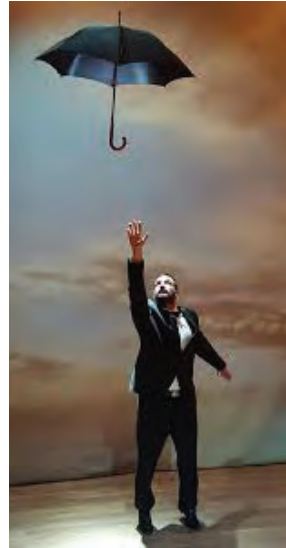


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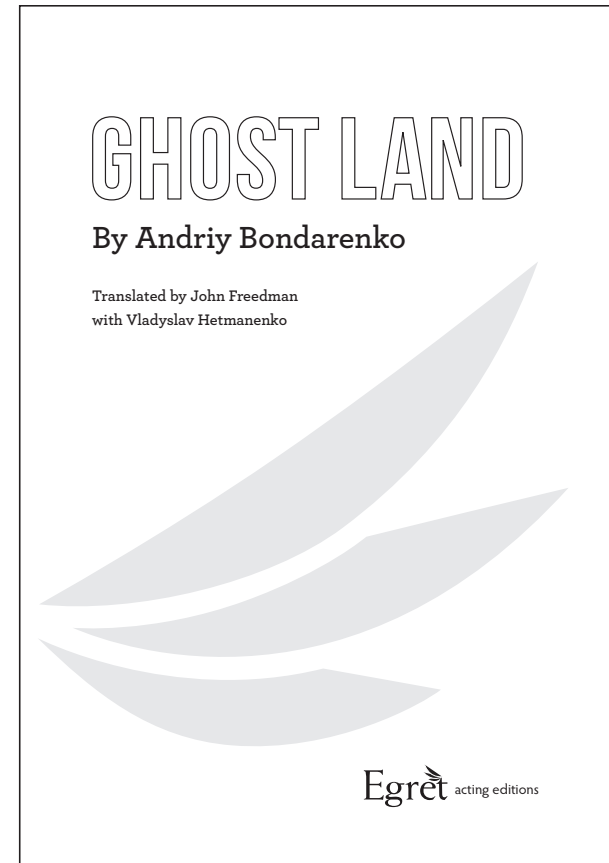
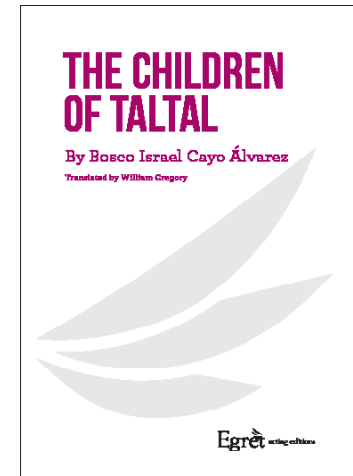
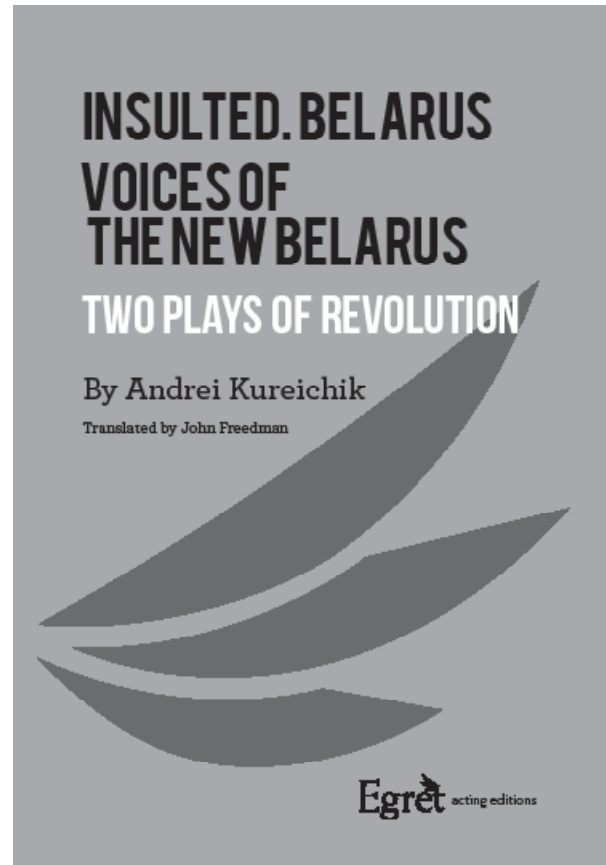
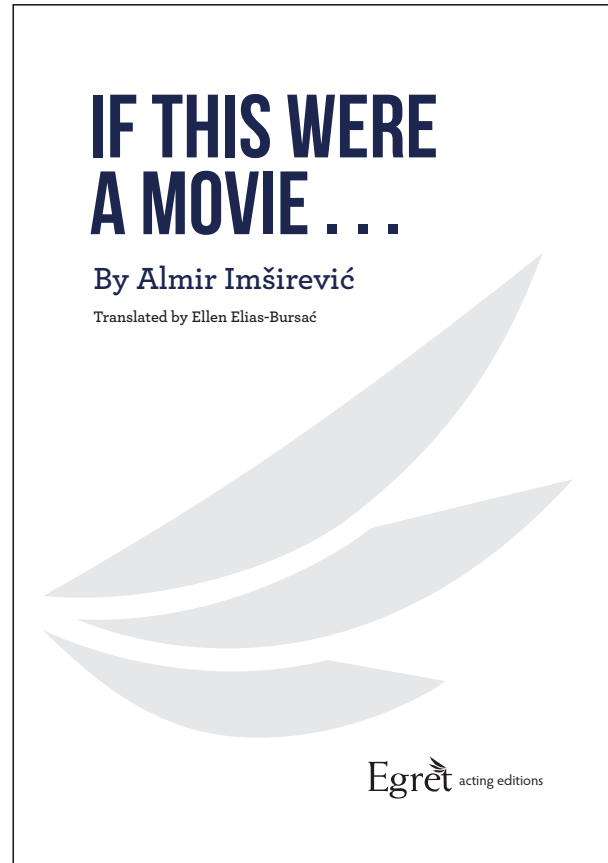
ENGAGED DRAMA FROM ACROSS THE WORLD



MARCH 2025

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# OUR LATEST EDITIONS





# 55 SHADES OF GAY

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Alexandra Channer

An application for a marriage certificate sets a Balkan town in a spin.



## An official selection for Global Queer Plays Creative/Disruption Festival

This love story is lit . . . Equal parts peep show and politics, the play burns hot (fuchsia) unapologetically . . . The show's sights and sounds don't only push the envelope, they lick it. —Derek McCracken, *Broadway World, BWW Review*

Conceptually supersized . . . powerful, semi-operatic . . . One of the fiercest social struggles of our age plays out in microcosm in this little town in a tiny country that many Westerners couldn't find on a map. —Jon Sobel, *Blog Critics*

Naughty but smart humor and a lovingly over-the-top queer sensibility . . . 55 Shades of Gay succeeds not only as a statement about LGBTQ equality but also as a deliciously raunchy, truly unique comedy that's more relevant than ever in 2019. —Jed Ryan, *Lavender After Dark*

It is billed as a contemporary burlesque and uses the variety format to skewer the bigotry of the locals, the smugness of the EU, and the stubbornness of everyone involved. —*Reviews Off Broadway*



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**JETON NEZIRAJ** is the former artistic director of the National Theater of Kosovo, and the founder and current director of Qendra Multimedia. He has written over twenty-five plays which have been staged, translated, and performed throughout Europe and the United States.

A political burlesque meant to shock, push buttons, entertain, point out hypocrisy, and maybe even open some minds. —Joe Lombardi, *Theater Reviews from My Seat*

Neziraj's plays are inspired by Rock 'n' Roll, political cabaret, and the brazenness of William Shakespeare. —*Der Spiegel, Germany*



Photos from the La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club NYC production in 2019.

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# AENEAS WOUNDED

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Blendi Kraja

In *Aeneas Wounded*, Jeton Neziraj portrays the absurdity of history. He positions his characters outside time, while forcefully underscoring the notion that all is poised on a knife's edge, on nothing but a whim. Whether we speak of Troy or Rome—or whether we speak of Kosovo—history can be like a domino that one day causes a chain of collapse for no apparent reason. —Raisa Stoleriu, theater critic, from a review of the Romanian translation of *Aeneas Wounded*

Neziraj is dizzyingly prolific . . . The plays are raucous, irreverent and absurdist . . . forcing the audience to confront the wounds of a country that only gained its independence in 2008, and where the war and its aftermath are still being processed. —Natasha Tripney, *The Guardian*, UK

Fairy tales are often brutal, but reality can be even worse. At the heart of Jeton Neziraj's work are realistic dramas. —Wolfgang Kralicek, theater critic, Vienna, from the forward to *Six Plays by Jeton Neziraj*

He is a man of explosively creative passion with the theatrical and personal courage to support it. —Michael Lessac

The Kafka of the Balkans. —Jakob Hayner, *Theater der Zeit*, Germany

From out of the same limbo, a victim of ethnic cleansing from Kosovo and the hero of an ancient epic reappear in our world.



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

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# BALKAN BORDELLO

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Alexandra Channer

An Oresteia for our times—a reimagining from the Balkans that implicates Everywhere.

Imagine yourself in a hedonistic nightclub full of campy decorations, cheap furniture and guests that drown themselves in shots of raki. Imagine that bloodshed is happening everywhere around you, caused by unhealed traumas and unresolved conflicts of the just-finished war. Imagine that even in these morbid circumstances you'll be drawn by turbo-folk music to participate in orgiastic dances. Welcome to the world of Balkan Bordello.

—Borisav Matic, *The Theatre Times*

The theatrical language is as allegorical as it is lyrical. The soldiers swagger, and the shedding of blood always warrants revenge . . . Aeschylus meets Beckett meets Ionesco meets Havel.

—Steven Leigh Morris, *American Theatre*

Balkan Bordello tackles the subject of war and its consequences with force and enthusiastic provocation. —*Taz*, Germany

Exciting, provocative, and painful. —*Danas*, Serbia

Borrowing the setting from the Oresteia, the play evokes an archetypal society which emerges from the war in a state of confusion, where the old order and power relations have been subverted, and the new does not seem to have any legitimacy because it is based on pure force. —Anna Di Lellio



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

A world-class playwright who challenges our complacency at every twist and turn.

—F. Kathleen Foley, *Los Angeles Times*

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# THE BASEMENT

By **Ilir Gjocaj** Translated by Fadil Bajraj

In the thick of the NATO bombing, imperiled by the Serbian police, a Kosovar family withdraws to a subterranean space.



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**ILIR GJOCAJ** is a playwright and a screenwriter for both film and television, a director, producer, dramaturg, and librettist. He has written and directed significant television documentaries, and one of his films won first prize at the *Nine Eleven Prishtina Festival* in 2003.

This play interrogates, with love and rage, the patriarchal-heroic myths that unified a people under siege and drove them, in interpersonal ways, to betray themselves.

—Karen Malpede, Playwright, Director, Co-founder of Theater Three Collaborative

The Basement develops during the mass expulsions of Albanians from Pristina . . . the men in the play are defenseless against the Serbian security forces bent on killing them.

—Anna Di Lellio, from the introduction to *One Flew Over the Kosovo Theater: An Anthology of Contemporary Drama from Kosovo*

Ilir Gjocaj examines, with quiet force and subtle poignancy, the workings of terror during the Pristina siege; a terror unleashed by the murderous rage occurring in the streets and by the cultural and personal demons of the victims themselves. It is haunting.

—Hana Pichova, Director of Slavic and European Studies, University of North Carolina

The basement is a metaphor for the underground flow of consciousness (or more precisely, the subconscious) that stifles the life of each new generation, conditioning it to be only a shadow of its ancient forebears.

—Zlatko Paković, *Mediantrop*

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# BLUE VALIANT

By Karen Malpede

In a great leap of fellow-feeling, the separate griefs of three diverse characters converge— together with that of a blue roan horse.

Official Selection of the *Segal Center Film Festival on Theatre and Performance, 2022*



Photos by Ellen Lynch

Karen Malpede is a downtown New York Theater mainstay known for her unflinching commitment to social justice.  
—Brad Rothbart, *American Theatre*

Karen Malpede's latest creation evokes the wordless love people and animals can experience . . . Hannah Doyle is at wit's end with grief and rage when she sees Blue galloping in an open, but fenced-in field. She is immediately smitten. What unfolds . . . is an intense meditation on freedom, love, patience, taming, and compromise. In short, it's the stuff of human connection.  
—Eleanor J. Bader, *The Independent*

A moving, beautiful, and highly theatrical exploration of the necessity and the difficulty of forgiveness.  
—Marvin Carlson, Sidney E. Cohn Distinguished Professor of Theatre, Comparative Literature, and Middle Eastern Studies, CUNY

George and Kathleen steal the air . . . A real kick in the gut and terrific writing.  
—Naomi Wallace, playwright, MacArthur Fellow

Sublime writing, first very realistic, then a slow build toward poetic monologues that are glorious and heartbreaking.  
—Linda Eisenstein, composer, playwright, chief theatre correspondent for *angle: a journal of arts + culture*

Gorgeous, deeply affecting, and provocative.  
—Kim Marra, Professor Emerita of Theatre Arts and American Studies, University of Iowa

Karen Malpede is the author/director of 20 plays and co-founder, with actor/producer George Bartenieff, of Theater Three Collaborative, a thirty-four-year-old, Obie-winning New York-based theater company that develops and premieres her poetic language, social justice plays.



Drawing by Biba Kayewich





# BOUNDS

By Tino Caspanello

Translated by Haun Saussy



Scenes from the Suttascupa Theater Company production in Palermo, Italy.  
Photos by Marcella Giuffrè and Alessia Lo Bello.



In the confines of a holding area, in the animation of play among the keepers and the kept, the lives of two migrants assume a human weight.

**Special Mention was given to *Bounds* at Migration Harbour Europe, London, 2018**

Five women stand in a wide parallelogram of sand, lined by wooden boards. I don't know their names, the city where they were born, their age . . . I know only what they want to let me know . . . The five belong to an unbreachable perimeter: as if they were closed in a cage. —Alessandro Toppi, *Pickwick Italy*

In the game of musical chairs, the one who loses dies, and every death speaks of a different space that we have closed, of different hopes terminated. —Luca Lòtano, *Teatro e critica*

The here and now is a diaphragm that constantly allows something that comes from outside to transpire. —Andrea Pocosgnich, *Teatro e critica*

His writing skillfully chooses the shadow areas of language. —Dario Tomasello, from the afterword to *Teatro di Tino Caspanello*



**TINO CASPANELLO** is a playwright, scenographer, actor, and director from Messina, Sicily, as well as the founder of the Pubblico Incanto Theater Company. He has written over twenty plays which have been widely performed in Europe and internationally. In 2008 he was awarded the playwright's prize from Italy's National Association of Theater Critics.

Caspanello has produced one of the most important and noteworthy dramaturgical experiences on the Italian scene. —Dario Tomasello, from the afterword to *Teatro di Tino Caspanello*

Drawing by Biba Kayewich

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# THE CHILDREN OF TAL TAL

By **Bosco Israel Cayo Álvarez** Translated by William Gregory

In one of Chile's forsaken reaches — Taltal, grieving parents submit to group therapy.



The characters in this story: an unemployed man, a policeman, a firefighter, a prominent grandmother, and a pregnant woman, meet under the care of a therapist who indoctrinates them in order to erase their anger and expunge the sadness from their bodies. Because, on the very same day, their children chose to take their own lives.

—Isabel Baboun Garib, *Remonstrator*

We are faced with a therapy session that is delusional, part of a state-backed “overcoming grief” program which encourages the bereaved to subdue their pain without seeking to understand its causes. The play poses perennial questions about the cost of building a national identity that collapses the further we travel from the center.

—Sebastián Pérez Rouliez, *Revista Hiedra*



With brutal and grotesque language, the deaths of each of the adolescents begin to be relived in the voices of their parents and the paramedic assistant.

—Teatro del Puente archive

The government is concerned. It does not want a repeat of what happened in Tongoy, where 20 or so children jumped into the sea. They do not understand why. They try to create opportunities, but the deaths continue to occur.

—Arturo Ledezma, *elciudadano.com*

I preserve the importance of geography in the texts, of that remote, abandoned territory of which the author speaks.

—Valentina Durán, actor and producer  
Teatrhoj



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**BOSCO ISRAEL CAYO ÁLVAREZ** is an actor, a director, and a playwright, who has taught in drama schools throughout Chile. His *The Lady of the Andes* was the winner of the 2017 Chilean National Council for Arts and Cultures literary award for best play, and his *José Desierto* was awarded the 2020 Chilean Ministry of Cultures, Arts, and Heritage playwriting prize.

Photos by Matías Lasen from the Teatro del Puente production.

# THE DEMOLITION OF THE EIFFEL TOWER

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Robert Elsie, Janice Mathie-Heck, and Alexandra Channer

When a Frenchman, caught pulling veils from Muslim women, is abducted by two terrorists, alternate mythologies grapple .



The Demolition of the Eiffel Tower is not only a symbolic title but a cry of alarm. It is a text of great strength—devastating in its impact—that recounts with careful calibration, in scene after scene, word after word, the secret thoughts, dynamics, relationships of a small group of terrorists who have landed in “the West,” in France.

—Andrea Porcheddu, *gli statigenerali*, Italy

A perfect dramaturgical machine that spares no one in the act of dismantling, piece by piece, not only stereotypes, misunderstandings, and prejudices with respect to Islam, but the myth of a tolerant Europe as well.

—Anna Maria Monteverdi, *Hystrio*, Italy

And, above all, love is always hindered by “veils,” both real and metaphorical, which

prevent us from clearly recognizing the object of our desire.

—Francesco Brusa, *Altre Velocita*, Italy

Jeton Neziraj is a person with a mission: freedom from xenophobia—for himself, his country, and the world. —Karen Malpede, *HowlRound Theatre Commons*, U.S.



Drawing by Biba Kayewich



**JETON NEZIRAJ** is the former artistic director of the National Theater of Kosovo, and the founder and current director of Qendra Multimedia. He has written over twenty-five plays which have been staged, translated, and performed throughout Europe and the United States.

*The Demolition of the Eiffel Tower* has been performed in Italy, France, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Albania, Kosovo, Croatia, and Serbia.







# DEPARTMENT OF DREAMS

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Alexandra Channer

In a vast underground complex, civil servants sift through our dreams. Enter Dan—the new hire for the prized job of interpreter.

**Critic's Choice, *Los Angeles Times***

**A play which is about as anti-authoritarian and anti-government as can be.**  
—Willard Manus, *Total Theater*

**His plays have brought threats, vandalism—and international acclaim.**  
—Natasha Tripney, *The Guardian*

Neziraj's Orwellian portrait of a mad world in which all individuality is suppressed . . . Important work by a world-class playwright who challenges our complacency at every twist and turn.  
—F. Kathleen Foley, *Los Angeles Times*

[City Garage Theatre] has always committed to daring works by major European and American authors. And for years has challenged us where many other Los Angeles theaters have resisted. Neziraj's play is a perfect example of their exceptional perceptions. —Douglas Messerli, *US Theater, Opera, and Performance*

“When I read Department of Dreams, I immediately wanted to do it. It's about the rise of autocracies and the literal invasion of our imaginations, not just by governments but by huge corporations. Every day we cede more and more of our privacy, of our selfhood to people who either want to control it or monetize it. Jeton portrays this in the kind of stark, brutal terms that leave no doubt about where our world is headed. It's an appeal to take back our own agency.” —Frédérique Michel, Artistic Director of City Garage Theatre, interviewed by Jackie Sedley, *The Corsair online*

He is a man of explosively creative passion, with the theatrical and personal courage to support it.  
—Michael Lessac

Neziraj exhibits a verve that is as joyous and unbridled as it is cynical.  
—Jean-Pierre Thibaudat, *Mediapart, France*



Photos by Paul M. Rubenstein. From the production at City Garage Theatre, Santa Monica, California.



Caricature by Mentor Llapashtica

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# A DICTIONARY OF EMOTIONS IN A TIME OF WAR: 20 SHORT WORKS BY UKRAINIAN PLAYWRIGHTS



Drawing by Liudmyla Tymoshenko

Photos by Nataliya Torzhevska & Oleksandr Prymak



## Works in the wake of invasion

These Ukrainian texts are extraordinary. So vivid and so various, heartbreaking, beautiful, funny, and honest.

—Carey Perloff, director, and playwright

There is no way we can ignore these moving, theatrical elegies.

—Ari Roth, co-producer of Voices Festival Productions in Washington, D.C., *Theater Arts*

These excerpts illustrate fratricidal wars, the complex nature of politics, the rending of family ties, and of unending grief. Yet, they will also prove that above all there is still hope for love in this sea of hate.

—Michel Marc Bouchard, playwright, winner of the Prix du Cercle des critiques de l'Outaouais

**Pavlo Arie, Olena Astaseva, Ihor Bilyts, Natalia Blok, Andriy Bondarenko, Vitaliy Chenskiy, Julia Gonchar, Oksana Grytsenko, Olena Hapieieva, Iryna Harets, Anastasiia Kosodii, Maksym Kurochkin, Tetiana Kytsenko, Lena Lagushonkova, Yevhen Markovskiy, Olha Maciupa, Kateryna Penkova, Oksana Savchenko, Liudmyla Tymoshenko, and Nataalka Vorozhbyt**

Translated by John Freedman, Natalia Bratus, John Farndon, and Evgenia Kovryga

**Texts commissioned by grants from Philip Arnoult's Center for International Theatre Development**

These intimate stories from Ukrainian writers during a time of war not only move us to tears but connect us to real people and the details of their lives as war unfolds—from the guilt of leaving loved ones to the bravery of taking on an armored transport, from love across a screen to the chaos of uncertainty. These stories make it personal.

—Ronda Spinak, founder and artistic director of The Braid, a global nonprofit theater

Maksym Kurochkin is a playwright. For almost three years, he and 19 other Ukrainian playwrights had been planning to build a new theater in the heart of Old Kyiv. The group found a magnificent old structure that they were busy renovating in order to open the Theater of Playwrights on 12 March. On 24 February, Maksym and his colleagues awoke to the horrific sound of bombs. 12 March came and went.  
—Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine 2005–2010, *The Guardian*



# A FABLE FOR NOW

By **Wei Yu-Chia** Translated by Jeremy Tiang

In seven scenes, the world ends again and again, for any number of reasons: environmental collapse, war, unrestrained capitalism.

A fable is a metaphor for human society with simple and easy-to-understand animal stories . . . Wei's work includes tales of war, the environment, and personal regret colliding as mankind hurtles towards a surreal apocalypse in the company of a disputatious duck, a sleuth of bears, and an exceptional chicken.

—Jasmine Yu-Hsing Chen, *Performing International Plays*

[Wei Yu-Chia's play] uses ridicule and absurdity to point out ignorance and shortcomings of humanity towards environmental ethics.

—Guo Qiang-Sheng, *ARTalks*



## Winner of the Taiwanese Literature Prize for 2014.

Full of language and yet ambiguous in meaning, full of flesh and yet rebelling against the human body, # ends with the director telling us a story in voiceover, and asking the audience, but what moral can we draw from all this? When all of contemporary culture and civilization is just another face on the sand that will be wiped away, what moral can there be?

—Li Shi-Yong, *Pareviews*



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**WEI YU-CHIA** has written five award-winning plays. She lives in Taipei, Taiwan.

As a talented writer who created poetry since elementary school and fiction during middle school, Wei launched her journey into playwriting after she moved from rural Taiwan to Taipei to study at NTU [National Taiwan University].

—Jasmine Yu-Hsing Chen, *Performing International Plays*

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# THE FINGER

By **Doruntina Basha** Translated by Doruntina Basha and Janice Mathie-Heck

Long after the war in Kosovo, two women—  
left with a gaping disappearance—observe an anniversary.

How deeply incised the claw marks of unseen crimes.  
—Nenad Obradović, *e-novine.com*

Two women share the colossal pain of a truth they  
struggle to face.  
—Nihad Kreševljaković, *Al Jazeera*, Balkans

Incompatible paths of grief that alienate each other's  
only source of connection . . . Absorbing, nuanced . . .  
a play worth seeing more than once.  
—Bob Ashby, *DC Metro*

The poetry of the language conveys the infinite  
nuances of the relationship between the two women,  
who hate and love at once, but cannot be without one  
another . . . A story of acute solitude, but also of hope.  
—*ATSH: Albanian News Agency*

How do we navigate our private and shared griefs?  
How do we buoy others up as we cope, and how do  
we drag them down? This play's greatest strength is  
its visceral evocation of domestic claustrophobia.  
—Hannah Berk, *DC Theatre Scene*

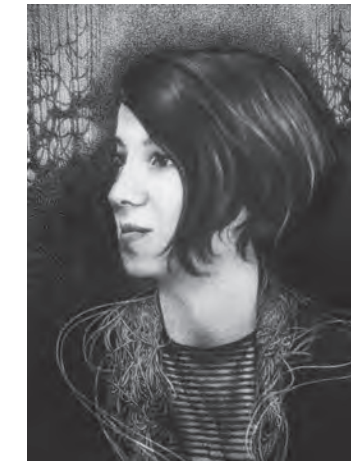
The first play from a Kosovo playwright ever to appear  
in Belgrade theaters. —Dardan Zhegrova, *Kosovo 2.0*



Winner of the Golden Laurel  
at the *Mess International  
Theater Festival* in Sarajevo



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Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**DORUNTINA BASHA** is the author of six plays, including plays for children, several short screen plays, and the internationally-award-winning-feature, *Vera Dreams of the Sea*.

*The Finger* has been produced in Belgrade, Skopje, Sarajevo, Vienna, Pristina, Tirana, Turin, and Naples. It had its North American premiere on September 19, 2019, at Venus Theatre in Laurel Maryland.



# GHOST LAND

By **Andriy Bondarenko**

Translated by John Freedman  
with Vladyslav Hetmanenko

Three premonitory tales  
from the throes of war



Ukrainian playwright Andriy Bondarenko brings the horrors inflicted on his compatriots by Russia's invasion to surrealistic life with three intertwining tales.

—Martín Hernández, *Stage Raw*

Tales of horrible atrocities came out of the country from the start of hostilities . . . The reality of Bondarenko's ghost land is vividly brought to life in Frederique Michel's staging. It's simple yet involving.

—Rob Stevens, *Haineshisway.com*

The plays in Bondarenko's *Ghost Land* blend metaphysics and despondency, grappling with political trauma in the way Sarah Kane's plays grappled with personal trauma. Not that they serve up lectures; rather, they offer a *schrei* of despair for the victims of a kind of home invasion on a national scale.

—Steven Leigh Morris,  
*American Theatre*

When the final revelation comes, it hits like a thunderclap . . . the full context of all we've experienced since the lights came up at the start becomes clear . . . Among other things, the play ceased to be about just what is happening in Ukraine or even about the hell of modern war. It became about me, and you, and everyone who has ever had to endure the trauma of real evil. Of those moments when the worst of us turn this earth into a real Hell. More, how do we heal after that?

—David MacDowell Blue,  
*The World Through Night-*

Images from the City Garage production in Santa Monica, California. Photos by Paul M. Rubenstein.



Drawing by Biba Kayewich



Andriy is a playwright, but also a philosopher and poet — his plays sear the heart with vivid insights about what it means to live in contemporary Ukraine, trying to find identity and meaning when the country is under attack by a neo-imperial neighbor. —Noah Birksted-Breen, Artistic Director, Sputnik Theatre, London

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# IF THIS WERE A MOVIE

By **Almir Imširević** Translated by Ellen Elias- Bursać

Through the lens of an apartment in Sarajevo, the war in Bosnia comes into view.



Almir Imširević's inspirational text depicts the author's almost autobiographical relationship with the phenomenon of the siege. Twenty years ago, we both entered the war as no more than boys, but now we speak about it from a father's point of view, from the perspective of adults. The text is written concisely, and the movie metaphor is not accidental. This is a fragmentary and post-traumatic work, elliptical in dramaturgy,

with some fleeting reflections of Imširević's earlier, *If This Were a Performance* . . . Among other questions, is that of whether or not cinematic (or stage) truth can be stronger than the commonplace truth of the day-to-day. For us theater workers who live in parallel worlds, it is the truth of the stage that can be stronger, more beautiful or uglier, than that of everyday.

— Dino Mustafić, director, *Kad bi ovo bio film* . . .

The narrator is a disabled person who, like the audience, is displaced. With this, Imširević creates a distance for re-examining his own relationship to the same historical event: It ranges from a comic review of repeated mistrust and misunderstanding to a devastating realization of the total predictability of the tragic event. The author places the war tragedies "side by side" with Whitney Houston's wedding, Richard Gere's divorce, Haile Selassie's death, Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat's Nobel Peace Prize, but also Bruce Springsteen's World Tour, and frames the drama with a camera obscura simulation. — Muhamed Dželilović, From the preface to *Seven Dramas from BiH*, Silson, Skopje

The story in Almir Imširević's plays is really the one we all experience today. The author puts his finger on the eternal wounds of society. Imširević's drama exposes.

— Sava Andjelković, preface to *Si c'était un Spectacle*, L'espace D'un Instant



Images from the 2012 premiere of *If This Were a Movie* . . . , at the National Theater of Bosnia. Photos by Fuad Fočo.



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

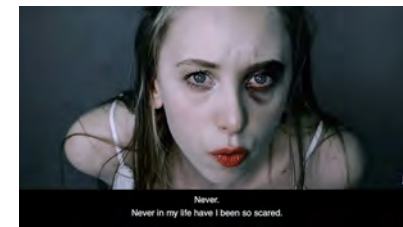
**ALMIR IMŠIREVIĆ** is a playwright, dramaturg, critic, and professor. His works have been produced in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, France, Turkey, Poland, Kosovo, Italy, and the Czech Republic. Included as a playwright in the *Twentieth Century Anthology of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Drama*, he has served as a dramaturg as well on numerous plays for B&H theaters, and as a critic for Sarajevo-based magazines.



# INSULTED. BELARUS; VOICES OF THE NEW BELARUS: TWO PLAYS OF REVOLUTION

By **Andrei Kureichik** Translated by John Freedman

Two plays of revolution — two declarations of defiance — from the vortex of Belarus



**ANDREI KUREICHIK** is one of the foremost playwrights, screenwriters, and producers in Belarus. His plays have been performed at the prestigious Moscow Art Theatre and Janka Kupala Theaters in Moscow and Minsk, as well as numerous theaters throughout the former Soviet Union. After writing *Insulted. Belarus and Voices of the New Belarus* in response to the contested elections and their brutal aftermath in 2020, he has gained an international following as a political playwright.

A stunning play! I can't get it out of my head not only because of what he depicts, but also because of how he does it . . . He creates a dialogue of broad utterances made at a distance, creates a dialogue among characters that never meet!

—Valentina Golovchiner, professor of literature, Tomsk Pedagogical University, Russia

The piece is harshly accusatory, but very lightly written and constructed. The necessity drips from it without being irritating. This is happening now as you turn the pages . . . The most urgent play of the year is *Insulted, Belarus*, by Belarusian writer Andrei Kureichik.

—Stijn Devillé, Het nieuwstedelijk, Leuven, Belgium

He pushes you close to tears with the graphic images of the act of wickedness of the president but then with one punch line, gets your rib cracking with laughter. More interestingly, remove the setting and substitute the characters, that play is 100% talking to Nigeria as well.

—Om'Oba Jerry Adesewo, writer, artistic director of the Arojah Royal Theatre, Nigeria

How beautifully written and heart-wrenching. How shocking, and how it leaves you feeling so connected with the people from Belarus (and Andrei's characters), their strength, their courage, their love. Incredible.

—Sietse Remmers, actor and director, Belgium

A visceral text, written with flesh and blood.

—Bogdan Saratean, director, Sibiu, Romania

A first-rate provocation.

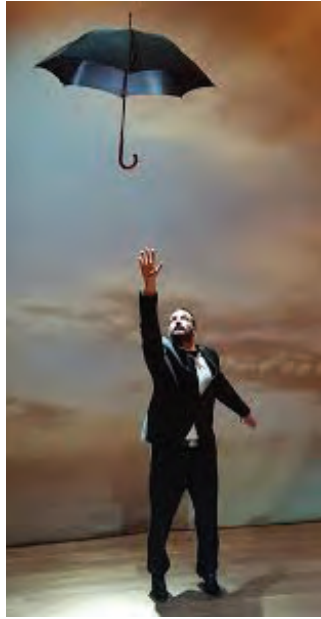
—Romana Štorková Maliti, translator, scholar, Slovakia and Czech Republic



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

Images of *Insulted. Belarus* from Gabriele Tuminaite's made-for-TV production at the Vilnius State Small Theatre of Lithuania; Jerzy Jan Połński's production for Teatr Miejski in Gliwice, Poland; and Javor Gardev's production for the Ivan Radoev Drama and Puppet Theater in Pleven, Bulgaria.

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# I WANT A COUNTRY

By **Andreas Flourakis** Translated by Eleni Drivas

In a chorus of distinct voices, with every human impulse in play, they conjure up a country.

*I Want a Country* has been performed in London, Athens, Oxford, New York, Berlin, New Dehli, Mexico City, Kraainem, and elsewhere.

Its lament for a homeland gone awry, for the security of the past to return . . . is a delicately persuasive one, and Flourakis laces the bittersweetness with occasional laughs to ensure the tone never gets too mordantly dark.  
—*There Ought to Be Clowns*, England

The new generation as a crowd that, against the backdrop of crisis, expresses fear, anxiety, but also sometimes hope and the urgent need for change.  
—Olga Sella, *Kathimerini*, Greece

A verbal mosaic of ideas, desires, judgements, doubts, and rationales . . . The text indisputably showcases one and only one protagonist: the crowd . . . Flourakis “transcribes” thoughts, emotions, and perspectives, which—whether liked or detested—remain recognizable to all.  
—Eleni Triantafylopoulou, from the introduction to *I Want a Country*, Greece

Written in an unconventional, chorus-like structure . . . with no concrete characters, scenes or dialogues, the writing ingeniously conveys a sense of volatility and bewilderment.  
—Text for the PRAXIS theatre company production, Oxford, UK

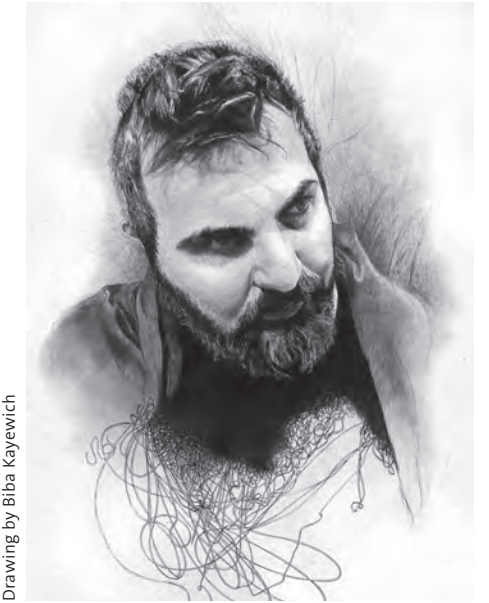
Flourakis’ heroes . . . release the inarticulate cry of the deep need to exist without pain. —Eleni Koutsileou, *Avgi*, Greece



He approaches his works with the joy and excitement of a child.  
—Kaiti Diamantakou, from the introduction to *Medea’s Burqa*, Greece

The attitude of the citizen toward the constant flow of extreme events.  
—Antigone Katsadima, *Agrinioculture*, Greece

An expressionistic smattering of ideas . . . an abstract take on mass migration.  
—Rachel Abrams, *The Easy*, USA



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**ANDREAS FLOURAKIS** has written more than thirty works for theater, which have been widely performed both in Greece and internationally. His accolades include a Fulbright Artists Award and selection by the Janus Project for New Plays and New Playwriting. In 2014 his drama, *Strong Knees*, was one of a trio of winners of the biennial Eurodram award.



# ONE FLEW OVER THE KOSOVO THEATER

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Alexandra Channer

Following a sudden visit by the Minister of Sport, the National Theater of Kosovo is tasked with creating a “national” play, to open on the very day Kosovo declares independence.



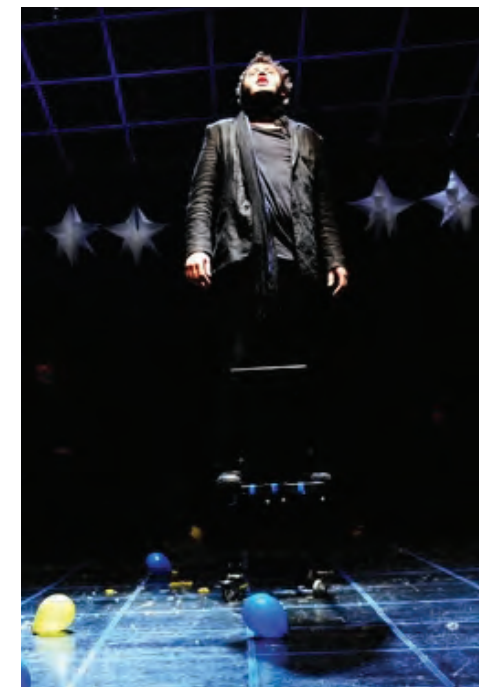
Dialectical and para-national . . . the play demystifies the effects of politics on art. —Ana Tasić, *Politika*, Serbia

The nation as a cuckoo’s nest? Its theater as an asylum? A sweeping performance that spanned weeks and led to a debate in the media about the relationship between art and politics. —Thomas Hahn, *Theater heute*, Germany

Seriously political theater . . . Neziraj laughs out loud in the face of bribery, brutality, dullness, ignorance. —Goran Cvetković, Radio Belgrade 2

The Nezirajs show the mask of civility and the face of patriotism in their true genre as a farce, and in their natural setting as a comedy of the absurd. —Zlatko Paković, *Danas*, Belgrade

Drawing by Biba Kayewich



A world-class playwright who challenges our complacency at every twist and turn.

—F. Kathleen Foley, *Los Angeles Times*

**JETON NEZIRAJ** is the former artistic director of the National Theater of Kosovo, and the founder and current director of Qendra Multimedia. He has written over twenty-five plays which have been staged, translated, and performed throughout Europe and the United States.

*One Flew Over the Kosovo Theater* has been performed in a number of cities, such as Skopje, Tirana, Ljubljana, Bern, Belgrade, Istanbul, and Modena.



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A utopian vision for a reconfigured race that will be “Other Than We”—hybrid creatures, human/non-human that will adapt and sustain themselves in the treacherous territory outside of The Dome. Malpede uses image-rich language and striking stage pictures to transmit an urgent call for global unity, imagination, transformation, and action.  
—Cindy Rosenthal, *The Theatre Times*

A playful but powerful meditation on urgent philosophical questions . . . consciousness, language, evolution, life and death.  
—Jo Mispel, *Motherhood Later*

Simultaneously unsettling, surreal, and hopeful . . . a post-apocalyptic scenario in which survivors have a chance to remake the world . . . a grand vision, born of catastrophe, but with the possibility of triumph.  
—Eleanor Bader, *The Independent*

It questions the origins of consciousness and thrives on the thrill of creating a better human species . . . Can the quartet of fugitives accomplish their outlandish goal?  
—Lena Zeldovitch, *Woman Around Town*

**KAREN MALPEDE** is the author/director of 20 plays and co-founder with actor/producer George Bartenieff of Theater Three Collaborative, a thirty-three-year-old, Obie winning, New York-based theater company that develops and premieres her poetic language, social justice plays.



Photographs © Beatriz Schiller 2020

# OTHER THAN WE

By Karen Malpede

In the wake of the climate apocalypse, four rebels enact a daring plan to give birth to something new—to beings other than we.

**Wild, fun, and unnerving.** —Andrew Revkin, science and environmental journalist

**A *New York Times* Critics’ Pick for “Theater This Season,” Fall 2019**

**Her characters are strong and fascinating, her contexts brilliant and horrifying, and her tone always warm and, in the end, loving.**

—Andrew Solomon, past president of PEN American Center

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Drawing by Biba Kayewich



# SLAYING THE MOSQUITO



## A Monodrama By Xhevdet Bajraj

Translated by Ani Gjika

In the course of a night, and across illimitable space,  
a man from Kosovo is plagued by a mosquito

The wrath of the righteous against the wily . . .  
—Eliona Lata, *Gazeta Shekulli*, Kosovo

Satire of the highest degree, wrought of  
metaphor, and made for a century like this:  
alarmed to an unthinkable extreme.  
—Rybak Dabaj, *Pashtriku*, Kosovo

A discourse that stretches from the lyrical  
to the language of advertising and pop  
culture . . . Political poetry in the broadest  
sense . . . observed from various angles, but  
always with a lucid bite. Very.  
—Héctor Carreto, *Periódico de Poesía*,  
Mexico City

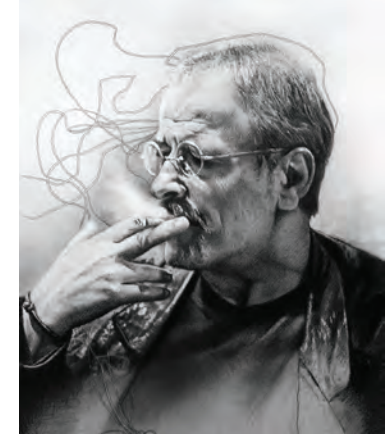


The troubled voice of the foreigner in a  
strange land; a place tethered, painfully  
and inextricably, to the past.  
—Alice Whitmore, *Seizure*

A man exiled by the war, who in exile  
is missing a part of himself . . . He feels  
soulless, far from a home he dreams of,  
but can no longer reach.  
—Anna Di Lellio, from the introduction  
to *One Flew over the Kosovo Theater*,  
*An Anthology of Contemporary Plays  
from Kosovo*

**Winner of the first prize at the  
Festival of Monodrama, Vlorë,  
Albania, 2013**

**Winner of the Katarina Josipi  
Award for the best original drama  
of 2010, presented by the National  
Theater of Kosovo**



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

Poetry is not merely a literary genre, it is  
a way to see and to live: to be consumed  
and regenerated on a daily basis.  
—Xhevdet Bajraj

**XHEVDET BAJRAJ** is a poet, dramatist,  
translator, and professor. He has published  
nearly twenty award-winning books of  
verse, which have been widely translated.

In May of 1999, Bajraj and his family  
were deported from Kosovo. Through the  
International Parliament of Writers and  
their program for persecuted writers, he was  
granted asylum and a fellowship at the Casa  
Refugio Citlaltépetl in Mexico City. He has lived  
and taught in Mexico in the ensuing years.

His poetry expresses a melancholy that  
covers his whole being, inside and out.  
—Albulena Zylbeari, *Pan Albanica*

Already the greatest Albanian poet of the  
twenty-first-century.  
—Rybak Dabaj, *Pashtriku*, Kosovo

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# THE THINGS YOU TAKE WITH YOU

By **Andreas Flourakis** Translated by Alexi Kaye Campbell

If you had to leave home in a hurry—in the face of a cataclysm—what would you take with you?

**Commissioned by the Royal Court Theatre. Inspired by the refugee crisis.**

Flourakis' heroes . . . release the inarticulate cry of the deep need to exist without pain.  
—Eleni Koutsileou, *Avgi*, Greece

Drawing by Biba Kayewich



**ANDREAS FLOURAKIS** has written more than thirty works for theater, which have been widely performed both in Greece and internationally. His accolades include a Fulbright Artists Award and selection by the Janus Project for *New Plays and New Playwriting*. In 2014 his drama, *Strong Knees*, was one of a trio of winners of the biennial Eurodram award.

He approaches his works with the joy and excitement of a child. —Kaiti Diamantakou, from the introduction to *Medea's Burqa*, Greece

A play of the utmost simplicity that packs a big punch full of feeling . . . This is theatre that makes you feel that you've got your feet wet, whether clambering up the beach or reaching out a hand from the rocks.  
—Howard Loxton, *British Theatre Guide*

A verbal mosaic of ideas, desires, judgements, doubts, and rationales . . . Flourakis “transcribes” thoughts, emotions, and perspectives, which—whether liked or detested—remain recognizable to all.  
—Eleni Triantafylopoulou, from the introduction to *I Want a Country*, Greece

His goal is to show us around the chaotic, hostile, unwelcoming, wounded, helpless “land of men.” Flourakis engages himself . . . with the savage and sacred material of human nature. —Eleni Koutsileou, *Avgi*, Greece

I cannot imagine the source—the readings or experiences—from which he combines the most magical elements of naturalism. —Grigoris Ioannidis, *Efimerida Ton Syntakton*, Greece



Left, *The ovation for Readiness Exercise (a workshop in advance of the play) at Beep theater in Athens.*

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# WAR IN TIMES OF LOVE

By **Jeton Neziraj** Translated by Fadil Bajraj

An imaginary beauty parlor—within an insane asylum—is the scene of mesmerizing confessions.



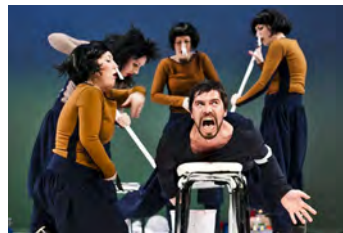
Four female patients run an imaginary beauty salon, and as they perform manicures or remove the hair from their clients' rumps, they tell each other their own love stories. —Wolfgang Kralicek, theater critic, Vienna, from the forward to *Jeton Neziraj, Six Plays*

However grieving the inmates of this mental hospital are, they recover a lusty health when they speak of their love lives. —David Larre, *Au Poulailleur*, Paris



Grotesque and tragic elements, mundane and fantastic aspects all blend their assorted fragrances to cover up the massacre and its stench . . . Behind a rather provocative title, the play reflects, with humor and great invention, the breakup of ex-Yugoslavia.

—Gilles Boulan, *Le Billet des Auteurs de Théâtre*, Paris



Neziraj creates a disturbing and cathartic play in which his characters' lives intertwine in order to better recognize and illuminate them.

—Borka Pavičević, theater critic, Belgrade, from the preface to the French publication of *War in Times of Love*



A mythic resonance . . . a testament to the blooming theater culture of Europe's newest country.

—Luke Dixon, Artistic Director, Theatre Nomad, United Kingdom

He has managed to create, or is on the way to creating, a Neziresque universe.

—Ballor Hoxha, *Koha Ditore*, Kosovo



Drawing by Biba Kayewich

**JETON NEZIRAJ** is the former artistic director of the National Theater of Kosovo, and the founder and current director of Qendra Multimedia. He has written over twenty-five plays which have been staged, translated, and performed throughout Europe and the United States.

The Kafka of the Balkans.  
—Jakob Hayner, *Theater der Zeit*, Germany

*War in Times of Love* has been performed in London, Paris, Florence, Istanbul, Prishtina, Skopje, Belgrade, Tirana, New Haven, and elsewhere.