

**THE ART OF AGE!NG**

**BRINGING  
THE BURNING  
ISSUE OF GLOBAL  
DEMOGRAPHIC  
CHANGE TO  
EUROPE'S STAGES**

**CREATIVE RESEARCH  
A DOCUMENTARY BY  
THE EUROPEAN THEATRE CONVENTION**



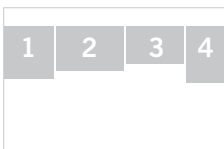
## THE CLOCK IS TICKING

## STRAWBERRY ORPHANS

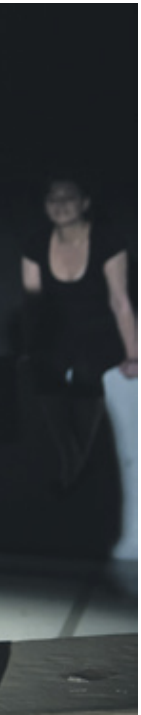


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**FEN FIRES**



**I'M AFRAID THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER NOW**

**THE ART OF AGEING THEATRE COPRODUCTIONS**

About the plays. Artistic researches. Behind the scenes. Extracts. Interviews. Reviews

**THE CLOCK IS TICKING**

by Peca Stefan  
A coproduction by Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Germany & Teatrul Național Timișoara, Romania

**STRAWBERRY ORPHANS**

by werkgruppe2  
A coproduction by Staatstheater Braunschweig, Germany & Teatrul Național "Marin Sorescu" Craiova, Romania

**FEN FIRES**

by Nino Haratischwili  
A coproduction by Deutsches Theater Berlin, Germany & Slovenské Národné Divadlo Bratislava, Slovakia

**I'M AFRAID THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER NOW**

by Ivor Martinić  
A coproduction by Theater und Orchester Heidelberg, Germany & Gradsko Dramsko Kazalište Gavella Zagreb, Croatia

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# INTRODUCTION

**We live in a time in which we daily face the dictates of a consumerist society which the “cult of youth” imposes on all other privileges and makes us dependent on the trends of perpetual rejuvenation and always seductive youthfulness. As a sacrifice to this collective slide towards youth, in the desire to find again our once lost innocence, we become lost in a reality which is presented to us as different; we almost become martyrs, for we are doomed to the “unhappiness of ageing”.**

**On the other hand modern society is rightly called the society of the “elderly”. Our theatres are filled with viewers most often more than sixty years old, old people’s homes fill up faster than classrooms, the census reveals a steady increase in the number of the elderly, demographics show that the number of deaths is twice as big as the number of births.**

**Due to the complexity of this issue alone, which is surely predominant in the society in which we live, and about which we rarely or hardly ever speak, we decided upon the project “The Art of Ageing”. With this theatre project we wanted not only to question the ways in which we age but also, at this time, to highlight the importance of theatres as places where we can still pose some of the essential questions which we encounter every day.**

**DUBRAVKA VRGOČ**  
PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN  
THEATRE CONVENTION

“The clock is ticking,” “Strawberry orphans,” “Fen fires” and, finally, “I’m afraid that we know each other now.” Four new theatre plays, five new theatre productions. Multilingual, based on investigative artistic research and collaborative theatre-making in Europe, created in Germany, Slovakia, Croatia and Romania. They couldn’t be more different from each other, yet they all have one thing in common: they are reflections on and positions toward the “The Art of Ageing.” The two-year international artistic project, which was initiated by the European Theatre Convention in cooperation with eight theatres, brings the burning issue of global demographic change to Europe’s stages.

When we first started to discuss the ideas in 2012 during the “European Year of Active Ageing,” our explicit desire was to add an artistic dimension to the public discourse and encourage a debate

between artists, scientists, political and economic stakeholders as well as theatre audiences about the demographic challenges facing younger and older generations alike. Our aim was to develop new formats for European theatre suitable for exploring the vast topic from a sociological, historical, economic, physiological, philosophical and political perspective and through the creative art of theatre.

Which new artistic forms of expression and which skills do we need in order to join forces, learn from each other within Europe’s public theatre sector and together tackle the challenging realities of our ageing society? Which stories can be told in today’s theatres to reflect the effects of ageing in the twenty-first century?

We invite you to discover and share the artistic European journey we embarked on as part of our efforts

to foster engagement with an ageing audience, as we looked for new ways to encourage people from all generations to actively take part in society. The following documentary illustrates four different creative research processes our teams of artists developed for their “The Art of Ageing” projects; introduces new aesthetic approaches; contextualizes our work within a broader social framework via contributions of invited experts; and, most importantly, tells the stories of how people age in Europe, how their lives and conditions for growing older are intertwined as part of our global economic and shared European political system. Can there be an “Art of Ageing”? For some, yes; for others, the art of it has remained an illusion. Until now, that is. Let’s work together to change this!

**HEIDI WILEY**  
GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE  
EUROPEAN THEATRE CONVENTION

GEORGE W. LEESON

# UNDERSTANDING DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN EUROPE

The dynamics of population are central to all levels of planning: individual, familial, community and societal. Thus, an understanding of demographic change is a prerequisite for all policy making – even for our life-course planning. How do we, as individuals and as members of families, communities and institutions (including theatre groups), address demographic change?

The ageing of Europe's populations causes concern in some quarters because of the increasing imbalance between the proportion of the population economically active and the proportion inactive, which puts pressure on the distribution of welfare and the transfer of resources from the active to the inactive. On the other hand, this ageing is also regarded as one of the major success stories of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it is expected to continue and even gain momentum in terms of longevity across the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Population ageing is a result of the development over time of the demographic components: fertility, mortality and migration. Each of these plays an important role in shaping the societal infrastructures that must be in place to meet the demands of the population – from child care to schooling to family support to housing to environmental welfare to workplaces to health care to care and services for older people.

Dr George W. Leeson is Co-Director of the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing at the University of Oxford and a Senior Research Fellow in Demography at the University of Oxford. His main research interests are in the socio-economic-demographic aspects of ageing populations, covering both demographic modelling of population development and the analysis of national and international data sets.

In recent decades, the European Union as a unit has made common moves and experienced common developments in response to the stated aims of its economic and welfare policies. The Union and its individual members strive for socio-economic convergence, and it seems sensible to assume that demographic convergence will accompany socio-economic convergence.

Demographically, the Member States have at least one feature in common, namely an ageing population, which itself has been formed by socio-economic developments.

With more than 500 million inhabitants, the European Union as a unit lies well behind China (1.4 billion) and India (1.2 billion), and while world population increases by approximately 80 million per year, the European Union accounts for only 1 per cent of this increase. The European Union's share of the global population is thus declining as its populations age.

Ageing societies, however, are not just about increasing numbers of older people. The impacts of ageing on European societies go beyond the fiscal pressures on pension systems and the fiscal and manpower pressures on health care systems. Ageing societies are also ageing and declining workforces, changing family formation and structure, and new migration patterns. Ageing societies are the urbanization and depopulation of peripheral areas.

"AGEING  
IS ALSO REGARDED  
AS ONE OF THE MAJOR  
SUCCESS STORIES  
OF THE  
20<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY"

## THE DEMOGRAPHIC DRIVERS

Populations have certain demographic characteristics – numbers of males and females in different age groups, for example. This demographic profile affects every aspect of contemporary society from the provision of childcare to education to housing to the labour market through

the health service and the provision of support for older people. A population's present profile is the result of its previous demographic behaviour. It should be emphasised that no one particular demographic profile can by definition be claimed to be good or bad. What makes a particular profile challenging are the economic and societal circumstances in which the profile is found.

## FERTILITY

Countries once regarded as high fertility cultures (Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, for example) have become part of the low fertility belt in Europe. They are now experiencing fertility levels lower than those experienced in the northern and western countries of Europe in the early-mid 1980s when fertility levels there were at their lowest. At the same time, this latter group of countries (Sweden, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands) now finds itself with some of the highest fertility levels.

The countries of Europe have thus come through the so-called demographic transition moving from high to low fertility and entered the second demographic transition with fertility levels often significantly below replacement level. When fertility levels reached replacement levels of ca. 2.1 children per woman in the 1930s and 1940s in most of Europe, it was widely thought that they could go no lower. However, apart from a short-lived baby-boom in the mid 1960s, fertility moved down from its replacement level plateau and began an uninterrupted descent, and in the mid 1980s the countries of Northern Europe bottomed with fertility levels at around 1.5. Predictions for fertility development in Europe as a whole suggest that although levels will increase, they will remain below replacement level for the remainder of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Fertility decline has not developed alone. It has been accompanied by shifts in associated behaviour, for example the mean age of females at first birth. The postponement of childbearing has always been a natural control of fertility, and certainly declining fertility has been accompanied by increasing ages at first birth across Europe.

## MORTALITY

Across Europe, the shadow of mortality has been lifting throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the result being that each new generation of Europeans can expect to live longer than previous generations – and significantly longer than their parents and grandparents and great grandparents, many of whom are likely to be alive when these new generations are born.

Evidence suggests that while the trend is one of increasing life expectancies, there are still significant differences in life expectancies at birth. For males, life expectancy at birth in Estonia is around 69 years while in Sweden it is around 80 years; for females the life expectancy in Hungary is around 79 years and in Spain it is around 86 years.

In the immediate post war years, European countries fell almost naturally into a two-tier classification as far as life expectancies were concerned with the more developed northern countries leading the way ahead of the less developed southern and eastern countries. Life expectancies did, however, converge somewhat in the course of the next 20-25 years especially as high mortality countries in the south and east experienced quite dramatic declines while the low mortality countries of the north were finding it difficult to push levels even lower. Not only have the countries become more grouped, but also France, Greece and Spain had moved up into the leaders' category and eastern countries were no longer lagging so far behind.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the situation had changed again, and some Eastern European countries were falling behind again. However, other Eastern European countries such as Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republics also show signs of a stagnating development in life expectancies, especially for males.

## MIGRATION

The contribution of international migration to the development of European populations can hardly be questioned, but not in every quarter is this regarded as an opportunity.

There is an inherent attraction for potential immigrants to the economically affluent countries of most of Europe, which have relatively low levels of fertility.

It is often assumed that international immigration rejuvenates the labour force and offsets age-related dependency costs, simply because immigrants are young economically active persons. However, contemporary migration experience does not always support this assumption, with only modest rejuvenating effects on the population observed.

The foreign population (i.e. residents outside their country of origin) in European countries amounts to around 25 million persons comprising approximately 5 per cent of the total European population. It is estimated that Eastern Europeans accounted for less than 1 million of this total. Since the middle of the 1990s, the size of the foreign population resident in Western Europe has increased by more than 10 per cent.

Central and Eastern Europe provides substantial shares of the foreign populations resident in particularly Finland (46.8 per cent), but also in Germany, Greece, Italy and Sweden and to a lesser extent Denmark. Africa is a key source of the foreign populations resident in Portugal and France and a significant source for Italy, Spain and the Netherlands followed by Belgium and the United Kingdom. Finally, Asia is a key source of foreign population for the United Kingdom (mainly from the Indian sub-continent), Denmark, Italy, Greece, Sweden and Finland.

Migration flow data are problematic especially with regard to emigration, and migration is highly sensitive to economic and political climates.

Although a steady in-flow of immigrants over a period of time can offset the ageing of the European population, population ageing cannot be prevented and research for the United States and Scandinavia indicates that immigration is not a realistic solution to demographic ageing. Thus, there seems to be rather conclusive research evidence that immigration at the levels we are accustomed to has limited effect on the overall age composition of the population.

In a growing European Union, migration is an important issue for the social and economic policy of the Union. There are concerns that local blue collar and unqualified workers will be made redundant as better qualified and cheaper labour immigrants arrive. Trade Unions warn of the negative impact on wage levels. And there are fears that existing welfare systems will be abused. From the point of view of the sending countries, the benefits of remittance payments in respect of income and consumption and demand and the positive effects of labour emigration on its own unemployment levels are seen against a backdrop of fear that the brain and skills drain may have a long-term detrimental effect on these countries' competitiveness.

A particular area of concern arising from emigration of the middle generations is the depopulation of certain areas, with older people being left behind to care for children at a time when they themselves are becoming increasingly in need of care.

## POPULATION AGEING

The ageing of populations is a quite recent phenomenon having begun in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it has become a global issue as we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In historical terms, however, some aspects of ageing are not so recent. Life expectancies have increased before though perhaps more modestly and less rapidly, increases from the low 30s in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the low 50s taking as much as three hundred years.

However, by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the Northern and Western European countries, the proportion of the population aged 65 and over had either stagnated or even declined slightly, whereas in the Southern and Eastern European countries, proportions were approaching those of Northern and Western Europe. So populations in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Belgium and the United Kingdom settled

## THE AGEING OF POPULATIONS IS A QUITE RECENT PHENOMENON HAVING BEGUN IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Ageing populations are regarded as a problem but also as a success. Much of the alarmist approach to ageing populations was fuelled by experience of and reaction to population change in the United States, where relatively high fertility levels and high rates of immigration characterized the first 75 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, only late attention was paid to public expenditure on aged people, especially in the form of health care services. As a consequence, public expenditure on aged people almost exploded and gave the impression that the population had suddenly aged.

At the beginning of the 1990s, generally speaking, the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over was higher in Northern and Western Europe than in Southern and Eastern Europe. By way of example, approximately 15 per cent of the populations of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Belgium and the United Kingdom were aged 65 and over in the early 1990s compared with the population of Poland, which had not yet reached 10 per cent.

with 15-17 per cent of the populations aged 65 years and over, while Greece, Spain, Hungary and the Czech Republic had aged to 14-17 per cent of their populations aged 65 years and over.

Thus, generally speaking, those countries with the lowest proportions of older people in their populations at the beginning of the 1990s have been ageing faster than those countries which at that time already had aged populations.

However, the early agers of Northern and Western Europe are now experiencing a double ageing of the population – the aged population is ageing itself with increasing proportions aged 75-80 years and over.

## ETEL ADNAN

# THEATRE

Etel Adnan is the patron of the ETC theatre project “The Art of Ageing.” Her play “At a certain hour of the night / Irgendwann in der Nacht” was staged in Karlsruhe as a prologue to the project. The 89-year-old artist embodies not just the art of ageing, but also of creating art later in life. She teaches and works as a playwright, lyricist, essayist and visual artist, amongst many other occupations. In her role as patron, she provides the project with insights on her hopes for theatre today.

There is evidently much to say about theatre. As an art, theatre is live, direct and collective; it stands in contrast to the loneliness invading our society.

## THE NEED FOR HUMAN COMPANY IS, AND SHALL CONTINUE TO BE, ESSENTIAL. THEATRE CAN PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THIS ARENA

Let's talk about this loneliness: a person can spend months without talking to another human being by shopping on the internet, paying bills online, and so on... In a magazine I recently saw a human-size robot in what looked like three-dimensional medieval armour. According to the advertisement, this “being” can perform domestic chores, talk... It immediately dawned on me that some older and lonely people could genuinely fall in love with that creature due to their utter solitude, and this made me cry.

So the need for human company is, and shall continue to be, essential. Theatre can play a significant role in this arena, while also finding a vehicle for self-renewal. Local theatres could become places for people to assemble by, for example, fostering post-performance discussions between the actors and the audience. They can even express the type of plays they will wish to see on stage, and thus feel involved, instead of being subjected to whatever other people decide to present. That approach would be one of the ways to open up the future of theatre, and on the other hand allows us to find again some of the spirit of the origin of the Greek theatre that was linked to the spirit of genuine democracy.

Schools can very well be used as structures to initiate young people into famous dramatic works by using innovative ways to teach them: roles, for example, can be distributed among the students, who will read out loud and personify the various characters. They will learn directly, from the start, how it feels to be Hedda Gabler, Hamlet or Phaedra... The classroom will become a little stage, and participation in the theatre an agreeable and intellectually stimulating experience.

I was thinking recently about the particular case of the children of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Some schools are being created for them, and it seems to me that some new ideas adapted to the circumstances of their lives could be put into action. These children have been traumatized and their lives are still more uncertain than the lives of ordinary children. This is true for refugees all over the world.



**Etel Adnan,**  
patron of the Art of Ageing project

I dream that some stage directors (who don't necessarily need to be well known) will come to one of these schools and try something new and worthwhile: with permission from the school principal, let a stage director, a beginner one if necessary, organize students into little groups and encourage them to act out their own experiences, their own lives. It will be like improvising plays, and they can learn many things without even realizing that they are learning: in the process they will learn who they are, what the other children are feeling, what it means to express oneself, and implicitly understand the essence of theatre: that they are all performing already with their lives, a role, a role linked to other people's roles; and that there's a solidarity between them, like at a theatre company or a symphonic ensemble. They will feel their own "importance" as not just a suffering object. I think the experiment is worth trying out.

Anyway, it seems to me that it is obvious that the arts in the twenty-first century need to be dusted off, to be refreshed, to find a new innocence.

The twentieth century, in the theatre, has had its great writers. To name a few: Lorca, expressing the "soul" of Spain, the power of the passions that animates its people; Brecht, with his immense political sense, politics in the ancient Greek sense, his knowledge of how human life is essentially "politics"; Heiner Müller, his understanding that the world we live in is about the simultaneous destruction of the individual and of the countries they live in. But so much is still lacking: the contemporary world is full of great tragedies, which continue in an uninterrupted way. There have been two world wars, bloody revolutions, immense repressions, dismantlements of nations such as Yugoslavia, for instance, wholesale massacres such as in Cambodia, enough to need many Shakespeares, and where are they? There have been, and are, presidents, rulers who could be the new Hamlet/Carter, Macbeth/Bush... new monsters...

There are new confrontations, new religious/political wars, worthy of the age of the Inquisition or the Reformation... (Brecht foresaw it with his "Galileo"!)

We are in a totally apocalyptic world (even more so if we include the destruction of our environment), and this is not finding expression on the stages of the many theatres in the cities... These issues don't need to be the subject of huge productions. On the contrary, it would perhaps be more useful to tackle these big subject matters in small places, with a fresh eye, away from the literary conventions that we are prisoners of. Things can be powerful and small scaled. It depends on deep concern, on honesty, on simplicity, on full commitment. To a new world: let's create a new theatre!

"WE LIVE  
AS THOUGH  
WE WILL  
NEVER  
DIE"

ETEL ADNAN,  
BADISCHE NEUESTE NACHRICHTEN,  
7 DECEMBER 2013

MICHAEL GMAJ

# LOVE HURTS. AT A CERTAIN HOUR OF THE NIGHT

## ABOUT ETEL ADNAN

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

Writing, on the other hand, is for Adnan more social in the way that we use it to share words with each other. For her, words are a suitable medium for expressing political beliefs, disappointment and sadness. In her poetical essay for documenta 13 in Kassel “The cost for love we are not willing to pay”, she writes, “Love can and does engage one’s whole being. It involves exploration, risk taking, revolution in one’s life.

It can take you to top of the Himalayas, to a ridge of volcanoes, to caves or laboratories; it will reveal your self to yourself. Who can endure for a long time such an internal upheaval? The lovers themselves end up fearing their happiness and feel ready to destroy it.”

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

## ABOUT THE PLAY

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

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



Eva Derleder,  
Antonia Mohr

## THEATRE REVIEW

OTTO PAUL BURKHARDT

# ON THE VERGE

THEATER DER ZEIT, JANUARY 2014

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

The actors have to take care to avoid an element of kitsch. Adnan’s dialogue appears to show depths and float at the same time. This poetic tone may seem strange to contemporary ears more accustomed to the realism that currently dominates contemporary drama. The ensemble in Karlsruhe performed the premiere production of “At a certain hour of the night” without a whiff of pretension; instead, they perform the dialogue – or, more accurately, lyrical reflections of a past, intense existential

phase of love – with a refreshing clarity and directness. The result: the contours of a drama emerge from what had seemed to be a retrospective encounter between two former lovers. [...]

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

The various life phases on view on the stage don’t leave much room for equality and harmony: instead, the partners act on two large, parallel seesaws that render their debates about remembered emotions as an alternating up-and-down rollercoaster of motion. The actors (Eva Derleder, Antonia Mohr, Robert Besta and Ronald Funke) offer highly different interpretations of the six roles: while the older partners struggle to make amends with the lives they didn’t live and keep a tight lid on their emotions, the younger couple won’t accept the earlier rejection and continues to fight it. [...] This piece – which is not about love, but about the different stages of life – explodes gender-based determination in a staging that is quiet, precise and polyphonous, thus making it the perfect prologue to the European theatre project “The Art of Ageing.” [...]

Sophia Löffler

# THE CLOCK IS TICKING

**BY PECA STEFAN**

A coproduction by Badisches  
Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Germany &  
Teatrul Național Timișoara, Romania

in German and Romanian language



K  
NG

BY MICHAEL GMAJ

# YES. NO. ASK ME AGAIN WHEN I'M 60

From Karlsruhe to Timișoara, Europeans are getting older. Both partner cities share a common past, as most of the Banat Swabians returned to Germany after World War II. Many continue to maintain a strong connection with their former home in the Banat and its capital city Timișoara. The German State Theatre of Karlsruhe is working together for the first time with the Romanian National Theatre Timișoara in its partner city.

What was life like for older people in the past? What will happen in a society when the majority of the population is elderly? And when will the dream of eternal youth come true for the lucky few with the help of modern medicine?

By 2040, the population of Europe will increase by 24 million. By 2060, 42 per cent of the population will be over 65. As early as six years from now, Europe will suffer from a major labour shortage. There are two contradictory forces currently at work in Europe: its young population continues to shrink and thus lose political sway, while the growing elderly population pursues its own interests and takes measures to ensure the preservation of its standard of living. The Romanian dramatist Peca Stefan conducted research in both countries to create his virtuoso comedy featuring four actors, two Germans and two Romanians, to serve as a platform for inter-generational dialogue.

Together with his team of directors, the author created nine self-contained scenes for "The Clock is ticking / Die Uhr tickt / Pe ceas," which can never be shown in its entirety in a single evening; instead, scenes are selected depending on how the audience votes and answers certain questions. For the first three scenes, the audience is asked to consider questions concerning the "beginning," "middle," or "end" of life. The play "The clock is ticking" invites the public to serve as voters, regardless of age, to decide as a group the best way to spend the 60 minutes of the play's running time. A single audience member is then chosen to select the final scene from the remaining pool. Once time runs out, the play is over and the post-performance get-together with the actors and the audience can begin.

ABOUT  
THE PLAY

ARTISTIC  
RESEARCH

PECA STEFAN

SHOULD AGEING  
ONLY BE ABOUT TIMING?

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

To address age and ageing is not the most simple research topic. Beyond statistics and theories, the subject of ageing is extremely subjective and raises a lot of questions. A demographic decline in Europe set against unprecedented population growth worldwide. Questions about the age(ing) of humanity itself. Prolonging life. The progress of science, technology and health versus the consumption of natural resources and environmental change. Religion versus education. Migration. Decline and progress. Diversity. The politics of dealing with ageing populations. Economic shifts and current economic reality. Responsibility. Intergenerational relations. Inheritance. But what about inner ageing? Self-awareness. Self-projection. Social memory versus personal memory. What is the psychology of it all? And what is the timing of it, at a moment when it seems – more than ever – that we’re on some sort of timer to resolve many of these matters, in order to guarantee the survival of humankind itself? Where are we on the clock as it ticks? Beyond data, I’ve always been fascinated with how people perceive their own age, remember previous ages and project ages to come. Ageing is a process that never stops, and it’s extremely interesting to compare how

people age in two EU countries which are at the opposite ends of the spectrum: the economic champion Germany, one of the fundamental European cultures and Romania, a country still recovering from its communist past, where traces of the Middle Ages can still be found in the daily life of its rural communities.

At the end of the research period there was enough material for five plays, not just one. On top of it all, there was my everlasting fascination with time and my own philosophy about how I am getting older. But it wasn’t just me. The subjectivity of ageing and its perception remained at the core of all the findings. It seemed extremely relevant and exciting to me to create a concept that would address one question: how do we decide to get older together? What if we had only a concrete performance time, and a social situation (such as a theatrical convention) that urges us to make a decision? Quite literally, the clock would tick. What happens when we know we only have 60 minutes? How do we decide to spend that time? What if we are aware we’re getting older with each second? And what if we know the performance is never the same, just as our own lives are never the same?

What if we would only get to experience this night with the others who have come here, knowing that no other audience will experience exactly the same thing? What if the hour we get to experience is the consequence of another audience being here before us (an inheritance)? And what do we leave to the next audience?

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

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

## BEHIND THE SCENES

GEANINA JINARU-DOBOȘ,

# ABOUT COMMUNION, ABOUT AGEING TOGETHER

As a dramaturge at the National Theatre Timișoara, Geanina takes a look back at the very first steps of the project up until the day of the premiere.

“I promise you youth without old age and life without death, my son. And the Emperor’s son stopped crying and agreed to be born into this world.” This is how a prince’s quest for immortality begins in this Romanian folktale, my personal favourite, one of the most unusual, beautiful, and which is often subject to philosophical interpretation.

Our journey of discovery with “The Art of Ageing” begins in Nottingham, in May 2011, when the idea first arose of bringing together several theatres for a major project dedicated to the many implications of ageing in contemporary society. At the ETC General Assembly in Miskolc a year later, after deciding that our theatres would be on the same team, Jan Linders and I were contemplating how we could not just create a great co-production, but also how we could reconcile two profoundly different attitudes toward ageing – one based on concern and one on denial, if you will – which stemmed from our respective societies. On a sun-bathed terrace in the Hungarian mountain town, we talked about ageing societies, the promise of never-ending youth brought about by the latest scientific discoveries and the right for euthanasia, but also about the generation gap in a country like Romania, where there is an acute need to re-think old ideals and attitudes, or the responsibilities each generation carries for the immediate future. Above all, we

both talked about our ageing loved ones, and the way that we were both ageing with every passing moment on that sunny afternoon.

## HOW WE COULD RECONCILE TWO PROFOUNDLY DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARD AGEING ONE BASED ON CONCERN AND ONE ON DENIAL

This profoundly human approach to our chosen theme was very dear to me, and I discovered it later while assisting Peca in his research. We carried on numerous interviews, and the surprising, thought-provoking or simply very personal questions Peca had in store for our interlocutors brought about a wonderful array of human emotions and life stories. We heard tales of victory and loss, of barren pasts and spectacular futures, of deep bonds and terrible loneliness, of sweet irresponsibility and wise concern.

Spoiler alert: the Emperor’s son discovers his much coveted immortality, only to lose it all with one (unconscious?) wrong step into the Valley of Tears that brings back all memories of his lost mortal life. One day, before our first performance in front of an audience

in Timișoara, I remember climbing the stairs of Sala 2, breathing heavily from my advanced pregnancy – days later I gave birth to my perfect baby boy. The rehearsal that night was tense, some technical details went wrong and you could tell there was a lot of pressure on the actors. Most importantly, it seemed

like there was something missing – I recognized that feeling in theatre when we’re just about to witness a moment of magic. And that magical moment did come as soon as the first line was uttered on stage, before the first audience. It was no longer about great acting or directing, a well-crafted story (or several stories in our case), or daring video effects, though at the same time these things were relevant. It was about communion, about ageing together, about having one more great story to share. I guess it’s like in our folktale: we only come to feel life in all its awesomeness the moment we lose our chance at immortality.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

SABINA BIJAN AND COLIN BUZOIANU

# THE PRESENCE OF HISTORY

During the rehearsal period in Karlsruhe, the Romanian actors Sabina Bijan and Colin Buzoianu visited an exhibition about the Romanian revolution in 1989, which began in Timișoara. The exhibition was organized by the union of friends of twin cities Karlsruhe-Timișoara. In the following interview, the actors discuss the city's turbulent history and share their impressions of Karlsruhe.

**COLIN:**

How old were you during the revolution?

**SABINA:**

I was fifteen. You?

**COLIN:**

Ten. That was in 1989. At the time I didn't really understand what was going on. What did you think about the exhibition?

**SABINA:**

It was like a punch in the gut. They showed a film with images that every Romanian knows – street fighting, the shootings, the victims. It felt like everything had just happened.

**COLIN:**

I felt the same way. One of the photographs was taken from your balcony, right?

**SABINA:**

That's right. My mother knew the photographer. It was a scary time. While I couldn't really understand what was happening, it nonetheless seemed like something good could come from it. We didn't really think about communism or about Ceausescu's regime because we were just born into this system and grew up with it; it was, in other words, our reality.

We certainly knew about other countries that were not communist and seemed to have much more than we did. For example, I remember flipping through a German magazine and seeing pictures of chocolate and Haribo. Back then we dreamed about this kind of thing, even if it seems absurd today.

**COLIN:**

The revolution started around Christmastime, so we didn't have school. I was at home. We lived close to the Opera Square in the centre of town. The revolutionaries made speeches from the opera balcony. That's also where the first shots were fired. During the first few days we could still leave the house, but as things got worse they barricaded the entrance to our block. So we were basically under house arrest. I remember hearing shots fired and people screaming. Were you at home, too?

**SABINA:**

My mother, sister and I basically hid in the bathroom because it was the only room that had no windows. We spent so much time laughing. At some point we just couldn't take it anymore and had some kind of nervous breakdown where the only thing we could do was laugh.

We just cracked under the pressure. Wasn't it a strange Christmas that year, after all the shooting was over?

**COLIN:**

Everything was so calm. Everybody was bursting with optimism after the fighting, after Ceausescu fell.

**SABINA:**

An eerie calm descended after the noise abated. Everyone was waiting for something to happen, but it never did. For years I couldn't stand the noise of fireworks because they brought back memories of the shooting. The noise made me afraid and panicky. There were so many senseless victims – the prisoners, and many who were beaten or killed.

**COLIN:**

It's so quiet in Karlsruhe. People here seem to have an internal calm – "Karl's calm\*". *Both laugh.* They seem to be taking in the city's atmosphere.

**SABINA:**

That said, Karlsruhe and Timișoara do have one thing in common...

**COLIN:**

What's that?

**SABINA:**

The construction sites. *Both laugh.* It's enough to make me feel right at home. The entire downtown district has been ripped apart at home. Is this your first visit to Germany?

**COLIN:**

No, I was already here a few times. First as an exchange student in Saarland. The German high school in Timișoara, the Nikolaus-Lenau-Lyzeum, always organised these exchange programmes. I later spent two semesters at the acting school in Leipzig as part of my training. Funnily enough, I was the first and last exchange student from Romania. The exchange programme wasn't much of a success.

This is your first time in Germany. How do you like it?

**SABINA:**

It's interesting. I didn't come with any specific expectations. But I had already heard many stories about the Germans, nothing good. Romanians find them aloof and distant.

**COLIN:**

Or maybe organised and orderly. Did the stories turn out to be true?

**SABINA:**

No. I really feel enriched by the encounters I have had here. I love to discover new things and experience new ways of living. Things are definitely different here than in Romania, for good and bad.

**COLIN:**

The older people especially seem happier than at home. Being old in Romania is different than it is here. Financial concerns play a role, because pensions are very small. They don't consider senior years to be a meaningful stage of life, like people here do. They are much more pessimistic than in Karlsruhe.

**SABINA:**

Here, older people can laugh and enjoy good health – this is something you don't often see in Timișoara. There, every day is a fight for survival. People often lose their sense of dignity in old age and there isn't much to be happy about. People are cared for by their families and no one is sent to a senior citizens' home. My grandmother lives with my mother. They pool their resources.

**COLIN:**

That brings us back to our play. The author Peca Stefan managed to unite two very different modes of living, that of senior citizens in Romania and Germany.

**SABINA:**

I totally agree. And yet I am still amazed to see how much we have in common. And how intertwined the stories people tell in Timișoara are with those of the Germans.

\* Karlsruhe can mean "Karl's calm" in German

**Choir of the Banat Swabians**  
from Karlsruhe in  
"The clock is ticking"



# BEHIND THE SCENES

SOPHIA LÖFFLER AND JAN ANDREESEN

# MULȚUMESC! THANK YOU!

Sophia Löffler and Jan Andreesen, actors from the German State Theatre Karlsruhe, discovered a new theatre environment in Romania – an experience that they will never forget.

## SOPHIA LÖFFLER

As soon as I found out that we were going to do a project with the National Theatre in Timișoara I definitely wanted to be a part of this German-Romanian co-production because I love getting to know a new country through work rather than as a tourist.

Unlike Karlsruhe, Timișoara has a vibrant atmosphere that benefited both our creative work as well as our work as a group. Meeting the Romanian audience was especially fascinating for me because it is very diverse and includes people of all ages and social backgrounds. Even before the premiere began you could just feel the positive energy coming from the audience to the stage. The audience was so filled with anticipation for the play that was about to begin that their enthusiasm was infectious. This created an unmediated sense of belonging between the audience and actors. I've felt the same openness from the public at every performance in Romania.

In Germany, on the other hand, I've often seen audience members who make me wonder why they bothered to come to the performance; they sit with their arms crossed and scowl as though I'd just stolen their bratwurst. Of course, fighting for your audience is always an exciting challenge; nevertheless, the receptiveness of the Romanian audiences created the ideal conditions for experiencing something totally new, a unique theatre

experience for all. As an actress, it also gave me a new, fresh look at my chosen profession.

After the performance we heard cries of "Mulțumesc!" for the time we had spent together and were hugged by many in the audience. I probably never would have come to Romania if I hadn't done this project because I didn't have any personal connection to the country. I had a few days off between performances, so I rented a car and drove through the Carpathian Mountains. So I could at least play tourist for a few days in this country that is just full of surprises.

## JAN ANDREESEN

I'm not much of a traveller. I was raised in East Frisia in the north of Germany and we used to spend summer vacations in Beilstein, which is a town located between Ludwigsburg and Heilbronn. Every summer for six whole weeks. Later we went to Denmark and I went to Italy twice on school trips. Other than that, I had never really wanted to travel. Being an exchange student for a year in America – or even closer to home in France – never appealed to me. I never even had an Interrail ticket.

I have to admit that I had a few reservations when I first found out that I would be a part of this co-production with the National Theatre of Timișoara.

First of all, I wasn't sure if my English would be good enough and feared that two weeks in Romania would be too difficult.

I can still remember arriving all alone at the "Piața Victoriei," the square in front of the opera house, and how I felt unsure of myself. With all these fears racing through my mind, I was panicky and stood there holding on to my luggage for dear life. Thankfully, my fears quickly dissipated and I felt completely relaxed the very next day. After two weeks in Timișoara I was very happy.

This co-production has really opened up the world for me. Before the trip, I wasn't even aware of everything the world has to offer. I have only gotten my first taste of the world out there, but now I want much more.

I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to work in a city far away from home, in a country with a different language and culture – and to have really experienced this new world, not just as a tourist. Experiencing the Romanian view of life, way of thinking and its work customs gave me new insights about my own life and way of thinking.

And it won't end there. After the premiere in Timișoara I had a few days off before work resumed in Karlsruhe. I spent my time travelling to Serbia, Macedonia and Greece. I have already planned many trips for the future and, if I ever have the opportunity to work abroad in the future, then I will be ready for all of the adventures that await me.

At this point I would like to extend my thanks to the city, the country and the people who made this amazing experience possible: Mulțumesc!

# EXTRACT

## SCENE

# BIRTH NEGOTIATION

NEGOTIATOR.

[...] Have a seat. Go on. *MOM sits down on a chair. NEGOTIATOR does a rather silly kung fu warm-up.*

MOM.

What's that for?

NEGOTIATOR.

Feng shui against statistics and pro miracles.

MOM.

Huh?

NEGOTIATOR.

Only 0.5 children have actually agreed to be born in the past 15 years. And that 0.5 kid was transgender. You're aiming really big here. [...] Space and energy. You should learn that from your unborn kids. [...]

*SABRINA AND MARIUS APPEAR. MOM IS AMAZED.*

SABRINA.

This sucks.

MARIUS.

Is this the best you can do?

MOM.

Oh, my God! It's both of them... right here.

NEGOTIATOR, *ignoring Mom.*

Look. I'm really sorry we cannot show you the real world yet but I have recordings and websites that you can check out. As we promise you, this is not about the world but about you meeting the person who has conceived you.

SABRINA.

I only see this woman.

MOM.

Elena... I'm your mother! You're so beautiful. And... grown up.

NEGOTIATOR.

We project them as adults. This is what they would look like in about 30 years if they make it out there.

SABRINA.

Elena?! Wait a second. My name is Sabrina.

MOM.

But Elena was the name of your great-grandmother. It's a beautiful Romanian name.

NEGOTIATOR.

Let's stick to Sabrina. If Sabrina chose it, it's her name now. The same goes for her twin brother... What's your name again?

MARIUS.

Marius.

NEGOTIATOR.

Marius! Well done! Great choice of names, you guys. That's what you'll get in our world: freedom of choice. We have it all the time, in all forms.

SABRINA.

What's Romanian? She said something about Romanian!

MOM.

That's the language you're speaking. It used to be a country as well. Romania.

SABRINA.

Why?

NEGOTIATOR.

It's just a code. It doesn't matter: the country is gone.

MARIUS.

That's what I speak too?

NEGOTIATOR.

No, you speak German. You take after the father.

MARIUS.

I don't see a father! Where is the father?!

MOM.

Your father couldn't make it. He's German.

NEGOTIATOR.

Was German. Germany also used to be a country.

[...]

MARIUS.

Obviously we're wasting our time here. It's much better in oblivion.

[...]

MOM.

I'm just here to say that I'm your mother and I love you very much. You'll be very happy with me.

SABRINA.

In Romania? Thanks but no thanks.

MOM.

No, but I live in Germany now. What used to be Germany. It's all one big state, all over Europe.

NEGOTIATOR.

That's true. Even Russia's in it.

MARIUS.

What can you do in Germany?

NEGOTIATOR.

You mean the United States of Europe.

MOM.

It's great. I have a house. Two rooms for each of you. We even have some water supplies. The weather is sometimes capricious but we can manage. Social security still works. We live far away from the desert and there are still about 100 trees in the Black Forest. It's a small paradise.

SABRINA.

100 trees? Not what the brochure said. Then what about Romania?

MOM.

We can go there if you'd like. My mom's house is in Timișoara. 2 hours by plane. There are also mountains, and deserts. And some oases. With figs. But not so many people anymore.

MARIUS.

Did someone kill them?

SABRINA.

They obviously killed each other.

NEGOTIATOR.

I'm pretty sure they died by themselves. No children. No immigrants. Pretty sad.

SABRINA.

What a great choice.

MARIUS.

Not even a war!

[...]

SABRINA.

And we'll have to live with her?

NEGOTIATOR.

Just until the time you're 18. Tops! Please have a look. It's a five-star package. What the hell... it's a ten-star package.

*SABRINA and MARIUS look through the files. They discuss amongst themselves the benefits, while MOM and NEGOTIATOR wait impatiently.*

SABRINA.

I have a question. Here it says no people have been born since 2053. What if I want to get into a relationship with somebody? I cannot do it with my own brother.

NEGOTIATOR.

Our hopes are high that other children will be born soon. That's why we raised the benefits. And in any case there are very realistic androids and cyborgs that can satisfy all your needs. I mean, sexual needs. It's all very safe. You can have sex with anyone anytime.

[...]

MARIUS.

What about this work thing? It says here we'll both get jobs after university.

NEGOTIATOR.

Yes, indeed. We provide top education and guaranteed employment.

MARIUS.

And what if I don't want to work? 'Cause I don't. I kind of want to party.

MOM.

That's just youth talking, darling.

NEGOTIATOR.

Please! In the process of growing up... ageing as they call it... you might discover different wants. But please DO look at chapter 1. We give you freedom of wanting. You can want freely. So if you don't want to work... basically no one can stop you.

MARIUS.

I like that.

[...]

SABRINA.

Do I have to be a Christian?

MOM.

The tradition says I should baptize you when you're about six months.

NEGOTIATOR.

No, you don't! As I said... complete freedom of choice. Only if you choose to be religious. And only if you like the idea of Christianity.

[...]

MOM.

Please... There has to be at least a type of heritage.

NEGOTIATOR.

No heritage. No history. It's their choice. These are the rules. These are the rules, you guys.

[...]

SABRINA.

It's not that! It's not objects or belongings. I miss something else. A different type of promise.

NEGOTIATOR.

Come on. Be reasonable. You have all the promises you can think of in there. Property, social security, political freedom and decision, free flights.

SABRINA.

You have to give us something else.

MOM.

I'll give you love.

SABRINA.

Not just you. I didn't mean one person.

NEGOTIATOR.

I'll give you love. Especially when you grow up. Everybody will love you once you're born. They'll just come and tell you you're lovely, and grab your cheeks.

MARIUS.

What do you mean grab my cheeks?

NEGOTIATOR.

A lot of love. That's what I mean.

SABRINA.

That's just what the two of you are saying. Somehow I feel that's not true. We need other proof. So, last question: how can you guarantee we'll be happy? What chapter is that?

NEGOTIATOR.

Well...

SABRINA.

Not just you. But we want others to promise us happy things. Get us those promises, from other people. And we'll consider it.

MARIUS.

We will?

SABRINA.

Yes. You have 5 minutes.

NEGOTIATOR.

I'll get right to it!

*MARIUS and SABRINA exit.*

NEGOTIATOR.

Shit! We're so close. This is historical greatness almost! We don't have to fuck it up!

MOM.

Yeah, but what can I promise other than love?

NEGOTIATOR.

Not you. Let me think! Franz, give me some lights. It's good that we have some interns here. Good people we need your help so two beautiful twins are born. Give me your best promises of a good life for them that would make them happy. Let's hear it, please.

MOM.

Please help us. I might be the first mother in a long, long time.

*NEGOTIATOR and MOM collect promises from the audience. Once the 5 minutes are up, SABRINA and MARIUS re-enter, stopping the collecting of promises.*

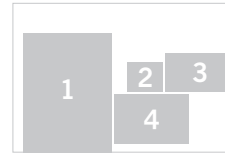
THEATRE  
REVIEW

# A SOCIOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT IN TIMIȘOARA

ADEVĂRUL, 9 SEPTEMBER 2014

Without taking into account what the same theoreticians call "the time to settle" (about 20 minutes), the performance lasted 60 minutes in total. [...] These minutes reminded me that while at the theatre you experience time differently than the actors even though you are with them at precisely the same time. You get old when they get old. You exit a performance not only with a much richer inner experience, but also biologically changed. When do you feel that you have aged? Do you think it's important to raise the age of retirement? What is our relationship to not only the time we lived in, but also with the history we experienced, etc. [...] Let's face it: All these questions are extremely serious, but they are treated in a playful manner. [...] The performance itself is exhausting for the performers. [...] They perform extremely well, they perform with a young spirit, and if they always remind us that at the end of this 60-minute performance we shall all be 60 minutes older, they nonetheless make us all feel much younger than we really are.





- 1** / Colin Buzoianu, Sophia Löffler
- 2** / Sabina Bijan, Jan Andreesen, Colin Buzoianu
- 3** / Colin Buzoianu, Sabina Bijan
- 4** / Colin Buzoianu, Sophia Löffler, Jan Andreesen



Gina Calinoiu,  
Sven Hönig

# STRAU ORPH

**BY WERKGRUPPE2**

A coproduction by Staatstheater  
Braunschweig, Germany & Teatrul Național  
„Marin Sorescu“ Craiova, Romania

in German and Romanian language



# STRAWBERRY ORPHANS

BY SILKE MERZHÄUSER AND AXEL PREUB

## A JOURNEY TO A LOST GENERATION IN ROMANIA

### ABOUT THE PLAY

The term “EU orphans” designates a generation of children in Eastern Europe whose parents have left the country in order to find employment in countries like Spain, Italy, Greece or Germany. These parents are known as “strawberryists” in Romania, regardless of whether they left to help with harvests or perform another kind of seasonal labour, or whether they work as health care aides for the elderly or infirm, in construction, the docks or as craftspeople. An estimated 3.4 million Romanians work abroad, which totals one-fifth of all workers. Whenever the parents work abroad, it is the children who remain. The project “Strawberry orphans / Erdbeerwaisen / Căpșunile și Orfanii” probes the issue of absence: Who takes over the role of the absent parents? Who replaces them? When or where are they missed? What are the consequences for the children and the entire family, whether emotional, structural or long-term?

The NGO Save the Children, which has offered strong support for the project, has stated that: “In Romania, 25% of the population lives in poverty. Average net earnings total approximately 300 EUR a month. The transition to a market economy had dramatic social and economic consequences. High unemployment continues to be rampant, while the weak economy continues to negatively impact living standards for many Romanians.”

"THE  
DEVIL'S EYES  
ARE MADE  
OF  
MONEY"

ROMANIAN PROVERB

# ARTISTIC RESEARCH

## AXEL PREUB AND SILKE MERZHÄUSER EU ORPHANS

Transforming meticulous research into a dialogue with art.  
A theatre documentary project.

The project “Strawberry orphans / Erdbeerwaisen / Căpșunile și Orfanii” is based on intensive research. In September and November 2013, werkgruppe2 travelled to Craiova on behalf of the German State Theatre of Braunschweig and the Romanian National Theatre of Craiova. The goal was to contact families who could be interviewed and trailed as they went about their daily lives. The written version that is to be performed on the stage is based on interviews with children, grandparents and other relatives in Craiova and its suburbs. The interviews were conducted with the help of interpreters in simple one-family houses or in their gardens. Children were often interviewed apart from their grandparents. They were asked about life with their grandparents, living without their parents, about school and their plans for the future, while conversations with the grandparents focused instead on their retirement – or lack thereof – and about their responsibility for their children and family, public welfare and their own goals in life. The results offered a penetrating look at their daily lives and express a critical view of Romania’s entry into the EU and the widespread consequences thereof. An entire generation of grandparents seems to lack sufficient social security. Basic survival is a struggle for many families.

All of the interviews were recorded anonymously, transcribed and condensed into dialogue to be spoken by actors. Interview subjects will be represented on stage by four actors, two from the ensemble of the State Theatre of Braunschweig and the “Marin Sorescu” National Theatre of Craiova respectively.

To date, there are no accurate estimates of the number of EU orphans in Romania. Back in 2008, UNICEF estimated that there about 350,000. There are increasingly frequent reports of children who commit suicide and lament their lost mothers in suicide letters. Nineteen cases of this were documented in 2006 and 2007 alone. The organisations World Vision and Save the Children provided important contacts for research: both have bases in the region Dolj and strive as much as they can to offer assistance to EU orphans and their families. Both organisations receive no state funding and are dependant on financing from the EU or non-governmental sources. Social workers organise after-school day-care services for children, but grandparents are also eligible for support if they have to resume the parents’ roles, which entails assuming responsibility for the children, helping them with homework, feeding and clothing them, helping them with their problems and taking an active interest in the children’s pastimes. Beyond issues related to age, the generation gap also poses a problem: how can grandparents understand and raise their grandchildren if they lack familiarity with the things

that are increasingly important to the children, such as smartphones, tablets, supermodels or the Champions League? While these concerns may seem trivial at first glance, the children may feel lonely and like no one understands them, even if they still have their grandparents. And often the grandparents are not available, just older siblings or, even worse, nobody at all.



According to an employee of Save the Children who was interviewed by werkgruppe2 during their field research, “This life is traumatic for all three generations. This stems from the fact that children are often promised a visit from their parents on a certain day, such as Christmas, but when it doesn’t happen, then they make up excuses for the children. Once the children notice that they are being lied to and that their parents aren’t coming as promised, then they begin to have doubts about everything, develop an insecurity. Sometimes children need

support because they no longer know where they belong – do they belong to the grandparents who do everything for them, or to the absent parents? Regardless of the grandparents’ efforts, they can never replace the parents. That’s why we always tell parents planning to go abroad that they should carefully prepare their children for the upcoming separation. Parents need to clearly communicate how long they will be gone and explain why they need to travel. We know of cases in which the parents brought the children with them, but they often return alone and face problems with reintegration and

with returning to the educational system in Romania. It is often not even possible to bring the children. The project is financed with support from the European Union. Decision makers need to know about projects like this and the need they face. Every child needs affection, especially these children.”

## BEHIND THE SCENES

# JULIA ROESLER

# REHEARSALS IN BRAUNSCHWEIG

We just started the practical work in Braunschweig, Germany, by performing lots of improvisations and undertaking the first steps for the staging. One main challenge was the way to find a common language for the stage performance, which is now a mixture of Romanian, German and English. It is quite amazing to see that this is working.

For me, the most fascinating point of this project is the international exchange in aesthetics and intellectual approaches.

The difficult discussions we had about justice, guilt and racism opened my mind in particular. It should have been obvious, but the fact that this production joins people from one of the poorest and one of the richest countries in the EU really means that we connect very different perspectives on the chances and risks of this whole European Union. For now, it really feels like a very good chance to reflect on my own positions and question things that I had previously not doubted.

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## BEHIND THE SCENES

LIA BOANGIU

# THE STRAWBERRY PICKER'S HERITAGE – ERDBEERWAISEN

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

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

When I was little, I was under the impression that the world can only evolve and constantly improve, albeit at a slow pace. This only seemed natural, probably thanks to the stories I read, which always ended well for all of the good characters. I honestly believed then that politicians could learn from their mistakes and would automatically avoid repeating history, and I was convinced

that economists can only improve the methods meant to control the economy. I have no better understanding of these things now, but at least I understand that everything is much too complicated and that people don’t always know, or do, what’s best. Nor do Romanians know whether it’s always best to go and work in other countries; but when it seems to be the only option, and many others around you are doing it, then you don’t waste time in securing your chance.

Thus, we have long become accustomed to the thought that people go away to Spain, Italy, England, Greece, Germany and many other countries where this very complicated economy seems to be more stable. And we’re used to hearing stories about those who left – some better, some worse. We, from the younger generations, have friends whose parents seem to have always been away, friends who come to aspire to the same goal because it’s the best example of success they’ve seen.

It is also commonly known, although a generalization, that the orphans whose parents have left either miss a lot of school, or barely learn anything.

“STRAWBERRY ORPHANS” TURNS INTO A FUNDAMENTAL REFLECTION, BECAUSE IT RESTORES A NEUTRAL PERSPECTIVE ON A SITUATION THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON IN ROMANIA FOR SUCH A LONG TIME

They also say that all Roma people went abroad to steal or beg. Lots of other stereotypes circulate among us, both orally and from the media; the foreign media and the Romanian press

have magnified these stereotypes to increase sales, and we've taken them on without even realizing it. The subject of the strawberry pickers has been discussed so often that we know tune it out. This is why the performance of a work like "Strawberry Orphans" turns into a fundamental reflection, because it restores a neutral perspective on a situation that has been going on in Romania for such a long time. [...] The actors Gina Călinoiu, Gabriela Baci, Sven Hönig and Oliver Simon animated these characters who live among us, and who were so real on stage that they must have brought tears to spectators' eyes throughout the performance. On stage with the actors was musician Kim Efert, who provided the live soundtrack created with an electric guitar, synthesizers, a drum brush, and rhythmic tapping on the enormous cardboard box that was, in turn, a closet, the actors' wardrobe kit, a children's playground, or any other necessary piece of furniture. [...]

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

The situation is clearly overwhelming for all of those involved, perhaps even more so for those who only know of these cases, like the Romanians, or for those who meet these cases in their own countries, like the Germans, Italians, Spanish, French and so on. And yet we're the ones who might be able to help, we whose families are at least together; the people who talked to the artists from werkgruppe2 often receive aid from the NGOs involved in this project, which are mostly interested in providing the children



During a visit with one of the families

with school supplies, making sure they can continue with their studies even when life at home is difficult. Projects like "Strawberry orphans" are necessary, because they remind us not to become used to a tough situation, even if it's been going on for such a long time that we barely notice it anymore. Habit leads to negligence, forgetfulness and indifference; and the theatre must take on a social role as well, like any of the arts – something that the collaborating artists have fully managed with this show. A show that, if analyzed from a purely aesthetic point of view, is well put together, played by discerning and skilled actors, and carrying that quality of keeping spectators on the edge of their seats, only this time being uncomfortable as well, because the theme itself brought to mind conflicting thoughts and emotions; a modern show directed with precision and minimal use of raw matter, but generous in its subject matter, range of emotions and interpretation.

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## EXTRACT

What should we do?  
What should we do?//

The mother, my granddaughter lied to her,  
she said she's staying for a little while  
and now she's not coming back.//

Patricia said her mother will get a beating  
when she comes back, because she lied  
to her.//  
I cried when I've heard that.  
It's awful. There are four of them away,  
four grandchildren.//

One of them is for eight years now in  
Schottland and a girl is in....not in Spain,  
I don't remember the country now.//

And Patricia's mother and her sister are  
in Germany. They were there last year  
and are now also there. They have some  
work there and they are going. Three  
months now. Last year they were there for  
two months and a week and that's why  
I wonder now... They say they are being  
held up, until everything is done. Until  
now, they harvested everything clear, but  
now other strawberries are ripe. Initially  
there were 500 people and now 60  
remained. And they cannot leave until the  
work is done.//

I don't know what to say more.//

I think the worst is for the girl and for  
her mother, 'cause they suffer too much.  
What shall they do?...That's all the  
money she has. To take care of the girl.  
They borrowed some money and now she  
owns money, 'cause that's why she went  
abroad, to give the money back.//

Well, I'm here. I had a piece of land, but  
I cannot work it anymore. My back, I  
can't walk anymore, my feet are not ok  
anymore. And I'm here with Patricia.//

I don't have a phone, I don't talk on the  
phone.

Patricia talks to her mother and the mo-  
ther with the daughters' father. They don't  
let her talk to me anymore, 'cause then  
the other one cries too. They told me, she  
cried for three days. Please, so they said,  
don't talk to her anymore, because she'll  
cry again for three days afterwards.//

I don't feel like singing, I don't feel like  
anything, anymore.

The biggest wish would be them to find  
work and them to be in the country, to  
come in the evening to their children.  
That would be the biggest wish.//

And mine would be, but I have to think  
also of them, to die at last.//

For me it would be better, I'm 81 years  
old and I can't walk anymore. I don't  
want to see anymore how the children  
struggle.//

And if they find work, I'd like to die right  
away, maybe I would die with my heart  
at peace, 'cause they wouldn't suffer any-  
more. Maybe I wouldn't know, if I died.  
But what shall I do?//

My husband, there are 21 years since he  
died. And I stayed behind, to take care of  
all...

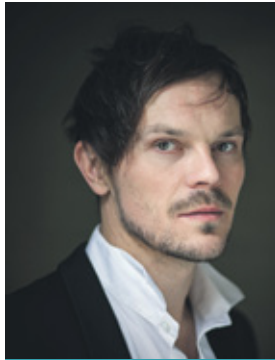




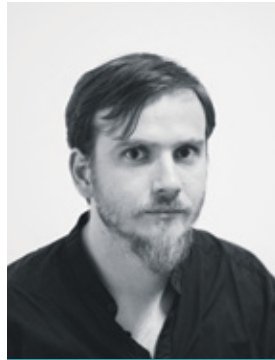
- 1 / Gabriela Baciu, Gina Calinoiu
- 2 / Kim Efert, Gina Calinoiu, Sven Hönig, Oliver Simon
- 3 / Sven Hönig, Oliver Simon
- 4 / Sven Hönig, Gabriela Baciu, Gina Calinoiu



JAN ANDREESEN



ROBERT BESTA



ADRIAN DAMIAN



LISA FÖRSTER



MATHIAS HANNUS



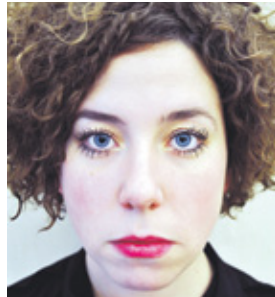
DUŠAN J.



GABRIELA BACIU



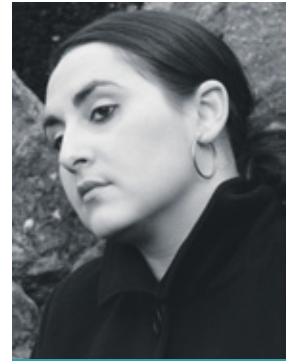
SABINA BIJAN



PIA DEDERICHS



NIKOLAUS FRINKE



NINO HARATISCHWILI



GEA  
JINARU



BRIT BARTKOWIAK



IVANA BOLANČA



EVA DERLEDER



RONALD FUNKE



GABRIELE HEINZ



JURI F.



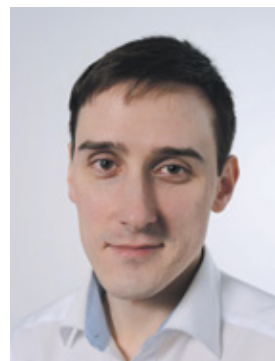
ULRICH BECK



COLIN BUZOIANU



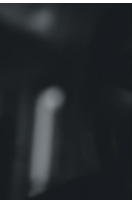
NATALIJA ĐORĐEVIĆ



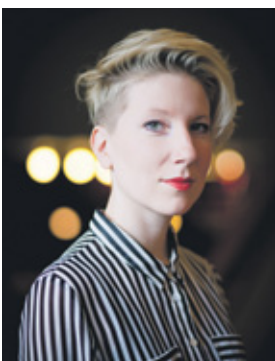
MICHAEL GMAJ



KATJA HERLEMANN



MIRIAM K.



CHRISTINE  
VON BERNSTEIN



GINA CALIONIU



KIM EFERT



JOSEPHA GRÜNBERG



SVEN HÖNIG



SONJA K.



MIRIAM HORWITZ



AMRICH



FILIP KRIŽAN



IVOR MARTINIĆ



CHRISTA MÜLLER



KARIN ROSEMANN



PECA STEFAN



NINA  
-DOBOŠ



MALTE C. LACHMANN



LUCIAN MATEI



THIES MYNTER



DOMINIQUE SCHNIZER



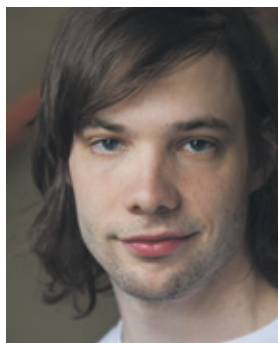
CHRISTIN TREUNERT



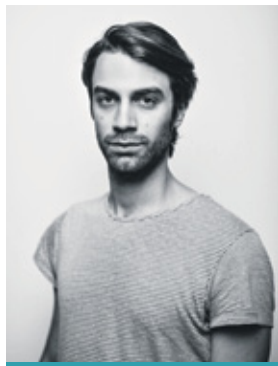
PADEL



JAN LINDERS



JOHANNES MITTL



FABIAN OEHL



ANDREAS SEIFERT



EMÍLIA VÁŠÁRYOVÁ



KIČIŇOVÁ



SOPHIA LÖFFLER



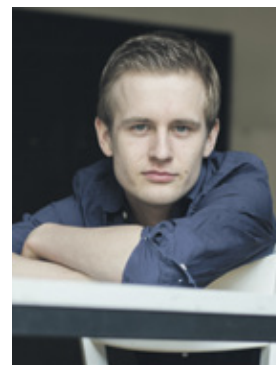
ANTONIA MOHR



AXEL PREUB



OLIVER SIMON



ERIC WEHLAN



KOVAČIĆ



RADANA LUKÁČIKOVÁ  
HROMNÍKOVÁ



JULIA ROESLER  
INSA RUDOLPH  
SILKE MERZHÄUSER  
WERKGRUPPE2



IRENA TEREZA PRPIĆ

GET TO KNOW THE ARTISTS

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Emília Vášáryová,  
Gabriele Heinz

# FEN A

BY NINO HARATISCHWILI

A coproduction by Deutsches Theater  
Berlin, Germany & Slovenské Národné  
Divadlo Bratislava, Slovakia

in German and Slovak language



# FIRES

BY CHRISTA MÜLLER AND ULRICH BECK

## THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' (BOB DYLAN)

A theatrical co-production involving two European cities, “Fen fires / Land der ersten Dinge / Bludičky” probes the history of two European nations that couldn’t be more different. Playwright Nino Haratischwili, who was born in Georgia but writes in German, takes as her starting point this history along with the real-life issues dominant in each country, both on the political level and in how they affect the lives of ordinary citizens.

Both of Haratischwili’s female protagonists grew up in very different societies. Now senior citizens, their paths cross as the esteemed jurist from the West becomes dependent on a home health care aide, who in her past life was a well-known musician in the East. During rehearsals in Germany and Slovakia, a team of Slovakian and German actors and theatre makers considered both the real history of the two countries as well as the fictional biographies of the two characters to create a moving, bilingual theatrical event that has already been performed over 20 times at Deutsches Theater Berlin and the Slovakian National Theatre in Bratislava.

The texts in this volume include interviews and essays created during the rehearsal period in Bratislava and Berlin. They are intended to provide insights into the creative process and the atmosphere fostered at the time.

### ABOUT THE PLAY

# INTERVIEW

## NINO HARATISCHWILI

# NEVER HIDE AWAY!

Nino Haratischwili was born in 1983 in Tbilisi, Georgia. An award-winning playwright, novelist and theatre director, Haratischwili started writing in Georgian and German since the age of twelve. Later on she opted for Germany and the German language. She works and lives in Hamburg. In 2014 her much acclaimed family saga “Das achte Leben (Für Brillka) / The 8<sup>th</sup> life (For Brillka)” was the surprise of the literary year in Germany. She wrote her play “Fen Fires / Land der ersten Dinge / Bludičky” for the Slovak and German senior actors Emília Vášáryová, Dušan Jamrich (Slovak National Theatre, Bratislava) and Gabriele Heinz (Deutsches Theater Berlin).

### ULRICH BECK:

**You were commissioned by the Deutsches Theater Berlin and the Slovakian National Theatre in Bratislava to create your work “Fen fires” for the major EU-supported project “The Art of Ageing,” which has eight participating theatre partners. What are your thoughts on the topic? Did it feel inspiring or limiting?**

### NINO HARATISCHWILI:

At first I was a little intimidated by the topic because it easily takes on a negative connotation if not approached openly enough. But the topic is extremely important to modern society and so I also wanted to accept the challenge of dealing with it, especially since the topic has a different kind of relevance in the two countries for which I wrote the play. Questions of the future and ageing are also concerns for all of us in the younger generations.

### U.B.: Which aspect of this project posed the biggest difficulty for you?

**N.H.:** The biggest difficulty was also the biggest challenge to overcome. When you are commissioned as an author, you are usually in contact with one dramaturge, or maybe even one stage or theatre director, who support you while you work out the ideas and first drafts. For “Fen fires,” I was in contact with two theatres, four dramaturges and very different ways of communicating. In light of the physical distance (I live in Hamburg) as

well as the language barriers, we needed to find common ground for effective communication. This was, ultimately, very productive and an important learning process for me – but it also gave me a few new grey hairs, which of course brings us back to our topic “The Art of Ageing.” *Laughs.*

**U.B.:** **The main focus of the play concerns two older women, one from West Germany who is confined to her bed after being ill, and the other one from Slovakia, who nurses her. They depend on one another and cannot avoid dealing with each other. Would you say that this is a hopeless situation?**

**N.H.:** For the two women, the situation certainly seems to offer little hope and no way out. But they have no other option than getting to know each other. Over the course of the play, they eventually come to value each other’s life stories, quirks, sense of humour and problems. The fact that we have two actors from Bratislava who speak both German and Slovakian was a huge asset. This made it possible for me to incorporate their linguistic abilities into the play from an early stage.

YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO REMEMBER, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS NO REAL “EAST” JUST AS THERE IS NO REAL “WEST.” EVERY EUROPEAN COUNTRY HAS ITS OWN UNIQUE HISTORY, CULTURE AND MENTALITY.

Dušan Jamrich,  
Emília Vášáryová

**U.B.:** Both of the protagonists have led very different lives, which were in turn heavily influenced by political circumstances. Which biography did you find easier to write?

**N.H.:** That's hard to say; I live in between both of these worlds. I am from the east and live in the west and consider this as a unique gift – which is itself sometimes problematic. You always have to remember, however, that there is no real “east” just as there is no real “west.” Every European country has its own unique history, culture and mentality. For both biographies I had to make decisions that were sometimes familiar, sometimes less so. That's what I like about writing – it gives you the chance to live many different lives in addition to your own, and to really put yourself in someone else's shoes. The most important thing is not to judge: you have to get close, even when the character isn't per se likeable, so that they seem to really have “flesh and blood.” It's really important to me that the characters on stage are recognizable as people, not artificial constructions.

**U.B.:** What is the art of ageing for you?

**N.H.:** I believe it means to not isolate yourself, not live in the past and to stay inquisitive. This is not the sole responsibility of the ageing individual, but also of society which, in times of an obsession with youth and superficiality, makes the topic of “living in old age” a taboo. This needs to change.

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# BEHIND THE SCENES

CHRISTA MÜLLER

## FROM VIENNA TO BRATISLAVA

“A carpet is like a tale. Innumerable other tales are hidden in it. You are a thread, I am a thread, together we unfold a little ornament, together with many other threads we unfold a pattern.”

*The great-grandmother in Nino Haratschwilis new novel “The 8<sup>th</sup> Life (For Brilka)”*



Bratislava:  
First reading of the text

How wonderful it is to be picked up at the Vienna airport by a driver from the Slovak National Theatre Bratislava. Ten years have now passed since I was first driven from Vienna to Bratislava; that trip also involved an ETC project: “Learning Europe,” created by Armin Petras, which united twelve actors and six directors from five countries. Three of the countries – Slovakia, Slovenia and Lithuania – were just about to join the EU. Ten years ago, I realised for the very first time that Bratislava is only about 60 kilometres from Vienna, that the river Danube here is the same as the one on the other side, and how similar the landscape is as well – all of which overwhelmed me. And I cursed those who had constructed the Iron Curtain, and divided the very heart of Old Europe, separating people and making them estranged from one another. Now, 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the start of the “Soft Revolution” in Slovakia, I just felt happy to be on my way to rehearsals for “Fen fires.” And I didn’t like the images in my mind of what is currently happening in Ukraine, at the Eastern border of Slovakia.

I was thrilled to discover that our play would be a success, despite a few difficulties – for example, there were language comprehension problems in this bilingual production, and once a bathtub on stage broke during an interview for this blog because too much people were in it – and that we had assembled a dream team to create Nino’s play, with direction from Brit and featuring the actors Emília, Gaby, Dušan and Eric. The first rehearsal period in Bratislava is now finished. At the end of October we’ll begin another three weeks of rehearsals in Berlin – and then have the first performance on 14 November in Berlin, followed by 27 November in Bratislava. Keep your fingers crossed!

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# BEHIND THE SCENES

MIRIAM KIČIŇOVÁ

## WELCOME TO BERLIN!

“A sweet, old, toothless grandma that’s what they want. Someone who offers everyone her jam recipes, one who cries each time she watches a love story on telly, one, who even on her deathbed smiles and whispers: I had such a fulfilled life, now I am ready to die and to join you, My God! But they have another one coming! They have a screw loose!”

*Lara in “Fen fires”*

A lot of time has past since the start of the project “Fen fires.” The third part of this journey into the topic of ageing will now begin for me.

The first phase started some time ago. A year ago, I met Nino Haratischwili, Christa Müller and Ulrich Beck for the first time and we started to talk about the topic, our work on the text together and the performances in Berlin and Bratislava.

While it was really fun to work on the project, it was also quite difficult to explore our history, parts of which we share and parts that diverge. We searched for an innovative approach to sharing this history. After that, Nino developed her story. A meaningful story. A strong story. A sad story. A story of hope. A story that shows how we can deepen our understanding of each other when we know where we come from.

Beyond that, we often discussed our vision for the play as well as our different readings of history. We engaged in highly emotional discussions based on our personal experiences, which brought up feelings that had been hidden in our subconscious because of historical experiences. Perhaps that helps explain why we continue to look back to the past: namely that we are still trying to understand it, while also trying not to

forget it. Thanks to “Fen fires,” a very important part of my history was opened up to me, the history of my family, as well as that of many families in Slovakia. I find it gratifying how this was opened up to me by someone from abroad, by a person who can see things in a more objective light. Thanks to “Fen fires,” we can also understand the history of the last 50 years as they were experienced by German families. Thank you, my German friends.

The second stage of the journey took place in Bratislava and has left me with very strong memories. First, we started to rehearse the play. In rehearsals that were probing, meaningful and passionate, the collaboration fostered an atmosphere that allowed all participants to raise questions, search for answers and change their ways. The atmosphere was so positive that I cannot continue writing without first extending my thanks to the team: Brit, Karin, Niko, Peter and Thies. For me, it was so impressive to see the work of Gaby Heinz on stage. Of course, I am already familiar with the work of our actors, but seeing her work was something totally new for me and very inspiring for my future work. How is it possible to simultaneously see charged

emotion on the stage and yet acquire distance to it with such ease, intensity and immediacy?

A major stage of our journey has now come to a close. The journey has been fun and enjoyable for all. Of course, in light of the two ways of working at the different theatrical houses, it was not always easy to understand each other and sometimes expectations diverged. The experience was on the whole very enriching, even if that sounds cliché. But the journey is not over yet; the most important part is still to come.

For me, the performance phase begins now, with my arrival in Berlin to join the team for rehearsals. We are still doing research in order to sharpen our understanding of our own history, and of history in general. So, it’s great to be in Berlin.

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GABRIELE HEINZ *INTERVIEW*  
**RAYS OF HOPE  
IN “FEN FIRES”**

Actress Gabriele Heinz was born in Vienna and studied at the Ernst Busch School for Performing Arts in Berlin. She is an ensemble member of the Deutsches Theater Berlin and plays the character Lara in “Fen fires,” a former judge who is now bedridden.

Eric Wehlan,  
Gabriele Heinz



**MIRIAM KIČIŇOVÁ:**

**There is a short line in your part in the play “Fen fires” that takes on the art of acting. You attended the best acting school in Germany and continue to work with students. How has acting changed in your opinion?**

**GABRIELE HEINZ:**

The remark in the play specifically refers to the acting in a particular television series. First of all, I don't believe that it's possible to discuss “this generation's acting.” Today, there are actors who are highly gifted or less gifted, just as in earlier generations. Rehearsing with Eric Wehlan was wonderful, and he isn't even finished with his studies yet. The training at different schools can vary immensely. Nevertheless, I feel that all actors need to find their own “method” at some point. Sometimes I also feel that training in the more artistic areas, such as singing and dance, is much stronger than in the psychological realm, which imparts the “courage to show yourself, to hold nothing back.”

**M.K.: Is the topic of ageing now being heavily discussed in Germany?**

**G.H.:** To my knowledge, Germany's ageing society is already considered a problem; generally, aspects discussed include the threat of poverty in old age as well as the shortage of home health care aids, who are often low paid. Just as in our play, this kind of work is often performed by foreign women working for meagre wages. It's scandalous to take advantage of people in a difficult situation like this, even though the problem is often ignored on an official level.

**M.K.: This is your second play with the team and the director Brit Bartkowiak. Were rehearsals for this play different than for other stagings?**

**G.H.:** We needed new working methods, not necessarily because of the topic, but because of the multiple languages involved. Unlike “Muttersprache Mameloschn” by Marianna Salzmann for example, my first work with Brit, we had very long discussions about the historical background, specific wordings and possible interpretations. I found this very interesting and enriching.

**M.K.: How would you characterize working with the director Brit Bartkowiak?**

**G.H.:** I like how Brit Bartkowiak explicitly expects active contributions from everyone, yet always has her own viewpoint as well. That challenges everyone to consider the dramaturgy, make suggestions – to act creatively, in other words. I think that's important.

**M.K.: Do you see any differences between audiences in Berlin and Bratislava?**

**G.H.:** I have the feeling that the audience in Bratislava took the play more seriously than the German audience. That may also be due to the fact that they first need to read the surtitles and can't immediately respond to the humorous parts. That's like when you have to explain a joke... I am sure you could find a few more differences if you talked with the audience members.

**M.K.: What do you find interesting about the play? And what was the most interesting part of working with the Slovakian National Theatre?**

**G.H.:** The most interesting aspect was of course working with our Slovakian colleagues, the actors, dramaturges and other staff. It was nice that we could immediately and naturally find ways to understand each other and work, despite the diversity of experiences and opinions. What interested me most about the play was how it connected the private stories of the two women with the overarching political backdrop – with its failed utopias, repressed guilt and the feeble sparks of hope that point to the possibility of a land of first things as in “Fen fires”...

## EXTRACT

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

*NATALIA – Lara's carer, a former organist, tied to the East she carries in her like a pacemaker.*

*A house ensheathed in dust and quiescence, hibernating, not knowing any longer how it feels to be awake. Lara is lying in her bed, Natalia sitting next to her, both staring at the television.*

*LARA, thinking.*

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

*NATALIA, thinking.*

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

*LARA, thinking.*

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

*NATALIA, thinking.*

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

*LARA, thinking.*

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

*NATALIA, thinking.*

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

*LARA, thinking.*

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

*NATALIA, thinking.*

No one ever comes to see her, not even her own daughter dares calling her. No wonder! She is a termagant. Compared to her, Mrs Gendig was a godsend. And she still goes on and on about her boy, "my grandson, my darling grandson". But where is he? Where is he, her precious Mika? Tomorrow at 12, wasn't it? Yes, tomorrow at 12 I can finally call him, the lawyer said. I will hear it in his voice if they treat him well!

LARA, *thinking*.

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

NATALIA, *thinking*.

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

LARA.

Natalie?

NATALIA, *thinking*.

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

NATALIA.

Shall I straighten your pillow?

LARA.

No! Leave it!

NATALIA.

But you can't see properly.

LARA.

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

NATALIA.

I just wanted...

LARA.

What? Help?

NATALIA.

I want you to be comfortable.

LARA.

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

NATALIA.

With my son.

LARA.

And what does junior do?

NATALIA.

He is at university – studying.

LARA.

And what does he want to become  
one day?

NATALIA.

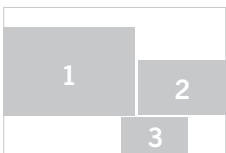
He – he wants to be in economics,  
but he will probably change his mind  
again. He is rather – how shall I put  
it – restless.

LARA.

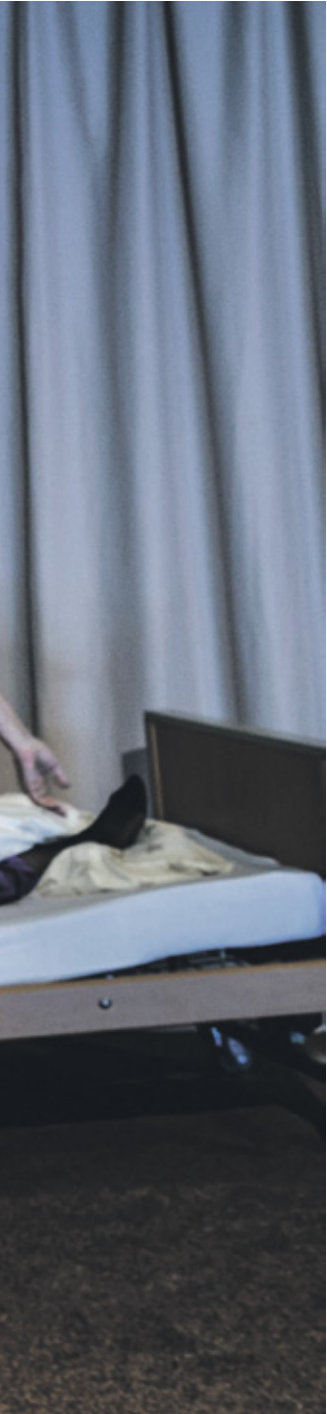
Economics. Sure! You Eastern folks all  
think we live in paradise...

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Translation from German to English: Knut Johansson



- 1 / Dušan Jamrich, Emília Vášáryová
- 2 / Gabriele Heinz, Eric Wehlan
- 3 / Gabriele Heinz, Emília Vášáryová



BIRGIT DAHLKE

# THE AGEING OF SOCIALISM

Birgit Dahlke is a guest professor of German literature at the Humboldt University Berlin. Born in East Berlin and with a PhD in GDR literature, she considers “Fen fires” to be a play about borders in human relations and societies as well as meditation on how the past can overtake the present.

The ideas of her youth have gotten old along with Lara. Defiantly, they show her wizened, bitter face and her barely-mobile body, which is dependent on help from others. Deeply entrenched wrinkles have remained from the erstwhile promise, the confusingly present memories of better days and the desperate power of hope. Nino Haratischwili’s final scene brings together the former West German judge Lara and Natalia, the former Slovakian musician, who is now Lara’s caregiver in Germany, in the wistful projection of the “land of the first things.” “Here something is to happen for the first time ...” but does

anything ever happen for the first time? Didn’t everything exist already long before us and won’t it exist after us as well? How do the awareness of our finiteness and the humility of old age change our perspective? Are “aged” utopias no longer utopias? The (socialist) utopias of youth have become a dangerously beautiful desert landscape whose Fata Morgana character is obvious at least to the audience. The oversized, enchanted sun-drenched orange shows a deceptive horizon. As soon as the two set out to reach it, its mirage character will become clear. These two worldly-wise women,

who grew up in the different societies and cultures of “West” and “East,” probably know this already, but they want to forget it for the moment. What actually lies before them is the everyday desert of the approaching end of life with its struggles and pain, and the despair over missed opportunities and an unbridled lust for life that comes with ageing. The resulting deep loneliness is lifted only in the brief moment of dreaming. The opening scene had confronted us with the loss of all privacy and intimacy: an ugly, white hospital bed is the most prominent object in the chamber play-like living room. Whoever is forced by the illnesses of old age to lie in this bed loses not only a world, but also his or her rightful, hard-earned social status. One’s place in the world as a mature, autonomous human being shrinks along with the world. The things we try to quickly forget after visits in hospitals or nursing homes contaminate all the conversations between Lara, who needs care, and her scarcely younger caregiver, Natalia. The naturally asymmetrical relationship is additionally poisoned by the East-West difference: the East European woman cannot count on a similarly “luxurious” setting during the last phase of her life. That the roles are divided doesn’t make it more bearable for either of them; both are struggling to be the subject of their lives rather than the object of external circumstances. The Western woman still cherishes her idealization of socialism. But she obtrusively calls the real Eastern woman by a wrong name and doesn’t once inquire why she left her native

DOES ANYTHING EVER HAPPEN  
FOR THE FIRST TIME? DIDN’T EVERYTHING  
EXIST ALREADY LONG BEFORE US  
AND WON’T IT EXIST AFTER US AS WELL?  
HOW DO THE AWARENESS OF OUR  
FINITENESS AND THE HUMILITY  
OF OLD AGE CHANGE OUR PERSPECTIVE?

country for this hardly comfortable job in a foreign country. The modus operandi of the dramatist Haratischwili is similar to one she masterfully employed in her extensive novel “Das achte Leben. Für Brillka” (published in Germany in 2014), in which she relates volatile political history across generations as disturbing family history. Haratischwili, who was born in Georgia in 1983, is interested in family secrets, taboos and memory blocks that connect familial and collective memory in the long twentieth century. In keeping with the aesthetic possibilities of the genre, the director of this staging, Brit Bartkowiak, presents flashbacks and the presence of the past by means of almost clown-like interjections of the deceased from behind the stage curtain: the lost loved ones, Natalia’s husband and Lara’s grandson, push their way more and more from the side into the play of the female main characters until we, like the two women, can no longer differentiate between the presence of the dead and the living. That the invalid Lara and her caregiver Natalia speak different languages is only logical: communication between the well-off pensioner with her 1968 past and the no longer young Slovakian foreign worker with her reduced social status would under normal circumstances have been doomed to fail; too many prejudices and above all different experiences separate them. Their identity as women does not unite them in solidarity, not even when they speak about their children. East and West, poor

and rich, object and subject – these are the poles between which Haratischwili treats ageing in present-day Europe. The staging also provides us with a lesson on media reception: for a long time, we hurriedly try to follow the projected translations of the lines of the two Slovakian actors until we realize that we are ignoring the presence of the physically present and verbally acting people on stage. Suddenly it becomes clear that it is not the spoken text that communicates what the play is about: namely, betrayal, betrayal of people and ideas, private and political betrayal. Now we no longer perceive the sound of the foreign voices predominantly as a symbol of the “Other,” but, over and beyond the language barriers, as what unites us: love, fear, sense of guilt, loss and yearning. A lesson that can be useful for dealing with the aged and with our own ageing.

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Translation from German to English: Margy Gerber

Fabian Oehl

# I'M AT THAT EACH NOW

BY IVOR MARTINIĆ

A coproduction by Theater und Orchester  
Heidelberg, Germany & Gradsko Dramsko  
Kazalište Gavella Zagreb, Croatia

in German and Croatian language



# I'M AFRAID WE KNOW EACH OTHER

BY JÜRGEN POPIG

## THE LIMITS OF LANGUAGE

### ABOUT THE PLAY

A man refuses to remember his past. This renders him unassailable, yet also unreachable for those around him. This raises the question: is it even possible to live without a history? To exist exclusively in the here and now? Both of these things – remembering and forgetting – seem to serve some essential human need. “Remembering everything is like a disease. You must forget in order to live,” says a character in Martinić’s play. What does this mean for the art of ageing? What are the limits of language? How can you live a meaningful life?

These are some of the thoughts that the Croatian author Ivor Martinić seeks to provoke in his play “I’m afraid that we know each other now / Ich befürchte jetzt kennen wir uns / Bojim se da se sada poznajemo.” The play was produced jointly by the Gavella City Drama Theatre Zagreb and Theatre

and Orchestra Heidelberg for the ETC project “The Art of Ageing.” Unlike the project’s other co-productions, which created one staging for both partner cities, separate stagings were made for this production, one for Zagreb and one for Heidelberg. The stagings resulted from a close collaboration between the partners initially fostered by a workshop directed by Miriam Horwitz. The premiere of the German version took place in Heidelberg in November 2014 in a translation by Renata Britvec. The play’s Croatian premiere was in January 2015 in Zagreb. Thanks to a guest performers exchange, we now have the unique opportunity to discuss two very different stagings of the same work.

IT CAN'T BE DONE.  
THERE AREN'T  
ENOUGH WORDS  
TO PRECISELY DESCRIBE  
THE COLOURS  
AND FEELINGS  
AND SOUNDS.

HOW TO WRITE  
THAT DOWN;  
BEFORE I CAME HERE  
I HAD BEEN LYING  
IN A BED, IN A ROOM,  
IN THE DARK, WHICH  
HADN'T BEEN THE DARK

...

IVOR MARTINIĆ,  
I'M AFRAID THAT WE KNOW  
EACH OTHER NOW

## ARTISTIC RESEARCH

DUBRAVKO MIHANOVIĆ

# THE DRAMATURGY OF LOOSENESS

It is hard for a person to live entirely in the present. To focus on the moment, on the “here and now,” and to simply be in one place, aware, close and at peace with everything going on in life – this is something we rarely manage to achieve. It is a skill which, it seems, children possess quite spontaneously and naturally, whereas adults need to reacquire it, as if they forgot it (or maybe suppressed it), in their bafflement over their collected disappointments. On the one hand, the past draws us back from the present moment, while on the other hand we spend a lot of time projecting ourselves into an imaginary future. What becomes clear in the process is this: that we cannot live in the past or the future.

In his new play, Ivor Martinić is trying to reconstruct the past in order to offer credible answers for the present, thus enabling it to go into the future disburdened. Written as the result of the cooperation between artists from the Gavella Theatre and Theater und Orchester Heidelberg as a part of the international project “The Art of Ageing,” Martinić naturally performs the reconstruction by using language that runs through the text, and at the same time serves as a building block of it – creating a dramaturgy of looseness.

As in his previous texts, this author uses terseness, ellipses, the unfinished and the unsaid as methods of forming a letter intended for the stage. In “I’m afraid that we know each other now” he goes a step further to create a whole that refuses to be anchored anywhere, or within anything. His tools in the process are not those of post-drama (although he knows and acknowledges the experience of post-drama): he preserves the elements of classical drama, it is all here, but we are constantly reminded that – just perhaps – none of it exists in the first place. The (dramatic) tension arises not so much from the relationships between the characters, but rather from their attempts, individual and shared, to seize the unseizable, to remember the forgotten, to experience the unexperienced, to hold on to that what remains, to revive the dead. It is as if every utterance momentarily evaporates, melts, crumbles. The language tries to reflect the reality, but it is so subjective and fragile in all of its manifestations that we cannot speak of anything permanent, let alone objective. Space is not permanent as well, topography also eludes steadiness and even less permanent is history, despite the fact that some people constantly inscribe universal characters and significances onto it.

Such “looseness” is, probably, a reflection of a young person’s mentality – the members of a “new generation that with great difficulty finds reasons to rebel,” who Martinić is talking about in “I’m afraid that we know each other now” and whose love story he tells.

“Remembering,” “forgetting” and “memory” are the key terms for understanding this play. These words are literally uttered every now and, after a series of lines such as, “I’m sorry to be forgetting,” “Everyone should have a better memory,” “I can’t remember anything” or “I would never forgive myself if I’d forgotten that moment,” they culminate in the dialogue between two characters, when one of them, wondering what is/was the truth and what happened (to them), asks, “How can we believe then that we are living?,” to which the other replies, “I don’t believe we are.” In that moment, it is as if the language itself, unable to create a steady reality, treads the area of a dream.

With this Calderon-esque manoeuvre, the author indirectly informs us that there has always been an equals sign, two-way and ambiguous, between dreaming and awareness, that is, between theatre and reality. We will believe in whatever we want, we will see what we believe we see and not what is actually going on, because this “actually” doesn’t exist anyway. “I’m afraid that we know each other now” is to a certain extent a subtle homage to the theatre and its inherent ability to disappear in front of us the moment it appears, while it is also wistful – which is not to say that there is no neurosis, despair or hysteria in the facial expressions and their verbal manifestations: on the contrary – as it considers our habit of asking questions about life, even though we know in advance that we will never get the answers we want.

ARTISTIC  
RESEARCH

MIRIAM HORWITZ

## LAST STEPS

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

Ivor Martinić and I spent one and a half years conducting research in Croatia and Germany. On the one hand we were developing a play, but we also spent the time trying to envision the work on the stage – that is, with the actors, the audience and the themes. The challenge for our work – and for the topic “The Art of Ageing” – was to create something that captured our shared aesthetic and yet could still transmit a sense of the history and culture of our homelands. That’s why we felt that it was absolutely necessary to spend time in both Zagreb and Heidelberg. The one-week workshop with actors from both theatres definitely enriched our work and was an important part of our creative process, even though – as we later found out – the experience was more about misunderstanding than understanding for our Croatian colleagues. We took a very theoretical approach to finding the topic that best described ageing and our view thereof: memory. At first glance, memory appears to allow us to relive past events. This could be through some token of the past, such as an old photograph or film, which literally reflects another time. And yet the act of remembering happens at a specific moment in time, thus becoming a process locked in the present; thus the memory is changed due to its new temporal framing. Even antique objects are changed by the very act of looking at them: “The reconstructed present is

by definition always different” (Maurice Halbwachs). Remembering is thus part and parcel of our identity: it shapes us, writing a history that allows us to situate ourselves in the world and at the same time lets us redesign our future based on memory.

WE TOOK A VERY THEORETICAL  
APPROACH TO FINDING THE TOPIC  
THAT BEST DESCRIBED AGEING  
AND OUR VIEW THEREOF: MEMORY

The subject served not only as a topic for our play, but also helped guide our creative process. We wanted to create characters who struggle to find their identity, their appearance and become visible to the world. The actors should become characters struggling to be seen, both as actors and characters. The text and its characters serve as the basis, that is, the formal historical narrative, for four people striving to situate themselves in their own lives, whether through want or need. Thus, the actors endure an unmediated encounter with the external, their own lives and with the presence of the audience; furthermore, they must submit to the notion that they only exist

when they are being seen. The characters’ condition as they narrate the story thus becomes real and palpable as an event on the stage. This demanded much more than a simple perfunctory performance from the actors – and accounts for the fact that the Croatian part of the project was completed without me. For the staging in Heidelberg we attempted to make this condition visible: the presence in history, the occurrence in one’s own life and the search for an interlocutor, or

a witness, who can help compose our identity and find our place in the world. The actors in the Heidelberg staging continually fight to be present with the other actors, the audience and the location, in their effort to leave something behind. This dichotomy – between being locked in the moment and telling a story respectively an identity – epitomizes for me the very nature of ageing.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

RENATA BRITVEC

# TRANSLATING = CREATING

The Croatian translator Renata Britvec on the art of translation and the beauty and uniqueness of language.

“A language is always a whole world view,” as my philosophy professor used to say. What seemed so obvious opened up a new perspective and raised many questions. During my studies, I started to consider my native language from another, broader point of view and I also started questioning how my native language affected the way I express myself in German, or any other language I speak. Back then, I realized how strongly my native language determines my personality and how the simple fact that I am bilingual led to many misunderstandings; for example, there is always the imagery, the fierceness, the head-on brutality, the meekness, the sense of humour, and the meandering ways to tell stories of my home countries that always colour and influence my mode of expression and way of speaking.

I love my language: I love the way it creates and destroys images. I also love that you can be both obvious and subtle at the same time. But how can you translate this language without losing all the richness? I realized I wanted to dedicate my work to answering these questions, and not just on a theoretical level. I wanted to help create an understanding for the cultures of the former Yugoslavian countries. So I started translating, short texts at first, then longer ones from different genres, and, as my path in life has always somehow led to the theatre, I ended up working as a translator of dramatic texts.

When Jürgen Popig from the Theatre and Orchestra Heidelberg asked me to translate Ivor Martinić's new play for the project “The Art of Ageing,” I was honoured and excited. I had read Martinić's work before and his subtle writing and his ability to create a strong narrative in dramatic texts impressed me immensely.

## THE ACT OF SPEAKING IS ITSELF ALWAYS A TRANSLATION OF WHAT WE FEEL IN THAT IT PUTS SOMETHING INDESCRIBABLE INTO WORDS THAT OTHER PEOPLE CAN SHARE AND UNDERSTAND

In Martinić's new play “I'm afraid that we know each other now,” Ivana leaves Filip because of his increasing inability to create a common narrative and, therefore, a (personal) history. He cannot remember important moments of their relationship, such as the first time she told him she loved him, nor is he willing to remember or to recreate those moments for the sake of their wellbeing as a couple. Even when she breaks up with him, he refuses to react appropriately. Instead of saying something meaningful, he just recites something that his mother once told him. Ivana cannot accept his reaction and returns again and again to

demand a real and fair ending, one that she will be able to retell as part of her personal history. As soon as they become aware of the break-up, Filip's neighbour Andreas and Filip's friend Natalija come to support him. While Andreas is trying to persuade Filip to come around to create a more amenable ending, Natalija holds on to her conviction that Ivana does not deserve a man like Filip anyway. Both characters may in fact serve as subconscious currents of Filip's own personality. When these two antagonists

finally cancel each other out, leaving Filip alone again, he subsequently finds a way to create the story of his relationship and to make peace with himself, with Ivana and with their failed relationship. “I'm afraid that we know each other now” is a subtle play about the human need to locate oneself in history and, moreover, to create a personal narrative in which memory, emotion and what one desires supplement the truth.



Lisa Förster,  
Fabian Oehl

As previously stated, Ivana leaves Filip due to his inability to create a common narrative, which specifically means that he is unable to express his emotions through language: as he explains later in the play, he always most urgently wanted to tell her that he loved her while she slept, but as soon as she woke up, everything was gone. When she tells him the relationship is over, he cannot find the right words to express his feelings and instead quotes his mother, who told him about the best way to please a woman. He expresses his emotions through somebody else's words, thus shifting the actual problem into something easier, more tangible and "real." But over the course of the play and through his involvement with Andreas and Natalija – in other words, with himself – he realizes how important it would have been, and still is, to communicate.

Most importantly, he realizes that he needs to actively translate his innermost feelings into words, and that he needs to talk, to narrate. He may be right with his assumption that words can never appropriately describe what we actually experience and feel: "How strangely do we diminish a thing as soon as we try to express it in words," says Maurice Maeterlinck (we've all been sceptics since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but...).

Of course, the act of speaking is itself always a translation of what we feel in that it puts something indescribable into words that other people can share and understand. In the end, Filip is able to open up and create a story used to express himself and his love for Ivana and, in so doing, he creates an end

to the relationship that he will be able to remember, and that Ivana can also remember. By remembering and retelling their story, they will know that it existed, had been real, and now is finally over.

With this play, which was inspired by artists from at least two nations, he beautifully demonstrates the human need for words, language, narration, memory and also history. Above all, Martinić demonstrates the act of struggling for words that can translate what we feel into something that we can grasp, understand, share and make peace with.

## EXTRACT

NATALIJA / JOSEPHA.

I never did like her. I never thought that it would last. But you lived together, so who was I to tell you I didn't like her? Why don't you write down all the dates and places where you were with her. Just look at all of the scars on your body. Which are from her? Look at your hand. Maybe it grew that way because of her. Maybe she's the reason you're going bald? Maybe your hair will grow back now that you're not together anymore? But who knows? Memory is pristine. As someone once told me – or maybe not. Time changes our memories. They are always different. As someone once told me – or maybe not. History is nothing but a story we tell ourselves. As someone once told me – or maybe not. These sentences are from me. But maybe I wrote them only for myself. Tonight, that's what I said. Or maybe not. All I know is that you're being terrible tonight, Filip. You're being terrible tonight, Filip. You don't love me tonight, Filip. I hate you, Filip. I hate you, Filip. I hate you. All you have to do is say that I am with you now, Natalija, and I will be happy, and that would be all. I hate you, Filip. I hate you, Filip.

*Silence.*

ANDREAS / IRENA.

I hate you, Filip. Not just because you know everything about me. I hate you because your story is incomplete, full of gaps that I won't be able to remember on my deathbed. Say something nice, Filip. For God's sakes, play something, so that we can repeat it at the end of our days.

*Silence.*

FILIP / FABIAN.

I'm tired. I'm very tired. Can I tell you something? I shouldn't have forgotten the time we went to the city and she told me that she loved me.

*Silence.*

NATALIJA / JOSEPHA.

Now you know everything about me.

ANDREAS / IRENA.

Now you know everything about me.

FILIP / FABIAN.

We know each other now. That's why I'm tired.

ANDREAS / IRENA.

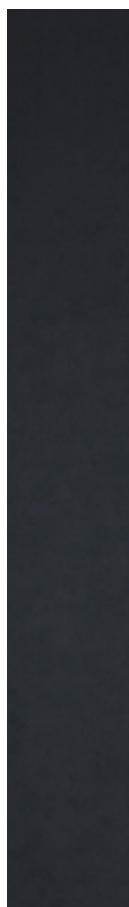
I'm afraid that we know each other now.

NATALIJA / JOSEPHA.

So what now?

ANDREAS / IRENA.

We know each other and now we will suck each other's blood. Why? Because that's what people do once they know each other.



- 1 / Lisa Förster, Andreas Seifert, Fabian Oehl, Josepha Grünberg
- 2 / Ivana Bolanča, Filip Križan
- 3 / Irena Tereza Prpić, Ivana Bolanča, Filip Križan, Natalija Đorđević
- 4 / Lisa Förster, Josepha Grünberg, Fabian Oehl

I'm afraid that we know  
each other now



STUART KANDELL

# POWER OF APPLAUSE

Creating theatre with and for elderly people. Experiences and tips. A declaration for spirited intergenerational communication.

When Joanne Grimm was ready to retire at age 64, she wanted to find a new audience. She had been a teacher and high school principal for many years. At first she volunteered to read to low income children. But when she encountered children who didn't speak English, she realized she had to hone her acting skills. Seeing an advertisement in the paper for a storytelling class at Stagebridge™, a theatre dedicated to older adults near San Francisco, California, she decided to join.

That was 16 years ago. Since then, Joanne has studied storytelling, acting, singing, and improvisation. She was among the first graduates of the Stagebridge's Performing Arts Training Certification Program, enabling her to teach and direct. Now, at age 80, she is instrumental in many of Stagebridge's outreach programs. Joanne mentors children in local schools. She performs and leads storytelling workshops for seniors in nursing homes. And she helps student nurses develop greater respect for older patients by telling personal stories to them as part of their nursing training. This involvement has sustained her through tough times and enabled her to give back. "Stagebridge was there when my husband was dying and when my son was shot. I could come to class, come to a performance and there were people there. Some people turn to the church, or to drugs, but I have Stagebridge. I have this opportunity to go outside myself and do something for other people."

Joanne is one of more than 250 adults (ages 55-97) who attend some of the 30 performing arts classes every week at Stagebridge. She leads two of the many "troupe" who reach out to the community. Every year the company gives hundreds of workshops and performances for 25,000 people in schools, senior facilities, community centers and theatres. Since 1978, Stagebridge has been the United States' oldest and most acclaimed senior theatre whose mission is to "transform the lives of older adults and their communities through the performing arts." Stagebridge gives older adults with little or no experience the opportunity to fulfill lifelong dreams – not only as students and participants in the arts, but also as mentors, performers, teachers and directors in their community.

This article addresses the need for community involvement with older adults as an integral part of community arts education; how two model outreach programs work; and concludes with some suggestions for successful outreach programs.

The time is ripe to open the floodgates to more older adults. As community arts schools and theatres, we all must strengthen our position in the local community, provide for the needs of our constituents and students, and serve some of the many needs of our neighbors. In the U.S. we have seen a dramatic increase in older adult (55+) participation. At Stagebridge our training program enrollment has doubled in the past five years. The "Age Wave" is upon us with 10,000 people turning 65 every day, many of whom are looking for new challenges, meaningful activities, opportunities to learn, and new audiences to share their talents with.

Stuart Kandell, Ph.D. is a pioneer of the creative aging movement. He is the founder and longtime director of Stagebridge, the nation's oldest senior theatre in the US., and is a founding board member of the National Center for Creative Aging. He lives in Berkeley, California.

#### RESOURCES:

Creativity Matters: the Arts and Aging Toolkit  
<http://www.nationalguild.org/Programs/Information-Resources---Publications/Publications/Creativity-Matters--Arts---Aging-Toolkit.aspx>

#### NCCA ONLINE ARTIST TRAINING IN ARTS AND AGING

<http://creativeaging.org/programs-people/ncca-online-artist-training-arts-and-aging>

#### STAGEBRIDGE

[www.stagebridge.org](http://www.stagebridge.org)

There is a growing need, as Joanne says “to give back,” or as psychologist Erik Erikson called this stage of life one of “generativity.” Children need mentoring. Young adults need role models. Older adults need inspiration. By bridging the arts institutions and community, we serve everyone’s needs and it is truly a “win-win-win” for all.

## PROGRAMS THAT WORK

### STORYBRIDGE SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Today, grandparents are often isolated from children, causing a separation of ancient partners. Storytelling by elders is a time honored way of imparting cultural values from one generation to the next. Earlier generations gathered around fires to hear the elders’ stories. Those fires are still waiting to be lit for many of today’s youth. Furthermore, many schools are desperate for programs that help reduce violence and create stronger family and community bonds. Storybridge brings elder storytellers and professional older adult teaching artists into classrooms to mentor at-risk elementary school children through storytelling, oral history and performance. Continuously evaluated and refined, Storybridge has grown significantly since 1993 into a nationally admired model for intergenerational learning.

Storybridge consists of a 24-week residency in classrooms, starting with six weeks of storytelling visits by “grandparent mentors.” This is followed by an 18 week residency conducted by professional older adult teaching artists. Children learn the skills of storytelling;

study and practice interviewing with the grandparent mentors; interview their own grandparents; write and learn their stories. The program culminates with an all school assembly for peers, family and community. Finally, selected students perform their stories for public performances on cable-TV, local radio and at local book stores.

Training is a vital part of the program’s success. Stagebridge storytellers must have taken at least one or more semesters of storytelling, followed by five sessions of classroom management and language arts curriculum training. Teaching artists and participating teachers engage in three professional development days that encourage and define their responsibilities. A 100 page curriculum guide with links to common core goals helps steer the project.

Stagebridge raises the majority of funding for the project, usually a mix of government, foundations, and corporations. Schools contribute what they can, which has gotten to be less and less over the past decade. A formal contract is signed with the principal detailing responsibilities, including the assignment of a school liaison (usually a teacher or parent) to work with the Stagebridge Schools Coordinator. The company’s Storytelling Program Director is responsible for the training and oversight.

Joanne recalls “I had this child whom everybody said was really bad news. But, he wanted to tell a story at the assembly. Against all the advice, I put him in. He waited his turn and he told this story with great delight and it was absolutely amazing. Afterwards the adults said they didn’t know he could do that.”

Evaluation was a key component (20% of the budget) for the seven years that Stagebridge had Federal funds from the Department of Education. This rigorous formal evaluation found the program successful in increasing

students’ test scores in language arts and reading, improving self-confidence in public speaking, dramatic presentation skills, intergenerational bonding and awareness of their heritage. Teachers report their teaching in all subjects improves when they learn to create a good story. As one 10 year old said, “The time you spent with us was like a family tradition.”

### SENIORS REACHING OUT

These programs annually provide workshops and performances for nearly 6,000 older adults in residential facilities, adult day and senior centers.

Story Circles for well elders: Stagebridge helps elderly low-income residents reduce their social isolation. Partnering with Satellite Affordable Housing, a large government sponsored housing developer, Stagebridge uses storytelling circles to draw elderly residents out of their self-isolation and encourage social interaction and new friendships among neighbors. “Stagebridge has been transformative” says Director of Resident Services “We’re seeing tangible positive results.”

TimeSlips™ for elders with dementia: Stagebridge is the only training center in the Western U.S. for the TimeSlips creative storytelling method for people with dementia. By involving Alzheimer’s patients in a creative activity, the site staff and client families see them in a new, more positive light. Staff uses this successful technique to train activity directors, health aides and residential staff. The program director of an adult day center where Stagebridge has worked for five years says “The experience gives them a new outlet, opportunity to verbalize, and a positive demeanor.” To date, Stagebridge has trained 140 staff from 25 facilities statewide.

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Music and Stories for elders in rehab centers: For the past five years, Stagebridge has partnered with a nearby rehab center to provide twice/month live music with audience participation. Joanne recalls a recent visit: “This afternoon, as I always do, I walked among the audience at Medical Hill stopping to speak to each one. A resident swaddled in heavy blankets and wearing a ski cap grabbed my hand. ‘Thank you for coming. We never get out of here. You bring the outside to us.’ Through our stories, we bring the world to those whose universe has shrunk to four walls and whose time is measured by their medication schedule.”

Stagebridge supports these programs through partnerships where the facility pays what it can and the company raises support from local government and foundations. Formal agreements are signed detailing responsibilities, and the company’s Booking Director works with the staff liaison at each facility. Stagebridge students and professional teaching staff receive training specific to the art discipline and type of facility. For example, the Storytelling Director will teach facilitation skills and storytelling appropriate for different senior populations/venues. Storytellers then “shadow” professional teaching artists for 3-5 sessions and then work in pairs team-teaching.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, tapping into the potential of older adults as students, volunteers, and program leaders with community groups provides them with new audiences and helps you strengthen your organization’s ties in the community. As Joanne says, “Maybe one person has enjoyed themselves or laughed or remembered something. That’s what I’m there for.”

## TIPS FOR OUTREACH ACTIVITIES WITH OLDER ADULTS

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### RECRUIT WITH A “CARROT”

“Make new friends.” “Learn new skills.” “Share stories with children.” “Brighten the lives of elders in nursing homes.” “Limited time commitment.” Older adults want to know how their skills will be put to use in the community.

### PLAN CAREFULLY

It’s very easy when we are understaffed to just think about ourselves, our programs, our needs – and not take into FULL account the needs of the community partner, the teaching artists, and especially the older adults who will deliver the program. Success means “win-win-win.” Everyone’s needs are met. Provide older adults with some food for a late afternoon session, car-pool to the site, or have them team-teach with supervision and feedback.

### BE CLEAR

Craft simple contracts and letters of understanding that detail each other’s responsibilities, roles and deliverables. Ask that a liaison be selected and detail what their responsibility is.

### THEIR VOICE MATTERS

Many older adults, especially women, don’t feel that they are seen or heard by others. Throughout the process, give them opportunities to express themselves in group meetings and in writing. Periodically monitor programs with all parties involved.

### BE HONEST AND DON’T PATRONIZE

We all want to feel respected and older adults can tell when they’re being treated with condescension or honesty.

### SHOW OFF

Share the final “show” with others: invite other classes, families, nearby community groups or schools. Document the project and share it. And ask the facility, if it has a marketing or community outreach to share your work with others on bulletin boards, in newsletters, photo displays, etc.

### SAY THANK YOU

Write personal notes to the participants; provide letters from school children; or have the head of the community organization speak.

EBBE JOHANSEN

# OVERVIEW OF EU ACTION IN THE FIELD OF AGEING

The AGE Platform Europe pursues educational, scientific and philanthropic ends to represent retired and older people as important group for European society to political stakeholders on EU and Member States level. It's vice- president, Ebbe Johansen, gives an insight into the European policy context on ageing.

The European Union has been dealing with challenges linked to demographic change in various ways. The 2012 European Year for Active Ageing has marked the EU strong political commitment to promoting rights and social inclusion of Europe's older population. Furthermore the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, which enshrines the rights of the elderly, has become a point of reference commonly used in the development of EU policies and is since 1997 complemented by the Amsterdam Treaty which gave the EU the competence for combating discrimination based on age. Thanks to this new competence, the EU has adopted a legislation forbidding discrimination in employment on the ground of age notably. A proposal to extend such legislation beyond employment, i.e. in access to goods and services, is under discussion at the Council of the EU since 2008.

The Europe 2020 Strategy, which is the EU's growth strategy for the current decade, aims at promoting a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for Europe. It set up clear objectives for employment and poverty rates, lifelong learning and gender equality, which are very relevant for older persons. In practice, the EU has launched in 2010 the European Semester process, aiming at discussing at EU level and monitoring the implementation of national reform programmes in the field of e.g. employment, pensions' reforms, poverty reduction, health systems and long-term care.

Moreover, the Commission proposed in February 2012 a "White Paper: An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions", outlining measures at European level to support and complement national pension reforms – for instance longer working lives; gender equality; the internal market for pensions; mobility of pensions across the EU; the future solvency regime for pension funds to better protect employees' entitlements or informed decision making and governance at EU level. The EU has also adopted a text ensuring that pensioners do not lose their statutory pension entitlements if they move to another EU country.

Under the EU Law, EU action must aim to improve public health, prevent human illness and diseases, and identify sources of danger to human health. Thus although Member States have the sole responsibility for the organisation and delivery of health services and health care in their country, the EU is actively supporting Member States in their efforts to promote healthy ageing with initiatives to improve the health of older people, develop eHealth solutions, strengthen the health workforce, prevent diseases throughout life and improve medicines for older persons. The EU also takes action to improve the living conditions of older people. In November 2010, the European Commission launched the European innovation partnership on active and healthy ageing (EIP AHA) to foster collaborations and synergies in the field of ageing.

In the field of accessibility, the European Commission is organising each year the EU Access City Awards which rewards European cities having made their environment more accessible for persons with disabilities and older persons. The European Commission has also released in December 2013 a draft legislation on the accessibility of public websites and is planning to publish another text addressing accessible goods and services from the private sector, the so-called EU Accessibility Act. Furthermore, the European Commission is more and more working in the field of senior tourism, identifying ways to develop low-season tourism and adapt the tourism offer to the needs of the older population.

Last but not least, the EU is funding a large number of research activities in the field of ageing, notably through the Horizon2020 programme, the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme (AAL JP), the JPI “More years – Better Lives”, the EU Joint Programme on neurodegenerative diseases (JPND) and the Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) on healthy living and active ageing. The projects funded through these programmes contribute to the development of eHealth solutions and other ICT-based solutions to support healthy ageing and independent living, the integration of health and social care, the research of particular diseases, or research in social sciences.

Another approach supported by the EU is the WHO approach on age-friendly environments (AFE), i.e. on how to adapt social and physical environments to allow people to age more actively, healthily and independently for longer. The European Commission is working with WHO-Europe on a project aimed at adapting WHO Global guide of age-friendly cities and communities to the European context. Moreover, it funds the AFE INNOVNET Thematic Network on innovation for age-friendly environments, which aims at creating an EU-wide community of local and regional authorities, and other stakeholders, willing to implement the WHO approach. Local and regional authorities have indeed been identified during the European Year 2012 on active ageing and solidarity between generations as key actors in the implementation of initiatives supporting active and healthy ageing. This network therefore aims at mobilising them, help them share their experience and notable practices, and develop action plans on ageing. The Network also gathers universities, NGOs, end users organisations, businesses, etc, and actively works to gather initiatives and to develop tools and methodologies to involve older persons in such processes as well as to assess the socio-economic impact of these initiatives.

The overarching goal of this Network is to launch an EU Covenant on demographic change, which will be a sustainable technical and political framework for cities and regions willing to adapt their environment to population ageing. The launch of such Covenant will take place in Brussels on 7 December 2015 at the Committee of the Regions. Initiatives supporting the participation of older persons in their communities, such as the Festival “The Art of Ageing”, are very relevant in this context and welcome in the AFE-INNOVNET Network.

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MORE INFORMATION AND  
SUBSCRIPTION ARE AVAILABLE ON:

[www.afeinnovnet.eu](http://www.afeinnovnet.eu)

THE ART OF AGEING  
RECOGNISES THAT  
AMONGST OUR ETHNIC,  
RACIAL, GENDER,  
CLASS-BASED,  
RELIGIOUS AND  
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES  
AS EUROPEAN CITIZENS,  
AGE IS  
THE ONE  
SOCIAL  
POSITION  
WE ALL SHARE

# THE ART OF AGEING ARTISTIC AND TECHNICAL CREATIVE EUROPEAN TEAM

## THE CLOCK IS TICKING

### KARLSRUHE:

Actors: **Sophia Löffler, Jan Andreesen**  
 Stage director: **Malte C. Lachmann**  
 Stage and costume design: **Anna van Leen**  
 Choir: **Hannelore Slavik**  
 Dramaturge: **Michael Gmaj**  
 Theatre pedagogue: **Anne Britting**  
 Project manager: **Jan Linders**  
 Director's assistant: **Eric Nikodym**  
 Stage assistant: **Johannes Fried**  
 Costume assistant: **Stefanie Gaissert**  
 Prompter: **Angela Pfüzenreuter**  
 Director's assistants: **Annika Gralke, Clara Sindel, Andreas Hirsch**  
 Technical director: **Harald Fasslrunner, Ralf Haslinger**  
 Technical manager: **Maik Fröhlich**  
 Stage/Light/Sound technicians: **Tobias Becker, Ernst Hollemeyer, Sebastian Huber, Mike Krause-Bergmann, Stephan Mauritz, Max Mörmann, Peter Peregovits, Urban Schmelzle**  
 Head of light department: **Stefan Woinke**  
 Head of sound department: **Stefan Raebel**  
 Head of props: **Wolfgang Feger**  
 Head of the workshops: **Guido Schneitz**  
 Head of the paint shop: **Dieter Moser**  
 Head of the theatre sculptures: **Ladislaus Zaban**  
 Carpenter: **Rouven Bitsch**  
 Metalworker: **Mario Weimar**  
 Upholstery and decoration: **Ute Wienberg**  
 Costume director: **Christine Haller**  
 Head of women's wardrobe:  
**Petra Annette Schreiber, Robert Harter**  
 Head of men's wardrobe: **Tatjana Graf, Karin Wörner, Annette Gropp**  
 Armourer: **Michael Paolone, Harald Heusinger**  
 Shoemaker's: **Thomas Mahler, Valentin Kaufmann, Barbara Kistner**  
 Modiste: **Diana Ferrara, Jeanette Hardy**  
 Head of make-up artists: **Raimund Ostertag**  
 Make-up: **Kathleen Hehne**

### TIMIȘOARA:

Author: **Peca Stefan**  
 Actors: **Colin Buzoianu, Sabina Bijan**  
 Scenography assistant: **Monica Grand**  
 Dramaturges: **Codruta Popov, Geanina Jinaru-Doboș**  
 Video artist: **Lucian Matei**  
 Project manager: **Geanina Jinaru-Doboș**

Stage manager: **Cristian Stana**  
 Prompter: **Corina Toma**  
 Lights: **Alexandru Stănescu**  
 Sound: **Cristian Rebejilă**  
 Head of production department: **Radu Berzescu**  
 Technical coordinator: **Horațiu Nica**  
 Costumes: **Monica Grand, Maria Aluaș, Marilena Suci**  
 Props: **Alin Tofan, Mariana Doboșan, Julia Doboșan, Mihai Ninel**  
 Make-up: **Andra Diac**  
 Hairstyles: **Lucas Maties**

## STRAWBERRY ORPHANS

### BRAUNSCHWEIG:

Author: **werkgruppe2**  
 Actors: **Kim Efert, Sven Hönig, Oliver Simon**  
 Stage director: **Julia Roesler**  
 Research: **Julia Roesler, Silke Merzhäuser, Gina Calinoiu**  
 Music management: **Kim Efert**  
 Dramaturges: **Silke Merzhäuser, Axel Preuß**  
 Director assistant / prompter: **Maximilian Hanisch**  
 Director's / Scenography's assistants:  
**Florian Berghöfer, Merle Kirchberger, Hanna Puder**  
 Translator (research and script):  
**Alexandru Sterescu**  
 Head of set and costume department /  
 Technical director: **Ralf Wrobel**  
 Head of light department: **Frank Kaster**  
 Light arrangement: **Jörg Schmidt**  
 Head of sound department: **Burkhard Brunner**  
 Props: **Anke Vorwick, Sonja Teubler**  
 Head of costume department: **Ernst Herlitzius**  
 Head of mask department: **Nicolas Guth**  
 Head of set and costume workshops: **Petra Röder**  
 Production engineer: **Stephan Busemann**  
 Head of metalworking: **Armin Zühlke**  
 Head of paint shop: **Sonja Bähr**  
 Head of woodwork: **Peter Kranzmann**  
 Head of decoration and furniture department:  
**Axel Schneider**

### CRAIOVA:

Actresses: **Gabriela Baci, Gina Călinoiu**  
 Stage and costume designer: **Adrian Damian**  
 Collaboration costumes: **Veronika Kaleja**  
 Technical director: **Mircea Vărzaru**  
 Sound: **George Udrea**

Lights: **Ruiu Vilică**  
 Stage crew: **Nicolae Dumitrașcu, Ștefan Rotaru, Mihai Nărămzoiu**

## I'M AFRAID THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER NOW

### HEIDELBERG:

Actors: **Fabian Oehl, Lisa Förster, Josepha Grünberg, Andreas Seifert**  
 Stage director: **Miriam Horwitz**  
 German translation: **Renata Britvec**  
 Costume designer: **Pia Dederichs**  
 Collaboration Light: **Daniel Goody**  
 Dramaturge: **Jürgen Popig**  
 Executive producer: **Katja Herlemann**  
 Director's assistant / Stage manager: **Juri Padel**  
 Intern: **Julia Buchberger**  
 Technical director: **Peer Rudolph**  
 Technical production manager: **Jens Weise**  
 Stage master: **Rolf Bader**  
 Foreman: **Christian Brecht**  
 Head of light department: **Henrik Forberg, Ralf Kabrhel**  
 Light technician: **Hartmut Horn**  
 Head of sound department: **Alexander Wodniok**  
 Sound technician: **Martin Rohr**  
 Head of costume department: **Burkhard Klein, Kristina Flachs**  
 Wardrobe directors: **Alexandra Partzsch, Dagmar Gröver**  
 Head of make-up artists: **Kerstin Geiger, Sylvia Olias**  
 Make-up: **Julia Ristl**  
 Head of props department: **Esther Hilkert**  
 Props: **Wolf Brückmann**  
 Head of paint shop: **Dietmar Lechner**  
 Head of set workshop: **Markus Rothmund**  
 Head of metalworking: **Karl-Heinz Weis**  
 Head of carpentry: **Klaus Volpp**

### ZAGREB:

Author: **Ivor Martinić**  
 Actors: **Ivana Bolanča, Filip Križan, Natalija Đorđević, Irena Tereza Prpić**  
 Director: **Dominique Schnizer**  
 Stage and costume design: **Christin Treunert**  
 Lighting design: **Zdravko Stolnik**  
 Dramaturge: **Ivor Martinić**

Executive producer: **Sonja Kovačić**  
 Stage movement assistant: **Pravdan Devlahović**  
 Assistant director: **Arno Vinković**  
 Stage manager: **Ana Dulčić**  
 Prompter at the rehearsal: **Andrea Glad**  
 Technical director: **Goran Jerosimović**  
 Head of grip crew: **Vilim Pustišek**  
 Lighting: **Tomislav Baotić**  
 Sound designers: **Christian Kanazir, Branko Puceković**  
 Head of women's wardrobe: **Jelica Mikuš**  
 Head of men's wardrobe: **Slavko Ričko**  
 Seamstresses: **Slavica Marušić, Ljubica Gašparović**  
 Master locksmith: **Ivica Kulaš**  
 Master carpenter: **Krunoslav Ozimec**  
 Upholstery: **Tomislav Barbarić**  
 Varnishing: **Josip Kukuruzović**  
 Make-up and hairdressing: **Danijela Pavlek**  
 Hairdresser: **Darinka Smetiško**  
 Make-up artist: **Sonja Pavičić**  
 Prop master: **Barbara Borčić**  
 Dressers: **Ružica Valenčak, Sanja Tenjer, Ljiljana Dimova Peternel, Dubravka Herout**

## FEN FIRES

### BERLIN:

Author: **Nino Haratischwilli**  
 Actors: **Gabriele Heinz, Eric Wehlan**  
 Director: **Brit Bartkowiak**  
 Stage designer: **Nikolaus Frinke**  
 Costume designer: **Karin Rosemann**  
 Music: **Thies Mynter**  
 Dramaturge: **Ulrich Beck**  
 Project manager: **Christa Müller**  
 Director assistant: **Jana Lösch**  
 Stage assistant: **María Murillo García, Ema Teren**  
 Prompter: **Joanna Lipniewicz**  
 Surttitle: **Natalia Kondratenko**  
 Technical arrangement: **Dirk Salchow**  
 Light technician: **Heiko Thomas**  
 Sound technician: **Florian Lohoff**  
 Props: **Frank Schulz**  
 Wardrobe: **Sabine Reinfeldt**  
 Make-up: **Andreas Müller**

### BRATISLAVA:

Actors: **Emília Vášáryová, Dušan Jamrich**  
 Stage director: **Ingrid Greššová**  
 Dramaturges: **Miriám Kičiňová, Peter Pavlac**  
 Project manager: **Radana Lukáčiková Hromníková**

Translator in Slovak language: **Martina Vannayová**  
 Interpreter: **Klára Prešnajderová**  
 Technical leadership: **Viliam Švarda**  
 Set up responsible: **Michal Novák**  
 Lights: **Juraj Jakabčín**  
 Sound: **Andrej Novák**  
 Women's wardrobe: **Stazka Kunočová**  
 Men's wardrobe: **Dana Bučíková**  
 Make up leadership: **Monika Olanová**  
 Make up: **Simona Kijejská, Dominika Bartošovičová**

## THE ART OF AGEING EUROPEAN PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

Project director: **Heidi Wiley**  
 Project manager: **Elsa Varenne**  
 Project assistants: **Caroline Froehlich, Paula Oevermann**  
 Designer & Website: **Guergana Novkirichka-Livet, Benoit Haurie**  
 Accounting: **Guillaume de Lagasnerie**

# THE EUROPEAN THEATRE CONVENTION

## THE EUROPEAN THEATRE NETWORK

The European Theatre Convention (ETC) is a network for public theaters. It was founded in 1988 with the aims to promote exchange and discussion between artistic, technical and administrative personnel involved in theaters and theater-making, to provide support to encourage the exchange of performances among different countries and to bridge the language gap that exists in the spoken theatre. Today, the ETC has grown to become Europe's largest-scale network of its kind, representing some 11,000 employees in over 30 theatres in 19 countries around Europe, thousands of artists and 16,000 performances and public events per year.

As a European theater collaboration network, the ETC introduces outstanding new ideas and examples of best practices in use at theaters around Europe and supports the development of international collaboration and artistic mobility projects focusing on new theatrical creation and collaboration forms. It also serves as a professional platform for theater makers, organizes meetings, invests in education and training opportunities and initiates theatre research and publications.

In addition, ETC is also active as an influential advocacy network representing the European public theatre sector on the political decision-making level, working to build long-term, structured relationships with European political institutions for the important purpose of strengthening the position of the European public theaters as part of the vital culture and creative sector.

The ETC network engages in programs that encourage European theater collaboration from a variety of perspectives: Mobility program support exchanges of theatre makers, performances and projects within the network; festivals showcase new European theatre trends and are important platforms for young artists; the 'Young Europe' program created new plays for young people in schools and theaters showing a genuine cross-border cooperation; a recently conducted audience development study provides pioneering knowledge about audiences for European theaters. With the artistic flagship project 'The Art of Ageing', ETC theatres share on Europe's stages the burning topic of demographic challenges our society is confronted with.

## ETC MEMBER THEATRES

### BELGIUM:

Théâtre de Liège, Liège

### BOSNA I HERCEGOVINA:

International theater festival MESS, Sarajevo

### CROATIA:

Croatian National Theatre, Zagreb, Z/K/M, Zagreb, Gavella City Drama Theatre, Zagreb

### CYPRUS:

THOC – Cyprus Theatre Organisation, Nicosia

### FINLAND:

Helsingin Kaupunginteatteri, Helsinki

### FRANCE:

Théâtre de la Manufacture CDN de Nancy

### GERMANY:

Deutsches Theater Berlin, Theater an der Parkaue, Berlin, Staatstheater Braunschweig, Theater Dortmund, Theater und Orchester Heidelberg, Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Schauspiel Leipzig, Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden

### ITALY:

Teatro Cargo, Genova, Teatro Koreja, Lecce, Fondazione TeatroDue Parma, Teatro Metastasio Stabile della Toscana, Prato

### KOSOVO:

National Theatre of Kosovo, Prishtinë

### LUXEMBOURG:

Théâtre d'Esch, Esch-sur-Alzette, Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg – Le Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, Luxembourg

### NORWAY:

Det Norske Teatret, Oslo

### ROMANIA:

Teatrul National "Marin Sorescu" Craiova, Teatrul National Timișoara, Centrul Cultural "Jean Bart", Tulcea

### SLOVAKIA:

Slovenské Narodné Divadlo, Bratislava

### SLOVENIA:

Slovene National Drama Theatre Ljubljana, Slovene National Theatre Maribor, Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica

### SWITZERLAND:

Théâtre des Osses – Centre dramatique Fribourgeois, Givisiez

### THE NETHERLANDS:

De Toneelmakerij, Amsterdam

### TURKEY:

Devlet Tiyatrolari Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara

### UKRAINE:

Molodyi Drama Theatre, Kiev, New Drama Theatre Pechersk, Kiev

### UNITED KINGDOM:

Belarus Free Theatre, London

The project “The Art of Ageing”  
was initiated by  
the European Theatre Convention

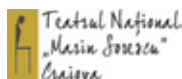
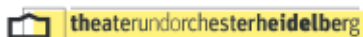


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In collaboration with  
the ETC partner theatres



## CONTACTS

### EUROPEAN THEATRE CONVENTION

#### HEAD OFFICE

c/o Syndeac  
8, rue Blanche  
75009 Paris  
France

#### EU OFFICE

c/o European House for Culture  
Saintelettesquare 17  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium

#### EXECUTIVE OFFICE

c/o Deutsches Theater  
Schumannstr. 13A  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
T: +49 30 284 41 460  
F: +49 30 284 41 488  
E: [convention@etc-cte.org](mailto:convention@etc-cte.org)  
[www.etc-cte.org](http://www.etc-cte.org)

ETC General secretary: **Heidi Wiley**  
Project manager: **Elsa Varenne**  
Project assistant: **Paula Oevermann**

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p.2, p.10, p.13, p.14, p.19, p.24, p.25 (bottom):

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**Annemone Taake**

p.60 & 61 (center): **Jasenko Rasol**

p.58 : **Ivor Martinić**

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