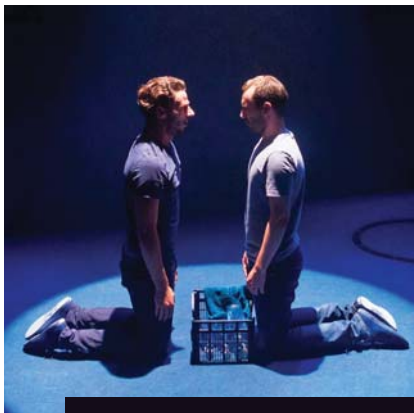




Croatian Theatre Showcase 2021

Zagreb, October 7 – 11, 2021

International Theatre Institute – Croatian Centre



**Croatian
Theatre
Showcase
2021**



PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, October 7, 2021 THE DAY OF ARRIVAL

Hotel Check-in

HOTEL GARDEN, Vodnikova St. 13

FRIDAY, October 8, 2021

12:00 Meeting in the Croatian ITI Centre

Basaričekova St. 24

20:00 NOTHING IS FINE

THEATRE &td, Savska St. 25

SATURDAY, October 9, 2021

12:00 UP&UP

ZAGREB YOUTH THEATRE, Teslina St. 7

20:00 THE HOTEL TITO

CULTURE CENTRE TRAVNO, Božidara Magovca St. 17

SUNDAY, October 10, 2021

18:00 WOULD BE A SHAME IF THE PLANTS DIED

KUNST THEATRE, Dubovačka St. 1

20:00 THE ONE ABOUT SISYPHUS

KUNST THEATRE, Dubovačka St. 1

MONDAY, October 11, 2021 THE DAY OF DEPARTURE

INTRODUCTION

Honoured guests, dear fellow theatre workers, even though our Centre has been hosting the Croatian Theatre Showcase since 2005, last year we were forced by the global pandemic to cancel our program for the first time. This year, too, we have had to reschedule it from April to October, in fear of stricter epidemiological measures. We were dealt another setback on March 22nd, 2020, when Zagreb was hit by a devastating earthquake, which prevented theatrical performances in many theatres that were damaged, some of which were forced to close altogether. I sincerely hope that these unfortunate times are now behind us, and I have made an effort to put together a program – even if it is reduced in scope, since there were objectively fewer theatrical performances and productions in the performing arts; our capital city, after all, has the liveliest theatre scene in the country. However, all of the plays included in this year's program are significant for Croatian theatre and, hopefully, informative for our guests, who come here to learn about our theatre, write about it and develop working relationships with their own theatre communities. Let us introduce our program, then...

You will have the opportunity to see the best play of the 2019/2020 season, *The Hotel Tito*, which won the 2020 Croatian Actor Award for Best Play and Best Achievement in Directing, is directed by Anica Tomić. It is a production of the Gavella Drama Theatre, which was closed due to damage suffered in the earthquake, so its performances take place at the Cultural Center Travno in Novi Zagreb. *The Hotel Tito* is an artistic project with Anica Tomić and Jelena Kovačić in the roles of director and dramaturge, based on motifs from Ivana Bodrožić's novel of the same name, written from the perspective of Ivana, a ten-year-old exile from Vukovar, who is waiting for her father to come back from the war and growing up in exile, in the former Political school in Kumrovec, the birthplace of Josip Broz Tito. The play is a sophisticated psychological drama full of symbolism and female strength, intertwining the past and the present. Theatre critic Nataša Govedić points out that "Anica Tomić and Jelena Kovačić's play insists that memory of our loss is not a memory of hate towards those who committed crimes against us, but a memory of our warm feelings of closeness to the ones we have lost, the ones we love, who remain with us even in the long centuries since the fall of Troy/Vukovar".

&TD Theatre has always been open to experimental theatre, young directors and playwrights who are only just making their way in the theatre world. *Nothing Is Fine* is a project by award-winning playwright and director Olja Lozica, well-known for tackling issues of social importance in her play. Her current focus is on the subject of depression, not as a medical diagnosis, but as a volatile form of mental dysfunction, manifesting itself through split personalities, reduced libido, sexual changes and alcohol abuse, taking on a form more akin to schizophrenia than depression.

I am also happy to announce that the two following plays will be staged at the recently founded KunstTeatar, an independent theatre (located in a former gym) with an auditorium for around fifty guests, which was founded by an actor, a producer and a director. They are open to new perspectives on theatre, and their goal is not to make plays strictly for theatre audiences; they seek to be innovative and sustainable. One might consider them an experimental, local theatre which focuses on their own generation, people in their early thirties. This is a definitely a breath of fresh air on the Zagreb theatre scene, which has so far created projects of guerrilla theatre, poking at our society and political scene with a satirical sting.

This theatre will host a production based on *Would be a Shame if the Plants Died*, a text by Ivor Martinić, one of the most propulsive young Croatian playwrights, taking on the role of director for the first time. It is an innovative approach to thematise the emotions which surface after the breakup of a long relationship, in the form of a razor-sharp and intimate text which reveals the absurdity and silliness of everyday situations.

Their second play is *The One About Sisyphus* by one of the founders of KunstTeatar, Ivan Planinić, which is based on a text by young and up-and-coming playwright Ivana Vuković, in which she paraphrases the touchstones of Ancient Greek mythology and poses a Camusesque question: who is Sisyphus – the cleverest of mortals or just an insolent fool refusing to die?

Finally, you will see what many have deemed the best dance performance of the past season, *Up&up* by Hungarian choreographer Ferenc Feher, produced by one of the oldest dance troupes in Croatia, the Zagreb Dance Ensemble. In it, six dancers of exceptional potency and coordination create a platform for a world of their own, in which they are subjects, while at times the ritual nature of their upward movement – as well as their androgynous appearance – testify to a refusal to conform to the male/female division in a patriarchal and primitive society.

I hope that this showcase will serve as a welcome transition into a future, hopefully normal everyday reality, when we will be able to offer more plays and overcome all the extra-theatrical circumstances that have been preventing us from enjoying theatre, talking about theatre and building bridges for theatre in Europe and across the world.

Željka Turčinović, The Showcase selector

Theatre_ **NOTHING IS FINE!**

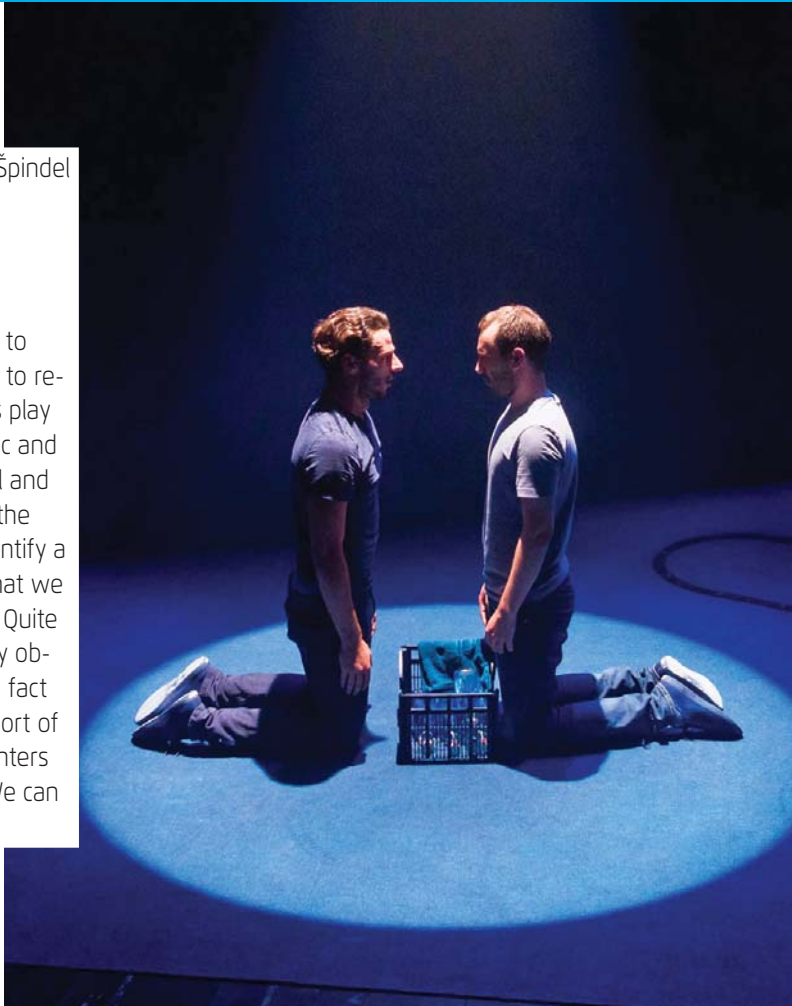
Director: Olja Lozica

Dramaturge: Olja Lozica and Luka Bosanac

Cast: Deni Sanković, Romano Nikolić, Andrea Špindel and Aaron Aleksej Ljevaković

Duration: 75 min

Olja Lozica and her collaborators use this play to thematise depression, specifically the inability to recognize its symptoms and causes. In fact, this play tackles depression by highlighting the dynamic and tightly-knit relationship between an individual and their surroundings, without ever mentioning the word depression. *Nothing is fine* does not identify a specific segment of society or everyday life that we could classify as a clear source of depression. Quite the contrary: the prism through which this play observes depression as a medical condition is in fact its non-specificity as something specific. This sort of poetics also suggests that depression itself enters lives as something impactful, but shrouded. We can feel it, but we cannot discern it.



Friday, October 8, 2021 20:00

Location: Theatre&td



Photo: Luka Dubroja

Dance_UP&UP

Created and performed by: Margareta Firingar, Andreja Jandri, Sintija Kučić, Gendis Putri Kartini, Petra Valentić, Jovana Zelenović

Choreographic idea: Ferenc Feher

Production: Zagreb Dance Company

Co-production: Zagreb Youth Theatre

Duration: 50 min

Up. A joint journey, a state of heightened emotions, a thrill. In a joint ritual, six dancers are somewhere up, discovering the joy of belonging to a community and the responsibility of the individual to the community and vice versa.

Ferenc Fehér is a dance artist and choreographer born in Hungary. As a self-taught dancer he has developed a unique and expressive style that mixes street dance, martial art elements and animal movements. His works are appreciated worldwide at dance and theatre festivals. He held workshops in different places and theatres in Europe (the Netherlands, UK, Spain, Poland, Romania, Italy, Bulgaria, Latvia) and in China, Russia, Iran, Egypt, the United States, South America and Canada.



Saturday, October 9, 2021 12:00

Location: Zagreb Youth Theatre



Theatre THE HOTEL TITO

Directed by: Anica Tomić

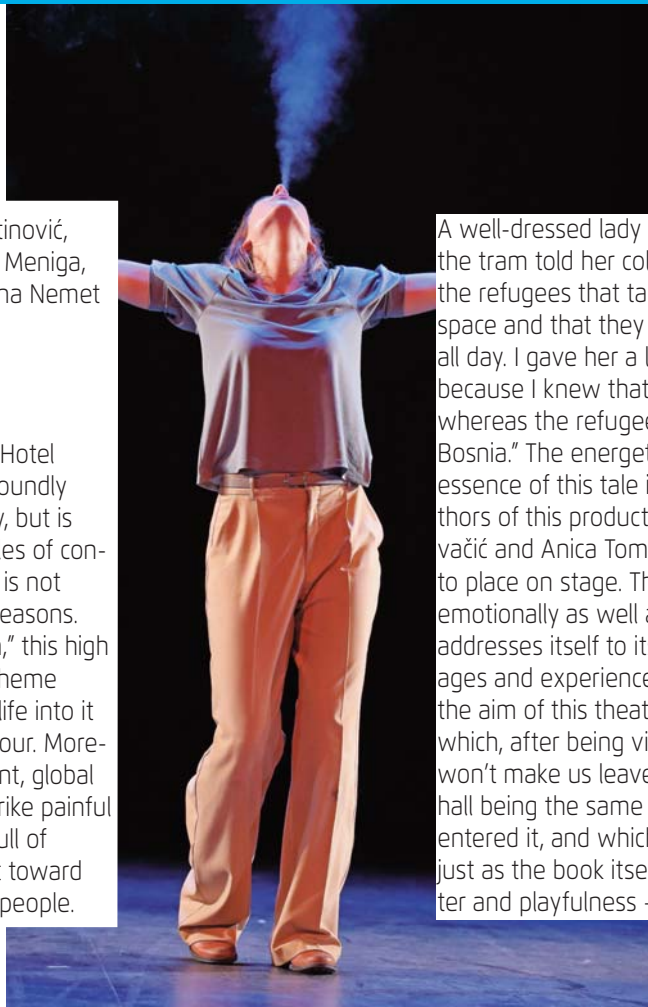
Adapted to the theatre by: Jelena Kovačić
and Anica Tomić

Dramaturgy by: Jelena Kovačić

Cast: Dijana Vidušin, Ksenija Pajić, Perica Martinović,
Bojana Gregorić Vejzović, Ivana Roščić / Lana Meniga,
Antonija Stanišić Šperanda, Ivana Bolanča, Tena Nemet
Brankov, Đorđe Kukuljica

Duration: 90 min

First published ten years ago, *The Hotel Tito* (Hotel Zagorje) by Ivana Bodrožić is a touching, profoundly moving and critical tale which flows smoothly, but is indelible – it is one of those indispensable titles of contemporary Croatian literature. “The Hotel Tito is not to be measured by one or even ten literary seasons. It is a novel that defines an entire generation,” this high praise is to be found in the book. Its central theme does not cease to be topical, and to breathe life into it on stage is a creative and enlivening endeavour. Moreover, talk of refugees has, at this very moment, global implications, thus sentences such as these strike painful notes: “On one occasion we received a bag-full of sweets at the local Caritas and we dragged it toward the west of town in a tram jam-packed with people.



A well-dressed lady in our corner of the tram told her colleague that it's the refugees that take up all the space and that they go about town all day. I gave her a look and smiled, because I knew that we were exiles, whereas the refugees came from Bosnia." The energetically polemical essence of this tale is what the authors of this production, Jelena Kovačić and Anica Tomić, are seeking to place on stage. *The Hotel Tito* emotionally as well as politically addresses itself to its readers, of all ages and experience, which is also the aim of this theatrical adaptation, which, after being viewed, we hope, won't make us leave the theatre hall being the same person as we entered it, and which will inspire, just as the book itself does, "laughter and playfulness – and love."

Saturday, October 9, 2021 20:00

Location: Culture Centre Travno



Theatre_ WOULD BE A SHAME IF THE PLANTS DIED

Author: Ivor Martinić

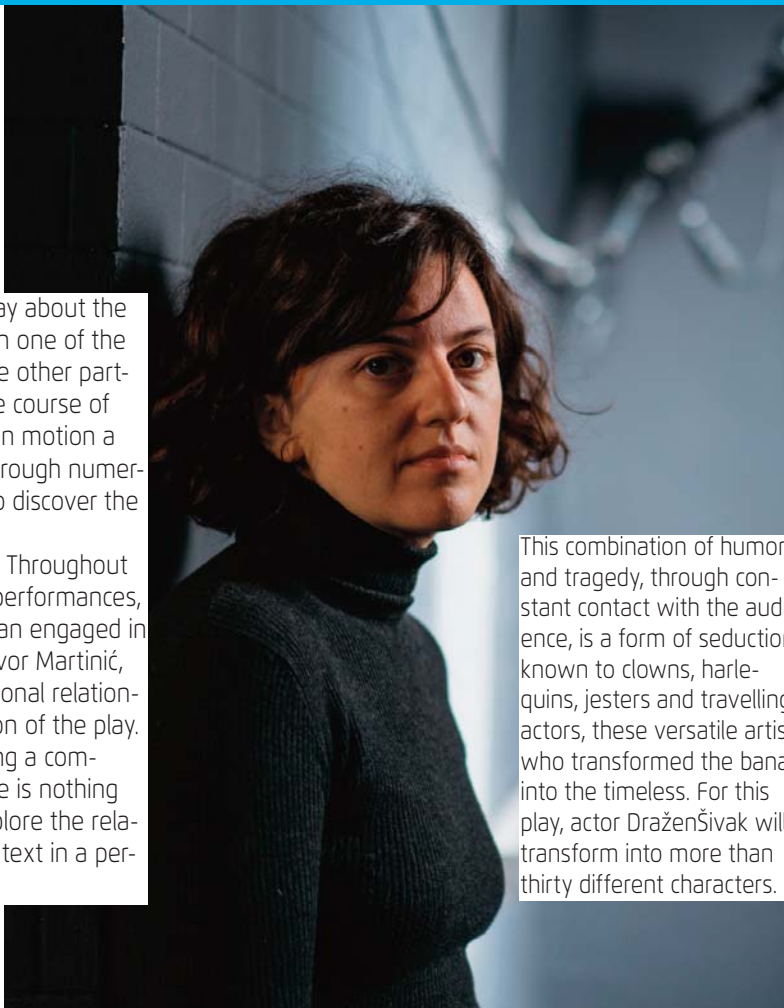
Cast: Maja Posavec and Pavle Vrkljan

Produced by: T25, TeatruM i KunstTeatar

Duration: 60 min

„*Would be a Shame if the Plants Died* “ is a play about the breakup of a long romantic relationship. When one of the partners cannot remember the event that the other partner considers to be the most important in the course of their relationship, a crisis is triggered, setting in motion a series of existential questions and doubts. Through numerous encounters, the now former couple try to discover the truth together, so that they may move on.

Work on staging the play began in May, 2019. Throughout the first season, over the course of a dozen performances, the performers Maja Posavec and Pavle Vrkljan engaged in open communication with the play's author Ivor Martinić, in order to explore interpersonal and professional relationship in search of an appropriate representation of the play. Since October, 2020, we have been performing a completely new version of the play, in which there is nothing on the stage except for the actors, as we explore the relationship between the actor and the dramatic text in a performance.



This combination of humor and tragedy, through constant contact with the audience, is a form of seduction known to clowns, harlequins, jesters and travelling actors, these versatile artists who transformed the banal into the timeless. For this play, actor Dražen Šivak will transform into more than thirty different characters.

Sunday, October 10, 2021 18:00

Location: KUNST THEATRE



Photo: Karla Juric

Theatre THE ONE ABOUT SISYPHUS

Director and author: Ivan Planinić

Dramaturge and author: Ivana Vuković

Performed by: Karlo Mrkša

Voices: Jadranka Đokić, Domagoj Janković,
Iva Kraljević, Nikša Marinović, Bernard Tomić,
Paško Vukasović

Production: Umjetnička organizacija Punctum
and KunstTeatar

Duration: 65 min

Alberta Camus's "The Myth of Sisyphus" concludes with the thesis that Sisyphus rejects the gods and that his world is one without masters. When that same Sisyphus retells us the Ancient Greek myth about himself, a comic reversal takes place, creating a joke in which humans are no longer playthings in the hands of the gods, and the gods themselves are turned into toys in the hands of man.

"The One About Sisyphus" – a fake myth of gods and men – is a casual peek into the cracks of the touchstones of Ancient Greek mythology, posing the Camus-esque question: is Sisyphus the cleverest of mortals or just an insolent fool



Sunday, October 10, 2021 20:00

Location: KUNST THEATRE



Photo: Karla Jurić

refusing to die? Is being forced to eternally push his stone uphill a just punishment or just a wanton act of cruelty from an egotistical god? Are Camus's metaphors about Sisyphus as a worker or a Don Juan character still exclusive, or does reframing Sisyphus as the protagonist of a joke enable us to perceive him as a macho-capitalist or kitsch lover-man?

The one-sided nature of Ancient myth, which predominantly defends its male gods, diminishes its goddesses and frames the mortals as inconsequential heroes, as well as the multi-layered nature of Camus's writing, reveal to us that there may be some meaning to the toils of Sisyphus, and that, in addition to imagining Sisyphus happy, one can also imagine him sad.

Croatian Theatre Showcase 2021

Zagreb, October 7 – 11, 2021

Program is supported by:



Croatian Centre of ITI

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Publisher: **CROATIAN CENTRE OF ITI** // For the Publisher: **Željka Turčinović**
Editor: **Nina Križan** // Design & Layout: **Bernard Bunić**, Axis-Design d.o.o.
Cover photo: **Karla Jurić**