



PRESS KIT

THE ART OF AGE!NG

2013 - 2015

A project developed under the umbrella of the **European Theatre Convention**

under the patronage of the artist Etel Adnan

With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union



Culture

in collaboration with

Staatstheater Braunschweig, Germany

Teatrul National Craiova, Romania

Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Germany

Teatrul National Timisoara, Romania

Gavella City Theatre Zagreb, Croatia

Theater und Orchester Heidelberg, Germany

Slovak National Theatre Bratislava, Slovakia

Deutsches Theater Berlin, Germany

www.artofageing.eu

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1. About “The Art of Ageing”

“An ageing population raises challenges for our societies and economies, culturally, organizationally and from an economic point of view. Policy makers worry about how living standards will be affected as each worker has to provide for the consumption needs of a growing number of elderly dependents. Markets worry about fiscal sustainability and the ability of policy makers to address timely and sufficiently these challenges in several Member States. The seriousness of the challenge depends on how our economies and societies respond and adapt to these changing demographic conditions.”¹

The **European Theatre Convention** initiates the project “*The Art of Ageing*” under the patronage of the artist **Etel Adnan** (87) and the support of the **Culture Programme of the European Union** with the aim to:

- **INITIATE THE DEBATE** between artists, scientists, political & economical stakeholders and audiences about demographic challenges addressing younger and older generations alike
- **RAISE AWARENESS** to the political, social, biological and economic challenges of our ageing societies
- **ENCOURAGE** all generations to take active part in society life

Eight renowned national state and city theatres from four countries – Staatstheater Braunschweig, Teatrul National Craiova, Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Teatrul National Timisoara, Gavelle City Theatre Zagreb, Theater und Orchester Heidelberg, Slovak National Theatre Bratislava and Deutsches Theater Berlin commission 4 young talented European playwrights (**Ivor Martinić**, from Croatia, **Nino Haratischwili** from Germany, **Silke Merzhäuser**, Werkgruppe 2, from Germany, and **Peca Stefan** from Romania) to realize research and interviews about the phenomena of Europe’s ageing societies and to write 4 new plays staged in **five new stage productions** performed by multicultural ensemble from each theatre.

The **five new productions** will be shared and toured between the participating theatres and showcased during the “**Art of Ageing - 1st European Theatre and Science Festival**” from **April 16-19, 2015 at the Teatrul National Timisoara, Romania with a scientific symposium to pool artists, audiences, political and economic stake holders.**

On **October 17th 2013**, the project started with the premiere of the play “**Irgendwann in der nacht**” at the **Staatstheater Karlsruhe written by Etel Adnan**, about the oneness of love. Two lovers meet after years of separation, they talk about their past, their memories, the time that is now lost.

On the occasion of the **Art of Ageing conference that took place from March 13 to March 16 2014 at Théâtre de Liège in Belgium**, a combined staged reading of the play in French and German and a screening of extracts of the stage production were performed. The playwrights of the project were invited to share the first results of their research and interviews realized in the last 7 months.

¹ “The 2012 Ageing Report - Economic and budgetary projections for the 27 EU Member States (2010-2060)”, European Union - Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2012”

1. „ Timisoara National Theatre (RO) – Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe (DE)

The clock is ticking / Pe ceas / Die Uhr tickt

2. Deutsches Theater Berlin (DE) – Slovenske Narodne Divadlo (SK)

Fen Fires / Bludičky / Land der ersten Dinge

3. National Theatre Craiova (RO) – Staatstheater Braunschweig (DE)

Strawberry orphans / Căpșunile și Orfanii / Erdbeerwaisen

4. Theater und Orchester Heidelberg (DE) – Gavella City Drama Theatre Zagreb (HR)

I'm afraid that we know each other now / Bojim se da sada poznajemo / Ich befürchte, jetzt kennen wir uns

8 premieres in 4 countries

Timisoara 07.09.14

Craiova 27.09.14

Karlsruhe 03.10.14

Braunschweig 23.10.14

Berlin 14.11.14

Bratislava 27.11.14

Heidelberg 16.11.14

Zagreb 16.01.15

2. The Art of Ageing Co-Productions

2.1 The Clock is ticking

A coproduction between Staatstheater Karlsruhe (DE) & Timisoara National Theatre (RO)



Biologically, time flies for each and every one of us. But any similarity ends there: what is our individual attitude towards ageing? What is our “real” age? And, by the way, what does “real age” mean? Is it a number of years or a state of mind? Just as all things can be well done, so too can be the “art” of ageing. The play “The clock is ticking” / “Die Uhr tickt” / “Pe ceas” tries – through laughter, unexpected dialogue, acidly, frankly and directly or hesitantly, in Romanian, German and English, spoken, sung, recited, whispered or shouted – to raise a few questions, even give a few answers. And, if possible, follow the desire of the audience. Because the audience is given the chance to decide democratically, by voting, what the actors will say. It is the audience who decides. Time does too: there are only 60 minutes available. Adherents of probability theory are surely rejoicing: each performance is a premiere, shaped by the audience’s votes. Three questions with three multiple-choice answers determine the structure of the show at every performance. And, if there’s still time remaining before the 60 minutes are up, then the performance goes into overtime – then there are more questions, more answers, more stories that the audience, with its votes, asks the actors to perform. Thus, everyone in the room is given the chance to age better over the course of 60 minutes.

Playwright: **Peca Stefan**

Stage director: **Malte C Lachmann**

Dramaturge: **Michael Gmaj**

Project manager: **Jan Linders and Geanina Jinaru**

Video artist: **Lucian Matei**

Stage and costume designer: **Anna van Leen**

Cast: **Sabina Bijan / Sophia Löffler / Jan Andreesen / Colin Buzoianu**

Peca Stefan (1982), playwright, based in Romania



PECA ȘTEFAN is considered one of the most powerful voices in Romanian contemporary playwriting. He studied dramatic writing at New York University (2003), was a resident of the Royal Court International Residency (2005) and CEC ArtsLink Playwright in Residence at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven (2007, 2008). He was the winner of the first dramAcum contest in Romania, in 2002. His work has been presented in many European countries and in the United States and his plays were often rewarded (Heidelberg Stuckemarkt Innovation Award (2007) for Romania 21 and the London Fringe Report Award for Best Play – Relationship Drama (2006) for The Sunshine Play). He was also one of the 5 European Playwrights selected in the Berliner Theatertreffen Stuckemarkt 2010, with “Wire and Acrobats”. In 2012, the production of his play “Targoviste de Jucarie” (Playground Targoviste) was showcased during the festival **New Plays from Europe** in Wiesbaden. He was invited to be one of the 35 European playwrights featured in the 35th Anniversary Edition of the Berliner Stückemarkt in May 2013.

Malte C. Lachmann (1989), stage director, based in Germany



Malte C. Lachmann was born in Marburg, Germany, in 1989. He studied stage directing for theatre and opera at Bavarian Theatre Academy August Everding and University of Music and Performing Arts Munich from 2008 until 2012. During his studies, he was a Cusanuswerk scholar, worked as assistant director at Salzburg Festival and Prinzregenten Theatre Munich and as assistant to conductor Michael Hofstetter. Additionally, he worked as director for various professional theatre, opera and musical productions in Munich. In 2012, he won the jury's award at Körber Studio Junge Regie and was named 'Best German Young Director'. After graduating, he worked amongst others for Thalia Theatre Hamburg, Hanover State Theatre, Dresden State Theatre, Bochum Theatre, Gießen Theatre and Osnabrück Theatre. In 2013, his project 'Toulouse Protocols' was invited to Radikal Jung Festival. His work focuses on contemporary dramas as well as project developments with a special interest in interdisciplinary concepts. More information on Malte C. Lachmann's work can be found on www.lachmann.tk

Research notes from Peca Stefan

For this play “The clock is ticking,” Peca Stefan, one of the most powerful voices in contemporary Romanian playwriting, researched how time is experienced individually, regardless of how it objectively passes. Do the stark economic differences in Romania and Germany influence the sense of time of people living in both countries? How can we characterize the psychology of time?

To address age and ageing is not the most simple research topic. Beyond statistics and theories, the subject of ageing is extremely subjective and raises a lot of questions. A demographic decline in Europe set against unprecedented population growth worldwide. Questions about the age(ing) of

humanity itself. Prolonging life. The progress of science, technology and health versus the consumption of natural resources and environmental change. Religion versus education. Migration. Decline and progress. Diversity. The politics of dealing with ageing populations. Economic shifts and current economic reality. Responsibility. Intergenerational relations. Inheritance. But what about inner ageing? Self-awareness. Self-projection. Social memory versus personal memory. What is the psychology of it all? And what is the timing of it, at a moment when it seems – more than ever – that we're on some sort of timer to resolve many of these matters, in order to guarantee the survival of humankind itself? Where are we on the clock as it ticks? Beyond data, **I've always been fascinated with how people perceive their own age, remember previous ages and project ages to come.** Ageing is a process that never stops, and it's extremely interesting to compare how people age in two EU countries which are at the opposite ends of the spectrum: the economic champion Germany, one of the fundamental European cultures and Romania, a country still recovering from its communist past, where traces of the Middle Ages can still be found in the daily life of its rural communities. At the end of the research period there was enough material for five plays, not just one. On top of it all, there was my everlasting fascination with time and my own philosophy about how I am getting older. But it wasn't just me. The subjectivity of ageing and its perception remained at the core of all the findings. It seemed extremely relevant and exciting to me to create a concept that would address one question: how do we decide to get older together? What if we had only a concrete performance time, and a social situation (such as a theatrical convention) that urges us to make a decision? Quite literally, the clock would tick. What happens when we know we only have 60 minutes? How do we decide to spend that time? What if we are aware we're getting older with each second? And what if we know the performance is never the same, just as our own lives are never the same? What if we would only get to experience this night with the others who have come here, knowing that no other audience will experience exactly the same thing? What if the hour we get to experience is the consequence of another audience being here before us (an inheritance)? And what do we leave to the next audience?

In other words, **what is the responsibility of our passing, and being in a moment – even as an audience at a theatrical event?**

One of the initial thoughts that excited me the most about this performance which inherits itself was this idea: that the performance would create its own memory, its own history.

I think the stories inside the performance are worth the trip to the theatre, since they address many of the topics mentioned above. But what really makes this piece click is that audiences compose the story themselves, working together, thus deciding how to age for those 60 minutes. To me that is the most exciting part of theatre.

2.2 Fen fires

A coproduction by Deutsches Theater Berlin (DE) & Slovenske Narodne Divadlo, Bratislava (SK)



The German-Georgian novelist, playwright and theatre director Nino Haratischwili wrote a multilingual play for two German and two Slovak actors: one protagonist is Lara from the West, who had a successful career as a judge after her youth as a nonconformist leftist, but is now bedridden – and the other is Natalia, her Eastern European nurse, a former organ player, daughter of a dissident and a widow of a snitch. Two women meet, who couldn't be more different, and try to manage their daily routines. Nevertheless, their memories catch up with them and they are forced to confront the shadows of their past.

Playwright: **Nino Haratischwili, Germany**

Dramaturges: **Ulrich Beck, Miriam Kicinova, Peter Pavlac**

Project managers: **Radana Hromniková, Christa Müller**

Stage director: **Brit Bartkowiak, Germany**

Set designer: **Nikolaus Frinke, Germany**

Costume designer: **Karin Rosemann, Germany**

Music: **Thies Mynter, Germany**

Cast: **Emília Vášáryová, Slovakia / Dušan Jamrich, Slovakia / Gabriele Heinz, Germany**

Nino Haratischwili (1983), playwright, based in Germany



Nino Haratischwili was born in 1983 in Tbilisi, Georgia. She is an award-winning novelist, playwright and theatre director and has been writing in Georgian and German since the age of twelve. From 1998 to 2003 she ran the free, bilingual theatre company (German, Georgian) "Fliedertheater" which had had several appearances at various Georgian theaters as well as guest performances in Germany (Bremen).

From 2000 to 2003 she studied film directing at the State School for Film and Theatre in Tbilisi. From 2003 to 2007 she studied directing at the Theatre Academy in Hamburg, ITMF. Nino Haratischwili wrote several prose texts and pieces which were published and performed both in Germany and in Georgia. Her debut novel Juja was longlisted for the German Book Prize. Mein sanfter Zwilling (My Gentle Twin) won the Hotlist German independent publishers' best book award in 2011. Furthermore, she was a writer-in-residence at the British Centre of Literary Translation's summer school in July 2012. Nino Haratischwili now works as a freelance director and author in Hamburg.

Brit Bartkowiak (1980), stage director, Germany



Brit Bartkowiak was born in 1980. She studied German Literature and Theatre Studies in Mainz and in Wellington / New Zealand. In 2006 she started her studies in Theatre Direction at the Academy of Music and Theatre in Hamburg. Her first works during her studies were: "Black animal sadness" by Anja Hilling in Hamburg and "Time to love, Time to die" by Fritz Kater in Dresden. From 2009 to 2013 she worked as an assistant director at the Deutsches Theater Berlin, cooperating, among others, with Dimiter Gotscheff, Nicolas Stemann and Stefan Pucher.

In 2012 she directed the German -language premiere of "Swchworm" by Toon Tellegen and Guy at the Schauspielhaus Düsseldorf . At the Deutsches Theater in Berlin, she directed among others : "Mother tongue Mameloschn" by Marianna Salzmann, which was nominated for the award of the Mülheim Theatre Days 2013.

In the season 2013/14 she is a director at the Deutsches Theater Berlin, the Staatstheater Oldenburg and at the State Theatre of Lower Saxony North in Wilhelmshaven.

Fen fires / Extract from the play

Lara – a former judge – tied to her bed. Each of her word is full of iron and she cannot handle the fact that she has been bereft of her future. She hates television series she is looking, and refuses to accept that times have become predictable, not only her life.

Natalia – Lara's career, a former organist, tied to the East she carries in her like a pacemaker. *A house ensheathed in dust and quiescence, hibernating, not knowing any longer how it feels to be awake. Lara is lying in her bed, Natalia sitting next to her, both staring at the television.*

Lara (*thinking*):

I have survived worse – I will survive her as well. Every morning these inane songs, as if I were gaga.

Natalia (*thinking*):

My name is Natalia – with an A at the end not an E – is not that bloody complicated, is it?

Lara (*thinking*):

„Dearie, just swallow the pills. Yes, great.“ As if I were a dog. With the same constant stupid grin on her face, she would even mix rat poison in my meal. My bitch of a daughter! Why did she have to employ such a cow? She only wants to punish me. Picks any old cow from any godforsaken country to torment me. Mika, my beloved Darling, you are not like your mother, you would never do this to me, would you?

Natalia (*thinking*):

„No! Not the blue stockings! I have not worn them since 1978! THE BLACK ONES!“ Why doesn't she throw them away? How on earth should I know which stockings she wants to wear? 1978? Excuse me! Old stockings shouldn't survive their owner, they ought to be thrown away.

Lara (*thinking*):

I – yes I – should bake an apple crumble. Show her how make a proper apple crumble. With proper crumble and cinnamon. Not this disgusting sugar concoction she gave me. You never wanted to eat your vegetables, my Mika. God knows how I tried to make you eat them. I was so ingenious – my God – I was so ingenious.

Natalia (*thinking*):

Not one single photo. Not one single photograph in the whole house. What is that? A house without photos. Mrs Gendig – even if she wasn't the epitome of a granny, she had pictures of her children, her grandchildren everywhere ... My God, when is this stupid television series starting ...

Lara (*thinking*):

A sweet, old, toothless grandma that's what they want. Someone who offers everyone her jam recipes, one who cries each time she watches a love story on telly, someone who says : „All the best“ to everyone; one, who even on her deathbed smiles and whispers: I had such a fulfilled life, now I am ready to die and to join you, My God!“ But they have another one coming! They have a screw loose! Let her tell my daughter – the high and mighty Professor!

Natalia (*thinking*):

No one ever comes to see her, not even her own daughter dares calling her. No wonder! She is a

termagant. Compared to her, Mrs Gendig was a godsend. And she still goes on and on about her boy, „my grandson, my darling grandson“. But where is he? Where is he, her precious Mika? Tomorrow at 12, wasn't it? Yes, tomorrow at 12 I can finally call him, the lawyer said. I will hear it in his voice if they treat him well!

Lara (*thinking*):

Yes! Mika, when we finally leave! This will be so much fun! I remember you always wanting me to teach you Poker and Black Jack. In my prime, I used to outact those boring old farts. A jazzy car and us at the wheel – splendid. Why is she bloody staring at me? Does she expect me to return her smile? Give me a break, sweetie!

Natalia (*thinking*):

Who does she think she is? I am going to explode in a second and scream into her face. Yes, I should do this – she would at least stop staring at me. Just to get up, to throw her fucking vase on the floor, tear down those smelly curtains, jump on them, and to stuff the biscuits she oogles into her bloody gob ... Finally the programme!

...

Lara: Natalie?

Natalia (*thinking*):

A! A! Natalia. My God, why is this so difficult?

Natalia: Shall I straighten your pillow?

Lara: No! Leave it!

Natalia: But you can't see properly.

Lara: Don't you understand? I said NO, and a NO is a NO!

Natalia: I just wanted ...

Lara: What? Help?

Natalia: I want you to be comfortable.

Lara: I shall only be comfortable once my grandson arrives and takes me away from here. Then I will be comfortable! Whom were you talking to on the phone?

Natalia: With my son.

Lara: And what does junior do?

Natalia: He is at university – studying.

Lara: And what does he want to become one day?

Natalia: He – he wants to be in economics, but he will probably change his mind again. He is rather – how shall I put it – restless.

Lara: Economics. Sure! You Eastern folks all think we live in paradise ...

Translation from German to English: Knut Johannson

2.3 Strawberry orphans

A coproduction by Staatstheater Braunschweig (DE) & National Theatre Craiova (RO)



The Staatstheater Braunschweig and Teatrul National "Marin Sorescu" Craiova conducted research for the play "Strawberry orphans," which focuses on the increasingly frequent migration of Romanian labourers to Germany and other western European countries. The growing phenomenon affects many people from poorer countries, such as Romania, who emigrate to Western Europe. In Romania "picking" has become a synonym for all the jobs that women and men perform in the West, be it strawberry picking, cleaning, taking care of the elderly and children, working at meat-markets or dockyards. They send their wages back to the families they left behind and become significantly interlinked with the economies of both countries. Elderly relatives are once again the generation who cares for the children and bears responsibility for their social, emotional and political education. Their idea of retirement is completely different from the modern comforts enjoyed by German pensioners. What are the new family structures that emerge from this demand for work? And further: at what emotional and psychological cost?

Stage director: Julia Roesler

Music: Kim Efert

Stage and costume designer: Adrian Damian

Dramaturges: Silke Merzhäuser, Axel Preuß

Cast: Gabriela Baci, Romania / Gina Calinoiu, Romania / Sven Hönig, Germany / Oliver Simon, Germany

Werkgruppe 2, a collective team of theatre artists born end of the 1970s, based in Germany



Werkgruppe 2 is a collective team of theatre artists born in the late 1970s, based in Germany. For more than eight years werkgruppe2 has been working as an independent drama group. Werkgruppe2 is an independent interdisciplinary theatre collective based in Lower Saxony, Germany. Founded in 2006, the team consists of Julia Roesler (director), Insa Rudolph (music) and Silke Merzhäuser (dramaturge). Their first theatre projects had a literary basis (Gaming Instinct, The Orange Girl, Borderliners). Werkgruppe2 has been developing evening length documentary theatre based on interviews since 2009. Once the interviews are compressed into a script or theatrical text it is staged with professional actors and music ensembles. Always edge cutting, they look for new forms of dialogue between the various art disciplines in each project. Aside from its own productions, werkgruppe2 realized projects in cooperation with the Deutsches Theater in Göttingen, works together with the Staatstheater Oldenburg and is a partner of the Staatstheater Braunschweig from 2013 to 2015.

The strawberry picker's heritage – Erdbeerwaisen

by Lia Boangiu, essayist & translator

The Romanian essayist Lia Boangiu on the social situation in Romanian families and communities, as well as her experiences and associations while watching the play "Strawberry orphans."

The German language could be compared to Lego pieces: words can interlock with each other, thus reaching incredible lengths; they can absorb each other to form new words, with new subtle or specific meanings. In that regard, it is a rather poetical language, even though it may sound brusque. In Romanian, the title of the show was "Căpșunile și orfanii" (Strawberry orphans), which was translated in German as "Erdbeerwaisen," almost identical to the English title "Strawberry orphans." This translation didn't suggest that the children belonged to strawberries and became orphans as a result of their absence, but rather that they were orphaned because of strawberries. The English language is also more flexible than Romanian because it even has a word for making, or turning someone into an orphan: The children were orphaned by strawberries.

When I was little, I was under the impression that the world can only evolve and constantly improve, albeit at a slow pace. This only seemed natural, probably thanks to the stories I read, which always ended well for all of the good characters. I honestly believed then that politicians could learn from their mistakes and would automatically avoid repeating history, and I was convinced that economists can only improve the methods meant to control the economy. I have no better understanding of these things now, but at least I understand that everything is much too complicated and that people don't always know, or do, what's best. Nor do Romanians know whether it's always best to go and work in other countries; but when it seems to be the only option, and many others around you are doing it, then you don't waste time in securing your chance. Thus, we have long become accustomed to the thought that people go away to Spain, Italy, England, Greece, Germany and many other countries where this very complicated economy seems to be more stable. And we're used to hearing stories about those who left – some better, some worse. We, from the younger generations, have friends whose parents seem to have always been away, friends who come to aspire to the same goal because it's the best example of success they've seen.

It is also commonly known, although a generalization, that the orphans whose parents have left either miss a lot of school, or barely learn anything. They also say that all Roma people went abroad to steal or beg. Lots of other stereotypes circulate among us, both orally and from the media; the foreign media and the Romanian press have magnified these stereotypes to increase sales, and we've taken them on without even realizing it. The subject of the strawberry pickers has been discussed so often that we know tune it out. This is why a **the performance** of a work like "**Strawberry Orphans**" turns into a fundamental reflection, because it restores a neutral perspective on a situation that has been going on in Romania for such a long time. (...) The actors Gina Călinoiu, Gabriela Baci, Sven Hönig and Oliver Simon animated these characters who live among us, and who were so real on stage that they must have brought tears to spectators' eyes throughout the performance. On stage with the actors was musician Kim Efert, who provided the live soundtrack created with an electric guitar, synthesizers, a drum brush, and rhythmic tapping on the enormous cardboard box that was, in turn, a closet, the actors' wardrobe kit, a children's playground, or any other necessary piece of furniture. (...)

Children like these don't receive the same attention, or the same solid structure that would allow them to grow and evolve normally, with normal children's thoughts. If Hönig was the most credible child, Gina Călinoiu was the most sensible one; her interpretation, oftentimes incredibly touching, demonstrated a level of empathy we should expect from all the citizens of this Europe we want to live in. (...)

The situation is clearly overwhelming for all of those involved, perhaps even more so for those who only know of these cases, like the Romanians, or for those who meet these cases in their own countries, like the Germans, Italians, Spanish, French and so on. And yet we're the ones who might be able to help, we whose families are at least together; the people who talked to the artists from werkgruppe2 often receive aid from the NGOs involved in this project, which are mostly interested in providing the children with school supplies, making sure they can continue with their studies even when life at home is difficult. Projects like "Strawberry orphans" are necessary, because they remind us not to become used to a tough situation, even if it's been going on for such a long time that we barely notice it anymore. **Habit leads to negligence, forgetfulness and indifference; and the theatre must take on a social role as well, like any of the arts** – something that the collaborating artists have fully managed with this show. A show that, if analyzed from a purely aesthetic point of view, is well put together, played by discerning and skilled actors, and carrying that quality of keeping spectators on the edge of their seats, only this time being uncomfortable as well, because the theme itself brought to mind conflicting thoughts and emotions; a modern show directed with precision and minimal use of raw matter, but generous in its subject matter, range of emotions and interpretation.

2.4 I'm afraid we know each other now

A coproduction by Theater & Orchester Heidelberg (DE) & City Drama Theatre Gavella (HR)



The Croatian writer Ivor Martinić conducted research with the German stage director Miriam Horwitz in Zagreb and in Heidelberg on how memory is experienced by different generations, what it means for collective and personal identity, how memory is a part of our relationships, family, the political situation and our communities. In the play, Ivana ends her relationship with Filip. The relationship fell apart because of Filip's inability to fulfill Ivana's desire for a shared narration. He can neither remember important moments, such as Ivana's first confession of love, nor is he willing to recreate the memory. Even in the moment when they break up, he refuses to show an appropriate reaction to her desire to separate. She can't accept his behaviour and keeps coming back to him to demand a worthy end. A subtle piece about the need to locate oneself in history. The play is staged in two versions: one with a team of artists from Heidelberg and one in Zagreb.

Playwright: **Ivor Martinić**

Croatian production

Dramaturge: **Ivor Martinić**

Director: **Dominique Schnize**

Executive Producer: **Sonja Kovačić**

Costume designer: **Marita Čopó**

Cast: **Ivana Bolanča / Natalija Đorđević / Filip Križan / Irena Teresa Prpić**

German production

Director and Stage Designer: **Miriam Horwitz**

Dramaturge: **Jürgen Popig**

Executive Producer: **Katja Herlemann**

Costume designer: **Pia Dederichs**

Cast: **Josepha Grünberg / Fabian Oehl / Lisa Förster / Andreas Seifert**

Ivor Martinić (1984), playwright, based in Croatia



Ivor Martinić was born 1984, studied at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb and worked as dramaturge in various national theatres in Croatia. In 2008 he took part in the "Forum of young playwrights" at the "New Plays" festival in Wiesbaden, Germany. He is the author of very successful drama plays: "The Title of the Drama about Ante is Written Here" and "A Play about Mirjana and those around her". Both plays have been translated and produced in at least ten European countries. Ivor was awarded the Fabriqu  en Croatie award by the REZ association and Small Marulic Award. He also is the youngest playwright to receive the Marin Drzic-

Award.

Miriam Horwitz (1984), director and stage designer, based in Germany



Miriam Horwitz was born in Munich and studied directing and choreography at Hochschule f r Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch in Berlin. She has realized productions at INKONST, Theatermaskine (Sweden), at Centraltheater and at Tanzarchiv Leipzig. Besides directing she has continuously been working as an actress in theatre and on TV. 1997 she received the Adolf-Grimme-Preis for her role in "Bruder Esel". For two years she has been working as assistant director at the Theater und Orchester Heidelberg, where she also directed the German premiere of the piece "Yukonstyle" by Sarah Berthiaume in 2013. For the Art of Ageing project she is director and stage designer for both, the Croatian production in Zagreb and the German production in Heidelberg.

Research notes from Miriam Horwitz

Last steps

Miriam Horwitz, stage director, worked in close collaboration with the playwright Ivor Martinić to develop the play in Heidelberg and in Zagreb. The following are some thoughts on her artistic journey.

Ivor Martinić and I spent one and a half years conducting research in Croatia and Germany. On the one hand we were developing a play, but we also spent the time trying to envision the work on the stage – that is, with the actors, the audience and the themes. The challenge for our work – and for the topic "The Art of Ageing" – was to create something that captured our shared aesthetic and yet could still transmit a sense of the history and culture of our homelands. That's why we felt that it was absolutely necessary to spend time in both Zagreb and Heidelberg. The one-week workshop with actors from both theatres definitely enriched our work and was an important part of our creative process, even though – as we later found out – the experience was more about misunderstanding than understanding for our Croatian colleagues. **We took a very theoretical approach to finding the**

topic that best described ageing and our view thereof: memory. At first glance, memory appears to allow us to relive past events. This could be through some token of the past, such as an old photograph or film, which literally reflects another time. And yet the act of remembering happens at a specific moment in time, thus becoming a process locked in the present; thus the memory is changed due to its new temporal framing. Even antique objects are changed by the very act of looking at them: “The reconstructed present is by definition always different” (Maurice Halbwachs). Remembering is thus part and parcel of our identity: it shapes us, writing a history that allows us to situate ourselves in the world and at the same time lets us redesign our future based on memory.

The subject served not only as a topic for our play, but also helped guide our creative process. We wanted to create characters who struggle to find their identity, their appearance and become visible to the world. The actors should become characters struggling to be seen, both as actors and characters. The text and its characters serve as the basis, that is, the formal historical narrative, for four people striving to situate themselves in their own lives, whether through want or need. Thus, the actors endure an unmediated encounter with the external, their own lives and with the presence of the audience; furthermore, they must submit to the notion that they only exist when they are being seen. The characters' condition as they narrate the story thus becomes real and palpable as an event on the stage. This demanded much more than simple a perfunctory performance from the actors – and accounts for the fact that the Croatian part of the project was completed without me. For the staging in Heidelberg we attempted to make this condition visible: the presence in history, the occurrence in one's own life and the search for an interlocutor, or a witness, who can help compose our identity and find our place in the world. The actors in the Heidelberg staging continually fight to be present with the other actors, the audience and the location, in their effort to leave something behind. **This dichotomy – between being locked in the moment and telling a story respectively an identity – epitomizes for me the very nature of ageing.**

3. *Irgendwann in der Nacht*, written by Etel Adnan



“Somewhere at night” follows a love story over the years as two characters meet following a long separation. Etel Adnan believes that love – whether heterosexual or between two men or women – is universal. As she writes in the text’s opening remarks, “It is possible to perform the piece in three different ways: either with two women of varying ages, or with two men of varying ages, or with a woman and a much younger man.” The young director Mathias Hannus rose to the challenge of staging the work, for which he chose a cast with shifting gender combinations – offering a story about the depths and dangers of love, as told from the perspectives of three different lovers.

The play, which is about the equality of love, especially love experienced by the elderly, ran for several months in the repertory of the State Theatre of Karlsruhe. A combined staged reading of the play and a screening of extracts of the stage production was performed during the ETC General Assembly at the Théâtre de Liège in March 2014.



About Etel Adnan: In addition to her work with poetry, Adnan also employs the medium of abstract painting: 87 of her paintings were exhibited at documenta 13. As she explained in an interview, she draws a strict line between her work in painting and writing; she forgets about painting when she writes, and vice versa. She uses painting as a vehicle for expressing her love for the world, her *joie de vivre*, as reflected in her paintings that are bursting with contrast and colour.

Writing, on the other hand, is for Adnan more social in the way that we use it to share words with each other. For her, words are a suitable medium for expressing political beliefs, disappointment and sadness. In her poetical essay for documenta 13 “The cost for love we are not willing to pay”, she writes, “Love can and does engage one’s whole being. It involves exploration, risk taking, revolution in one’s life. It can take you to top of the Himalayas, to a ridge of volcanoes, to caves or laboratories; it will reveal your self to yourself. Who can endure for a long time such an internal upheaval? The lovers themselves end up fearing their happiness and feel ready to destroy it.”

Born in Beirut, speaking Turkish and Greek as her native languages while growing up in an Arabic-speaking environment, Etel Adnan is a citizen of the world. She went to Paris in 1949 to study philosophy at the Sorbonne, then continued her studies at Berkeley and Harvard, where she later taught. She returned to Lebanon in 1972, but was forced to leave in 1976 because of the Civil War. After that, she returned to Paris, where she wrote her anti-war novel *Sitt Marie Rose*, based on the murder of her friend at the hands of the Kata’ib, the Lebanese political party responsible for the Bus

Massacre in the Christian district of Beirut. This incited the Civil War, which Adnan examines in her lyrical work "The Arab apocalypse." She lives in Paris with the artist Simone Fattal.

Mathias Hannus (1982), stage director, Germany



Mathias Hannus, born in 1982 in Munich, studied philosophy, musicology and German philology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. From 2010 to 2011 he was a guest assistant with the Bayerisches Staatsschauspiel in Munich where he worked, among others, with Dieter Dorn and Jan Philipp Gloger. Since the season of 2011/2012 he is an assistant director at the Staatstheater Karlsruhe. There, he organised the staged readings of "Mitteilung Nummer 10" by Samuel Gallet, "Beg your pardon" by Marianna Salzmann, "Und dann" by Wolfram Höll as well as "Personalien" by Gérard Watkins. In October of 2013 he directed the world premiere of "Irgendwann in der Nacht" by Etel Adnan.

Theatre review

On the verge (Theater der Zeit, January 2014)

by Otto Paul Burkhardt

"In this dark night we are at last reunited" This opening sentence sets the tone for the play: after an old love long ago extinguished, the former lovers reunite at the deathbed of an acquaintance. Murmuring the opening words, this first sentence offers us a poetic flash of emotion. The lyrical dialogue continues throughout Etel Adnan's play: "We are alone. Our bodies are ruled by the pitch-black night."

The actors have to take care to avoid an element of kitsch. Adnan's dialogue appears to show depths and float at the same time. This poetic tone may seem strange to contemporary ears more accustomed to the realism that currently dominates contemporary drama. The ensemble in Karlsruhe performed the premiere production of "Somewhere at night" without a whiff of pretension; instead, they perform the dialogue – or, more accurately, lyrical reflections of a past, intense existential phase of love – with a refreshing clarity and directness. The result: the contours of a drama emerge from what had seemed to be a retrospective encounter between two former lovers. (...)

As a play conceived to explode gender stereotypes, the director Mathias Hannus condensed this innovative experiment by setting the work as a single performance with the three gender combinations. Under Hannus's direction, the transitions between the different constellations overlap so that the end of the section featuring two women is repeated at the beginning by the male couple; the artistic device shows how differently actors can deliver the same lines of dialogue, and underlines at the same time how love is always and never the same.

The various life phases on view on the stage don't leave much room for equality and harmony: instead, the partners act on two large, parallel seesaws that render their debates about remembered emotions as an alternating up-and-down rollercoaster of motion. The actors (Eva Derleder, Antonia Mohr, Robert Besta and Ronald Funke) offer highly different interpretations of the six roles: while the older partners struggle to make amends with the lives they didn't live and keep a tight lid on their

emotions, the younger couple won't accept the earlier rejection and continues to fight it. Based on the gender constellation, each sentence is endowed with a different delivery. On the whole, the actors develop a clear, direct tone that grants the unspoken subtext its own space. Strangulation and hugs are symbolic movements but also outward expressions of spontaneous impulses, thus reflecting the staging's characteristic, disquieting oscillation from immediacy to distance and back again.

This piece – which is not about love, but about the different stages of life – explodes gender-based determination in a staging that is quiet, precise and polyphonous, thus making it the perfect prologue to the European theatre project "The Art of Ageing." This long-term undertaking of the European Theatre Convention (ETC) examines the ongoing demographic shift (...).

4. The conference “The Art of Ageing”

Following 5 months of research and interviews realized across Europe, the conference “Art of Ageing” showcases the first research results which will be presented by the four commissioned young European playwrights of the project: **Ivor Martinić**, from Croatia, **Nino Haratischwili** from Germany, **Silke Merzhäuser**, Werkgruppe 2, from Germany, and **Peca Stefan** from Romania.

PROGRAMME

Thursday March 13, 2014

09:30 – 17:00 Art of Ageing partner meeting
Théâtre de Liège

Saturday March 15, 2014

14:00 – 14:30 Presentation of the working session’s results
Université de Liège / Salle des Professeurs

14:30 – 15:15 Art of Ageing Prologue:
Reading *Irgendwann in der Nacht*, written by Etel Adnan and directed by Mathias Hannus, a production by Staatstheater Karlsruhe,
Université de Liège

15:15 – 17:15 Art of Ageing session

Presentation of the research work in the framework of the project “The Art of Ageing”
with Etel Adnan (playwright and patron of the project) and the playwrights of the project :
Ivor Martinić (Croatia)
Nino Haratischwili (Germany)
Silke Merzhäuser (Germany) and Gina Calinoiu
Peca Stefan (Romania)
Moderated by Joachim Klement, General Intendant, Staatstheater Braunschweig
Université de Liège

5. The Art of Ageing festival

ETC INTERNATIONAL THEATRE CONFERENCE AND ART OF AGEING 1ST EUROPEAN THEATRE AND SCIENCE FESTIVAL

Teatrul National Timisoara, Romania

16-19 April 2015

The ETC International conference and “The Art of Ageing European Theatre & Science Festival” will present the five new Art of Ageing theatre plays addressing the topic of ageing position them in a broader scientific context offering working sessions, panels, public talks and a symposium that provide the opportunity to pool artists, audiences, political and economic stake holders with researchers from the philosophical, sociological, economic and political field, to meet and exchange for the first time in a multidisciplinary context on the impact of ageing populations on our societies.

Thursday, April 16 2015

- 15:00 – 17:00** **ETC Board Meeting** (Theatre)
- 15:00 – 17:00** **Staged Reading** Temeswarer Liederkrantz in *The clock is ticking*.
A unique European, german-romanian theatre project
written by Peca Stefan, directed by Malte C. Lachmann
(Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania, Adam-Müller-Guttenbrunn-Haus)
- 17:00** **Press Conference** (Polytech – Senate Hall)
- 18:00** **Opening Reception The Art of Ageing - 1st European Theatre and Science Festival** (Sala 2)
Klaus Johannis, Romanian President (tbc)
Werner Hans Lauk, German Ambassador in Romania (tbc)
Nicolae Robu, Mayor Timisoara
Ada Hausvater, General Manager, National Theatre Timisoara
Dubravka Vrgoč, ETC President
- Art of Ageing performances**
- 19:00** *The clock is ticking* written by Peca Stefan, directed by Malte C. Lachmann
premiering with the participation of the Temeswarer Liederkrantz
Public after show party with the artists (Sala 2)
- 21:00** *Strawberry orphans* concept by werkgruppe2, directed by Julia Roesler
Post-performance talk with the artists (Sala Mare)
- 23:00** **Party in Festival Centre** (Mirror Hall)

21:00 *I'm afraid that we know each other now* written by Ivor Martinić, staged by Dominique Schnizer (Sala Mare), Croatian version
Post-performance talk with the artists

22:30 **Party in Festival Centre** (Mirror Hall)

Saturday, April 18 2015

10:00 – 12:30 **Parallel working sessions**

Professional workshop for European Theatre Pedagogues

(Polytech - Room 2)

Innovative theatre pedagogical forms, exchange of best practices and ideas

Workshop lead by Rob Drummer, Bush Theatre London

2 Working groups: Elaborating guidelines for international collaborations in repertory theatre

(Polytech - Room 3 & Senate Hall)

Aspects of artistic collaboration (topic, team, language etc.)

Aspects of producing international collaborations (agreements, schedule, communication,

etc.) chaired by Dubravka Vrgoč, Croatian National Theatre Zagreb and Serge Rangoni,

Theatre de Liège / with the participation of the Art of Ageing artistic and creative teams

12:30 – 14:00 **Networking Lunch** (at Hotel Timisoara)

upon the invitation by the National Theatre Timisoara

14:00 – 16:00 **Parallel project workshops** (Polytech - Rooms 2 & 3)

1) **Young Europe III**

chaired by Paulien Geerlings, De Toneelmakerij Amsterdam

2) **European Theatre Lab, project partner meeting**

chaired by Heidi Wiley, ETC General Secretary

3) **Individual Theatre Networking**

16:00 – 16:30 **Result of working sessions** (Polytech - Senate Hall)

Closing comments

Art of Ageing performance

17:00 *I'm afraid that we know each other now* written by Ivor Martinić, staged by Miriam Horwitz (Sala Mare), German version
Post-performance talk with the artists

19:00 – 21:00 **Debrief Board Meeting** (Theatre)

21:00 **Performance National Theatre Timisoara production – Maria de Buenos Aires**

by Astor Piazzolla (music) and Horacio Ferrer (lyrics), directed by Ada Lupu

(Sala 2)

22:30 **Party in Festival Centre** (Mirror Hall)

6. About the European Theatre Convention

The European Theatre Convention (ETC) is a network of European public theatres founded in 1988 to promote contemporary drama theatre, to support the mobility of artists and to develop artistic exchange throughout Europe and beyond. With high quality creative and innovative theatre projects the ETC seeks to reaffirm the role of theatre, its intrinsic subversive force to shape a European public space, offering access to culture for all generations. Connecting theatre makers and the citizens of Europe, the ETC employs theatre to support intercultural dialogue and with its activities, to develop intercultural competence in our increasingly diverse societies in a hyper-competitive world. To respond to these challenges the ETC represents the member European theatres and participates in the exchange of good practices and good ideas between European institutions, member states and civil society. The ETC has become the largest pan-European network of its kind, representing over 40 member theatres in 25 countries, 8,000.000 theatre goers, more than 11,000 taxpaying people employed by public theatres, thousands of artists in over 20 countries and 16,000 performances and public events per year.

7. Contacts

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Theatre is our tool, Europe our working space!