

## **INTERPELLATION (v 1.02 / 26.3.2021)**

Tomáš first approached Miriam about the show via Facebook. Her name appears on the 2019 list of performances on one of the contemporary dance festivals sites, in the performance category under the name New Faces. Several names came up on the list at that time. Based on that list, Tomáš got in touch with her. Later, there was also a brief meeting, again at a similar festival of contemporary dance, where Tomáš briefly, in just a few minutes, elaborated on information previously exchanged over the internet. Miriam's friend and classmate, Rebecca, also attended the meeting. Rebecca was approached previously by Tomáš on the recommendation of her tutor. Rebecca and Miriam were standing together when Tomáš joined them. At that time neither of them was aware that they were both approached for the same show, and from the looks on their faces, neither of them recognised Tomáš right away. Until then, Tomáš had no idea that the two knew each other. Tomáš was not able to make it to Miriam's show, as it was sold-out. He was waiting in a bush behind the catering van until the show was over and he would get a chance to catch the girls. There was a group of people surrounding the girls who were probably congratulating them on their performance, as it is customary in these parts. It is a very small world where everyone knows everybody. As Tomáš was already in quite a hurry to catch his train, he walked straight up to a small table in the courtyard of the New Synagogue in Žilina, where the girls were standing after a long day, intentionally not mingling with others. Hi, I am Tomáš. Miriam remembers this with humour. She recalls eating an orange. She remembers they were being told the outline of the performance's objective. From their discussion, they got an idea of what the performance was about. Due to the timetable constraints, Rebecca in the end did not participate in the show. However, we certainly still could work together in the future. Recently, Rebecca established her own brand of hand-knitted socks made by grandmas. Miriam's sister helped her create visualizations for the socks. Miriam has not heard from her in a while, just that she is finishing her master's degree at VŠMU (the University of Musical Arts) in Bratislava. Rebecca also recently called Miriam's grandmother to see if she would like to make some extra money by knitting socks, but gran did not feel up to it.

Miriam likes to remember the first residency she took in Brno. The most vivid memory she has of those few days is the blue carpet where most of the dance rehearsals took place. As part of the overall reflection of all settings associated with the process of preparation of the performance, Miriam includes her feelings as a state of oblivion. Namely, that she didn't know where she fit in the process and the idea of the final performance. She couldn't predict what would be the final climax. Much of the information about what it all amounted to was kept under a blanket of mystery, albeit paradoxically, every activity during rehearsals was giving away excessive amount of information, meanings, and clues. At times, Miriam felt like a robot being assigned tasks without explaining the context in relation to the previously given information. But she saw this experience as interesting, and quite positive. Her visualisation of the final result offers her something that never happened during the rehearsals. It is a scene

from a poster for one of Tomáš's exhibitions, depicting four 3D characters with outstretched arms. This figural pose represents a base model when modelling a human figure in a virtual environment before it is being animated. To Miriam, this characteristic pose, generally evokes the expression of the body being in oblivion while engaged in work.

In retrospect, Miriam realized that a lot had happened during the production process. She sees each residency very differently from the dance research point of view. Many activities did not directly, or rather not obviously, tie up together, albeit it was quite easy to follow the overall intent compared to the situations that were created previously. It seemed as if every day, or even every hour, she was rehearsing something new, like a completely different performance. In the end, Miriam says she could find potential connections in all of this. She recalled a few moments associated with awkwardness. Like when you are saying something, you are not very comfortable with, getting deeper and deeper into a kind of spasm. She recalled that Tomáš drank excessive amounts of coffee, which until today she does not quite comprehend how this could be physically possible.

She will not forget the winter of one of her residencies, where there was a public presentation where no public had turned up. The only spectators at the time were a theatre critic, who was also there for her creative residence, and the theatre director.

The introduction of the presentation was the gradual invasion of the dancers from a nearby forest into the theatre building. The girls were bumping into the exterior walls of the building, windows, and doors, which was quite noticeably heard on the inside space of this empty theatre. The ambiguous characters of dancers were disappearing into the night, they were shimmering outside where they can be seen from the windows. The outdoor area was illuminated by a green light, and the inside of the whole building was plunged into darkness. Randomly distributed movement should ensure that you could not tell how many people were outside and where. Of course, that would only work if there were uninformed viewers inside. The whole thing could be compared to a failed low-budget B-horror movie of the likes of *The Night of the Living Dead*.

In the second part of the performance, frozen dancers made their way into the theatre building through the back entrance to the theatre hall. By now, this was accompanied by loud music, coming from the concert speakers, which they very quickly brought themselves from the theatre hall as they arrived in the lobby. A techno-party took place right in the theatre's lobby. While Miriam, as the only one, was running back to the theatre hall, where video footage of the dance competition in which she performed at about seven years old was projected on the big screen. She tried to imitate dance creations of that girl in the film that played in a loop. She describes this as probably a very peculiar situation for the others involved. According to her, this trial version of the show for two viewers would work even better today than it did then.

One of the rehearsal motives at the time, which was presented to the girls as a possible working tool, was to describe the functioning of computer software. The task of this software is to

automatically click on all the ads on the Internet. As a result, the software would confuse the algorithm calculation on which the advertising targeting the user is based. It is supposed to make user identification impossible based on their social behaviour. It simply automatically clicks on everything that is possible, even hidden, giving a very confused message about the user as a result. Paradoxically, in this way, the ordinary user remains essentially anonymous, by taking a large number of interactions. This is how the girls should have imagined the space around them, as if they were fulfilling the role of this software.

One of the pivotal motifs of the performance appeared here – the colour orange. Miriam is referring to orange baseball caps that previously appeared in another rehearsal presentation. She visually developed a positive relationship with these baseball caps. She is looking for associations with an orange that she ate at the first meeting, but that association is not a true connection. Orange is an extremely basic colour that occurs often on different objects around us. It plays an important role in construction, road traffic, highlighting signs, it is also a reflective element. It also can be identified as an aid in creating a virtual environment. It is a kind of borderline, line, or contour. It has many uses, and it is certainly interesting to try to observe what all this colour is assigned to.

In 2019, the coral shade of orange on the Pantone palette was declared the colour of the year. A year later, it was "classic blue."

Sometime when she was four, little Miriam started to attend the Eva movement studio, which focused on gymnastics. One fragment of her memories from this period is how relatively often she was stretching on wooden wall bars. That was her first real contact with dance. Later, when she started primary school, alongside, always after classes, she would continue to attend the gymnastics club that was taking place in the hall next to her school. This hall was called the Gymnastics-Trampoline Club. Yes, the trampolines were the main attraction for her. At that time, her coaches started to choreograph her routine for an upcoming competition. It was based heavily around gymnastics with some dance. She competed in floor exercise. She did not get far in this discipline. In these gymnastics circles there were a lot of kids who were much better than her. She never even made it to the top 10 of these competitions. She would not be even considered for entering. Her mother, who dreamt of being a dancer, pushed her into these competitions. Her parents seldom asked her what she would like to do or what was she interested in. In this way, her parents probably prepared her for her future career. This was a relatively good solution for Miriam as according to her, she was never good at maths or other logical subjects.

She remembers one of her coaches who used to attend the conservatory. She kind of suggested to her that gymnastics was not exactly right for her. She directed her further to the local conservatory, where she could study dance directly. That is when Miriam thought, this is an opportunity that in the future would support her. That is where she first encountered contemporary dance. It was a big change from folk dance and ballet, the conventional dance

genres. Miriam remembers seeing a performance of physical theatre by Jozef Fruček in the Dance Studio in Banská Bystrica. This show featured real blood. That was the moment that kicked off a lot of things for her.

Miriam's performance that was already mentioned, which she presented in 2019 as part of the contemporary dance festival, was primarily created for the competition. This choreographic competition had a financial award what was for Miriam the main incentive at that time, as she needed funds to go to study overseas. It took Miriam roughly two days to create her own dance solo. She knew who was organising the competition and she tried to tailor her performance accordingly. She knew that the panel would consist of certain people who are well respected and known in the Slovak dance community. Therefore, she decided to create this performance a bit more conceptually and to adapt it in a way that would speak to the panel, according to how she perceived these people. She was not taking this at all seriously, she did not quite care. The show, titled "Neither Mi Nor Ma," was based on improvisation. At this time, Miriam was already studying in her first year at the SEAD Academy in Austria, where she was used to constant active movement. Miriam does not like to talk about this show. Today, she would not want to do a performance in in this way. Every time she was supposed to play this show somewhere else, she did not enjoy it. She would rather never perform it again. In this show, Miriam performs a headstand. That year, Miriam listened to Deep Purple and attended yoga classes, where she learned this headstand. At the first performance of this dance solo, at the already mentioned competition, Miriam stood on her head just briefly. Gradually, this form transformed, and Miriam stood on her head longer. As the show was built mainly on improvisation, Miriam always wondered while standing on her head what she would do next. Right next to her was a pineapple, a pile of leaves and some dirt. In order for this to work as part of the competition, she began to interact intuitively with these objects. She cut pineapple, blew the leaves.

The performances, which reached the top three spots in the competition, were later to be presented at the NuDance Dance Festival. There, at the end of the show, Miriam passed this sliced pineapple to one of the ladies in the audience as if she were, just by a chance, an important choreographer and a publicist. This lady came to see Miriam after the show, to tell her that she did not expect such a gesture and that she enjoyed the performance very much. After this accolade, Miriam told herself that in the end it was probably rather good. Later, this performance was also listed on the KIOSK Dance Festival, in the New Faces category, where the previously mentioned meeting regarding the performance you are witnessing right now took place.

When Miriam later had to imagine what the premiere of this show would look like after all the previous production processes, she makes references to some figural compositions that took place during the second residency in Žilina. These are, in her view, things that can be somewhat expected in the final form of a premier. She judges by the way the author is perceived. Particularly, for example, a case where all the dancers stood diagonally and moved in dance

steps country music knows as a Line Dance. During these dance steps, they were asked in some parts to disassemble a firearm.

Although a great deal of time has passed since the last pre-prime residency, some things are still fresh for her. She really doesn't have any specific idea about what is really going to be the final form of the performance. Later, when she devoted herself to doing her own creations, or during dance rehearsals at school, it happened on numerous occasions that many settings reminded her of the things from the production of this performance. At times, while doing other projects, she also wondered, for example, what would happen next at that moment if she were to be part of the rehearsal for this show. She often remembered times when it was decided whether what had just happened would be later used in the final form of the show or whether it will be cut. Also, from this consideration she drew the conclusion that anything from the process of rehearsing this performance would be fine to use in the end. She would not have a problem with any of this.

However, she really regretted that during the rehearsal, one particular idea was abandoned. It was the idea of a poker game in a dramatic atmosphere similar to that of a television broadcast, a cards based reality show with no comments or any physical expression that would not as much as indicate anything to anyone.

By the time the girls even got to the playing table, they had to go through a process of another game right away - musical chairs - very similar to the one that is often played in nurseries or kids' parties, where a group of people would walk around chairs set up in a circle and once the signal sounded all the chairs have to be sat on. There are fewer chairs than players and after each round, the player who does not have a chair leaves the game. However, there were about 100 of these chairs in the hall at the time, which meant that a different system of reducing female players had to be invented. So, to gradually create a path to the playing table for all three players, only the chairs were removed.

Chairs are generally an inexpensive, but highly effective, element of dance performances. Today, it could be said that they are a sign of underestimation of both the audience and the dancers. Yes, they are a very significant part of everyday life in space, but so it was in the 1960s and also in the Middle Ages. Ultimately, all three girls came to sit at the table, no one had to leave the game, and only the chairs changed the composition in space. These chairs would later be intended for the potential audience, who would until then only be standing up. After each round, three more people from the audience would be sat down. This kind of audience interaction cannot always be expected, especially if it is not clear where the plot of the performance will lead and whether the last few chairs would not be used again by the dancers.

During the pretend card game, the girls were not able to reveal their cards, and their facial expressions were hidden by the orange baseball caps pulled down to cover their faces. The game had no development, no rules, not even real playing cards. This almost static process could have lasted for a few hours. Miriam feels it is a pity that this has not been followed up.

All rehearsals were recorded on camera, which created several tens or possibly hundreds of hours of documentation. Miriam would one day like to see the footage of all the rehearsals. Some recorded materials could work separately, like short films. Combining some could create, for example, a very engaging trailer for this show. But the audience might be led to exaggerated expectations of a result.

For a while, one trailer was being created, but from new materials that were created separately from the show's joint production processes. This trailer eventually became a half-hour video called Carpet Stories, which does not directly refer to the show. In the video, an office chair takes the main role, spontaneously starts to spin around its own axis, there is no assistance from anyone, but the chair does not stop. Computer generated voices of computer assistants commenting on the story spread further around the room. The room contains various photographs of this particular chair, or for example a deformed portrait of an avatar from the computer game Half Life. This video can be found on the internet.

Nonetheless, Miriam is not afraid of the result, and she speaks for all of the girls, that they will do their best and it will all work out in the end.

Miriam likes to watch internet videos filmed by a slow-motion camera, where people slice, cut, paint, or squeeze different kinds of food or other strange materials. She says that this pastime came from a particular experience in her life some time ago. Every time she watches this kind of video, she gets back the feeling of that experience. Recently, she discovered a YouTube channel where a giant plunger squeezes under great pressure various solid metal elements and compounds. This plunger can, for example, crush glass, steel, or a soccer ball. In these videos, there is a gentleman who puts materials under this plunger but is unfazed by any of it. Miriam enjoys the most when something quite soft is squashed in these videos. It gives her a very pleasant feeling. She likes how the cut runs symmetrically, precisely, or when in some other videos, long thin strips are being pushed out of small holes. When Miriam was little, she remembers how she enjoyed squeezing a balloon filled with flour. Doing this made her calm and she still does to this day. Whenever and in any situation, this will work for her. She does not watch these videos to get calm, rather she is looking for excitement, a sense of thrill or surprise. If she had to choose a cake to slice, it would be a strawberry one. She would find it absolutely brilliant if such thing could be a part of the show.

There was an Open Call to start with, after Miriam accepted the offer to collaborate on this show. The Open Call announced an audition for a dancer or motion actress for a feature night dance performance, a conceptual movement form under the working name Interpellation. The premiere was supposed to take place in May 2020. The candidate selection should have been carried out online, based on the submitted application documents. This took place sometime in September of 2019. The application should contain basic information about the applicant and her previous experience in dancing, CV, or a portfolio. The candidates were required to include video footage of their performance, rehearsal, or training. The video was supposed to clearly

show recognisable movement of the female candidate. The quality and reason for the recording was not important, it could even be a mobile phone video if the applicant did not have access to better quality recording equipment. Professional as well as emerging authors interested in discussing the process from the theory point of view and who were open to overlaps with other artistic genres were welcome to apply. "The applicant must be available on all the above rehearsal dates and the premiere. Working on this project is commissioned. There will be an opportunity for long-term cooperation on other projects."

There were fourteen female candidates applying, one of which applied under a false name and sent in a rather abstract video focusing on her leg. After contacting this person, Tomáš received via email another action-packed dance video. Despite the dancing girl's face being covered, Tomáš recognised the person. Identification was also helped by recognising the surroundings of the apartment room where the girl was dancing and where he lives together with this girl. It was his girlfriend Tereza. Tereza is a former clown.

All the other female candidates were most likely real, and each presented herself in a specific way and approach that was difficult to reject but did not make sense to evaluate. In total, Tomáš met four of these remarkably interesting female candidates in a live interview. All four travelled quite far to attend. Later, Tomáš met with one of the candidates, long after the audition, as she was intrigued by the rejection consultation. This offer was made to each of the candidates. Some of the applicants later appeared in Tomáš's other projects.

Nikola's meeting was the last one in a series of three live meetings with the applicants at the Open Call. She was one of the first to respond to the call. Most of the applications are usually received on the last day. It was at a time when Nikola was finishing her bachelor's degree thesis and was not required to be actively present at the university. While doing this, she searched for various projects. The more, the better, making money and networking while writing her thesis. The sooner the better. Nikola cannot remember on which website she came across the Open Call for this show. But when you look for things like that, you find them. She applied to this Open Call. She imagined Tomáš in a completely different way. She thought he would be some sort of a fortysomething year old man. Later, they met for the first time in an audition interview, over coffee in Brno. After Tomáš overloaded Nikola with the huge amount of information about the project, he asked her if she knew any other potential candidates. They also talked about Miriam for a while, but at the time, she was already featured in the show.

This is how Nikola describes the opening moments. Even if she sometimes does not know what she is getting into, she always hopes it is something good and that she is lucky in what comes her way. She did not see this situation as something terrible. She went into it thinking it was just going to be fine and the show was going to turn out well. After she met Tomáš, she realised that he was not thick and that he himself does understand what he is talking about. At their first meeting, Nikola learned quite quickly that she would be a part of the project. Tomáš expressed it in words, something like "you're in" or "you got in." Nikola describes these sentences as

strange and prompt. She describes her reaction as "oh, ok". This audition, if it can be called that, took place, as has been mentioned before, in the form of an interview. Nikola was not particularly preparing for this audition. All she remembers was that she had had a look at Tomáš's Facebook profile and YouTube videos. But most likely, it was just the Facebook. Nikola describes her feelings of the audition as good. Nikola says she does not need to try to impress. In her words, she says that she does not need to pretend and that she is trying to be who she is. If she would pretend to be something, she would have to carry on pretending. She had nothing to lose. Obviously, if she meets someone for the first time, she does not treat them as her brother. Of course, she would behave a little bit differently than she would in everyday life and her own environment. For Nikola, the most important thing is to sit down with the people she is going to work with.

Nikola realises that it is good to have a full CV, if for no other reason, just for other applications. What she does is not only for the benefit of her CV, albeit she does not deny the importance of its role. She is happy when there is something added. She does not take her work in a way that she takes her time and says goodbye. This way of working would be extremely difficult from the point of view of an artist in relation to creating. She recognises the role of art in the society.

Nikola enjoys doing new things, she likes meeting new people, getting new experiences, new ways of creating, and she is not ashamed of it, even if it sounds a little trivial. She is interested in other people's scope, their approach to creation, the ways in which the show is produced. That is what she likes and enjoys. For her, it is not the mechanical work where everything ends once it is finished. In the future, she hopes to create and work on her own things. On the dancing scene, she says it is important to have a lot of contacts. Nikola also likes to travel, so she was pleased that the production of the show would take place in several places.

When she was later asked what she believed was her role in the show's production process, she answered, it was to have interactions during residences, outside working hours. Girls were constantly given fresh information about the different meanings, contexts, and associations of this work. These took the form of conversations, which often replaced the processes of physical activity in the studio. Therefore, giving a response about a more comprehensive picture of these common interactions can be taken as a success of these processes. Nikola describes herself as part of an organism. Not in the way of a corny corporate phrase, but in the very specific context of some of the ideological and institutional backgrounds of this project. Everyone in the process was her equal, even though there is someone in the setting who is tasking others. Tasking came most often from Tomáš, but these roles were in certain situations often exchanged, or sometimes even cancelled. The project itself concealed experimentation and research of non-hierarchical functioning within the group. Of course, the non-hierarchy was not the backbone of the project, it often caused misunderstandings, chaos in the schedules, and revealed some authoritative traits of the project participants. The group was not aware of the deliberate non-hierarchical way of working together. This in itself is a paradox. You could say it was a



temporary experiment that got out of hand at times. This temporality resulted in later difficulty of changing this way of working. This information was only given to the group at the time of the premiere.

Nikola's feelings about the overall process were every day quite different. All the surroundings and places of residency where the production took place were more varied. Due to the fact that the premiere had to be postponed several times, communication regarding the final performance was extremely specific even during the long pause that occurred between the last residency and the premiere.

Nikola felt the best in Žilina at Stanica Záríečie (station Záríečie). The second joint residency took place there. She felt at her best as this environment was the closest to what can be described as the dance studio space. That is where the most interesting things were happening to her. She had the feeling of group and intense work there. She also felt that she achieved the best creative results. At the residency before, that is the first residency in Brno, it felt as if everyone there was a guinea pig. The fact that the residency was held according to her in a peculiar, cramped environment, in an environment better suited for painting than creating dance, contributed to this.

Nikola is very affected by the space in which she is located. Nikola feels her best on the stage, in front of the audience. For her, it marks the climax of the whole production process, when something is finally being presented to the public. Of course, she finds working in the studio a similarly fulfilling activity. Therefore, she found the working environment in Žilina, extremely comfortable. The residency in Brno she describes as a feeling of a strange room, but she does not perceive it in any critical way. There was also a studio in Bátorovce, in the Pôtoň Theatre, it was where the last residency took place, and where the already mentioned techno-party took place. She did not like it there that much as the space was too big and at the same time isolated from the community, with nowhere to run. Well, apart from the forest. She would much rather just go there alone and not rehearse a group show. According to her, this place could be well used by everyone alone. Rehearsals were taking place in a large theatre hall, in the space below the stage that is intended for the audience. Gradually, it expanded from the hall and took over the entire lower floor of the building, even the outdoor area, where the night-time temperatures at that time dropped below zero.

One morning, when Nikola was little, she woke up and went to have breakfast with her sister in front of the telly. At that time, her mum came into the room and asked the sisters if they wanted to sign up for some after school club, such as a dance club. Nikola's answer was "Yes." So, her mum signed her up for the dance club at the Primary Arts School when she was just five or six. Nikola didn't mind so much what kind of club it was going to be. Why would she not try it? It was not so much about the dancing; it was about any club activity in general. In her words, she was too young to understand what dance is.

In her words, the story of her first contact with dance is different from the others around her, who are still dancing today. She enjoyed the school club that took place twice a week. She describes it as a hobby of her early years. When later there was a decision made about to which secondary school to apply, she was still an active member of the club. At that time, her friend decided to go to the art school to study dance. Nikola was taken by surprise that something like this could even be studied. Her friend asked her if she wanted to accompany her to the entry exams, just for a laugh. So, Nikola joined her. She describes these events as a sequence of random events. After the entry exams, Nicola was accepted to the school. One of the main reasons she wanted to go to school was that she would be in the student halls. She really wanted to leave home. She always enjoyed dancing, but these decisions were never about her going straight for it. At the end of the fourth year, she was firmly decided that this is what she would like to do in her life. She spontaneously followed on to study at university abroad.

From her childhood, she remembers that someone from her more distant family was suffering from kleptomania. Probably it was her uncle's uncle. Her sister once told her that when their uncle came once to visit them, she witnessed him walking into their kitchen and starting to open cupboards and taking out various objects and putting them into his pocket. Her parents simply told her that he was a kleptomaniac and that he was looking for money.

Nikola also recollects her very own first theft. When she was a kid, she was with her mom in a haberdashery. When her mum was paying, Nikola noticed a container of plastic ladybirds on the top of the cash register. She owns one of those ladybirds to this day. Nikola stole a lot of things in her life and often talks about it during her work process discussions. She says that she does not steal anymore. That she realises that it is not right. The second time, she stole a nice pencil sharpener from one of her classmates in primary school. The boy told the teacher, who then searched all the school bags in the class. Nikola did not fess up and the sharpener in her bag got overlooked. Later, Nikola returned the sharpener. Another time, at her cousin's instruction, she stole a ball. She stole several postcards of her own accord. It has been a few years since she stole anything.

Nikola also observes her OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder), at times, when no one else is looking. For example, if she jumps on her right leg, she must also jump on her left one. Similarly, she is biting on the sides of her teeth. Her one eye squint is something a bit different. When Nikola squints twice with her right eye, she must balance it out twice on the left eye, and then straight away again with the right because the left eye is disadvantaged as the right eye was the last to squint. And since the number of these activities spontaneously accumulates, it just cannot be stopped, which brings about quite an unpleasant state that can only be interrupted by another activity.

During the premiere of this show, Nikola was finishing the production of one other theatre performance, and was waiting for another that was taking place next month. During this break, she secretly organised studio physical exercise training. Nikola's a freelancer. She applies for

residencies, for which she creates concepts, participates in auditions and waits for answers. She is always searching for and trying new things, and while doing that she teaches.

In addition to that, she was a student then, every day for two months she took three hours of German lessons. She could afford to pay for this course with insurance money. At present, she is also producing a concept of her own dance performance, where she will be in the role of choreographer and will also dance. Her performance is hoping to be performed with two other male dancers and a musician.

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Nikola imagines this project will result in the expression of various geometric shapes; it is the project that you are watching right now. It is based on a reflection on the processes of which she was part of, during the time of her four residencies. She often felt like she was, for example, in a cube or a circle. It must be said that they were on a few occasions working with cardboard boxes of a cuboid shape or for example, with tennis balls.

She liked the choreography exercise the most, when the girls were learning how to put together and take apart an invisible firearm, using a YouTube video where this activity was shown in a record time by an anonymous man in an army uniform. She was amused by the contrast between the gun and their femininity, which as she said, no one would expect from girl dancers. She said it would not be a bad idea to try to do something with this particular motif.

If she, herself, were to determine what she would be happy to see in the show, without considering the processes up until now, she needs to think harder. Nikola prefers to work with guys rather than girls when it comes to dance partners. She never really thought about creating anything with girls only. If anything, it would be a little more in the genre of physical theatre in conjunction with storytelling, with only a few elements of dance. I am sure she would use an object to do that. Like a stick or some chalk.

Nikola enjoys the idea of acrobatics with the added value of the wow effect while working with the guys. On stage, she is impressed by the duality. When she is watching a show where only women or only men perform, she says that she is missing something. She enjoys it even less if the things happen on stage in unison, when everyone does the same thing.

She describes previous years of study at school as the moments when she was physically the smallest and the lightest in the group. Every time there was throwing or lifting of someone's body in the air, Nikola was always the one who was thrown. Since then, she has enjoyed working with men and the adrenaline associated with it. She really enjoys working in pairs. The harder the choreography appears to be, the easier and more interesting it is for her.

Nikola sees herself as a genuinely nice person who, in her own words, does not let anyone fuck with her. She is trying to remain a non-conflicting person, and she is trying not to pretend to be someone else. She is currently living with a friend whom she has known for about a decade. She

has no problem to tell off the people that she has known for a long time. That is how she expresses her love for them. They say that it hurts more to be told off by Nikola than anyone else. That is what one of her friends once said. During the process, she became angry just once, during an improvisation, when everyone understood the task in a completely different way.

According to Nikola, it would be really good to utilize the dance potential of all the girls, as each one is completely different and has very specific movement ability. Which is really true. It would be a shame if something like this did not appear in the show. Some kind of dance explosion. It would certainly be better, but that is no longer in her words, if this text is read by a real person.

She says she enjoyed when, in one of the exercises in this performance, each of the dancers was supposed to visually mimic each other's movements in real time, while they were all standing side by side, but at such of a view angle that they could hardly see each other.

According to what Tomáš said within the conceptual description and background research for this project, the most important information for Nikola got stuck in her head. For example, information about how long a person can concentrate during the day based on their environment and surrounding stimuli, and how attention can be lost, for example, when watching a performance from a viewer's point of view. Also how this knowledge is used, for example, when working in corporations, movies and in other spheres of social order.

From the beginning, for example it was clear how long is this show would be, and why. It will be 53 minutes long. In a similar way, this kind of information was also reflected in the timetable of some rehearsals. Nikola enjoys the idea that in the concept of the show there are things that will be hidden from the audience, just under the surface, basically in a way that it will not be actually possible to discover them. At the same time, she also has no idea what is going to happen in the final.

Like Miriam, Nikola also graduated from the Conservatory of Ján Levoslav Bella. Both later went to live and study movement and performance in Austria. They did not leave at the same time, each in a different year. Because of this time gap, they actually had not met at the school.

After Nikola got selected for the show at the audition, she recommended Tomáš to also approach Simona. Nikola and Simona were classmates at the Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität, and she also attended the Jan Levoslav Bella Conservatory in Banská Bystrica. She has a part time job in a café while she works on her own dance projects. She often talks under her breath or thinks aloud. She has a very peculiar sense of humour, sometimes it is like old pensioners' mood humour. She is very influenced by external factors, always suspiciously alert with concerning commentary, whether something actually happened or not. Simona is naturally reflective of herself and others. To get to the first meeting, Simona had to travel by train for four hours round trip.

After Tomáš introduced the basic concept of the show, Simona understood what was conceptually involved. She says that at times, one can get lost in it. She describes some of the

rehearsal process as if you throw someone in a room and let them do whatever they want. She often had doubts whether she was responding correctly to what was being asked of her, but it was logical that everything was right. As I said before, to the first face-to-face meeting, which was relatively short, Simona travelled on a quick turnaround, it was about a four-hour round trip from Linz to Brno. The first contact with her was made very quickly, it took just two emails and a contact from Nikola and she was on a train.

A few weeks later, a residency took place in Žilina. It was the second residency that Simona and the other girls attended together. Simona recalls from this residency in Žilina that she was remaining at the place the most. This was because she, as the only girl, did not get accommodation away from the place of residency. The other girls are in this city at home, so that is where they stayed. The most vivid memories from this residency she has are of situations in which they were showing each other what their idea of movement expression of the other is like. These reactions of one dancer to another were a physical depiction in the sense of some kind of mutual critique. At the same time, it was a subjective interpretation of her colleague's movement expression from the previous round. This exercise, for its success, had to be completed by employing higher alertness, empathy and thinking. It was not an imitation or a parody, sometimes perhaps, but an effort to express brief information from a previous solo dance performance. One girl always danced, and the others were watching her, not knowing until the last moment which one of the girls would be next.

The way it works, was that there was an anonymous draw of names just before the previous solo dance performance ended. That meant that all the dancers had to concentrate their attention, as any of them could be the next. The importance for this view or analysis was grasping their expression, specifically in a different way than before, and to try to understand the language of movement of the other dancer. This language, as well as the information conveyed by it, they should then try to concisely translate into their dance expression, but by using the same dance language. During this exercise, original dance compositions were created. In this exercise, it was necessary to strongly reflect the self as well as the people around. Due to the complexity of this task, it was necessary to first try this exercise in verbal form, alternating the monologues. And only later, in the next cycle in the form of dance.

It was the first time in the history of mankind that the abstract language of contemporary dance, in its arrogant, out of grasp reflection of complete and clear information of hidden ideological entities and identity, was presented through the self-reflection of physicality. It was for the first time that contemporary dance made sense. Like totally...

The ability to self-reflect is the first and experimentally easy-to-prove transcendence experience in human life, which is conditioned by the human ability to create a primary image of I (SELF) in our consciousness. This overlap, self overfulfilment is also "stepping" on the life path towards the well roundedness of a person. Psychological identification depends on the physical body,

but it is not identical to it. French psychologist Jacques Lacan described the importance of the psychic *imago*, and in developmental psychology it is referred to as the "stage of the mirror".

A child of about six months old looks into the mirror and recognizes himself in it. It delights him and he tries to coordinate previously uncoordinated body movements. That in particular, presents a general fact – "identification with the other being in the loosest sense of the word". If we would be misled by the word "stage", it needs to be pointed out, that it is not only a life stage, but also a "position of mental life", the effects of which continue to last throughout life. Thus, "Self", or its conception, is formed at a certain point in life, based on an imaginary relationship. That is by identifying with an external form, which results in restructuring of the psyche of the "Self". And that is where the meaning of the term "the imaginary" lies. The "imaginary" refers to the relationship between the subject and its identifications that shape it. So, the subject realises the uniform shape of his body, and finds his "Self" off himself.

In contrast to the joyous, false recognition that is at the heart of the essay about the "mirror stage", there is also a rarer situation where a twenty-month-old child understood his own reflection in the mirror as an object of love, and in the next eleven months he played with the reflection as if it was his doppelganger or a rival. Another example could be an eight-month-old baby, who is zealously reaching for his reflection in a mirror, and was quite surprised when his hand touched the cold mirror surface instead of warm skin. At fifteen months the same child was touching his reflection, was licking it, pounding it with his small fists and considered it an enemy.

We are however, interested in another, more definite example of interpellation. A child, who did not respond to the voice calling his name, but instead was looking at his reflection in a mirror.

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A few days later, at another residency, in the same town where Simona travelled by train for the first meeting on this project, another "work in progress" public presentation took place. It was a part of Tomáš's exhibition, yet again in a completely different way.

The exhibition was named Still Left. Simona did not expect the presentation to take place among hundreds of cardboard boxes. She describes the experience as interesting. Suddenly, cardboard boxes brought a different meaning to previous processes. It was suddenly something different. She says it was a freedom. It was not just about copying the motion. She was discovering new layers. According to her, there was no need to look for direct meaning, the associations offered by the surrounding area were enough. An object you can play with, simpler, yet with many options.

Thanks to the "bodily" or "postural schema", we have at every moment a global, practical and implicit idea of the relationship between our body and things, of our position in relation to them. We transmit to the surrounding space and cluster of possible movements, or motoric

projects. Our points are not within a space in the same way as objects; rather, it inhabits it and settles in it, attaches to it like a hand to a tool. If we want to shift our position, we don't have to move our body like an object. We don't need any means to change its position, we do it as if it's a miracle, thanks to the fact that the body is ours and allows us direct access to the space.

The real space in which every point is what it really is covered with humans by a "virtual space" into which dry spatial values are inscribed that specific points would be reached if the coordinates of our body changed. As a result, and the system of correspondences comes into existence between our situation and the situation of the others, in which each correspondence symbolizes all of the others.

This different approach, which changes our factual situation into one of the cases in a system of other possible situations, is already realized at the moment when, for example, we point our finger at a point in space. The pointing gesture that animals do not understand assumes that we are already moving within a virtual, centrifugal or cultural space, at the end of a line indicated by the finger. This mimic use of our body is not connected with the mind as it doesn't separate us from the body situation; on the contrary, it takes over its whole meaning.

Simona clearly remembers the boxes, especially for the large amount of photo documentation that we made during that time. This presentation itself took place on one evening in several places. It began after several dozen people entered the gallery space, where the girl-dancers waited in standing still pose among hundreds of boxes arranged in regular sections, according to the layout of the tiles on the floor in the gallery. The boxes were of the same size as these stone tiles. Together, the boxes formed even aisles between in which it was possible to walk freely. The boxes were not glued to the tiles, they could be moved. They were also part-opened, which created geometrical differences in each and every one of them. Gradually, the girl-dancers got moving using the country music steps of the previously mentioned Line Dance. They were avoiding the boxes. They all were at random directions, and they were changing the direction according to the dance steps. The dancers, to start with, were autonomously distanced. They only bumped into them only if a member of the audience disrupted their regular composition and that was the only reason why the boxes were put in the line of dance steps. At times, the girls hit the walls as if they were not there. As if the rows of boxes should continue into the imaginary infinite space behind them. Similar to a programme error in a computer game. Gradually, the girls disappeared out of the gallery and into the lobby, where they clumped together into one joint body. At that point, they had changed the style of movement. But they never stopped. They had gracefully marched off to the city centre – at the same pace, almost in slow unison dance step. They have in this way walked through a large department store, escalators along a long street. Causing quite a stare everywhere. While they were on the move, randomly and accidentally, glibly, loudly uttered the word “Hey.” Sometimes, as it happened, the greeting found someone. At different times, the word “hey” just went into the void. Gradually they moved to another gallery, where in that evening another, unrelated exhibition

had its opening night. In this style of dance walking, accompanied by random word "hey", they were walking through the entire three-storey gallery full of people for the next hour. They also visited a crowded cinema auditorium and interrupted the introductory speech of the curators there. In one of the rooms, they stopped and like in the mirror started to throw a tennis ball at each other. A couple of times the ball missed the hand and fell to the ground. That is when the movement stopped and the dancer who was the furthest away from the dropped ball always went to pick it up. Then she returned to her spot and the game continued. After some time, the game ended, and the joint migration continued through the space until they disappeared outside, out of sight of all visitors of this gallery. All the girls were dressed the same, in black, with heavy boots and orange baseball hats pulled down over their face to prevent their identification or eye contact.

Let us imagine a walking individual. Somewhere, usually behind their back, there is an interpellation, "Hey, you, there!". One of those individuals, in ninety per cent of cases, is the one whose interpellation is aimed at, will turn around, because he believes, he has a feeling, he knows that it is for him, and thus acknowledges that he is the one at whom the interpellation was aimed at.

The existence of ideology and interpellation of individuals as subjects is one and the same thing. We are exposed to interpellation at any time and under any conditions. Even though we think we are on the outside of the ideology, we are actually still inside it. By definition, the subjects that are interpellated by the ideology are under the impression that they have managed to find themselves outside the ideology. After all, the ideology has no outside. This feature of ideology, related to the false recognition function, is referred to as denial. Simply put, ideology never admits its ideological nature, and the subject is nothing more than the result of the actions of interpellation forces.

In order for interpellation to be truly effective, the subject first of all has to believe that it is he who is the one who is interpellated, and not someone else. "Hey, you there!" - is a model interpellation prompt, forming the rudimentary basis of any interpellation process. Experience shows that interpellation practically never misses the intended man. Whether it is a verbal prompt or whistling, the interpellated always recognizes that whoever is interpellated is really the one.

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The process of residencies was awfully long. The amount of information after such a long time tends to be forgotten. When discussing and telling stories together, Simona often felt misunderstood because of her way of expressing herself. In addition to this physical exercise, discussions and critiques were frequently on the agenda for the performance preparation.

Simona is not used to using her mother tongue. When chatting in Slovak, she needs to think more, which often makes her lose the opportunity to react immediately. Once, her grandma



was scaring her that she will be abducted by an UFO. Simona thinks that when she was little, she saw a ghost. She has had a lot of drama in her early life, but all that is behind her. Simona can sometimes get bored very quickly, especially while dancing, she must often repeat the same actions.

Simona suffers from congenital ADHD disorder, which manifests itself in lack of concentration, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness. At times, when she has to wait for something, she loses patience, and needs to do something all the time. Being impatient often hits the surface. If she has some free time while she works, she loses her concentration and gets lost. If there are multiple stimuli around her, she loses concentration, and it disturbs her. Walking down the street, in the presence of cars, is for her more complicated. She keeps looking around and does not pay attention to the road. Her expressions are more sensitive in response to surrounding stimuli. One of the fundamental motives of the performance preparation processes was constant listening to the white noise sound in the background while working. This is where Simona first reported that this sound has the opposite effect on her than on the others. In general, this sound is soothing, helps concentration and today, can be basically found everywhere around us. Whether it is in nature or man made. It is hidden for example in the ventilation, air conditioning or rain. Many people use it when studying or falling asleep. Some sub-genres of heavy metal music have a similar effect. Imagine sitting in the office every day in the summer with the fan on. Have you ever fallen asleep on a bus? For example, to some people with tinnitus, who can hear constant whistling in their ears, this sound actually helps to alleviate this whistling. Some even look for this sound. As long as the sound level is at atmospheric level and completes the background setting, that is fine with Simona.

For Simona it is not a problem to work with someone who can keep her concentration. She finds it most difficult, if in an interview, a person jumps around too much, breaking down the information, simply put, finding himself. She needs information she can work with. The change occurs at the time of live performance. That is when Simona is extremely focused.

In the run-up to this show, Simona was learning to play congas during her free time. She polished the rhythm, playing concentration, and the technique whenever she had a moment to herself, or forgot that there was something going on around her. This was simply her way of relaxing. She was always busy.

Simona first came into contact with dance at the age of three, when her mother enrolled her in a dance club. Later in life, she was most influenced by her teacher, who teaches at the dance conservatory in Nitra. She wanted Simona to go on to study dance. It was at the same time when she realised that she has talent, and that the dance has meaning for her. Simona, in her own words, is a perfectionist. When she was fifteen, she firmly decided on dance after seeing a performance showing the reality and not just purely aesthetic movement that makes no sense to her. This performance was a demonstration of the work of the dance conservatory from

Banská Bystrica, in which the actors had a vicious fight. It was a real fight, which she has never seen before. For 15-year-old Simona, there was something more than just dancing.

Simona goes on to comment on the early collaboration with one dance performance, in which it was not about knowing what this performance was about, while it mainly created the confidence that it was going in the right direction. There was no need to ask or look for the ideas. In the end, there was a feeling that a person had done the right thing and that it felt good. This has not happened to her in a long time. At the time of the premiere of this show, Simona was producing her own research project. She was looking for something new. At the time, she described her research with the help of other people's feelings, using comparisons to laboratory mice. Her research also describes how her surroundings were not ready for this kind of view and the meanings associated with it. Simona can find quality in situations like this. She also talks about her experience with large scenes, which are clearly understandable in their idea and about another way of creating than she knows from school. Next to this, she has other research projects for comparison, which only carry a lot of questions, a lot of searching and a lot of difficulties for dancers who cannot quite believe the whole thing.

Even a little doubt will make it very difficult for her to work. She asks herself how she as a dancer can support such situations. It is hard for her to find a balance. If she, as an artist, believes in something, it is a lot easier. She emphasizes that she does not say she does not believe what she is doing right now, here, in this show. It is just that it is a little different... For her, it is all about being inside the process. She thinks that this show is going to be a bit of a surprise, especially for people. She thinks that people are going to have fun, but she herself has no idea what is the planned final version.

During several such sessions, she often felt unpleasant reactions from one of the girls. A fun moment for her was the experience of the residency in Bátorovce, in the Pôtoň Theatre, when the performance was starting to take the shape of the already mentioned techno-party. In this dance presentation, it was necessary to imagine fictional people around you and to create interactions with them in the rage of dance. In the space, apart from the girls, there was no one from the invited public. They just did not turn up, but ironically it had no impact on the concept of the show. Simona remembers this experience as something very real, that makes one happy, feels relaxed and natural. The joy associated with work. A particular task in which there is a need to actively engage the imagination, but at the same time, there is the need to fully embrace this feeling. At certain moments, the girls swapped roles of taunting, obnoxious people at a disco, trying their luck with all the girls, but also with everything around. During the dance, they tried to improvise fictional stories, pickup lines in interaction with invisible people. This is what Nikola enjoyed the most. Simona gradually danced only for herself, and Miriam, meanwhile, ran to the main theatre hall to mimic the acrobatics of her younger Self, projected on the projection screen.

This, the last joint working residency, took place roughly a year before the premiere. The premiere took place on 26.3.2021. It was 53 minutes long. The next morning, after the premiere, the girls said their goodbyes and left, each on their own way. The show's reruns continued to take place but without their physical presence.