Downtown Variety: Serbia Edition

curated by Eho animato collective

Eho animato is a collective devoted to research in performing arts and multimedia practices, founded in Belgrade in 2011. In their creative work, they aim to provoke as many perspectives as possible through collaborative processes, supporting each artistic voice to be heard and developed. They employ multimedia and interdisciplinary approaches as a way to enrich the language in which they tackle the topics they explore.

Walking with AIVI
live performative gameplay

Author of the performance: Ana Popović (with Ana Knežević)
Authors of the game: Aleksandar Bulajić, Ana Popović, Isidora Pejović Blagojević, Maja Maksimović & Sunčica Pasuljević Kandić

Ana Popović is a theatre director and co-founder of theatre company Tri groša/Threepenny in Belgrade. Her work is known by combining various performance arts forms - physical theatre, contemporary circus, contemporary dance, puppetry, musical theatre, digital arts exploring different aspects of the body, autopoietic feedback loops and overlapping roles of performers and audience. She is also active in the fields of performance education and children and young audience development. Ana is collaborating with many art individuals, organisations and institutions advocating for an open, free and solidar art community.

Walking with AIVI

Ana Knežević, a visual artist based in New York but originally from Belgrade, due to pandemic regime, is currently unable to visit her hometown. In search for the cure for homesickness she discovered AIVI game, which enables her to take at least a virtual walk and visit the spots in the city of Belgrade. In this virtual space Ana Knežević meets Ana Popović, one of the designers of the game AIVI, and two of them are opening the black (Pandora) box of AI applications in both public and private spheres, which tends to create a future image of the city. In this performative gameplay, Ana and Ana are crossing borders between virtual and physical places, past and future, human and digital companionships, discussing important and complex questions in a playful and inspiring manner. Visit https://aiviresearch.wixsite.com/aiviresearch for more about AIVI game.

In Him We Trust

durational performance (excerpts)

Author: Ivana Ivković
https://www.eugster-belgrade.com/artists/ivana-ivkovic/

Ivana Ivković gained international recognition mostly by shifting the infamous classical roles between women and men in her drawings, performances and site-specific works. Ivković examines gender roles between women and men in the art using the naked or semi-naked male body as a performative instrument within her orchestrated scenes or tableau vivant where it becomes precisely a medium, a channel of sensitivity, vulnerability, discomfort and sensuality.
The focus of her research ranges from personal reflections, intimate stories and immediate surroundings to various phenomena of global socio-political context resulting from the artist's requested dislocation through travel and nomadic way of life.

**Durational performance “In Him We Trust”** deals with the topic of trust and re-examines our beliefs through the recreation of the well – known scene of The Last Judgment – belief of eschatological religions in the last and final judgment which at the end of history will be performed over people to separate them: the righteous will receive eternal life as a reward and the sinful will have the final death as punishment. Performers play the roles from the standard iconography of this composition that becomes alive and moving. The work was performed once as an eight-hour site-specific performance in the building of BITEF Theatre - a never completed cathedral of the Evangelical church. The audience was able to come and go, sit, observe or contemplate a re-enactment of the religious composition. The scene is shaped by a spontaneous choreography made by natural body movement of the performers who are free to interact without acting while performing on a scaffolding construction that simulates the renaissance impression of perspective.

**Mirage_inter**

A/V performance, interdisciplinary project  
**Authors:** Doplgenger duo - [http://www.doplgenger.org](http://www.doplgenger.org)

Doplgenger is an artist duo from Belgrade, comprising Isidora Ilić and Boško Prostran. Doplgenger engages as a film/video artist, researcher, writer, and curator. The work of Doplgenger deals with the relation between art and politics by exploring the regimes of moving images and the modes of their reception. They rely on the tradition of experimental film and video, and through some of the actions of these traditions intervene on existing media products or work in expanded cinema forms. Their work has been shown internationally at institutions such as Museum Wiesbaden, Kunstmuseum Bonn, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, Osage Gallery in Hong Kong, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina. Doplgenger's films have been screened and selected for film festivals including the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Seattle International Film Festival, Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival. Doplgenger has participated in symposia and discussions, organised educational projects and workshops, presented lectures, and screened curated programs worldwide. They edited the publication „Amateurs for Film" and served as curators and selectors for the Alternative Film/Video Festival.

**Mirage_inter (2008)** was an interdisciplinary project dealing with themes of media manipulation, stereotypes, identity, communication. Research was developed through theoretical and practical phases while the work appropriated strategies of conceptual art, performance art and film. Conceptual starting point was Pirandello's “Six Characters in Search of an Author”.

**Mirror Glazing**

live A/V performance  
**Authors:** Eho animato collective (music by Rogi)  
[www.ehoanimato.org](http://www.ehoanimato.org)

**Performer & author – Željko Maksimović (1985)** is an actor from Belgrade and member of Eho Animato since 2011. Besides performing in Belgrade's institutionalized theatres, he has also worked independently. Since 2014, he has occasionally worked in Prague, Czech Republic, with the award-winning directorial duo SKUTR on performances The Tempest, Walls
and Handbags, A Midsummer’s Night Dream at the Summer Shakespeare Festival and with choreographer Adela Stodolova on Heiner Miller’s Description of a Picture. Since 2019, he has been working with artist Ivana Ivković, participating in her performances (Un)protected Witness and In Him We Trust. He has also translated essays on theatre theory and plays by Filip Grujić, Dino Pešut and Tanja Šljivar, the latter in collaboration with a New York based artist Cory Taml, published in the US by Asymptote Journal, The Mercurian and The Offing.

Director – Ana Konstantinović (1987) is a theater director, founder and curator of Eho Animato. She holds a degree in theater and radio directing from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade, where she is currently finishing artistic doctoral studies. At the moment she is working at the National Theater in Belgrade. She participated in numerous workshops and international projects like Terre Promesse / Bussole Rotte (Milan), Europe Unlimited (Hannover), Augenblick mall! (Berlin). She has directed theater performances, radio plays, public readings and performances, such as In a Glass Ball (Cultural Center Pavilion, Hannover), The Tempest (Regional Theater Novi Pazar), I Bei Temp and Home (Milan), The Glass Menagerie, After the Play, Rosmersholm, Fragments of Disquiet and others.

Video designer – Marija Kovačina is a multimedia tech engineer oriented towards audio and video postproduction. Her main interests and fields of activity are film and video editing and sound design for film, but she is also engaged in VJing, music production and multimedia artist in theater. She has been a member of AES since 2012, and was a Berlinale Talents Alumni in 2017. She is currently working with Panorama Films Collective. Her filmography includes documentaries, art and short experimental films, many of which were screened and awarded at international festivals. Film selection: dogs, moon river and Baudelaire (Serbia, 2019), Then Comes the Evening (Serbia, 2019, dir. by Maja Novaković), Ficus (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, Sarajevo City of Film project), Big Leap (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, Sarajevo City of Film project), A Steady Job (Serbia, 2018, dir. Igor Toholj), Vukica Djilas – Home Movies (Serbia, 2015, dir. Slobodan Šijan), Razv the Great (Serbia, 2015, dir. Ivan Nikolić), Romeo and Juliet are Dead (2014, UK/France, r. Helen Stewart).

Dramaturgue – Tamara Baračkov (1988) graduated Dramaturgy at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. Since 2012, she has been working as a TV editor, dramaturge and screenwriter within the Culture and Art program of the Radio – television of Serbia. She authored plays Fifty Strikes and Cell, as well as dramatizations of Max Frish’s novel Homo Faber, Ingmar Bergman’s Private Confessions and Best Intentions. She was a dramaturge of Fragments of Disquiet, Othello, Rosmersholm. For Radio Belgrade, she wrote radio-dramas Copy – Paste and Amethyst, as well as radio-dramatizations of Jasmina Petrović’s novel The Summer When I Learned How to Fly and Yevgeny Zamyatin’s short story WOMB. As a screenwriter assistant, she worked on several awarded shorts (Red Snow, Baits and Hooks, Of Ashes – a segment from October omnibus). Her theater reviews and texts were published in magazines Scena and Teatron.

Mirror Glazing
The performance is exploring the eroticism and escapism of oddly satisfying videos. Charming cakes with attractive glazings lead the observer into meditative state. Perfect shapes and colors, yummy desserts and disturbing thoughts clash in this monologue.
Performance was created through a collaborative process by Željko Maksimović, Ana Konstantinović, Marija Kovačina and Tamara Baračkov, with music by Rogi.

Why You Should Be As Puppet Maker (When You’re Single, Lonely, and in Quarantine)
puppet performance
Author: Sandra Nikač
Sandra Nikač is a theatre designer and visual artist from Belgrade. She completed her MA specialist pathway in puppetry at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and is currently attending Doctoral Academic Studies in Scene Design at the Faculty of Technical Sciences. She works as a puppet, set and costume designer primarily in theatre for young audiences. She is part of the editorial team of Ascending – an online platform focused on the work of emerging performance designers. Her articles have been published by Threads puppetry arts magazine, and Scena theatre review. Her visual art practice evolves in the medium of pencil on paper. These works have been exhibited at group shows, including OSTEN Biennial of Drawing Skopje 2020 (finalist).

Why you should be a puppet maker (when you’re single, lonely, and in quarantine)
A short puppetry etude exploring personal yet global challenges brought on by the social distancing imperative of 2020 (2021). A puppet designer investigates if the answer to satisfying the need for contact, touch, intimacy and emotional support could be in bringing to life an inanimate partner (especially the one you’ve made yourself). Puppets taken from different projects are placed in new roles with new expectations.

An Invention More Precious than Gold
drag performance
Author: Markiza de Sada

Markiza de Sada - A very posh biography
Fatal seductress, bastard of a Russian revolutionary and a German aristocrat. It is said that in a surge of passion she killed her lover and now roams the cities of Europe in search of entertainment. Of dubious morality and with an insatiable sexual appetite, she is unconquerable in arm wrestling, skilled with the sword and a champion in downing an entire bottle of absinthe. Shrouded in a veil of mystery and with an inherent and immaculate style; she chooses her company carefully and goes nowhere without her driver.

An Invention More Precious Than Gold is one of The Four Tales of Now by Markiza de Sada. Stories are composed of a series of references from the domain of popular culture and socio-political phenomena to critically reflect the contemporary moment, especially the current pandemic, migrant and climate crisis, as well as fantastic narratives embodied in conspiracy theories.

On Memory (Remake)
live A/V performance, poetry reading
Authors: Dobrivoje Milijanovic & Jovana Ivanac

Jovana Ivanac - Poet and multimedia artist interested in ways of communication between words, sound and visual material, especially in the context of improvisation. Produces experimental electronic music as Shaan, and has released two full-length albums - "Notes From a Peculiar Time in Space" (Modern Tapes) and "Loop Quantum Gravity" (E.C.T). Her music was a part of a sound exhibition at the Biennale of Western Balkans 2018: https://bowb.org/exhibitions/sound-of-work/. Editor and contributor to 20 Seconds Magazine, a magazine for experimental music and art: https://www.20secondsmag.com/. Programs visuals in TouchDesigner, and does that under the pseudonym 1014.
Dobrivoje Milijanovic, sound artist. Although mainly interested in electronic music, Dobrivoje revels in designing sound for theatre and creating interactive sound installations. From 2014-16.
he performed as raum.null (with Chris Bruckmayr) at Ars Electronica Festival (AT). “Dark WindTrilogy” was comprised of three audio-visual performances, each with different artistic team, and evolving around site-specific subjects (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAbSPbTzKH8). He holds DA in Polymedia Art on subject of interactive sound installations, and teaches Sound Design for Theatre at Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade.

**On Memory (remake)** is their first official collaboration.

**On Memory (Remake)** is an ongoing exploration of possible worlds and possible answers to questions like "Who put my thoughts in me? Where do forgotten thoughts go? How about unspoken sentences?". Most of the worlds and answers aren't written in human language, and that is why music and moving pictures are ways of exploring them.

## Venoms of the Kitchen

**live A/V performance**

**Authors:** Björnsonova

[http://bjornsonova.com](http://bjornsonova.com)

**Performer:** Milica Stefanović

Björnsonova is a platform for interdisciplinary artists to experiment, research and study together. She’s also a monstrous fictional character and a project with roots and connections in Belgrade, Berlin, Brussels and Prague. Nik Timková, Zuzana Žabková, Tamara Antonijević and Tanja Šljivar combine their practices to describe the relationship between female bodies and their environments in order to unleash fantasies about how this relationship can change.

**Venoms of the Kitchen**

*The hag lingers, the witch’s endometriosis lingers – they are both here to stay.*

As a continuation of Björnsonova’s collective work on the topic of divination and witches and the practice of augmenting art objects, Tamara Antonijević and Tanja Šljivar develop texts, reading performances and fanzines to tackle one witch with endometriotic superpowers and almost all the hags of the world.


## RAФ КАТС / Rough Cuts

**short documentary film**

**Author:** Miklós Barna Lipkovski (Visual Anthropology Centre)

[http://visualanthropologycenter.com](http://visualanthropologycenter.com)

**Visual Anthropology Center** has been founded by young professionals from the fields of anthropology, film and theater with a goal of creating a hub that will encourage and store works of visual anthropology. In our age ever so overwhelming with visual data we find it crucially important for documentarists and social scientists to cooperate with visual artists, film and theater-makers in order for their work to be not only relevant but visually enticing as well. Documents can be art as pieces of art can be documents – yet visual anthropology in the digital age is one of the most underdeveloped social sciences and there’s barely any institutions or organizations that give it the key importance it should have.

The BVAC is a creative hub and a database that aims to fill the aforementioned gap. The hub that we imagined is unique: motion picture and photography, any kind of visual art shouldn’t just be a tool in the hand of the scientist; visual anthropology and film are to have a symbiotic relationship, documentaries and feature film can have an anthropologic approach and
anthropology and social science in general can have an artistic approach – it is our belief that the much desired social change depends on such approach.

The film "RAFKATS" was shot during the July protests in Belgrade, 2020. Like the protests themselves, the material was created spontaneously, without a premeditated plan. Faced with unexpected social turmoil, Miklos Barna-Lipkovski and Relja Pekic, founders of the Center for Visual Anthropology, felt they could not remain observers and neutrally document reality. That is why with their cameras, they become active participants in the event, coming into direct contact with the characters they meet. They meet other "people with cameras" in the crowd, one of whom is Ed Godsell (Irishman Eddie), whose material is also used in the film.