

press file

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BRUSSEL / BRUXELLES / BRUSSELS

KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS

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facts & figures

23rd edition of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts
40 artistic projects
4 productions
14 (inter)national co-productions
18 world premieres
180 performances
282 artists
22 different countries
10 extra's
85 collaborators
35 volunteers
53 partners
7 international artists in *Residence & Reflection*
23 days of festival
23 venues or public places all over the city
26 643 tickets on sale

kunstenfestivaldesarts 2018

The Kunstenfestivaldesarts is a festival that cannot easily be captured in a nutshell. It tends to prefer taking risks than opting for something tried and tested. Within its space dedicated to vibrant and current artistic creation, it offers a multitude of possible narratives. It is not based on a theme or ideas worked out beforehand. It is written and experienced live. The great majority of pieces in its programme are new works: they are being created today and are highly topical at a time that in many respects may seem very worrying, mostly provoking extreme and reductive responses.

*Christophe Slagmuylder, director
March 2018*

Simplification is reassuring. The simplification of political discourses, ideological propaganda and received ideas. Of media messages and opinions shared en masse on social networks. Of commercial mechanisms that not even the cultural sector can avoid. Of substituting ideas themselves with slogans in order to reach consensus. Simplification keeps the complexity of people and the world at a distance and ultimately starts to deny it.

The festival programme is open to daring and complex projects. It is highly multidisciplinary. It is sensitive to artistic approaches that attempt to escape the kind of formatting seen at all levels of society. It strongly asserts the autonomy of artistic practice that is anchored in its time and linked to movements of living beings and of the world. It favours artists' visions about the world as it is now and the world to come that resist classification. Visions that assert the importance of complex territories in which genres and definitions remain fluid and ideas continue to be questioned. Visions that are often forward-looking and which beyond offering commentary, criticism or documentary, originate out of the need to imagine a future.

This year's programme includes almost forty (new) works conceived with care, determination and a sense of urgency by artists from all over the world. The paths they have taken to get here are different: some are already well known, others are here to be discovered.

Cosmopolitan, international and anchored in Brussels, the Kunstenfestivaldesarts is the product of intense collaborations and numerous partnerships. It is held in Brussels, taking over various venues in the city and presenting remarkable projects in them. For three weeks it opens up a living and moving space in the city.

This year the festival centre is moving between four different spaces. One of these is the film and theatre school, INSAS, which is hosting a programme dedicated to forms of resistance and challenge. The centre will also be taking over the old Citroën garage, a space that holds the promise of a major new cultural project in Brussels for the future. In addition the festival will be headquartered in the Théâtre National during the festival's opening weekend, and for five days it will be relocating to the Beursschouwburg, a loyal partner of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts and a venue with which we have an unquestionable affinity.

1.

At our 23rd festival, leading European artists on the bill use fiction to address anti-democratic developments on the continent.

A prominent and controversial figure in contemporary theatre, **Milo Rau**'s latest production is having its world premiere at the Kunstenfestivaldesarts. The work of the Swiss-born director has made its presence felt on international stages in recent years and enjoyed unprecedented success. His concept of "engaged" theatre - in other words theatre that draws its material directly from real life trajectories and addresses fundamental questions of morality head on with the audience and actors alike - leaves no one unaffected by it. Not without ambiguity, it interlinks fiction and reality, people and characters, stories that are fictional or experienced in real life to continually confront theatre with reality and with the facts. *La Reprise : Histoire(s) du théâtre (I)* is currently being developed and, as is often the case with Milo Rau, the direction it has been going in so far can still be turned on its head. However one of its principal starting points is a crime that actually happened in Liège several years ago. What role can fiction play in the face of intolerance, homophobia and crime? *La Reprise : Histoire(s) du théâtre (I)* is also a form of definition or manifesto about theatre, its essence, its present and its future, as well as its ability to confront the world. This creation is the festival's sixth collaboration with the Swiss director. He was not particularly well known here when our collaboration started, but he is now considered a major artist who in the meantime has even become a little bit "Belgian", and whose work is performed in several of the country's theatres. *La Reprise : Histoire(s) du théâtre (I)* is a new work that is being co-produced by the Théâtre National, which is very committed to the project, alongside the Théâtre de Liège, NTGent (which Milo Rau will be running from September) and several other European organisations.

Also rooted in a present that is unbearable at times, the much-anticipated creation by the Spanish collective **El Conde de Torrefiel** takes us through different timeframes in search of a possible future world. First appearing in Belgium at our festival in 2015, El Conde de Torrefiel's work has been loyally supported by the Kunstenfestivaldesarts ever since and has been performed at three consecutive festivals (2015-2017). This year the festival is producing the latest work by this duo from Barcelona. *LA PLAZA* is a large-scale project that has benefited from a significant period of research, solid production support and an impressive network of European partners. This highlights one of the festival's important roles as a producer who finds the funding and partners required to develop promising projects created by up-and-coming artists. El Conde de Torrefiel conceives unclassifiable stage works. Using heterogeneous material, their vision is striking however for its sharpness of thought and being in tune with our times. Disturbing under the guise of appearing agreeable, it often bears witness to a disenchanted recklessness. Their vision is eminently youthful. The people who are expressed in it and the characters who populate the simple sets are young adults of the 21st century. They live in the present. El Conde de Torrefiel's work is contemporary. The action in their shows regularly starts from passive situations. While often staging a society of leisure and easy, thoughtless activities, it also refers almost innocently to an inert

world, obsessed with the fear of losing what has been acquired. *LA PLAZA* has been developed in a series of workshops. It will be an open and exploratory piece that dares to put at stake some of the company's most characteristic artistic principles: removing words or sometimes offering an excess of them, suppressing all living elements on stage or multiplying them, using sound, the object, film and the stage material as much as human presences, words and actions. It imagines the stage space as a public space, an area of permanent tension and transformation where different timescales and historicities encounter one another. Confronted with the anti-democratic advances seen in Europe, this new work today attempts to outline a future or, at the very least, the possibility of imagining one.

To date the festival had already initiated, coproduced and presented two "Suites" conceived by **Joris Lacoste** as part of his *Encyclopédie de la Parole* project. This year, he is offering *Suite n°3 - Europe*, the last and very dark by Lacoste based on Europe's greatest challenges today: populist words and a closing of minds. For several years the French artist has been collecting and archiving various audio sources found mostly on the internet, in telephone conversations, public speeches, and collective or individual voices speaking in different languages. This oral material is then faithfully reproduced on stage. For *Suite n°3 - Europe*, he has chosen recent words from European citizens, one for each official language of the European Union, all conveying the discomfort, intolerance and hatred circulating on our continent. Through a process of musical transposition and sophisticated staging, it is the unbearable dimension of these words that produces an even greater impact. *Suite n°3 - Europe* is a concert of considerable vocal and musical refinement, an agreeable and romantic-seeming recital whose libretto, produced by a collage of found words, is extremely caustic. Through language and its uses, he paints a gripping portrait of Europe today.

2.

Beyond Europe, the festival is collaborating with artists who are questioning the process of decolonisation. During the festival's opening weekend, choreographer **Faustin Linyekula** is presenting a new project at the Museum for Central Africa. *Banataba* is a duet that attempts to construct new personal and historical accounts for his country through the body and words. In the as yet unfilled, bright white rooms of a museum that is due to reopen at the end of the year, by appropriating objects and pieces of art conceived on Congolese soil, he delves into the stratifications of history in order to identify possible future transformations.

Originally from Singapore, **Ho Tzu Nyen** is offering *One or Several Tigers*, a work that, in the face of history's univocal narrative (*One*), summons up the plurality of accounts (*Several*) and the importance of complexity. Fascinated by hybridity, it questions his country's origins. It is an installation, film and interactive website in one, blending various ancient techniques with state-of-the-art technologies and a mix of cultural influences. It is a brilliant piece of work!

3.

The Kunstenfestivaldesarts is delighted to be presenting in May 2018 new works by two artists whose artistic careers are very closely associated with the festival's own development. Long-standing artists at the festival, **Toshiki Okada** and **Amir Reza Koohestani** are highly talented and now world-famous directors. Toshiki Okada is returning to one of his landmark pieces, *Five Days in March*, which he is recreating here. The new version of this masterly piece, presented outside Japan for the first time in Brussels in 2007, brings a group of very young actors to the stage. Taking place during a demonstration in Tokyo, these five days in March question collective and social engagement in Japan. The mundane nature of the situations creates an astonishing contrast with the abstraction of Okada's extremely unusual artistic language; a language of profound originality where words and movements each seem to live out their autonomous logics, evolving in parallel, creating very moving forms of the alienation of individuals. Presented by the festival at the Kaaistudios in 2007, the re-creation of the play eleven years later will be on the large stage at the Kaaitheater.

Amir Reza Koohestani is presenting the world premiere of his latest work at this year's festival. While Okada works with a group of very young actors, Koohestani brings the world of children to the stage... through adult actors. Taking place at the school gates, *Summerless* exposes the projections created between adults and children through the subtlety that is characteristic of Koohestani's theatre. Indirectly, but very precisely, he also addresses changes to the education system, thus evoking the contradictory development of Iranian society today.

By incorporating the new works of Milo Rau, Toshiki Okada, Amir Reza Koohestani and El Conde de Torrefiel, the 2018 edition of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts offers an exceptional opportunity to discover some of the strongest contemporary drama around today, in Europe and beyond. Presenting the work of leading international artists remains one of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts' key missions.

4.

Several projects this year are coming to us from Brazil, a country badly affected by the return of hard-line conservative measures and persistent inequalities. This is not about focusing on a particular geography - the works of each of the artists are very different and defy any cultural categorisation or definition of identity. Most of these artists are still very young, not particularly well-known in Europe and presenting their work in Belgium for the first time. Developed without state support and mostly in very precarious conditions, their works address social, racial, physical and mental divides through the body. What primarily links these various artistic visions from Brazil is the way in which the body plays a crucial role in them.

aCORdo is a choreography by **Alice Ripoll** that will be presented in three different spaces in the city. It is one of the must-see works at this year's festival. Ripoll conceived this piece in Rio in reaction to the Olympic Games. In it she directly addresses the prejudices faced by those from disadvantaged classes who are not white. *aCORdo* is a

dance piece with a disturbing emphasis on the place of the spectator. Ripoll and her dancers will also be running a series of workshops while in Brussels.

More than a show performed every evening, *Macaquinhos* is a happening, an event that attempts to give substance to a contentious act. This raw show that shatters certain taboos has been conceived by a collective who operate anonymously as a group. Severely criticised in Brazil, *Macaquinhos* is an artistic and political approach in which more than anything the body is conceived as a political force and envisaged as a metaphor for the world: divided, organised in a hierarchy and governed by relationships of top-down power.

The best known of the artists from Brazil, and the only one to have already presented his work at the festival, is **Bruno Beltrão**, a leading figure in the contemporary dance world. A regular at the Kunstenfestivaldesarts, his work offers some of the most refreshing experiences in choreography in the last fifteen years. It can be characterised by a subtle and fascinating deconstruction of codes from hip-hop dance that the artist is continually enriching and questioning. Beyond its astonishing virtuosity, *INOAH*, his latest creation for ten dancers, translates the ambivalence in relationships between individuals.

And there is also **Eduardo Fukushima**, a dancer and choreographer from São Paulo, whose singular approach also provides a link between street dance, contemporary dance and martial arts. He is presenting his work for the first time in Belgium. With great delicacy and poetry, the solo *Título em Suspensão* brings to the stage the resistance of a forgotten or abandoned body.

Also based in São Paulo, **Leandro Nerefuh** is an artist who is accustomed to presenting his work on the visual arts circuit, a work that so far has mostly taken the form of lectures, combining words with objects and images. In collaboration with the sound artist Caetano and the choreographer Cecilia Lisa Eliceche, at this year's festival he is creating a more directly choreographic project, deploying an aesthetic that combines primitivism and futurism, the Aztecs and... Malevich! In it he summons up the victorious and destructive mythologies associated with the sun's rays in an endeavour to dismantle triumphant capitalism.

Lastly there is the work of **Dudu Quintanilha** who anchors his artistic practice in the city. In São Paulo, where he lives and works, he is one of the founders of Mexa, a project aimed at and involving some of the city's most socially vulnerable. In Brussels, he is producing a new work that has been commissioned by the festival. *PeuP-* is a video performance within which the artist brings to the stage chance encounters with various people as he wandered through the city. In a very sensitive approach to bodies and gestures, Quintanilha's films discreetly unveil the social divisions and phenomena of marginalisation.

5.

Younger generations are directly involved and addressed in various projects at this year's festival. The role of fiction, its ability to add complexity to the world and the possibility of thinking about the future has inspired *Unforetold*, the ambitious new work devised by **Sarah Vanhee** with children. Vanhee's remarkable work has been supported and presented by the festival in recent years. At earlier festivals, she came up with astonishing projects (such as *Lecture for Everyone* and *Untitled*), often participatory in nature, which establish the artistic act in a city's social fabric. For the production company CAMPO, and in coproduction with the festival, this time she is producing a play with young children on the basis of their unbridled ability to imagine without having preconceived ideas. With them she is also embarking on an approach that looks ahead. The theatre's stage and black box become a place to light up, allowing dreams and visions for the future to emerge. *Unforetold* is a highly promising, long-awaited new work.

In *Paradise Now (1968-2018)*, **Michiel Vandavelde** brings together a group of teenagers around a cult work in theatre, a testimony of the utopias of the late 1960s and a show created in 1968 by The Living Theatre: *Paradise Now*. This symbolic work of an engaged, semi-improvised artistic act that involves audience participation lies at the heart of this project. Without reproducing it, Vandavelde encourages his young performers to react to the anti-establishment themes and radical forms that this work offered and then to update them. What would be "paradise now" for young people today? What really matters to the younger generations in 2018 and what means do they have to express them? This new project by Michiel Vandavelde is the one in our programme that maintains most directly the link with the question of engagement and the student demos seen in 1968.

INSAS, the performing arts school in Ixelles, will serve as the festival centre from 16 to 20 May. This choice is not a chance one. May 2018 marks the fiftieth anniversary of what is commonly known as "May '68". In response, INSAS will be hosting a programme entitled *The May Events*. This brings together a series of artistic and discursive interventions, but also activities conceived directly by the students themselves, around forms of resistance and protest. Without nostalgia or a desire to take a historical look at the period, this programme's ambition is primarily to evoke its legacies, both in Europe and further afield. *The May Events* is centred around three artistic projects conceived by Ivana Müller, Pamina de Coulon and the Mexican collective Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol. After these three days dedicated to May '68 in Brussels, the programme will move on to Ghent (Vooruit). Artistic projects on the bill at the festival, such as those by Michiel Vandavelde and *Macaquinhos*, also resonate directly with this programme and vice versa. As part of *The May Events*, a 'carte blanche' evening will be offered by Basis voor Actuele Kunst (BAK), an arts centre in Utrecht supporting an international group of artists who are conceiving an intervention connected to "May '68" and which plans to offer a variety of incarnations and interpretations (*First Person Plural*, 19 May).

6.

Dance continues to have a strong presence at this year's festival with singular choreographic formats. In *MONUMENT 0.4: Lores & Praxes*, **Eszter Salamon** invites the audience to visit an exhibition of movements that are not intended to be learned. Unfamiliar to contemporary dancers, these marginalised dances that came out of various traditions escape standard, globalised approaches to education or the market economy. *Lores & Praxes* is a dance exhibition that runs for six hours, establishing a network of encounters between people and traditions. This wonderful project, subtitled *a ritual of transformations*, creates the experience of a kind of utopia which, through movement, brings individuals together in their diversity.

The festival is also offering a project initiated by the choreographer **Latifa Laâbissi** dedicated to the figure of the witch. *W.I.T.C.H.E.S Constellation* comprises a show by Laâbissi herself, an installation-performance by the London-based French artist Paul Maheke, and a workshop that invites Brussels participants to come up with multiple definitions of witchcraft. Witches are seen here as a symbol of exclusion. The various witch-hunts of which they were victims at different times in history clearly echo our contemporary societies, which are continuing to resort considerably to exclusion and calumny. This project by Latifa Laâbissi, a remarkable choreographic artist whose work is seldom seen in Brussels, is a co-presentation with Charleroi danse.

Among the choreographic projects on the bill this year are several new discoveries. This is the case with *Farci.e*, a confrontational solo by Iranian-born artist **Sorour Darabi**. In it Darabi stages a body struggling with types of formatting and standardisation. The body, its absence and its substitution by machines is the starting point for the new work by Korean **Jisun Kim**. *Deep Present* is a play written for four artificial intelligences, a piece of theatre in which machines take over from mankind and where thoughts and intelligences are embodied by objects rather than by bodies. At the festival two years ago, Jisun Kim presented a particularly disturbing project in which the virtuality of video game worlds acted as a substitute for real life. Today she continues to passionately question the transformation and progressive alienation experienced in contemporary societies, particularly in Asia, vis-à-vis reality.

The body, its modifications and its substitutions also lie at the origin of *Co-Natural*, the creation by **Alexandra Pirici**, who is presenting her work for the first time in Brussels. This Romanian-born artist has already carved out a strong reputation for herself, particularly at biennales and other major art exhibitions. One of her latest works was conceived as part of the major *Skulptur Projekte* exhibition in Münster, Germany, last summer, with others being shown at the Venice Biennale and Tate Modern. These pieces are on the edge of performing arts and installation. They concern choreographies presented on a loop over long periods, like moving sculptural devices. They evoke spaces, monuments and collections of imaginary, absent objects through gestures and words. Alexandra Pirici's creation can be seen in the Kanal space. It is being co-presented by the Pompidou Centre. For the last four days of this year's festival, Kanal will

be home to the festival centre. This space contains the promise of a new and great cultural project in Brussels in future. It potentially opens up lots of possibilities and it remains to be seen what its visions will be and the specific actions that will be undertaken to realise them. By essence nomadic and designed in partnership with different arts institutions in the city (this year the festival is collaborating with 22 cultural partners in Brussels who will be presenting its projects), the festival is temporarily associated with this space which, for one year, from May 2018 to May 2019, will be open to the public in preparation for what it will ultimately become.

The relationship between visual and performance arts are at the heart of **Philipp Gehmacher**'s work that we will be presenting at WIELS. For several years now the Vienna-based artist has been conceiving a highly original choreographic work; his growing interest in manufactured objects and the sculptural practice he began studying recently lead him to conceive works that blend the body, in all its fragility and nuances, and various materials and objects, solid and unchanging, fluid and perishable. Discrete, opaque but extremely sensitive, *my shapes, your words, their grey* is an extremely beautiful danced and sculptural performance. Also at WIELS, **Hana Miletić** is staging a monographic exhibition using works made of woven felt. In it the act of weaving, which the artist undertakes notably as a collective gesture with people whose status is precarious, is conceived as a therapeutic and holistic act that repairs the failings in our fragmented societies. Equally interested in gestures and words, in parallel with this exhibition Miletić will offer an evening of readings of poetic and theoretical texts.

7.

Fundamentally the festival supports the liberation of artistic languages from dominant linguistic codes expressed primarily through bodies, objects and spaces, a particularly sensitive aspect in **the new works by a young generation of Brussels artists. These projects are mostly co-productions with organisations in Brussels.** In May audiences will have an opportunity to discover new creations by **Léa Drouet** (*Boundary Games*, a partnership between the festival and the Théâtre Les Tanneurs), **Gwendoline Robin** (*A.G.U.A.*, a partnership between the festival and Halles de Schaerbeek) and **Louis Vanhaverbeke** (*MIKADO REMIX*, a partnership between the festival and the Beursschouwburg). These three artists, whose respective careers are still at a relatively early stage, testify to the vitality of the arts scene in Brussels and its interdisciplinary nature. Drouet's shows are marked by her sensitivity for sound and spatial relationships, Robin's by sculptural practice and chemistry experiments, while Vanhaverbeke's scenic world is primarily designed as an installation of objects and colours, injected with hip hop rhythms and slam poetry. The festival is a springboard for these artists, allowing them to create new works with greater funding and benefit from a higher profile among Belgian and international audiences.

Also featuring in the projects of Brussels-based artists is the new creation by **Alma Söderberg**. Fascinated by rhythmic structures (those of flamenco as much of those of

hip hop), the dancer and choreographer combines sound, gesture, percussion and singing to form a unique stage language of exceptional expressive force.

Lastly it is important to highlight here the new project by **Jorge León**, a Brussels-based film-maker who is developing an important project for the stage. *Mitra* combines music, singing, cinematographic image and stage action to testify to the condition and doubts experienced by a woman in Iran today who has been locked up for practising psychoanalysis. Tackling the delicate question of normality through several media, this ambitious project is being co-produced with the Ensemble Ictus, Transparant, La Monnaie/de Munt and the Halles de Schaerbeek.

8.

Moving images and visual and cinematographic arts are well represented this year.

Two artists originally from North Africa will be presenting their latest films. **Ismaïl Bahri** is the creator of ingenious short films that are nevertheless conceived around formal devices of disarming simplicity. They question the very acts of watching and filming, and subtly engage in a political experience between the subject and the world around it. **Yto Barrada**, an established artist in Tangiers whose photographic work is already widely recognised, is also offering a film which, starting from formal principles, indirectly returns to political issues. The presence this year of the Hungarian film-maker **Béla Tarr**, a leading figure in contemporary cinema, is also noteworthy. He will be giving a workshop in collaboration with the association Cinémaximiliaan. The short film produced by this workshop, and made by newcomers to Brussels, will be projected in the director's presence. It is worth highlighting lesser known aspects of the festival here: the establishment of a wide range of activities designed for different audiences, often people who are not very familiar with the arts: workshops, encounters, residences etc., a way of positioning the festival more widely in the city and continuing to attract all kinds of audiences (see the enclosed document listing these activities).

Lastly, among the cinematographic approaches on offer, the festival has invited **Carlos Casas** to present his latest project, *Sanctuary*. Casas has been developing a form of expanded cinema for a number of years, in which sound is at least as important as image, and that offers the spectator an immersive experience. *Sanctuary* is also among the projects which in our opinion definitely should not be missed. He leads the audience to and abandons them in an unknown space, dark as a jungle, enveloping them in captivating sound and light information. Having recourse to advanced technologies that allow filming in darkness or capturing otherwise inaudible sounds, the work opens up a novel and unexplored sensorial world. In the final days of this year's festival, *Sanctuary* offers the experience of a utopia and a space that is open to change.

9.

The city still plays an important role in each edition of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts, primarily through the network of partnerships that have been established, the large

presence of creations by Brussels artists, and the diversity of venues in which the festival comes to life for three weeks. Some works address the city directly. This is the case with the new project by **Anna Rispoli**, a familiar figure at the festival who is inspired by her urban and nomadic context and whose works conceived in and for Brussels' social and urban fabrics have contributed to the success of many of our earlier festivals. This year she is developing a show in collaboration with two German artists that questions empathy and different forms of "love". Written on the basis of interviews with a number of residents of the city who have differing ideas of love, *Your word in my mouth* filters into different public spaces in the city, some of them highly improbable, large and not so large (a sauna, a parliament, a hairdresser's etc.) that are only revealed to the audience when they buy their tickets.

The city will also be hosting a concert being planned by **Charlemagne Palestine** for the opening of the festival. Palestine is an American artist who has been living in Brussels for a number of years and enjoys cult status for his pioneering advances in musical composition. A visual artist when he has the time, his work is the subject of an exhibition at BOZAR from May onwards. For the festival he is creating a concert of organs and bells in the Cathedral of St Michael and St Gudula that will ring out across the city centre.

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Time shared, filled with wonderful artistic experiences, debates and celebrations, bringing us together in diversity. A festival of the present, dedicated to international, multidisciplinary and contemporary creation. Here and now, the possibility of imagining a future.

Another BRIC in the wall

The perhaps best-known Brazilian artist of all time, composer and singer Antonio Carlos Jobim, treated his songs as beautiful, loving descriptions of Brazil, even when the reality here was more than dark. He was also a very ironic man that never lost an opportunity to say his mind about our country. Once, astonished by the local news he said « Brazil is not for beginners ». The observation became an aphorism for our capacity to be always even more absurd than we already thought possible. Jobim died in 1994, just before the changes that led Brazil to being, until recently, the biggest promise of capitalism, the world's 6th economy and the poster boy for development. We could say to Mr. Jobim now, after last year's parliament coup and the messy presidential election we will face in a few months, that Brazil is hard to explain even for veterans. So bear with me for some paragraphs.

A few years after Jobim passed, Lia Rodrigues looked around the booming country we lived then, the amazing import goods, the controlled inflation and apparent classy democracy that had evicted a corrupt president in a impeachment process in 1992 and then had a elegant president that could even speak French. Despite all the press and general feeling of success, Lia could not be - as good artists can never be - fooled by the sparkling shine of neoliberal politics. She then created a piece of dance, one that shook all of us to the bone then and still does now, called « Such stuff we are made ». Violence, poverty, abuse, poetry, marketing slogans, all were in there, with tickets costing 1,99 reais. The price was a comment on the shops filled with cheap goods made in china that multiplied around us as symptom of what we now know, 20 years later, was a road to destruction of this planet and ever growing inequality, but filled with cheap led lights and fluffy gadgets.

As *Kunstenfestivaldesarts 2018* choses to share with its audiences in Brussels some of the recent productions in Brazilian dance and performance, I can't keep my mind off the subtle way Lia was able to foresee something out of order when most people were so sure of the great moment we were living in and make it into a piece that was seminal to the generation of young Brazilian choreographers and performers that will share their views on our reality this summer in Brussels. But let's fast forward a bit. For purposes of style, I wish I was able to arch this context essay straight to 30 years after Lia's milestone work and speculate on what Brazil could be in 2019. But given that I write this while the front runner for presidential elections, former president Lula, can be arrested any minute, I am guessing the only sure thing here now is that we are not going to have replicants to fall in love with, as predicted by the first *Blade Runner* (set in 2019). Instead, let's stick to some data around the last two years, a frame in which all the Brazilian works presented were created.

The rise of conservative thinking, religious power and plain fascism is not strange to Europe today, and has also been the backdrop of the Brazilian street demonstrations, violence, corruption cases and political persecution since 2013. The first woman to become president, Dilma Rousseff, was impeached for fiscal fraud, but the legality of that

By *Naysa López, Artistic director Panorama Festival - Rio de Janeiro, March 2018*

Brazilian artists at the

Kunstenfestivaldesarts 2018 *Alice Ripoll, Bruno Beltrão, Leandro Nerefuñ, Eduardo Fukushima, Macaquinhos, Dudu Quintanilha*

process is highly debatable. A congress dominated by criminally charged politicians and neopentecostal leaders, sided by their allies, makes sure progressive legislation is on a halt.

The only progress we had in the last years in social issues as abortion, transgender rights, gay marriage and others, came from Supreme Court Rule. The bad news is that Brazil became a judicial state, as described by many international analysts. This atmosphere is made much more depressive when we realise that the second runner in the presidential polls is an openly fascist, misogynous and homophobic former army captain.

Brazilian daily news is a vortex of all our worst nightmares. But unlike collapsed countries, there is still a lot of money around. When I mean around, is not “Belgium” around, it is a whole other concept of inequality. All this numbers and macro view concern artists in two fronts: subsidy and censorship.

Censorship in Brazil is not legal since the end of dictatorships in the late 80’s. Forbidding an art project strikes a huge nerve on a community of artists that, if over 60 years old, saw friends being arrested, tortured and killed. The younger ones entered the scene knowing this legacy of fight for freedom of speech was the reason they could now say whatever they want. And they could. Still can. Most of the time.

Last year some episodes reminded us all of the fragility of democracy and liberty in a country controlled by oligarchs and where corruption is endemic to the political world. Some specific pieces became scapegoats for the extreme right and their trolls and bots, but as well a target for prosecution and criminal absurd charges like paedophilia, sexual misconduct and religious offense. *Macaquinhos*, one of the pieces being shown at *Kunstenfestivaldesarts*, suffered a lot of attacks for having scenes where the performers explore each other’s bodies more than some people think should be done on stage. Or ever, apparently.

We feel there is a wall being constructed between sides in Brazilian society, and the bricks are being laid hourly by fake news, attacks and an army of bots and real life bullies acting on religious communities as right wing groups all around the country. Neopentecostal churches will, by recent poll, be the choice of life for nearly half the population in a few years. Those churches preach against art, against artists and their work.

And the artistic and progressive field has always dismissed their claims and treated them as a minor disturbance. We have been doing it for two decades and while we were concerned with cultural policies, human rights and our own artistic world, they were creating a huge base of voters. A base like that has elected a neopentecostal bishop as mayor of Rio.

Budget cuts became the norm in cities and states as the crisis installed a fear of bankruptcy in the country. Cultural budgets have been cut or eliminated - except for the film industry and some musicals - across most Brazilian regions. We do not have the multiannual subsidy system here, meaning none of the artists being presented in Brussels have any consistent funding to work.

On the moral front, attacks on art and artist are now a strategy for the elections, for those attacks galvanise forces and millions of people that feel historically excluded from the cultural process at large. Exclusion is another frame - and issue - present in the works chosen to be at *Kunstenfestival-desarts*. Let's take a look at some numbers, and remember the size of another wall, the inequality wall, that we face here.

According to the first systematic assessment of globalization in terms of economic inequality, released in March 2018 as the *World Inequality Report* (<http://wir2018.wid.world/>), despite high growth in emerging countries, global inequality increased since 1980 all around the world. The top 1% captured twice as much global income growth as the bottom 50%. That is bad news across the globe. It is even worse in some places.

In Brazil, the wealthier 1% holds around 30% of the country's income. The top 10% holds half of it. This 10% is of course white. When you look at the racial aspect of inequality, violence has a colour. We have an average of 55.000 killings a year here, 2/3 are young black men. Like the ones dancing in some of the Brazilian works arriving in Brussels. These killings are mostly related to the drug war and perpetrated by other young men in police uniforms. To put this death row in perspective, Belgium had 220 violent deaths in 2015 (in a population of 11,35 million) while Brazil had 5.5574 homicides in a population of 207,7 million. That is 18 times more population x 253 times more killings. Amnesty International even released a campaign called "young black men alive", to raise awareness of the situation in this country. Remember those numbers by the end of *aCORdo*, when the cast of black young men face the wall.

Violence and social tension, an issue that emerges from Bruno Beltrão's *INOAH* and Alice Ripoll's *aCORdo*, but also latent in *Macaquinhos* or Eduardo Fukushima's personal battle with exhaustion, is a central element to understand our country today. Brazil is the country that kills more trans and gay people on the planet. But our currently more successful pop star is the dragqueen Pablo Vittar - her youtube videos amount for hundreds of millions views each. Go figure. Not for beginners, this country. Those are the kind of complex economical and social paradoxes also present in the visual artists chosen to complete the performative programme at *Kunstenfestival-desarts*, Dudu Quintanilha and Leandro Nerefuh.

So dance and art production in Brazil is straightforward resistance. Resisting the lack of cultural budgets and the effects of deregulated capitalism in developing countries, resisting the conservative attacks on nudity or sex content, including the craziness

(and cynicism) of some attacks on works that have no sexual content whatsoever, for the sake of internet mess and far right votes. Resisting statistics, depending on the artist's social origin and skin colour, and keep being alive.

But we are optimists. I know at this point this text is not the best example of that, but don't be thrown by a middle aged feminist curator a bit exhausted of watching the cycle of corruption, constructed economical crises for profit of a few and fear of many, bad electoral choices and bad investments in education. It is not Monday that is bringing you down, says my favourite Internet meme, it is just capitalism.

We have to find joy and hope when we look at the extraordinary work being produced by Brazilian artists currently in that complex and crude context; better said: despite that context. And I can but think of Lia Rodrigues' sharp eye for titles again. Her most recent one, made in 2016 against the backdrop of all those numbers and political mess, sums up this idea of holding in there: *for the sky not to fall*. The walls holding the sky are these artists and many others, bringing their resistance brick by brick everyday to the studio and stage, to the streets of Brazil and festivals around.

One of the issues at the heart of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts is to offer a demanding artistic programme to a wide audience. In order to deeply root the festival within the city and to diversify our audience, we foresee a series of different activities that enrich the experience of the artistic programme.

A series of framing activities offer the possibility to dive into the themes, ideas and references of the artists (talks, post-show discussions & reading club); and even to experience their artistic practices physically (workshops Latifa Laâbissi & Hana Miletić). To facilitate the access to less informed audiences, the artists engage actively by offering workshops for groups of welfare organisations or socio-cultural associations (Léa Drouet & Alice Ripoll). Through a long term partnership with CIFAS, the presence of the artists and their entourage is also put to profit of young, aspirant artists (workshop Joris Lacoste) and producers (*Producers' Academy*).

Young artists are also invited to dive into the festival's programme through residencies, such as *Residence & Reflection. The >> Sessions* is intended for a group of young Brussels based artists and cultural workers from different networks and affirms the will of the festival to consolidate the urban artistic tissue. Through the projects of Onda and Cinemaximiliaan, we wish to stimulate exchanges and encounters with the newest inhabitants of the city.

Brussels is a particularly young city. The festival wants to actively engage with these aspirant citizens, spectators and artists by organizing activities within their school context: school performance Alice Ripoll & workshop Carlos Casas. The community projects are particular, as they exceed the time frame of the festival in order to create long term bands. The Class is a partnership of three years between two secondary schools and underlines our will to create bilingual alliances within the capital. We collaborate with youth houses and associations (such as youth houses Chicago and AJM-VMJ or TransfoCollect) in order to facilitate the access of youngsters outside school hours; whether it's as a group (*Chicago Project*) or individually (*Young Art Reporters*).

the may events

IVANA MÜLLER

NOTES. THE MAY EVENTS

16 > 20/05 - 18:00 > 22:00

Including a public conversation

on 19/05 - 17:00 > 19:00

With *Ivana Muller, Maxime Arnould, Róise*

Goan, Livia Andrea Piazza, Laurence Russell,

Christel Stalpaert & Michiel Vandevelde

Free entrance

PAMINA DE COULON

PRINTEMPS ON RECOMMENCE

16/05 > 20/05

18:00 > 00:00

Free entrance

LAGARTIJAS TIRADAS AL SOL EL PASADO NUNCA SE MUERE, NISQUIERA ES PASADO

16/05 - 19:00 > 22:00

17/05 - 18:00 > 22:00

19/05 - 18:00 > 22:00

20/05 - 18:00 > 22:00

€ 8 / € 6

A performative installation by *Gabino*

Rodríguez

FIRST PERSON PLURAL

19/05 - 20:00

A performative conference by *BAK,*

basis voor actuele kunst

€ 14 / € 11

THE POLITICAL PARTY - READING CLUB

20/05 - 16:00 > 18:00

Reading fragments from *The ends of*

the world by *Déborah Danowski & Eduardo*

Viveiros De Castro

Moderated by *Livia Piazza &*

Michiel Vandevelde

Free entrance

CINÉ CLUB IN OPEN AIR

17 > 18/05 - 22:00 > 00:00

Curated by *Ciné Club de l'INSAS*

Free entrance

STUDENT ASSEMBLY

17/05 - 22:00 > 07:00

Curated by students of *INSAS*

Free entrance

WORKSHOPS FOR ART STUDENTS

18/05 - 14:00 > 17:00

EN

Workshops by *Gabino Rodríguez (Lagartijas*

Tiradas al Sol), Ivana Muller, Sepake Angiama

In collaboration with *INSAS, RITCS,*

La Cambre, LUCA School of Arts

Registration anne@kfda.be / 02 226 45 73

DECOLONIAL GUIDED TOURS

16/05 - 18:00 > 20:30 (FR)

18/05 - 18:00 > 20:30 (EN)

In collaboration with *Collectif Mémoire*

Coloniale et Lutte contre les Discriminations

€ 10

ART & POPULISM BRAZILIAN ARTS UNDER ATTACK

INSAS

18/05 - 18:30

Speakers *Caetano, Cecilia Lisa Eliceche,*

Dudu Quintanilha, Eduardo Fukushima

& the members of Macaquinhos

Moderator *Leandro Nerefuh*

Free entrance

EN

talks

POST-SHOW DISCUSSIONS

Festival moderator *Flore Herman*

Free entrance

MILO RAU / INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL MURDER

Théâtre National

9/05 - 22:00

Speaker *Olivier Bailly (founding member of*

Médor, magazine for investigative journalism)

Moderators *Flore Herman & Laure Saupique*

In collaboration with *Médor, Théâtre National*

Wallonie-Bruxelles

Free entrance

NL / FR

JORIS LACOSTE & PIERRE-YVES MACÉ

KVS Top

20/05 - 17:00

Speakers *Karel Barták (Creative Europe -*

cultural programme of the European

Commission), Bertrand Peltier (advisor for the

Director-General for Finance at the European

Parliament), Antoine Cahen (Civil Liberties,

Justice, Home Affairs)

Moderator *Françoise Wuilmart*

In collaboration with *the European*

Commission; the French Institute & the French

Embassy in Belgium, in the frame of EXTRA

Free entrance

EN

encounters

ARTISTS IN EXILE

Globe Aroma

18/05 - 14:00

Organised by *Onda - Office national de diffusion artistique, Flanders Arts Institute, ITI Germany & Pro Helvetia*

Reserved for performing arts professionals

Reservation required

katie.watts@onda.fr before 14/05

FR / EN

CINEMAXIMILIAAN & BÉLA TARR

Cinemaximiliaan project house

11/05 - 19:00

12/05 - 19:00

Reservation required at the box office

Free contribution for Cinemaximiliaan

In presence of the participants

reading club

THE POLITICAL PARTY - A MOBILE PUBLIC LIBRARY

FUTUREABILITY, by Franco

'Bifo' Berardi

Théâtre National

Sat 5/05 - 16:00 > 18:00

Moderated by *Kristof van Baarle (dramaturg),*

Michiel Vandeveldde (artist)

DEPRODUCTION, by Terre Thaemlitz

Beursschouwburg

Sun 13/05 - 16:00 > 18:00

Moderated by *Laura Herman (curator La Loge),*

Charlotte Van Buylaere (curator Netwerk Aalst)

THE ENDS OF THE WORLD, by Déborah

Danowski, Eduardo Viveiros De Castro

INSAS

Sun 20/05 - 16:00 > 18:00

Moderated by *Livia Andrea Piazza*

(researcher), Michiel Vandeveldde

THE OLD AXOLOTL, by Jacek Dukaj

Kanal - Centre Pompidou

Sat 26/05 - 16:00 > 18:00

Moderated by *Aneta Rostkowska*

(curator Akademie der Kunste der Welt,

Cologne), Michiel Vandeveldde

Free entrance

workshops

JORIS LACOSTE & ELISE SIMONET

La Bellone

9 > 16/05 - 10:00 > 16:00

(day off 13/05)

€ 100

Organised by *CIFAS*

For professional artists from different

backgrounds, interested in the use of

voice and audio fragments

Registration www.cifas.be before 08/04

In collaboration with *La Bellone*

FR / EN

Public performance on 16/05 - 18:30

LATIFA LAÂBISSI & ANNA COLIN

ALTERNATIVES SORCIÈRES

Charleroi danse / La Raffinerie

15 > 19/05 - 10:00 > 18:00

20/05 - 15:00 > 18:00

€ 30

For arts students, anthropology students, people who feel related to the contemporary figure of the witch

Registration flore@kfd.be

02 226 45 91 before 16/04

In collaboration with *Charleroi danse -*

Centre chorégraphique de la Fédération

Wallonie-Bruxelles

FR / EN

Public performance on 20/05 - 18:00

HANA MILETIĆ & GLOBE AROMA WIELS

12/05 - 13:00 > 15:30

26/05 - 13:00 > 15:30

Free entrance

For curious spectators of all ages,

no experience required

Registration welcome@wiels.org /

02 340 00 52

In collaboration with *WIELS &*

Beursschouwburg

Language no problem

PRODUCERS' ACADEMY

INSAS

17 > 20/05 - 9:30 > 18:30

(20/05 until 14:00)

Organised by *CIFAS*

Free entrance

For producers, bookers, administration

managers, tour managers, cultural

entrepreneurs

Registration www.cifas.be before 1/04

In collaboration with *MoDul & On the Move*

More info modulasbl@gmail.com

EN

workshops for associations

LÉA DROUET

Within your association

23/05 > 8/06 (schedule by request)

Free entrance

For people related to associations

linked to Article 27

As part of *Pass Découverte*

In collaboration with *Théâtre les Tanneurs*

NL / FR / EN

ALICE RIPOLL

La Bellone

7/05 (schedule by request)

Free entrance

2 hour workshop

For curious spectators of all ages,

no dance experience required

Language no problem

residencies

RESIDENCE & REFLECTION

Guest artists *Wichaya Artamat (THAI), Nahuel*

Ezequiel Cano (AR), Anne-Lise Le Gac (FR),

Mandeep Reinhy (IND), Simon Thomas (BE),

Lisa Vereertbrugghen (BE), among others

Moderators *Mylène Lauzon, Tom Engels*

Production assistant *Elena Tzanasvalou*

In collaboration with *La Bellone*

THE >> SESSIONS

Guest artists *Alhadi Adam Agabeldour,*

Niels Coppens, Alex Deforce, Farbod Fathinejad,

Sihame Haddioui, Sanae Jamaï, Hyun Lories,

Ilyas Mettioui, Hendrick Ntela, Anthony Nti,

Lisette Ntukabumwe, Amina Saadi & Ahlaam

Teghadouini

Moderators *Daniel Blanga Gubbay,*

Bie Vancraeynest

In collaboration with *Demos*

CROSS CRITIQUE

Beursschouwburg

4 > 9/05

For art critics & video artists

By *rekto:verso (BE)*

Moderators / workshop leaders

Wouter Hillaert, Bart Rooms

In collaboration with *Art of Criticism (EU),*

Institute of Network Cultures (NL), Domein

voor Kunstkritiek (NL), De Zendelingen (BE),

Kritiklabbet (SE), Nachkritik (DE),

Hard/Hoofd (NL)

EN

schools

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE:

ALICE RIPOLL

La Bellone

8/05 - 9:00 > 13:00

€ 6 (free for accompanying teachers)

For scholars in the 5th & 6th grades (secondary school)

Included a bilingual (NL/FR) introduction at

school beforehand

& a workshop afterwards

By *Alice Ripoll & her dancers*

Language no problem

WORKSHOP:

CARLOS CASAS

Les Brigittines

24/05 (schedule by request)

Free entrance booking required

For scholars between 7 and

12 years old (primary school)

By *Carlos Casas*

NL / FR / EN

community

THE CLASS

A project for and by youngsters of *Institut*

Dominique Pire (Brussels) and Atheneum GO!

For Business (Molenbeek-Saint-Jean)

In collaboration with *De Veerman Workshops*

by *Gideon Hakker, Lauranne Winant*

Thanks to *Valérie Asselberghs,*

Florence Hanoset, Stefanie Peeters

NL / FR

CHICAGO PROJECT

Presentation and public screening

Kanal - Centre Pompidou

26/05 - 12:00

Production *Chiraz Graja*

Videos *Oualid Akrouh*

Moderator *Lars Kwakkenbos*

In collaboration with *youth centres Chicago*

and VMJ-AJM (D'Broej), TransfoCollect

Supported by *Bernheim Foundation*

NL / FR

YOUNG ART REPORTERS

A project by young people from

Brussels (16-22 years old)

Initiated by *De Veerman,*

Kunstenfestivaldesarts

Coaches *Daan Simons, Pierre-Philippe Hoffman*

In collaboration with *BILL, KAROO.me*

Supported by *Evens Foundation*

Thanks to *École Active (Uccle), Eras-*

mus hogeschool Brussel (Journalism), GO!

atheneum Anderlecht (Audiovisual education),

Ihecs (Institut des Hautes Études des Commu-

nications sociales), Samarcande & Solidarité

NL / FR

4x centredufestivalcentrum

4 > 6/05

THÉÂTRE NATIONAL

Emile Jacqmainlaan 111-115 Boulevard Emile Jacqmain,
1000 Brussel / Bruxelles

9 > 13/05

BEURSSCHOUWBURG

Auguste Ortsstraat 20-28 Rue Auguste Orts,
1000 Brussel / Bruxelles

16 > 20/05

INSAS

Jules Bouillonstraat 1 Rue Jules Bouillon,
1050 Brussel / Bruxelles

23 > 26/05

KANAL - CENTRE POMPIDOU

Akenkaai / Quai des Péniches,
1000 Brussel / Bruxelles

PARTY

04/05 *Opening party @ Théâtre National*

26/05 *Closing party @ Kanal - Centre Pompidou*

And also every Friday and Saturday 23:00 > ... @ centredufestivalcentrum

box office

BEURSSCHOUWBURG

Karperbrug 9-11 Rue du Pont de la Carpe,
1000 Brussel / Bruxelles
+32 (0)2 210 87 37
tickets@kfda.be
www.kfda.be

Start ticket sales *6.4.2018*

OPENINGS HOURS

06.04 > 03.05.2018 *Tuesday to Saturday – 11:00 > 18:00*
04 > 26.05.2018 *Every day – 12:00 > 19:00*

SPECIAL PRICES

A festival pass for all projects for € 190, reduced prices for Festifreaks (at least 4 different performances), Festigroups (at least 10 tickets per performance), Festiyouth (-25, a personal card at € 5 which offers 50% reduction on the standard price), -25/+65 and the unemployed. The festival accepts Paspertoe and Article 27.

New the festival pass can now also be purchased online!

Thanks for their collaboration and commitment to:

Allée Du Kaai, La Bellone, Beursschouwburg, BOZAR, Les Brigittines, Cathedral of St. Michael & St. Gudula, Charleroi danse / La Raffinerie, Cinemaximiliaan, Globe Aroma, Les Halles de Schaerbeek, INSAS, ING Art Center, Kaaitheater, Kanal - Centre Pompidou, KVS, L'L - Recherche expérimentale en arts de la scène, Royal Museum for Central Africa Tervuren, Théâtre Les Tanneurs, Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles, Théâtre Varia, WIELS, Zinnema

And also

Article 27 (Pass Découverte), Atheneum GO! For Business (Molenbeek-Saint-Jean), BILL, CIFAS, Collectif Mémoire Coloniale et Lutte contre les Discriminations, Demos, De Veerman, Ecole Active (Uccle), Edificio, Erasmus hogeschool Brussel (Journalistiek), The European Commission, Flanders Arts Institute, GO! Atheneum Anderlecht (Audiovisual education), Ihecs (Institut des Hautes Études des Communications sociales), Institut Dominique Pire (Bruxelles), ITI Germany, Jeugdhuis Chicago Maison de Jeunes (D'Broej), KAROO.me, La Cambre, LUCA School of Arts, Centre Communautaire Maritime, MoDul ASBL, On the Move, Pro Helvetia, rekto:verso, RITCS (Erasmus Hogeschool Brussel), Samarcande, Solidarité, TINTINNABULUM vzw/asbl, TransfoCollect, VMJ-AJM (D'Broej)

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KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS

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*Pictures of the performances
are sent on request*