

Artist: Filippou Tsitsopoulos

Project Title : “Kage- where K for Kott” ®

With the help of: The Serpentine Galleries, The Whitechapel Gallery, Freize Art fair.

Production: <http://outoftheboxintermedia.org>

The project is a tribute to an unremembered outstanding theorist, **Jan Kott**. A series of filmed live performances in public spaces and monologues/reflections based on his two books that resemble literature writing rather than academic manuscripts (Jan Kott, *Shakespeare our Contemporary & Theatre of Essence*), will be employed, as theatrical texts for Tsitsopoulos' monologues, to reconstruct an imaginary life of Jan Kott in London.

In the same vein as Joyce's Ulysses who revisits “payments” of a day time mythology, the personage who is acting Kott will revisit all his principal theatrical subjects from Ionesco and Gombrowitz, in conjunction with his beloved subjects such as: his relation with art and life and his beloved and magical actress **Ida Kamińska**, (also well known from the Oscar prize nomination but especially from her remarkable embodiment of Brecht's *Mother Courage*)

I had the privilege to see a similar performance like Ida Kamińska's Mother Courage by Greek actress Katina Paxinou when I was six to seven years old. Jan Kott knew Paxinou well and several times saw that play to include her in his book about Drama. My father, repertory actor, was acting the role of the priest in Brecht's play next to Paxinou. I barely remember Mr. Kott now, but his smile, his black shirt, and the fact that he was enjoying like a small child the cakes Paxinou offered to both of us in the backstage room has marked my memory. I remember him coming at Paxinou's theatre for some time. He spend time in Greece, in Epidaurus theatre, quite often as I later understood. I was almost every night after school in theatre backstage doing my home work, watching Brecht's play, enjoying especially my father's acting, as every child could do, every afternoon, till my mother, who usually finished her job later, would come and take me home .

Index of links of the above mentioned performers:

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=brIIBQAXtNEC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katina_Paxinou

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/310658/Ida-Kaminska>

<http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%93%CE%B9%CF%8E%CF%81%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%82%CE%A4%CF%83%CE%B9%CF%84%CF%83%CF%8C%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%82>

https://www.google.co.uk/?gws_rd=ssl#q=giorgio+strehler+tempest

<http://www.tovima.gr/relatedarticles/article/?aid=124198>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDrGsrEZlfQ>

Having a repertory actor as father makes you inevitably a silent witness of his rehearsals at home. This fact can change you forever. Endgame, Hamlet and Othello, Berry, Bart, Beckett, from *Jerzy Grotowski to Giorgio Strehler and from Ibsen to Calderon, to Peter Weiss, Suzuki Tadashi, Peter Sellars, Heiner*

Müller, Tony Harrison, and Thomas Murphy, to Kafka's "A Cage went in search of a Bird"...

If this is the conclusion of a lifetime with your father, then you are very close to adopting a religion called "Ionesco" and the person to swear, as Peter Brook's said, is "*in the name of the Bible of Jan Kott*".

Theatre is the medium to understand the world. Although I studied visual arts (BA Fine Art), theatre came up, it was inevitable, and all the love about the masks, "layers of onions of an actor's visible visibility or invisibility," make me jump, through painting to performance. The most "near bus stop before Theatre." Jan helped me understand what means to find the non-evident in the evident, and the evident in the non-evident ...

Well, this project starts mentally from my home ground and is transported to a theatrical ground which is London (where I now live), creating performances at public spaces, scenarios and monologues reflections about theatre and life, as if I was wearing metaphorically the skin of Kott who in my works now is living in London, walking the streets, watching galleries and Museums, sleeps on a boat by the river, approaching the near strangers and talk with them, and uses masks as Kott's favorite elements of his *Verfremdunseffekt* (photographs attached). Acting is putting on, other faces and embodying someone else soul.

Kafka is to inspire this journey and "A cage went in search of a bird", became "**Kage- where K for Kott**", who is the title to these works and to Joyce to take care of the *Ulyssean* journey, of video- filmed- performances and monologues allover London. This piece will be presented in a Gallery as a photography and large scale multi channel video installation and will also be presented at several exhibitions.

You can find a sample of this video installation here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOIEhfX4lXw>

This project is related to the *Cabinet of Curiosities of Mr. Bonsai*, still ongoing, based on a reconstruction of a *Cabinet of Curiosities* but in video form, everything made by light, no real objects only per formative videos of a world who passes through my eyes classified with performance. Masks with living elements are employed and the works sounds like a close up of a Nature world transformed into a human form.

“Kage-where K for Kott” will be included in the cabinet following its completion.

For more information about the Cabinet works please visit:

<http://www.thebluecoat.org.uk/events/view/exhibitions/1882>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChwSQR4Y5fw>

Fernando Castro Florez (Spanish critic) review about the above projects:

“In Greek vases as in Filippou’s works, almost all the figures are looking sideways, except figures that should face death, who are the only ones who are looking in front. In Ancient Greece, the Actors didn’t come to act a tragedy role from the backstage, but from Ades, the kingdom of death. This is where the Greek tradition is placing the actor before the play. ”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e198CpCEDxs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztbs0MtN9zE>

As a Joycean *Ulyssean* journey, where Homer Ulysses embodies the Joycean and vice versa, all this is like, the classic theatre paradigm of the mirror, when Hamlet tell his actors to pull up a mirror so that they may view themselves, *and if a theatre is a mirror then “the right is left in it, and the left right. In the mirror, our heart is on the right side, we cross with our left hand”*. *And if we ask ourselves what is real in the theatre then probably we will answer the chairs. Yet these chairs when taken from the auditory and set on the stage are no longer chairs are representations of chairs, “spots” in theatre language like Ionesco’s empty chairs are waiting the viewers to come. The same way as London responds as canvas for my performative works and monologues, a theatrical “spot” the most precious one.*



“Kage- where K for Kott”, Second part Social Annexed Project ®

“I was in a house in one of the longest night of constant bombing Warsaw ,full of people dancing and laughing, thinking maybe is the last night and I suddenly saw two actors who are trying to fight and win a strange competition. “The ugliest and most horrible grimace of the world made by the muscles of a human face” A grimaces Competition.”

Jan Kott Theatre of Essence. Page 178



The Grimaces Competition is the digital and technological reconstruction and adaptation in a modern life and public art form of an incident took place in the Second World War. In a Hackney central 38 London bus are installed 120 screens in his exterior façade and lateral as well in the upper outside roof. People invited to get in and describe with a grimace in a camera, in the interior of the bus the horror and or the joy of their feelings, and or personal or political disappointments.

Based on an essay by Jan Kott**, theatre arts critic, about an incident during the second world war in Poland where, during a long night of constant bombing Warsaw ,two actors in a desperate party/obligate gathering due to the fallen bombs, are

trying to fight and win a strange competition. "The ugliest and most horrible grimace of the world made by the muscles of a human face".

This project wants to embrace the disappointment and luck of believe of the citizens to the actual social and human structures, asking them to perform a grimace. In every stop of the bus new people will come up and new grimaces will be added in the timeline of the day. Every grimace will be filmed and streamed on the flat television screens in the exterior of the bus. This event will be collecting grimaces all over London. Older "grimaces" (from the days before) will be added in hard discs and streamed in some of the outer screens of the bus, while in other screens, will be performed the new ones totally live.

The inside part of the bus will remove some big amount of the seats, to include a space with one camera, waiting to record the reaction of a passenger to a memory or to something related always with a grimace. A video edition and streaming team of volunteers and people explaining the action where the artist is involved will be there to help and give the guidance points. The artist will perform also every day during two hours a sequence of grimaces streaming them directly on one outer screen of the bus. In several stops of the bus 38, while the bus is moving, 3 teams will be collecting grimaces of people who their grimaces are willing to travel along with the other people grimaces in the bus. When the bus stops in the bus stop, the hard discs will be given to the editors and will be streaming on the exterior Tv screens of the bus.

The Grimaces Competition is an adaptation in a modern life form of that Warsaw incident but in an *outside inverted shape*. The metaphor of the attack of the commercial markets, art markets, social markets, art war, "the constant bombing of the human rights and work", as well the cuts of all type of benefits due to the new order of things which embrace with indifference the unprotected citizens, makes critical the reaction and activation of the series of primary feelings and interior nerve mechanics, spasms and expressions and the use of them as the possible theatrical Utopia answer and (U) collective reflection performance answer to disappointment and to disagree or agreement. In the exterior of the bus, as well as in Ancient Greece " the Eleusinian Telesterion (initiation hall)" and "ex amaxis" events this will turn too into a live structure society performance.

Can be considered as a collective absurd comedy drama for viewed live but in video, as an Ionescian puzzle in the outside part of the bus in nearly two hundred or more connected and adapted flat television screens in the exterior of it. In our theatrical modern theory, the fact of the two actors

competing for the most horrible grimace under the sound of bombing Warsaw in fact was used as an example by Ionesco to his students who saw this competition as Jan Kott described in his book.

**Jan Kott "Theatre of Essence"

This work will perform, inverted from the inside, with grimace and absurdity, the outer world of nowadays. This theatre bus will reveal the expression of the inner protected or unprotected presence of territorial freedom, and what people believe and also the mechanics that arise at the human being in order to defend himself psychologically and physical from an external pressure, defeat the fear, as well the sadness.

Filippos Tsitsopoulos is an installation, video theatre and performance media artist who has worked in the field of interactive theatre installation art exploring the limits of performance as well as in painting since 1990. His practice engages the spectator/participant to a new theatre or rather a system of including theatre as a catalyst of our daily life. Concepts that belong to the theatre, traditional theatre, modern theatre are applying to visual arts observing the effects that these concepts can produce in the "image" as plasticity behavior. With the use of self made masks made from living materials and animals or plants is constructing parallel equivalents that enclose and juxtaposing temporally disproportionate elements.

Production

Out of the Box Intermedia is a non-profit interdisciplinary arts organisation actively committed to the research, development and presentation of location-driven and intermedia projects. The organization aims to promote international exchange of practice and knowledge in the arts (visual and sound art, dance, architecture, theatre), to research on the methods used in theatre and curatorial practices and to investigate points of intersection between the arts and the public sphere by means of interventions, collective actions and educational programmes. Out Of The Box Intermedia was founded in 2008 in London by Dr. Sozita Goudouna who has curated intermedia projects and exhibitions in

London and Athens in venues such as the Shunt Vaults, Hunterian Museum, French Institute, Barbican Centre, Benaki Museum, Byzantine Museum, Historical Archives Museum, Place-London, Art-Athina International Fair, DRHA 2014 Greenwich and in the public sphere. The production UN/INHABITED has been selected as the official national representation at Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space 2015. Dr. Sozita Goudouna is currently production coordinator at Marina Abramovic' film "Seven Deaths," conceived by the artist in collaboration with seven prominent directors such as: Polanski, Almodovar and others.

For more information please visit: <http://www.outoftheboxintermedia.org>