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Show your face

Tanja Lesničar - Pučko

A new co-production performance *Show your face!* by Betontanc was premiered at the end of May in the Latvian capital Riga, at the base of the co-production group UMKA. The Slovenian premiere will take place on Thursday, 15 June at 9 p.m. in Stara elektrarna (and will be repeated three times by Sunday). After having successfully cooperated with the Dutch for the performance *Berlusconi*, the director Matjaž Pograjc has now reached towards north-east, to a group which deals with so-called object theatre. Such theatre uses different objects rather than classic puppets (most often the objects that have been thrown away, garbage), animates them and changes them into figures and symbols.

Pograjc has linked this Latvian theatre element to Betontanc's understanding of the body and to their working process, during which a text and a final image of a project are slowly being formed through research of the material. That is how the performance *Show your face!* was created (in English due to its co-production nature) and could be placed among puppet theatre shows for adults, too often overlooked in Slovenia. The main topic of the performance is represented by fifty Slovenian and fifty Latvian people "without a face", the ones who were repressed by the system in one way or another – among the Slovenians figure Angela Vode, Kocbek, Furlan and others. These black stains of 20th century history were then linked to key events of the century, like wars, the nuclear bomb, and on such historical background a hero – a ski Babygro – is fighting its fights.

Contrary to the technically demanding performance *Fragile!*, this one is a mixture of a musical, circus and concert. It is possible to pack everything that is on stage into six suitcases, says one of the performers, Primož Bezjak, while the director is adding: "The only technique that we use is the one that is hidden in the people themselves."

Besides seven performers (four Slovenians and three Latvians), there is also a music group Silence, featuring live with the help of a Latvian saxophonist Ugis Vitins.

After this series of performances, it will be possible to see *Show you face!* again in August, within Mladi levi festival, which is returning to its classic festival form this year. In autumn, Betontanc will go on American tour New York-Los Angeles-San Diego with the performance *Wrestling Dostojevski*.