

R A S T E R

2008 #01



2009 #02



2010 #03

2011 #04

2012 #05

2013 #06

**YEARBOOK OF THE INDEPENDENT PERFORMING
ARTS SCENE IN BELGRADE**
PUBLICATION OF TKH FORUM FOR PERFORMING ARTS CRITIQUE



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× BOJAN DJORDJEV

INTRODUCTION

Raster – Yearbook of the Independent Performing Arts Scene, published by the TkH platform (Teorija koja Hoda / Walking Theory) contributes to the systematization of data and promotion of the independent performing arts scene as a highly significant and indispensable agency of cultural life in Serbia today. *Raster* is structured as a directory of productions and projects in the domain of performing arts, premiered throughout 2009 on the Belgrade independent stages. In accordance with TkH's pursuits as a theoretical-artistic platform dedicated to advancing not only artistic, but foremostly theoretical practices pertaining to contemporary performing arts – beside the information/documentation segment, the publication includes the editorial accompanied by two contextual introductions from our contributors. The last year's *Raster*, first in the series, as contextual introductions featured in-depth theoretical-historical-poetical analyses of the three most common disciplines of the independent performing arts scene: alternative theatre, contemporary dance, and performance. This year's contributions address more specific phenomena related to the independent performing arts scene – the question of the "World Financial Crisis 2009" in its local incarnations and effects on the scene, and an 'insider's' problematization of the initiative NovA DramA (New Drama) and assessment of its position within the independent art scene. Consequently, *Raster* is not merely a representative 'postcard' from the Serbian independent performing arts scene nor its PR portfolio, but a critical publication attempting at reflection on the respective problems, working conditions, aspirations and transformations of that scene. In a way, *Raster* additionally manifests and contributes to the solidarity of the protagonists of the independent scene – the highest merit of the 'bottom-up' organization through the *Other Scene* and similar initiatives.

The productions/projects in the directory are listed alphabetically, featuring the names of the authors/groups. They all received a standard questionnaire form with accompanying technical instructions. Responses from the authors/groups demonstrate a variety of different approaches to self-presentation and, consequently, diversity of the scene in terms of genre, discipline or aesthetics. We have selected 24 productions for presentation

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in the *Raster*, but we feature 23. This asymmetry comes from the request from the author of the production “Ona se budi” (“She Is Waking Up”), Uroš Jovanović, to be left out as he decided to abandon theatre.¹

Definition of independent scene for the purposes of this systematization includes projects produced outside the municipal or national cultural institutions. Majority of the productions was funded by the national or municipal governments through open calls for co-financing cultural projects. Many were produced in municipal theatres as ‘co-productions’ i.e. taking advantage of their institutional infrastructure for the opening events and, less frequently, for rehearsals and the premiere (Yugoslav Drama Theatre, Little Theatre “Duško Radović”, Belgrade Drama Theatre, Student Cultural Centre, and Bitef Theatre).

Cultural centre UK “Vuk Karadžić” falls into a special category. Through the program Beogradski plesni centar, dedicated to contemporary dance, in the last two years it raised a profile as a venue for performing and co-producing numerous independent dance projects. With the new repertory of Bitef Theatre focused on contemporary dance, and the initiative of the new manager Jelena Kajgo for launching the resident Bitef Dance Company, this theatre emerges as another municipal institution fostering production of contemporary dance. Such repertory focus broadly allows Bitef Theatre to co-produce independent dance productions, and the first season of the new Bitef Theatre commenced with Isidora Stanišić’s piece “Paranoja šik” (“Paranoia Chic”), a co-production with the Station. Standard venues for performance and production still include the cultural centres Rex, Centre for Cultural Decontamination, and Magacin u Kraljevića Marka as important contributors, since their inception, to development of the independent performing arts scene, but also to the broader cultural-artistic and activist landscape.

More than half of productions featured in this *Raster* are dance-based. The aforementioned gradual rise of the institutional infrastructure and modes of co-production are some of the contributing factors. However, a dance scene grows not only with material infrastructure – in terms of new performing venues – but more so by what precedes or brings about production. Here I mostly take into account the pursuits of the Station – Service for Contemporary Dance (Stanica – Servis za savremeni ples).

.....

¹ More on this production at: <http://tkhforum.blogspot.com/2009/03/razgovor-sa-autorima-predstave-ona-se.html>

With their educational projects (Nomad Dance Academy, Fostering Creativity, Resonance, Puzzle), organization of the festival Kondenz and logistic support notably to young performers, in the last few years Stanica has essentially changed the landscape of our contemporary dance, even obliquely affecting initiatives like the already mentioned Beogradski plesni centar or Bitef Dance Company. This year was significant for the local dance scene for an additional reason – hosting of the biennial festival of the Balkan Dance Platform in Novi Sad by Per.art and Forum for New Dance of the Serbian National Theatre from Novi Sad, and TkH and Stanica from Belgrade, who faced an exceptionally difficult task to realize such a demanding international project in the year of severely downsized cultural budgets.

Along with this vigor and ascent of contemporary dance, the last year's production features another unexpected piece of statistics – a considerable number of projects operating with text. Not in terms of traditional playwriting – one of the basic characteristics of the independent performing arts scene is detachment from the local mainstream theatre, exclusively based on interpretation of traditional plays – but different kind of stage (or post-dramatic) texts, presented on the independent stages in a variety of ways. Centre for Cultural Decontamination's project "Rizik #2" ("Risk #2") produced elaborate stage readings of the plays by three female authors, as an alternative to the fixed, self-contained and unreflective mainstream ways of staging. In addition, some of the projects were engaged in a direct dialogue with the dramatic and literary heritage (or indeed literary figures): Mudra teatar's dance performance "Koža je zid" ("Skin is the Wall") (with references to Lorca's "The House of Bernarda Alba"), productions "Tri sestre gledaju Čehova" ("Three Sisters Watching Chekhov") by Ister teatar, "Životinjska farma" ("Animal Farm") by the Perpetuum Dance Company, "Solo za tri vizije" ("Solo for Three Visions") by Miloš Sofrenović (Peter Handke, Samuel Beckett and Virginia Woolf), "Ples sa ocem" ("Dancing with Father") by Plavo pozorište (Franz Kafka), or Dušan Murić's "Robinson Kruso" ("Robinson Crusoe"). Furthermore, some productions were largely based on stage texts written in non-dramatic fashion: "Ono" ("It") by Ana Dubljević, comprising interchangeably re-read literary and dance texts; "Smoking Kills" by Ister teatar and Damir Vijuk, a copy/paste textual machine meandering between a stand-up comedy, lecture performance and a sermon, or "Oj Srbijo među šljivama" (Patriotic Dadaist Soirée) by Ivana Koraksić, written by Dušan Murić. In a considerable number of instances, the lines were conceived during rehearsals or the performance itself – as performer's text: "Odjavna špica" ("Générique") by the TkH platform,

“Robinzon Kruso”, or “Džinovske žene predstavljaju najbolju predstavu u gradu” (“The Giant Women Present the Greatest Show in Town”) by Dragana Bulut, Gillie Kleiman and Lígia Soares. Dah teatar’s production “Prelazeći liniju” (“Crossing the Line”) featured monologues – documented confessions of women from the 1990s’ ex-Yugoslav wars.

The rising interest in the text, displayed on the independent stages in the last year, was a direct instigation for the contextual introduction by Milan Marković, focusing on the initiative NovA DramA. This initiative was launched under the auspices of a national cultural institution – National Theatre in Belgrade – but was soon deprived of institutional support, and taking part in the conception of the Other Scene and its workings without a clearly defined position of its protagonists – young writers captured between the general indifference of the independent scene towards playwriting, and inadequacies of the educational system in terms of drill in any kind of idiosyncratic interdisciplinary dramaturgy. In her contribution Milena Bogavac looked at the calendar season through a wider perspective on the social and cultural climate and indeed tumultuous events which nevertheless allowed for some output of the independent scene. Statistically speaking, according to the number of featured projects, there is no difference between this and the last year’s *Raster*. However, in the meantime, the funds were decimated – due to the rebalance of the state budget the money for cultural purposes was considerably downsized. This had no effect on the number of productions – by this standard the independent scene annually produces the total output of four city theatres. On the other hand, due to the constant delays of the open calls of the Ministry of Culture and the Belgrade City Assembly and, consequently, late announcement of results, the production calendar does not match the fiscal year. It is, accordingly, harder to assess the consequences of the downsizing of production budgets. The independent scene is, perhaps, simply prepared to operate without an appropriate financial support, and it therefore ‘survived’ the tumultuous 2009, but the questions remain: how long and whether at all it should sustain.

As a yearbook of the independent performing arts scene *Raster* was conceived as a segment of TkH platform’s project Forum for Performing Arts Critique. On the one hand, this project was created as a discursive support to the protagonists of the independent scene. On the other, it opened new possibilities for engagement in criticism of performing arts to the students of the school for criticism Walking Critique (KKH) launched by TkH in cooperation with the Bitef festival in 2008. Generally

speaking, the project met with great interest from the protagonists of the independent scene, while the engagement in terms of self-organization relied on the young critics' personal interests and enthusiasm, and varied accordingly. Therefore, my pledge from the editorial of the previous *Raster* that every project would be accompanied by a review from a young critic – could not be fulfilled. Additionally, as the initiator of the Forum, TkH met numerous logistic and logic problems concerning organization of the discussions, sometimes amounting to banal fusses over coordination of schedules. Nevertheless, through various forms of debate, from October 2008 to September 2009, the Forum for Critique 'processed' more than twenty productions. The Forum's round table had its last session in September 2009, discussing the productions, but also the pending situation with financing of independent projects after the budget rebalance, and suspension of many of them before the summer season. After this meeting a decision was made that this issue of *Raster* should mark the formal ending of the TkH Forum as a project; however, it should continue on an *ad hoc* basis whenever important issues for joint discussion or individual initiatives of the protagonists emerge. One of the aims of the Forum was fostering collegiality and solidarity, even acquaintances between the protagonists of the independent scene; this was accomplished to a certain extent, or was at least moving in the right direction. As I conclude this editorial, the Other Scene hosts an ongoing e-mail debate on criticism of contemporary dance productions, one of its conclusions being that critique perceived as 'good-bad' arbitrage, based on taken-for-granted criteria and always ending in displays of critic's personal taste and erudition, is simply no longer adequate by contemporary standards. I end with hope that such discussions will gain in frequency and initiate before the *Raster's* next edition some new reflection, new writing and new performance, theory and criticism arising from the local independent scene.

Translated by Irena Šentevska

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× MILENA BOGAVAC [DRAMA MENTAL STUDIO]

NEW PERCEPTIONS OF PARANOIA: LOOKING BACK ON THE YEAR 2009 AND THE SERBIAN CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

My contribution to the second *Yearbook of the Independent Performing Arts Scene in Serbia* began writing itself in my notes, when I was appointed as the selector of the festival Ex teatar fest in Pančevo. Not while I made them, but while I numbly stared at them at a meeting preceding the festival. At this meeting I was introduced to the New Manager and was in turn expected to introduce my selection. The agenda nevertheless changed so, instead of presenting my proposals, I found myself staring into my notebook, listening to her talk on the World Financial Crisis.

She must have been very convincing, because afterwards I had nothing else to say. Except that drastically downsized budget drastically changes the concept and that I would, accordingly, have to think again before I announce my decision. The announced thinking again concerned, in the first place, my dilemma: do I want to sign at all the selection of the “festival” financially covering one and a half show? ... Could this be called a festival in any event, or the appropriate term would be “hosting”?

And, finally, if my task was to recommend a production to be hosted in Pančevo, how to pick up from many different quality productions the one that bears a statement on the whole season?!

And, while I'm thus staring in my diary, reading the titles: “Oh, no!”, “It”, “Dancing with Father”, “Three Sisters Watching Chekhov” or “The Giant Women Present the Greatest Show in Town” – I realize that all I can think of is how to check out from the post of the selector of Pančevo's festival. This reminds me of TkH's performance “Générique”. Although it contained many elements of sharp and critical assessment of the season, the accompanying leaflet made it clear that it could be performed only once. The event was announced as TkH's last theory performance, attracting a large audience in the Studio stage of the Yugoslav Drama Theatre. Engaging with the context of the local artistic scene, it contained a possible programmatic evaluation of the previous season. Starting from a concept that the show never happened, on the level of dramaturgy Ana Vujanović, Marta Popivoda, Bojan Djordjev, and Siniša Ilić conceived a performance that critically addressed the independent

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scene, challenged its values, power relations, and indeed its position in the society... Employing the methods of lecture performance, they engaged in a one-hour public discussion (re)constructing a two-hour production: a bizarre master-piece, into which the authors allegedly invested two years of their lives. However, that performance never happened, and this fact brings TkH's artistic act to a new level of contextual intervention. Here the audience's failed expectations stir a debate on financial issues and cultural policy: the audience – mostly comprising protagonists of the independent scene, is provoked to join in. As one of the brightest moments of this performance, I remember a comment from the audience suggesting that Ministry of Culture should not waste public money on nonsense like this one. Marta Popivoda, in an incarnation of naïve self, with a touch of ironical dumbness, declares this comment as valid, asking: can you share with us an example of a project that justifiably spent public money? ... Her question, at first, was met with laughter... As for me, I kept returning to it seriously, following the newspaper coverage of culture and, especially, theatre in the last year. I noticed that in the sphere of mass media communication, it is not productions themselves that are written and commented about, but 'their importance' measured by two standards: amount of effort allegedly invested by the authors into their creation, and the number of prominent personalities from the world of politics, business, and sports who attended the premiere. It seems that raising attention to this phenomenon had been one of the aims of TkH's performance. The performance, nevertheless, never happened – meta-information replaced information. With this event, TkH 'checked out' from the field of theory performance but, in a way, they announced the year to come. A year marked by sensationalist announcements of productions which, in fact, never happened. Without aspiring to dwell on aesthetical accomplishments of mainstream productions, I would like to take up the principles of hype-marketing attached to them. It so happened that some productions conceived as intense and quite liberal dramaturgical adaptations of certain, in their time, cult titles, would be announced as new stagings of those plays. Not as new pieces created 'in reference', but as re-stagings of particular plays. The premiere would indeed happen, with VIP guests in attendance, but the announced event – nope. This form of manipulation with the public opinion, namely: the audience had marked the year 2009, but the beginning of 2010, as well. The problematic issue in this approach is not only how the premieres are advertised, but the sheer downgrading of audiences' intellect, starting from the assumption that they are indifferent as to what they watch, or what kind of cultural production they finance by paying their taxes.

Although it may be claimed that such cultural atmosphere prevails in Serbia since the 1990s, it seems that in the last year the respective frustration on the part of certain individuals peaked. Over night, the walls of eminent theatres (National Theatre and *Atelje 212*) received new graffiti decoration: “Nova Drama iz ded” (New Drama is Dead) and “Filozofija palanke” (Boondock Philosophy). The latter was swiftly painted over, but its photographs and footage appeared on the Internet, and from the mysterious e-mail address: filozofijapalanke@yahoo.com they were distributed to a considerable number of cultural workers, representatives of Belgrade’s theatre establishment.

Such a straightforward activism manifesting individual attitudes opposed to the dominant regime and cultural policies of the Republic of Serbia had no prominence in the previous years, which created an impression that in 2009 the divide between the “main” and the Other Scene became deeper and graver than ever before.

The best support for this claim probably came from a sequence of events related to the opening of the summer Universiade when, after the erection of the luxury residential complex Belville (conceived to host the athletes and international guests of the event) a neighboring Roma settlement had been fenced. Joining forces, groups and individuals from the Other Scene manifested their protest and solidarity with the Roma minority in a series of outings/events conceived in the barbed-wired settlement. The artists and activists from the Other Scene created a web site: www.universiade-belgrade2009.com (“United Neighborhood Against Racism”) reporting on this grand sport event from “the other side of the fence”, making public all the absurd, racist and politically incorrect statements given by the organizers of the Universiade, representatives of the administrative and cultural elite of Serbia, concerning the situation in the New Belgrade block no. 67 where the Roma settlement was surrounded, thwarting the inhabitants’ normal circulation and their daily business (like collecting ‘secondary raw material’). At the same time, a group of artists, employees of city-funded cultural institutions, was engaged in the production of the spectacular opening of the Universiade, reported by the media as a supreme aesthetical achievement, whose message was supposed to be conveyed from the “new, young, and different Serbia” to the whole world. Whose message was more emphatic? And whose went further? The pretty one, resembling a rally backed up by sophisticated holographic projections, or the true one, rendered as an electronic postcard from Belgrade seen by the Other Scene’s eyes, where glamour and misery are divided with barbed-wire, like in good old concentration camps?

A few months later, the long-anticipated Povorka ponosa (Gay Pride) was cancelled, the stated reason being incapacity of the state organs to guarantee safety in the capital's centre to more than five hundred participants – another event that brought the schisms in the country's cultural and public life to the melting point. At the same time, the 43rd Bitef (Belgrade International Theatre Festival) went on. On the day of the cancelled Gay Pride, the main festival's selection featured two productions: "Sanjari" ("Dreamers") directed by Miloš Lolić (Yugoslav Drama Theatre) and the performance "Odmor od povijesti" ("Vacation from History") by the Zagreb-based group Bacači sjenki (Shadow Casters). In a way, the events were marked by the general indignation and split opinions in the local cultural environment; after-show discussions as well. Delay of the Parade was thoroughly and heavily debated at the round table after Miloš Lolić's show, while the artists from Zagreb at their after-show discussion wore Belgrade Gay Pride T-shirts. Even as a coincidence, the fact that these two productions shared the awards of the 43rd Bitef would be symptomatic and significant. International jury's official statement began with a reference to the cancelled Gay Pride, and the way in which Bitef as a mainstream Serbian cultural institution interacted with this event, organized by some of the members of the platform Other Scene, was a phenomenon crucial for understanding the cultural life in Serbia throughout the year 2009.

The autumn that began with Gay Pride's defeat went on with escalation of violence on the Belgrade streets and the tragic death of young Brice Taton, supporter of the French soccer team Toulouse, who came to Belgrade to watch his club's match against the local Partizan. A group of Partizan fans brutally assaulted him in the middle of the city, and the young man, a few days later, died from injuries. At the time when billboards in Belgrade featured Brice Taton's name and his years of birth and death, physical violence reappeared in Novi Sad, not in the streets, but in a theatre. For personal or other unknown reasons, Milorad Kapor, member of the independent theatre company Jorik, after the performance of "Zločin i kazna" ("Crime and Punishment") in the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad, attacked Ivan Cerović, director and actor of the company Duplo dno (The False Bottom) where Kapor was a founding and long-time member of the cast. Ivan Cerović, this time, sustained grave physical injury. Kapor's response to reporters' queries on the causes for a physical assault on a colleague and close collaborator was that he endured "years of mobbing" in his former company. "Mobbing" – a term adopted from the vocabulary of capitalist corporations – thus had a back-door entrance into the Serbian NGO, non-profit, cultural-artistic sector. This case of drastic physical violence among the protagonists of Novi Sad's independent scene appears

as another event reflecting in various (not always affirmative) ways how the independent artistic scene responds to the social reality. It emphasized the words: violence, aggression, divide... that significantly marked the year 2009 in Serbia. And, while in the Serbian National Theatre, the oldest theatre institution in the country, members of the only two independent companies in Novi Sad settled their misunderstandings in a fight, in the National Theatre in Niš, activists and participants in the campaign “16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women” were thrown out from the theatre bar with threats and extreme misogynist comments, e.g.: “If you were my wife, I would beat you up every night”.

I could not have been aware of all the ensuing events while I was browsing over my notes on the output of the alternative performing arts scene at the meeting in Pančevo's Dom omladine. Neither could I have been aware of them during the festival, while I was chairing the clumsiest (misfortunate?) round table in my life. On my left hand side I had feminist activists, authors and performers of the piece “Ne mogu da odem, zato što” (“I can not leave, because...”) produced a year ago as part of the already mentioned campaign. On my right hand side I had members of Puls teatar from Lazarevac who on the same night performed their low-budget production based on the text “Pomorandžina kora” (“Orange Peel”) by the young playwright Maja Pelević. Both productions engaged with the gender issue in Serbia; however, it turned out that my idea to show them on the same day and discuss them at a joint round table was, in fact, an unforgivable mistake. The problem was not with the participants. The problem was in the audience. In the audience of the Ex teatar fest, addressing the most misogynist questions and comments. I was criticized for closing this round table too soon... However, someone's “too soon” for me was too late. Trying to strike a balance between audiences' questions and replies from the artists on my right and left hand side, I could think of only one thing. I thought how it was now too late to recall the meeting where I, in spite of all the difficulties and uncertainties, decided to try to do a festival with four shows, although I knew that the budget could cover only one and a half. Too late, too late indeed... In my mind, for some reason, I keep going back to that meeting and I clearly see myself staring bluntly at my bitter notes. It seemed to me then that an element most strikingly connecting various productions was the changed position of the audience assumed by the authors. In TkH's “Générique” the audiences found themselves in a situation demanding full participation in the debate. In addition to stressing their wish to answer all the questions from the audience, the authors/performers did not hesitate to address direct and personal questions to the attending protagonists of the independent scene. In a slightly different

manner, the authors of “The Giant Women Present the Greatest Show in Town” (Dragana Bulut, Lígia Soares and Gillie Kleiman) addressed audiences’ expectations from the event pompously advertised in following terms: „the show achieves historical significance and promises the creation of new paradigms for the dance scene of the future“.

The young choreographer Ana Dubljević, whose dance solo “It” has undoubtedly been one of the major events of the season, as an important element of her work stressed the research into possibilities of “non-collective” perception of a public event.

In Ister teatar’s production “Three Sisters Watching Chekhov”, an adaptation of Chekhov’s famous piece, the audiences observe the play from the perspective of the main characters that are absent from the stage.

In Mimart’s production “Memorandum” the audiences identify with the protagonists, assuming their position of computer game players. The group Hajde da... (Let’s...) created an inclusive theatre piece, “Reset”, adapted to the perception of blind and visually impaired persons, while the company Drama Mental Studio in collaboration with the Association of Blind and Visually Impaired People “Homer” staged Beckett’s “Endgame”. Here, the character of the blind Ham is played by a blind actor, while the long, poetic stage directions suggest the “arrested gaze” of the main character, and all the visual elements of the production are made accessible and comprehensible to the blind and visually impaired members of the audience. What all these productions, in a way, had in common was a research in audiences’ perception or, more precisely: a series of attempts at its change and inversion, from the traditional theatre’s into a different, less passive and less pacifying perspective.

A number of productions appearing on the independent stages in the second half of 2009 featured another common element – thematization of fear and paranoia. In a symptomatic manner, this coincided with the overall social reality marked by escalation of violence, general anxieties about the global economic crisis, and the mass hysteria following the proclaimed pandemic of the new flu – temporarily diverting citizens’ attention from the events associated with politics or economy.

Isidora Stanišić, the author of the dance performance “*Paranoia Chic*” (co-produced by the Bitez theatre), observed the phenomenon of fear as modern and almost fashionable; Irena Ristić and her company Hop.la! came out with their multimedia work “Soba malih strahova” (“Room of Little Fears”). In addition to addressing the primordial human fears, this video-installation was an experiment with audiences’ perception, allowing for them to freely choose their position in the empty space between the two simultaneous projections.

Speaking of paranoia, as one of the subjects significantly marking the 2009 independent theatre production in Serbia, I shall dwell for a while on “Smoking kills”, Ister teatar’s one man show. This “copy/paste collage” conceived by the dramaturge Damir Vijuk comprises texts addressing various ailments and perversities of the contemporary society. In an almost-an-hour-long soliloquy, the actor Igor Filipović discusses the damage from smoking, genetically modified food, diseases and viruses as well as unknown substances we consume while eating meat from the animals treated with antibiotics or fruit, vegetables, and cereals splashed with pesticides. His performance gets the audience paranoid. Again in this piece we encounter the elements of lecture performance, and this remark is not without consequence for the context of the local independent scene. In Serbia, the term *lecture performance* has been translated into Serbian only recently, in the title of an exhibition curated by Jelena Vesić and Radmila Joksimović at the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Arts. This is, indeed, another reason for observing this format as significant for the independent scene. The causes for its appearance may be traced in the conditions of the independent production: lecture performance is a low-budget form.

Instead of dazzling the audience with expensive sets, large cast and theatre effects, lecture performance stresses the intellectual, theoretically grounded and pronounced political and social engagement. In the year of the World Financial Crisis the one man show and dance solo were commonly encountered forms on the Serbian independent stages.

Miloš Sofrenović’s “Solo for Three Visions” and Ljiljana Tasić’s “Jednougao” (“Single-angle”) coincided with the rapid expansion on the fringe scene of poetry performances and events like poetry readings. The last year was additionally marked by the success of the festival “Pesničenje” (“Poetry Ring”), hosted monthly by the Cultural Centre Rex, becoming within a year one of the most popular cultural events in Belgrade. The festival was launched by a group of enthusiasts, poets and poetry lovers assembled by the art group Škart.

“Pesničenje” featured more than a hundred poets, “cantautores”, performers, activists and “everyone with a message”. Poetry performances thus became a popular form of artistic expression, and a new para-theatrical phenomenon attracting wider audience. Due to “Pesničenje”’s large attendance, including the fact that festivals modeled on this one started emerging in several Serbian cities, there is an impression that 2009 saw Serbia acquiring something like a “spoken word” scene. As the year went by it became clear that this young and fresh scene advanced, and that it would significantly influence the performing arts alternative in Serbia in

the years to come. This year was also marked by the project of collective self-education “Deschooling Classroom (o^o)”, addressing the protagonists of the independent cultural-artistic scenes in Serbia and Macedonia. The programme, produced by TkH in collaboration with Kontrapunkt from Skopje, granted its participants with opportunities to acquire education in the fields of their own choice, but also to meet each other on more regular basis, and exchange information and ideas more efficiently... This year, finally, saw Serbia entering the Schengen White List and this is not a small issue for artists now encountering new possibilities of easier and quicker cooperation with their international colleagues. This seems important because, unlike the national or mainstream culture, the independent scene in Serbia has always been looking at the rest of the world: the Western world, in the first place – both in ideological and aesthetical terms. All of this is beyond my knowledge at the Ex teatar fest meeting, while I’m listening to the speech on the World Financial ... and stare at my notebook.

I still don’t know what to say except that I have to think.

Like, how we are to do the festival in the first place and how can it, with a budget downsized more than once, maintain its course and concept of an experimental, alternative, low-budget and engaged theatre festival. Nevertheless, caught up in the realities of the financial crisis, I understood that this was the fate of the independent scene at large – this very scene engaged with science, theory, body, and paranoia – in its attempts to change the perception of theatre, and indeed those realities. Paranoia is the dominant state of consciousness in the contemporary society, where nothing is safe and no one is secure. Such was the year 2009: divided, violent, aggressive. Financially in crisis. Paranoid and insecure.

Translated by Irena Šentevska

× MILAN MARKOVIC

HOW NADA¹ DIED (AND DO WE MISS HER?)

I'd like to make myself clear at the beginning – there are simply no good young writers in Serbia today. The grave situation we found ourselves in does not merely come from the fact that young authors write badly, but rather from the fact that WE are not young anymore.

Our theatre has long been governed by the institution of the Genius. Jovan and Branislav, Aleksandar and Ljubomir, Dušan and Siniša, Biljana and (perhaps less so) Milena... all of them, as different as they certainly are, align with a single paradigm, dependant not only on the workings of the theatre, but the society as a whole. The Author is the One who Knows. The main task of the director, actors and, lastly, the audience is to *read* correctly what the author has put into words. And, since one does not become a Genius, but is born a Genius, directors, theatre managers and the others deciding on the matter have a *responsible* role to *discover the next*. Since I enrolled in the Academy I was clear that the theatre scene is not the same thing as the punk scene, that the things go slightly different there; however, I was still convinced that I didn't have to be a genius to find my place around. I couldn't imagine that any scene could only feature one stream, reviving itself every few years with a single New Name.

The prevailing crisis of playwriting at the time of my activation on the Belgrade theatre scene was slightly different than the current one. Then, of course, the Young could not write as well, but not because we were not young (like today), but because we were not Grand authors. Young authors, recently graduated dramaturges, found themselves in a paradoxical situation. We wouldn't get a chance to work, study – even an opportunity for someone to read our output because we weren't good enough. Left on our own, discouraged, with utterly wrong ideas on theatre (exclusively as an *institution* authorized to slam the doors in your face) we never had

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¹ NADA is the acronym of NovA DramA (New Drama) project, but it also means *hope* in Serbian.

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a chance to become what we are today (Ingenious Authors). This is why Miloš Krečković's idea to commence the project NovA DramA at the National Theatre in Belgrade in 2001 seemed so beneficial. Relieved of obligations to be ingenious, we could do our things, write ours and read other people's plays, work with colleagues from other countries, study ... and get paid for it!! Quietly and unexpectedly, the theatre scene faced something new. I do not refer only to the plays written at the time (they were all staged afterwards), but to conditions of their conception: the writer was no longer an *artist creating a masterpiece in the solitude of his studio*; the plays were conceived in workshops, in collaboration between several colleagues; the text was changed, modified, there were failures to be rejected and returns to older versions... In short, this was not just a Death of the Author – the Work died as well.² However, what was born was empowering, at least for us who had a part in it, enough to make us feel that we belonged to a *group that changed something*. It seems to me that it wasn't exactly clear *what* had been changed at the time, but the feeling was nevertheless there.

And, indeed, the scene recognized (perhaps foremostly the *market*) potential of the new wave; soon afterwards, all the city theatres would admit a few young authors on their stages, including Maja Pelević, Filip Vujošević, Minja Bogavac, and other young writers who were not directly affiliated with the project – Dimitrije Vojnov, Aleksandar Novaković, Iva Modli, Ljubinka Stojanović, Fedor Šili, Milica Konstantinović, Milena Depolo...

The year 2005 saw changes on the National Theatre's shaking soil and the project was deprived both of financial support and Miloš Krečković who, looking for a better livelihood, transferred to the Yugoslav Drama Theatre. Few of us, who at the time had just finished a round of workshops, decided to try to keep on as a *no-budget* project. In the next few years NovA DramA had operated in peculiar, guerilla conditions. I had a feeling that we were squatters in our office at the National Theatre. So, we were deprived of any financial support, but no one was disturbing us with their attention, either. We were pleasantly ignored by the people who granted us our premises. We were all writing a lot, trying at the same time, in this

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2 It would be interesting to observe more closely this trajectory; from the attempt at returning to the theatre of Grand Authors (which the NovA DramA project essentially was) to the actuality in which, for instance, Milena Bogavac admittedly conceives her plays using the Photoshop (on the one hand, the graphic layout of the text itself *demands playfulness* and not taking the writing as the starting point for a *theatre production*; on the other hand, the writing itself outlines a *performance on paper*, making way for a new relation with the staging).

way or another, to engage other colleagues. That is how we conceived the online archive of contemporary drama *nova-drama.org*³, the first website of this type in the region, and a festival of stage readings of the works featured on the website – by Staša Bajac, Jordan Cvetanović, Ivan Pravdić etc. This period was not long – a considerable amount of *activist* energy was required from the participants, and that energy could not flow endlessly in front of a wall of silence jointly raised by the host institution and the wider theatre public. In spite of the random, un contemplated and essentially chaotic character of this new wave of playwriting, I would claim that this energy boost had been useful on another level (except for introducing several new names to the performing arts scene) as it brought a fresh perspective on our theatre. Perhaps the crisis, much discussed at the time, could be observed not as a crisis of playwriting, but as indication of the need for fundamental changes in the way of conceiving performing arts in our country – in terms of conditions of production, relations between the written and staged texts, and finally, audiences' expectations. Along with the sparks of new self-awareness of the independent scene in Belgrade, in 2005-2006 the project NovA DramA ceased to exist in the National Theatre, but those actively involved continued to operate on two levels – institutional, and in the frameworks of the local and international independent, non-institutional initiatives. Minja Bogavac became the selector of Ex-teatar fest, a festival of experimental, alternative, low-budget, and engaged theatre in Pančevo, Maja Pelević became the dramaturge of the National Theatre, and I started a long-term project “New Drama Week” at the festival Sterijino pozorje in Novi Sad.⁴ Minja Bogavac managed to reorganize the Ex-teatar fest in Pančevo, in impossible conditions. Within the few years of its new life this festival became an important place for meetings and conference between the protagonists of the independent scene. Unfortunately, this year's Ex-teatar fest (like so many other good local initiatives) fell victim to the changes in the management structure of cultural institutions. In her two years of work at the National Theatre, Maja Pelević took on some of the activities of the NovA DramA project – she organized readings of contemporary Romanian and German plays. At the same time, the stage Raša Plaović bravely featured several Serbian and international pieces, making a marked

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3 www.nova-drama.org

4 There are few more authors with a sustained public presence who were, in one way or another, involved in the activities of NovA DramA (Ivan Pravdić – professor at the art academy in Novi Sad, Jelena Kajgo – the current manager of the Bitef theatre, Milica Konstantinović, Ljubinka Stojanović...). However, it seems that they haven't continued to actively pursue these issues.

impression that the National Theatre is opening to daring and more up-to-date projects.⁵

I experienced my contribution to the festival Sterijino pozorje again as a kind of excess – as if I found myself once more in the office at the National, as if someone again simply *tolerated* our presence. The three years of this regional project saw many interesting and brave authors, some of them awarded (Simona Semenič for the play “5boys.org” – Grumova Award, Slovenia; Goran Ferčec for his “Letter to Heiner M.” – Über Grenzen sprechen Award, Austria), and some of them having their works staged in Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia. Although we insisted on a ‘laboratory’ approach to the work and kept trying to argue that what happened *in the process* was perhaps more important than the final result, throughout the years the project “New Drama Week” at Sterijino pozorje became a proper small *drama factory*, but also a forum: meeting point for young writers, directors, theorists, critics, and actors. I could not but be content with the “results”, but I started to realize that this very position as some kind of (low) *paid margin* sets the limits for the further development of the project.

However the (institutional and non-institutional) attempts at creating a platform for contemporary drama received minor interest from the local theatre scene, the international collaboration has been growing – mainly due to the program lately organized by Sterijino pozorje, providing opportunities for many young directors, writers and theorists from Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina to visit Novi Sad, including the collaboration with the festival PreGlej from Ljubljana, engaged for years with public reading and publishing of the works by Serbian authors.

On closer inspection, situation in the former Yugoslav countries is quite similar to ours – the theatre tradition largely relies on the text; at the same time, there is a conspicuous lack of institutional programs for continuous advance of contemporary playwriting. However, the differences do exist. In Slovenia, Gledališče Glej theatre has been hosting the platform PreGlej for years (I am best acquainted with the situation in this country). As part of the program Pglab, coordinated by Simona Semenič, throughout the year the platform hosts workshops and meetings and (in cooperation

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5 This year, after the changes in the top ranks, the management of the National Theatre decided not to renew Maja Pelević’s contract, with an arrogant comment that she is (for them) just a statistical data item.

with young directors) an annual festival of public readings. The platform receives program support from the Ministry of Culture and, through co-productions, from Cankarjev dom, the festival Teden slovenske drame in Kranj and AGRFT (Akademija za gledališče, radio, film in televizijo / Academy for Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, Ljubljana). Its way of operation is largely affected by the absence of courses in playwriting at Ljubljana's university department for dramaturgy. The annual international festival of new drama PreGlej na glas! hosts public readings, discussions, workshops on dramaturgy and criticism, and publishes new plays. What makes the platform PreGlej particularly interesting is its very operation within the theatre Glej. Glej is a meeting point for directors and playwrights, theorists, choreographers and dancers from the independent scene, informing a critical mass for critical approach to theatre. For our purposes, for dramaturges and the *kind of dramaturgy* they are engaged with, this fact is of crucial importance because mutual *contamination* during the Glej encounters brings about new, hybrid scenic forms and new, playful and *poor* theatre. PreGlej fosters experiments, the notion of variety of possibilities against a single best solution...⁶ The things in Ljubljana have recently started to change⁷, but a fact remains that a platform like PreGlej would never be able to survive in circumstances like ours. On the one hand, what is common for the protagonists of the local independent scene is indifference to work on the text, and on the other, the young writers and dramaturges are often insufficiently acquainted with the possible sources of funding and procedures of application to national and municipal institutions supporting independent production. The lack of motivation in this respect is quite understandable as the membership and decision criteria of the bodies in charge are normally hidden from public view. As for Croatia, the interest in playwriting mostly resides in theatre institutions, more precisely around Zagreb theatres Kazalište mladih, Kazalište Gavella, Mala scena, Teatar &td, and HNK in Split – staging the works by Croatian authors on a more or less regular basis. Within the independent scene, the authors merely resume the roles of dramaturges on dance and/or hybrid-conceptual projects; drama is perceived, regardless

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6 As a recent example I note Miha Marek's "Čas razcveta"; the nine monologues comprising the text are perpetually staged anew by different directors, in new versions.

7 Along with the Gledališče Glej, staging the works of contemporary Slovenian authors mainly as independent productions, Mestno Gledališče Ljubljansko nowadays has a third of its repertoire based on Slovenian texts, featuring a particular focus on contemporary drama.

of content and form, as residue from the institutional system, its prodigal offspring, as something belonging to an institution – and is, accordingly, treated without too much affection.

Dramaturgical collective⁸ launched by Jasna Žmak and Goran Ferčec in 2007, dedicated to affirmation of new playwriting and conceiving the program Mala noćna čitanja (*Small Night Readings*), is certainly an interesting initiative. The project conceived in collaboration with Teatar &td used its existing infrastructure to host the readings – more precisely, it activated minimally the theatre mechanisms in using/adapting the premises and technical services of the existing productions. *Small Night Readings* lasted for two seasons, featuring a dozen of new plays. This season, the dramaturgical collective and Centre for Drama Art (Centar za dramsku umjetnost) applied for support from the municipal government – however, due to the financial crisis, received none. In the meantime, under the auspices of the Academy of Drama Arts (Akademija dramske umjetnosti), University of Zagreb, a similar project had been launched. Additionally, on the initiative of the students and graduates from various departments of the Academy of Drama Arts in Zagreb the web portal *drame.hr*⁹ was created, providing easier access to Croatian plays, and contributing to their greater public visibility, staging, reading and acknowledgement.¹⁰

If we now return to the project *NovA DramA* we can see that, since the suspension of our work in the premises of the National Theatre, the following question remained: is continuous work on development of new playwriting possible at all without a continuous institutional support? However, perhaps the attempt to solve a problem formulated in such terms is a part of the problem itself. If we look at the time and conditions bringing about the new wave of the British drama (a model for the *NovA DramA* authors) we can see whether there had been any similarities to our situation at all.

Sarah Kane, Patrick Marber, Martin McDonagh, Phyllis Nagy, Joe Penhall, Rebecca Prichard, Mark Ravenhill are but few of more than twenty authors who, in a short span of time by the end of the 20th century, appeared on the

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⁸ www.dramaturskikolektiv.blogspot.com

⁹ www.drame.hr

¹⁰ I am grateful to Simona Hamer and Goran Ferčec for answering my questions and providing me with a better overview of the situation in Slovenia and Croatia. In the segment dedicated to the Croatian scene I adopted integral segments of Ferčec's replies.

British theatre stages. It is widely held, however, that the turning point in the process was the premiere of Jez Butterworth's gangster black comedy "Mojo" (Royal Court Theatre, 1995). This was the first time in forty years (since John Osborne's "Look Back in Anger") for the Royal Court Theatre in London to stage a debutante's play. The political-economic situation in Great Britain was overtly "optimistic" – the liberal Left was basking among the fruits of the "post-ideological" unipolar world, and all kinds of popular resistance from pre-Thatcher ages were long forgotten. Nevertheless, the young authors (mostly in their twenties) brought to the stage a gloomy and nihilistic view on the world, including a new, brutal aesthetics. The new wave (for the purposes of better marketing) got a resonant name: dramaturgy of blood and sperm, or in-yer-face.

Apart from the involvement of a considerable number of young authors, and the general tone of the social realities (whose similarities are nevertheless quite debatable¹¹), the circumstances surrounding the emergence of the two waves were utterly different. Even if we escape the naïve assumption that the British New Drama emerged on its own, that it did not come out as a result of a clear cultural policy decision, the fact that Belgrade's NovA DramA was a product of an institution remained, marking all the subsequent phases in its development (as it was viewed as a group fashioned by the National Theatre's project, and as a "wave", a "movement"). From this perspective, the fact that NADA ceased to exist, that nobody invests into production of new authors anymore, is not surprising. What surprises is that we are still surprised by that fact.

Like the Grand Authors, our environment cherishes the Grand Theatre. There is nothing but Grand Authors and Grand Theatre. Even the architecture and interior decoration of our theatres suggest this. As if they were built to make the same impression as temples and churches: make us feel small and warn us not to question the eternal truths we had just witnessed therein.

Grand Theatre is not only about grand forms, for instance, drama performances with a massive cast. Grand Theatre demands completed

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¹¹ Indeed, the beginnings of NovA DramA in the National Theatre, in spite of some strong resistance from certain political currents, saw a dose of optimism in our society regarding the transition to the market economy and accession to the European Union. However, the atmosphere of universal pillage, corrupt privatization and ambivalent public attitudes towards the crimes committed in the recently concluded wars rather resembled the primary accumulation of capital in certain initial phases of the European capitalism.

works, closed formally and closed for experiments and mistakes – clean enough to provide comprehensive PR stories.

Accordingly, NovA DramA, produced in the institution of Grand Theatre for the institution of Grand Author was born dead – not only because, on the institutional level, there had been no desire to engage in persistent research or debate, but because the very nature of new writing was largely opposed to the conditions prevailing on the scene. Today, unfortunately, the situation gets even worse with the great comeback of the revamped conservatism and (the other side of the same coin) revolutionary market logic, in the times of crisis seeking affirmation in the most trivial kitsch simulations of rebellion. However, I think that I am not groundlessly optimistic if I believe that the rising awareness of the independent scene will (perhaps if not immediately, than in the near future) significantly affect the situation of the institutional scene. The two scenes are established and defined in the same process, but if we consider their treatment of the written text the dominant approaches are easily distinguished. It is clear that this is largely affected by the conditions of production – and those will probably not considerably change in the future, but the status of the text as the dominant code of theatre, I believe, will. Regardless of the fact that the management of cultural institutions has not been for a long time so deeply implicated with corruption, kitsch and arrogant show off of nonsense as it is today, the dramaturges and directors active on the independent stages already use the emerging opportunities to raise questions about the power relations on the social/artistic scene, among other things, by redefining the position of the written text in performing arts – or to simply conceive a different theatre, for that matter.

Several authors, writers and dramaturges (dramaturgical ‘teams’), are actively engaged with Belgrade’s independent scenes. The works featuring the text mostly comprise smaller forms – stand-up acts, slam poetry nights, street and activist performances. In case of more complex or demanding forms, those authors assume the roles of dramaturges. Nowadays, collaborations¹² between the dramaturges and dancers, visual artists, choreographers, performance artists etc. gain in frequency, including the work on new and hybrid artistic forms – sometimes crossing the borders of performing arts. This seems as a stage in conception of a common “base”

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¹² An excellent example is “Ono” (“It”), a dance piece conceived by the choreographer and dancer Ana Dubljević and writer Milica Ivić; among other things, they address in a new and exciting way the relation between performing (the body) and conceiving (the text).

for the independent scene. Of course, in the previous years, instances of collaboration between various independent groups or individuals did occur, but now the framework itself began to matter. There is a variety of contributing factors to the recent awareness of this framework (however we may call it – the Other, “independent” scene...) I would like to mention the discussions of independent productions convened by TkH’s Forum for Performing Arts Critique, the self-educational project Deschooling Classroom, Ex-teatar fest¹³ etc. – adding another event, probably not mentioned often enough: launching of the Other Scene, conceived as a kind of a loose political platform, visible in the last year notably through different occasional joint initiatives.¹⁴

Such frameworks, accordingly, provide some new space for dramaturges. Collaboration is easy, creating an impression that in the new circumstances we naturally rely on others’ skills; but, on the other hand, this collaboration confronts us with new challenges. Other Scene’ dramaturgy is interdisciplinary and, as such, far exceeds the frameworks we were accustomed to while studying with the Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade.

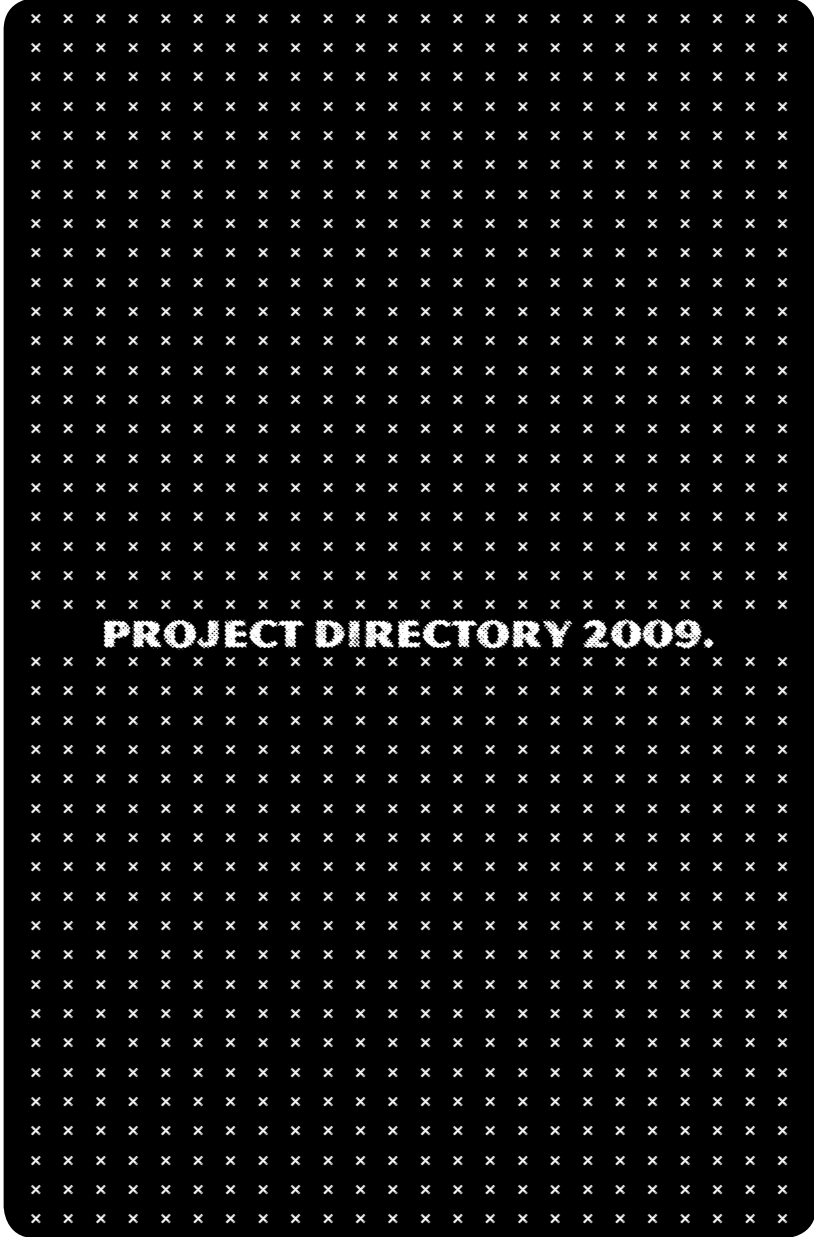
We, who not only write superbly, but decide on the definition of good writing, are no longer young enough to call ourselves young authors.

This is, precisely, the cause of the ongoing crisis of playwriting, the crisis we found ourselves in after a few prosperous years when the Young could write for the theatre (because those Young were Us).

Translated by Irena Šentevska

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13 Naturally, I note influence most visible to me, concerning my engagement with performing arts.

14 In this respect, the most ambitious initiative of the year 2009 was probably the protest against the racist fencing of a Roma settlement during the Universiade in Belgrade. More on this initiative: www.universiade-belgrade2009.com.



PROJECT DIRECTORY 2009.



OH NO!

concept: Dalija Aćin; choreography: Dalija Aćin, Recognize Crew; dramaturgy: Saša Božić; performed by: Darko Bursać, Luka Lukić; music: Goran Simonoski, Ivan Antić; graphic design: Mihailo Ršumović

premiere: February 2009, Belgrade Dhrama Theatre

The usage of only the break dance movements (bboying) in *Oh, no!* marks Dalija Aćin's choreographic step out into the territory of a different dance language, in which the atmosphere is made by the accentuated accumulation of the dance material and the eyes of the audience are overwhelmed by the information on intelligent bodies in movement. Still amazing, the virtuous language of break dance acts as a choreographic parasite on the matrices of the abstract code pertaining to contemporary dance, thus bringing a new aesthetical and methodological breakthrough.

Saša Božić

Dalija Aćin was born in 1974. Graduated at Lujó Davičo Ballet school and acquired knowledge and practice in the field of contemporary dance through numerous workshops and residencies throughout Europe (Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Düsseldorf...). Presented her choreographic works on numerous festivals in Serbia and abroad (BITEF, BELEF, Infant, Impulstanz, Tanz im August, Tanz Tendenzen, Mladi levi, Week of Contemporary Dance, Oppla, Performa...) and collaborated with international choreographers (Isabelle Schaad, Thomas Lehmen...). She is the winner of prestigious award of Impulstanz 2008 – "Prix Jardin d' Europe" for the piece *Handle with Great Care*. Co-founder and coordinator of Station – Service for contemporary dance, co-founder and Artistic Board member of Nomad Dance Academy.

WORKS

2009: *This is not what you think it is*, Monetnegrin National Theatre, Podgorica, MNE; *Oh, no*, Station & Belgrade Drama Theatre; **2008:** *Duets/ Meet the Expectations*, BELEF, Turkish Bath; *Book of Wandering*, children's performance, Little Theatre Duško Radović; *Overdone and Gone / On self temptation*, Belgrade Drama Theatre; **2007:** *Handle with Great Care*, Belgrade Drama Theatre; **2006:** *There is no exception to the rule because I am never what I have*, with Isabelle Shad (Berlin), Bitef Theatre; *GAMEPLAY*, Belgrade Drama Theatre.

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THE GIANT WOMEN PRESENT THE GREATEST SHOW IN TOWN

authors and performers: Dragana Bulut, Gillie Kleiman, Lígia Soares; dramaturgy: Ana Vujanović; graphic design: Nina Zeljković; organisation and PR: Dragana Jovović

premiere: February 2009, CZKD

The Giant Women present The Greatest Show in Town is a dance performance which promises to be entertaining, virtuosic, and sharp, through beauty, emotion, etcetera. And of course, you will obviously see the socio-political engagement and the theoretical background of the dancers. Naturally, these aspects will interact with you, provoke you, and shock you. Whilst showing you the crucial power of innovation and blindly following trends, the show achieves historical significance and promises the creation of new paradigms for the dance scene of the future.

REVIEW

“This is a show on how we make garbage out of almost everything as quickly as possible, exposing it as a “problem” or a theory or a thought or a body movement. As it may hurt and still be something to laugh about, if we had the time, the courage or the patience to look closer”

*Alexander Gerner,
Jacaranda - Platform of arts,
sciences and politics*

WORKS DRAGANA BULUT

2009: P. Glass, *Les enfants terrible*, directed by B. Djordjev, choreography in collaboration with A. Dubljević, D. Murić, Č. Djerić; *Inside my flat my mind* with K. Sandstrom and K. Bigler; *E.I.O.* with E. Gabia and M. Baroncea, National Dance Center, Bucharest; *Puzzle* with D. Aćin, D. Murić and A. Todorović, JDP, Belgrade; *The Giant Women present The Greatest Show in Town*, with G. Kleiman, L. Soares, Belgrade, Lisbon, Novi Sad; **2008:** *Once upon the time... and again from the beginning*, Poznan, Warsaw, Belgrade; **2007:** *Just one more solo*, Rex, Belgrade.

CONTACT

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Dragana Bulut is freelance choreographer and performer based in Belgrade. She had project engagements with various choreographers from Serbia and abroad. She has twice been the recipient of the European scholarship for contemporary dance DanceWeb in 2004/2008, as well as Strictly Seattle dance scholarship in 2005. Her work has been presented in the Balkan Dance Platform, Body Mind festival in Warsaw, Biennial of young artist of Europe and Mediterranean, Sarajevo winter...

Gillie Kleiman graduated from a BA in Dance and Culture in 2008 and has since created a variety of performance projects, on her own and with others, in the UK and in Europe.

Lígia Soares graduated in Dance from High School for Dance in Lisbon. Since 1999 she works as a choreographer and playwright presenting her work mainly in Berlin and Lisbon. She is a co-founder of Máquina Agradável. The authors are members of “Embassy of” umbrella of performing artists from more than 30 countries.



CZKD (CENTER FOR CULTURAL DECONTAMINATION)

The independent and non-profit cultural institution Center for Cultural Decontamination was founded as a result of a 1993 initiative, aimed at confronting the war politics of Slobodan Milošević's regime and empowering resistance of the Serbian civil society. In January 1, 1995 CZKD commenced its work in the 'Pavillion Veljković', opposing in its artistic, cultural and social engagement overwhelming nationalism, xenophobia, intolerance, discrimination, local hates and fears. So far, the CZKD has produced over 3000 events – performances, exhibitions, protests, public debates, lectures, campaigns, professional conferences, artistic actions and other projects. CZKD aims at advancing human rights and values in transforming the long-contaminated atmosphere of the Serbian society, marked by orchestrated nationalism, hate and destruction. The Center provides an open forum for public debate, where people can freely respond to ongoing events surrounding them on daily basis.

RISK #2: SERBIAN FAUST AND OTHER QUOTES PROTO-PRODUCTION TRIPTYCH (OF BRAVE THEATRE)

1)
SERBIAN FAUST: INSTEAD OF PERFORMANCE
- Critical reading of (con)text -
Tanja Simić-Berclaz: SERBIAN FAUST AND OTHER QUOTES
INSTEAD OF PERFORMANCE, CZKD, 10.12.1996.
Concept of reading: Boris Bakal/Katarina Pejović

2)
DANUBE REGION PRISON
Biljana Jovanović: ROOM ON THE BOSPHORUS/CENTRAL PRISON/FLY TO THE
MOUNTAIN LIKE A BIRD/ULRIKE MEINHOFF
Dramturgical reconstruction and directing: Zlatko Paković

3)
Zorica Jevremović: BASTARD
Director: Anja Suša

The starting point of all three of proto-productions are plays by women playwrights belonging to the different generations, but with a shared belief that theatre is determined by the ideas of risk, provocation, antagonism with current social, political and artistic environment and the times when they write. This CZKD triptych is realized in time of many social issues that, unlike in the 1990es, do not find their articulation in the street protests and civil rebellion. Is theatre a possible space for this articulation?

WORKS

2007: Risk #1 I. Sajko *Europa+Rio Bar*, d. B. Đorđev co-production with TkH platform and BDP; **2005:** *Pornography 1,2...4*, A. Miljanić, BELEF, Cinema Partizan; **2003:** *Hamlet-machine* and *Medea, Shore, Dump N. Osman* and N. Kokotović; **2001:** *Bordello of Warriors*; A. Miljanić; **2000:** *On Germany*, A. Miljanić; **1999:** *Middsummer Nightmare*, S. Vukićević
...
1995: F.M. Dostoevsky/A. Camus, *Demons*, A. Miljanić

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web: www.czkd.org



DAH TEATAR

Jadranka Andjelić and Dijana Milošević formed DAH Theatre in 1991 out of the need for profound experimental work. In 1991 actress Maja Mitić joined the Dah Theatre, and actress Sanja Krsmanović Tasić joined in 1993. In 1993 Dah Theatre enlarged its activities by forming the DAH Theatre Research Centre with an ongoing program of workshops, lectures, seminars, guest performances and festivals.

For members of Dah Theatre DAH means to breathe in, to collect the strength, to persist, to be spiritual, to keep the warmth of creation, movement.

Dah Theatre performed and led workshops all over Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

2 GRANNIES, 4 CATS AND A SCOOTER

dramaturgy, direction and acting: Sanja Krsmanović Tasić i Maja Mitić; animation, graphic design: Anastasia Tasić; music: Aleksandra Đokić; animation editing: Jugoslav Hadžić; wigs design and manufacture: Dragana Ladevac; set construction: Nikola Tasić; light design: Radomir Stamenković

What would happen if cartoon characters would become real and alive? If they would discuss important questions like: What is happiness? What is friendship? "Happiness and sadness, They are part of the circle of life, And in the circle stand Two friends."

REVIEW

"Introducing to the theatre scene for children the specific theatre expression that DAH fosters through research work, it is a real refreshment in the theatre scene for children and contributes to the diversity and development of quality in culture intended for the youngest consumers."

*Diana Kržanić Tepavac,
President of the Executive Board
of ASSITEJ Serbia*

CROSSING THE LINE

dramaturgy and direction: Dijana Milošević; performers: Sanja Krsmanović Tasić, Ivana Milenović and Maja Mitić; set and video: Neša Paripović; video production: Boško Prostran; costumes: Dah Teatar; sound: Jugoslav Hadžić; lights: Radomir Stamenković The performance "Crossing the Line" is based on texts from the book *Women's Side of War* edited by Women in Black organization (2007). The book is a collection of women's authentic testimonies about wars, that had happened on a soil of former republic of Yugoslavia from 1991 till 1999. All testimonies are in first person, without comments or other kind of use or misuse.

WORKS

2007: *In Search of the City*, the ruins of the National Library on Kosančićev Venac; **2006:** *Story of Tea*, DAH Theatre; **2005/2006:** *The Guide Through the Alternative History of Belgrade*, squares and streets of Belgrade; **2005:** *Alice and Kafka are Dead/Long Live the Rosenbergs*, Atlanta, USA; **2002:** *Cirque Macabre*, Bifet Theatre; *Dancing with Darkness*, REX, DAH Theatre; *Inner Mandala*; MTM, Mostar (B&H); **2000:** *Maps of Forbidden Remembrance*, Atlanta, USA;

...

1992: *The Gifts from Our Ancestors*.

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IT

idea, choreography and performing: Ana Dubljević; dramaturgy and text: Milica Ivić; text spoken by: Anđela Stamenković; technical support: Stefan Mažić; design by: Marko Stojaković; photography: Ana Blažić Pavlović

premiere May, 2009, Belgrade Dance Centre – UK “Vuk Karadžić”

IT is a dance solo performance dealing with an issue of a body. Research was based on a relation of nonverbal and verbal language of the body. How body could be verbalized? How could verbal be embodied? What happens when we let the body speak. Choreographic material is a result of research on a body and it's “own” movement. Project was inspired by a Fourth Body from Paul Valery's study “Some simple reflections on a body”. IT is also questioning a possibility of non-collective perception of a performance as a public and collective event. IT is moved “inside” the spectator. Performance becomes “private” making obvious the fact that there are as many performances as spectators. IT speaks for itself, but not only about itself.

WORKS

2009: *IT*, UK “Vuk Karadžić” – Belgrade Dance Center, Belgrade; **2008:** *Trigger Happy*, collaboration with Ljiljana Mihajlović (SLO), Old Power Station, Ljubljana; *ZippHopp Music*, collaboration with Werner Puntigam (AUT), Museum of African Art, Belgrade; **2007:** *Watch out. Watch in.*, Little Theatre “Duško Radović”; **2006:** *Relax!*, Inteatro Polverigi, Italy.

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ZOE GUDOVIC
 (TRAVELLING FEMINIST CARAVAN IN THE FRAME
 OF 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST VIOLENCE
 AGAINST WOMEN CAMPAIN)

Zoe Gudovic (1977), theatre educator and manager in culture, art activist. Organizer of numerous exhibitions, campaigns, travelling performances. Responsible for various art projects in Women at Work. Founder of ACT Women /informal lesbian theatre group/ where she is co-director and actress in performances: “Transrhythmical kitchen therapy”, “Drop Dead Darling”, “Other view”, “Traveling with the wind” – in cooperation with OM Theatre and Rogo Theatre, performed in Denmark, 2003 during Winden festival. Cooperates with numerous artists, festivals and art institution in country, region and worldwide, international lecturer. Organizer and PR for the campaign “Love for all” (campaign of Queeria) for the promotion of LGBT rights. Currently works in Reconstruction Women’s Fund. Initiator and organizer of the street performances as part of the *16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women* campaign.

IF WE DEAD AWAKE... SOCIALLY ENGAGED PERFORMANCE ABOUT MURDERED WOMEN

directing: Ivana Koraksić; actresses: Biljana Stanković – Lori, Vesna Bujošević, Zorica Nikolić, Ana Imširović; script: Jelena Anđelovski; set design: Marija Vidić; technicians: Nikola Cakić; photography: Biljana Rakočević; video: Aleksandra Nestorov; organization: Zoe Gudović

performed on the squares of: Belgrade 25.11; Novi Sad 27.11; Vranje 01.12; Niš 02.12; Leskovac 03.12.

In collaboration with Autonomous Women Centre, Reconstruction Women’s Fund, Network of Women Against Violence and Rex Cultural Centre.

The *16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women* campaign consists of several different actions. Street performances travelling through Serbian towns are a central event of the campaign for seven years. Each year the street performance is focused on different aspect of society problem of male violence against women.

This year’s street performance *If we Dead Awake* is dedicated to the murdered women. The performance is focused on circumstances of women being murdered in public spaces. During 2008, 49 women were murdered. The institution of the state as well as the nearest social surrounding did not react adequately to calls for help and protection from these women.

Performance *If we Dead Awake* as a direct street action reminds us that the murder is ultimate and most drastic consequence of male violence against women.

WORKS

(in the frame of *16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women* campaign)

2008: *I can not Leave Because...* director: I. Koraksić, Velika Plana, Smederevo, Vlasotince, Niš, Novi Bečej, Novi Sad, Loznica, Female Prison Požarevac and Roma settlement, Pančevački Rit; **2007:** *React before it’s too late!*, director: I. Koraksić, 22 Serbian towns; **2006:** *Do you see violence against women?*, director: Z. Gudović; **2005:** *Red card for perpetrators!*, director: I. Koraksić; **2004:** *They don’t trust us, why?*, director: J. Dakić; **2003:** *Why they are not among us?*, director: J. Dakić.

CONTACT

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Hajde da... (Let's...) group is a non government organisation mainly involved in the field of work with various marginalised groups, intercultural learning and youth activism.

Since 2008, the group initiates the "Body Frame" project with a goal to stimulate dialogue between persons with disabilities, choreographers and professional dancers. Several rounds of workshops were organised led by Gesel Mason (USA), Victoria Malin and Elinor Baker (CandoCo, UK), Sanja Krsmanović Tasić and Boris Čakširan (SRB). Inclusive contemporary dance workshops were held in Belgrade, Paraćin and Podgorica (MNE)

RESET

choreography: Danica Arapović; music: Aleksandra Đokić; costume, stage and lights design: Boris Čakširan; dramaturge: Marko Pejović; dancers: Ana Ignjatović-Zagorac, Danijel Todorović, Jelena Stojiljković, Jovana Rakić, Senad Sopnić, Stojan Simić; photography: Aleksandar Milosavljević; co-production: Grupa Hajde da... and UK "Vuk Karadžić"

premiere: December 2009, UK "Vuk Karadžić"

Electronic systems have their life cycles. They get created and they operate. Sometimes, they fail to recognize other systems, establish communication, be compatible and cooperate. They get bugged, enter uncontrollable states and break down. They have to be stopped, all activities have to be cancelled, in order for processors to be able to operate again. It seems that we have the same situation with humans. The RESET performance is a story about waking up, about restarting.

REVIEW

"Applying to her performers the technological term "reset" Danica Arapović successfully shows both "failure" of dance system, bugs and its restart, its awakening through movement."

*Milica Zajcev,
Danas, Daily Journal*

WORKS

2009: *Performance as means of social action*, international project (artists from FYROM, SI, RO i SRB), lead by Johannes Daimling; **2008:** *Curve for Gauss*, UK Vuk Karadžić; **2004:** *Uaaa injustice!* cartoon series for primary school children. An episode was awarded by Council of Europe on the short video form competition in the frame of the *Dosta (Enough)* campaign.

CONTACT

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Art group Hop.La! was founded in 2005, in Belgrade. The main areas of Hop.La! activity are authorial art productions, participative art programs and research in the area of aesthetics and psychology of art.

Irena Ristić (1970) graduated at the Faculty of Drama Arts, Department of theatre directing; finished postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of psychology; currently, she is writing Phd thesis at the University of Art in Belgrade. Directed in municipal theatres of Belgrade, Zrenjanin, Kruševac, Vršac, Banjaluka and Hall in Tyrol. Participated in numerous festivals, workshops and conferences. Lately, she is focused onto the creativity research and crossdisciplinary experiments.

ROOM OF THE LITTLE FEARS

author: Irena Ristić; DP: Ivan Todorovski; editor: Ana Radojičić; composer: Ah.Ahilej; cast: Sanja Radišić, Magda Popović, Miloš Paunović, Ana Radonjić, Marko Marinković et al.

premiere: October 22, 2009, REX

ROOM OF THE LITTLE FEARS examines an experience of emptiness and isolation, conditioned by the traces of early trauma. It is made as a result of experiment in which the drama approach was combined with elements of sound installation and video duel, while the perception is conditioned by the specific position of the audience, placed between two crossed projections in the space of emptiness and/or gap.

REVIEW

“What’s on the screen concerns us and demands reaction. Narrative horizontal flow loses its primacy over vertical facing with situation, and brings us that highly needed influence of consciousness and introspective of the false life of masks that we are wearing. That’s how the *Room Of The Little Fears* turns into a laboratory where our fear gets eaten, unbuilt and liberated of the armors that we build around it.”

Dragan Dimčić
Beolgrade, November 1, 2009.

WORKS

2008: *About Violence*, after Titus Andronicus, directed by A. Nikolić, in collaboration with National Theatre Kikinda; *You Haven't Forgotten*, *You Just Don't Remember Anymore*, S. Semenić, directed by A. Nikolić, in collaboration with Gley Theatre, Heksnfest/Slovenia; **2007:** *I Am My Own Wife*, D. Wright, directed by A. Nikolić, Progress Gallery, Belgrade; **2006:** *Saga*, by I. Ristić, CZKD, Belgrade; **2005:** *Rigor Mortis*, by I. Ristić, Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; **2004:** *On The Way...Seeking*, Washerei P, by I. Ristić, Hall in Tyrol, AUT.

CONTACT

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ISTER was the name of the Danube River in classical antiquity, the river that connects two different worlds, two different civilizations. The Ister Theatre was founded in 1994 as a theatre company whose work is characterized by investigation and establishment of links between dance and drama techniques into physical theatre. The work on personal stories, authentic observation of the world, concrete emotions is of crucial importance for the creation of theatre pieces and performances that attempt to draw the attention to truth about the surroundings we live in. Provocation rather than answer. Space as a venue of communication significantly determines work on street performances that are also important segment of Ister practice. Ister Theatre participated at numerous festivals and performed in Serbia as well as in Bulgaria, Rumania, Great Britain, Italy, The Netherlands, Germany, Egypt. Ister is one of the founding members of the ANET (Association of Independent Theatres) as well as Station – Service for Contemporary Dance.

SMOKING KILLS

playwright: Damir Vijuk; directing and adaptation: Filipović / Vijuk; performer: Igor Filipović; producer : Ister Teatar
 premiere : april 2009. Magacin u Kraljevića Marka

By genre determination *Smoking Kills* is the closest to one man show form, and by it's structure is collage, *copy-paste* type, which performance allows and desire every kind of improvisation and superstructure.

REVIEW

"Smoking kills! And that's not funny. Nevertheless, reason for smile are Damir Vijuk and Igor Filipovic, the authors of the first Belgrade «lecture performance», which charmes with sharpness and concentration necessary to disguise bitter lecture about civilisation illnesses in to a stand up comedy, which is performed in a full club."

Milena Bogovac, Večernje novosti

THREE SISTERS WATCHING CHEKOV

concept, directing, choreography: Čarni Đerić; adaptation and dramaturgy advice: Bojan Đorđev; composer: Nenad Jelić; performers: Srđan Ivanović, Dušan Murić, Miloš Timotijević, Petar Ćirica and Jelena Jović; voices of three sisters (off): Maja Mirković, Marta Popivoda and Ana Vujanović; set design: Ljubimir Todorović; costume design: Ister teatar; light design: Paun Pavlović; photography and graphic design: Aleksandar Milosavljević; headquarters: Anđelija Todorović, Danica Arapović i Damir Vijuk; producer: Ister Teatar; co producer: Little Theatre "Duško Radović"
 premiere: June 2009. Little Theatre "Duško Radović"

By deleting the three sisters texts, this adaptation of Chekhov puts the audience in Olga's, Masha's and Irina's position. this director's procedure further develops one of the basic characteristics of Chekhov's drama écriture – where his characters, especially the protagonists, "barely speak", "suffer", "don't work". Their problems, dilemmas, thoughts, deeply dived in carried away everyday life, which with it's banality cancels out every big word and there is no room for (drama) hero.

WORKS

2008: *Polyptych* – Dah Theatre – Center for Theatre Research; **2007:** *Three Sisters or all Around Chekov* – MKM, Teatro della Contaddizione (Dimitrije Parlić Award); *Boom Bang – Man and Dog*, Bitef Theatre; [...] **2002:** *List of Suspects or Who Ate the Pudding*, Bitef Theatre;

...

1994: *Island – the Dance of Atoms* – Sava Centre, Art Saves Life festival (Dah Theatre)

CONTACT

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KINOLIT

authors and performers: Kino group; supervisor: Frits Vogels; sound: Vladimir Jovanović; music: Simeon Ten Holt "Canto Ostinato"; production: GO ZVEZDARA and UK "Vuk Karadžić" in collaboration with Cultural Center "Stari Grad" and MAPA Academy(mapa.nl);

Ambient physical performance *Kinolit* was held in transition of day to night. The context of the performance is astronomical, astrological and eschatological. Structure of performance is segment and associative. In this materialistic, nihilistic era *Kinolit* reminds to the basic metaphysical position of man in the cosmos, determined by the Earth and the Skies.

Kino group are authors:

Nada Jovanović (painter), Nemanja Nikolić (dramaturge), Milica Vukelić (sociologist), Ivana Koraksić (director), Marija Šujica (visual artist), Bojan Milosavljević (director), Miona Petrović (dancer). Kino group is founded in winter 2009 as an artistic group involved in exploring the possibilities of interdisciplinary art presented in an ambient performance. The emphasis is placed on the non-verbal physical expression. Kino group is making moving images (kinema, greek-movement).

Bojan Milosavljević (Kruševac, 1976) graduated Faculty of Dramatic Arts Belgrade Department of theatre & radio directing. Member of Union Of Drama Artists Of Serbia (freelance artist), member of ASSITEJ Serbia. Artistic director of MAPA (Amsterdam) for Serbia. Founder of Kino group.

WORKS

2009: *Kinolit*, UK "Vuk Karadžić", INFANT, Novi Sad; performance *A Subzero Situation* ("Abyss", "Womb" and "Wall") at the construction site of the UK "Vuk Karadžić"

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Ivana Koraksić, born in Zemun, 1979 Theatre director, performer, clown, juggler. Graduated Theatre and Radio directing at Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade. Co-founder of Cirkusfera (2008), organization for development of new circus, street theater and artistic animation.

OH SERBIA, AMONG THE PLUMS! (PATRIOTIC DADA SOIRÉE)

concept, directing, stage design: Ivana Koraksić; DADOLJUBI (dada lovers): Milan Manić, Dušan Murić, Miona Petrović, Igor Filipović; costumes, video, graphic design: Tamara Jovanović; photos: Milica Vukelić; production: Cirkusfera

premiere: December, 22, 2009, at Dom Vazduhoplovstva (The house of military airmen), Zemun

One dancer + one actor + one clown + one ZUM ('star' of arty muddling) = four plums (plumes univerzalis). Four plums + dada + manifestos + patriotic poetry = theatre performance. A performance about leaving Here: leaving Serbia, leaving civilization as we know it, leaving Planet... or to enter into another System. About trying to make an own system, about inefficiency of rebellion. Critic of any system. Whatever, it's all the same...

...and all this performed for a bunch of soldiers. Mmmmmmmmm

WORKS

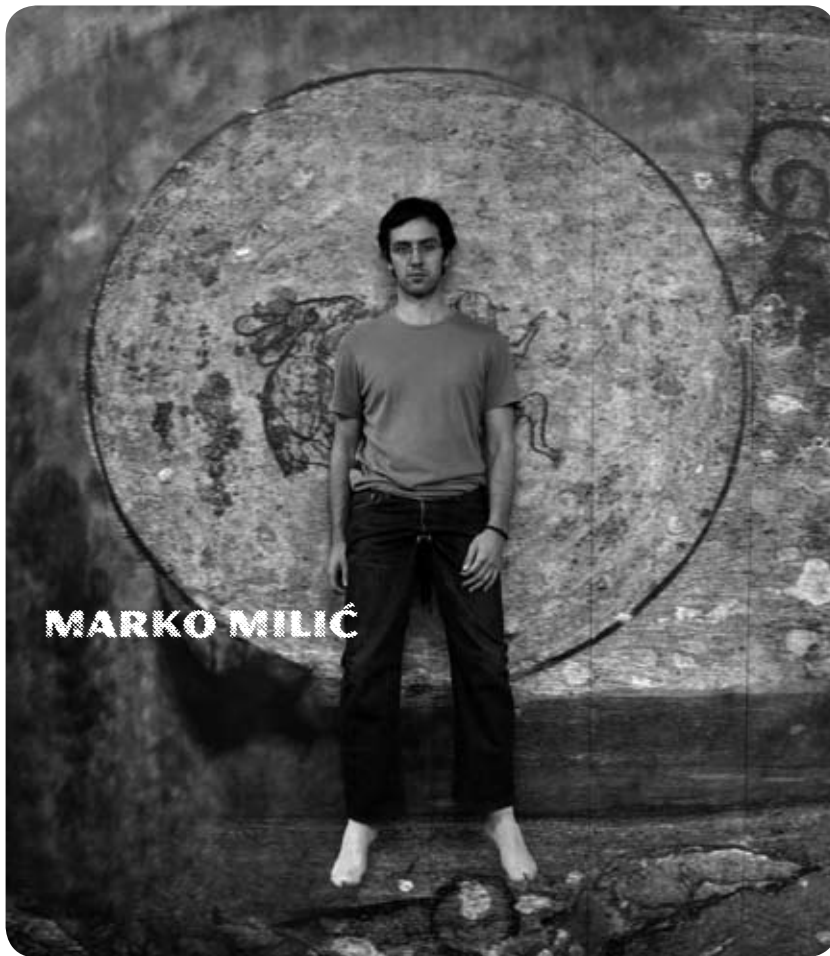
2005-07-08-09: street performances against violence on women, produced by "Women at Work" and Autonomous Women Center performed in some 20 cities around Serbia; **2007:** *Pataphysics* Eugen Ionesco, NP Toša Jovanović, Zrenjanin; *Dionysius celebration*, street spectacle on occasion of celebrating 50 years of University of Art, Belgrade; **2006:** *Pisati skalpelom* Petar Mihajlović, "Joakim Vujić" Theatre, Kragujevac; **2005:** *Sunčicin plamičak*, solo clown show, SKC, Belgrade;

Cirkusfera:

2009: *Kabare Spontana (Spontaneous Cabaret)*, REX Cultural Center

CONTACT

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(DVA MESECA)

author: Marko Milić; assistant: Andreja Široki; scene: Rodoljub Čolaković;
light: Jelena Markov; organization: Milica Urić

premiere: February 25, 2009, Magacin u Kraljevića Marka.

(Dva Meseca) is a performance where I'm sitting in a dark on a bicycle seat, in front of Korean tomb mural, while being alighted with yellow Bioptron lamp. On every two minutes, lamp produces recognizable medical sound, giving us opportunity to drive our attention back to the present or keep daydreaming.

Marko Milić was born in Belgrade in 1981. Since 1995 he was committed to photography while attending workshops in Cultural centre Stari grad. In 2002 he started his own performance works.

During 2006 till 2008 he was mostly a performer in different productions, working with authors from Serbia, Croatia, the Netherlands, Germany and Bulgaria.

In 2006 he was Danceweb scholarship recipient in Vienna.

He is a part of international art project *sweet and tender collaborations*.

WORKS

2005: *Hotel piece* with Sanja Cekov and Ivana Elezović, Hotel Vojvodina, Novi Sad;
2003: *Ž or P*, the entrance of National theater, Belgrade; **2002:** *The Match*, Student Cultural Center, Belgrade; *The Shame*, Knez Mihajlova street, Belgrade.

CONTACT

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Mimart is one of the first alternative theaters in ex-Yugoslavia was established in 1984 in Belgrade. Nela Antonović, founder and artistic leader all these years, is exploring possibilities of moving the borders of theater through a method of creative visualisation Mimart. She is the author of 43 performances and over 400 performance arts. She published books: *Mimart godovi* (2000), *Phenomenology through movement* (2004), and e-book "25" (2009) about experience of 25 years of work. Mimart took part at many international theater festivals and won many prizes: Prague, Moscow, Sarajevo, Gelsenkirchen, Herne, Rostov, Antwerp, Sochi, Podgorica, Paris, Lviv, Uzhhorod, Kiev, Oslo, Naples, Zagreb, Cluj, Novi Sad, Subotica, Nis, Kotor, San Marino and many others, as well as leading interactive video art festivals in the world. In the era of universal aspiration towards visualization and spectacle as a model of social and cultural life, in its sole discretion MIMART Theatre is searching for the meaning of contemporary art. Mimart is member of *Station*.

MEMORANDUM I OKTAGON

concept & directing: Nela Antonović; dramaturgy: Dragan Grbić; sound design: Predrag Radovančević; costumes and props: Anđelija Marković; video: Lidija Antonović ANT; stage design: Nikola Nikolić and Anđelija Marković

MEMORANDUM (ACT I)

cast: Dušan Murić, Dragana Stanisavljević, Ana Bastać, Predrag Radovančević, Lidija Antonović, Rita Gobi/Dubravka Subotić
 premiere: April 23, 2009, SKC, Belgrade; Festival FIAT, Podgorica, Montenegro

In the process of creation, an artist undergoes a laboratory, through self activation in individual mythology, through struggle and sacrifice, sometimes even war. The artist is exposed to hundreds of influences of the Muses and Mephisto, and he is judged and surgically stitched, and in the end there is an absurd situation in which the artist eats himself, actually he criticizes himself and judges himself.

OKTAGON (ACT II)

cast: Ana Bastać, Predrag Radovančević, Dubravka Subotić, Ivan Milenković-Macaco (Capoeira), Lidija Antonović (camera), Marina Bukvički
 Premiere: April 25, 2009, Bitef Theatre, Belgrade; Festivals: FIAT, Podgorica, Montenegro; INFANT, Novi Sad; CHALANCHI, San Marino – statue

Stage as a space of research, mistakes, progress, self improvement, arena in which you can become invisible, buried in garbage, blown away, scared or happy. This performance is dedicated to the opening of "new television Oktagon" which attends to contemporary art on a global level, where ironically speaking we observe its position in the global society.

REVIEW

"Story of research, identity, being and existence is told through the body and movement. Exciting performance, demanding for audience, sometimes hermetic, but fascinating (capoeira movements, percussions, dancing in a web)."

Jelena Jovanović, Time Out

WORKS

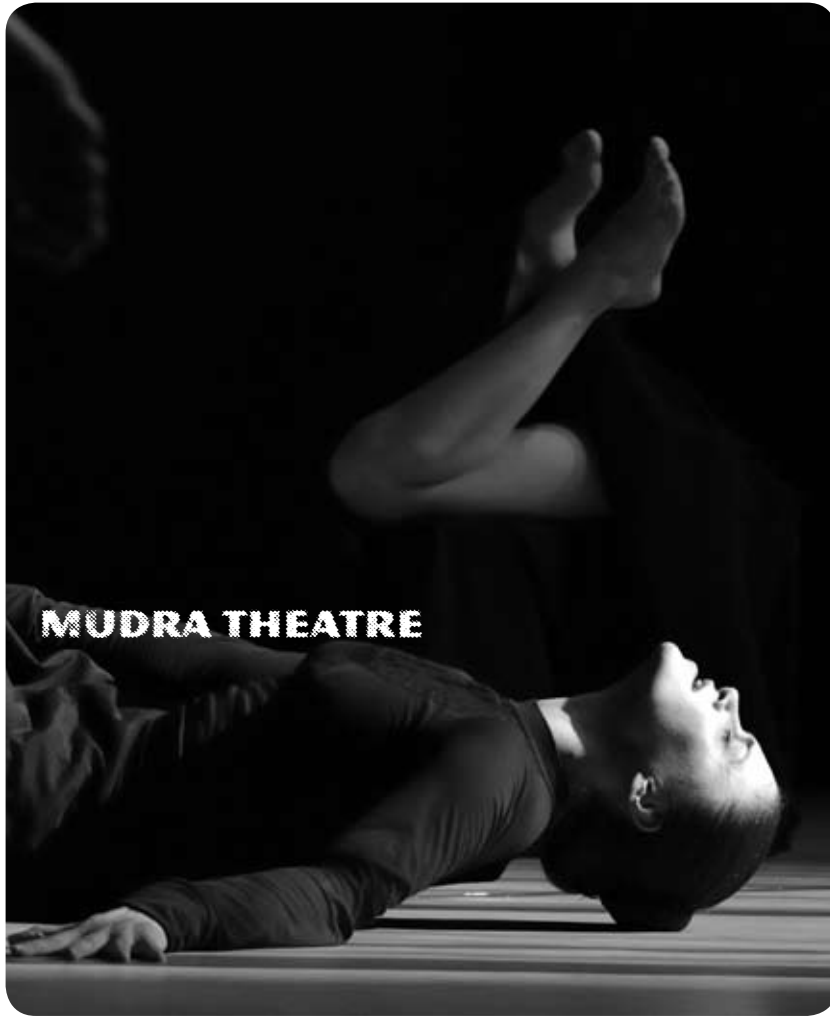
2009: *SPOT*, Festival of autoperformances, MIMART 25-SKC; *Illuminations*, The Fortress Theatre Festival – Smederevo; **2008:** *KNOT*, Belgrade Dance Centre; **2007:** *Fairies in bionic convergence*, MKM; *Dead end street*, REX; **2006:** *Crossroad*, DOB; **2005:** *Gift*, SKC; **2004:** *Questions marks*, Atelje 212; *Romeo and Juliette*, BELEF...

...

1985: *Urbis ludus*, SKC.

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MUDRA Theatre is an independent dance & theatre company that explores dance as a language that crosses geographical, political and cultural borders and searches for the communication between dance forms from various cultures. The members of this company are excellent dancers/actors/performers uniquely trained in various forms of traditional and contemporary dance forms, martial arts, and elements of physical theatre.

SKIN IS A WALL
BASED ON HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA
BY FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA

dancers: Andrijana Lubina, Jelena Stojiljković, Jovana Rakić; concept and directing: Mudra Teatar; dramaturge: Goran Milenković; music, vocals, violine: Ivee Aleksandrović Ivana; costumes: Boris Čakširan; set design: Andrijana Lubina; light design: Paun Pavlović; technics: Petar Kalinić, Borislav Stamenkov; coproduction: MUDRA Teatar and UK "Vuk Karadžić" in collaboration with Belgrade Dance Centre

premiere: October 2009, UK "Vuk Karadžić"

Our dance starts out of a belief that severe repression suits certain people, that following set laws gives a certain feeling of peace, however dark it might be. To be at peace with strict prohibitions also implies a release from personal responsibility. To be submissive is the easiest thing. But what happens with the insubordinate? Why even when they overcome all the limitations, when they rip off all the uniforms freedom doesn't reign?

What is that ultimate obstacle?

Is it the skin itself? The only boundary we cannot cross, because it asks for another being to take us out, to release us from our skin by receiving us, by us receiving it in ourselves.

Skin is a wall.

Walls are dancing tonight.

WORKS

2008: *Shadows Dancing on My Shoulders*, UK Vuk Karadžić; **2007:** *Forgotten Language*, Bifef theatre (Germany 2006); **2005:** *Dance for Asia* Bifef theatre; *Shadows*, Bifef theatre.

CONTACT

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[Dušan Murić was born in 1971 in Čuprija. Here and there something everything.

PROJECT “NIJE MOGUĆE POGREŠITI” (“MISTAKE IS IMPOSSIBLE”)

EPISODE ROBINSON CRUSOE

concept: Dušan Murić; participants: Miona Petrović, Ivana Đokić, Olja Njaradi, Sanja Vinković, Milan Manić, Vladana Erdeg, Ana Bastać, Ivana Koraksić, Branislav Jeremić, Ivan Zdravković, Ana Grigorović

first draft: March 2009, REX

“Nije moguće pogrešiti” is a name for relaxed ‘multiplayer’ game of making theatre sketches/drafts on: *Gateway*, F. Pohl, *Julius Caesar*, W. Shakespeare, *Cat’s Cradle*, K. Vonnegut and *The six wives of Henry VIII*, compilation. *Robinson Crusoe* is a pilot episode of this serial.

“Agrounded on shores of life, I’m waiting for other castaways, shipwrecks all around, only items and uses emerge. I am the item, part of a net, lever for levers, light as a butterfly, serious as hunger. Survival. Sustainable survival. Bearable vegetative living... or sustainable bearability...or...
To sail away...where? The crash of everyday life. The island of everyday life offers sustainable illusions, we are adapted to that, domesticated, we agreed silently, amen, then forgot about it. The sea is silent or noisy, our answers are artificial waves. Torrents of words. Tankers.”

While you are reading this, the draft could turn into a spectacle.

WORKS

2009: *Puzzle*, contemporary dance performance, co-author, Stanica, JDP, Belgrade; **2008:** *I’m pro : spam*, solo, KONDENZ festival, Stanica & CZKD, Belgrade; **2005-07:** *Jam snacks*, impro evenings, REX; **2005:** *A few Sweaty T-shirts*, no-budget solo, REX; *Snow Queen*, Little Theatre “Duško Radović” **2003-05:** *Next step...* (with Bojana Mladenović), Little Theatre “Duško Radović”.

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AFTERNOON OF A FAUN

author and director: Vera Obradović; choreography: Vera Obradović in collaboration with dancers; music: Claude Debussy and Vladimir Ljubinković; dancers: Ana Džanković, Marija Jocić and Iva Lončarević; actors: Primož Vrhovec, Đorđe Dragičević, Ivan Radinović (students of acting at the Academy of Fine Arts); set and costume design: Miljana Radojičić; lights design: Gordana Pantelić.

premiere: October 24, 2009, UK "Vuk Karadžić"

Choreodrama *Afternoon of a Faun* is driven by the idea to show the confrontation of two dimensions, two choices, two possible ways of life. On the one hand there is existence overburdened by work, monotonous quotidian rhythm, confrontations and urban filth, and on the other, existence in the unreal world of dreams, free from the worldly drab. The contemporary man has lost his touch with humane and with nature, but still not with beauty (!). Wherever one lives, and whatever one does – one can still discover and dream of beauty – but only if one has it inside. This is a metaphoric story of contemporary world where beautiful nymphs arise from the dump, and homeless man becomes a Faun.

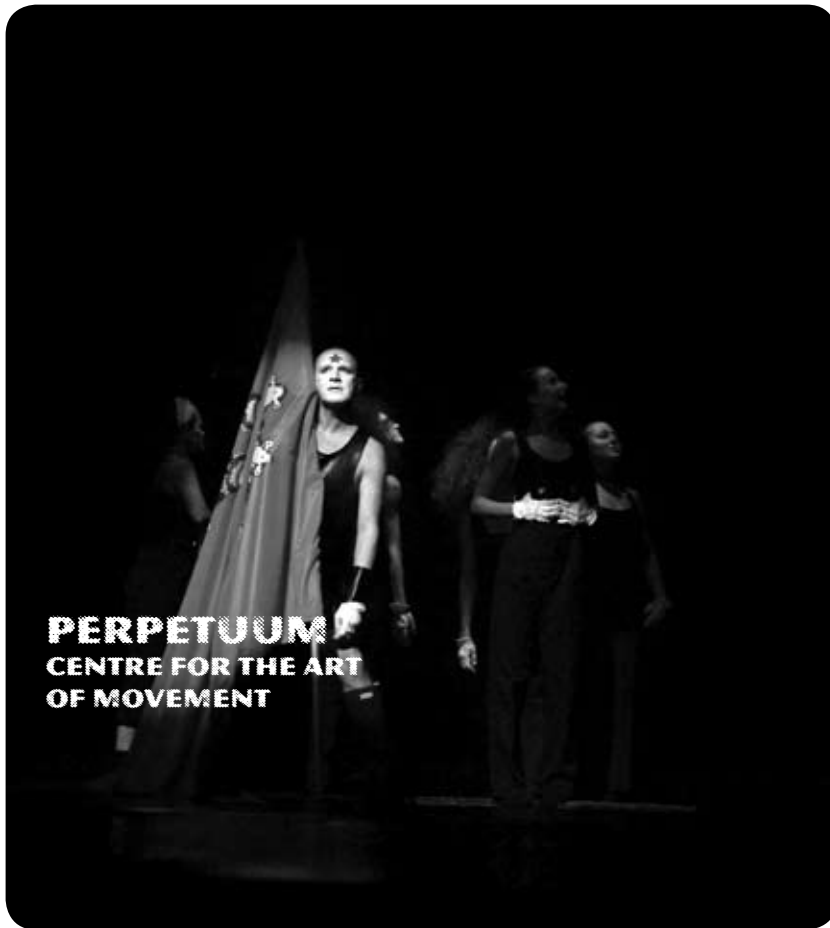
Vera Obradović graduated from The Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and Modern Jazz Dance at Faculty of Physical Culture, Novi Sad with prof Ljiljana Mišić. She acquired master degree in Theory of Arts and Media at the University of Arts in Belgrade and is finalizing her PhD at the Faculty of Drama Arts. Her choreographic debut *The Requiem* (music: W. A. Mozart) was awarded at the Fourth Yugoslav Ballet Competition in 1988. She was dancing in The Belgrade modern ballet of Smiljana Mandukić from 1981 to 1990, and in 1990 she founded her own modern dance troupe – *The XXI movement*. Besides her author pieces, she also collaborates on stage movement with most important drama theatres. She teaches at *The Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade* and at *The Faculty of Arts in Kosovska Mitrovica*. She won several awards for choreography. She is a member of The World council of dance – CID UNESCO.

WORKS

2008: *Picture of Dorian Gray*, DK Studentski grad;
2006: *New York at of Mary Pickford*, SKC, *Dream on Hot Stones*, CID UNESCO, 20. World Congress in Athens; *Rasprava*, SNP, Novi Sad, **2005:** *Moving equilibrium*, Bitef polyphony, CID UNESCO 19. World Congress, Cyprus; *Leonce and Lena*, National Theatre, Subotica, **2004:** *Miloš the Great*, Joakim Vujić Theatre, Kragujevac, **1998:** *Rite of Spring*, Choreographic Miniatures Competition, National Theatre Belgrade, III award, **1997:** *Salvador*, SKC; **1995:** *Eros at the Table*, SKC.

CONTACT

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PERPETUUM
CENTRE FOR THE ART
OF MOVEMENT

Svetlana Djurović is the founder, director and choreographer of the Centre for the Art of Movement PERPETUUM (ex Madlenium). Her ballet teachers were M. Sanjina, A. Roja, J. Bjeogojević. Her dancing career started in the Dubravka Maletić's contemporary dance studio, then in Duncan Company. Svetlana initiated and founded many manifestations on contemporary art dance ("Body Shop", "Give me wings for a spin" festival for children companies – Belgrade, Belgrade dance center). For her artistic and pedagogic work in the field of contemporary dance she received many awards.

ANIMAL FARM

idea, script and set design: Ranko Lasica; directors: Ranko Lasica and Svetlana Djurović; choreography and music arrangement: Svetlana Djurović; costumes: Perpetuum Centre for the Art of Movement; photography: Srdjan Mihic
dancers: pigs: Ranko Lasica, Marija Obradović, Slaven Momčilović; sheep: Ana Obradović, Bojana Zimonjić; horse: Tajana Cvjetković; dog: Andrea Mladenović; goose: Biljana Kitić
premiere: December 09, 2009, UK "Vuk Karadžić"

ANIMAL FARM, conceptually holds the directives and milieus posted by G. Orwell with ingredients of present time added, underlining similarity of human megalomania in all systems and historical frames. Totalitarianism as a form of rule over the masses in modern times is reflected in the globalization and the alignment of specific individuals, peoples, and dressing in identical costumes mediocrity-or not even mediocrity, domination of the minority elite, not only of humankind but of the entire planet and all its resources and beauty. The show uses the archive clips and music that marked the period of communism in the various countries where it was the ruling political system.

REVIEW

"Perpetuum dance company has celebrated ten years of work with a performance "Animal Farm" (by Orwell) in the staging of Svetlana Djurović. The performance represented a dancing echo of a totalitarian social organization, with a clear allusion to Fascism and Communism and their similar ways of oppressing an individual, deeply rooted into the entire history of human existence. All participants of this warning performance have impressed knowledge and enthusiasm into it, so necessary for further development of our contemporary dance."

*Milica Zajcev,
Danas 07.01.10*

WORKS

2008: *I am, my own collection*, Belgrade Dance Centre, Belgrade (Amman); *Long lasting play*, Terazije Theatre; **2007:** *V BODY SHOP* Festival, seminar Joe Alegado Vuk Karadžić, Belgrade;
2006: *Zapis*, IX RODARA Festival, Mexico, BEST CHOREOGRAPHY AWARD, Nov 06;
2005: *Hurry up!* Kennedy Center, Washington D.C. USA (Belgrade, Polverigi, Lebanon, Amman, Ramallah).

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PLAVO POZORIŠTE
(BLUE THEATRE)

Plavo pozorište is a theatre laboratory whose ideology is based on principles established by reformers of XX century theatre – C. Stanislavsky, A. Artaud, J. Grotowski, E. Barba and Odin Teatret, as well as Italian director M. Giannetti. Theatre which exists with the idea to serve theatre, not to be its servant, theatre which explores deeper levels of human communication, theatre which has the idea of moving boundaries of human perception, theatre which lives the utopia of reconciliation of anthropology and society, and theatre which presents a critical attitude – these are our basic premises. We are a group of people who, cherishing a seed of anarchism in ourselves, use theatre as the place which has credibility and in which some serious things about the world that surrounds us could be said.

Plavo pozorište participated in numerous festivals in Italy, Montenegro, Romania, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Slovenia, Slovakia.

DANCING WITH FATHER

scenario and directing: Nenad Čolić; actors: Ranko Trifković, Dejan Stojković, Masa Jelić, Jelena Martinović, Marko Potkonjak; set and costume design: Ivana Čolić; executive manager: Dubravka Vujinović; graphic design: Ivana Čolić

European premiere: 25.10.2008. Festival “360°”, Bielefeld, Germany
Serbian premiere: 16.04.2009. Centre for Cultural Decontamination

[...] Kafka wrote many letters. His entire life is one continuous correspondence. However, the Letter to Father is different. The Letter to Father unlocks all the doors. Franz explains in it why his father bore part of the guilt for their estranged relationship... Midway through this same letter one will stumble upon a detail that might seem unimportant. Kafka in fact did not like to dance. In the letter he wrote that in his childhood only dancing caused more boredom than the custom of going to the temple. Perhaps it is possible to connect this attitude with the personality of Franz Kafka, but perhaps it was all too late even then, in his childhood. The will was already broken.

Nenad Čolić
Plavo pozorište

REVIEW

“Nenad Čolić’s confrontation with Franz Kafka’s “Father” deals with a conceptual universe of origin and predestination, between education and neglect, of destiny and guilt. What from the gutting of a literary starting point remains (as theatre) is simply existential: The presence of human bodies focused to a targeted release of their problematic existence(s).”

Knut Geissler,
artistic director of Büro für Off-
Theater and festival Off Europa,
Leipzig, Germany

WORKS

2007: *The Wizard or Harmonic Cacophony*, Leipzig/
Belgrade: CZKD; **2006:** *I Sing Like a Bird*, Halle/
Belgrade: REX; **2004:** *Dialectics of Soul – Study of
Freedom*, BITEF theatre; **2003:** *Fantastic Gospel
According to Virginia*, REX; **2002:** *Sarcasticus or Birth
of the Virus*, BITEF theatre; **2001:** *Hypertrophy of
Authority or The Man Who Darkened the Sun*, REX;
2000: *Oscar Wilde and Inconstant Prince*, BITEF
theatre; **1999:** *It Was the Souls’ Wondrous Mine*,
INFANT, Novi Sad/ Belgrade: BITEF theatre; **1998:**
Incredible Duel, REX; **1997:** *Magnificent Odyssey*,
REX; **1995:** *Sonnet Without a Title*, REX.

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Miloš Sofrenović (1976) – performance artist, choreographer, director and pedagogue has received his dance / choreographic education as a scholarship student of Laban Centre in London. He is a recipient of several international scholarships from the Serbian Ministry of Culture, Soros Foundation, Dance Web Programme, Dance Omi Programme, Odyssey Dance Theatre. Among others he has collaborated with choreographers A. Sanchez Colberg, K. Johnson, L. King, D. Tan, M. Honesseau, P. Bausch, F. Armati, S. Vukićević and continued his education with acclaimed pedagogues S. Linke, J. Burrows, C. Kono, V. Mantero, K. Murobushi, etc. He has presented his works at festivals in Belgrade, Edinburgh, Skopje, London, Vienna, Istanbul, Singapore, Stockholm. Currently he lives and works in Vienna.

SOLO FOR THREE VISIONS

Visions of Peter Handke, Samuel Beckett and Virginia Woolf

author and performer: Miloš Sofrenović; sound collaboration: Jan Visocky & Cosimo Nando; video collaboration: Chris Clow; graphic design: Slava Kranewitter; photography by Max Moser

Project *Solo For Three Visions* explores and articulates the notion of “the poetic body” hidden within each of us. Our inner world in dialogue with the outer manifestation of our movements becomes one entity that can be experienced as a form of movement or even metaphysics. Through my inner dialogues the body is no longer a prisoner of the logical world, but still makes sense within it.

It is often less important to revolutionize, but more important to make aware.

(PETER HANDKE,
“Kaspar and Other Plays”)

REVIEW

“Constantly developing and enriching the associative arena of his movements, Miloš Sofrenović keeps his audience “alert”, mentally “prepared”, and ready to activate themselves intellectually, to take up the challenge, and to become a part, in the noblest way possible, of this truly unique theatrical experience.”

Milena Jauković
Politika

WORKS

2009: *Triptych*, with Chris Clow, Lab Factory Vienna; **2008:** *The One I Am*, In-tention / Hildegard von Bingen festival, Votivkirche, Vienna; **2007:** *We: Implicated & Complicated* with Ana Sanchez Colbeg, Central School of Speech and Drama London; **2006:** *Play*, Bitef Theatre, **2005:** *A Piece of Monologue*, Balkan Platform, Skopje; **2004:** *Indancities* with Filipo Armati, La Fabrica, Locarno, Switzerland.

CONTACT

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photography: Sonja Žugić

PARANOIA CHIC

author: Isidora Stanišić; composer: Anja Đorđević; stage design: Saša Ivanović; costume design: Ivana Vasić; dancers: Dejana Budiška, Nevena Jovanović, Olga Olćan, Milica Pisić; photography: Sonja Žugić
co-production of STATION and Bitef Theatre

premiere: November 2009.

The performance explores the states of mind generated through the systematic production of paranoia which is constantly encouraged and publicized, being a suitable disguise for various economic and political measures in the form of "shock-therapy". Deprivation from one of the basic needs – the need for safety – reduces critical thought, while the proper daily amount of fear transforms a person into a non-stop alert beast. Ready, steady and the constantly postponed: go! creates an atmosphere of tension making the performance hardly bearable up to the moment of culmination, when the system-managed paranoia becomes a cool image of terror, the moment when paranoia becomes chic.

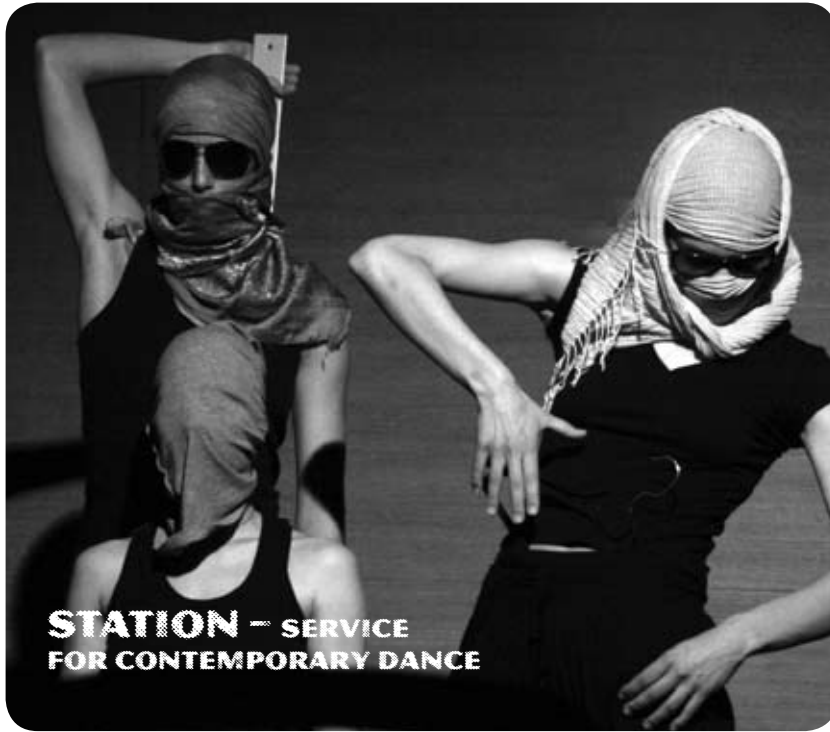
Isidora Stanišić was born in 1975 in Belgrade. She finished ballet school "Lujo Davičo" in 1993 where she currently teaches. She had professional trainings in France, Hungary, Russia, Italy, Austria... Active as choreographer, dancer and choreographer-collaborator in numerous theatre productions. Her performances have been selected for festivals in the country and abroad. She won First Prize and Audience Prize at 4th Festival of choreographic miniatures. She has been granted Dimitrije Parlić award twice, for her contribution as a performer and as a choreographer.

WORKS

2008: *To Damascus*, Belgrade Dance Centre;
2006: *Self-erase*, BELEF; **2002:** *Elevator*, Bitef Theatre; *Die Blechtrommel*, National Theatre, Belgrade; **2001:** *Organisation of Work*, Bitef Theatre; **2000:** *Les Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, KPGT; **1998:** *Bastard*, National Theatre, Belgrade.

CONTACT

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**STATION – SERVICE
FOR CONTEMPORARY DANCE**

Station is a service for contemporary dance community in Serbia aiming to make that community improved, strengthened, structured and recognized by cultural policy makers, state institutions, cultural operators, educational policy makers, Balkan and European partners and funding bodies as well as by broader audience.

Station realized the project *Puzzle* in 2008 and 2009 in order to raise level of education and professional standards of the Serbian contemporary dance scene. *Puzzle* is the ambitious mechanism which allows young dancers to make their first professional projects in cooperation with established choreographers and dance artists. The dancers went through a series of workshops of Serbian choreographers and European dance pedagogues (Federic Gies, Martin Sonderkamp, Teja Reba, Selma Banich...), appropriating new methodological approaches in contemporary dance. The project terminated with a one-month working process with four Serbian choreographers and the Croatian dramaturge Sasa Bozic and with the dance performance presented in the Yugoslav Drama Theater.

PUZZLE

choreographers: Dalija Aćin, Andjelija Todorović, Dušan Murić and Dragana Bulut;
dramaturge: Saša Božić; dancers: Dragana Milošević, Milica Pisić, Miona Petrović,
Jovana Rakić, Sandra Vidović

premiere: May 4, 2009, Yugoslav Drama Theatre – Studio Stage

Puzzle is designed as a gathering of the choreographers of mid and young generations and the emerging dancers: as exchange of personal artistic ideas, skills and even as re-questioning of different positions. The viewers are offered the performers with their optimal potentials, illusions on virtuosity, lies, dreaming about where they are now and whom they might be in a situation where cultural policy is starting to recognize relevance of contemporary dance, where contemporary dancers are accepted as representatives of local culture in international cultural context and when the local festivals start to co-produce new works of the emerging dance artists.

WORKS

2009: *Puzzle*, D. Aćin, D. Bulut, D. Murić and A. Todorović, JDP; **2008:** *La pierre et les songes*, Odile Duboc and Françoise Michel, BELEF, co-production with Centre Chorégraphique National de Franche-Comté à Belfort, Kalemegdan fortress; **2007:** *Enjoy July*, Ivo Dimchev, BELEF, Magacin u Kraljevića Marka.

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Ljiljana Tasić belongs to a recent generation of authors and performers of contemporary dance and performance art on the Belgrade scene. She graduated architecture and studied contemporary dance through various educational programs and workshops. As a performer, Ljiljana has worked with artists such as Jana Menger, Katsura Kan, Irena Ristić, Ivo Dimchev and Dalija Aćin.

SINGLEANGLE

concept and performance: Ljiljana Tasić; collaborator: visual artist Dušan Bročić

Singleangle has been created through the process of an experiment and research on correlation between time and space, taking their elementary characteristics as a starting point, manipulating with them and changing their place frequently, i.e. dispossessing their basic properties in order to assign them to another. Playing with inversions in relations such as: outside-inside, intimate-public, statically-dynamically, forwards-backwards, subjectively-objectively etc, it is possible to experience the constants of time and space, flow and expansion in a different, but always subjective way. As a result the interactive ambient installation is obtained, equally involved along with the body of the performer as its inseparable part, in the role of a catalyst – in starting up and controlling processes, setting choreography on the motion of the whole ambient as a unique “organism”, including spectator inside it as its passive part.

WORKS

Author's works: **2007:** *Promised Land*, Rex; **2009:** *Singleangle*, Magacin u Kraljevića Marka.

Performed in: **2008:** *Overdone and Gone* by Dalija Aćin, BDP; **2007:** *Enjoy July* by Ivo Dimchev, Magacin u Kraljevića Marka 4; **2006:** *Ples u šumi* by Katsura Kan, KC Novi Sad; *Saga* by Irena Ristić, CZKD; **2004:** *Play* by Jana Menger, Bitef teatar

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TKH WALKING THEORY

TkH: Walking Theory was founded as a research theoretical-artistic group in Belgrade in 2000. Main domain of work of TkH Platform is to encourage development of contemporary performing arts practices and their critical discourses through programmes-projects: TkH Journal for Performing Arts Theory, educational projects, on-line platform (tkh-generator.net), as well as artistic and theoretical manifestations and projects. TkH Platform is engaged in the cultural policy field and empowering of infrastructural and discursive potentials of independent artistic and cultural initiatives (Other Scene, The FaMa, Clubture, PaF).

Bojan Djordjev (1977) theatre director, Siniša Ilić (1977) visual artist, Marta Popivoda (1982) video and film artist and Ana Vujanović (1975) performing arts and culture theorist are permanent collaborators of the TkH platform. They also realize their artistic and theoretical practice outside TkH.

TKH: THE LAST THEORETICAL PERFORMANCE “GÉNÉRIQUE”

authors and performers: Marta Popivoda, Ana Vujanović, Bojan Đorđev, Siniša Ilić; powered by: *everybodys*; producer: Jelena Knežević; organiser: Dragana Jovović; production: TkH – Centre for Performing Arts Theory and Practice

premiere: January 2009, Yugoslav Drama Theatre – Studio Stage; also performed at *Lecture Performance* exhibition, curators: Kathrin Jentjens, Radmila Joksimović, Anja Nathan-Dorn and Jelena Vesić, Kunstverein, Köln, Germany

After a long line of theoretical performances that were performed since 2001 in opera house, boxing ring, botanical gardens, on the internet, TV, radio, in the university amphitheatre, classroom, museum, gallery, paper and Documenta 12 in Kassel, Walking Theory (TkH) shows its body for the last time. Tits, to be more precise.

There are four people in the room. Look at them closely... What do they ask us? What did we witness? Why swearing now? I always miss the best part... Seems I have arrived in the best moment. Should I say something? Isn't this manipulation? We have seen all this before... I am the tigresse! Boring intellectual discussion... they could shut-up now. I'm glad that it's the last.

* performance is based on methodological tool *Générique* by *everybodys* collective (www.everybodystoolbox.net)

WORKS

2007: *Boxing match – readymade theatre*, Czkd;
2006: *Problem Market – Pro tranzit*; Erste Bank, Belgrade; **2005:** *sms guerilla*, commercial TV stations; **2004:** *Psychosis and Death of the Author*, Bitef; **2003:** *Enjoying in Deconstruction*, University of Arts, Belgrade/Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb; **2002:** *Performing Gender*, SKC; **2001:** *DreamOpera*, Teatro Tartini, Piran; *Hyperreal Allegory*, SKC; *Walking Theory*, National Theatre, Belgrade.

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