

AGM
PUBLICATION

CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS & OUTDOOR ARTS IN CROATIA AND THE REGION



ARTCENA

ARTCENA is the National Centre for Circus, Street and Theatre Arts, created by the French Ministry of Culture. It coordinates Circostrada and has a permanent seat on its Steering Committee. It works closely with sector professionals and offers them publications and multimedia resources through its digital platform. It develops mentoring, training, tools and services to help them in their daily practices. It provides support to contemporary creation through national programmes and encourages international development of these three sectors.



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CIRCO
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EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR
CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS
AND OUTDOOR ARTS

Circostrada is the European Network for contemporary circus and outdoor arts. Created in 2003 with the core mission of furthering the development, empowerment and recognition of these fields at European and international levels, over the years the network has become an important anchoring point for its members – 150 organisations from over 45 countries – and a key interlocutor in the dialogue with cultural policy makers across Europe.

FOREWORD

The publication you are about to read presents to you a panoramic overview of local and regional contemporary circus and outdoor arts productions and beyond that of the community, environment, and circumstances in which these disciplines are created and performed in Croatia and the region. It is also a cautious approach to the topic of diversity, which happens to be the second annual red-thread of the current Circostrada project.

As for the Peculiar Families Festival, which is hosting the Annual General Meeting of the network in Split (Croatia), not only the festival's name is peculiar here. This year's festival edition is organised in the sisterhood and unity of three organisations that have practised alchemy for more than five years together in a working environment that has usually been precarious. To adapt, contemporary circus organisations ROOM 100 from Split, Cirkusfera from Belgrade, and Cirkorama from Zagreb share values of bottom-up, peer-to-peer, and interdependent approach to creation, production, and presentation resulting in a specific blend of resilience, improvisation, and reliability. Even before the pandemic, working in countries lacking institutional and public support for arts and culture, mutual support and constant interaction of regional actors was a tool for the long-term development of shared infrastructure, fresh generations, artistic criteria, and operating on low resources.

The production of this scale is the biggest challenge we took working together from cities apart. We have put together a programme that offers a proper insight into the Croatian and regional landscape of circus arts with a strong flavour of humour and spice of melodrama. The festival is mostly happening in the tent of CirkoBalkana in the Zenta bay of Split, offering the opportunity for the first time ever to the city's audience to enjoy contemporary circus performances in a tent. Apart from the opening session, all venues and outdoor performances are all located outside the touristic centre. The impact of the tourist industry on the everyday life of local people inspired us to set a critical ground for reflection on our own practices as a large family of European circus arts.

Aside from a great appreciation for all the collective and individual efforts to make this artistic field visible and innovative, new trends in production emerge that are often far from being sustainable and inclusive: enormous set-ups with an excessive ecological footprint and lack of occasional joyful simplicity recreate imbalance, i.e. periphery-centre relations or unrooting the circus from its local and immediate audiences. But instead of insisting on balance, for now, let's embrace diversity and mutuality!

Antonia Kuzmanić

**Artistic leader of the contemporary circus collective ROOM 100,
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CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS AND OUTDOOR ARTS IN CROATIA: THE GROWTH OF THE PLANT CALLED “CIRCUS”

By Irena Boljuncić



Irena Boljuncić is a cultural worker in the independent art and cultural scene in Croatia. Since 1999 she has been active in developing contemporary circus and outdoor arts in Croatia as an artist, producer and manager. She has initiated, curated and managed various projects and programmes related to the contemporary performing arts, cultural policy and international collaboration. Her principal field of interest is creating opportunities for the development of independent culture (performing arts), international collaborations and governing cultural spaces. From 2019 to 2021 she was President of the European network [Trans Europe Halles](#).

The development of circus art in Croatia lasts around twenty years. It can be said to be a spontaneous growth plant that builds its way through a series of obstacles, side tracks, and aggravating circumstances. Over the past years of persistent work and action, the plant called “circus” has succeeded in roots taking and growing in a tree that is expanding its branches. This text includes a brief historical overview and some notifications on today's situation in the contemporary circus scene and outdoor arts.

Nomadism as a key emotion

At the beginning of 2000, just five years after the war had finished, a group of twenty students living in Zagreb, who were already active on the alternative performing youth scene, started to juggle with fire on the streets. Fun, music, guitars and djembes, hanging together, provoke normality... - who knew that time this will start the journey called developing circus art form in the region? The development of the circus in modern Croatia was born on the streets.

After the war in Croatia, with the fast growth of tourism on the coast and connected entertainment, it was obvious and natural that outdoor arts and street festivals will be the first branch of oncoming circus genres. The aforementioned group of students formed a

collective called *Nova loža lude mame*. As something completely new, quite marginal and full of nomadic vibrations, they became a source of curiosity for famous Croatian theatrical directors who invited them to play at summer festivals or engage them as part of their productions.

In 1998, FAKI (Festival of Alternative Theatre Expression) started in Zagreb as one of the most important festivals that, from the very beginning, invites artists who base their expression on contemporary artistic practices, including a contemporary circus. The festival opened the door to many amateur local and regional artists who based their work on circus expression and served them as a kind of support and inspiration for their further work. From 2001 to 2004, FAKI

hosted several important European outdoor arts and circus troupes, such as Grotest Maru (Germany), Psychological Art Circus (UK), B612 (Spain). Parallel, the established well-known festivals such as EUROKAZ in Zagreb and PUF in Pula introduced the term “new circus” to the audiences by programming big international contemporary circus companies like Acrobat, The Happy Sideshow, SILO Theatre.

Besides the mentioned, a big influence on the early stage of circus development in Croatia was the Italian circus and outdoor scene. When in 2003 part of the collective *Nova luža lude mame* arrived in Porano, at a phenomenal Italian juggling convention, they were in total shock! For the first time, they saw professional jugglers, tightrope

walkers, acrobats, different circus disciplines and artists and the funny thing was, that they learned they can buy circus equipment and not only produce it by themselves. That Italian juggling convention opened the doors to the necessary professionalisation of circus skills and shows.

The result of all these events was the establishment of associations that decided to professionally engage in contemporary circus and outdoor arts, Kulturna alternativa mladih – Hram in Split, Čarobnjakov šešir in Pula, Antuntun, Cirkorama, and Triko Cirkus Teatar in Zagreb, some of them still remaining

active in the circus scene to this day. The emotion of nomadism and feeling of freedom while travelling and performing from that time is something that will mark the whole development of the contemporary circus scene in Croatia.

Festivals and international collaborations as a rollercoaster for professionalisation

Festival novog cirkusa – FNC began in Zagreb in 2005, established by Ivan Kralj as one of the most important festivals in the first decade of the new millennium in Croatia and the entire region. The festival is fully dedicated to contemporary circus and all of its variants. It manages to widen the audience and to enter the institutional theatres where the festival programme is performed. Throughout the years, the festival influences the development of domestic circus authors and begins to deal with advocacy and publishing activities. The festival also realises numerous international collaborations, as well as networking, and the association Mala performerska scena is the first circus organisation from Croatia to join the Circostrada network. The festival itself, from the beginning, becomes recognised by the audience and critics. Festival novog cirkusa ends in 2016 when the last edition of this festival was held.

A second important festival raised at that time but very different from FNC was Festival uličnih Čarobnjaka – FUČ, the international festival of outdoor arts and street circus performances organised by the association Čarobnjakov šešir. It was held in Pula, Istria, on the coast and hosted artists in an abandoned military place near the sea, where the camping was organised. During the night, on the camping side, after the main programme finished in town, an improvised stage was organised. It was a great opportunity for local artists to unofficially perform in front of recognised international artists in a chill atmosphere, and to hear their opinions on



Slavuj performance in 2014 © Photo by Dragan Popović

the new acts they were preparing. This improvised programme became quite famous and lots of audiences attended to see weird acts behind the official programme. Because of the festival's family feeling, and because it was organised by local and regional artists, it's still remembered as one of the crucial festivals for further circus and outdoor arts development and was the seed of future regional cooperation in upcoming years.

The arrival of Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe (today circusnext) in Croatia in 2010 had an important role in international recognition and cooperation. A collective from Split, Positive Force (today ROOM 100) was selected as one of the ten laureates. The following year, they had a world premiere of the play *C8H11NO2* on the stage of Académie Fratellini. It's the first contempo-

rary Croatian circus production that premiered abroad. The play achieved international success and had a world tour. Although the play was performed a few times in Croatia, it didn't achieve a significant response; it was too early for the public. Jakov Labrović's solo from the play was additionally performed as a unique performance and recognised by the art profession - the performance was a finalist award in contemporary art Arte Laguna in Venice and Aesthetica Art Prize in York. Since 2010, international collaboration started to be very vivid and had a big impact on young artists. It was a means of inspiration, and it gave the first possibilities for professional education and co-productions. The first real contemporary circus productions happened; the play *Poppins silazi* directed by Dubravka Crnojević Carić and *Slavuj* di-

rected by the famous Lee DeLong, both produced by [Triko cirkus teatar](#).

International cooperation had a significant impact on the education of young circus artists in the region. The Cirko-Balkana platform was the first regional educational programme and was supported by BAC (Balkan art and culture fund). It was related to the development of circus pedagogy. In 2014 started the project Circopedia by Ecole de Cirque Turbul', Cirkorama and Cirkusfera. It is intended for young people from former Yugoslavia countries who want to take part in the Turbul' circus school program, to gain pedagogical experience, and obtain a circus pedagogue diploma. Until today, seven youngsters had completed one year of education.

In the last years, there is a visible growth of international cooperation projects supported by Creative Europe. Examples of that are the circusnext platform, Circus Without Circus, Solo But Not Alone,



Participants of the Flying Trapeze workshop led by circus pedagogues from the Ecole de Cirque Turbul' in Belgrade in 2022 as part of the CirkoBalkana festival © Photo by Dragan Popović.

Hand to Hand, Beta Circus projects. All these international projects support the development of contemporary circus, especially the work on further innovation of the scene. And at the same time, they give good international opportunities to

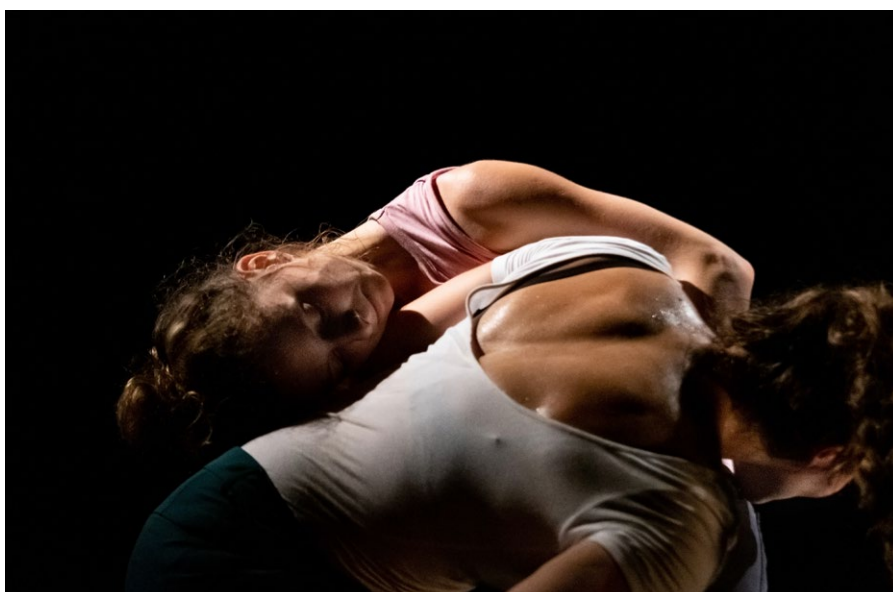
local and regional artists - they are well paid for their participation, their visibility has increased, they receive education and the possibility to work professionally in the circus field, and they can refine their own creative abilities.

Space resources as a never-ending challenge and the arrival of the CirkoBalkana circus tent

The interest in contemporary circus grows, productions are happening, festivals are bringing international companies and foreign artists give masterclasses. The scene became very engaging. Then, as of today, in Croatia, there's no professional school or well-equipped, satisfying space to train skills or to produce shows. That's one of the biggest obstacles to the professional growth of artists. The spaces we use are very improvised and technically insufficient (especially regarding the ceiling height) and the ones we can afford are part of squats or independent cultural centres. In many cases, the scene depends on the will of others to share a space. Performances that are technically demanding are hard to organise; the official theatres still do not consider contemporary circus as part of their artistic programming. The only more or less satisfying space is in Split, held by [Cirkus Kolektiv](#) in the cultural centre Dom mladih.

In 2013, [CirkoBalkana](#) - a festival of contemporary circus in a circus tent begins in Zagreb. CirkoBalkana starts as a collaborative project between Cirk'

Oblique from France, Cirkusfera from Serbia, and Cirkorama from Croatia. The aim was to bring and set up a circus tent as an independent space for



Premiere of the performance *Duel* in 2021 - Cirkorama, Cirkusfera and Un Loup pour l'homme co-production © Photo by Dragan Popović

performance, education and creation. The festival is getting a new form in 2017 when the CirkoBalkana collective buys a circus tent and starts using it as a regional mobile circus centre. CirkoBalkana festival took place in several cities in the region: Zagreb, Pula, Belgrade, Novi Sad and Ljubljana, and hosted numerous contemporary circus artists and collectives from all over the world and co-pro-

duced three contemporary circus performances in collaboration with French and regional circus artists. Nowadays, the CirkoBalkana tent is set up for two months in springtime in Zagreb and two months in autumn in Belgrade. It's a unique space that supports young artists, gives them residency opportunities and production conditions. The latest CirkoBalkana production *Duel* you'll be

able to see in the frame of this year's Peculiar Families Festival in Split.

Because of this lack of necessary spaces, in 2020 six circus associations put together their forces and started a programme called Circus residency network where they share or try to find spaces in six Croatian cities for artistic residencies in the contemporary circus field.

Audience development

The word circus in Croatia is ambiguous. In a public space is used to describe chaos, confusion, a big comedy, and it is often used by politicians in a negative and to-insult way. As in many other countries, circus as an art form is connected to the traditional circus, and this is the first meaning for the general audience. The public still expects to see big tops with animals. Because of the fast growth of outdoor arts and street performances that are part of touristic entertainment, this art form is not recognised and is considered as an amateur, mostly oriented as part of the art-for-children form.

In 2012, Triko Cirkus Teatar won the Audience Award for the independent theatre of the year. A year later, they produced the first professional circus show for children *Iglica* as a coproduction with the theatre Mala Scena. This is the first in a series of collaborations between these two professional independent theatres. It helped to open the doors of traditional theatres to circus artists and to widen audience outreach.

One of the most performed plays in Croatia and the Balkan region is *CirkoBalkana Kaos cabaret*, produced by CirkoBalkana collective. It combines traditional circus forms with the structure of cabaret and with live music. The show was awarded as the most innovative show on XII. Gumbekovi dani (2019) - festival of comedy and cabaret, receiving the special jury prize.

The most significant impact on audience development comes from educational programmes for all age groups (learning circus skills), which are numerous. There are also special projects for audience development such as Circus on the periphery (ROOM 100) and Kulturan ulični festival (Cirkorama). Not less important is the humanitarian work and work with vulnerable groups done by Red Noses Croatia - Clown Doctors, who, in addition to helping people, develop an awareness of the circus through their work. The collaboration between circus associations and students from the Academies for Dramatic art helps to promote the diversity of circus expression.

In recent years, circus is present in different art media. Authors produce artistic content that is not necessarily performative; basically, it's circus just in the form of video, art installations, photography, film, radio podcast, etc. ROOM 100 takes part in the interdisciplinary research project Circus without circus. The project brings together artists from the circus field and other artistic fields (music, film, dance, theatre, design, architecture) intending to facilitate cross-boundary research and to develop and explore cross-disciplinary working methods. Today, with the growth of professional young artists and the number of their productions, the contemporary circus as an art form becomes more and more acknowledged by different audiences. In 2011, the Croatian cultural independent scene successfully manages to advocate the establishment of

the Foundation Kultura nova. This is the first national institution that recognised the contemporary circus scene and offered funds to the sector. The Ministry of Culture and Media financed projects and programmes under the section called contemporary artistic practices, and around 10% of the whole section budget was intended for the circus.

During the Covid time, circus and outdoor artists were the only ones who didn't get any support from the state, as their status was not officially recognised. Therefore, in 2021 the sector finally founded an umbrella organisation DUSC - Contemporary Circus Artists Association. The advocacy process with the Ministry of Culture and Media was slow, but in a short time, important steps were made. The result of these advocacy processes is a separate budget dedicated only to circus and outdoor arts projects and programs starting in 2023. In this way, circus organisations managed to double the support compared to the previous years. The budget of the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media for circus and street arts 2023 is 70 000 euros. Which is nothing when we compare it to Western countries' budgets. In the next period, this call will also show and give us crucial information on the needs for further development.

A not less important thing that happened recently is the publishing of the Yearbook that unifies the work and systemises the achievements of contemporary circus authors and outdoor arts in 2021¹.

¹ <https://www.dusc.hr/cirkuski-godisnjak/>

Productions and aesthetics

In the early stage of contemporary circus development and outdoor arts, what was common to all productions was the term “the limits of human possibilities” and comedy. For many years, the form of cabaret was one of the most present and popular. Many artists didn't have a real show, they usually had short acts of up to 5-10 min with good circus

I mentioned before, Lee DeLong had a big impact on the development of the scene. Many good collaborations and production directed by foreign famous artists happened (Jango Edwards, David Shiner, Ira Seidenstein). In 2020, the Zagreb Clown Festival began in Zagreb, organised by the Triko Cirkus Teatar, the leading organisation of clowning ex-

perform and Cu'fus managed to create a special community around them.

In 2018, the company Tricycle Trauma brought refreshment on the circus scene with the event called Night of the dark circus, which was an underground performance in the fog. The event gathers various artists from the independent performance scene and creates a synthesis of various artistic expressions, and gives special expression to dark and mystical themes. This event travelled to many Croatian cities.

Association Čarobnjakov šejir in 2020 in Pula, produced the show *Raširi svoja krila*. The show gathers people with intellectual disabilities and unites them with professional contemporary circus artists in the joint creation of the same. The play is unique because it advocates an inclusive approach to performative practices, which is nothing new when it comes to theatre and dance in our country. But it was certainly something new in the contemporary circus that proved to be quite a reliable tool when working on this type of project.



Raširi svoja krila - performance at the Dr. Inat Theater in Pula © Photo by Igor Dražić

skills. To be able to perform/organise a full show, artists collaborated, and the easiest way was to use a form of a cabaret. The shows were funny, combined with puppet theatre and theatre of shadow, but with a lot of good experimentation and improvisation. The lack of “good characters” was present and then was natural that clowning became the next step of education.

Masterclasses of clowning held by foreign artists were often. Especially, as

pression in Croatia. The festival equally represents both local and foreign performers and has a rich educational programme in the form of masterclasses with world-famous pedagogues - clowns.

Outdoor arts remains true to comedy. Street theatre festivals are nowadays held in many Croatian cities. But not a lot of them are professional. Cu'fus festival which started back in 2011 in Samobor near Zagreb (and still exists), was and is a place where local artists

Cirkorama from Zagreb, ROOM 100 and Cirkus Kolektiv from Split are the strongest representatives of contemporary circus expression. They are leaders in innovation and experimentation, and their performances are to encourage the audience to rethink. As fascinating artists, I would mention Nikolina Majdak and Nikolina Komljenović who often combine contemporary circus with contemporary dance, physical theatre, and performance.

Importance of regional collaboration and common growth

On one hand, it's not possible to observe the development of contemporary circus and outdoor arts in Croatia without looking at significant regional common growth. We wouldn't

be where we are if we didn't join forces and support each other through the years. Here I especially mean neighbouring countries Slovenia and Serbia. All mentioned countries and

Croatia are small countries, without old circus tradition, and it's not realistic to expect we will have a significant number of circus artists to advocate, be visible, and we will easily break into the

performing art scene. We also share the same or similar societal context and history.

It started with the production of the international festival CirkoBalkana in 2013 by associations Cirkorama (Zagreb) and Cirkusfera (Belgrade). CirkoBalkana created and expand opportunities for the regional artists in co-productions, joint development of young artists, residency programs, touring and distribution of pieces, joint educational programs, etc. The biggest achievement of this collaboration was later on, in 2017 when they bought a circus tent for the whole region.

All these years the scene was followed and had the great support of the association Ana Monro from Ljubljana, which for already 25 years, organises an international street festival Ana Desetnica. In 2018 Cirkorama, Cirkusfera, Ana Monro and Anazitites theatrou (Thessaloniki) won the project CPUP - Circus on the move. They provided an online publication "Mapping circus



The first building of CirkoBalkana tent in 2017, Pula © Photo by Goran Jevtić

and street art in South East Europe"¹ in which they present the current state of the circus and outdoor arts scene in the region's culture.

The French Institute in Serbia gave extreme value for the growth of the sector and the programme Teatroskop,

started in 2011. The programme supports the reinforcement of professional networks by encouraging diffusion and project-sharing, enabling professional encounters and stimulating cooperation between the regional actors and the French scene.

¹ http://cirkobalkana.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/web_cirkus.final-1.pdf

PROVOCATION ROW: VOICES AND VIEWS OF CULTURAL LEADERS FROM CROATIA, SERBIA AND SLOVENIA

INDEPENDENT PERFORMING ARTS MOBILITY IN THE “NEW NORMAL”: LESSONS FROM THE POST-YUGOSLAV CONTEXT

By Ana Letunić



Ana Letunić is a contemporary performing arts producer, curator, lecturer, and researcher based in Croatia and Germany. She has worked for several performing arts organisations in Croatia, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Serbia, UK and USA, as well as for European networks. Her research is at the intersection of performance studies and cultural policy. She is currently pursuing a PhD as well as contributing to several initiatives, lecturing and pursuing academic research across Europe.

In 2023, following an abrupt shift in society brought on by the pandemic, we are experiencing attempts to return to the “old normal” and adaptation to living with the virus. On the other hand, it is neither possible nor, as many might argue, desirable, to simply go back to how things were before the COVID-19. Arundhati Roy, an Indian activist and author, has said that “pandemic is a portal”¹ or a gateway between one world and the next. We were forced to thoroughly rethink current serious global humanitarian, health, environmental, and economic challenges imposed by the “new normal” as well as new wars and armed conflicts in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. In a sense, our new reality broadened the ethical and aesthetic horizons of cultural solidarity, care, and critical thought in the cultural sector and beyond since the structures of unequal access to



Re-arranging (and) the self-arranged - performance with Sonja Pregrad and Nives Sertić, produced by Fourhanded and Mašina at &TD theatre (HR) © Damir Žižić

resources have been brought into an even clearer vision. The pandemic has also highlighted the complex interconnections between the arts and these larger socioeconomic urgencies. Due to the prevention of the liveness

¹ Roy, A. (2020). The pandemic is a portal. *Rethinking Schools*, Volume 34, No. 4. <https://rethinkingschools.org/articles/the-pandemic-is-a-portal/>

and physical assembly of bodies even in the wealthier European countries with robust public funding for culture, the independent performing arts including contemporary circus and outdoor arts around the world have been seriously impacted by the mobility restrictions.

In the independent performing arts particularly, mobility is vital to education and research, artistic and career development, professional and peer-to-peer networks and, thus, many professionals have come to depend economically on international travel for work opportunities, such as touring, talks, teaching, and funded residencies. Mobility also diversifies discourses, resists populist and politicised polarisation, and acts as a mediator between local differences and planetary perspectives. In other ways, travel has been partly compensated by developments in digitalisation, following a trend that was already noticeable before the pandemic. But these changes have also had an unevenly distributed socioeconomic and ecological effects around the world. It may be said that we are currently in the midst of some significant transformations, which are strongly affected by concerns about the mobility of artists. But what does all this mean for cultural mobility for the independent performing arts in the Balkans?

Research recently conducted within the Perform Europe project that deals with global cross-border performing arts presentation in a more inclusive, sustainable, and balanced way¹ has clearly shown that the majority of the performances that are presented in Eastern Europe and the Balkans² are coming from other countries in the region. National, regional and local sche-



Snapshot of Performing New Europe Festival 18 organised by the network APAP - Advancing Performing Arts Project and Szene Salzburg, Salzburg (AT) in January 2018 © Photo by Ana Letunić

mes supporting cross-border distribution of performing arts has been found to be very limited, especially those that create enough international touring opportunities for regional artists. Further on, Eastern Europe and Balkan countries import performances from all other regions, although their travel to Western and Northern Europe happens only in a very small percentage. On the other hand, research by the regional network *Kooperativa*³ shows that strong mobility and networking within the region strengthens the organisations' capacities through advocacy and the exchange of knowledge, skills, and experiences. Due to the common heritage, the cooperation in the independent performing arts in the scene has been developing organically.

Historically, when considering what would specifically be Yugoslav legacy in culture, the independent performing arts scene is a continuation of the predominantly radical art and cultural practices which produced critical inter-

ventions in the cultural, social and political spheres of society. Therefore, the values of cooperation, decentralisation, accessibility of culture and self-organisation is what the independent performing arts scene in the region is still bringing to the fore. The question that should be asked over and over again is how can these values be reinforced towards a more sustainable mobility of the contemporary circus and outdoor arts in the "new normal" within the region and beyond?

¹ Perform Europe is an initiative supported by the European Commission, which has been initiated in 2020 by a Consortium composed of IETM - International network for contemporary performing arts, the European Festivals Association (EFA), Circostrada, EDN - European Dancehouse Network and IDEA Consult. See more at: <https://performeurope.eu>

² Within the research, the countries have been divided in macro-regions in the following way: Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia; Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia.

³ See more at Letunić, A. & Karaulić, J. (2022) How to build networks and why? From resilience towards sustainability. Zagreb, *Kooperativa - Regional Platform for Culture*. <https://platforma-kooperativa.org/news/how-to-build-networks-and-why-from-resilience-towards-sustainability-the-first-source-book-is-out/>.



CULTURAL POLICIES AND DIVERSITY IN SERBIA AND THE REGION

Interview with Goran Tomka



Goran Tomka is a researcher and lecturer in the field of audience studies, new media, cultural diversity and cultural policy and management. He is assistant professor at the TIMS Faculty in Novi Sad and UNESCO Chair in cultural policy and management from Belgrade, Serbia. He holds a doctoral degree in culture and media studies from the University of Arts in Belgrade. He is also active as consultant, trainer, critic and advocate: he was a trainer in Al Mawred Abbara programme for capacity building in the Arab region and a coordinator of long-term cultural planning of the city of the Novi Sad European capital of culture 2021.

Could you tell us more about the current state and challenges for cultural policies in Croatia, Serbia, and in the region?

First, I would say these several countries are diverging more and more from decade to decade and that this so-called region is much less of a region really. According to a recent research done within the INVENT Horizon 2020 project, we see that, due to sociopolitical and economic differences, experiences living and working as an artist in these countries are increasingly diverging. For Croatia and Slovenia, being within EU means having a much easier access to funds, being surrounded by audiences who can buy tickets and finally not being burdened by limitations to travel and work abroad or internationally. On the other hand, for cultural professionals from North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Montenegro, one of the big issues that has been reintroduced is the issue of mobility and international cooperation with visa restrictions and COVID tests and so on. And as you might know, for a large part of the cultural field in these countries, especially parts which are progressive and socially engaged, international collaboration is a lifeline, since finding funding locally and nationally has been increasingly hard due to corruption and overall economic hardship. The other issue is that the art scene in many niche areas like the circus

or experimental dance has not yet matured. Not to say that there are no brilliant productions, but audiences don't really have the habits to follow them and funders are still shy of supporting them, putting them in the field of being very avant-garde and extraordinary. It may sound great to be a pioneer, but if you can't make a living out of that as a professional, you probably won't last very long, as quality usually comes with time. On the plus side, these hardships have created a perfect storm for many people to explode. People are saying more openly how they feel and what they think; embracing different working rhythms, changing working spaces, changing collaborations, standing up to banality and cruelty and exploitation. Kondenz in Serbia was blowing up with bodily pains with postcolonial thinking, with ecological awareness. Bitef has been exploding with workers rights, but also ecological issues. Another positive thing happening is that international networks, links and collaborations like IETM, Circostrada, Europa Nostra, Trans Europe Halles, EFA, EDN are now coming of age and playing an amazing role, reshaping the way that people work, providing collaboration, solidarity and sense of togetherness, along with knowledge and recognition. I am not sure if without those international support nets we would even see any kind of circus or experimental dance.

What can you say on the topic of diversity and the way it is understood in the region?

I think that for many engaged organisations, diversity has always been high on the list of the priorities. The same stands for many funders - working with marginalised groups, working across cultures has, of course, always been important. However, I would say that there is a hierarchy of diversities. For example, working with ethnic or national diversity has been heavily supported by European funds especially for this region with this idea of introducing peace-building through arts and culture.

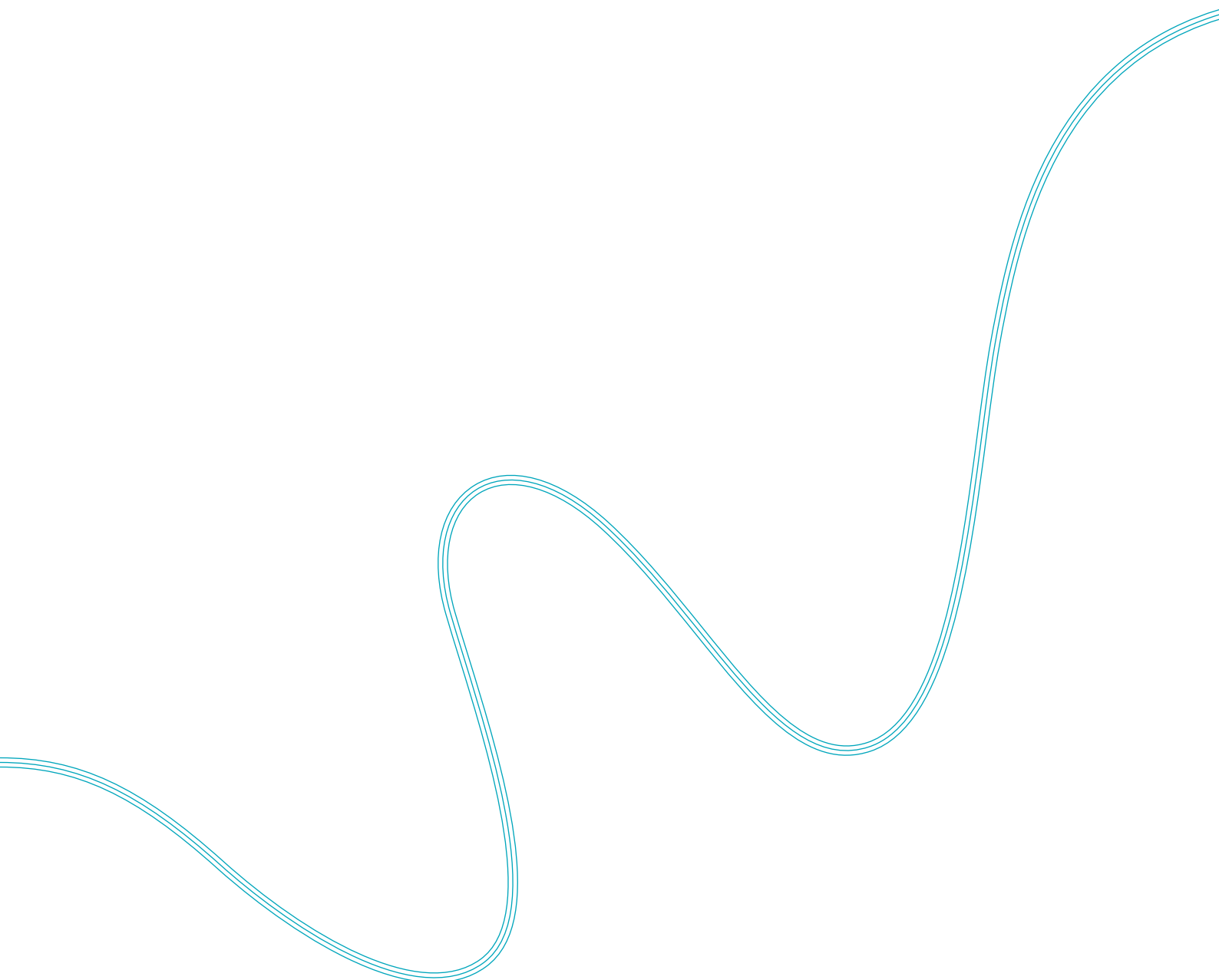
Another type of diversity that has been embraced, but to a much lesser extent was the gender balance, as well as inclusion of LGBTQIA+ communities, with success, to a certain extent. However, I think there are even much more defining differences that are almost out of the picture, like that of the class differences. For example, recently, in many projects, including the Perform Europe one, the way that diversity has been conceived has been almost exclusively around national borders, which for me, is flawed. People coming from Zagreb and Belgrade and Ljubljana are actually much more alike, than two persons living in the same city coming from the centre and the suburbs, or some rural area nearby, assuming that they have a

working class background. But our mobility and our access to culture are not defined by this knowledge. So a circus troop from Zagreb would get money to travel to Belgrade or Priština. But maybe a more important destination could be a village in Croatia. This social awareness needs to be re-introduced. COVID also brought a much larger stress on those performers and artists who have a working-class background. As a consequence of all that, I am afraid

that the arts profession is getting even more and more homogenised, as well as our audiences.

Another issue that seems wild and completely out of the picture, is that of the species differences. Our global ecological condition is a consequence of different kinds of specisms, and anthropocentric approaches are everywhere, including in the arts. I think that art world is invited to offer

a different imagination of our societies which won't be so anthropocentric. We should be looking for the ways to de-centre ourselves and make room for radically different ways of existing, so that different species of animals and plants, but also other elements, like rocks and winds, can have a more decent place in our ecosystems.



A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND STATE OF THE CONTEMPORARY PERFORMING STREET ARTS (CPSA)¹ AND CIRCUS IN SLOVENIA

By Goro Osojnik



Goro Osojnik is an actor by profession, street performer by heart, pedagogue by experience and manager by need. Artistic leader of Ana Monro Theatre, independent theatre group from Ljubljana, Slovenia (from 1994); creator and artistic director of international street theatre festivals Ana Desetnica (from 1998) and Ana Mraz (from 2000); headmaster and mentor on ŠUGLA, School for contemporary performing street arts (from 2007); co-founder and active member of Circostrada (from 2003); board member of the Sign-dance Collective in UK (from 2012).

Geopolitical situation

Slovenia is a relatively small country in the South East of Europe. It is very diverse in landscape, with Central European type of settlements and vast woods. The language spoken here is Slovenian, a member of Slavic languages. At the same time, inhabitants speak other languages as well - primarily English, German, and Italian. Slovenia is a gateway to Balkans. It is a functioning democracy, part of Europe, Euro, and Schengen. Slovenian cultural

space has always had of multicultural character.

The size of the country has its benefits for the development of the performing arts. The performing arts community is relatively small. There is no strict division between genres and almost every performer has different experiences - classical theatre, contemporary physical theatre, dance, clowning... Therefore, the average level of performing is good to very good. For festivals, it

is very common to organise performances in their home location and, at the same time, present incoming shows in other places around Slovenia.

On the other hand, the relative smallness is also a serious setback for contemporary performing street arts (CPSA) and circus performers, since the market is also small and earning a living for performers is not easy.

Historical development of CPSA and Circus

In the sixties and seventies international contemporary performances toured in Slovenia and quite a few Slovenian artists were working with famous masters as Jerzy Grotowski and Eugenio Barba. This led to establishment of different experimental theatre

groups and soon many started to perform in public spaces. The first international festivals were started as well.

For different reasons this energy slowly faded away and by the end of the eighties there was practically only one

group that regularly performed on the streets and no festivals.

In 1998 Ana Desetnica, international street theatre festival was established and this was a new impetus for the CPSA scene in Slovenia.

Performing groups

In 2022 there were eight theatre groups in Slovenia that regularly

create and perform in public space. Different genres, from contemporary

physical theatre, street theatre, animation, space and public intervention

¹ "Since the term Street Arts is formally taken by graffiti and similar arts from the field of visual arts, there is a bit of ambiguity how to call our art performing form. I prefer to use the term Contemporary performing street arts (CPSA), since already the term itself evokes strong associations in the reader, while Outdoor arts, the term catching lately, does not say much about the contents, since it can be practically anything happening outdoors." - note from the author.

and clownery. Apart from these, there exist at least ten other groups that do it from time to time. At least five of these

successfully perform in the international market around Europe.

Education

In 2007 ŠUGLA – school for contemporary street arts started. This is an informal educational program, once a week and one intense weekend module per month curriculum, lasting for two years. Slovenian and international mentors

taught students many necessary performing skills – from basic performing skills to more sophisticated techniques of audience engagement, space usage and other. Theoretical base is what we call Triangulation – a way how to com-

bine three key elements – Performer, Space and Audience in a good show. From the start more than 120 students attended courses and almost all the active performers were involved in ŠUGLA.

Festivals

The main street arts festival is Ana Desetnica, international street theatre festival that each year in the first weekend of July shows around forty different groups from all over the world. It usually takes place in 12-16 different places around Slovenia. International jury gives the Urbana Ljubljana award for excellence, and several expert and youth activities are part of the festival. Many smaller events and festivals are arising all around the country, usually connected to local festivities, and CPSA performances are more and more in demand.



R.I.P. – Performance by KDPM during Ana Desetnica, International Street Theatre Festival in Ljubljana
© Photo by Luka Dakskobler

Circus

Although I am no circus expert, I can state that circus skills and shows were always part of the CPSA activities. We consider the two as twin art forms. In the last ten years or so, the circus scene in Slovenia has seen a huge development. Quite some young artists went to various schools in Italy, France,

and Belgium. Some interesting work has been created as well, usually experimenting on new ways of doing circus and present circus skills in connection with contemporary technology. The circus pedagogy has developed considerably, and we have at least three different contemporary circus groups that

create and perform on a regular basis and at the same time lead workshops and other educational processes.

In 2023 three different organisations and festivals joined forces and, in cooperation with CircoBalkana initiative, they will organise a 3 weeks festival in a big top.

Future perspectives

Although some financial support is available at the local and state level for circus and CPSA it is time to push development on a new level. And this will only be possible if we manage to establish a long-

term structural support on a national level, with establishing a publicly financed organisation for development, promotion and education of CPSA and circus, following the examples of Out There

Arts (UK), ISACS (Ireland), ARTCENA (France) and others. We also hope that the 2025 European Capital of Culture in Nova Gorica, Slovenia and Gorizia, in Italy will find a way to strengthen our field.

THE INTERVIEW CORNER



INTERVIEW WITH ANTONIA KUZMANIĆ



Antonia Kuzmanić is co-leader of the ROOM 100 collective based in Split. She started her circus life as an artist – in 2010, ROOM 100 has been awarded as laureate of Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe now circusnext. In 2015, she moved her focus from touring to designing and implementing projects of developing the sector in the region. At the moment, she is the director and producer of the Peculiar Families Festival, HALA 100 and Circus on the periphery programme and coordinating activities of the international project ROOM 100 is part of. Since 2018, Antonia is part of the Steering Committee of Circostrada Network.

You are a performer, as well as co-founder of the contemporary circus collective ROOM 100, and the artistic director and executive producer of Peculiar Families Festival. Can you tell us about the pros and cons of wearing multiple hats?

It is more of a condition than a choice due to the context in which me and my colleagues here in the Balkans work. As the field of contemporary circus is still developing, so are the supporting institutions and infrastructures, both spatial and for production. Even worse, here in Balkans while we, as artists, are investing all our skills, resources, and enthusiasm to evolve as individuals and collectives, institutions are for last 15 years mostly, we could say, dissolving and regressing. To continue developing the sector, all the initiatives have to come from the bottom up. All this directs the primary creative impulse to engage with all different aspects of work, to improvise, to adapt and adopt, to get together and pull everything we have for things to work. Long story short, to have only one hat of an artist

or a producer or an advocate is a luxury I cannot afford while the sector still needs to develop in terms of spaces, education, finances and cultural policies. But this leads to a great pro of having a family of colleagues from the region that have the same mindset. We work together on numerous collaborations and strong ties are created. I would say other positive sides are that you discover all your strengths and weaknesses as a person and as a professional when you face situations like production with almost no budget, performing in a space without heating or applying the power of a strong woman when unloading the setup when there is not enough technicians... Circus is essentially about the risk and being out of the comfort zone, so in many ways doing all these things is just an extension of circus artisan mindset.

Negative points are challenges of multitasking and stress that goes together. But there are even more consequences when others don't understand the reality of our work. There are misunderstandings about the "multiple hats". We are

recognised as in-betweeners and most of the time, our Western colleagues have an idea that we are not good enough to sustain ourselves as only artist or only producer, and therefore we need to do more jobs. The truth is that if we want to develop contemporary circus in this region, we need to go out of our comfort zone and juggle with different roles.

What have been the major developments in terms of advocacy in Croatia for the circus? Do you already know what the next steps will be?

The circus scene in Croatia strategised institutionalisation when the pandemic hit us, and we started discussing different levels of neglect as a result of national and local cultural policies. In 2021, we established the Contemporary Circus Artists' Association, a new legal body and an umbrella organisation that gathers artists, producers and all other creators and workers in the field of contemporary circus and outdoor arts in Croatia.

We have started communicating our needs with the Ministry of culture and media of Republic of Croatia using a momentum of COVID crisis reliefs, and we were lucky to address them to part of the structure of the Ministry that shared our drive to change things for the better. When you find common ground with those higher up in the hierarchy of the main national institution, and you cluster them with a bunch of stubborn people from the sector, things start to move fast. In 2023, in the main funding call from the Ministry of culture and media, for the first time, contemporary circus and outdoors arts have a dedicated budget, and it is more than double comparing it to the support we received in 2022. We are talking here of 70 000 euros for the whole Croatian sector. So, more direct support and opening new grants schemes in 2024 is one of our objectives.

Also, we are advocating recognition of contemporary circus as a performing art, since it is still categorised as entertainment in the Croatian legal framework. To enjoy the basic benefits of recognition (i.e. social and legal status, new funding) we need the law to change, and with the current negotiations it is the first time since the law is written, that an initiative for a new definition on what artist practice involves legally was created and is coming from the artists themselves (usually, it comes from the Minister directly). Legally, this is an unknown territory for the administration, so it is taking longer than we expected, but we are confident about the positive result. After the recognition, contemporary circus artists would benefit from tax reduction and receiving the status of professional performing artist (which comes with another set of benefits, like health insurance, etc.). As long as there is a group of people who is committed to this cause, that are aware that we need to fight for the whole sector and not our singular situations, I am positive we will achieve all of this soon.



ROOM 100's new production *C8H11NO2 (2.0)* premiering in September 2023 © Photo by Jakov Labrović

Is there a singular aesthetic in Croatia in the contemporary circus today?

A hard question to answer. Surely, the conditions of creation and performance are very similar and the coping mechanisms are different repetitions of conceptions, methods, collaborations, etc. We do not have any formal circus school in the region and training places are underdeveloped, i.e. are equipped for limited number of disciplines. We have mostly aerials artists, which also defines certain aesthetic but not completely. Learning loops are dispersed and slower and just recently we have started to organise intensive masterclasses that are devoted to the creation, dramaturgy etc. Artists are on comparably similar levels, but what we do with our skills and creativity differs since there is no pedagogy or aesthetic authorities to root it. Visually and scale wise it differs from Western European contemporary circus, but we as well moved far from traditional connotations on what circus or Balkan is. So, don't look for Kusturica in our aesthetics. We are better than that!

Most of our productions are minimalist, self-reflective, and I would say reserved

towards the audience, but convivial in other sense. They are close to audience because we are in the same mess. No need to fake it, to impress, it is more immediate. Does this produce a singular aesthetic? I would say no. There is something deeper than aesthetic that we can compare, and it is melancholic sense of love for starting from the beginnings, struggling and keeping it going, and finally no bullshit investments approach to productions, we use resources wittily, no money, no confetti. Balkan circus is no bullshit circus. This is sort of original to me, the rest we can debate. I hope even when our working and creative conditions get better, we will keep it this way, we will remain honest and modest and at the same time have some food on the table.



INTERVIEW WITH JADRANKA ŽINIĆ MIJATOVIĆ



Jadranka Žinić Mijatović has been active on the independent cultural scene since 2000 as a performer and project coordinator devoted to performing arts. Since 2008 works as a producer, author and performer in the association Cirkorama and later in CirkoBalkana collective. She participated in many contemporary circus productions and outdoor arts performances, cooperates with circus artists and companies from the region and Western Europe, and works as a circus teacher. She is a member of the regional jury for the circusnext nominations.

Last year, the regionally travelling festival CirkoBalkana, co-organised by Cirkorama based in Zagreb (Croatia) and Cirkusfera located in Belgrade, (Serbia) marked its tenth anniversary. How does the local became interlinked with the regional and ultimately with the international?

CirkoBalkana is an enthusiastic creation created in the minds of a few friends - later also colleagues - who fell in love with contemporary circus and outdoor arts at the beginning of the 2000s. Even before the founding of our organisations, we hung out and exchanged knowledge between Zagreb and Belgrade. It was somehow natural, since at that moment, primarily, the scene of outdoor entertainers who used circus techniques in expression, in both countries was small and fragmented, and it was not difficult to know anyone who appeared on that same scene anywhere on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In a region where there was no autochthonous circus tradition that was maintained or circus schools, we all had in common that we exchanged knowledge with each other, learned by travelling to European juggling and acrobatic conventions and from artists from Western Europe who would come to our region for the Festival of alternative expression - FAKI organised by the Autonomous Cultural Center Attack!, acrobatic conventions organised

by the then Triko (today Triko Circus Theater) and the Festival of Street Magicians organised by the Čarobnjakov šesir association. There were also artists passing on the trip through the Balkans, who would stop in our cities and teach us some new skills. Thus, the international character of the development of our practice is present in the very roots of our art and our projects. Over the years, affinities were profiled, organisations were founded and cooperations based on before-established friendships and individual artistic collaborations moved into the dimension of between associations. Cirkusfera and Cirkorama found their common direction in the development of the contemporary circus.

With the desire to strengthen the scene, we started the project Circus Art Laboratory based on year-round education of young people interested in "unusual and fun" circus techniques. The project included progressive young artists from Western Europe who came to Zagreb and Belgrade, held intensive workshops and played shows (some of them were Johan Swartvagher with the Martine a la Plage collective, My! Laika/Side Kunst Cirque). Through the same project, Marie Mercadal, a French trapeze artist from the company Cirk' Oblique, also comes to the region on several occasions. At that time, Cirk'Oblique was the first known to us and friendly company that owned a circus tent and was willing to come



Periferijans - performance in Novi Sad © Photo by Goran Jevtić.

to the region and cooperate with us on an equal basis. Namely, the Circus Art Laboratory encouraged us to come up with the idea of a festival, but the venues where we operated were not adequate for the organisation of a circus festival. We were also aware that the organisation of the festival, which provides regional artists with an insight into recent circus art, education by guest artists and the possibility of joint training, exchange and socialising in an adequate space, would provide the visibility we needed for the planned advocacy actions around the venues and position of circus art in cultural policies in the region. From the very start, the festival was international, organised by three equal partners Cirkorama from Croatia, Cirkusfera from Serbia, and Cirk' Oblique from France. Thanks to the guest artists, the relaxed atmosphere and the recognition by the French Institute of Serbia, the word about the festival spread quickly outside the borders of the region and brings many positive reactions from circus organisations in Western Europe. At the same time, strengthened by this reaction, although still unrecognised at home, we are developing further collaborations at the local and regional levels by connecting with organisations in Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia, so the festival is hosted in Pula by the Čarobnjakov šušir association, in Novi Sad by Ludifico and Kreativni Pogon, and in Ljubljana by the Ana Monro Theatre. A collaborative network is being created at the local and regional levels. It can be said that our story took the opposite path - from the simultaneity of the regional and international to the local, where the results have only recently been visible.

What are the specificities of owning and working in a circus tent?

As we started planning to buy the tent for the region, our good friend, the director of the Turbul' circus school Pierre Chartier, warned us that managing a circus tent is not a simple job. Although



The CirkoBalkana tent - Photo by Branko Drakulić.

aware of the complexity of building and disassembling the tent, which we practised for years under the watchful eye of Cirk'Oblique and later Side Kunst Cirque, we could not visualise everything else that was waiting for us, despite the well-intentioned warnings of our friend. The idea was to buy a tent, reduce the costs we had every time the tent had to come from France (since our budgets were never enough) and have a nomadic circus space for regional artists and the festival. The simplest possible!

Managing the circus tent is a special feeling. Perform in it, create in your space, observe all the programs that take place in it without bureaucratic procedures and people who are lucky to be able to work in a space of sufficient height, feel the spirit of a real circus space, to support new creations and host diverse quality programs that do not have a venue for their realisation - these are the reasons that carry us further through this adventure.

Owning and maintaining a circus tent in our region is, to say the least, very specific. The winning cause of the problems lies primarily in the eternal lack of finances. Our tent has a frontal stage, and our desire has always been for the stage to cover the entire inner surface and to be able to play both circularly and frontally. We do not have heating, so programs are only during the warm months of the year. As eve-

ryone who manages circus tents knows, building a tent requires terrain of certain specifications. It is hard to get a permit for the tent in city locations in our countries, since the city authorities still do not perceive the tent as a space for the promotion and development of art. Fortunately enough, in both Zagreb and Belgrade, we receive the help of the Zagreb Center for Independent Culture and the youth centres of Pogon and Bitef Festivals, who provided us with space for a tent. There is also the challenge of the vehicles that transport the tent and equipment, which, in our case, consists of two older perishable vans and a trailer. Sometimes we travel for 48 hours for distances that normally last 6 hours. It doesn't sound appealing at all!

However, living with a circus tent allows us the dose of nomadism we all crave. It gives us the opportunity to live in a collective, to share everyday life and artistic ideas on a daily basis, to jump out of bed onto the stage and create, for our children to grow up in a stimulating, creative and fearless environment. Despite all concerns, the circus tent gives us our autonomous zone for art and life, a small circus utopia in an uncertain reality.



INTERVIEW WITH DORA KOMENDA



Dora Komenda is an architect and self-taught circus artist from Split, Croatia. She completed her master's degree and simultaneously discovered circus in 2015, and has been active in both fields ever since. She started producing her own work in 2016. Currently, she is an artistic director, producer and programme coordinator in the association Cirkus Kolektiv and a member of Steering Committee of Croatian Circus Artists Association since 2021. Together with two partners, she founded the architectural office Kolektiv tri in 2021.

In 2022, you were selected in the Bounce professional programme by Circostrada, and this year your project *Konstrukt* with Cirkus Kolektiv is amongst the short-listed projects of circusnext. What have these professional development programmes brought you so far, and what are the projects that have been stemming from it?

I felt that the Bounce programme was crafted exactly for somebody like me. Croatian reality (from both perspectives of a cultural worker and of an artist) is characterised by a lack of opportunities for formal education in those fields. My practice in circus was completely self-taught and based mostly

on intuition and learning from trial and error.

Through Bounce, I had the opportunity to develop a project in depth working one-on-one with my dear mentor Bruno Costa, with his rich experience and knowledge I would otherwise not be able to reach. I could then adapt it to the Croatian context, and October 2023 will be the first year of implementation of a circus and outdoor arts festival Split calling that has been my wish long in the making. I felt like I didn't just bounce towards my goals, it was more like I was catapulted by Bounce.

On the other hand, I was under the false impression that being amongst the 12 shortlisted projects by circus-

next meant escape from the loophole of being an anonymous artist from a country on the periphery of the circus world. In reality, nothing has changed in terms of international residential support yet, but we still have the opportunity to present live at the selection week in Paris quite soon. If nothing comes out of it, I'm still very happy and grateful for the possibility to continue the project for at least another six months and to introduce three new young artists to it. The exchange already gave me so much as an artist and creator, and to the project as well. I probably wouldn't step into this role of a director until much later. As one of my mentors always says - it's impossible to direct yourself, so maybe instead of doing everything by myself, this is a push into professionalisation of my approach to creation.

In parallel to Cirkus Kolektiv, you work in the architectural office Kolektiv tri which you have co-founded. How are these two apparently far away practices intertwined and influence each other?

All the conceptual knowledge about art I learned in architecture school I use equally in my circus practice as well. When I make a design choice for a project, it's the same as when I make a dramaturgy choice for a circus show, because it's based on an elaborate idea. The clearer the idea, the easier it



Performance of Dora Komenda © Photo by Zeljko Tutnjevic

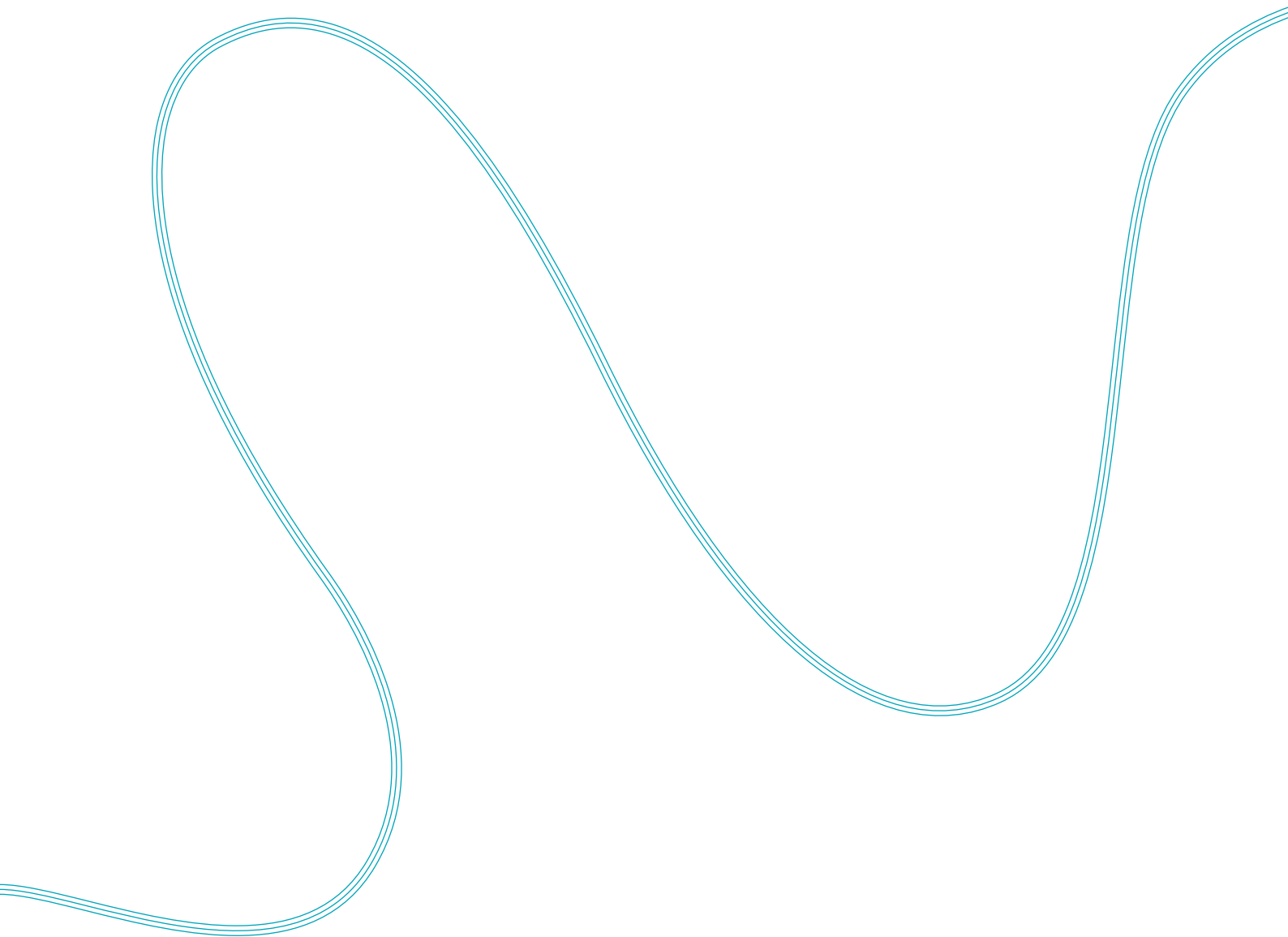
is to make choices and go forward with either materialisation in space, or performance on stage. Artistic concept is what excites me, and I believe the same idea can have infinite interpretations through disciplines. Idea in itself has no form. Currently, I'm making a show about struggle and failure, and this can be interpreted through many different approaches. For me, it's easier to start from *thinking* and apply it to *doing* than the other way around, which is more common in circus. That way I feel free, not limited to conditions of a circus discipline but looking more broad. I guess this comes from my background in architecture. In a less abstract way,

applying a point of view from architectural practice to circus creation only happened recently, in my last work in progress, where the structural interventions are used to create a metaphor in the show.

Can you tell us about the challenges of motherhood for a circus artist?

Actually, I can't, not yet! I can only tell you about the challenges of pregnancy for a circus artist so far. Since circus is so physical, through the changes that pregnancy brings I'm rapidly learning new things about my body, gaining a lot of respect and trust in it. I'm reminded

how trust in your body is essential for a circus artist, in a regular state or this "changed" one. The biggest change of all for me is slowing down, and even appreciating the absence of high tempo and intensity that used to be my life while trying to simultaneously juggle two equally important careers. Surprise! Life goes on if you're not working on 120% of your capacity all the time. The time and space to reconnect with myself through different types of physical activity than my usual aerial training is very satisfying.





INTERVIEW WITH PETRA NAJMAN



Petra Najman is a circus artist based in Zagreb. In 2012 she completes her Bachelor's degree as circus pedagogue at Turbul' circus school. At circus school Piste d'Azur - Center des arts du cirque, she specialises in static trapeze. She enters FLIC Scuola di Circo circus school's two-year programme in 2021. In 2020, she creates the play *My Death and me*. The following year, she gets in the residency programme Circus Without Circus. In 2022, she joins L'Attraction company on their new creation. Currently, she works on the show *Horror House trilogy* at Cirkorama, and the play *Crow without a nest*.

You have participated in the programme piloted by ROOM 100 Cirkus na margini (Circus on the periphery) with your site-specific show *Moja smrt i ja* (My Death and Me). How do you connect with diverse audiences and spaces in your circus practice?

The show *My Death and me* is not originally a site-specific show, due to its dark, obscure atmosphere, it is intended for indoor spaces where it is possible to play with lights.

Circus on the periphery was a great experience for me because it encouraged me to put the show in a site specific space, in front of an audience that was not necessarily familiar with contemporary circus. In the beginning, it was a big challenge for me because I didn't know how such a show would look in the outdoor space, but later I was satisfied with the result. Of course, the external and internal environments are not at all similar and each of them has its advantages and disadvantages. I was indescribably happy to play the show in front of the children and people who are not into circus art because after the show I could see their enthusiasm and great interest in circus art and practice, as well as the discussions and their thoughts about the show inspired me a lot. This also inspired me to start a creation of a new show *Crow without a nest*, which I decided to put in a site specific ambient.



My Death and Me - Performance of Petra Najman © Photo by Matija Smuk

What are the pros and cons, if there are any, of formal circus education?

Having an adequate education is always very helpful in the future. The circus school provides regular training and development of technique in a certain discipline, it also provides artistic education in fields such as dance, theatre, clown technique and physical theatre. The positive sides of the circus school are the development of self-discipline in training, because the regular training that the student receives is essential for future work as a circus artist. Personally, as a negative thing, I would point out that each school has its own specific style and recognition, which can sometimes be unintentionally im-

posed on the student, which in my opinion weakens the artistic individuality of a student.

What are your future plans?

I plan to continue playing the show *My Death and Me*. That show is very important to me as an author, and I see that there is place for more research, work and deeper potential in it. That is why I would like to continue playing it in Croatia as well as in other countries and in front of various audiences. Also, last year I started creating a new interdisciplinary play *Crow without a nest* with which I have a lot of plans. With my partner Ivan Svaguša, I plan to combine several media such as painting,

music, dance, theatre with the contemporary circus.

We hope to be finished with the show by the end of 2024, and the first segments of that creation will be released already in September of this year. This year I joined the French company L'Attraction, with whom I am currently working on a side specific show with Jean Jacques Minazio as the director of the show *Salétés et autres restes*, which will premiere

in France in July this year. As part of Cirkorama association this year we are working on a new show of the last part of the Horror House trilogy called *Zodiac - circle of small animals* which will premiere this year in July as well.



INTERVIEW WITH NIKOLA RISTIĆ



Born in 1999, in Belgrade, Serbia. Originally working in the IT industry as a software engineer, and after discovering circus arts in 2017, Nikola decides to audition for preparatory circus arts schools in France. He started his main discipline hand to hand in 2020 at Arc En Cirque, Chambéry – to later continue at ENACR - National Circus Arts School in Rosny-sous-Bois. Currently diversifying his circus practice in the NextGen programme with Cirque du Soleil in Avignon, since November 2022.

You have started your studies at Cirkusfera school, in Serbia, and are currently completing them in France within the framework of the NextGen programme with Cirque du Soleil. What are the next steps for you?

I have discovered circus in 2017 in Belgrade, in Cirkusfera. I touched upon many disciplines, and eventually saw that I would like to build myself a path of a circus artist. A big influence on me was, of course, CirkoBalkana festival. Discovering the life and dynamics next and inside a circus tent helped shape my interests. Companies and artists visiting would sometimes give workshops. Two weeks of workshops we had with Un Loup pour l'Homme reassured me of my discipline choice and my wish to work with others.

After two years of preparatory schools in France (Arc En Cirque & ENACR) I enrolled in an intensive Cirque du Soleil program, with the goal of discovering new disciplines (teeterboard, Russian bar, and Russian swing) and progress in my disciplines: hand to hand, banquine and 3-highs (colones). What comes next – I am also curious! This is the first year of such a formation so we're discovering how it functions as we go. Potentially, we could be getting contracts or further training opportunities with Cirque. There are benefits to being in a big company, everything is arranged for you, but I think I would be missing smaller venues and scenes and more personal circus I'm used to seeing and that I love. I was always attracted by companies with collective acrobatics as the main voca-

bulary – so naturally I wish to pursue companies with a similar style to XY or Akoreacro, to name a few.

If you'd be to continue your career in Serbia, which kind of local and regional collaborations would you like to develop?

One thing that is always in the back of my head is my wish to return to the Balkans and Serbia. To present the skills, aesthetics, and point of view I acquired to the public but also to the circus community in Serbia.

The main challenge I have is that of the discipline itself – it requires a well-oiled team and constant training. Most of my colleagues, if not all, are based in France. I tried to lure them to Serbia but apparently it takes a bit more than good cuisine and beautiful nature to get people to change countries. Well, it was worth a shot. Hand to hand and group acrobatics is, as far as I know, a rare discipline in the region. Especially people wanting to make a career out of it. So it would be amazing to match with motivated and skilled people in the region. I know there are places that offer residencies in the region, but I am yet to build a solid network of theatres and festivals which would potentially buy a circus show. That is normal given my lack of experience in the region. Luckily, there are organisations like Cirkusfera and Cirkorama that are on the frontier for a long time, and are helping young artists.



Nouje – Performance of Nikola Ristić © Photo by Mailys Bessière



INTERVIEW WITH TJAŽ JUVAN



Tjaž Juvan is a Slovenian performing artist based in Ljubljana. His interdisciplinary approach has led him to explore relations between circus, dance, music and physical theatre, trying to stretch the borders between the disciplines as thin as possible. He is a member of collective Mismo Nismo (eng: we are, we are not) that he established with his colleagues in 2018. He earned a degree at the Scuola di Cirko Vertigo in Turin, Italy that he attended between 2015-2017. During this time, he also finished his bachelors studies in social pedagogy at the University of Ljubljana. His circus base is in juggling and object manipulation, but during his time in the circus school he specialised in balancing on chairs and handstands.



Noister: wave - Performance of Tjaž Juvan during CirkoBalkana in 2021 © Photo by Dragan Popović

Interdisciplinarity is peculiar to your work as a circus artist. How are your other interests beside circus reflecting in your practice?

Personally, I am fascinated with synthetic sound producers (analog and digital) and how circus movement can make this sounds more concrete. For example: a sensor on a juggling club sending information about the movement of the club to a computer and translating that information into sounds. Suddenly, something that primarily conveyed information visually has now a strong auditory element as well. But can then a juggling club become a musical instrument? What in-

formation about the flight of the club can make the most musical sense - rotation, position, velocity? There really are no guidelines how to make it work. I combine methods, import them from other fields, ask friends, watch (ir)relevant tutorials on YouTube and slowly find new paths - and most of them lead nowhere. So accepting failure is part of the course, and sometimes it's hard to find the meaning in my work. But I keep on learning new things and after each project I understand a little bit more about this specific thing, or I learn a new skill that I didn't have before. I like the challenge and the unpredictability of it, and those are the same impulses that keep me

practising circus disciplines - which I would like to add is already a multidisciplinary art form. I was never good at just doing one thing and lost interest in activities very fast. So the freedom, that I could try balancing on rola bola when I got bored with juggling or do some partner acrobatics with friends, was something that really kept me practising and improving. In that sense, it was circus that really started my interdisciplinary approach.

What is it like to work in the circus field in Slovenia?

In Slovenia, you are your own director, manager, agent, musician, technician, and sometimes audience. Either that, or you invested in Bitcoin in 2012. But then you probably wouldn't be doing circus, and certainly not circus in Slovenia. Anyway, let's see some pros and cons of the circus scene in Slovenia. The cons would mainly be about the lack of real training spaces and infrastructure. We had a space in former autonomous factory Rog for around seven years, but were kicked out two years ago. The current space is also temporary and will be torn down probably this year. There are also no managers or agents or big companies that would employ a circus artist. So we do this work ourselves, which means less time for practising.

Also, the lack of tradition of circus translates into a very basic understanding of it in Slovenia. That is true for the public as well as in the cultural sector. There is little to no learning possibilities for certain disciplines since there are no people who would have the necessary knowledge. At the same time, no tradition means no chains, as

the famous Bosnian singer Damir Avdić said. The fact that there is no tradition, means that there is no one who would dictate what and how the circus should look like. The same for the missing infrastructure, which as bad as that is for anyone that wants to make a living by being a circus artist, there is one small positive about it. Even

though we are (at least me) bad at it, we can create our own networks and organisation and shape them in a way that they would work in the interest of the artists and not big institutions.





INTERVIEW WITH GREGA MOČIVNIK (LJUD GROUP)



Grega Močivnik has been part of *Ljud_group* (as performer, actor and producer) since 2007, he has been involved in most of the projects, also in the performance *The Invasion* that has been on tour since 2008 and has been performed in 31 countries worldwide. He is also involved in *Ljud's* newest productions. Since 2019 he has also been a legal representative of *Ljud_group*. He is working as a mentor and organiser of open non-formal workshops of interactive physical theatre in public space '*Ljud's laboratory*' that are taking place in Ljubljana for fourteen year.

How do you apprehend the notion of public space(s) in Slovenia?

Public space is a shared space owned collectively, e.g. by the inhabitants of a community. Thus, it should be accessible to everyone. As we are walking through, observing, training or performing in all kinds of public spaces in Slovenia, we are realising that public space(s) are becoming more and more gentrified. Giant buildings owned by private companies, market halls and gated communities are cutting public space and make access to it more difficult. It is also often difficult to distinguish between public and semi-public spaces. We experience less playful interactions, less surprises, and alternative ways of spending time, less creativity, ad hoc gatherings and exchange of opinions. In a world ruled by the capital and driven by time pressure, public spaces are increasingly becoming walk-through spaces exclusively. But still... There are so many things to explore in public space(s) and you never know what will happen. We love being outside. We see our work in public space(s) as a direct engagement with the people and urban scenery, which includes physical and mental experience. By experiencing it, we try to make sense of the world.

Public space(s) are our stage where we rehearse (especially between April and October), we facilitate theatre workshops and create (together with



Invasion Krakow - Performance of *Ljud_group* © Photo by Anders Pihl

the workshop participants) theatre interventions and ad hoc theatre happenings; a space where all of our performances are shared (majority of them are based on interactive non-verbal physical theatre). With our theatre gatherings / social events / rituals in public space we want to:

- Shock, confuse, shake people, put them out of their ordinary routine.
- Warn and show people and decision-makers that public space is not just a space where you walk from point A (home) to point B (work/shops) and back
- Give people opportunity to be gently surprised, to stop, watch, interact and engage, to create space for dialogue, space for a community ritual

- Create "here and now" situations, horizontal participation, creative chaos, process, exchange, temporary community
- Reinvent the meaning of spending time in public space, create playful situation in the traffic mall, in trains, buses, squares, parks.

You seem to be well-connected to the international scene of performing arts, through your links with several European platforms and projects. How does this international dimension influence your work? What does it bring you?

We believe it is of much importance to exchange experiences, thoughts, search possibilities for international cooperation, learn, share the

knowledge that you have gained, to foster the knowledge that you have individually and as a group. Participating in long term international projects where we shared knowledge, skills, doubts, methods of work (such as RIOTE 1, 2 and 3 which was taking place from 2016 till 2022) allows us to bring high quality performances from abroad to local areas and to do self-reflection and find space for improvement when being part of the project. International

dimension also gives us opportunity to bring our performances to wider audiences, create new (performance) situations in different spaces and to share experiences with our colleagues and community from abroad and with wider audience: either in the big festival venues (EXPO 2012 in Yeosu, South Korea) or in the Roma ghetto just outside of Miskolc in Hungary. International dimension gives our work much needed (financial) stability and new

opportunities (premiere of our still ongoing performance *The Invasion* which visited 31 countries so far, would not be possible without the help of La Strada Graz Festival and IN SITU platform), space to “get away” and then come refreshed back home with new ideas and experiences.



SECTORIAL MAPPING OF CROATIA, SERBIA, SLOVENIA AND BOSNIA

This mapping was conducted by Circostrada, Cirkorama, Cirkusfera and Room 100 in collaboration with key sectoral stakeholders from Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia and Bosnia. It is not intended to be exhaustive but aims to provide a general overview of contemporary circus and outdoor arts in the region at the time of publication.

CROATIA

FESTIVALS

CirkoBalkana

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus

Contact: Nikola Mijatović – Producer and Artistic Director

🌐 <https://cirkobalkana.org/>

Cu'fus

Location: Samobor

Discipline: circus, outdoor

Contact: Matija Vuletić – Producer

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/cufus.fest/>

Cultural Street festival (KUF)

Location: Zagreb, Sisak

Discipline: circus, outdoor

Contact: Ratko Bokić – Artistic Director

🌐 https://www.instagram.com/kulturan_ulicni_festival/

Križevci Street Festival of Education and Entertainment- KUFER

Location: Križevci

Discipline: circus, outdoor

Contact: Saša Lončarić – Executive Producer

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/kuferkz>

Peculiar Families Festival

Location: Split

Discipline: circus, outdoor

Contact: Antonia Kuzmanić – Artistic Director

🌐 <https://peculiarfamilies.org/>

Periskop

Location: Rijeka

Discipline: multidisciplinary

Contact: Nives Soldičić – Member of selection team

🌐 <https://www.periskopfestival.com/>

Split Calling

Location: Split

Discipline: circus, outdoor

Contact: Dora Komenda – Artistic Director

🌐 <https://www.cirkus-kolektiv.org/>

Street Wizard's Festival (Festival uličnih čarobnjaka-FUČ)

Location: Pula

Discipline: outdoor, circus

Contact: Irena Boljunčić – Producer and Artistic Director

🌐 <https://www.fucfestival.com>

Zagreb Clown Festival

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus

Contact: Iva Peter Dragan – Artistic Director

🌐 <https://trikocirkusteatar.com/zagreb-clown-festival/>

SCHOOLS

YEAR- ROUND CONTINUOUS EDUCATION FOR RECREATIONISTS

ROOM 100

Location: Split

Discipline: contortion, handbalance

Contact: Antonia Kuzmanić, coordinator and pedagogue

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/ROOM100SOBA100/>

Cirkus Kolektiv

Location: Split

Discipline: aerial techniques: tissue, ring, trapeze

Contact: Ivana Vukušić, coordinator and pedagogue

🌐 <https://www.cirkus-kolektiv.org/>

Cirkultura

Location: Samobor

Discipline: aerial techniques: tissue, ring, hammock

Contact: Jelena Kalaica, trainer

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/Cirkultura>

SvilArt / Čarobnjakov šešir

Location: Pula

Discipline: aerial techniques: tissue, ring

Contact: Manuel Rossi, trainer

🌐 <https://m.facebook.com/people/SvilArt-Aerial-Acrobatic>

Prostor plua / Cirkeros

Location: Rijeka

Discipline: aerial acrobatics: tissue, hoop, trapeze

Contact: Nives Soldičić, trainer

🌐 <https://www.prostorplus.hr/>

Cirk Pozor

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: clown techniques, juggling

Contact: Nikolina Majdak, trainer

🌐 <https://cirkpozor.hr/>

Cirkorama

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: juggling, acrobatics, aerial techniques,
balance for kids, youth and adults

Contact: Nikola Mijatović and Jadranka Žinić Mijatović,
pedagogues

🌐 www.cirkorama.org

Svilarice

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: aerial techniques: tissue, hammock and ring

Contact: Sandra Dunaj, trainer

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/Svilarice/>

Acro Act Lab, Triko Cirkus Teatar

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: aerial techniques, acting

Contact: Iva Peter Dragan, pedagogue and coordinator

🌐 <https://trikocirkusteatar.com/>

EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS

Cirkus kolektiv

Location: Split

Discipline: whole range of circus techniques

Contact: Dora Komenda & Antonia Vuletić, coordinators

🌐 <https://www.cirkus-kolektiv.org/>

Clown Platform, Triko Cirkus Teatar

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: clown techniques

Contact: Iva Peter Dragan, pedagogue
and platform coordinator

🌐 <https://trikocirkusteatar.com/klaunska-platforma/>

Circus Arts Laboratory

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: whole range of circus techniques

Contact: Jadranka Žinić Mijatović, pedagogue
and coordinator

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/cirkorama/>

ARTISTIC VENUES & RESIDENCY SPACES

Association Čarobnjakov šešir

Location: Pula

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Irena Boljunčić – Programme Coordinator

🌐 <https://www.carobnjakovsesir.com/>

ČirkoBalkana circus tent

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus

Jadranka Žinić Mijatović – Programme Coordinator

🌐 www.cirkobalkana.org, www.cirkorama.org

Čirkus Kolektiv / Mala Scena Doma Mladih

Location: Split

Discipline: circus

Contact: Dora Komenda

and Dajana Džafo – Programme Coordinators

🌐 <https://www.cirkus-kolektiv.org/>

Club Močvara

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Ivana Pedljo – Programme Coordinator

🌐 <https://mochvara.hr/cirkus-u-mocvari/>

HALA 100

Location: Split

Discipline: circus

Contact: Antonia Kuzmanić – Producer

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/ROOM100SOBA100/>

House of Klajn

Location: Klanjec

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Dunja Bovan – Programme Coordinator

🌐 <https://kucaklajn.com/>

Klub Kulture

Location: Križevci

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Saša Lonačarić – Executive Producer

🌐 <https://www.klubkulture.org/>

Pogon Jedinstvo

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: multidisciplinary

Contact: Luka Antić – Technical Director

🌐 <https://www.pogon.hr/>

Prostor plus/ Filodrammatica

Location: Rijeka

Discipline: multidisciplinary

Contact: Nives Soldičić – Programme Coordinator

🌐 <https://www.prostorplus.hr/>

Triko Cirkus Teatar

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus

Contact: Iva Peter Dragan- Programme coordinator and artistic deirector

🌐 <https://trikocirkusteatar.com/>

Dom Mladih

Location: Split

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Dora Komenda and Antonia Kuzmanić, coordinators for circus programmes

🌐 <https://dom-mladih.org/en/>

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND/OR FUNDING BODIES

Kultura Nova Foundation

Location: Zagreb, Croatia

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Dea Vidović – Director

🌐 <https://kulturanova.hr/>

Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia

Location: Zagreb, Croatia

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Nevena Tudor Perković – Director of the Administration for the Development of Culture and Art

🌐 <https://min-kulture.gov.hr/>

Cirkorama

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Jadranka Žinić Mijatović – Programme

Coordinator and artist

🌐 www.cirkorama.org

Cirk' Pozor

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: outdoor arts, circus

Contact: Nikolina Majdak – Programme Coordinator and artist

🌐 <https://cirkpozor.hr/>

Circo Art

Location: Zadar

Discipline: circus

Contact: Xiomara Ruiz Ratković – Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/circoart/>

Cirkultura

Location: Samobor

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Tatjana Vuletić – Programme Coordinator and artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/Cirkultura>

Cirkus Kolektiv

Location: Split

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Dora Komenda, – Programme Coordinator and artist

🌐 <https://www.cirkus-kolektiv.org/>

Cirkeros

Location: Rijeka

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Nives Soldičić – Artist

🌐 <https://emiliothebalancer.wixsite.com/>,

<https://nivessoldicic.com.hr/>

Cirkus NIT

Location: Pula

Discipline: outdoor arts, circus

Contact: Lea Komel – Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/cirkusnit/>

Čarobnjakov šešir

Location: Pula

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Irena Boljunčić – Producer

🌐 <https://www.carobnjakovsesir.com/>

K.V.A.R.K.

Location: Križevci

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Saša Lončarić – Executive Producer

🌐 <https://www.udruga-kvark.hr/>

Loop circus

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Aleksandar Đikić – Artist

🌐 <https://loopcirkus.com/>

Magmatika

Location: Karlovac

Discipline: outdoor arts

Contact: Gabrijela Brletić – Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/magmatikka/>

Martiniuss

Location: Pula

Discipline: outdoor arts

Contact: Martin Bastijanić – Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/martiniuss>

Navodno oslobodilački cirkus -NOC

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Klara Barišić – Artist

🌐 <https://www.instagram.com/nocirkus/>

Nikolina Komljenović / s.Vila/ ekscena

Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Nikolina Komljenović – Producer and artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/ekscena/>

Red Noses Clown Doctors

Location: Zagreb, Split, Rijeka, Osijek

Discipline: clown, circus

Contact: Nikola Dabac, artistic director

🌐 www.crveninosovi.hr

ROOM 100

Location: Split

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Antonia Kuzmanić – Producer and artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/ROOM100SOBA100/>

Traumatic Arts

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Martina Pavlović, association's president and artist

🌐 <https://www.traumaticarts.hr/>

Tricycle Trauma

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Ivana Pedljo – Producer and artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/tricycletrauma/>

Triko cirkus teatar

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Iva Peter Dragan – Programme Coordinator and artist

🌐 <https://trikocirkusteatara.com/>

Teatar Cirkus Punkt

Location: Zagreb

Discipline: mutlidisciplinary

Contact: Marijana Matoković – Artist

🌐 <https://teatarcirkuspunkt.hr/>

Tontorino

Location: Brač

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Tomislav Kozarčanin – Artist

🌐 <https://tontorino.org/>

Unity TWG

Location: Pula

Discipline: outdoor arts

Contact: Lea Komel – Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/UnityTWG>

OTHERS

Contemporary circus artists association

Location: Croatia

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Nikola Mijatović – President

🌐 <https://www.dusc.hr/>

National Circus Platform

Location: Croatia

Discipline: circus, outdoor arts

Contact: Antonia Kuzmanić – Coordinator

🌐 <https://www.dusc.hr/nacionalna-cirkuska-platforma/>

SERBIA

FESTIVALS

CirkoBalkana

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: circus
Contact: Milan Manić – Producer and Artistic Director
🌐 www.cirkobalkana.org

SCHOOLS

INFORMAL EDUCATION THROUGH TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS.

Cirkoneo, Kreativni Pogon

Location: Novi Sad
Discipline: circus
Contact: Dragan Jajić – President
🌐 <https://kreativnipogon.com/>

Fabrika savremenog cirkusa, Cirkusfera

Location: Beograd
Discipline: circus
Contact: Danka Sekulović, pedagogue
🌐 www.cirkusfera.org

ARTISTIC VENUES

Bitef Theatre

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: circus
Contact: Ksenija Đurović – Producer
🌐 <https://teatar.bitef.rs/>

CirkoBalkana circus tent

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: circus and outdoor arts
Contact: Milan Manić – Producer and Artistic Director
🌐 www.cirkobalkana.org

Magacin u Kraljevića Marka

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: multidisciplinary
Contact: Milan Manić – Producer
🌐 <https://kcmagacin.org/>

RESIDENCY SPACES

CirkoBalkana circus tent

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: circus and outdoor arts
Contact: Milan Manić – Producer and Artistic Director
🌐 www.cirkobalkana.org

Magacin u Kraljevića Marka

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: multidisciplinary
Contact: Milan Manić – Producer
🌐 <https://kcmagacin.org/>

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND/OR FUNDING BODIES

Ministry of Culture of Republic of Serbia

Location: Belgrade
Discipline: circus and outdoor arts
Contact: Radovan Jokić – Assistant Minister
🌐 <https://www.kultura.gov.rs/>

ARTISTS / COMPANIES

Cirkusfera

Location: Belgrade

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Milan Manić – Producer and Artist

🌐 www.cirkusfera.org

Inex Cirkus Teatar

Location: Belgrade

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Tanja Milanović – Artist

🌐 <https://inexcirkusteatar.co.rs/>

Kinetrop teatar

Location: Belgrade

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Ivana Koraksić – Director and Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/KinetropTeatar/>

Ludifico

Location: Novi Sad

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Mira Beba Dobrković – Producer and Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/Ludifico/>,

<http://www.ludifico.com/>

Kreativni pogon

Location: Novi Sad

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Dragan Jajić – President

🌐 <https://kreativnipogon.com/>

NS Acrobalance

Location: Novi Sad

Discipline: circus

Contact: Nenad Savković – Artist

🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/nsacrobalance/>

SLOVENIA

FESTIVALS

Ana Destenica Festival

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: outdoor arts
Contact: Goro Osojnik – Artistic Director
🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/anadesetnica/>

Ana Mraz Festival

Location: Celje, Novo Mesto, Ljubljana, Radovljica, Logatec, Maribor
Discipline: outdoor arts
Contact: Goro Osojnik – Artistic Director
🌐 <https://www.anamonro.si/steber/ana-mraz/>

Ana Plamenita Festival

Location: Ljubljana, Maribor
Discipline: outdoor arts
Contact: Goro Osojnik – Artistic Director
🌐 <https://www.anamonro.si/steber/ana-plamenita/>

Klovnbufo Festival

Location: Ljubljana
circus and outdoor arts
Contact: Natalia Sultanova – Artistic Director
🌐 <https://www.klovnbufo.si/>

SCHOOLS

ŠUGLA, Gledališče Ana Monro

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: outdoor arts
Contact: Goro Osojnik – Director
🌐 <https://www.anamonro.si/steber/sugla/>

Juggling, movement and object manipulation, Mismo Nismo

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus
Contact: Oton Korošec, Eva Zibler, Tjaž Juvan, pedagogues
🌐 <http://misonismo.org/uncategorized/juggling-movement-and-object-manipulation/>

Aerial Acrobatics, Mismo Nismo

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus
Contact: Danijela Zajc, pedagogue
🌐 <http://misonismo.org/uncategorized/aerial-acrobatics/>

Handstands workshops, Mismo Nismo

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus
Contact: Tjaž Juvan- pedagogue
🌐 <http://misonismo.org/uncategorized/handstand-workshops/>

Aerial Silks & Aerial Workout workshops in Ljubljana, Dana Auguštin

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus
Contact: Dana Auguštin, pedagogue
🌐 <https://www.danaaugustin.com/>

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND/OR FUNDING BODIES

Ministry of Culture of Slovenia

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus and outdoors
Contact: Asta Vrečko – Minister
🌐 <https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/ministrstva/ministrstvo-za-kulturo/>

ARTISTS/COMPANIES

Cirkokrog

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus and outdoor arts
Contact: Kristina Debenjak – President
🌐 <http://cirkokrog.com/>

Cirkus Fuskabo

Location: Ljubljana
Discipline: circus
Contact: Zef Berišaj – President
🌐 <https://skala.je/cirkusfuskabo>

Dana Augustin

Location: Ljubljana, Koper

Discipline: circus

Contact: Dana Augustin – Artist

🌐 <https://www.danaaugustin.com/>

Gledališče Ane Monro

Location: Ljubljana

Discipline: outdoor arts

Contact: Goro Osojnik – Director

🌐 <https://www.anamonro.si/>

Ljud Group

Location: Ljubljana

Discipline: outdoor arts

Contact: Vida Crekvenik Bren – Artistic Director

🌐 <http://www.ljud.si/>

Mismo Nismo

Location: Ljubljana

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Eva Zibler – Artist

🌐 <http://misonismo.org/>

Zavod Bufeto

Location: Ljubljana

Discipline: circus

Contact: Ravil Sultanov – Director

🌐 <https://zavodbufeto.com/>

EX-Teater

Location: Ljubljana

Discipline: circus and outdoor arts

Contact: Hristina Vasić Tomše, director and actor

🌐 <https://www.ex-teater.org/>

OTHER

Mission Tent, long term project with an aim to buy a circus tent for Slovenian circus scene

Location: Ljubljana

Discipline: outdoor arts, circus

Contact: Oton Korošec, Eva Zibler, Tjaž Juvan, coordinators

🌐 <http://misonismo.org/>

BOSNIA



FESTIVALS

Street art Mostar

Location: Mostar

Discipline: outdoor arts

🌐 <https://safmo.org/>

MESS

Location: Sarajevo

Discipline: theatre, circus

Contact: Dino Mustafić – Selector

🌐 <https://mess.ba/>

ARTIST/COMPANY

Teatar mladih Travnik

Location: Travnik

Discipline: circus

Contact: Oliver Jović – Producer

ABOUT CIRCOSTRADA, ARTCENA, CIRKORAMA, CIRKUSFERA AND ROOM 100

CIRCOSTRADA

Circostrada is the European Network for Contemporary Circus and Outdoor Arts.

Created in 2003 with the core mission of furthering the development, empowerment and recognition of these fields at European and international levels, over the years the network has become an important anchoring point for its members and a key interlocutor in the dialogue with cultural policy makers across Europe.

In a few words, Circostrada is:

- A community of contemporary circus and outdoor arts professionals linked together by common values and aspirations, who advocate for greater recognition and more structured cultural policies.
- The voice and reference network of contemporary circus and outdoor arts in Europe.
- A group of passionate and committed individuals who meet several times a year at the network's events.
- A network dedicated to its members, engaged in facilitating the exchange of experiences, knowledge, and good practices at European and international levels.
- A digital resource platform that provides thematic publications, observation tools and news on contemporary circus and outdoor arts, available to all free of charge in English and French.

🌐 www.circostrada.org

ARTCENA

ARTCENA is the National Center for Circus, Street and Theatre Arts, supported by the French Ministry of Culture. It coordinates Circostrada and is a permanent member of its steering committee. It works in close collaboration with professionals in the sector and offers them both publications and digital resources via its web platform. It also develops mentoring and training actions, tools and services to help them in their everyday practices. It supports contemporary creation through national support programs and encourages the international development of these three sectors.

🌐 www.artcena.fr

CIRKORAMA

Cirkorama was founded in 2008, with the aim of promoting and developing circus and street art in Zagreb, and very quickly with activities and work achieved a national as well as a regional role in the development of these arts. Cirkorama's activities consist of: artistic production, co-production with colleagues from the country and abroad, organization of festivals, education of children and young people (recreational and professional), promotion and distribution of contemporary circus shows, networking with related organizations, radio production and video works, exhibitions, publishing, advocacy for better positioning of circus arts...

Together with colleagues from the Belgrade – Cirkusfera, Cirkorama is managing the CirkoBalkana circus tent, as a traveling-nomadic venue for performance, education and creation, as well as CirkoBalkana Festival.

Cirkorama's members are participants in numerous local, regional and international projects.

Through 15 years of work, Cirkorama has realized partnerships with numerous local, regional and international organizations, some of them are AKC Attack!, Zagreb Center for Independent Culture and Youth – Pogon, Čarobnjakov šešir, Room 100, Cirkus kolektiv, Prostor plus, Cirkultura, K.V.A.R.K, Cirkusfera, Klub Močvara, Libraries of the City of Zagreb, City Gallery Striegl, Side Kunst Cirque, Cirk' Oblique, Ecole de cirque Turbul, QuattroX4, as well as numerous local artists. At the moment they are producing the third part of trilogy "The Horror House project" which will premiere in July 2023.

🌐 www.cirkorama.org

CIRKUSFERA

Cirkusfera's work is aimed at the affirmation of contemporary circus creativity through the education, artistic exchange and production of plays. The core activity of the association is to provide opportunities for development, research and artistic work to the young circus generations. Their plays are the result of twisted art chains, where circus skills, movement, and music merge with the context of informal theater, where linear narration and direct understanding are avoided. Through Cirkobalkana festival, for ten years now, Cirkusfera is dedicated to the development of alternative art scene and the exploration of the so-called circus tradition through an adventurous style of artistic expression and experimenting with the language of performing (primarily circus) arts.

So far, they have produced and co produced 15 plays, 7 performances, educated 5 generations of circus artists, hosted over 70 international shows and organised over 40 workshops and masterclasses.

🌐 www.cirkusfera.org

ROOM 100

ROOM 100 has been established by Antonia Kuzmanić and Jakov Labrović in 2010. Their first performance *C8H11NO2* earned them a title of "Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe 2009-2010" laureate and was praised by critics as being an "exceptional example of an intelligent, accurate, deliberate and intensive work". Since then, they performed in USA, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Lithuania and Croatia and produced "split", "Seed" and "BLINK" performances. Beside performing and producing contemporary circus performances, ROOM 100 is undergoing different projects of strengthening contemporary circus scene in Croatia and introducing contemporary circus arts, its history and importance to wider audience. Their main activity is running HALA 100-residency place for contemporary circus arts (first of its kind in Croatia and ex Yugoslavia)- and hosting international circus artists for creation, performances and workshops.

🌐 www.room100.org



