Abstract: The Ghost Machine is a practice-based research project that explores the process of embodiment in animated film. It describes the process of transfiguration from the artist’s/auteur’s point of view and not from an outside position. The dissertation follows the embodiment of a dramatic text, the *Ghost Sonata* by August Strindberg (1907), into an animated film. The starting point is my experience of the drama, at the age of thirteen, when staged by Ingmar Bergman at the Royal Dramatic Theatre. As a teenager, the world of the grown-ups seemed to be corrupt, twisted and ruled by violent power plays and economic sanctions, and this play confirmed my world view. Was I right, as a thirteen-year-old boy? What kind of world emerges in my version of the Ghost Sonata? In this thesis work, the films and the experimental research process meet the practice and art of writing. Using text, not as “theory” separated from “practice” but as a bodily art practice, creates a shifting border between the results and intentions of art and filmmaking, and the results of writing. At the same time a unity emerges where the results of the research process can be seen and experienced in the interaction between the texts and the artwork. The Ghost Machine is a totality where the text, films and artworks included in the project are equally important and must be seen as a unity. The Ghost Machine is a work journey where travelling, animated film practice, networking with colleagues and collecting data are mixed with experiments using methods from contemporary arts practice, performance, reenactment, appropriation and transfiguration, blended with traditional puppet animation in classic Czech style. In collaboration with actors, mime artists, puppet makers, musicians and a minimal film crew, century old stop-motion animation is combined with computer animation. The textual part of the work falls into two categories: life stories and work stories. The work stories traces the forming of an artwork in all aspects. The life stories are related to the subject of ghosts. Suddenly, dead friends and dear family members claimed their space. The understanding of the *Ghost Sonata* came to be a process of sorting out and following lines of memory using an inverted version of the Orpheus myth as a guide. Instead of never turning around, when walking the dead out of oblivion, I chose to look back, again and again, until I hit something and could not write anymore.


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