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Asociácia Divadelná Nitra | Divadelná Nitra Association • Svätoplukovo nám. 4, 950 53 Nitra, Slovakia
Tel. + Fax: +421 903 55 44 75 | e-mail: nitrafest@nitrafest.sk | www.nitrafest.sk | IČO: 340 745 71 | DIČ: 20 21 20 60 33

New international productions at Divadelná Nitra

What will our future be? How can we and our children affect it? ITF Divadelná Nitra looks ahead, introducing new international productions with Slovak collaborators.

When young activist Greta Thunberg staunchly asked people in charge what they were planning to do to save the planet, she was backed by thousands of children and teenagers across the globe. The question of our collective future became one of the day's most burning issues. The International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra (25 – 30 September 2020) will feature two special performances produced for the European Project Be SpectACTIVE! reflecting on the need of us all to take part in shaping society's future.

Why rinse a plastic yoghurt cup if some people fly to Thailand four times a year? The subtitle of the intermedia production **Blue is the Colour** is a reference to the ecological dilemmas modern society has become enmeshed in. The piece sees acclaimed director, choreographer, dancer and actor Petra Fornayová explore various visions of our future. A fanatical botanist, a true-blue athlete, and an idealistic politician, a collector or a minimalist will take centre stage as the archetypes of concrete figures and stories. 'Blue is the Colour seeks answers to the question as to what will convince our spoiled civilisation of a need to reformulate its dominant discourse, and interrogates the relationship between individual freedom and his or her responsibility – for society, for future generations, for the environment,' explains Petra Fornayová, who performs in the production alongside colleagues Vlado Zboroň and Silvia Sviteková. 'Are there any solutions to the advancing ecological crisis? Will they be private, or – to the contrary – global political strategies? How willing and capable will be we in following the moral law, and how far will its limits be displaced?' the author asks, posing questions seamlessly connected with the theme of the 29. International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra – territory ethos. 'Reality will blend with fiction, text with movement and image,' adds Fornayová, who plans to involve spectators in her performance. Besides contemporary dance, the production also involves other art forms – its visual concept was authored by multimedia artist Jakub Pišek, while the text and dramaturgy are due to Peter Šulej, and music to Fero Király.

Fornayová's new work will see its first presentation during the festival – however, it will not be staged in its final form. The production's development was affected by the coronavirus crisis, having disrupted planned residencies



in Ireland and Belgium. *Blue is the Colour* is produced in Slovakia and beyond – importantly, its development also consists of participative research done at various European partners. Due to restrictions on foreign travel, only one artistic residency has taken place so far, hosted by Plesni Teater Ljubljana in Slovenia. The artistic team will present the results of their Slovenian residency and the first stage of rehearsals in a special presentation at Divadelná Nitra as a work-in-progress. *Blue is the Grass* is scheduled to premiere in late 2020 or early 2021.

In June 2019, fifteen teenagers from Nitra and Prague met for the first time at Tanec Praha Festival. Here they had a chance to become familiar with five Czech and Slovak artists and to choose their favourites to collaborate in a collective production. In the end their choice fell on well-known names from the international dance scene – choreographer, scenographer and visual artist Marie Gourdain (France, Czech Republic), and dancer, choreographer and performer Jaro Viňarský (Slovenia), who is acclaimed internationally and who has received one of the world's most prestigious dance awards, The Bessies New York Dance and Performing Arts Award in the category Outstanding Performer – additionally choosing Václav Kalivoda (Czech Republic) for musical collaboration.

Having formed an intergenerational creative team, the children continued to prepare their production Icarus at live meetings, discussions, workshops, and online. They also had an important say in selecting its theme. The dance production reflects on what is of highest concern to young people – the themes of limits and freedom. The piece was inspired by the mythological tale of Daedalus and Icarus, but it by no means offers a mere illustrative rendition. *'The story served as the point of departure for its symbolism and abstraction, like the teenagers' scenic movement, based on an analysis of human walking and revolving around the trajectorial principle of human movement. Walking is an expression of identity in motion,'* says director Marie Gourdain. The project's ambition was to create a work that would be mobile between countries and that could be variably created anew in each locality and presented with groups of local teenagers.

'This production is meant to foster contemporary dance in Nitra. By actively involving children in artistic processes under the guidance of a team of prominent figures from the international and local dance scene, it contributes to the future career chances of young dancers from Nitra and broadens their horizons. It equally brings participative experimentation to Slovakia, promotes active citizenship, and supports community life,' explained manager of the internationally acclaimed project Be SpectACTive!, Anna Šimončíčová. The organisers of ITF Divadelná Nitra were the first subject in Slovakia to join its ranks in 2019. This community-oriented project, funded by the European Union, promotes extensive activities contributing to citizens' participation in local events, their activation, development of art and audiences and to improved contacts with the international scene.



The 29. International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra will take place in the Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra, the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, the Synagogue, Vila K and at Svätoplukovo námestie.

Tickets to performances can be purchased via the online marketplace GoOut from 7 September 2020 and at the Festival Cash Desk (main entrance of the Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra) daily from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM. In view of current safety measures, the organisers recommend visitors purchase their tickets online.

Association Divadelná Nitra will ensure compliance with all hygienic and anti-epidemic measures in accordance with current instructions of the Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic and the Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra during the International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra 2020. For more information about current measures, please visit www.nitrafest.sk.

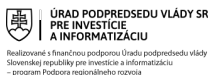
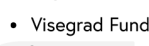
For more information, please contact:

Linda Durkáčová
PR manager of ITF Divadelná Nitra
+421 902 088 044
press@nitrafest.sk

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