

## Reckless Sleepers

### A String Section

**Contact**

Reckless Sleepers  
Kerkstraat 261  
9050  
Gent  
Belgium

[molewetherell@reckless-sleepers.co.uk](mailto:molewetherell@reckless-sleepers.co.uk)

+44 115 714 2171

[leen@reckless-sleepers.co.uk](mailto:leen@reckless-sleepers.co.uk)

+32 474 61 32 36

Skype reckless-sleepers

[www.reckless-sleepers.eu](http://www.reckless-sleepers.eu)

**Created by**

Leen Dewilde

**Performed by**

Caroline D'Haese  
Lisa Kendall  
Rachel Rimmer  
Orla Shine  
Leen Dewilde  
Sofie Vanderstede  
Dee-Anne Donalds

**Artistic Director**

Mole Wetherell

### **Project statement**

In 2010 Leen Dewilde started destroying things, smashing cups, breaking down walls, cutting up furniture and sawing the legs off chairs.

A String Section started as one of these works, a simple set of 5 chairs, 5 women and 5 saws. A project where the production of sawdust, the left over legs, the half broken chairs, the residue of the action is as important as the action itself.

Up until today many chairs have been dismantled. We have presented the project inside a theatre, a church, warehouse, at the beach, in an Italian courtyard, underneath a bridge...

### **Press reviews**

‘I have never been to a performance – of anything – where the need for resolution, for completion, has felt so compelling, has been so actively craved. I would happily have sat there for twice A String Section's forty-five minute running time, caught up in that feeling of things about to fall’

Tom Moyser, Broadway Baby

★★★★★ [Link to full review](#)

‘what a manifold and meaningful piece it proves - without doubt, one of the most gripping and visceral things I have seen this festival.’

Matt Trueman, Whats on Stage

★★★★★ [Link to full review](#)

‘By the end, it's hard to avoid unnerving thoughts of our actions, our choices, actually leaving us without a leg (or a planet) to sit on.’

Mary Brennan, Herald Scotland

★★★★★ [Link to full review](#)

‘What these women demonstrate is control, over their choices and their circumstances.’

Maddy Costa, Exeunt

★★★★★ [Link to full review](#)

‘To describe this work as hypnotic isn’t enough—the state it induces is one of intense engagement with its presentness, in both a temporal and spatial sense. It is the feeling of a breath held for 50 minutes, all in the audience leaning forward, alert to every movement.’

John Balley, Real Time

[Link to full review](#)

### **Press interviews**

The company are available for press and media reviews, and press photography opportunities.

**Support**

Commissioned by Tramway, South East Dance, Coastal Currents and British Council in partnership with Stockholm Kulturfestival.

Made with the support of INTEATRO Creative Residency

Research to create the project supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

Funded by British Council Australia and The Flemish Government.

**Reckless Sleepers Logo** - To be used on publicity generated by the venue - versions in a range of formats can be supplied.

# Reckless Sleepers

**Vimeo documentation**

[Latest version MUDAM Luxembourg](#)

[Edited version](#)

[Full length version](#) - password sleepers

**Twitter** [@RecklessSleeper](#)

**Blog** <http://www.stringsection.co.uk/blog/>

**Flickr** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/reckless-sleepers/>

**Budget**

The minimum cost for the gallery version of A String Section is £3,000 excluding travel, accommodation and per diems. A full and breakdown of costs and more detailed budgets for bespoke versions can be provided.

## Peer reviews

Helen Cole, programmer In Between Time Festival

"I like this work very much! I like the women entering and leaving the space as if in an orchestra. Their formality and seriousness combined with the silliness and simplicity of their task. I like the shapes of the bodies - the differences between them, the way they twist around the chair seeming powerful, weak, sexual, ingenious. I like their tenacity. I connect with them and care that they carry on. I don't care why they are doing it. I respect their commitment, their strength, their perseverance. I root for my favourite. I think one has weird hair. I objectify them then they lock eyes and they stare back at me. I like to see how perfect they are even when they sweat with their hair astray. I like how disheveled they become. I like to see their strong arms. I think about their core balance. Then they falter and over turn or get stuck inside the seat of a chair. When they fall I think about their hands starting to blister and their muscles beginning to burn and the wood chaffing their legs. I think about their perfect but different black dresses and how nice and prim they look. I think about how hard it is to be a woman. I think how strong we are. How much we carry with us. I am proud of them. i am proud of me.

I feel sorry for the beautiful wooden chairs and how old they are and how many people now gone that have sat on them. I ask where are the other chairs that once sat alongside them. I look at the good old wood and I think how lonely they seem (mad i know). This will be their final performance.

This is ok. I like how simple and robust this work is. I more than like. I love this work very much.

Rob Orchard Arts Emerson Boston

"I was dozing a bit in the first day and thought it would be particularly hard to sit through this piece presented by Reckless Sleepers, a movement/performance company. The conceit was simple. Five variously aged actress/dancers dressed in plain but different black outfits each sat on five different old wooden chairs in absolute silence while making emotionally neutral eye contact with the audience. They then proceed to saw the legs and support mechanisms from each chair (one little bit at a time) - all while sitting on the chair. On occasion, they'd pause as a group, take in the audience, and then get back to work. It was riveting. I kid you not, the audience of 50 was transfixed. Each chair, made and shaped differently, posed individual challenges. The oak chair took the longest and was the hardest. Some of the legs were thicker than others. Each performer "attacked" the task from a different angle at different times and with a range of determination. Their expressions were undifferentiated - cold and determined. No irony, no warmth, just calculated and focused on the task at hand. The chairs were fighting back. You began to "imagine" the life of each chair - where it was made, who sat on it, what it had learned over time from the generations of people it had observed and served. The chairs became the real characters. There was genuine poignance to their methodical destruction. Slowly on the floor piles of sawdust accumulated.

OK, so you think I'm nuts. The magic here is that it opened up an imaginative window with so much creative air and atmosphere.

There must be some obnoxious academic jargon for this kind of performance. Performativity? I've never fully embraced the everything is "performance" world. The rigour of this work kept it alive. As is, it could never be a stand-alone project for us. But, in the context of a festival it would work provocatively well.... Larger scale and site-specific versions are being planned in Europe. I think there could be one Boston potential in the larger context. In this version it took 55 minutes to execute the chairs.



### **Publicity images**

There are a range of carefully selected images that we use to publicise A String Section, the image below can be [downloaded](#) on our Flickr site.



Photo © Sven Becker for MUDAM Luxembourg

### **Brochure Copy (archive)**

We ask that any printed or web brochure copy is approved by the company.

### **Photography and documentation**

The project has a full range of both video and photographic documentation, if documentation is to be arranged we ask that the company receives copies of all photographs and rough video footage - all photographers are credited together with the commissioning venue

### **Post and pre-show discussions**

Have been facilitated in the past these work better if supported by a local academic, artist or venue curator

### **The residency model - audience development.**

In order to connect to places that we visit the company promote an idea of company in residence for each invitation to present, this can mean that more time is spent at each location, workshops and education programmes can be facilitated, and meetings with the venue or festival departments can be arranged.

In some cases A String Section has been presented along side other Reckless Sleepers repertoire projects, or tied into a creative residency at a local University or Art School.

**Further information about the range of models that we have developed together with our venue partners can be provided, however our aim is to treat each invitation as a unique event, providing the company with information about other arts and education organisations that the venue work with, or may wish to develop relationships is essential, we ask that this is provided a minimum of 3 months prior to any presentation.**