

The following works (in no particular order) were selected by the jury for presentation in Jönköping, Sweden at Music Theatre NOW:

Josefine singt. (k)ein Liederabend nach Franz Kafka

(Josefine sings. (Not) a recital after Franz Kafka)

Hans-Jörg Kapp (Director/Staging, Germany)

Wolfgang von Schweinitz (Composer, United States)

Thomas Schmölz (Sound Design, Germany)

Marcel Weinand (Stage Design, Germany)

Production: Kampnagel Internationale Kulturfabrik Hamburg (Germany) in co-production with Opera Silens, Hamburg (Germany)

Josefine Sings is a contemporary opera project based on Frank Kafka's last short story "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk". It focuses on the question whether the singer Josephine is really able to sing or only able to whistle. The novel deconstructs the romantic conception of the relationship between the artist and the people.

In opera silens' *Josefine Sings* production, recitation, acting and music do not evoke an integrated image but remain separated from one another. The performance creates an uncanny and weird atmosphere of disintegration.

还魂三叠

(Three Haunting Souls)

Zhou Long (Director, China)

Yan Quanyi (Dramatist, China)

Jiang Jinghong (Music Designer, China)

Liu Xiaoqing (Styling Designer, China)

Han Jiang (Lighting Designer, China)

Production: Chinese Academy for Dramatic Art

Three Haunting Souls is an experimental drama performed in a small theater, which combines the elements of Chinese traditional opera and the modern factors. It has been adapted from the highlights of traditional operas, *The Peony Pavilion*: "Love-making in a Dream", *The Red Plum Pavilion*: "Setting Pei Free" and *The Wulong House*: "Holding Captive". The theme is classical but staged in a contemporary fashion. It is no longer necessary to conjure up the complete plot, but rather they are recounted in a highly abstract, highly simple manner, freeing up this classical theatre from conventional formal boundaries.

Three Mile Island

Andrea Molino (Composer, Italy)

Guido Barbieri (Text/Librettist, Italy)

Karl Hoffmann (Video, Germany)

ZKM - Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe (Video, Germany)

Holger Stenschke (ZKM, Sound Design, Germany)

Production: ZKM - Centre for Arts and Media, Karlsruhe (Germany) in co-production with Accademia Filarmonica Rome, IUC (Istituzione Universitaria dei Concerti) Rome

The nuclear accident that took place in Three Mile Island 30 years ago has largely been forgotten. On the morning of the 28th March 1979 one of the reactors in the nuclear power plant began to heat up because of a faulty cooling system. Between 5 in the morning and 8 in the evening a radioactive cloud reached the houses and the fields around Harrisburg. Many journalists have investigated this affair. One of the key figures was Ignaz Vergeiner, an Austrian meteorologist commissioned by the families of the victims to write a report about the pollution levels that had been reached. Vergeiner's research, leaves no doubt. The radioactive cloud travelled much further than the authorities admitted. Vergeiner's premature death put a halt to his efforts. However, in the weeks before he passed away, the scientist revealed the details in a filmed interview with his friend Karl Hoffmann. Most of the data that Vergeiner collected refer to wind speed, low and high air pressure, the movement of air currents. For that reason 'air' is the protagonist in this theatre production. Reactors, maps, documents, diagrams, calculations, landscapes, measuring instruments, conducting wires, pipes,

cables etc. are on show. An interactive installation – the “Cloud” - reacts with the performers and with the voice and face of Vergeiner, the testimonies of the survivors and the interviews with family members of the nuclear accident victims filmed on location. The audiovisual materials are counterpointed by the Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart; The instrumental part, performed by the Klangforum Wien, is also organically involved in this dialogue and with the help of amplified percussions, wind and string instruments adds meaning, lightness and expression to the element ‘air’.

Up-close

Michel van der Aa (Composer, Video, Netherlands)

Candida Thompson (Musical Director, United Kingdom)

Sol Gabetta (Argentina)

Production: Sinfonietta, Amsterdam (Netherlands) in Co-Production with Konserthuset Stockholm, Philharmonie Luxembourg, BOZAR Brussels, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Barbican Centre London, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg

On film we see an elderly woman wandering across a stage devoid of musicians, while soloist Sol Gabetta performs live to one side: the music (and movement in moments) sometimes separate, sometimes interacting with the film. Gabetta tackles the score and its often riveting urgency with a drama that becomes as much physical as musical, an effect enhanced by her integration into the direction of the entire piece. It is a striking visual effect that lingers longest: Gabetta leaping up, propelled forward, in unison with the actor on screen.

Home Work

François Sarhan (Composer, Director Staging, Design, France)

Production: Kunst aus der Zeit, Bregenzer Festspiele (Austria)

The piece shows the maniacal activities of three men in three locations in a house : the garage (Do-it-Yourself), kitchen (cooking), living room (dating). The garage is performed by the body percussion player, the kitchen, by the guitar player, and the dating scene by the sax player. Videos are projected on large painted fabric, curtains which are slightly transparent and separate the three rooms from one another.

These activities are presented separately first, and the audience is can view each room in the installation. Little by little the three stages converge sonically, and after a while the activity is simultaneous and the musicians play as an ensemble.

It's possible to watch the show either moving around, or staying in one position, in front of one room.

The subject of the piece is : how suppressed erotic feelings underly the most banal situations.

Samotność pól bawełnianych

(In the Solitude of Cotton Fields)

Radosław Rychcik (Director/Staging, Poland)

The Natural Born Chillers: Ignor Bartosz, Michał Lis,

Piotr Lis, Maciej Matysiak (Composers, Poland)

Marta Stoces (Stage Design, Poland)

Production: Stefan Zeromski Theatre in Kielce (Poland)

Styled like an Eastern European punk concert, director Radosław Rychcik's contemporary spin on *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* features two actors in chic suits backed by a house band, The Natural Born Chillers. Based on the French play of the same name by Bernard-Marie Koltès, the action follows an illicit, unnamed deal expressed between men known only as The Dealer and The Client. Featuring a cast from the Stefan Zeromski Theatre of Kielce, Poland.

Opera GEROS DIENOS

(Opera HAVE A NICE DAY!)

Vaiva Grainytė (Text/Librettist, Lithuania)

Lina Lapelytė (Composer, Lithuania)

Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė (Director/Staging, Lithuania)

Daiva Samajauskaitė (Costume Designer, Lithuania)

Production: Independent creative group OPEROMANIJA, (Lithuania)

The opera *Have a Nice Day!* (for 10 voices, piano and live electronics) is a strange ode to capitalism, that illustrates the inevitability of consumption. The anonymous cashier, a person one meets every day, becomes a collective character.

T.E.L.

Luigi De Angelis (Director/Staging, Belgium)

Chiara Lagani (Text/Librettist, Italy)

Mirto Baliani (Composer, Italy)

Damiano Meacci (Sound Design, Italy)

Francesco Casciaro (Sound Design, Italy)

Production: E Soc. Coop / Fanny & Alexander / Tempo Reale

Co-producing organizations: Napoli Teatro Festival Italia, Ravenna Festival, Festival delle Colline

Torinesi - Torino Creazione Contemporanea, and Fondazione Teatro Piemonte Europa - Teatro a

Corte, Santarcangelo 41 - Festival Internazionale del Teatro in Piazza, in collaboration with Rai Radio

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T.E.L. is a device for utopian communications. Two actors, placed in two different places, distant in space, maybe also in time, passionately leaning out towards the same indomitable ghost. Two different audiences, simultaneous witnesses of their possible-impossible dialogue, barely aware of their reciprocal presence. At the centre of the staging a "prepared table" by Tempo Reale equipped with hidden microphones, sensors, electric resistances, the interface that the actors need to develop the musical and vocal score, the generator of all the sounds.

The Navigator

Liza Lim (Composer, Australia)

Patricia Sykes (Text/Librettist, Australia)

Barrie Kosky (Director/Set Designer, Australia)

Manuel Nawri (Conductor, Germany)

Alice Babidge (Set Design, Costumes, Australia)

Damien Cooper (Light Design, Australia)

Michael Hewes (Sound Design, Australia)

Production: Brisbane Festival, Melbourne International Festival of the Arts and ELISION (Australia)

Liza Lim's third opera, *The Navigator*, is teeming with ideas. Inspired by ancient Greek myth, the Mahabharata and the story of Tristan and Isolde (as told in the Breton folk tale and by Wagner), it also explores desire, war, creation and annihilation. Its structure is built on the in utero development of the five senses, its sexuality or obscure symbolism.

Blauwbaard (Bluebeard)

Michael de Roo (Concept/Musical Direction/Sound Scape, Netherlands)

Douwe Dijkstra (Video, Netherlands)

Coen Huisman (Video, Netherlands)

Jules van Hulst (Video, Netherlands)

Mete Erker, Martin Fondse, Daniel Cross (Rosa Ensemble) (Musical Arrangements, Netherlands)

Production: 33 1/3 Collective (Netherlands)

After having created and successfully shown a number of multimedia projects the 33 1/3 Collective was invited by the Voi-Z Festival Zwolle, the Netherlands, to produce a version of the Bartok's opera *Bluebeard's Castle*.

In the Collective's *Bluebeard*, a version of this well known opera, the basics of the classical theatrical setup are shifted. For instance, Bluebeard's male protagonist is not illustrated by a performing actor, but turned into a circumstance. Judith, the female protagonist, leads the audience by the seven doorways and makes it feel what is happening behind the doors. As a result the audience feels as if they are inside the chambers, witnessing and undergoing Judith's destiny.

Degenerate Art Ensemble's Red Shoes

Haruko Nishimura (Staging/Director, United States)

Joshua Kohl (Conductor/Composer, United States)

Dohee Lee (Composer, South Korea)

Jherik Bischoff (Composer, United States)

Production: Frye Art Museum & Director Robert Wilson's Watermill Center a Laboratory for Performance (United States)

Degenerate Art Ensemble's performance *Red Shoes* was created and premiered in conjunction with a major museum retrospective of the group's work at Seattle's Frye Art Museum. The work was developed by the group at a residency at director Robert Wilson's Watermill Center: A Laboratory for Performance, presented at the Center for Performance Research in Brooklyn, NY and produced in the embrace of an unprecedented partnership that includes the Frye Art Museum and St. James Cathedral in Seattle. The performance is an adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's tale of a girl who is cursed to dance herself to death for following her creative desires.

Maschinenhalle #1

(Machine Shop #1)

Christine Gaigg (Director/Staging, Austria)

Bernhard Lang (Composer, Austria)

Philipp Harnoncourt (Stage Design, Austria)

Winfried Ritsch (Sound Design, Austria)

Production: steirischer herbst (Austria)

Maschinenhalle #1 is not only a new sort of music theatre, it is a cross-genre art work created by the composer Bernhard Lang, the choreographer Christine Gaigg, the computer musician Winfried Ritsch and the light and stage designer Philippe Harnoncourt. At twelve stations, arranged in series in space and each consisting of an acoustic panel and an automation piano, twelve dancers perform in a feedback situation of movement and self-generating sounds.

War Sum Up

Kirsten Dehlholm (Director/Staging, Denmark)

Willie Flindt (Text/Librettist, Denmark)

The Irrepressibles (Composers, United Kingdom)

Santa Ratniece (Composer, Denmark)

Jesper Kongshaug (Composer, Denmark)

Production: Hotel Pro Forma, Latvian National Opera, Latvian Radio Choir (Denmark)

Twelve singers and an elaborate light design give a powerful visual impression of the nature of war. The audience follows the Warrior, the Spy and the Soldier through their transformation into a world of light and dark, battle and death: From man to machine, to statue, ghost and fantasy heroine - Three stories in XL of glorification and abomination.

El Gran Teatro De Oklahoma

(The Great Theatre of Oklahoma)

Marcos Franciosi (Composer, Argentina)

Diego Cosin (Text/Librettist, Argentina)

Valeria Martinelli (Musical Director, Argentina)

Fabian Nonino (Sound Design, Argentina)

Production: Teatro Argentino de La Plata (Argentina)

The sound world of this work is inspired by the notion of the found object. Objects of daily life that have been chosen for their sonic and expressive qualities. These objects (car horns, bicycle, glass lanterns, hoses, megaphones ...) act on the one hand, as acoustic detonators of harmonic rhythm, melody, as well as spectral and spatial impulses for the musical score. In relation to the literary, this work also addresses the concept of logic of Kafkaesque nightmares, in an atmosphere of uncertainty, in which the characters are torn between reality and fantasy.

FLYWAY

Elizabeth Dunn (Director/Staging, Australia)

Lawrence English (Composer, Australia)

Lara Thoms (Australia)

Production: APHIDS (Australia)

FLYWAY invites you to join the flock. Trust your instincts and the golden wings. Channel your vision and take a migratory walk through the city, between mediated sights and sounds of quiet bird spaces and spectacular scenes.

FLYWAY is a site specific, interdisciplinary, musical work that investigates the enchanting nature of migratory birds. Wearing headphones and binoculars a small audience of 15 is enveloped in a lush soundscape and guided on an intimate birdwatching tour through urban spaces to encounter special moments dotted along the path - birds framed by screens, lenses and the city itself. Using video, music and performance *FLYWAY* merges foreground and background and points to our mediated experience of 'nature'.

Thanks to My Eyes

Oscar Bianchi (Composer, Italy/Switzerland)

Joël Pommerat (Text/Librettist, Director/Staging, France)

Franck Ollu (Musical Director, France)

Dominic Glynn (Text/Librettist, United Kingdom)

Eric Soyer (Stage Design, France)

Isabelle Deffin (Costumes, France)

Dominique Bataille (Sound Design, France)

Production: Festival d'Aix-en-Provence (France)

Co-producing organizations:

T&M--Paris/Théâtre de Gennevilliers, CDNCC, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Théâtre National de Bruxelles, Festival Musica - Strasbourg. With support of SACD, of Fonds de Création Lyrique and from Pro Helvetia. Fondation suisse pour la culture. Production on tour: T&M-Paris with the support of the Réseau Varèse.

Thanks to my Eyes is the fruit of the collaboration between the Swiss Italian composer Oscar Bianchi and novelist and stage director Joël Pommerat. Bianchi's first opera deals with the question of the stormy relationship between a father – the biggest comic artist of his time – and his only son, Aymar, who is incapable of meeting his father's stifling demand to succeed him on stage. Forced to fit the paternal mould, the young man only finds comfort with a strange and timid woman, during dangerous and liberating nights away from the closed family setting.

Schlimmes Ende

(The Awful End)

Hauke Berheide (Composer, Germany)

Annette Bieker (Text/Librettist, Germany)

Jan Kocman (Costumes, Slovakia)

Evelyn Arndt (Puppet Direction, Germany)

Frank Schulz (Director/Staging, Germany)

Production: Theater Kontra-Punkt (Germany)

Co-producing organizations:

Theater Oberhausen/Theater Freiburg

What's it about? Eddie Dickens's parents suddenly turn "strangely yellow and crinkly around the edges". Therefore they arrange for him to be picked up by his "Mad Uncle Jack" and "Even Madder Aunt Maud", who drive with Eddie in a large coach to their house called "Awful End" on top of everything. Philip Ardagh's educational views are pretty black, the world of adults is a nightmare, the director of the orphanage is cruel and indescribable and the stuffed weasel Malcolm is really called Sally – or was it the other way round? Eddie does not let himself be intimidated; together with his unpredictable aunt he defeats the bearded stranger, and in the role of a poor orphan boy he becomes the glamorous hero of the St. Horrid's Home for Grateful Orphans.