

International Festival
fail better
beckett@111

E-WERK Freiburg 4th March – 12th March 2017
TEATERHUSET AVANT GARDEN Trondheim 5th + 6th May 2017
LAZNIA NOWA TEATR, TEATR GROTESKA, Cracow Oct-Nov 2017
Paris, Auxerre, 2017/2018, in planning

The venue is Freiburg's E-Werk Theatre, except 6th March (Kommunales Kino, Freiburg)

The Festival will open on March 4th 2017, 111 years after the Irish poet's birthday on 13th April 1906.

Why Beckett?

A European at heart. Irish, living in France, writing in English and French, working in Germany. A Dante specialist. His œuvre has become the lingua franca for contemporary artistic expression. It has revolutionized theatre world-wide and influenced musicians, artists, dancers, performers, together with cross-genres, provoking intellectuals and scholars. Ahead of his time, Beckett experimented with the media and techniques which only now are becoming widespread and mainstream. Not only the Beckettian form has had an impact; also that which Peter Brook labels an honest vision. Despite his assumed aura of non-involvement, Beckett has taken a political stance while attempting to grasp the whole complexity of the human situation. After the death of most ideologies and in the face of recent religious and cultural challenges, his work reverberates at this tumultuous time with new tones and encourages us to take on another quest. And if he... fails, as we all do, he fails better!

What we want to emphasize:

The quest. Instead of a museum-style commemoration based on established models, we propose an exploration which sets free energies and brings Beckett close to today's sensitivity, even at a certain risk.

The educational aspect. To teach and learn, privileging the experiment. Not one-way communication but searching together.

Translingual and cross-cultural, going beyond compartmentalization. Aiming to transcend the fixed schemata of national tradition, language, genre, medium etc. To demonstrate how his work, while remaining "roughly" the same, varies from language to language, from genre to genre, from written page to stage to screen, from music to the visual arts to word, from radio to TV/video/acoustics.

Echoes. To juxtapose Beckett's own work in one breath with those inspired by him.

In a nutshell: Among some 30 dramas Beckett has written, only 3 are normal-length plays; most are just fragments and variants, which makes him closer to today's sensitivity and the syncretic aesthetics of the present.

Everyone knows Beckett – but differently. In every language, his works sound different not only because of the language but also because of the culture in question, the varied backgrounds of the artists, and the performing style in their countries. It is a far cry between the Norway-based British performer-composer Pritchard and the Jamaican Dub-poet and jazz singer Ntoutoume, each speaking her native tongue. Or between Pritchard's and the Equador-born Miguashca's composing styles. Given the range of artistic disciplines involved, and the fact that Beckett's works are being confronted with those inspired by him, our putting together of such a programme can teach us as much about Beckett as about ourselves.

And to this purpose one does not need evening-length works; it can be put in a nutshell. LESS IS MORE was Beckett's own guiding principle.

beckett@111 combines music, theatre, performance, video- and audio art, installations, exhibits, workshops, lectures and discussions. In music, original pieces are being written by Alwynne Pritchard (GB, Norway) and Mesias Maiguashca (Equador, Germany). Theatrically, Beckett's late work will be in focus, performed by participants from France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Poland, USA and Jamaica. Academically, discussions, lectures, workshops are being prepared.

This project has been conceived by the Polish writer, translator and director Marek Kedzierski, working internationally, who since 1996 has organized and co-organized major theatre festivals in Strasbourg, Berlin (with Walter Asmus), Cracow, Zurich (with Thomas Hunkeler), each of which emphasized the changing aspects of Beckett's work as it appealed to subsequent generations. This is the next step, tuned into the specific talents of the artists associated with beckett@111.