

**WE
ARE ALL
ARTISTS!**



**THEATRE FOR
SOCIAL CHANGE
FOR ALL
GENERATIONS**

THEATRE FOR FOR ALL

The use of theatre as a tool for social change and community empowerment has a long history, but it can also be an effective way to bring culture to all generations as they actively co-create theatre.

The Transformator Culture and Arts Association has been exploring this kind of theatre for more than a decade. Our work is rooted in the theatre for social change known as theatre of the oppressed, which it adapts to diverse audiences - including the youngest ones.

Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) is a method used for theatre-activist, pedagogical and educational purposes, as a tool to achieve social justice, and it also for therapeutic purposes. TO deconstructs and eliminates the conventional relations of power between actors and spectators by creating space for dialogue and placing spectators in a new position of actively participating theatre actors (the so-called spectators - both spectators and actors in one).

ABOUT KUD TRANSFORMATOR

The main activities and objectives of KUD Transformator are to bring together socially responsible individuals working in the field of performance, musical and visual arts, to spread knowledge and use of the arts through collaboration, and thus to encourage creativity and creative action, and to react to social realities. In the social and cultural arts field, we collaborate with organisations and informal groups at home and abroad.

We are trainers and facilitators in theatre of the oppressed techniques and other socially engaged theatre practices with many years of experience, we have participated in numerous trainings in the use of theatre of the oppressed techniques at home and abroad, we have acquired general knowledge in the areas of oppression and the problems of vulnerable social groups, and we are developing new approaches through international partnerships.



PRODUCTIONS

We regularly produce community theatre that addresses social inequalities through real-life stories and interacts with the audience in order to find possible solutions to social problems. In our performances we address and deal with stories that people face in everyday lives. Through theatre, we create an environment where we talk about life's most difficult issues, which at the same time serves an educational function. In theatre productions, we talk about gender inequality, environmental and economic injustice and other inequalities produced by the system and reproduced in society.

Our productions are regularly ranked as high quality productions by the Slovenian platform Zlata Paličica (The Golden Wand).





EDUCATION

Local and international training is provided in the form of workshops aimed at different generations and target audiences. For eleven years, we continue being engaged in youth work using the methodology of the theatre of the oppressed. We reach out to young people every year through regular programmes such as the Transformator Academy of Theatre of the Oppressed and Rainbow of Desire, and we have many years of experience in running workshops in primary and secondary schools as well as with students. We also run workshops for educators and youth workers . Our members come from all over Slovenia, which is why we carry out our activities at various locations, especially in Ljubljana and Maribor.our activities at various locations, especially in Ljubljana and Maribor.

GET INVOLVED

Through various projects, we create international connections, networking with performers, theatre groups and organisations in Slovenia as well as throughout Europe. In this way we develop new approaches, exchange and deepen good practices, create recommendations, benchmarking of theatre experiences and strategic partnerships. In this way, we develop a sense of working with people from different cultures and actively involve young people in international projects.





THE NON-FESTIVAL

The Non-Festival of Theatre of the Oppressed is a creative and educational meeting of artists working with the methods of theatre of the oppressed in Slovenia and abroad, as well as other fans of theatre of the oppressed. The main purpose of the gathering is to network, exchange experiences, knowledge and skills. It takes place every year during summer.

The participants co-create the Non-Festival according to the principle of community and active participation. This means that KUD Transformator coordinates all the practical elements of the festival (organisation, content, accommodation, food, etc.), while all participants and visitors actively co-create the Non-Festival. An important part of this is the involvement of the local community of Gornji Grad in the Non-Festival activities and the dissemination and promotion of the methods of the theatre of the oppressed.



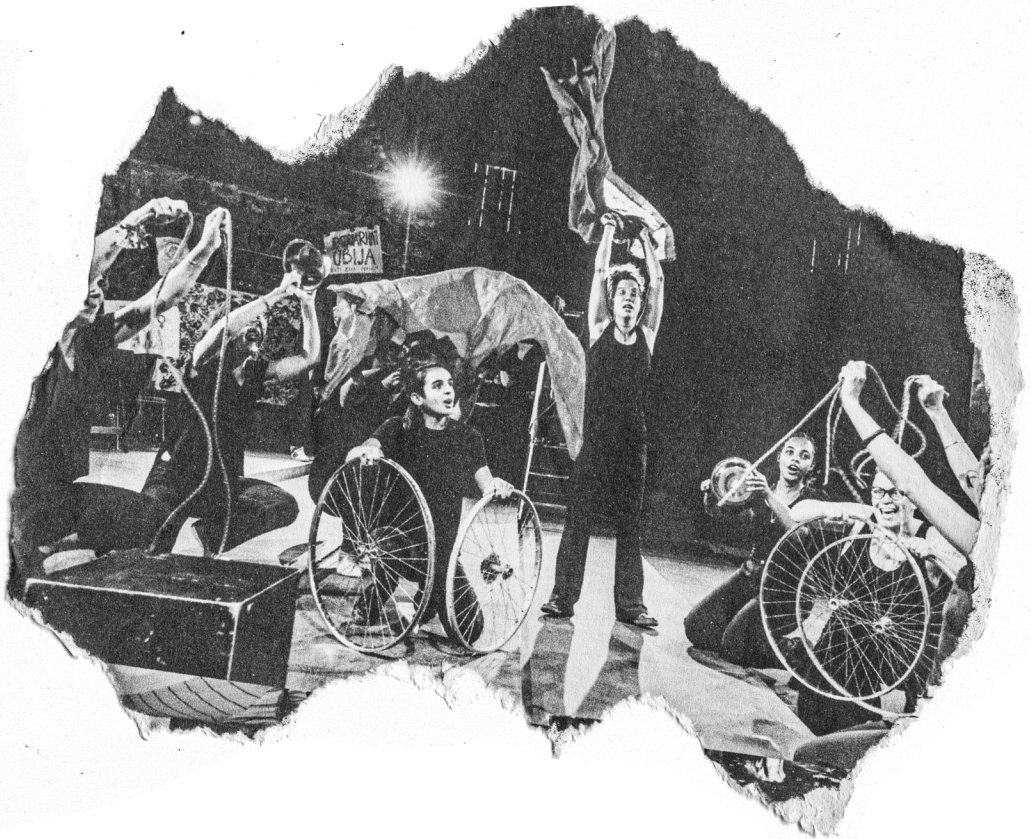


THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED CONFERENCE

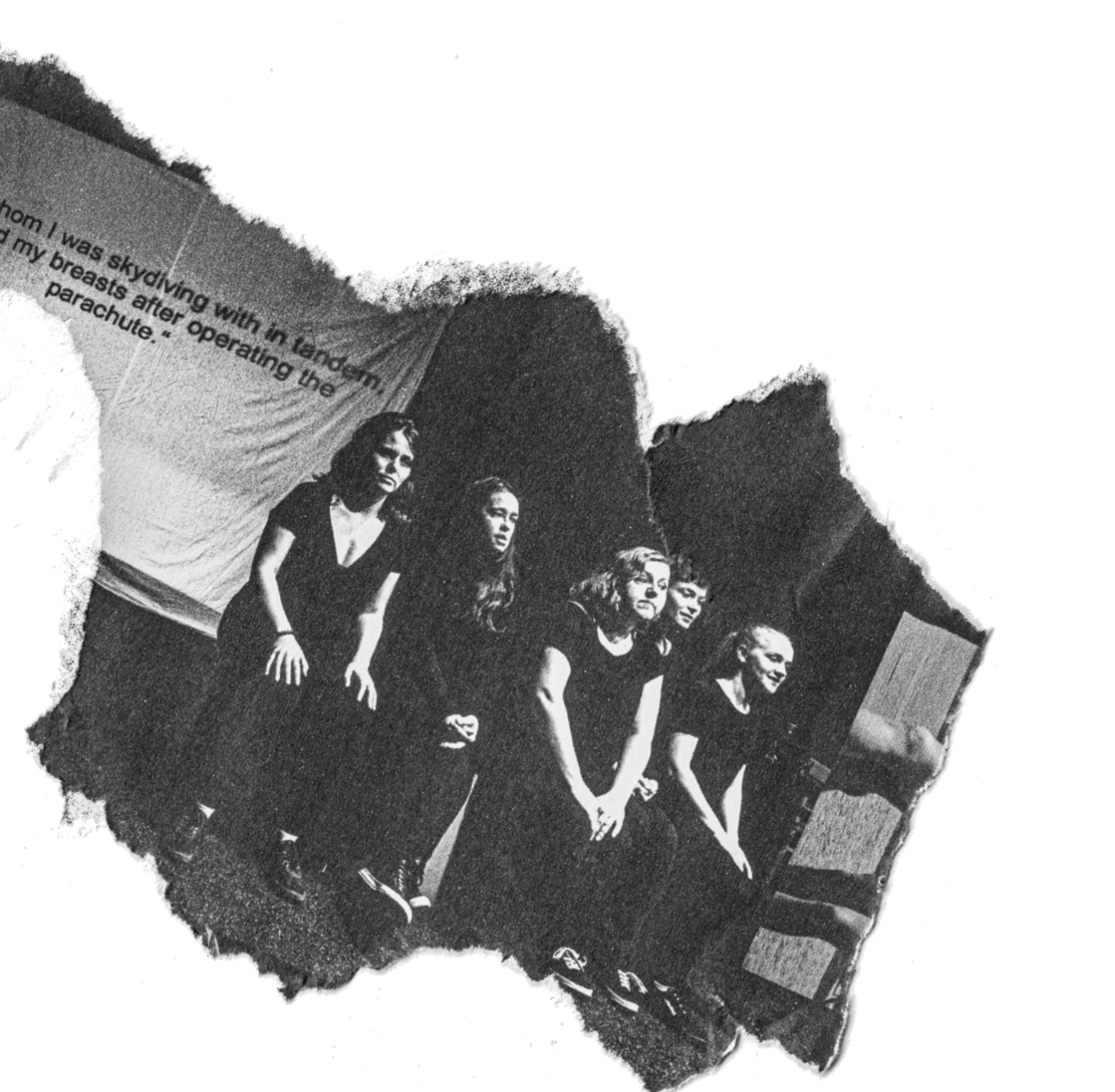
Every three years, we organise the Theatre of the Oppressed Conference, the only event of this kind in Slovenia, where we discuss theatre of the oppressed in theory and practice through expert contributions by national and international guests. Through these conferences, we have a significant impact on the presentation of the diverse ways of working with TO in Slovenia and abroad. We create recognition and understanding of theatre of the oppressed as a method for social change. We raise the visibility and promotion of theatre of the oppressed as an autonomous practice in the field of performing arts in Slovenia. We encourage the development of new performance approaches that draw on theatre of the oppressed and relate to other theatre practices developed by theatre groups in Slovenia and Europe. We expand the platform and further networking of performers, organisations and collectives.

MAGDALENE KRIVOPETE

In 2018, members of KUD Transformator founded the feminist theatre group Magdalene Krivopete within the company, which uses techniques of theatre of the oppressed in order to explore gender inequalities and reveal the stereotypes that perpetuate violence and misogyny. Where can we find reflections of patriarchy and heteronormativity and when are our choices (not) based on gender? The performances address the processes of socialisation into social gender and the assumption of roles assigned to that social gender.



man w
grabbed



hom I was skydiving with in tandem,
and my breasts after operating the
parachute."

PUBLISHING

Within and outside our projects, we publish useful manuals, children's picture books, and translations of professional material from the field of theatre of the oppressed. In doing so, we bring the methods closer to different vulnerable groups so that they can begin to try them out for themselves and encourage practitioners in different educational settings to use them.



TECHNIQUES OF THE THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED:

Forum Theatre is the most well-known and popular approach in theatre of the oppressed. Actors act out a short scene presenting a type of oppression which ends with a conflict and a question to the audience about how to liberate themselves from the oppression depicted. The approach is based on improvisation of both actors and spectators who, together with the use of theatrical expression and role-playing, look for ways to empower the oppressed character in the scene, thus co-creating a community at the event that will be ready to actively change similar situations in society in everyday situations.

Newspaper Theatre uses a variety of approaches - cross-reading, rhythmic reading, simple reading, and improvisation. The aim of this technique is to transform and reshape daily news, newspapers, diverse articles and other non-dramatic texts into performance. By asking the questions 'What is highlighted in the texts and what remains hidden? What is in the headline and what is shown in the photographs? Who is the news for?' newspaper theatre draws attention to the (in)objectivity of the media and the power they wield in the hands of the dominant class. Invisible theatre directly inter

Invisible Theatre directly intervenes into society with a specific topic in order to stimulate discussion, excite public dialogue, raise awareness, expose problems that should be resolved and raise questions in a public forum. The target audience of invisible theatre is random passers-by in public space who are unaware that they become part of a pre-orchestrated performance, as it plays out as a completely everyday situation.

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Image Theatre is a series of approaches in which the participants and the attendees embody their emotions and experiences without using speech and words, only through images and space. Participants express themselves through 'frozen images', with attention to body positioning, frozen movements, and facial expressions. These images can also be dynamised in the process by movement and uttering of key words or phrases. The technique is especially useful for cross-cultural learning and for people who find it difficult to express themselves verbally.

Rainbow of desire is a TO approach for visualising personal, internalised repressions (personal fears, frustrations and traumas). It taps into Boal's therapeutic repertoire of exercises. It is also a tool for characterisation of characters in theatre performances. In Rainbow of desire, the participant directs their own therapeutic process, while the co-participants hold up a mirror and provide a new and multidimensional understanding of past events.

Aesthetics of the theatre of the oppressed is a set of diverse approaches and techniques that are brought together with the desire to aestheticise scenes of oppression. The process of research is carried out by writing poems, letters, personal reflections, which are then depicted in a variety of ways - through painting, photography (photography of the oppressed), dance, music, installations, etc.

The technique of Legislative theatre is about moving from the phenomenon of oppression or injustice in society to the laws that regulate it. In the cycle of legislative theatre, social groups experiencing oppression are activated to formulate concrete proposals for changes to legislation. The formulation of proposals is done through an interactive process with the interested public - a forum performance. Experts in the field or topic and legal experts are also involved in the process. Proposals are forwarded to the relevant public institutions and decision-makers, accompanied by an awareness-raising campaign, a public debate on the case, etc. If the proposal is accepted at the decision-maker level, the cycle is closed, otherwise a new cycle starts.





THEATRE TECHNIQUES ARE ADAPTED FOR NON-ACTORS, USING THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF THEATRE AS A BASIS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND/OR ENTIRE COMMUNITIES TO EXAMINE THEIR OWN LIVES AND TO PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING AND DIALOGUE THAT FOCUSES ON ANALYSIS RATHER THAN ON GIVING ANSWERS.



THEATRE-PEDAGOGICAL TECHNIQUES FOR EMPOWERING VULNERABLE GROUPS

Theatre of the oppressed is a space where we talk about issues that are not otherwise highlighted and where those who often do not have a voice can speak out.

The basis for addressing a particular topic in Theatre of the Oppressed is the **CENTRAL CONFLICT** that arises from the power relations in society. From these relations arises the oppression in society, which is the main and central cause of **SOCIAL INJUSTICE**.

“Oppression is a concrete relation between individuals who belong to different social groups. It is a relation that benefits one group to the detriment of the other. In this attempt at finding a definition, oppression is beyond individual relationships. It is not reduced to what the English call a ‘one to one relationship’; it always contains something beyond that.” (Julian Boal)

Internalised oppression: “The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion. “ (Paulo Freire)

ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

Developed by Brazilian visionary Augusto Boal (1931-2009) in the 1960s, the methods represent a form of popular, community-based education that uses theatre as a tool for social change at individual, local and global levels. The techniques are used in over 100 countries for social and political activism, conflict resolution, community building, therapy, rehabilitation and advocacy, and influencing government legislation. The methods began to penetrate Slovenia more noticeably in 2010.

Boal was influenced by the work of the educator and theorist Paul Freire and his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The book is considered to be one of the seminal texts of critical pedagogy and it proposes a pedagogy with a new relationship between teacher, student, pupil and society. In the book, Freire calls traditional pedagogy “the banking concept of education”, treating students as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, like a deposit in a bank. He argues instead that pedagogy should treat the student as a co-creator, a co-creator of knowledge.





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