



## ***Performance across Borders***

The new European youth exchange YOU PERFORM gathers young people from five countries to work creatively together

**Amsterdam, Belgrad, Berlin, Budapest, Dresden, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Vire/Normandy, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020.** Their names are Álmi, Béci, Tázi, Lidija, Nikola or Dimitrije. They live in Budapest, Szúcs and a little village near the capital of Hungary or they live in Belgrade, Niš and Loznica in Serbia. They love the arts and theater and many of them have one focus: to emigrate from their home country. Their peers from France live in the countryside of Normandy, far away from bigger cities and major cultural attractions. Also those from the Netherlands, Hungary and Germany are between 14 and 20 years old and live in very different lifeworlds. Some of them have not yet left once their home country or even their home town. From May 24 to May 30 of 2020 they will jointly participate in the **EUROPEAN YOUTH PERFORMANCE LAB** in Hamburg within the new cultural youth exchange project **YOU PERFORM**. A total of 60 young people from the five countries France, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands and Serbia are expected to attend the programme at Thalia Theater Hamburg. The German participants come from Berlin, Dresden, Frankfurt and Hamburg.

YOU PERFORM adds an international dimension to the existing and successful youth competition for multimedia performances UNART. The concept of the new exchange format was presented at the Thalia Theater during the UNART competition. The cooperation partners



of YOU PERFORM are Deutsches Theater Berlin, József Katona Theater (Budapest), Le Préau CDN de Normandy-Vire in France, Schauspiel Frankfurt, Staatsschauspiel Dresden, Thalia Theater Hamburg in Germany, Toneelmakerij (Amsterdam), the Yugoslav Drama Theater (Belgrade) and, as initiator, the BHF BANK Foundation based in Frankfurt/Main, Germany.

With YOU PERFORM they want to point out current social developments in Europe and the alienation of many young people from the European idea. Many of them have little chance to get to know other cultures and lifestyles in their everyday life. YOU PERFORM should give them the opportunity to creatively represent and exchange their concerns and points of view.

“To negotiate all what concerns us in the world and what goes beyond our own horizons, this is the mission of the Thalia Theater with the festival *Um alles in der Welt - Lessingtage* and its international orientation”, says Joachim Lux, director of Thalia Theater, the host of the YOUTH PERFORMANCE LAB in 2020. “So it is natural to continue this work in the young division of the house. UNART, the nationwide performance competition, which is now being expanded to include European partner theaters at YOU PERFORM, is almost perfect for this aim. It’s about the life worlds of the young performers. We are very interested in whether and to what extent the worlds of thought of the young people within Europe differ or are similar. My suspicion is that the similarities rather outweigh the differences.”

“We, at Yugoslav Drama Theater, responded positively to this important project because we recognise the issues that have arisen in the EU in the past few years, while also having to deal with our own specific challenges. Our aim is to approach and work with the young on a longer term basis within our theater, especially having in mind that such programmes do not exist in theaters in Belgrade. Needs and obstacles that the young in Serbia face bring about local particularities – but at the same time they speak the universal language of the young. Our group consists of the young aged 17 to 20, from a few towns in Serbia, and this is an opportunity for them not only to work within an institution such as Yugoslav Drama Theater, but also to learn about performance art and use it as a means of art expression. Each one has entered the project with their own background and expectations. Their work on their own performance aims at surpassing clichés and focusing on what they truly wish to communicate together. Such experience has opened up entirely new learning processes, both for them and for us, and this is what we benefit from as partners in the project”, says Tamara Vučković Manojlović, General Manager at Yugoslav Drama Theater.

YOU PERFORM and the YOU PERFORM LAB are based on the experiences of the Youth Performance competition UNART, which has been successfully held for more than ten years. In 2018 the project received the Arts Sponsorship Award of the Association of Arts and Culture of the German Economy at the Federation of German Industries and was nominated for the German Engagement Award in 2019. The format brings together young people from different social backgrounds who rarely have the opportunity to create something together in their everyday lives. They use means of performance and can explore the most diverse art forms together for their expressive desires. Also at YOU PERFORM the groups initially work on the local level in their theaters and develop fifteen-minute performances on their themes. At the



Thalia Theater (Thalia Gaußstraße) the groups then experience each other's performances on stage and continue working together in internationally mixed groups.

The partners of YOU PERFORM share the conviction that independent work with the means of expression of performance art has great potential for a cross-border youth exchange. They would like to test this with the new format YOU PERFORM and at the same time deepen their cooperation.

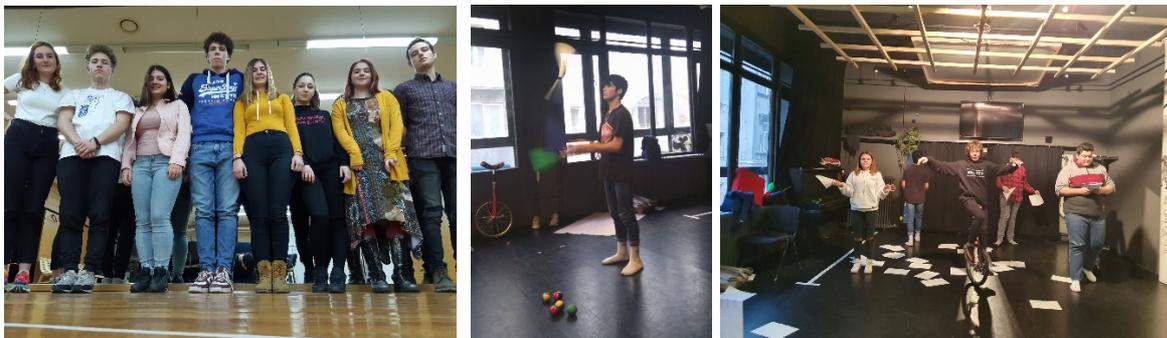
### The project partners:

- BHF BANK Foundation, Frankfurt am Main
- Deutsches Theater, Berlin
- József Katona Theater, Budapest
- Le Préau CDN de Normandy-Vire, France
- Schauspiel Frankfurt
- Staatsschauspiel Dresden
- Thalia Theater Hamburg
- Toneelmakerij, Amsterdam
- Yugoslav Drama Theater, Belgrade

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See also: [www.youperform.eu](http://www.youperform.eu) / [www.unart.net](http://www.unart.net)



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