

## “SMALL ARTS” SYMPOSIUM

9–11 September 2021, Slovenian Theatre Institute

In collaboration with the Slovenian Theatre Institute, Emanat is organising the international “Small Arts” Symposium between 9 and 11 September 2021 within the frame of the “Small Arts” platform. The symposium highlights the quickly developing and topical yet dispersed and scarcely visible non-institutional production of hybrid stage practices by presenting artistic groups, academics and producers developing these genres in Slovenia and abroad.

The three-day programme will include talks, lectures, workshops and performances by local and international representatives. The symposium will thereby focus on the contextualisation, affirmation and professionalisation of such artistic practices, analysing the potentiality of the social questions that these practices open and the impact these practices have through which they can build new communities.

All lectures will be live-streamed over the Open Source platform Pretok.tv.

The symposium will be held in Slovenian and English.

Head of symposium: Maja Šorli

Symposium committee: Maja Šorli, Maja Delak, Sabrina Železnik

Symposium project group: Sabrina Železniki, Eva Jus, Leon Marič, Jan Rozman, Metod Zupan

With the support of Teatroskop, a programme initiated by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, the French Ministry of Culture and the Institut français Paris.

## SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

### Thursday, 9 September 2021

**14.30–15.00** *Participants registration and welcome speech: Mojca Jan Zoran – Slovenian Theatre Institute and Maja Delak – Emanat, Institute for the Development and Affirmation of Dance and Contemporary Art*

**15.00–18.00** *“Small Arts” in the Frame of the Institutional Theatre System*

*Introduction: Maja Šorli*

**Hans van Maanen** (NL): *The Aesthetics of Kleinkunst*

*Discussion, led by: Maja Šorli*

*Coffee break*

*Performative workshop: The Sociology of “Small Arts”*

*Led by: Maja Šorli and Eva Jus*

**20.00–23.00** *Accompanying programme – Cabaret evening: Madame Arthur (FR) with a small feast, Hotel Union*

### Friday, 10 September 2021

**10.00–13.00** *The Affirmation of “Small Arts” in Slovenia*

**Zala Dobovšek**: *The Formats and Potentials of Local “Small Arts”* (presented by Maja Šorli)

*Discussion, led by: Maja Šorli*

*Coffee break*

*Round table with representatives of Slovenian “Small Arts” production platforms*

*Participants: Maja Dekleva Lapajne (Kolektiv Narobov) / Maja Delak (Emanat) / Goran Završnik (KD Priden možic) / Teja Reba (City of Women)*

*Moderator: Maja Šorli*

**13.00–14.00** *Social mixer with the theatre group Ana Monro*

**14.00–15.00** *Lunch, Café Pritličje*

**15.00–18.00** *Different Production Models – Examples of Good Practices from Abroad*

*Introduction: Sabrina Železnik*

**Fabrice Laffon** (FR): *Artistic and Production Strategies in Developing Drag Cabaret – A presentation of the organisation Divan du Monde and the cabaret Madame Arthur*

**Helena Bunker** (SE): *The Internationalisation of “Small Arts” – A presentation of the Stockholm Fringe Festival and the Nordic Fringe Network (online presentation)*

*Coffee break*

**Saša Božić, defacto** (HR): *Pop Culture References in the Deconstruction of Contemporary Performing Arts – A presentation of the project On Entertainment*

**20.00–21.00** *Accompanying programme – Performance: How Many Cube Centimeters Can My Body Take Up, Sonja Pregrad with TRAS Studio (HR), Space DUM*

**Saturday, 11 September 2021**

**10.00–13.00** *Dramaturgies of Discomfort*

*Introduction:* **Metod Zupan** and **Drag Queens** (SI)

**Maša Radi Buh** (SI): The Theatre of Discomfort: A Case Study of the Image Snatchers

Discussion, led by: **Metod Zupan**

**Urban Belina** (SI): Micropolitics of Curating: Principles and Pitfalls of Intersectional Treatment of (Fringe) Marginal Performance Practices

Discussion, led by: **Metod Zupan**

*Coffee break*

**Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski & Slavčo Dimitrov** (MK): Performing, Choreographing and Curating the Other (Queer/Feminist) Body in (North) Macedonia (online presentation)

Discussion, led by: **Metod Zupan**

**13.00–14.00** An Installation of the **Association for Contemporary Clown Art** (SI): Za crknt

**14.00–15.00** *Lunch, Café Pritličje*

**15.00–18.00** *From Deviant Pleasure to Community*

*Introduction:* **Eva Jus**

**Katja Čičigoj** (SI): Utopian Biases and Misidentifications: Pleasure, Critique and the Future in Queer Burlesques

Discussion, led by: **Eva Jus**

*Coffee break*

**Irena Ristić** (RS): Collectives and Commoning in “Small Arts”

Discussion, led by: **Eva Jus**

Symposium conclusion: **Maja Šorli**

**20.00–23.00** *Accompanying programme – Technoburlesque: Image Snatchers (SI), Old Power Station – Elektro Ljubljana*

**Thursday, 9 September 2021, 15.00–18.00**

*“Small Arts” in the Frame of the Institutional Theatre System*

In the introductory panel, we will deal with the complexity of “small arts”: their many historical and substantive beginnings, their (non-)placement in the context of the contemporary performing arts and theatre system, their social and social implications and genre diversity.

**Hans van Maanen (NL): The Aesthetics of *Kleinkunst***

The term *Kleinkunst* was born out of necessity, not only when the STEP research group needed a name for a specific form of theatre, but also in the past, for instance, when, already in 1960, a cabaret academy was established in Amsterdam and after a couple of years renamed as Academy for *Kleinkunst*.

Since the 1980s, the programme has been included in the theatre school as the Amsterdamse Toneelschool & *Kleinkunst*academie (Amsterdam School for Drama and *Kleinkunst*). Strangely enough, from an international perspective, the term *Kleinkunst* has only a linguistic reference in German and Dutch and is absolutely unknown and even incomprehensible in other languages. In German and Dutch, Klein means “small”, and from the 1950s till recently, a distinction was made between *Kunst met een kleine* and *met een grote K* (Art with a small or a big A), which raises the question of whether *kleinkunst*, “small art”, has less of an aesthetic value than “great art”, whatever that may be.

In the Netherlands, some interesting developments have taken place in this field since the 1950s. In the first decade after World War II, only a couple of artists were active as cabaret performers. Yet, with their so-called “one-man shows”, they reached a huge audience in theatre halls and, later, via television broadcasting. During the years of the new consciousness, the 1960s and 70s, several cabaret ensembles – mostly with a university student background – originated and criticised societal development through songs and sketches. They also found a huge audience, particularly in smaller theatre halls and again via television. And finally, since the 1990s, the increase of a host of young cabaret performers working independently could no longer be stopped, partly due to the four competition cabaret festivals active in the Netherlands since the late 20th century. Generally speaking, what they present can be best described as a full-evening stand-up comedy programme, with a lot of talking and from time to time a song. By far, these “small art” shows became the fastest-growing theatre genre in the same period in which the popularity of the so-called “great art” of stage drama strongly decreased. This shift raises the question of whether, at least in the Netherlands, cabaret as a genre has taken over the societal function of staged drama.

**Hans van Maanen** was a professor of arts & society and theatre studies and the head of the Department of Arts Culture & Media Studies at the University of Groningen (NL) before retiring in 2011. Since then, he was chair of the Arts Council of Groningen and has worked again as a dramaturg. His main area of research is the functioning of the arts, particularly theatre, in society. He is a member of the editorial board of the *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. Besides his thirty years at the University of Groningen, he served as a member of the executive committee of the IFTR and as vice-chair and general executive of the Fund for the Stage Arts of the Netherlands. In 2005, together with Andreas Kotte, he started the international working group on European theatre systems (STEP).

**Maja Šorli and Eva Jus (SI): Performative Workshop – The Sociology of “Small Arts”**

The participants, lecturers and interested public present at the “Small Arts” Symposium will, through creative, performative and, as befits the “Small Arts”, also slightly kitschy approaches, tackle the mapping of the “Small Arts”... We will look for the venues where small arts appear and shake up the characteristics and diversity of genres in this field. We will ask ourselves what values permeate “Small Arts” and, by preparing their dream production budgets, try to answer the vital question: “How small are ‘Small Arts’ really?” Instead of self-adhesive notes, we will use collage, colours, performance and lots of glitter.

**Maja Šorli** was born in Kranj, where her first theatrical experience originated. She graduated in psychology (2003) from the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts. She also studied dramaturgy, completing her studies at the University of Ljubljana, Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (UL AGRFT) with the doctoral dissertation “The Role of Text in Slovenian Post-Drama Theatre” in 2011. Between 2007 and 2011, she was employed as a young researcher at UL AGRFT, where she also taught in the theatre history seminar. She works as a grammar school counsellor and teacher (SVŠGUGL), researcher (UL AGRFT) and dramaturg. In 2021, she received the Slavko Grum Award for the Best New Slovenian *Play You Have Not Yet Tried This Taste*.

**Eva Jus** is a uni. dipl. sociologist of culture and professor of art history who works in several fields. She is a creator in the field of impro theatre as well as a theatre pedagogue and trainer of non-formal education. She also works as

a producer, events and festivals organiser and, here and there, writes something. She is interested in feminist and queer activism, loves to cook, sleep and watch TV quiz shows.

#### **Thursday, 9 September 2021, 20.00–23.00**

*Accompanying programme – Cabaret evening: **Madame Arthur** (FR) with a small feast, Hotel Union*

**Madame Arthur** is a drag cabaret venue in the Rue des Martyrs of the 18th arrondissement of Paris. Madame Arthur opened in 1946 as the first transvestite cabaret, taking its name from the famous song written in 1860 by Paul de Kock and performed by Yvette Guilbert. After being closed for many years, it was entirely restored and reopened in November 2015 by Divan du Monde, its neighbouring venue. The cabaret group Madame Arthur produces evenings with crossdressers singing in French for a mostly young, Parisian and popular audience. Their creations are ephemeral: every week, a new show is produced, performed and then disappears.

#### **Friday, 10 September 2021, 10.00–13.00**

*The Affirmation of “Small Arts” in Slovenia*

The panel will strive to present national non-institutional creators and producers who work in the “Small Arts” genres in Slovenia. They will talk about their experiences, motivations, inspirations and desires, ways of working, audience responses and, specifically, about the genres in which they create – how they define themselves and what they think about the development of this field in our country.

#### **Zala Dobovšek (SI): The Formats and Potentials of Local “Small Arts”**

(Maja Šorli will present the paper.)

Since 2000, the foundations of “Small Arts” in Slovenia have been created and maintained mainly by organisations and festivals that have critically thematised social anomalies, regression and normativity (in all respects). The City of Women Festival primarily focuses on contemporary, experimental, critical, socially engaged, political, transdisciplinary and feminist cultural production. Red Dawns also derives from the model of an engaged feminist festival with a strong connotation of queering and lesbian components and is designed to be multidisciplinary (lectures, performances, exhibitions, concerts and other forms of public expression). In the last few years, the domestic environment in this area has been marked by the permanent project the Image Snatchers (produced by Emanat) – a technoburlesque that non-normatively represents nudity, pornography, homosexuality, perverted pop culture, feminism, transnationality and queer gender perspectives. As the youngest gesture of Kleinkunst emancipation, the Syndicate of Outlandish Entities festival was created in 2018, acting as a platform for marginal, urban genres of new comedy, performative humour, irony, satire, parody and social commentary. In addition to the aforementioned, marginally most prominent figures, there have been, of course, other actors in our space who perhaps – conceptually or not – do not work continuously but are undoubtedly widening the (performing and mental) horizons of theatre and expanding the place of (artistic) resistance. The paper will also focus the research spotlight on them.

**Zala Dobovšek** is a dramaturg, theatre scholar and assistant professor of dramaturgy and performing arts studies at the University of Ljubljana, Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (UL AGRFT). She graduated from UL AGRFT with a degree in dramaturgy. During her studies, she also attended the DAMU Theatre Academy in Prague (Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění in Prague). In 2019, she received her PhD from UL AGRFT (Department of Performing Arts) with the dissertation “Theatre and War: Fundamental Relationships between Performing Arts and the Wars in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia in the 1990s”. She is the current president of the Association of Theatre Critics and Theatre Researchers of Slovenia. Since 2016, she has been the mentor of the year-round seminar Little School of Criticism. She works as a practical playwright, reviewer, critical writing mentor and pedagogue.

#### **Round table with representatives of Slovenian “Small Arts” production platforms**

Participants: **Maja Dekleva Lapajne** (Kolektiv Narobov) / **Maja Delak** (Emanat) / **Goran Završnik** (Priden možic) / **Teja Reba** (City of Women) (SI)

**Maja Dekleva Lapajne** works as a performer in the field of performing arts. She is a director, author and performer, co-founder and artistic director of the internationally awarded Kolektiva Narobov, one of the artistic directors of the international festival Naked Stage, creator of clown projects (Moja nit je rdeča, Za crknt, Rdeči noski) and movement performances (Processed Life, Federacija Institute), and a member of the international art collective

Orcas Island Project. She also participates in the theatre for children (Unikat Theatre) and adolescents (Society for the Development of Theatre in Education) and on radio and television (RTV Slovenia).

**Kolektiv Narobov's** roots go back to classical theatre improvisation. Although still very skilled in and thrilled by the basic principles of impro comedy and storytelling, the Narobovs have since their beginnings developed their very unique approach to improvisation, combining influences of physical theatre, contemporary dance and clowning. Kolektiv Narobov's artistry in spontaneous composition and live interaction with the audience has evolved into diverse award-winning work, ranging from experimental theatre, clown and cabaret pieces, site-specific performances, radio plays all the way to film. Members of the collective are: Alenka Marinič, Maja Dekleva Lapajne, Gregor Moder, Tomaž Lapajne Dekleva and Sonja Vilč. In 2013, Kolektiv Narobov joined Federacija Institute, a big network of artists who offer each other organisational, artistic and productional support.

**Maja Delak** is a choreographer, dancer, performer and pedagogue who has studied contemporary dance at CNDC L'Esquisse in Angers, France and at numerous dance seminars. She was a member of the international dance group En-Knap between 1993 and 2002 and led the implementation of the grammar school programme for contemporary dance, carried out by the Secondary Preschool Education, Grammar School and Performing Arts Grammar School Ljubljana (SVŠGUGL), where she teaches regularly. In her choreographic opus, she has travelled many worlds, which, despite different themes and ways of working, gather as cross-sections in the anchor of her dance poetics, in which she more and more clearly defines the methodologies of contemporary dance. In 2006, she founded the Emanat Institute, in which she strives for the affirmation of contemporary dance – both through the production of performances as well as through book publishing (the Transitions collection) and education (Agon).

**Emanat**, which has been working in performing arts and contemporary dance since 2006, has been developing the field of “small arts” since its inception. In addition to stage, multimedia, music, publishing and educational activities, it also develops new burlesque, cabaret and contemporary performative practices with its own cycle of the technoburlesque Image Snatchers. For many years, in cooperation with various independent organisations and venues, Emanat has been organising high-quality, high-profile workshops with internationally renowned creators of such genres. Emanat created the “Small Arts” platform in 2018 to affirm and develop small arts within its production. Since then, Emanat has realised three editions of the festival entitled the Syndicate of Outlandish Entities. Each edition shines a light on the local and foreign production of marginal, urban genres.

**Goran Završnik** is the president of the Priden možic cultural association and the leader of Kamfest. With the Priden možic team, he managed the Kamnik Cultural Centre from 2002 to 2017. In 2006, he completed the European Diploma in cultural project management at the Foundation Hicter. Together with other organisers, he developed the Medieval Days in Kamnik, the Kamnik Cultural Center, the Kamfest Festival, Mestovanje, the Carnival, the Kamnik Quiz, KIKŠstarter, the Katzenberg Cultural Garden, Ognjena Veronika, Ana Desetnica in Kamnik, the Barutana Creative Quarter, the Path of Gunpowder and Comradeship, Kamara flows, etc. In 2007, he was a co-recipient of the Ježek Award, in 2013, a co-recipient of the bronze municipal award of the Municipality of Kamnik and, in 2017, a co-recipient of the Valvasor Award for the preservation of cultural heritage.

The **Priden možic** cultural association was founded in 1996 and is a theatre with the most diverse offer of street performances and installations in Slovenia. It offers great spectacles, mature street comedies, socially critical installations, fire shows and road experiments. It has participated in various festivals in Slovenia and abroad with its street performances and music productions. The Priden možic cultural association manages the Kamnik Cultural Centre and, in 2013, founded the Kotniknica Kamnik Youth Centre. In 2003, the association organised the first Kamfest Summer Festival on the model of Ljubljana's Trnfest. After thirteen years, the festival is the largest in the wider region and, with over 100 events in 10 festival days, attracts more than 35,000 visitors a year!

**Teja Reba** is an author, creator, curator, producer, mentor and former programme manager of the association and festival City of Women. She has performed with her works of art at numerous Slovenian and international venues, biennials and festivals, and has been awarded several times.

The **City of Women** is a platform that produces and presents contemporary, innovative, cutting-edge, critical, daring and radical art in various venues in the city of Ljubljana.

The festival, which brings together exceptional women from all over the world, offers a unique experience of merging incredible artistic feats with inspiring discussions. So far, the festival has hosted more than a thousand local and international artists and collectives from all fields of art – from those that are just establishing themselves, all the way to the biggest names. Every year, the festival presents contemporary, bold, experimental, critical, socially engaged, political, transdisciplinary and feminist cultural production.

**Friday, 10 September 2021, 13.00–14.00**

*Social mixer with the theatre group Ana Monro*

Since its founding in 1981, the **Ana Monro Theatre** (GAM) has evolved from a small but expressively and artistically strong theatre group, which has been creating behind and on the street for around three decades, into a referential production house and independent organisation. To promote artistic growth and connect artists in contemporary performative and street arts, they are also active at the local, national, regional and international levels in the field of knowledge transfer and the exchange of experiences and partnerships or cooperation. Their presentation at the symposium will take the form of an interactive street action in which they will play with both the audience and the concept of “small arts”.

**Friday, 10 September 2021, 15.00–18.00**

*Different Production Models - Examples of Good Practices from Abroad*

In the field of small arts, we record various forms of presentations around the world, depending on local contexts and involvement in international networks. In this context, we have invited experts from various organisations across Europe to present their small arts production formats, how they address the audience and their experiences with the internationalisation of their groups or organisations.

**Fabrice Laffon (FR): Artistic and Production Strategies in the Development of Drag Cabaret – A presentation of the organisation Divan du Monde and the cabaret Madame Arthur**

One of the places with the longest tradition in “small arts” and, concretely, cabaret is Paris, France. The term cabaret itself originally came from the Picard language or Walloon language words *camberete* or *cabret* for a small room (12th century). Cabarets had appeared in Paris by at least the late 15th century and were known as guest houses associated with entertainment. In the 18th century, the café-concert or café-chantant appeared, which offered food along with music, singers or magicians. The first cabaret in the modern sense was Le Chat Noir in the Bohemian neighbourhood of Montmartre, created in 1881 by Rodolphe Salis, a theatrical agent and entrepreneur. It combined music and other entertainment with political commentary and satire. By 1896, there were fifty-six cabarets and cafés with music in Paris, along with a dozen music halls; in the 20th century, they expanded and hosted the biggest stars of dance and music. A handful of music halls exist today in Paris; however, many exploit the cabaret tradition and often serve commercial and non-artistic productions to tourists.

**Fabrice Laffon** has been the director of the Divan du Monde since 2008 and was able to revive the past glory of the Madame Arthur cabaret in 2015 with quality artistic productions and international acclaim. In recent years, he has developed a sustainable business model (club, cabaret) and a clear artistic course – in curating the programme. Madame Arthur is one of the rare cabarets in Paris that nurtures its tradition while making it accessible for younger, heterogeneous and diverse audiences.

**Helena Bunker (SE): The Internationalisation of “Small Arts” – A presentation of the Stockholm Fringe Festival and the Nordic Fringe Network**

The Stockholm Fringe (STOFF) is a multidisciplinary arts festival presenting innovative work ranging from performance to installation art and anything in between. The festival stands for artistic freedom and focuses on out-of-the-box and “alternative” works that may not fit into mainstream performance or exhibition spaces. STOFF is a chance for arts practitioners to test new ideas, network and collaborate with other artists, develop work, and get inspired by many different creative expressions. Not only does STOFF encourage emerging artists who are developing their craft, but it also welcomes established groups and individuals whose work promotes innovative work practices. Through international guest appearances like The Infernal Comedy with John Malkovich, Mykki Blanco and Forced Entertainment, the festival wishes to bridge the gap between the established and the emerging. STOFF co-founders and festival directors are Helena Bunker, Lina Karlmark & Adam Potrykus.

**Helena Bunker** is a co-founder and co-director of the Stockholm Fringe Festival. She has a master’s degree in performance art and is herself a fringe artist and producer.

## **Saša Božić, defacto (HR): Pop Culture References in the Deconstruction of Contemporary Performing Arts – A presentation of the project On Entertainment**

In 2015, de facto initiated a five-year performance and research project titled On Entertainment. In the frame of the project, they were interested in the analysis of the ontological status of a performer in the encounter with the audience in various formats and performance production forms, with an accent put on borderline types of genres positioned in line with the so-called “on the edge” aesthetics (queer cabaret, anti-drama theatre, the performing tasks of the German Ausdruckstanz, Brooklyn voguing ... ). Three performances were developed in the frame of the project: *Born to Please* (2015), about reconstruction/interpretations of popular music hits from the history of pop music; *Folk/acts* (2016), about the performativity of gender in the theatre and reshuffling the performativity of the body and gender in folk music as well; and *A Good Life* (2018), about the fragility of the performance to outline the void and create myths about bodies of the theatre and bodies of the TV spectacle.

**Saša Božić** is a Croatian theatre director and dramaturg active in the field of European contemporary dance. His interests lie mainly in the widening of the performing arts field – working on the thin line between theatre, dance and performance, examining the permeability of their frames, and the performer’s position within the disparate modes of performing. His works rarely fit neatly into the category of choreography or directing. His distinctive combination of movement materials, visual imagery and texts follows the transformations between his multidisciplinary roles as a choreographer, director and dramaturg.

### **Friday, 10 September 2021, 20.00–21.00**

*Accompanying programme – Performance: How Many Cube Centimeters Can My Body Take Up, Sonja Pregrad with TRAS Studio (HR), Space DUM*

*How Many Cube Centimeters Can My Body Take Up* proposes another space of experiencing the embodiment of the performance (of gender). Patriarchy looks at the female body as an object, and drag emancipates this in its overdone voluntary performance. In the double-twist-gesture, that is, the performance of female to female drag, the objecthood of femininity is re-appropriated by the one (drag queen) who is performing it, who operates its construction and destabilises the way the spectator perceives it. At the same time, the performance deals with the production or performance of contemporary dance. In it, performers in drag are instructed how to perform drag and observed in their performance by a figure (the choreographer?) in drag as well, while all of them being women: “The female voice, speaking about the female body, performing in a female genre, an objectification of femininity.” Co-authors and performers are **Sonja Pregrad, Martina Tomić, Ivana Pavlović, Petra Chelfi**.

### **Saturday, 11 September 2021, 10.00–13.00**

#### ***Discomfort Dramaturgies***

In this section, we confront theorists, suggesting that small arts open up important social themes and issues that defy heteronormative values and often arouse surprise and sometimes even discomfort in the audience.

## **Maša Radi Buh (SI): The Theatre of Discomfort: A Case Study of the Image Snatchers**

The theatre of discomfort is a concept created in an attempt to find the Slovenian translation for “queer dramaturgies”. It refers to performances that question or surpass normative standards and stage scenes of potential futures. The theatre of discomfort includes practices that critique discriminatory and oppressive systems in contemporary society. The phrase does not explicitly refer to gender or sexuality. Instead, it allows for intersectional or multilayered interpretations of discomfort in accordance with queer theory’s opposition to clear categorisations. By using discomfort, the author refers to the effects the concept evokes when breaking common social rules and proposing alternative models of being, which could endanger the current social order. Opting for a translation of queer as discomfort also addresses the unease present in both audiences and professional circles when encountering the theatre of discomfort.

**Maša Radi Buh** holds an undergraduate degree in the sociology of culture from the University of Ljubljana and is currently finishing her master’s studies in contemporary theatre, dance and dramaturgy at Utrecht University. As a performing arts critic, she contributes to platforms such as *Neodvisni* and *Kriterij*. In collaboration with Varja Hrvatin and Jakob Ribič, she creates the monthly broadcast *Teritorij teatra* for Radio Študent.



The guests of this panel will be two **drag queens who are representatives of the new wave of the Slovenian drag scene.**

**Mentalika** is one of the founders of the first Slovenian drag house, the House of Dynasty. She describes her character as a product of frustration with the capitalist system of the 21st century. Her style of performance is expressive and personal, inspired by anger, sadness, injustice and pink. She is the main organiser of the online drag show *Dragoslavia*, in which about 50 drag performers from all over the Balkans and beyond performed in 18 shows.

**Babsi Adler** is the First Lady of the new wave of the Slovenian drag scene. She is a self-proclaimed starlet from hell and cyber pixie yokai witch, known for her precision performing and spectacular fashion style. An experienced performer, she has performed with Cabaret Tiffany all over Slovenia and beyond. She is inspired by pop culture, horror movies, punk rock and strong female characters.

### **Urban Belina (SI): Micropolitics of Curating: Principles and Pitfalls of Intersectional Treatment of (Fringe) Marginal Performance Practices**

Curating is like a process of mediation and caring for something in a state of constant change. It cannot be moulded and locked into a fixed identity. In the paper, the author considers the micropolitics of curating (fringe) marginal performance practices from the point of view of feminist, queer and decolonial theory and practice, with an interest in enabling the development of minority poetics.

**Urban Belina** works as a post-media artist, playwright, literary translator and writer. In his research, he uses the findings of decolonial, queer and feminist theory and practice to open various key but underrepresented social themes by creating a variety of hybrid works with diverse expressions and syndromes of the (post-)human and other than human experience. He is also a co-founder and former co-curator of the *Syndicate of Outlandish Entities*, a platform for marginal urban genres, produced in Ljubljana by the *Emanat Institute* from 2018 onwards, and a member of the *Association of Slovenian Literary Translators*.

### **Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski & Slavčo Dimitrov (MK): Performing, Choreographing and Curating the Other (Queer/Feminist) Body in (North) Macedonia**

In their presentation, the authors will look at and tackle different performing, dance and curatorial practices in North Macedonia that stage what they provisionally call the other body/ies, whose otherness is set in relation to institutional art frameworks, to normative and hegemonic “(bio)political apparatuses” (Foucault) and “distributions of the sensible” (Rancière), and, specifically, to sexual and gender regimes of power and bodies politics. The authors aim to present the provisional genealogy of contemporary queer/feminist performances in North Macedonia and examine the specific historical socio-political and cultural contexts and effects of each of the presented practices while addressing the wider theoretical and speculative questions related to aesthetics, culture, power and queerness. They will look at the early 1970s’ performances for the camera by Bejan and Kodzoman, some rare feminist performative practices and everyday queer and clubbing choreographies in the 1990s, and the late 2000s’ dance choreographies and the queer arts, culture and theory festival *Skopje Pride Weekend*.

**Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski** is a manager in art and culture, curator and part of the independent art scene in Macedonia. She works in contemporary culture and arts, focusing on the re-evaluation of modes of artistic and cultural production and collaboration and advocating for cultural workers’ rights and the re-formation of cultural policy in the country. She holds a BA in the history of art and archaeology, an MA in interculturalism, cultural management and cultural policy from the *University of Arts in Belgrade* and a PhD from the *Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade*. In 2003, she co-founded the organisation *LOKOMOTIVA – Centre for New Initiatives in the Arts and Culture*, where she works as a manager and programme coordinator. She is co-founder of *NOMAD Dance Academy (NDA)*, a self-organised model of regional collaboration in contemporary dance in the Balkan region. She is part of the decision-making body and regional coordination body of the *NDA*.

**Slavčo Dimitrov** graduated from the Department for General and Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Philology of the *Ss.Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje*. He got his first master’s degree in gender studies and philosophy at the *Euro-Balkan Institute* and his second master’s degree from the Department of Multidisciplinary Gender Studies at *Cambridge University*. Currently, he is working on his doctoral thesis at the *Euro-Balkan Institute*. His activist interest is directed towards the politics of queerness (queer politics), sexual and gender citizenship and equality, rights of marginalised communities and their transaction with questions concerning social justice.

**Saturday, 11 September 2021, 13.00–14.00**

**An Installation of the Association for Contemporary Clown Art (SI): Za crknt**

The installation offers insight into the immersion of the **Association for Contemporary Clown Art** members into the turbulent and zany sea of clown art. The more they dived and wrote about the adventures of diving, the more they were invited by clownish playfulness to follow the mental and other currents of their clown characters. Alongside, about and in the clown state, the members created an abundance of meaningful, entertaining and poetic texts of various lengths, widths, depths and tapestries. The loops of this red-threaded interweaving surprised them! The clown is a live and lively phenomenon who works mainly in front of, during and with the audience; they didn't even think it was so lively in the medium of the written word in which the spatio-temporal relationship between the participants is very different from that on stage. You are also invited to take a few dives into clown art with the present selected texts. Because the group is an international team of creators, the texts are multilingual.

Authors of installation texts: **Maja Dekleva Lapajne, Gergely Dosza, Simeon Huzun, Tina Janežič, Tomaž Lapajne Dekleva** and **Petra Markovič**.

**Saturday, 11 September 2021, 15.00–18.00**

*From Deviant Pleasure to Community*

Art, which can be a source of discomfort for the majority public, can, on the other hand, produce pleasure, feelings of acceptance, belonging, a bright future – in one word: community. In the last symposium panel, we explore how the artists and the audience of “small arts” do it.

**Katja Čičigoj (SI): Utopian Biases and Misidentifications: Pleasure, Critique and the Future in Queer Burlesques**

In *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (1999), José Esteban Muñoz develops the concept of “deidentification” to analyse the complex relationship to normative gender (as well as racial, ethnic and other) identities that he establishes from the social norm of “deviant” subjects. When this relationship is staged on the queer within the queer of performative practices, among which marginal genres such as cabaret and burlesque have a special place, performers with spectators create “counter-publicities”: communities that consciously distance themselves from the majority society, but not in complete self-exclusion. Since, for many marginal subjects, visibility is also a condition for survival in society, this distancing cannot take place as a complete rejection but is always a subversive appropriation that uses and deconstructs dominant identities and normative images at the same time. With the concept of disidentification, we can analyse the combination of cheerful humour and sharp criticism, the exhaustion of pop-cultural images ad absurdum and the pleasure of surrendering to them, which to some extent has characterised the burlesque genre since its inception, and even more so the queer burlesque and performance. While the pleasure of identifying with dominant images and celebrating surrender to the moment is reminiscent of Lee Edelman's queer nihilism in *No Future*, the critical cost of such performances evokes earlier feminist analyses of the mechanisms of internalising power relations (Sandra Bartky, Susan Bordo). This combination of the unrelated or even the opposite, which characterises queer burlesque disidentification and its characteristic temporality, can finally be understood through the concept of queer utopias developed by Muñoz in *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009): queer utopias affirm emancipatory forms of building relationships and communities in the present, but at the same time they do not give up hope for a different future.

**Katja Čičigoj** is a research associate in the Department of Philosophy of the University of Paderborn (Germany), where she will receive her PhD with a dissertation in feminist philosophy. Her research interests include contemporary European philosophy and critical theory. She has been a visiting researcher at CRMEP at Kingston University, London and CPCT at Goldsmiths College London. In 2019, she translated, co-edited and wrote an accompanying study for *The Dialectic of Gender* by Shulamith Firestone (/cf. Publishing House) and organised an international symposium on feminist utopias. She currently lectures in the Department of Philosophy of the University of Paderborn and the Master of Dance Studies at the Alma Mater Europaea (AMEU) in Ljubljana. She co-edited a collection on feminist utopias of care and reproduction for /cf. and co-organised a conference on the critical phenomenology of street protests at the Department of Political Philosophy of the University of Paderborn.

### **Irena Ristić (RS): Collectives and Commonings in “Small Arts”**

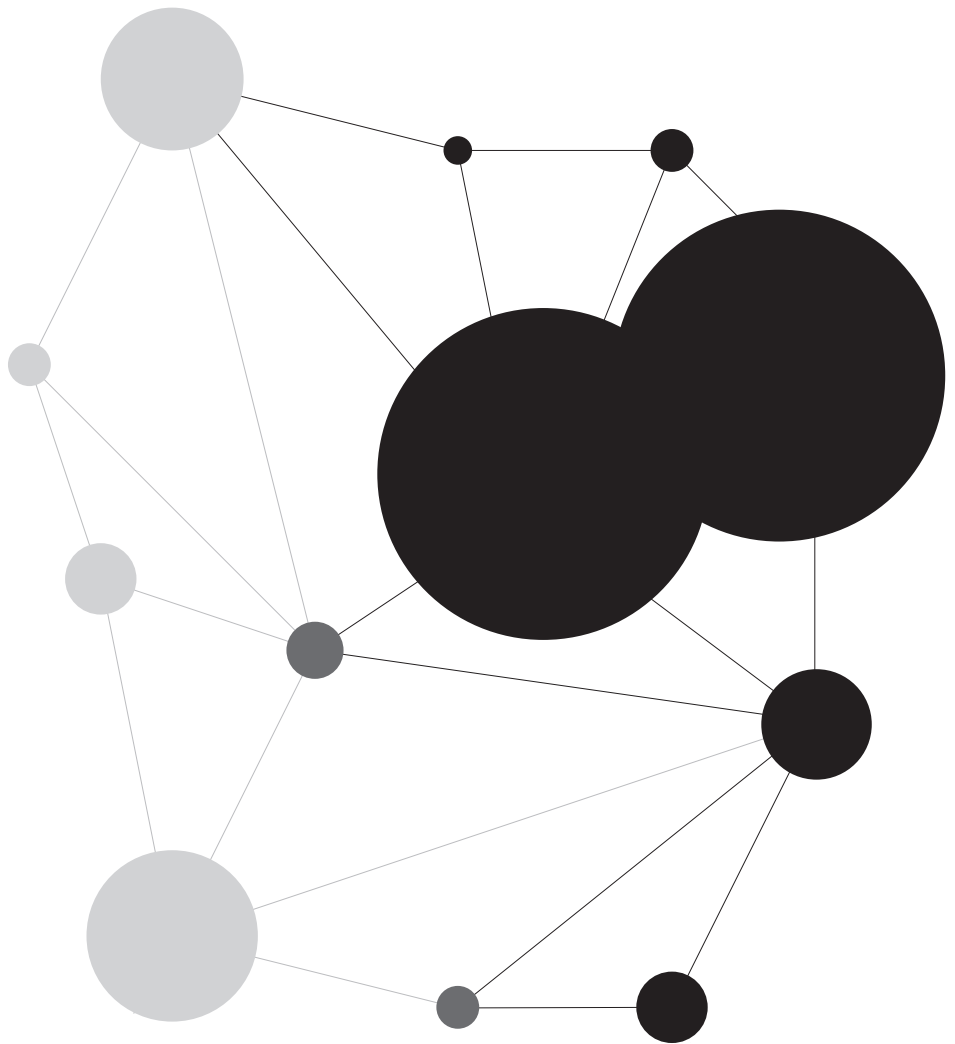
The focus of the lecture will be on the “small arts” collectives in which the practice of commoning, organised by egalitarian principles, becomes an alternative mode of social reproduction. Their joint actions, in a non-institutional framework, provide an opportunity to examine the paths of radical imagination on two levels: firstly, by following the principles of collective creativity [a], which operate through different forms of “small arts” production, systematically targeting the development of social imaginaries; secondly, by creating a collective [b], based on imaginary constructs aimed at the production of sociability itself which are evolved and tested through practices. Indeed, the very creation of a collective is based on the prerogatives of collective creativity, as are the principles of joint work during the creative process conditioned by the structure and dynamics of the collective. Thus, these are neither destinational paths nor linear ones, and it could be important to observe them carefully before explaining their entanglement.

**Irena J. Ristić** is a researcher in the fields of psychology, social science and art. She focuses primarily on generative processes, collective creativity and the conditions of radical imagination. She graduated from the University of Arts in Belgrade, Faculty of Drama, Department of Theatre Directing, followed by postgraduate studies of the psychology of art at the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Psychology (MSc) and the Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Theory in Belgrade (PhD), as well as the specialised education at the Institute of Psychodrama (EAPTI, Belgrade/Vienna). She has conducted many studies and created art pieces, performances and projects. She is a co-founder of the micro collective Hop.La!, a member of “Roof” action, and an associate professor in the Department of Theory and History at the Faculty of Drama, University of Arts in Belgrade.

### **Saturday, 11. September 2021, 20.00–23.00**

*Accompanying programme - **Technoburlesque: Image Snatchers** (SI), **Old Power Station - Elektro Ljubljana***

The regular, modular, surprising, never the same and above all artistic and social evening **Image Snatchers** in various forms of cooperation was established by the group **Feminalz**. This burlesque collective has been operating under the auspices of Emanat since 2013. The core consists of a permanent group of performers; other deviant guests are often invited. In the seven years of its existence, more than 60 different numbers have been created, and each implementation with successful strategic adjustments and recycling provides an entirely new experience.



**Head of symposium:** Maja Šorli

**Symposium committee:** Maja Šorli, Maja Delak, Sabrina Železnik

**Symposium project group:** Sabrina Železnik, Eva Jus, Leon Marič, Jan Rozman, Metod Zupan

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