



# Europe on Stage

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Young Creation

New Audiences

Season's Highlights



*Stolpersteine*, guest performance by Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe (Germany) in Kyiv National Academic Molodyy Theatre (Ukraine), Theatreis Dialogue 2018.  
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## Theatre in Europe – Theatre for Europe?

“I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another what it is to be a human being.” This quote from Samuel Beckett reflects the role theatre can play, not only for the individual but also for society as a whole. Sharing our past, our stories and our experiences is crucial if we are to build a cohesive, resilient Europe for the future. And culture, in all its forms, has a vital role in making it possible.

That is why culture is at the heart of European integration. Cultural experiences not only bring us together, they also help create an emotional connection between us that is essential to keeping the European project alive.

I am proud that the EU supports culture and creators, including those in the theatre, through the Creative Europe programme. Like all the other parts of the cultural and creative sectors, theatre faces its own unique challenges. Strongly defined by language and tradition, it is not easily accessible across borders.

Creative Europe has supported the theatre sector with over €40 million in funding since the start of the programme in 2014, mainly by promoting cooperation projects. Yet, theatre-makers still struggle to stage their works in countries that do not share the same language, which makes it difficult for European citizens to enjoy plays from other countries.

That is why the European Commission is currently assessing how we can support theatre more effectively. We have just launched a mapping effort to better identify the sector’s needs. We are also looking into developing a fund to support the transnational circulation of performing arts works. The European Theatre Convention is an important partner in this endeavour, and I thank the network for its ideas and projects geared towards developing our strategy further.

This is especially important at a time when divisive politics are tearing at the fabric of our societies, creating new gaps between and within countries, and even between and within communities. Theatre, like other forms of cultural expression, has a unique power to help us learn about and accept our differences – as well as to see what we have in common. It is precious, and I believe that, together, we can ensure that it fulfils this role.



**Tibor Navracsics**  
*European Commissioner for Education,  
Culture, Youth and Sport*

## Whose Stories Are We Telling?

What responsibility does a public theatre have, as an artistic institution financed by taxpayers' money, to represent an artistic view of society and humanity? Be it poetic, inspirational, disturbing or awakening – it must be relevant! Who are the protagonists of the performance, who tells the story, who plays on stage and who comes and watches? Theatre is not just one of the oldest art forms in Europe, but also the most interactive with its audiences.

In a nutshell: Whose stories are we telling? This is the main theme of the next ETC International Theatre Conference in November, hosted by the youth theatre company De Toneelmakerij in Amsterdam.

History, Presence, Utopia: Those three words will conclude our season at the June ETC International Theatre Conference at Schauspielhaus Graz (Austria), framed by two festivals: The Young Europe Festival, presenting new performative research productions for young Europeans with a focus on Identity; and the DramatikerInnen Festival, presenting latest trends of new dramaturgies. Which forms are the most appropriate for interacting in societal and geopolitical debates with our audiences? How do we tell stories?

ETC's 2019/2020 season features diversity in theatre, making sure the art remains relevant for audiences. It features dramaturgies, making sure the art stays relevant for a wide range of artistic forms of expression. And it features artists' programmes to ensure the new generation of talent has access to create and produce relevant theatre.

The manifold European theatre landscape has a great diversity to offer. Discover what makes each country's theatre scene so special: from Portuguese dramaturgies and its 21st century revival of text based theatre; to the first impacts of the successful foundation of the "Bürgerbühne" in Austria empowering citizens on stage; onto the triumphing TalentLAB in Luxembourg enabling young artists to connect with local communities and the international co-production chain.

ETC and its Member Theatres stand for the desire to create modern, contemporary, world-class drama, to share practices that make our work more sustainable, and to bring it to the broadest audience possible. We also stand for a strong united theatre sector, needed for a strong European culture. Our work is carried out with partners at national and European institutions. We are proud and grateful to have gained the trust and recognition of the European Commission, to which our work and theatre as art form in Europe is vital, and, most important, to be supported and strengthened in partnership.



Heidi Wiley and Serge Rangoni  
*ETC Executive Director and ETC President*

Photo Heidi Wiley © private, photo Serge Rangoni © Plissart



*Tranzyt*, guest performance by Schenk&Cant in AirGogolfest, Vinnytsia (Ukraine), Theatre is Dialogue 2018. © Anastasia Mantach

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# Fake News: There is no Portuguese Dramaturgy

by Rui Pina Coelho

One of the most common refrains about Portuguese dramaturgy is that it does not exist. That we do not have the necessary “tête dramatique”, as Almeida Garrett claimed in 1822 (cf. Rebello 2000: 13). A relatively robust narrative was constructed to justify the alleged absence of dramatic authors in Portugal: it was argued that the “dramatic verve” had been absorbed by lyrical impulse; that playwrights were not able to develop their work; that the structures of theatrical production suffered from an endemic inattention to Portuguese dramaturgy...; or that this alleged absence would even be a way of attesting to our unique mode of being. Eduardo Lourenço, in his *Labirinto da Saudade*, writes that in Portugal, “everything happens as if we had no interlocutor. (And this famous *forma mentis* is reflected in our literary creation, full of monologues, which explains, at the same time, our old lack of background in theatrical and Romanesque matters)” (Lourenço 2000: 24). And so, Portuguese dramatic literature was cyclically declared absent.

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declared absent.*

Since the mid-1990s, many initiatives have been trying – or struggling – to prove the vitality of dramatic creation in Portugal. The DRAMAT Centre for New Dramaturgies, a project of the National Theatre São João (TNSJ), was created in 1999. It was first led by Fernando Mora Ramos and later by Maria João Vicente. For years Antonio Mercado gave a playwrighting workshop at DRAMAT, which, even today, is still considered to have been the most fruitful. The works of this centre (workshops, staged readings, seminars, books and publications...) resulted in the “emergent dramaturgies” of many young authors and one of the richest assets for learning about and discussing dramatic writing in Portugal.

The Projecto Urgências (literally “Urgencies Project”, 2004-2007) was another very important moment of acute revitalisation. Directed by Tiago Rodrigues, and co-produced with Mundo Perfeito, Produções Fictícias and Teatro Maria Matos in its three editions, the project presented more than two dozen short theatrical pieces by contemporary Portuguese authors. Some quietly pursued other interests, but the majority rose to be part of a new and vibrant generation of playwrights.

In November 2010, Collective 84, under the direction of Mickael de Oliveira, organised the Meeting of New Contemporary Dramaturgies (Encontro Novas Dramaturgias Contemporâneas) at the São Luiz Municipal Theatre (SLTM) in Lisbon. They staged the reading of several plays, as well as a series of translation workshops, debates, conversations and seminars, in a programme focused on “stage writing”. The heart of the event was a lecture by Bruno Tackels and work sessions with the playwrights Carlos J. Pessoa, Carlos Costa and José Maria Vieira Mendes, all credited “écrivains de plateau”. With the designation of Festival END, this initiative had a follow-up, led by the Gil Vicente Academic Theatre (TAGV) in Coimbra. In the



Top: Projecto Urgências (Urgencies Project) directed by Tiago Rodrigues, 2007. © Magda Bizarro  
Right: Library of Teatro Nacional D. Maria II, Lisbon (Portugal).  
© Filipe Ferreira



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**Portuguese dramaturgy has resumed the political urgency of storytelling.**

last nine years, this playwrighting festival, which combines academic research and artistic creation, has been one of the most exciting laboratories for contemporary playwriting in Portugal. More recently, in the past four years (2015-2019), National Theatre D. Maria II has been promoting its Laboratory for Stage Writing, which has helped develop the work of 23 new authors to date.

All this – among several other initiatives – has helped to shape a theatrical landscape where text is of a crucial importance. If we had to locate a pivotal moment in the reshaping of Portuguese dramaturgy, we could go back to 1994, to the moment when Jorge Silva Melo premiered one of the most relevant recent plays to emerge in Portuguese drama: *António, um rapaz de Lisboa* [*António, a Boy from Lisbon*]. He offered a dramaturgy inflated with polyphony, electricity and a monumental dimension that helped boost new playwrights.

The 21st century has witnessed a vast field of stage writers that work exclusively with a particular theatre company or actors and actresses that become authors of their own material. Arguably, Portuguese contemporary theatre is nowadays pretty much grounded in new dramaturgy and the power of text. Not necessarily rooted in drama, but in a theatre that envisages text, without prejudice of other dramatic elements, as a structural means of expression. It is a new dramaturgy built on proximity to the stage and anchored in collaborative processes, devising strategies and autobiographic approaches.

And, most strikingly, it is interested in memory. As physical borders and frontiers either become increasingly absent or, as we have seen more recently, increasingly present (for example, by building border walls that prevent people from moving from one place to another), Portuguese dramaturgy has resumed the political urgency of storytelling. As if the idea of past, identity and geographical mobility could only be perceived through the lineage of stories that link us together. Thus, dealing with European literary patrimony (as Tiago Rodrigues pursues in many of his texts/performances) or discussing recent Portuguese history (as Joana Craveiro has been doing in her most recent works) is a way of paying homage to the great achievements of humanity (literature and revolutions) and, simultaneously, to discover a new world where life can be, again, reinvented.

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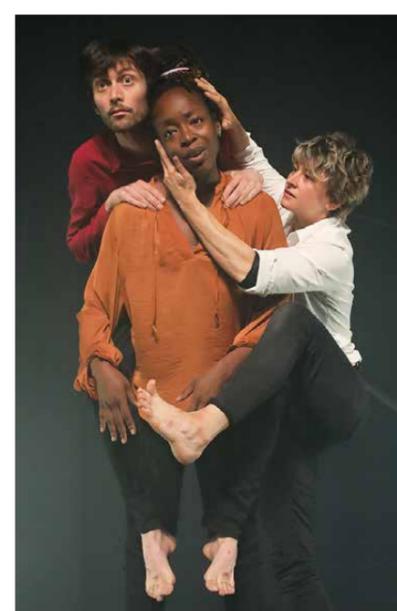
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**Rui Pina Coelho** (Évora, 1975) is an assistant professor at the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon and a researcher at the Centre for Theatre Studies in Lisbon. He has a PhD in Theatre Studies with a study on the representation of violence in post-World War II British realist drama. As an author, playwright and translator, he has worked

with several Portuguese theatre companies. Since 2010, he has been collaborating with Teatro Experimental do Porto (TEP) as a playwright and dramaturg. He is also the director of *Sinais de cena-Performing Arts and Theatre Studies Journal*. He is the author of, among other titles, *A hora do crime: A violência na dramaturgia britânica do pós-Segunda Guerra Mundial (1951-1967)* (Peter Lang, 2016), *Casa da Comédia (1946-1975): Um palco para uma ideia de teatro* (IN-CM, 2009). He recently coordinated the volume *Contemporary Portuguese Theatre: Experimentalism, Politics and Utopia* [Working Title](TNDMII/Bicho do Mato, 2017).

Photo Rui Pina Coelho © Bohumil Kostohryz



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**“Find Ways to Give Something Back to the Local Community”: Promoting Young Creation in Luxembourg**

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by Tom Leick-Burns

**W**hen I was first appointed artistic director of the *Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg* in 2015, it was obvious to me that we, as a public institution, had a huge responsibility to support the local artistic community and contribute to its development. As a former actor, I was very aware that one of the most urgent needs expressed by many artists was the one for time and space: the possibility of experimenting and working in a safe space and the opportunity to experiment outside the result-oriented production logic.

*Left: Scratch performance of Parasite by Frieda Gerson, a multi-disciplinary project combining circus, physical theatre, scientific research and text, TalentLAB 2019.*

*Right: Scratch performance of Là où en sont nos vies by Godefroy Godet, acknowledging the excesses and drifts of our era, TalentLAB 2019.*





Scratch performance of *Le Furieux* by Claire Pasquier, participatory project based on current events research, TalentLAB 2019. © Boshua

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***I wanted to explore the idea of a more collaborative co-production model.***

It was with that in mind that the idea of the TalentLAB originated. Conscious of the fact that I was about to take over the helm of a major European co-producing venue with a large international network and an eclectic programme spanning opera, dance and theatre, I felt that it was important to find ways to give something back to the local community and add value to what we are doing for our artists, our audience and our organisation. It was clear to me that I wanted to explore the idea of a more collaborative co-production model. The driving force behind our artistic project and the launch of the TalentLAB was to create a win-win situation where we would continue to support international creation through co-commissioning and co-production whilst at the same time seeking ways for the artists we support to contribute to the development of our own artistic community. Since I was convinced that any research laboratory would benefit immensely from a mentoring element, it was not difficult to imagine that these mentors could come from the pool of established directors, choreographers and artists that we had or were going to support in our co-commissioning and co-producing role.

Within the space of only four years, the TalentLAB has developed into an international laboratory that, over a 10-day period, brings people together to research, experiment and work on their projects, to share their working methods, learn from each other and discover exciting performances. The encounters that take place, the diversity of the participants and the richness of the exchanges is something I am very proud of and that I get excited about every year. This hybrid form between a project laboratory and a multidisciplinary festival has since enabled 24 artists from nine countries to develop scratch performances under the benevolent eye of 19 mentors from four countries. What was originally designed to provide time and space to artists from the region has since grown into an important international platform where local artists meet and exchange with others from all over the world. The pluridisciplinary aspect of the TalentLAB enhances the potential for cross-pollination between theatre, dance and opera practitioners, and represents further opportunities for learning and growth.

It is our responsibility, as publicly funded organisations, to support artists and give them the chance to take risks, to fail, to learn and to work in a safe space that is not dictated by production logic or the pressure of producing a result. Part lifelong learning, part research and development, but first and foremost a unique way of working in a dynamic and international environment for 10 days, the TalentLAB is now not only at the heart of our artistic project here at the Théâtres de la Ville but it has also become a major tool in our collaborative co-production model.

As a major institution in a small country, it is very important for us to provide international opportunities for our artists and support the ongoing professional development of our artistic community. Facilitating internships or assistant positions with international directors for our emerging artists, encouraging choreographers and directors to hold auditions in Luxembourg and include dancers or actors from here in their productions are now things that we directly link to the level of our financial co-production contribution.

Other initiatives that we have launched to support the creative process are residencies such as Capucins Libre. Here we give young companies the opportunity to perform their final weeks of rehearsals and the première of their project at the Théâtre des Capucins with our full technical, administrative and communication support whilst ensuring that they have the full artistic responsibility and ownership of the production. Our international collaboration with the company La Barraca and the Chapelle Sainte-Marie in Annonay has enabled us to provide one choreographer a year the opportunity of a six-week residency in Annonay, including a two-week technical period in a theatre to bring their project to creation.

Acutely aware of the importance of time and space, of financial support and professional guidance, we continuously invest in the development of our artists by putting our international network of partners and artists at the disposal of the young generation of creators. In doing so, we aim to further not only the overall artistic development of our institution as a producing house but also the evolution and dynamic of the cultural sector in Luxembourg.



Born in Luxembourg, **Tom Leick-Burns** originally completed his training as an actor in London where he lived for 10 years. Upon his return to Luxembourg, he continued working as an actor in theatre and film, and in 2004 he took his first steps as production assistant at the Grand Théâtre. In 2008 he started working full-time for the organisation as production administrator for the opera department. To further develop his skills, he embarked on a Master of Business Administration at Sacred Heart University, graduating in 2012. In July 2015, he succeeded Frank Feitler as Artistic Director and General Manager of the Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg. In less than four years, he has made his mark and found a balance between continuity on one hand and a new artistic project for the Théâtres de la Ville on the other. Tom Leick-Burns has been a speaker and mentor at the ETC European Theatre Academy for the last few years.

Photo Tom Leick-Burns © Bohumil Kostohryz

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***It is our responsibility, as publicly funded organisations, to support artists and give them the chance to take risks, to fail, to learn and to work in a safe space.***

# Generating New Audiences: More Than a Task

by Karla Mäder



*Schöne neue Welt: Träumen Androiden von elektrischen Schafen?*, participatory project about working in tomorrow's world, Bürger\*innenbühne Schauspiel Graz, 2019. © Lupi Spuma

**T**he theatre of the future needs confident, open(-hearted) and educated audiences who not only watch what we do but also join in, learn and grow with us. None of this will happen without an effort. Generating new audiences, especially those that represent more than just mainstream society, is not a simple task: it is a challenge. On the one hand, we need to open up new channels of information to make the theatre building, which is often located in the centre of a city, more accessible to people who have up to now not seen themselves as the natural clientele of this temple of the muses. This requires the discovery of new content and aesthetics that do not necessarily rely on the literary canon or conventional modes of performance, which continue to dominate the German-language theatre system and are focused on the craft of directing.

The Bürger\*innenbühne ("citizens' stage"), which we founded at the beginning of the 2018/19 season, is therefore an attempt to involve people from many different walks of life. These people often have very little theatre experience, but they feel they have something to share onstage. We created our Bürger\*innenbühne with a great deal of vigour and energy, and produced three productions this season – one at each of our venues, which range in size from small to very big. Under the heading of *Schöne neue Welt* ("Brave New World"), they all dealt with various aspects of the future – the overarching theme of our season. During the development phase, our three theatre educators received continued support from Miriam Tscholl, the experienced head of the Bürgerbühne ("citizens' stage") at Staatsschauspiel Dresden. She helped us a great deal with her experience and practical knowledge and supported us with advice during our initial phase.

The three productions were a great success. A total of nearly 60 people performed onstage as members of the Bürger\*innenbühne this season. They dedicated a large part of their free time to the project and have become a part of our theatre family. After initial scepticism, the employees of our theatre, too, recognised what an asset these "experts of everyday life" are for us. Everyone helps everyone else, and everyone is putting their best foot forward to give the participants professional support and calm those who might be overwhelmed by their nerves. In our work with average citizens, we are guided by the principles of equality and equal treatment as well as a guideline that was introduced in Dresden: "To treat these productions like any other production". Ultimately, we provide even more support than usual.

However, we have also learned that conventional marketing devices are not enough when it comes to getting people from the margins of society – people who do not have a basic education in or an openness towards the theatre – to try out for the Bürger\*innenbühne. It obviously requires projects of a different nature, and with different content. And so, in the coming season, we will create one Bürger\*innenbühne with the fans of two football clubs from Graz, who have been rivals for more than 100 years, and one project about cooking and culinary topics, which will be expressly aimed at people from other cultures. The first Bürger\*innenbühne will be directed by Ed Hauswirth, a widely known and respected old hand of the independent theatre scene in Graz, and the second one by the Afro-German director Simone Dede Ayivi.

The Bürger\*innenbühne-productions, however, are only two of 19 productions this coming season. Today, our season programme navigates a tense field that must bridge more and more polar opposites: here is our traditional audience that is used to well-made drama productions, there is our self-determined task of making our audience more diverse and varied in the long term; here is a legitimate wish for entertainment and amusement, there is our own longing for an intense analysis of complex current

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phenomena and seemingly insoluble challenges of the future; here is the wish for plays that are part of the country's literary canon, there is our conviction that consistent support of contemporary drama is essential for creating new impulses for the theatre.

Four seasons ago, during our first season in Graz, we focused on working with contemporary authors from all generations, and by no means only those who write in German. The third of this year's Bürger\*innenbühne productions – with 40 participants, making it the largest of all – was accompanied by an author who works with the improvised material. And in the coming season, 12 out of 19 new productions will be based on the works of living authors, with three devised plays. Only four productions are "classics" and two of them are by 20th-century authors: Thomas Bernhard and Friedrich Dürrenmatt.

At the end of each season, there is a five-day festival dedicated entirely to the exchange and networking between dramatists and other theatre-makers, and that is unique in the German-language region: the Graz International Dramatists' Festival. Each June, Schauspielhaus Graz organises this event together with uniT, a key player in the field of promoting and educating authors in Graz, and Deutscher Literaturfonds from Darmstadt, a large-scale foundation that awards fellowships and promotes excellence in writing. Every year, countless texts are heard, seen and experienced in a wide range of formats, and up to 50 dramatists, mainly from Europe, get together in Graz to exchange their ideas and inspire each other, without any pressure to compete.

The festival's next edition will take place from 10 to 14 June 2020 – at the same time as the ETC International Theatre Conference at Schauspielhaus Graz, which will reflect on "History, Identity, Utopia" during three days of the festival. Also during the festival, the nine participating theatres of the Young Europe Project will present the results of their work. We are looking forward to welcoming colleagues from all over the world to Graz in June 2020!



**Karla Mäder** was born in 1972 on the island of Rügen and grew up on the Baltic Sea and in East Berlin. Immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall, she was one of five East German students to spend an exchange year at a high school in Oregon on a scholarship from the U.S. government. In 1992, she began studying comparative literature at the Free University of Berlin

and theatre studies/cultural communication at the Humboldt University of Berlin. From 1997 to 2000, she held her first permanent position in the theatre as the press and public relations director at Theater Kiel. Subsequently, she switched to dramaturgy and acted as a dramaturg in the Hanseatic city of Lübeck for seven years until 2007, where she occasionally also supervised operas. In 2007, she took up the same position in Switzerland at Konzert Theater Bern, where she worked with Iris Laufenberg starting in 2012. Since the 2015/16 season, Mäder has been the leading dramaturg at Schauspielhaus Graz.

Photo Karla Mäder © Lupi Spuma



## **RADAR OST: Deutsches Theater Berlin Looks Eastward**

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 by Birgit Lengers

### **Radar Ost – Deutsches Theater on the Lookout**

A radar is an instrument used to locate moving objects in a specific area. Having something on one's radar means that one can observe, track and study it. At first, the word might evoke a certain distance, or even hunting or war tactics, rather than encounters and cultural exchange. By naming its festival for Eastern European theatre "Radar Ost", Deutsches Theater is, of course, playing with both meanings, as the metaphor perfectly describes its search directed to the east.

Top: My Rather Odd Friend Walter, guest performance by Junges DT Berlin in Kyiv National Academic Molodyy Theatre (Ukraine), 2018. © Oleksii Tovpyha  
 Rest: Guest performances from eastern European theatres invited during Radar Ost at Deutsches Theater Berlin © Tomas Ivanuskas, Nia Gvatua, Bobo Mkhitar.



### Radar Ost – Building on Tradition to Expand the Theatre's Profile

Radar Ost not only marks the start and international expansion of the Deutsches Theater's Autoretheaterfest festival, which the theatre has dedicated to new German plays and authors for years. It also firmly anchors the profile of Deutsches Theater on the dynamic Berlin theatre scene. However, its interest in Eastern Europe is not arbitrary. It draws on the theatre's history, its location in former East Berlin and its tradition, best illustrated in October 1989, with a peaceful demonstration for democratisation and against the East German government – with consequences that are well-known today. Thirty years later, the euphoria as well as the pain associated with the changing system are still visible both in Berlin and in Eastern Europe.

### Confronting and Understanding the Past Through Theatre

Deutsches Theater's commitment to questioning the present in light of history has led it to develop strong artistic relationships with directors from neighbouring countries. Artists such as Ivan Panteleev (Bulgaria), Dušan David Pařízek (Czech Republic), András Dömötör (Hungary) or Wojtek Klemm (Poland) have staged several productions at Deutsches Theater in the past few years. These collaborations rest on the conviction that theatre as an art form can testify to the past and current situation in Eastern European countries. It is a relevant way of confronting the historical upheavals and contemporary socio-political distortions in the post-communist neighbouring countries.

During the first edition of Radar Ost, in 2018, the young director and manager of the Royal District Theatre Tbilisi (Georgia), Data Tavadze, presented two plays. The visually powerful production *Prometheus. 25 Years of Independence* commemorated the anniversary of the independence of Georgia, questioning the possibility of heroism through the recent bloody history. *Women of Troy* addresses the violent experiences of Caucasian women in post-Soviet times in a vivid way that is personal and highly political at once.

Theatre also questions feelings, their meaning, their value and their effect on social interactions and is thus a great means for tackling societal issues. Take the performance *Trans Trans Trance* by Kamilė Gudmonaitė (Vilnius/Lithuania), who was a guest at Deutsches Theater in 2018. It revealed powerful, comic and clever images on the theme of sexual identity.

### International Connections Lead to International Collaborations

Following this first edition of Radar Ost, Deutsches Theater intensified its artistic exchanges with two partners in particular: the DAKH Theatre in Kyiv (Ukraine) and the Gogol Centre in Moscow/Russia, showing that new artistic voices can emerge from intercultural encounters.

The rock pop show *TseSho? (What's That?)* produced by the DAKH Theatre and shown in Berlin during Radar Ost 2019 was described in the FAZ newspaper as a performance which "captivates the audience with a great verve and unusual musicality and shows that a new generation of all-round performers has arrived in Europe." In return, the young section of Deutsches Theater, Junges DT, visited Ukraine and performed its play *My Rather Odd Friend Walter*, by Sybille Berg, in Kyiv in 2018 and also at the Gogolfest 2019 in Mariupol with the support of the European Theatre Convention. The story between the Deutsches Theater and Ukraine will continue into the next season, as Deutsches Theater hopes to open the next edition of Radar Ost (June 2020) with a co-production with the DAKH Theatre.

The intensive artistic exchange between Deutsches Theater and the Gogol Center in Moscow also shows that strong relationships and collaborations can emerge from first encounters with new artistic voices. In addition to its director Kirill Serebrennikov, Timofei Kuljabin (Russia), Ewelina Marciniak (Poland) and Data Tavadze (Georgia) will also be staging new works at Deutsches Theater in the coming seasons.

### Dissolving Borders by Adopting the Other's Perspective

For its 2019/20 season, Deutsches Theater has chosen the motto "Außer sich" (literally "outside oneself"). It follows the artistic team's conviction that being oneself is only possible by exploring and experiencing an outside part of oneself, through encounters with the Other, with new perspectives, places and living realities. Thus, questioning and looking beyond what is already known, to find a way out of one's echo chamber.

There are many good reasons to enrich the Autoretheaterfest festival by looking beyond our own national and cultural borders. Even the category of "German-speaking theatre" is being blurred in our globalised and post-migrant world. The curiosity about this dissolution of boundaries as well as about artistic perspectives in the neighbouring countries to the east is shared by the Berlin audience. How can we get a glimpse into another world, one that is inextricably linked to ours? The intensive discussions with the guest ensembles also made it clear how existentially important artistic dialogue and exchange is for both sides. Deutsches Theater is looking forward to continuing this dialogue.



**Birgit Lengers** studied theatre, film and cultural studies in Cologne and Hildesheim (Germany). From 1997 to 2002, she worked as a research assistant at the University of Hildesheim. After six years of collaborating with director Thorsten Lensing (THEATER T1), she became a dramaturg at German Theater Abroad (GTA) where she conceived and realised

transatlantic festivals and theatre projects such as Stadttheater New York (New York) and Road Theater USA. Lengers is a guest lecturer at the University of Hildesheim and the Berlin University of the Arts. She was moderator of the Theatertreffen in Berlin as well as a juror for the first and second Bürgerbühnenfestival, the "Brüder-Grimm-Preis" (awarded by the state of Berlin) and the Heidelberger Stückemarkt. Her publications include *Text + Kritik*, transcript Verlag, *Theater der Zeit*, *Die Deutsche Bühne* and *Korrespondenzen*. Since the 2009/10 season, Birgit Lengers has been director of Junges DT. She has also been the head of DT International and curator of the RADAR OST festival since 2018.

Photo Birgit Lengers © Arno Declair

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**Strong relationships and collaborations can emerge from first encounters with new artistic voices.**

—  
**How can we get a glimpse into another world, one that is inextricably linked to ours?**

# Bringing Stages to Audiences

## On the process of opening satellite stages in Tbilisi and Oslo

Interview with Ekaterina Mazmishvili (General Manager of Kote Marjanishvili State Drama Theatre) and Tine Lunde (Project Manager of International Activities at Det Norske Teatret)

**E**TC Member Theatres Kote Marjanishvili State Drama Theatre (Tbilisi/Georgia) and Det Norske Teatret (Oslo/Norway) have been established in their nations' capital cities for many decades. Now, both institutions are expanding their horizons by developing new stages on the outskirts of their cities. With the desire to diversify their artistic output and develop new audiences, both theatres are creating spaces with and for the local communities.

In January 2019, Det Norske Teatret moved to Rommen Scene and joined forces with a community centre in a suburban area of Oslo called Groruddalen. Situated in a school, the 200-seat theatre was already an established part of the local community, hosting a variety of local amateur groups, schools, choirs, marching bands, film clubs and voluntary groups. For Tbilisi, a brand-new Theatre City will be built and plans to open in 2020. It will have several stages, residency places, a conference hall, a new technology lab and a theatre kitchen. We asked them about these new projects...

### What inspired you to open a new stage?

**Ekaterina Mazmishvili:** We had three stages in Marjanishvili Theatre. The third one, the Basement, was opened in 2013 in an old, abandoned basement of the big complex, just in front of the Theatre. Over the years, it became clear that we needed to move and find a new, bigger space. So, we left the Basement and began a new adventure. This adventure became more adventurous than we anticipated and instead of looking for a new venue in the centre of the city, we went one step further. We thought that it would be more interesting if we defy convention. After several months of searching, we found a new area where not only a new venue could be built, but the new Theatre City in nature, with beautiful surroundings and perspective.

**Tine Lunde:** The decision of opening a new stage was a mix of several wants and needs. Our main house has reached a limit of productions and performances, so we wanted an additional performing space in order to continue our growth. In addition to this the theatre had a desire to reach new audience groups. We have in the previous years made some productions that challenge the traditional view on what theatre can be, with projects that mix theatre and hip-hop, projects with non-actors on stage, normal youths telling their stories in a theatre wrapping. We found that these projects both broadened our horizons, by giving us stories we would not easily have found otherwise, and it added a new dimension to our audience's experience of the theatre. This gave us the idea of establishing a stage where we could work differently and more directly with the audience and their stories. The final aspect of this decision was the wish to change the cultural and ethnic monotony we often see in our audience, on the Norwegian theatre stages and behind the scenes. The area in which Rommen Scene is located is an area of a diverse population, many of which do not have a

*This decision was the wish to change the cultural and ethnic monotony we often see in our audience.*



Opening of the new Rommen Scene (Oslo) with Artistic Director Erik Ulfvsky and Norway Minister of Culture Trine Skei Grande, 2019. © Michael Ray Vera Cruz Angeles





Architectural plans of Theatre City (Tbilisi/Georgia), opening in 2020.  
© Kote Marjanishvili Theatre

relationship to the institutional theatres at all. By bringing the theatre to their neighbourhood, telling their stories and asking them to join in our projects, our goal is to lower the threshold for new audience groups to visit the theatre.

**Why now?**

**T. L.:** We felt that it was important to follow up on the successful projects we had made in the past years, while the momentum was there. The hip-hop project “Blokk til blokk” had all through 2018 played for sold out houses at each of our three stages, and the artists fronting that project are from areas close to Rommen Scene. We thought that an opening of Rommen Scene with their production would give us the gateway into the local community that we needed. In addition to this the Cultural Ministry released some funds aimed at activities initiated by the cultural institutions with a focus on increasing the cultural diversity. So the timing seemed perfect.

**E. M.:** Why not now? Now is the best time. Ideas come to mind exactly when they need to come to life. Later, it will be too late.

**Did you receive input from the local community when conceptualising this new space?**

**T. L.:** Our opening of Rommen Scene happened very quickly. The funds from the Cultural Ministry was granted in mid-October 2018 and in January 2019 we opened with a performance of “Blokk til blokk”. This was of course only possible because the infrastructure of the space was already there. As this became a collaboration with the administration at Rommen Scene we could use each other’s experiences. But it is honest

to say that this first year is very much a pilot year for our engagement at Rommen, and that we are learning as we go. Some projects this spring were a great success, and some were not. As we plan for the autumn and for 2020 we have a greater focus on including the local community in more of our projects, something which was hard to accomplish this spring because of the short time we had for planning.

**Did you change any of the architecture of the existing artistic centre?**

**T. L.:** We have not made any changes to the architecture, but we have supplied the stage with some extra equipment, mainly lights. The lighting rig is doubled, and we have made sidelight bars in the wings on both sides.

**As you are building this new centre from scratch, can you tell us about the architectural choices you are making?**

**E. M.:** The Theatre City will be built of wood mostly. The architectural style will be, let’s say, “eclectic” on purpose. Some parts will be like old Tbilisi houses on mountain slopes with narrow streets and beautiful balconies, with small wine basements and big piazzas. The other part could be Swedish minimalism or we will also use Greek antique palace details. We will have small squares, gardens around the theatre, small bridges and places named after great masters. And modern technology on top of everything - imagine. Something like timeline or impressions from history with present priorities.

**You’ve described opening the Rommen Scene as a “new artistic and political chance for the theatre”. Can you elaborate on this?**

**T. L.:** In the 2019 budget, the Cultural Ministry had a distinct focus on diversity and integration in the cultural sector, where the institutions were challenged to look for projects to include a greater variety of the citizens. Det Norske Teatret has worked on increasing the diversity in the theatres for years. In 2012 we started an acting education for students whose family background was from outside Europe, Det Multinorske. We’re also co-owners of a theatre school for children and young people aged 6–26 from a variety of cultural and social groups all over Oslo. When it was established in 1912, Det Norske Teatret was a theatre for the outsiders, the people moving into the city from the countryside. It became a symbol of the antagonism between the bourgeoisie classes and the people. Det Norske Teatret still finds that it is our task to investigate what it will say to be Norwegian in modern Norway, and who are the outsiders today, the opponents to the established classes. The engagement at Rommen Scene is a continuation of this, and a way of showing the politicians that we take this responsibility seriously.

**Do you also see the development of Theatre City as a political opportunity?**

**E. M.:** Theatre is of course political chance. A new space, even more so. This is a new challenge and a possibility of sustainable development in culture. We claim that we are the fourth most important driving force in the economy. So, it is a political opportunity as well.

**How is the artistic direction of these new stages different from the ones of your current theatres?**

**T. L.:** Rommen Scene is run by an artistic group consisting of four members, together with the artistic director at Det Norske Teatret, Erik Ulfsby. The four members are Anders Hasmo (dramaturg), Belinda Braza (choreographer), and Cici Henriksen and Hedda Sandvig from the independent group SPKRBOX, who produced “Blokk til blokk”. The artistic group is responsible for programming and creating new projects at Rommen Scene, such as devised projects, projects with the local communities, workshops etc. The theatre’s artistic team programme one or two main productions a year and decides which productions will be transferred from the main house to Rommen.

**E. M.:** We have already started working on the artistic planning for Theatre City and it will not be too different from Marjanishvili.

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*Theatre is of course a political chance. A new space, even more so.*

—  
*This gives us the chance to explore more stories and play with themes, forms and visual ideas in a different way to the main house.*

**Can you tell us about the local and national support you've received for this project?**

**E. M.:** The Ministry of Education and Culture of Georgia has provided a grant to support the building of Theatre City through and the Ministry of Economy gave the land free of charge (9500 m<sup>2</sup>). We are also talking with potential international and local partners.

**T. L.:** We received funding from the Cultural Ministry and from the municipality of Oslo. In addition, OBOS, the largest Nordic cooperative building association, joined as a sponsor. So far, we have not felt any opposition to this project at all. It has been met with positivity and excitement both locally and nationally.

**How will the staff structure differ with these new projects – have new artistic/logistical teams been created?**

**T. L.:** In addition to the Rommen artistic group, we have appointed a project manager to work with this project. We are also in the process of hiring a technician, who will work mainly at Rommen. This will make the stage more independent of the planning and programming at the main house. The projects at Rommen will vary in size and resources, but the main structure will be projects that can be run by the one technician, together with the artistic teams put together for the different projects. The Rommen artistic group will work with projects that will have the opportunities of lab projects or workshops, more than complete productions. This gives us the chance to explore more stories and play with themes, forms and visual ideas in a different way to the main house.

**E. M.:** We will be creating two new teams: a new technology team and a logistics and educational team. The existing artistic team will be enriched with the new technology team and the management and technical team will stay the same.

**What is your vision for the future with your new stages?**

**E. M.:** The artistic/theatre heritage of Tbilisi is rich. Tbilisi depends on art, theatre and culture and not only for the quality of life. Our vision is to create a new creative life, squeezed into an almost 1 hectare grid. There will be creative and educational processes with experiments of theatre and new technology, venues and places with an emphasis on a healthy cultural climate. We would like to help educate and inspire our citizens and stimulate creativity and freedom in creativity. We want to attract talents and grow their economies.

**T. L.:** Our vision is that Rommen Scene can be a stage where creative teams feel that they can move outside the borders of normal theatre production. We want to invest in stories, artists and people that usually might not get a chance on the institutional stages. We want to find new visual expressions, new voices, new ways of telling stories, in order to attract new audiences from all over the city. We also wish to strengthen Rommen Scene to become a vibrant and diverse culture house, that can function both as a local community centre and a professional stage.

*This interview was led in June 2019 by Alice Burrows.*

# ENGAGE

## The International Programme for European Theatres



**Artistic collaborations, professional development and advocacy: discover ETC's activities during the season 2019/2020.**

# Artistic Theatre Collaborations

At its heart, ETC focuses on artistic international collaboration and creation with innovative programming and new formats – enabling critical thinking through theatre.

## Young Europe III

The ETC's artistic collaboration project Young Europe III focuses on theatre as a place of identification for young people in Europe. Over the last two years, nine ETC Member Theatres have developed new theatre texts on the topic of rage, identity and democracy, which will expand European multilingual drama for young audiences. Their experiences will be shared in a casebook to be published in 2020.



© Arno Declair

- Premieres and performances across Europe Season 2019/2020
- Young Europe Festival, Graz/Austria 9–11 June 2020

## Theatre in the Digital Age

The European Theatre Convention has set “Theatre in the digital age” as one of its pillars for the years to come. By researching and experimenting with digital technologies, the goal is to enhance the theatrical live experience as well as to offer meaningful reflection of its possibilities and boundaries.



© Tom Kohler

- **Symposium at Ars Electronica Festival, Linz/Austria, 05–09 September 2019**
- **ETC Digital Theatre Workshop at IMPACT Festival Théâtre de Liège/ Belgium, 20–23 November 2019**
- **ETC Digital Theatre Workshop at Kote Marjanishvili Theatre, Tbilisi/ Georgia, Spring 2020**

## Our Stage

Our Stage introduces the idea of Bürgerbühne (literally “citizens’ stage”) – which is run the same way as a professional in-house production company but involves nonprofessional actors – as a new form of creative community outreach via artistic collaboration and as a new artistic business model. After two years of experimenting with participatory theatre, ETC Members and experts will publish a best-practice casebook at the end of the year 2019.



*Barriers and Inhabitations,*  
participatory theatre project.  
© Weöres Sándor Színház

- **Two performance exchange grants** are dedicated to participatory performances in the season 2019/2020

# International Professional Development

ETC develops a European professional network to increase the exchange of best practice, to promote chances to meet and share, and to stimulate European theatre production.

## ETC International Theatre Conferences

Four-day conferences for theatre professionals to explore new trends in European theatre and an excellent forum for information, exchange, debate and networking.

- For ETC Member Theatres and invited guests
- Amsterdam, Netherlands  
28 November to 1 December 2019  
"Whose Stories Are We Telling?"
- Graz, Austria 11 to 14 June 2020  
"New Dramaturgies"

## Artist Residency Programme

Scholarships for emerging theatre artists in Europe to join the creative team of an ETC theatre production process as assistant or second assistant director.

- Open for both ETC Member Theatres and non-members
- Takes place between January and May 2020
- Call for applications  
September 2019

## European Theatre Academy

Four-day seminar of masterclasses and workshops offering broad and in-depth knowledge on the development and management of international theatre collaborations. Designed for theatre professionals at the beginning of their careers, with ambition to grow internationally.

- Open event for both ETC Member Theatres and non-members
- Takes place during the Festival d'Avignon, France, July 2020
- Call for applications March 2020

## Performance Exchange Programme

Travel grants to support ETC Member Theatres wishing to present a guest performance from another ETC Member Theatre.

- For ETC Member Theatres only
- Takes place between September 2019 and August 2020

## Staff Exchange Programme

Opportunity for all technical, administrative and artistic personnel from ETC Member Theatres to visit another ETC Member Theatre for up to 30 days to exchange know-how and share best practice.

- For ETC Member Theatres only
- Takes place between September 2019 and August 2020

## Professional Training Programme

Multiple seminars through the year designed for communication officers (Audience Development) and theatre technicians (Green Theatre). This programme aims to develop professional skills, promote peer-to-peer learning and networking.

- For ETC Member Theatres only
- Takes place October 2019 and Spring 2020

# Advocacy

ETC voices the needs and concerns of the theatre community to political leaders and promotes the visibility of the sector from local to international level.

## ETC Roadshow

Facilitating the international promotion and representation of ETC and its members in key sector events in Europe and beyond.



- For ETC Member Theatres only
- Takes place throughout the season
- Travel grants available

## Study on Diversity in European Theatres

Following the adoption of a Diversity Code by the ETC Member Theatres in December 2018, ETC has commissioned an academic study on diversity and gender equality in the European public theatres, based on quantitative and qualitative surveys in the ETC Member Theatres. Results of the study will be presented during the ETC International Theatre Conference in Amsterdam and published in a casebook on diversity in theatre in spring 2020.

Furthermore, ETC has been selected by Voices of Culture to participate in the structured dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector in 2019/2020.



Top, left and bottom:  
ETC International Theatre Conferences.  
© Sebastian Hoppe, Klaus Gigga, Peter Chvostek  
Middle: Meeting with EU Commissioner  
Tibor Navracsics, 2018.  
Right: Theatre is Dialogue in Goethe Institut Kyiv  
(Ukraine) 2018. © Oleksii Tovpyha

# ETC Calendar 2019/2020

03 September 2019

**Deadline for Staff & Performance  
Exchange Grants**

▮ All Europe

04–05 September 2019

**Brainstorming Meeting: Gender Balance in  
the Cultural and Creative Sectors**

▮ Voices of Culture, Prague/Czech Republic

05 September 2019

**Rage – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Deutsches Theater Berlin/Germany

05–06 September 2019

**Theatre in the Digital Age Symposium**

▮ Ars Electronica Festival 2019, Linz/Austria

16 September 2019

**Artist Residency Programme:  
Deadline to Become a Host Theatre**

22 September 2019

**Artist Residency Programme:  
Application for Artists Opens**

▮ europeantheatre.eu

28 September 2019

**Age of Rage – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ De Toneelmakerij, Amsterdam/Netherlands

02 October 2019

**Plan(et) B – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe/Germany

05 October 2019

**Before Tomorrow – Young Europe III  
Premiere**

▮ Pesti Magyar Színház, Budapest/Hungary

11 October 2019

**Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Slovak National Drama, Bratislava/Slovakia

17–18 October 2019

**Communication Officers Seminar**

▮ Berlin/Germany

20 October 2019

**Artist Residency Programme:  
Deadline for Artists' Applications**

05–06 November 2019

**Dialogue Meeting: Gender Balance in the  
Cultural and Creative Sectors**

▮ Voices of Culture, Brussels/Belgium

8 November 2019

**Democrisis – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Theater Magdeburg/Germany

17 November 2019

**Democrisis – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Teatrul "Marin Sorescu" Craiova/Romania

20–23 November 2019

**ETC Digital Theatre Workshop**

▮ IMPACT Festival, Théâtre de Liège/Belgium

21 November 2019

**Democrisis – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Staatstheater Braunschweig/Germany

27–28 November 2019

**Partner Meeting Young Europe III**

▮ Amsterdam/Netherlands

28 November–01 December 2019

**ETC International Theatre Conference  
"Whose Stories Are We Telling?"**

▮ Amsterdam/Netherlands

30 November 2019

**ETC Study on Diversity  
in European Theatres:  
Presentation of the Results**

▮ Amsterdam/Netherlands

18 December 2019

**Fury Island – Young Europe III Premiere**

▮ Weöres Sándor Színház, Szombathely/Hungary

January–June 2020

**Artist Residency Placements**

▮ ETC Member Theatres

March 2020

**European Theatre Academy:  
Application Opens**

▮ europeantheatre.eu

Spring 2020

**ETC Digital Theatre Workshop**

▮ Kote Marjanishvili Theatre, Tbilisi/Georgia

Spring 2020

**Seminar on Green Theatre Dedicated  
to Theatre Technicians**

09–11 June 2020

**Young Europe III Festival**

▮ Graz/Austria

09–14 June 2020

**Dramatists' Festival**

▮ Graz/Austria

11–14 June 2020

**ETC International Theatre Conference  
"New Dramaturgies"**

▮ Graz/Austria

July 2019

**European Theatre Academy**

▮ Festival d'Avignon/France

# About ETC

## An artistic platform for creation, innovation and collaboration

As the largest network of public theatres in Europe, the ETC has about forty European Theatre Members from over twenty countries, reflecting the diversity of Europe's vibrant cultural sector.

Founded in 1988, the ETC promotes European theatre as a vital social platform for dialogue, democracy and interaction that responds to, reflects and engages with today's diverse audiences and changing societies.

ETC fosters an inclusive notion of theatre that brings Europe's social, linguistic and cultural heritage to audiences and communities in Europe and beyond. Powerful and professional ETC governance ensures that the network will thrive and grow, taking into consideration the latest trends and developments.

The ETC's current four-year programme "ENGAGE: Empowering today's audience through challenging theatre" offers our Member Theatres many opportunities. This comprehensive, ground-breaking programme is supported by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

### Your Benefit as an ETC Member

- **Meet and network with colleagues** from other European theatres
- **Create** international artistic collaborations
- **Get inspired** by new ideas and share best practice
- **Be represented** at European and international levels
- **Explore new contexts**, cities and perspectives



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## Get in Touch!

Interested theatres are invited to join our ETC International Theatre Conferences to get to know the network, the members and future cooperation partners. New members' applications are voted on at each General Assembly.

If you are interested, please don't hesitate to contact the ETC team for further information.



# ETC Partners

ETC projects are jointly financed by its members.  
The ETC programme "ENGAGE – Empowering today's audience through challenging theatre"  
is co-funded by the **Creative Europe Programme of the European Union**.



The ETC project "Young Europe III" is developed in cooperation with Allianz Kulturstiftung.



## Cooperation Partners



## Media Partner



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[europeantheatre.eu](http://europeantheatre.eu)

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Image page 25: *Tranzyt*, guest performance by Schenk&Cant in AirGogolfest, Vinnytsia (Ukraine),

Theatre is Dialogue 2018. © Anastasia Mantach

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