as the

⁴⁹ Interview with Daniela Svensson, former actress and drama teacher, at Hall on 24 May 2005.

plays of Oscar Wilde. Sessions took the form of workshops, and there was never any intention of their culminating in a production. During the sessions, Daniela made extensive use of classic drama exercises to explore such issues as willpower and status.

The aim was to induce the participants to feel that they were capable of performing, and even good at it — and that they were free to try things out, and it was all right to make a fool of oneself. Daniela tried to base the work on the inmates' terms and interests, and used play as a means of approaching the task. She thinks that her work with the group resulted in a noticeable change in at least one of its members, who developed tremendously during the period.

13. Gotlands Teater

Nearly 90% of Sweden's Prison and Probation Authorities state that they have or have had visits from touring theatre groups to their institutions and non-institutional care facilities. In most cases, this proves in fact to have been one and the same group: the independent Gotlands Teater ensemble.

The fact that Gotlands Teater predominate in terms of theatre performances at institutions also emerges clearly in discussions with Teatercentrum (*translator's note*: a non-profit organisation for Sweden's independent theatre companies) and the Swedish Centre of the International Theatre Institute, these being the two central associations for the performing arts in Sweden. Both of these organisations state that the only theatre at prisons they know about is provided by Gotlands Teater.

13.1 Background⁵⁰

Gotlands Teater was formed in 1973 by the actor Anders Peedù. In 1982 the group started its now perennial joint venture with the Prison and Probation Service. On the initiative of Director Clas Amilon, the group was invited to stage its performances at prisons around Sweden. The Service was then still heavily under the influence of the reform of correctional treatment of offenders carried out in 1973•74. The purpose of this reform was to create a humane correctional system with the emphasis on treatment and rehabilitation of offenders. All that prisoners would be deprived of was their freedom: otherwise, the aim was that the best conditions should prevail. It was in line with this policy that theatre, in general, made its entry into Swedish prisons.

Initially, Gotlands Teater staged performances originally produced for audiences at the senior level of compulsory school, but in due course it was charged with the task of writing plays specifically aimed at prison audiences. In the early 1990s, the group produced a trilogy — *Ni är intagen för vård* ('Entering the Institution'), *Nu är ni fri* ('Staying Free') and *Portalen för kriminalvård* ('Gateway to Correctional Care'), which dealt with conditions at prisons, in the probation service and at remand centres respectively. The first of the three was a take on correctional treatment of offenders in Sweden over the past hundred years, which it debated with vigour.

13.2 Activities⁵¹

⁵⁰ Interview with Anders Peedù, director and actor at Gotlands Teater, on 19 May 2005.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Today, Gotlands Teater comprises a core of five people (originally, there were 20). However, freelance actors are engaged from time to time according to need and as far as resources permit. Some 160 performances a year are given, including 70 in prisons. Over the years, activities have been funded with grants from the Prison and Probation Service, the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. Nevertheless, the main source of income is performance fees. Each performance costs the Prison and Probation Service some SEK 7,000 (750). The fee is also sometimes paid by the local parish.

Gotlands Teater performs regularly at most of the prisons in Sweden. There are also recurrent performances at Norwegian prisons, and there have been guest performances in Iceland and Finland. In the Swedish prison and probation system, 75% of Gotlands Teater's performances take place in prisons, 20% in remand centres and 5% in probation facilities. The numbers of performances for at prisons of different security categories — from category 1 to category 4 (*translator's note*: categories 1•3 are closed institutions, category 1 being of the maximum-security type and 2 and 3 offering high and medium security respectively, while category 4 institutions are open) — are fairly equal.

Gotlands Teater performs mainly for inmates, but it sometimes also stages performances for Prison and Probation Service staff alone. The performances are given primarily in the gym or, as a second choice, the refectory (canteen). They invariably take place in the daytime, to attract the largest possible audiences. In the evening TV, for example, competes for the inmates' attention.

Gotlands Teater is a repertory theatre that currently has three productions catering for the prison and probation system on its repertoire. These are *Rockpojken* ('The Rock Boy'), which had its première back in 1982; *Ni är intagen för vård* (1991); and *Bergspredikan* ('The Mountain Sermon', 2002), which had its première in 2002. Prisons choose between buying these or the latest year's production. *Rockpojken* has been performed no fewer than 4,500 times to prison and school audiences. In most cases, the plays were written by Anders Peedù on the basis of his discussions with inmates and the experience other actors in the group have brought to bear on the work. Before every performance, the ensemble engages in fact-finding about the institution they are visiting, and then use this information to add local references to the dialogue. Names and descriptions of settings are, for example, changed from one venue visited to the next.

The plays frequently discuss the prison and probation system and convicts' lives. The ensemble has recourse to drastic means of arousing emotions, creating a stir and generating debate. Every performance is followed by a discussion with the audience about the subjects the play raises. The purpose is to serve as a 'safety valve' for the inmates — to induce them to act out their feelings and venture to express their opinions. Creating a social space where discussion can take place is vital, and the performance endeavours to pave the way for this. Another major aim is to instil strength in the prisoners and give them a glimmer of hope. Gotlands Teater sees its performances and the subsequent discussions as part of programme activities, not as recreation. Its theatre is utilitarian, rather than designed to entertain. The group also stages productions with biblical themes, and regards a focus on the spiritual as important. It also has flourishing cooperation with Swedish prison chaplains.

Not infrequently, Gotland Teater's performances are perceived as highly provocative by inmates and staff alike. At some prisons, they even say that they no longer want the group to visit because of the unsuitable content of its performances. One prison officer even expressed the view that Gotlands Teater creates conflicts between staff and inmates.

Most prisons and Prison and Probation Authorities, however, are highly pleased with the group's activities.⁵² Overall, Anders Peedù of Gotlands Teater is very much in favour of cooperation with the prison and probation system. He appreciates the daily contact with staff at the institutions, and sees Swedish treatment of offenders as very good. He describes the institutional environment as secure for inmates and visitors alike, but also wishes to point out that this security costs money to achieve. He is therefore concerned about the financial low point to which the Prison and Probation Service has now sunk.

Why Gotlands Teater is largely alone in touring Swedish prisons is due mainly, Anders Peedù thinks, to the fact that performing in institutions affords little status for actors. Another factor is the way in which the Prison and Probation Service is organised, which makes it more difficult for a prison to devote time and money to the arts. If grants were approved centrally and a fund set up, this would benefit theatre activities. He also believes that Gotlands Teater, which is a socialist theatre group, has a different view of humankind from the one that generally prevails in society today, and this is why it gives priority to performing at institutions.

Another of Gotlands Teater's commitments is the 'Association for Living Information about Prisons and Probation' (*Föreningen för levande information om kriminalvården*, FLIK), which the theatre formed in 1994. This association holds an annual seminar on correctional treatment of offenders in the former prison at Långholmen in Stockholm (now a conference centre). These seminars attract visitors from all over the Nordic countries. During each annual get-together, the Clas Amilon prize is awarded to a person in the prison and probation system who works for humanism. Gotlands Teater also endeavours to bring treatment of offenders to the fore in public debate, and to conduct a dialogue with school pupils about attitudes to prisons and probation.

⁵² Discussions with employees at Swedish prisons and Prison and Probation Authorities, May 2005.

14. Theatre activities med ex-convicts

During this survey of theatre at prisons, the author have also heard of organisations engaged in theatre with ex-prisoners taking part. These organisations are listed and described briefly below.

- ‘EXIT! — From Prison to Social Cooperative’ is a partnership between the social economy, the public sector and private enterprise in the Gothenburg region. EXIT! serves as a social employment cooperative in which people with experience of substance abuse or crime can find new ways of becoming employed and supporting themselves. The aim is thereby to prevent people released after prison sentences from relapsing into crime or substance abuse.⁵³

Activities include the cultural and theatre projects of Interna Teatern and EXIT! that have been under way in Gothenburg since 2004. A writing circle and a drama circle have met regularly, under the direction of author Stig Hansen and actor Niclas Fransson respectively. The purpose of these activities is that, within about two years, they should yield written material and skills that culminate in an in-house theatre production.⁵⁴

With the *Arma Irma* (‘Poor Irma’) production come the knowledge and competence that participants in the two circles have acquired to date, along with professional theatre workers to try out in a smaller-scale context.⁵⁵

- Gothenburg Rescue Mission is a non-profit association to which 24 churches in the Gothenburg area belong. The Mission offers emergency assistance to the homeless, substance abusers and other disadvantaged persons, but also support for long-term life changes. The organisation also offers people with mental disabilities a secure home, helps children with parents in prison, and provides counselling and courses for unemployed youth, prisoners and women from all over the world.⁵⁶

The Mission is currently working with a few inmates from Sagsjön, the women’s prison, who will soon be re-entering the community. The plan is, with these women taking part, to make a film about life in the prison that they are about to leave behind them.⁵⁷

- Teater Sandino (see sections 10.2 and 10.3), based in Stockholm, has worked repeatedly with ex-convicts over the years. Its current project of the year is *Molière 2005*, for which it is now applying for funds. The project involves producing, in the course of a year, three plays by Molière to tour with in the Stockholm region and the rest of Sweden. The ensemble comprises seven former prisoners and the aim is for them, after being ‘demobbed’ in this way, to be reintegrated into the community.⁵⁸

⁵³ EXIT!, www.vagenut.coop, 26 May 2005.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Gothenburg Rescue Mission, www.raddningsmissionen.se, 26 May 2005.

⁵⁷ Discussion with an employee at Sagsjön in May 2005.

⁵⁸ Interview with Igor Cantillana, artistic director of Teater Sandino, on 20 May 2005.

15. Conclusion

In May 2005 there are three correctional institutions in Sweden with their own theatre activities for inmates: Storboda, Österåker and Hinseberg prisons. Activities at each institution are run by two directors with a professional theatre background and a pastor of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden with experience of amateur dramatics. Two of the prisons have permanent theatre activities — Storboda has had them for the past three years and Österåker for 15. At Hinseberg, activities have been conducted in project form for eight years. Österåker prison is unique in this context, in that it has its own permanent premises with a stage and theatre equipment, a well-established theatre ensemble at the institution and a leader engaged in drama activities full-time.

Forty-six per cent of Sweden's Prison and Probation Authorities receive visits from guest theatre groups at their institutions once or twice a year. Another 43% state that they have hosted guest theatre performances in the past, while 11% have never done so. In most cases, it is the independent group Gotlands Teater that has visited the various prisons. This group performs some 70 times a year at institutions, and is the only ensemble of its kind in Sweden.

Seventy-four per cent of respondents representing the Prison and Probation Authorities and the prisons stated that they were in favour of theatre in prisons, while 26% had a neutral attitude. Not one expressed disapproval of theatre. The main reason why there were nonetheless neither in-house theatre activities nor guest performances by visiting theatre groups was financial. Staff shortages and security priorities were other reasons commonly cited.

The 1974 Act and Ordinance on Correctional Treatment in Institutions have a great deal to say about inmates' rights to work, employment, education and training, recreation and time spent outside the institution, and also state that prisoners' reintegration into the community must be promoted. Nevertheless, all these aims can be achieved only if it is possible to do so 'without neglecting the requirement of society's protection' (unofficial translation). In phrases like 'to the extent that it is feasible' and 'where appropriate', the statutes emphasise the need for security to take precedence over all other considerations.

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Kriminalvårdens organisation 2004

Kriminalvårdsverket består av kriminalvårdsstyrelsen (KVS), 35 kriminalvårdsmyndigheter (KVM) och transporttjänsten (Tpt).

Kriminalvårdsstyrelsen i Norrköping är central förvaltningsmyndighet och chefsmyndighet. Kriminalvårdsstyrelsen är organiserad i ett huvudkontor (Norrköping) och fem regionkontor.

Regionkontoren svarar för tillsyn och uppföljning av kriminalvårdsmyndigheterna.

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheterna, 35 st, svarar för verksamheten vid anstalter, häkten och frivårdskontor.

Transporttjänsten (i Göteborg) svarar för utrikestransporter och vissa inrikestransporter.

KVS= Kriminalvårdsstyrelsen

Kriminalvårdsstyrelsens regionkontor

- A. Härnösand
- B. Stockholm
- C. Norrköping
- D. Göteborg
- E. Malmö

Tpt= Transporttjänsten i Göteborg

S= Sluten anstalt Ö= Öppen anstalt S/Ö= Anstalt med både slutna och öppna platser

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheter (KVM)

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Luleå

- 1 Anstalten Haparanda S/Ö
- 2 Anstalten Luleå S
- 3 Frivården Gällivare
- 4 Frivården Luleå
- 5 Häktet Luleå

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Umeå

- 6 Anstalten Sörbyn Ö
- 7 Anstalten Umeå S
- 8 Frivården Skellefteå
- 9 Frivården Umeå
- 10 Häktet Umeå

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Härnösand

- 11 Anstalten Härnösand S
- 12 Anstalten Saltvik S
- 13 Frivården Härnösand
- 14 Frivården Örnsköldsvik
- 15 Häktet Härnösand

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Sundsvall

- 16 Anstalten Ljustadalen Ö
- 17 Anstalten Viskan Ö
- 18 Frivården Sundsvall
- 19 Frivården Östersund

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Gävle

- 20 Anstalten Grubberget Ö
- 21 Anstalten Gävle S/Ö
- 22 Frivården Dalarna
- 23 Frivården Gävle
- 24 Frivården Hudiksvall
- 25 Häktet Falun
- 26 Häktet Gävle

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Uppsala

- 27 Anstalten Åby Ö
- 28 Frivården Uppsala
- 29 Häktet Uppsala

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Västerås

- 30 Anstalten Tillberga Ö
- 31 Frivården Västerås
- 32 Häktet Västerås

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Stockholm Kronoberg

- 33 Häktet Kronoberg

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Hall

- 34 Anstalten Hall S
- 35 Anstalten Håga S

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Norrtälje

- 36 Anstalten Norrtälje S

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Stockholm Centrum

- 37 Anstalten Färingsö S
- 38 Anstalten Svartsjö Ö
- 39 Frivården Fridhemsplan
- 40 Frivården Hornstull

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Stockholm Norr

- 41 Anstalten Storboda S
- 42 Anstalten Österåker S
- 43 Anstalten Täby S/Ö
- 44 Frivården Stockholm Norr
- 45 Häktet Österåker

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Stockholm Söder

- 46 Anstalten Asptuna Ö
- 47 Anstalten Beateberg S/Ö
- 48 Frivården Nacka/Haninge
- 49 Frivården Södertörn
- 50 Häktet Huddinge

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Örebro

- 51 Anstalten Hinseberg S/Ö
- 52 Frivården Örebro
- 53 Häktet Örebro

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Kumla

- 54 Anstalten Kumla S

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Eskilstuna

- 55 Anstalten Hällby S
- 56 Anstalten Mariefred S/Ö
- 57 Frivården Eskilstuna

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Nyköping

- 58 Anstalten Nyköping S
- 59 Frivården Nyköping
- 60 Häktet Nyköping

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Norrköping

- 61 Anstalten Norrköping S
- 62 Anstalten Skenäs Ö
- 63 Frivården Norrköping
- 64 Häktet Norrköping

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Linköping

Anstalten Roxtuna S/Ö

- 65 Anstalten Roxtuna S/Ö
- 66 Anstalten Skänninge Ö
- 67 Frivården Linköping
- 68 Häktet Skänninge

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Visby

- 69 Anstalten Visby S
- 70 Frivården Visby
- 71 Häktet Visby

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Karlstad

- 72 Anstalten Karlskoga S
- 73 Frivården Karlstad
- 74 Häktet Karlstad

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Mariestad

- 75 Anstalten Mariestad S/Ö
- 76 Frivården Skövde
- 77 Häktet Mariestad

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Vänersborg

- 78 Anstalten Brinkeberg S
- 79 Anstalten Östragård Ö
- 80 Frivården Vänersborg
- 81 Häktet Uddevalla

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Jönköping

- 82 Anstalten Tidaholm S
- 83 Frivården Jönköping
- 84 Häktet Jönköping

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Borås

- 85 Anstalten Borås S
- 86 Anstalten Småteryd Ö
- 87 Frivården Borås
- 88 Häktet Borås

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Göteborg Centrum

- 89 Anstalten Högsbo S
- 90 Frivården Göteborg Centrum
- 91 Häktet Göteborg

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten GÖTEBORG Hisingen/Förorter

- 92 Anstalten Sagsjön S/Ö
- 93 Anstalten Skogome S/Ö
- 94 Frivården Göteborg Hisingen/Förorter
- 95 Häktet Skogome

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Halmstad

- 96 Anstalten Halmstad S/Ö
- 97 Frivården Halmstad

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Kalmar

- 98 Anstalten Kalmar S
- 99 Anstalten Västervik S
- 100 Frivården Kalmar
- 101 Frivården Västervik
- 102 Häktet Kalmar

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Karlskrona

- 103 Anstalten Karlskrona S
- 104 Frivården Karlskrona
- 105 Frivården Växjö
- 106 Häktet Karlskrona
- 107 Häktet Växjö

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Kristianstad

- 108 Anstalten Kristianstad S/Ö
- 109 Anstalten Kristianstad Centrum S
- 110 Frivården Kristianstad
- 111 Häktet Kristianstad

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Helsingborg

- 112 Anstalten Helsingborg S/Ö
- 113 Frivården Helsingborg
- 114 Häktet Helsingborg

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Malmö Norr

- 115 Anstalten Kirseberg S
- 116 Frivården Malmö Norr
- 117 Häktet Malmö

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Malmö Söder

- 118 Anstalten Fosie S
- 119 Anstalten Tygelsjö Ö
- 120 Anstalten Rostorp Ö
- 121 Frivården Malmö Söder

Kriminalvårdsmyndigheten Ystad

- 122 Anstalten Ystad S
- 123 Frivården Ystad
- 124 Häktet Trelleborg

