



# Balerina, Balerina

A project by Jurate Trimakaite  
Based on Marko Susic's novel

Translation (in french) by Zdenka Stimac, éditions franco-slovènes

# Cast

Based on the novel *Balerina, Balerina*, by Marko Susic

Translated from the slovene language, éditions franco-slovènes

DIRECTOR – Jurate Trimakaite

PERFORMERS – Coralie Brugier, Jimmy Lemos, Gisèle Torterolo

SOUND DESIGNER – Clémence Gross

SCENOGRAPHER, PUPPETS DESIGNER – Cerise Guyon

LIGHTING DESIGNER – Felix Bataillou

SOUND DESIGNER – Bastien Varigault

SOUND EFFECTS – Elodie Fiat

STAGE CONTROL – Julien Hatrisse (sound), Romaric Pivant (Light)

ASSOCIATED PRODUCTION – Le Tas de Sable – Ches Panses Vertes , Centre National de la Marionnette

WITH THE SUPPORT OF La DRAC Hauts-de-France,

Jurate Trimakaite is supported by the Department of Seine Saint-Denis as part of the artistic residencies system

CO-PRODUCTION Studio-Théâtre de Stains (93, Nordland Visual Theater (Norway), Nordland County Council (Norway), Espace Périphérique – La Villette (75)

PARTNERS Le Tas de Sable – Ches Panses Vertes (Centre National de la Marionnette – 80), Césaré (Centre National de Création Musicale de Reims – 51), La Fabrique de Théâtre de Frameries (Belgium), Studio-Théâtre de Stains (93), Nordland Visual Theater (Norway), Espace Périphérique – La Villette (75)

PATRONAGE Fondation E.C.Art-Pomaret

TECHNICAL SUPPORT Décor Sonore / La Fabrique Sonore.

*With the support of the International Puppetry Institute as part of its system to support the professional integration of ESNAM graduates.*



# Balerina, Balerina




The show is based on a puppet and sound work, adapted from Marko Susic's novel: *Balerina, Balerina*, is the story of a young girl unlike the others. seen from her innocent eyes, in a poetic and sleek language that deeply touched me.

In this book, a young Slovenian girl from Trieste surroundings observe the daily life of her humble family in the Italy of the 60's. It's a child with a mental disability who doesn't speak, but the author gives her a voice. *Balerina* take a quirky look on the world that surrounds her in a poetic language, with a simplicity that touches deeply the reader.


The story starts when *Balerina* is a child and continues all along her life. It gives as much importance at big events – like the first steps on the moon – and more modest – like her own birthday. Through her eyes, we discover the life of her loved ones, their looks on her, their love for her.

*Balerina* doesn't judge anything or anyone, she feels things, often questions herself and listens a lot to others. Marko Susic, who tried to imagine her inner world, immerses us in her emotions and here is the proper strength of the book.

*Balerina* embodies those who are too often excluded from society (mentally or physically disabled people for example) and who continue, nevertheless, to stay willing to live with dignity.



I'm standing on tiptoe, looking at the bun on her head, her shoulders, her skirt and her slippers. They say that's how it is, says Mama. They say it happens sometimes. All of a sudden and no one really knows why. Out of the blue. She doesn't play anymore. She keeps herself to herself, who knows what she's thinking. You ask her and she doesn't say. She hears everything, but she doesn't talk anymore. She laughs, she cries, but you don't know when or why. You don't know what she's thinking, what's going through her head ... They say it'll get worse every year, says Mama, more quietly, and I stand up even higher on my tiptoes to see her face. I hear Mama's last words. Look at her! She spends hours and hours standing on tiptoe, does everything I tell her to, then she goes in that corner, lifts herself onto her toes and just stays there. There's nothing they can do, they say ... that sometimes it just happens with children. At that moment Mama turns to me. I'm standing on my tiptoes and I can see her face. There are tears in her eyes then, too, and her smile, and I hear Mama's words. What will happen to us, Ballerina, eh?



# Emerge from its bubble...



Balerina is a young lady with a mental disability. All along my numerous experiences (cultural actions, creative projects,...) in MEIs (medico educational institutes), I realized that these people were invisible in our society, often stigmatised and victim of a lot of stereotypes. They taught me a lot on myself, on others and on my way of seeing the world. I was surprised by the simplicity and the openness of their relationships that always were honest and profound. It gave me the desire to create a show built on those values. I wish to invite the public to encounter people with different worldviews.

I also wish that this show will be accessible to the youngest, in order to sensitize them, open their minds and give them the desire to share things with people that are not like them – emerge from its bubble, where we only get to meet people that look and are like us, to create a relationship with strangers, sometimes on the margins of society.

## ...to enter in strangers minds

This new project will give the floor to people that are not listened to and moreover, it will bring the public in their minds. Thank to headphones and the binaural sound system, the audience will feel the sound experience of Balerina and will be able to hear her inner voice.

Balerina, the principal character, will be performed by a life-size puppet. The puppeteers will not only animate her, but they will also play the role of her loved ones: her mum, her brother... The relationships that she has with them are very important in the play since they show that, as well as everyone of us, she needs attention, love, and comprehension from others to live.

I wish to offer to the audience a trip in Balerina's soul. Her feelings, her emotions, her inner life will be shone in a metaphorical and poetic way. Her body will literally open in front of the audience. To show her universe in a visual way will permit, I hope so, to give access and value to the feelings of a person with a mental disability. In this way, this project could transmit the desire to take the time that is necessary and the patience to understand other's feelings.



# Adolescence

The story begins the day of Balerina's 15th birthday, a young lady with a handicap, who does not live the ordinary teenager life. Her relationships are limited to her inner circle, her family, and a few people from the neighbourhood. A life on the margins, isolated from the outside world and from young people of her age.

Balerina's difference excludes her of society at an important age of construction of its personality and individuality. How does she experience the eyes of others? What are her more intimate thoughts? With no moralizing purpose, this show will allow the audience to enter the skin of a person called « different », thanks to an original and playful staging. The use of immersive sound technologies will give the spectators the opportunity to really enter in the inner world of the character, surrounded by the sounds and words she hears to understand her truly.

I'm willing to propose a show about otherness that touches consciences, and that will be able to transform our biased ideas – I hope so. As an artist whose interventions often take place in schools, I realize every day that small differences are often used, even by small children, as a source or pretext for exclusion; but with teenagers, the situation can even more quickly get out of control. For this reason, this show is particularly interesting for this specific audience because it necessarily leads to a personal reflection: How do teens relate to their peers? How do they look at each other's differences? How do they react to differences? How would they react themselves if they were to feel excluded?





## Binaural sound system, a sound « trompe-l'œil »

As well as our two eyes gives us the ability to see the space around us, our hears permits our brains to visualize the environment in which we stand. The binaural sound is a particular technique of sound capture and reproduction. Headphones permit the diffusion of sounds in 3D. Thus, one could really feel that someone is speaking in one's ear or that an airplane is flying above us. This method of registration and reproduction creates a brighter, larger and, above all, more realistic sound, since the listener really feels enveloped by the sound experience.

To live this immersive experience of a sound in three dimensions and dive into Balerina's mind, the spectators will have to be equipped with headphones. They will then discover the word of someone who cannot speak. How does a child, with a mental disability, hears the world around her? her inner voice, her thoughts, her moments of crisis? or moreover, how does the medicines transform her sensations ?

Example of binaural son ( to be listened with headphones ) : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fugVyP.JVF8>



*Voices and sounds recordings, in National Center of musical Creation (Césaré), Reims.*

# Space and puppets

The principal character appears as a life-size puppet who will be handled by three puppeteers, like in the bunraku. Those three performers will stay silent and embody Balerina's family members, her vital support to exist on stage as well as in her life. The puppet will change shape following the age of the character. Her body, that will finally open, will let her intimate world escape, and take over the space of the stage. The audience will slide into the richness of her feelings that will be embodied by a universe made of puppets, inspired by outsider art. This art is at the same time the art of madmen and the art of marginalized of all kinds: prisoners, recluses, mystics, anarchists or rebels. They are pure, raw work of art, in some way naïve and primitive, reinvented by their authors, only following their own impulses.

I was inspired by the works of these people that suffered from disorders like those of Balerina to express and show this different worldview.

The stage space will be minimalistic, structured by light and a few objects, because the richness of this play is not outside, but inside our principal character's mind, Balerina. The visual world and the sound world will come together to tell Balerina's intimate life.





Marko  
Susic  
author

Marko Susic is a Slovenian-speaking Italian writer, director for theatre and cinema, born in Trieste the 22nd of December of 1958 and who died in Trieste the 3rd of February of 2021.

He graduated from the Academy of Theatre and Film Art of the University of Zagreb with a diploma in Theatre Direction and Cinema. He was a theatre director and also worked for the television, in Slovenia and Italia. He was artistic director of the Slovenian National Theatre in Nova Gorica (a city located on the border between Italia and Slovenia), and artistic director as well of the Slovenian Teatro Stabile of Trieste and of the Teatro Trastevere of Roma. He created and directed numerous radio plays, dramas for children and he directed several short films. He's also the author of numerous novels translated in several languages.

*Balerina, Balerina* is his first novel; it was published in Slovenia in 1997 and translated since 2005 in several languages (in French by Zdenka Stimac, éditions franco-slovènes). Editors from eleven Slavic-speaking countries have designed a European project: "100 Slavic novels", for which this novel was selected, with other Russian, Macedonian, Serbian books...

The novel has received many awards:

Vstajenje Prize («resurrection») in Trieste in 1998

Special mention of the Umberto Saba Prize (Trieste) in 2005

Price of the city of Salo in 2005



Jurate  
Trimakaite  
metteuse en scène

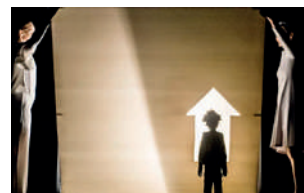
In 2006, Jurate Trimakaite joins the actor's training at the Vilnius Academy, from which she graduates in 2010. Immediately after, she joins the permanent troupe of the Vilius Puppet Theatre. She is directed by Arnaudas Jalianauskas, Algirdas Mikutis et Mazuras.

She joins the École Supérieure Nationale des Arts de la Marionnette de Charleville-Mézières (ESNAM) in 2011, from which she graduates in 2014. There, she directs her first show, *Les Animaux Inéluctables*, that will be presented in numerous theatres and festivals in Europe.

As an actress, she works with Eun Young Kim Pernelle, Les Enfants Sauvages or Mateja Bizjak Petit, Vera Rozanova, as well as Sylvie Baillon for the creation of *Bastien Und Bastienne* in the Opéra de Lille.

In 2016, she starts a companionship with Tas de Sable – Ches Panses Vertes, and becomes one of the associated artists in 2018. She creates *La Mort, Je n'y Crois Pas* (2016), and *Pièges* (2019).

In 2020, she wins the Price of the best show for youth of the year at the Aukšniniai Scenos Kryziai (the Lithuanian equivalent for the french « Molières ») for her show *Antis, Mirtis ir Tulpe*. Working between France and Lithuania, she directed six shows: *Les Animaux Inéluctables* (France, 2014), *Kas Tu?* (Lithuania, 2015), *La Mort, Je n'y Crois Pas* (France, 2016), *Kryptis* (Lithuania, 2017), *Pièges* (France/Lithuania, 2019), *Antis, Mirtis ir Tulpe* (Lithuania, 2019).



# Build a relationship with school groups

To initiate or extend the reflections with the groups that wish so, I will engage them to stage their own memories or their own stories. The final purpose will be the creation, with my support, of a puppet that will open to show their inner world in the same way the life-size puppet does in the show.

At first, a sound document (voices, wavelengths) will be created from their memories. Participants will then be guided to create small human effigies that will embody their stories. We will also build all the universe that could gravitate around those figures (objects and sounds) to enrich the narrative of those memories.

The creation of puppets is particularly interesting for a teenage audience, because it allows them to engage, to reveal themselves, in a roundabout way, at an age where expressing feelings and emotions in public is usually difficult, or uncomfortable. They will not express themselves directly, but the puppet will speak for them, accurately.

At the end of the project, when the participants will show their work to a little audience, the small human effigies will stage inside the head of the life-size puppet of the show. In the same purpose: immerse the audience in the mind of someone who entrust a part of his life.

This project could take place in schools, for 10 years old children to 18 years old teenagers, but also in medico educational institutes for teenagers or pre-teens with disabilities (MEIs). It's important for me that this type of project circulates among various institutions and enables us to build connexions between different audiences, to bring them together, to make them work together in a common way and in the same purpose of breaking prejudices, in order to prevent, hopefully, from reproducing the ostracization of other victims of their differences.



*Workshop by Jurate Trimakaite in Centre d'Accueil de Jour d'Abbeville.*

# Calendrier

2022

December 2-6 / La Fabrique de Théâtre, Framerie, Belgique

2023

May 15 -19 / Césaré - Centre National de Création Musicale, Reims, France

June 2-16 / Le Tas de Sable - Centre National de la Marionnette, Amiens, France

August 21 - September 1 / Studio Théâtre de Stains, France

October 9 - 13 / Espace Périphérique - La Villette, Paris, France

2024

January 9 - February 7 / Nordland Visual Theater, Stamsund, Norvège

February / INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE - Nordland Visual Theater, Stamsund, Norvège

February 11 - 24 / Tournée en Norvège

April 16 - FRENCH PREMIERE - Théâtre Le Safran, Amiens, France

April 25 - 26 avril / Studio-théâtre de Stains, France

June 3-4 / Théâtre du Mouffetard, Paris, France, for *Scènes Ouvertes à l'Insolite* biennale

Planned Tour:

Autumn 2024 / Puppet theater of Ljubjana, Slovénie

# Technical rider

Duration: 60 – 80 min.

From 10 years old

Audience: 100 people

Minimum stage dimensions: 8m x 8m

Dark room

Frontal view

3 actors on stage

6 persons on tour

## Contact

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