



Nightwalks with Teenagers

by Mammalian Diving Reflex

What is Nightwalks with Teenagers?

Nightwalks with Teenagers is a walking performance and a nighttime tour of the city, designed and hosted by teenagers. *Nightwalks* is an all ages event, where an audience (of both teens and adults) is invited to attend, and encouraged to participate and experience the city from the teenagers' perspective.

Why is Nightwalks with Teenagers important?

In our day-to-day lives, adults are often the ones taking charge of teens' lives. Whether in school or at home, the youth are restricted with supervision from their parents, guardians or teachers; the decision-making powers teens have are limited to what their adult supervisors deem appropriate, which can impact how much control they feel over their lives, self-confidence and self-worth.



Image: *Nightwalks with Teenagers* in Bochum, Germany 2017

Nightwalks with Teenagers reshapes the social contract between adults and teens by giving teenagers the power to make executive decisions to create and shape all elements of the performance.

From the planning stage to the finished *Nightwalks* performance, the teens take on the role of artists and supervisors, and have the creative control over the project. Even if only for the duration of the project, we want the youth to feel that they have power over

the outcome of the performance, that the decisions that they make matter, and most of all, we want to have lots of fun!



Image: *Nightwalks with Teenagers* in Bochum, Germany 2017

To further learn about Mammalian Diving Reflex's methodology, read: *The Mammalian Protocol for Collaborating with Children and Haircuts by Children and Other Evidence for a New Social Contract* - Darren O'Donnell.

What will your teen do?

Nightwalks with Teenagers is developed, planned and executed by the youth in collaboration with Mammalian Diving Reflex, over the course of about two weeks. We begin our workshops by talking about the history of this kind of work- relational aesthetics, live art, and how *Nightwalks with Teenagers* is a performance, featuring the teenagers as creators and performers. We play games to get to know one another, and to become more comfortable engaging with strangers in public; we explore the neighbourhood together, letting the teenagers guide the way, and show us the places they love. Together we plan a walking route, with a variety of activities along the way. The final performance (1.5-2 hrs.) is led by the youth, with all activities executed by them, with Mammalian's support. They will be responsible for hosting the event, social animation, and will have the opportunity to lead activities chosen by them, if they

choose to (examples include: a game of basketball with the audience, a water fight, showcasing a short skit, ghost stories, showcasing a talent, etc.). Mammalian artists and the Presenting organization's staff and volunteers will support and assist with activities as required, and ensure youth and audience safety.

How does this happen?

There are three key stages of production for *Nightwalks with Teenagers*:

1. Planning



Image: Nightwalks with Teenagers in St. Etienne 2017

In week 1, Mammalian will lead workshops that will take place in the classroom, community centre or arts organization, and the surrounding neighbourhood. Mammalian will explain *Nightwalks* and other performances like it- social practice work that utilizes people, and the relationships between people as primary 'materials' for creating interactive performances. Together, we'll brainstorm and decide on the path for the walk, the talents and performances that will happen throughout the night, and who will be responsible for taking the lead on each role. We will all work together as a team to figure out what we want to do, and how we want to create our own *Nightwalks with Teenagers*

2. Rehearsal(s);



Image: Nightwalks With Teenagers in Nyon, Switzerland 2016

During rehearsal(s) we'll work on developing and practicing the different elements of the performance including hosting, engaging the audience, performance (and related timing, logistics, etc.). We will test the planned walking route, and if needed, make adjustments to the walk with new locations of interest, and/or participatory activities for the audience members.

3. Performance(s)

The event takes place over approximately two hours on 1-3 evening(s). All of the participating youth will be responsible for some element of the event, either "onstage" or behind the scenes.

About Mammalian Diving Reflex

Mammalian has received numerous awards and support for its engaging collaborations with the community, children and youth. Most recently, the company was nominated for the BKM Preis Kulturelle Bildung, given by the cultural ministry of Germany to outstanding projects in the field of cultural education, and was named a finalist for the inaugural Ellen Stewart International Award, for an individual theatre artist or company whose work promotes social change and community participation with a particular focus on the engagement of young people. In 2016, Mammalian was named to San Francisco's Yeruba Beuna Center's Top 100, an annual list of the creative minds making the provocations that will shape the future of culture. The company was the recipient of the inaugural Neighbourhood Arts Network TD Arts Diversity Award (2013), and the Toronto Community Foundation's Vital Toronto Award. In 2012, Mammalian (and particularly *The Mammalian Protocol for Collaborating with Children*) was awarded the Children's Rights Supporter Award from the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children, nominations for which were reviewed by a jury of young people. In 2010, Mammalian won Harbourfront Centre's Fresh Ground New Works Award to premiere *Monster Makers*, the company's first performance created for child audiences. After being shortlisted for three consecutive years, in 2009 Mammalian won the Toronto Arts Foundation's Arts for Youth Award. In 2007 and 2008, Mammalian was the recipient of the Growing Active Kids award from the Toronto Community Foundation.

Mammalian has created numerous successful performances with children and youth in over 70 cities in 20 countries all over the world, including *Haircuts by Children*, *Eat the Street*, *Dare Night* and *Teentalitarianism*.



www.mammalian.ca



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