

INTERVIEW WITH HADAR GALRON ABOUT SLOVAK PREMIERE OF I LOVE MAMA IN JOZEF GREGOR TAJOVSKY THEATRE IN ZVOLEN

In „I love mama“, each actress portrays her own character, but all the men are portrayed by a single actor. Why?

This play was first produced with 3rd year drama students... The topic was given to me: Motherhood. I was also given 8 weeks to write and direct the play, and 8 female students to work with. But I realized I really needed at least one guy. So I asked for just one... with a lot of Testosterone! I thought of the Barbie dolls- there's always Barbie-this and Barbie-that but only one Ken for all. I liked the idea that in this play the male characters are "functional"... yet as it is one actor for all, he does steal the show.

You say you had 8 weeks to write and direct the play. Did female students also take part in it?

Well, I came with the scenario, and worked with improvisations... NUFAR HURVITZ, my assistant director (also one of the cast), help me very much in rewriting the impro's as texts, and her contributions are valuable to the play until today.

Your play I love mama is gorgeous, fresh, funny and also bittersweet introspection not only into motherhood, but also into various relationships. Since 2012, this play has undergone several transformations. What are the changes in our version of the play?

Well, first of all , this version is more or less the version I created for ABC theatre in Prague (MDP), with a few updates and one extra scene at the beginning. The extra scene came about, because of the (great) dialogue I had with Yozef Ciller the scenographer. The storyteller is Abigail - who is making an exhibition on Motherhood... and as we had already decided this would not even attempt to be a "realistic" stage -Yozef suggested that the space would be the space of the exhibition from the start. and all the rest is retrospect. (hopefully when you see the play, you will understand what I am talking about!)

How do you feel directing in our theatre with this team of creators and actors?

My friend and colleague Darina Abrahámová, is the one that brought me here. She told me that the ensemble was great and they are. Also the team of designers - especially choreographer Maria Danadova, who I never met until beginning of rehearsals and I was quite afraid that she wouldn't understand me... on the contrary - we understand each other without words!

You invited the Israeli composer Itamar Gross to join the team in Zvolen. Is the music in I love mama important to you?

Music is always important to me... it connects worlds, even inner and outer worlds. And Itamar is a great musician, we have collaborated on several projects together, both in theatre and in music.

In our context, Jewish themes are mainly associated with the Second World War, and we also staged The Diary of Anne Frank at DJGT. But of course jewish history is much more than that. And I like your play, because it shows a different view of jewish culture. Do you think that showing common themes across the world (motherhood, family, personal problems, dreams) can be a way to tolerance and understanding?

Firstly, I feel that art in general, and theatre especially, should be a bridge to tolerance and understanding. In wars there is little or no culture- but we can look at that the other way round too: If there is a lot of culture and art, there is less war. When we are in "creativity" we are not n survival! For me, I know theatre is a therapeutic tool, as is humor. Whatever the topic. Motherhood (and fatherhood), is forever changing these days, with all the shifts in women's status - I use theatre as a reflective tool, and hope to bring some insight with this play, but more than anything to open the hearts of the audience. If everyone can go home from the theatre and tell their child/ mother "I LOVE YOU" - that's a lot.