

## SHARING CRAFTS: performative laboratory

Gdańsk Miasto Literatury (Gdańsk City of Literature Centre, Długa 35, Gdańsk)

**Curator: Katarzyna Pastuszek (UG)**

**Workshop facilitators: Clara Simpson (Ireland/France), Dionysios Tsafaridis (Greece), Paul Allain (UK), Alice Veliche i Radu Alexandru (Romania), Kiki Selioni (Greece), Nigel Stewart (UK), Katarzyna Pastuszek (Poland)**

The performative laboratory “Sharing Crafts” is a cycle of workshops focussing on the exploration of tools, methods, and creative practices in physical theatre and choreography. The aim of the workshop is to hold open a space for the exchange of knowledge and experiences among artists, theoreticians, and students. The laboratory aims to be a site of performative synergy where theory and practice meet. The mediators invited to help create this space are from a group of outstanding and internationally recognized artists and scholars. The cycle will culminate in an improvised performative event in the Gdańsk Shipyards.

The cycle of workshops is organized by the Between.Pomiedzy Research Group in cooperation with the “Gdańsk Miasto Literatury” (Gdańsk City of Literature) project as part of the Between.Pomiedzy Festival 2025.

### WORKSHOP PROGRAMME:

#### Monday, 19th May / 12am-1pm

- **Clara Simpson** (Ireland / France) – *Page to Stage: Not I* (as part of The University of Gdańsk Samuel Beckett Seminar: Tools and Craft)

#### Tuesday, 20th May / 9am–1pm

- **Dionysios Tsafaridis** (Greece) – *DMS / Dark Movement Human Spaces – the Dark Experience of movement* Primarily Non-Visual Sensory Exploration of the Spatiotemporal Formal Attributes of Stage Movement
- **Paul Allain** (UK) - *Physical Acting and Space*

### Wednesday, 21st May / 9am–1pm

- **Alice Veliche, Radu Alexandru** (Romania) – Speed Training – The Fast Body
- **Kiki Selioni** (The Makings of the Actor, Greece) – *Laban–Aristotle: Zóov (Zóon) in Theatre Πράξις (Praxis)*

### Thursday, 22nd May / 9am–1pm

- **Nigel Stewart** (UK) – *Bodies Moved and Moving: a Workshop on Volitional and Non-volitional Action*
- **Katarzyna Pastuszek** (Poland) – *Bones' Landscape – anatomy in motion*

### CURATOR

**Katarzyna Pastuszek** – dancer/performer, choreographer and artistic director of Amareya Theatre & Guests, assistant professor in the Department of Performing Arts (Institute of English and American – University of Gdańsk), member of Between.Between (UG) Research Group, also associated with the Centre for Environmental and Minority Policy Studies (Sapporo, Japan). Author and translator of articles on dance and theatre, editor and translator of *Studia Choreologica* and author of *Hijikata Tatsumi's Ankoku butō - body theatre in crisis* (Krakow: Universitas, 2014). She has published in *Didaskalia*, *Konteksty*, *Kultura Współczesna*, *Teatr*, *Tekstualia*, among others. She is the winner of an individual 4th degree Rector's Award of the University of Gdańsk and numerous artistic scholarships awarded by the City of Gdańsk, the Marshal of the Pomeranian Voivodeship and the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. In 2024, she realised an extensive artistic and research scholarship project *Dance Ecologies* as part of the National Reconstruction Plan (KPO) programme for culture. Her performances have been presented in Japan, Greenland, Norway, Turkey, Israel, Germany, France and numerous festivals in Poland. In her artistic endeavours, she mainly moves in the field of choreography and physical theatre. She combines movement explorations with current trends in humanist thought (posthumanism, ecofeminism). She combines movement explorations with current currents of humanist thought (posthumanism, ecofeminism). Projects realised in this field are: *Dance Ecologies* (from 2024), *Spore Fantasy (sf)* (with Nat Chylinska, 2024), *Braiding Time, Memory and Water* (directed by Sue Schroeder, 2024), *LoopCurrent* (directed by Maya Ciarrocchi, 2024), *Instabilités naturelles* (created with Sonnets Trois Fois and Nat Chylinska – PL, 2023), *Mapping Bodies, Landscapes, Relations* (2023), *Re:fungia – fungi score* (2022). In 2024 she completed the EarthBody Institute's Certified Ecotherapy Course (USA).

## WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

**Clara Simpson (Ireland/France)**

***Page to Stage: Not I***

The *Page to Stage* workshop session led by Clara Simpson will outline the process of translating a literary text into a theatre production. The session will conclude with a performative reading of an extract from Samuel Beckett's *Not I*.

**Clara Simpson** – actress and director. CLARA SIMPSON studied at Cours Florent, Paris. She was an associate artist of the Theatre National Populaire for Clara Simpson trained at Dublin Theatre School and at La Classe Libre, Cours over 15 years, and has performed on many of the main stages in Paris. Her last role at the Tnp was as Gruach in David Greig's *Dunsinane*. Her solo-piece *Kitchen Blues*, written for her by playwright poet Jean-Pierre Siméon was performed in Avignon OFF 2018 at Le Train Bleu, and will be touring in 2023. In Ireland she has worked notably at the Abbey, Peacock and Project theatres. She was awarded an Irish Times Theatre Award for her role in *Lolita*, and in 2010 she performed Winnie in *Happy Days*, both directed by Annie Ryan. Recent work with Irish companies include *After* with Liv O'Donoghue, extensive international touring with *Chechov's First Play* and *Lippy* with Dead Centre, and *You Belong to Me* written by Rory Nolan and directed by Lynne Parker. Her *Pas moi/ Not I* premiered in Paris and has featured at the Happy Days Festival in Enniskillen in 2018, 2019 and 2022, and the Unbound festival in Paris and Liverpool (2024). Recent tv and film credits include *L'Impasse* (directed by Delphine Lemoine, France Tv, and *Ma Vie Ma Gueule*, directed by Sophie Fillières, Christmas in July Productions.

**Dionysios Tsaftaridis (Greece)**

***DMS / Dark Movement Human Spaces – the Dark Experience of movement Primarily Non-Visual Sensory Exploration of the Spatiotemporal Formal Attributes of Stage Movement***

This workshop delves into the world of non-visual sensory exploration, of *Kinesis* (movement within the personal movable sphere/kinesphere), *Metakinesis* (movement that alters location within shared, external space/exosphere), as well as the *Intra-* and *Inter-Relationships* of movement by inducing a self-imposed visual obstruction, a “Dark Experience” (D. Tsaftaridis, 2020). Relevant research indicates that by obstructing the primary sensory channel of sight, the participants by nature will heighten their spatial, kinaesthetic and temporal awareness through the different channels of communication provided by the remaining senses. This method of movement practice/experience, termed the DMS method, Dark Moving Human Spaces (D.

Tsaftaridis, 2020), is a unique tool for developing movement dexterity as well as an alternate way of developing movement material.

### Theoretical Framework

This workshop, part of an ongoing research, is based on Rudolf Laban's movement analysis and Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences as a framework for understanding movement and its related formal attributes as perceived by the human brain. Furthermore, textbooks on musical theory and analysis and the systems of music pedagogy (Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze) through movement provide further ground for discussion.

**Dionysios Tsaftaridis** – a Greek choreographer, dancer, and researcher. He graduated from the State School of Dance Art in 2001 and completed postgraduate studies in Physical Theatre at the University of Surrey and RHUL (MA, 2002). He then completed his PhD dissertation with scholarships from the State Scholarships Foundation and Onassis Foundation at Roehampton University, *Maya Deren's Screendances: a Formalist Approach* (PhD, 2009). As a choreographer, he has collaborated with the Greek National Opera, the Futures Theatre Company (UK), and the OPANDA. His most recent collaborations are with the theatre directors Reina Eskinazi (2020-2021), Nikos Kamtsis (2021–2023), with the visual artist Ben Judd (2021, 2022, 2025 UK) with the opera director Isidoros Sideris (2023), and as a dancer with the choreographer Beth Corning (2021–2022, USA). He has directed *The Chairs* by Eugene Ionesco (2018) and the children's play *Yes, Mr. Noah* by Dimitris Lenos – Sofia Sotiriou (2022). He also creates dance films and video art with award-winning participation at the Thessaloniki Film Festival – VideoDance (*Fones*, 2007), with official participation at the 9thAVDP (*Unhinged*, 2016) and at the International Festival NEXT@Graham Eve project in New York (*1 2 3*, 2019 Arthrosis/Diamantopoulou). He is currently in the fifth year of developing a training method for developing the kinaesthesia and spatial perception of the performer through dark experience (impeded vision) DMS-Dark Moving Spaces as a tool for Kinaesthetic and Spatial Awareness Self-Knowledge, Improvement and Kinetic Exploration.

### Paul Allain (UK)

#### *Physical Acting and Space*

This workshop will explore how the actor starts to shape and define space when there are no givens such as a text or other creative input. How do we align and organise ourselves, both individually and as a group? What is space for the actor? The workshop will then look briefly at how best to document this process on film, considering where and how the camera might best capture the actor's work.

Paul Allain – Professor of Theatre and Performance at the University of Kent, (Canterbury, UK), researcher of actor's training, editor of many publications devoted to Jerzy Grotowski,

author of the books *Gardzienice: Polish Theatre in Transition* (1997) and *The Art of Stilness: The Theatre Practice of Tadashi Suzuki* (2002), among others. Whilst collaborating and performing with Gardzienice Theatre Association, on whom he wrote his PhD and published his first book, he worked extensively as Movement Director, much of it with Katie Mitchell. He has since published books, CDs, DVDs and films on theatre and actor training as both author and editor. He is an expert on physical acting, Jerzy Grotowski and contemporary Polish theatre as well as Suzuki Tadashi. He has taught workshops around the world, including in China, India, Iran and Singapore as well as across Europe, especially in Greece, Italy and Poland.

### **Alice Veliche, Radu Alexandru (Romania)**

#### **Speed Training – The Fast Body**

Speed is one of the fundamental qualities of movement, yet also one of the most complex to refine. This workshop explores methods for optimizing speed and precision in bodily movements, providing participants with long-term training strategies. Through a practical and analytical approach, the workshop offers a reevaluation of the concept of the 'fast body,' examining both the technical aspects and the expressive implications of accelerated movement.

**Alice Veliche** – a choreographer and performer, characterizes herself as energetic and creative. Alice tackles diverse themes in her productions, from familiar texts that she passes through her filter to personal concepts that do not follow a classic narrative thread. Her signature shows include RED LINE, Quantum Bodies, Asylum, FeMALE, The Little Prince and Space-Soul-Second. In 2023, at the 8th edition of the D-Butan-T festival, RED LINE won the special prize offered by Linotip – Centru Independent Coregrafic (Independent Choreographic Centre Linotip) in Bucharest. Because her adaptability characterizes her, she has collaborated with several directors in the country in the choreography of some theatre shows: *Forest of the Assumed* (dir. Andrei Măjeri), *A Day of Joy* (dir. Radu Afrim), *The Anthology of Disappearance* (dir. Radu Afrim), *Masagge* (dir. Radu Afrim), *Lysistrata, My Love* (dir. Zolán Zakariás). Alice completed her bachelor's studies in 2020, at the National University of Arts "George Enescu" Iasi, Faculty of Theatre, Choreography Department, and two years later she completed her master's studies in the same educational institution, Theatre Performing Arts Department. She is currently a freelance choreographer and PhD student in the "Doctoral School of Theatre" at the same University.

**Radu Alexandru** – a choreographer and performer, shows a constant interest in experimentation, permanently searching for new experiences. His creations address diverse and challenging choreographic themes. These include: *DIE(T)*, *RED LINE*, *Quantum Bodies*, *The Little Prince*, *Space-Soul-Second*, and *KARNAL*. In 2023, at the 8th edition of the D-Butan-T festival, RED LINE won the special prize offered by Linotip – Centru Independent Coregrafic

(Independent Choreographic Centre Linotip) in Bucharest. Radu has also collaborated with directors to choreograph theatre performances such as: *Silent Cehov* (dir. Octavian Jighirgiu), *Three Sad Pieces* (dir. Radu Afrim), *Theorem of the Infinite Monkeys* and *IVAN* (dir. Antonella Cornici). Radu completed his bachelor's studies in 2020, at the National University of Arts "George Enescu" Iasi, Faculty of Theatre, Choreography Department, and two years later he will complete his master's studies in the same educational institution, Theatre Performing Arts Department. He is currently a freelance choreographer and PhD student in the "Doctoral School of Theatre" at the same University.

### **Kiki Selioni (The Makings of the Actor, Greece)**

#### ***Laban–Aristotle: Ζώον (Zóon) in Theatre Πράξις (Praxis)***

The workshop presents an introduction into research carried out by Kiki Selioni. Her research proposes that Laban's analysis of human movement is inextricably linked to Aristotle's concept of mimesis conceived as a *zóon* (life force). The research, adopts an Aristotelian perspective and proposes that knowledge, which is the main issue in both episteme (science) and art, is gained through training, and that training requires a conscious and rational approach. This research can be seen as a practical explication of the manner in which the Aristotelian *ζώον* moves in mimesis, thereby contributing to Aristotle's ontological and poetic theory by developing a practical training for the body in the kinesthetic experience of *ζώον*. The workshop will consist of a theoretical introduction to this research and a practical exploration of the main principles of the methodology.

Kiki Selioni – is a movement teacher and acting coach in various Drama Schools and Institutions internationally (UK, Lithuania Denmark, Belgium, Russia, Romania, France, Greece, Island, Chile). She has completed her studies in Dance Theatre at the Laban in London (BA and MA, City University. She holds a doctorate in Movement Training for Actors and in Acting (RCSSD). She is a former Affiliate Research Fellow at RCSSD in a post-doc research project (The British Acting School: Biophysical Acting) regarding a complete acting method based on Laban's work and Aristotle's theory. She is also the founder and Artistic Director of The Makings of the Actor.

### **Nigel Stewart (UK)**

#### ***Bodies Moved and Moving: a Workshop on Volitional and Non-volitional Action***

During the workshop, participants will deepen their body awareness and ability to respond to stimuli. The workshop draws on Vsevolod Meyerhold's concept of reflex excitability, the



Skinner Releasing Technique – SRT (a technique for relaxing muscles and using gravity) developed by Joan Skinner, the concept of fall and recovery developed by Doris Humphrey and José Limón and other somatic techniques. The workshop will consist of some deceptively simple exercises partner and group exercises in which we have the opportunity not just to move but to be moved by forces external to ourselves and to harness the energy that results.

Content advisory: this workshop will involve guided forms of physical manipulation and touch using hands and/or intermediary objects. Consent will always be asked before each of these exercises.

**Nigel Stewart** – a dance artist and scholar. He is Artistic Director of Sap Dance and is presently Senior Lecturer in the Institute for Contemporary Arts at Lancaster University, UK, and a Visiting Professor of Dance at the University of Gdańsk. He has danced for various European choreographers, including Thomas Lehmen, and as a solo artist. Apart from his choreography for Sap Dance, he has worked as a choreographer, director, and movement director for Louise Ann Wilson Company, National Theatre Wales, Odin Teatret, Theatre Nova, Theatreworks Ltd., Triangle and many other companies. He is currently developing a performance exploring the relationship between the pipe organ, the human body, and breath; and a solo choreographed from improvisations in the forests of California, Czechia, England, and elsewhere. Nigel is the author of many articles and chapters on contemporary dance, dance phenomenology and environmental dance; and is co-editor of *Performing Nature: Explorations in Ecology and the Arts* (Peter Lang 2005). He is currently completing two book-length series of essays. The first theorises environmental dance, including his own rural site-specific dance works, in terms of environmental aesthetics and values. The second uses phenomenology and hermeneutic ontology to explore the relationship between choreography and the visual arts in dance works by several twenty-first century choreographers.

### **Katarzyna Pastuszek**

#### ***Bones' Landscape – anatomy in motion***

The workshop aims to explore the materiality of the body and experience anatomy in movement. During the workshop, dance/movement practices will be used as tools for exploring and mapping bodies, with particular focus on what Katarzyna Pastuszek calls “bones’ landscapes” (bonescapes). The workshop is an open space for practical research and reflective analysis of the potential that dance/movement practices have in instigating corporeal dialogues between body and the material world (dialogues between bodies and materials, bodies and places, humans and non-humans, etc.) in different contexts. The workshop is part of the ongoing research led by Katarzyna Pastuszek under the umbrella of *Dance Ecologies* project.