



The Internationals

Written by Jeton Neziraj

Translated from English by Aktina Stathaki

Directed by Aktina Stathaki

With: Anastasia Katsinavaki, Vivi Petsi and Arianna Chatziganou.

Movement consultant: Eleftheria Komi

Music: Aktina Stathaki and Jerome Simeon

Video: Eleni Zervou

Photographer: George Danopoulos

Produced by: Between the Seas: Mediterranean Performance Lab.

About the performance:

How does a Starbucks vanilla chai latte taste in Pristina? What did Mother Teresa tell Bill Clinton on the phone? How hard is it to buy a kidney? Where was Madeleine Albright when the first bomb exploded in Serbia? And what if the kidney belongs to Marina Abramovic? Do you know who created the state of Kosovo?

In 22 vignettes, loosely connected around the figure of Hague criminal court prosecutor Carla del Ponte, Neziraj employs his signature satirical style to explore how a state is created, exposing the political games played around a people's plea for sovereignty and the winners and losers of war. The powerful of the world, be it in the political or the cultural sphere, those who dominate the narrative, are juxtaposed in the play's non linear, absurdist structure and style, with the simple people who try to survive in a changing world that they do not comprehend and where they are always the innocent victims. It is the very locality of the play, its piercing satire and the astuteness of its interpretation of our neo-colonial world order, that make it relevant and timely beyond the borders of Kosovo.

Touring info:

Travelling: 4 persons

Costumes and props to be carried by travelling team.

Performance language: English or Greek with English supertitles.

Duration: 70 minutes, no intermission

Technical info:

Local technicians (light/sound)

Basic Lighting and sound equipment

Projector

Strobe light

Wireless hand held microphone

Will need one full day of rehearsal to adapt to space.



Props:

A walker

Cocktail glasses

A large square piece of artificial turf



Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/839478222>

Bios of the core team:

Jeton Neziraj is the Director of Qendra Multimedia, after serving as the Artistic Director of the National Theatre of Kosovo. He has written over 20 plays that have been staged (over 50 productions), translated and published in more than 15 languages. His plays have won numerous prizes and have been performed in theatre festivals throughout Europe. "...The plays [of Jeton Neziraj] are raucous, irreverent and absurdist. They invoke Ibsen, Molière and Kafka..." The Guardian wrote about his work. The German theatre magazine Theater der Zeit and the German Radio Deutschlandfunk Kultur have described him as 'Kafka of the Balkans', while Los Angeles Times called him "a world- class playwright who challenges our complacency at every twist and

turn". He is winner of 2020 Europe Culture Award and several other local and International awards and prizes.

Aktina Stathaki is a graduate of the National Theatre of Greece and holds a PhD in theatre and postcolonial studies from the University of Toronto. As an actress she has collaborated with the National Theatre of Greece, the AfriCan theatre Ensemble (Toronto) and trey anthony productions (Toronto). As a director/theatre maker she has staged productions and staged readings including: Abandon the Citizens (devised performance based on testimonies of Asia Minor refugees in 1922); Could You Please Look into the Camera? (by M. Al Attar); Against Progress (by E. Soler); and The Internationals (by J. Neziraj), What Reality? (by Nina Rapi), A story of Love and Soccer (by M. Santeramo). She is the founder of Between the Seas Festival: an international platform presenting and promoting the work of emerging contemporary Mediterranean performing artists (2011-2019, New York — more info: www.betweentheseas.org). In 2019 she founded 1927 Art Space in Kypseli, an independent venue for artistic research, the bridging of theory and practice and the promotion of international exchange (1927online.art.blog). Parallel to her own work, Aktina has served in managerial and consulting positions at The Joyce Theatre (New York), Women's Project Theatre (New York), The International Theatre Institute (Shanghai), while most recently she was appointed a special advisor to the Greek minister of culture in charge of international relations.

Aktina's practice is informed by her dual artistic and academic background. Her interests lie at the intersection of storytelling and the staging of testimony and archival material in narratives and histories that examine questions of identity, place and displacement. Her research and articles have been published and presented in conferences, journals and newspapers in Greece, North America and beyond. She is the recipient of a Time Warner Fellowship for her producing work and a United Nations Alliance for Civilizations fellowship for her commitment to intercultural dialogue and exchange.



Vivi Petsi: Born in Athens. Graduated from the Athens Conservatory Drama School in 2009. Studied singing in the National Conservatory from 2015-2020. In addition to her work as an actor and singer, she works as a theatre educator at the primary and secondary school level. She has worked with Greek directors: Elli Papakonstantinou, Eleana Tsichli, Dimitris Kanelopoulos, Anna Kokkinou, Thodoris Abazis, Eleni Boza, Aktina Stathaki and others.



Arianna Chatziganalou: Born in the city of Volos. Studied theatre in the Acting Anatomy Studio of Roula Pateraki after completing her BA in English Literature in the University of Thessaloniki and her MA focusing representations of mental illness in American cinema. She has trained with Theodoros Terzopoulos, Richard Nieoczym, Mario Biagini and Antonis Koutroubis. As an actress she has worked in the Athens Festival, Peiraeus Municipal Festival, Cacoyannis Foundation, Embros Theatre, and has worked with directors such as Roula Pateraki, Thanos Papakonstantinou, Michel Van der Aa, Angela Brouskou, Fenia Papadodima and

others. She has acted in films by Vassilis Mazomenos, Gains Smaragdis, Konstantinos Kontis and Tassos Psaras. She designs and runs educational programs on the theme of Theatre and personal development for youth and adults



Anastasia Katsinavaki is a professional actress and singer. She is a graduate of the Veaki School of Acting and holds a classical singing diploma and a Byzantine music diploma. She writes, teaches and produces her own work and has been a member of ensembles such as the Voice Research group of Spyros Sakkas and ODC Ensemble of Elli Papakonstantinou. She experiments with new technologies in the field of performing arts including: Brain Computer Interfaces – BCIs) for the performance *Eneduanna*, a manifesto of falling - 2015, Hotel Anti-Oedipus (FORUM VERTIGO, IRCAM - Centre Pompidou 2021), Asylum – a holy space within virtual live mixed media on questions of confinement and emotional trauma. She has worked with directors and composers: Elli Papakonstantinou, Thodoris Abazis, Gains Kakleas, Natasa Zouka, Eleni Kalara, Tilemachos Moussas, Spyros Sakkas and others. She has participated in many greek and english-language productions such as: BAM Fisher – New York, CCA Glasgow, Operadagen Festival - Rotterdam, Be Festival – Birmingham, Copenhagen Operafestival, Aalborg Operafestival, Notre Dame Gate, Birgu (Malta), International Chorus Festival Niš (Serbia), State Theatre of Northern Greece, National Opera, Epidaurus, Half Note Jazz Club and others.

Reviews:

[...] Carla del Ponte as the connective tissue, runs through the drama of war, taking us from the world of political calculation to that of recording benefits and losses, through the sad cataloguing of all those who lost lives, limbs, who got raped or had their kidneys sold in the back market. [...]. Equally dominant is the figure of Marina Abramovic in a clear satire of the art-washing of western imperialism. And somewhere halfway through the performance an exciting game with the audience, a type of lottery or referendum based on the words of those who one way or another played a part in this Balkan drama. All of this would have been impossible without the lively, audacious translation of Aktina Stathaki and her skill to use the minimal gallery space to orchestrate the cast in a finely tuned chorus, well integrated in a performance that is coherent while staying true to the proclaimed loose structure of the text. Anastasia Katsinavaki, Vivi Petsi and Arianna Chatzigananou interchange in the roles of all those who profit from the war. Their tone, playful from beginning to end, serves precisely the purposes of a rich political satire set against the backdrop of a war that scarred the Balkans in the darkest way”.

(Vangelis Marinakis, review of The Internationals at 1927 Art Space, 7.3.2023, Documento News: <https://www.documentonews.gr/article/to-drama-toy-kosovoy-sto-theatro/>)



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