

THE INFLUENCE OF APPLIED THEATRE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUDIENCE

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The main purpose of the paper is to point out the importance of applied theater that is performed outside the classical relation of stage performance in front of the audience in a classical theater. The role of applied theater is much more complex and aimed at strengthening the critical thinking and self-confidence of marginalized social groups in the community, developing creative processes in education by including drama in the education of primary and secondary school students. The paper points out the functionality and value of all the techniques used by the applied theater to influence the formation of a new theatrical audience through animation activities. The basic hypothesis in this paper is to prove that the forms of applied theater influence the development of the cultural needs of the audience, as well as that by getting acquainted with the forms of applied theater, the audience develops a deeply positive attitude towards theater. The paper will use an interdisciplinary theoretical method, which implies the use of the following theories: the theory of applied theater by Patrick Pavis, Jakob Levi Moreno, Augusto Boal; theories for the audience and the reception of works of art by Victoria de Aleksander, Darko Lukić, Maja Ristić, and Predrag Ognjenović. The outcome of the entire research should provide theoretical, but also a practical insight into the possibilities offered by the applied theater for the development of the audience in the theater.

Keywords: applied theater, audience animation, open theater forms, creativity, audience, art reception

ВЛИЈАНИЕТО НА ПРИМЕНЕТИОТ ТЕАТАР ВРЗ РАЗВОЈОТ НА ПУБЛИКАТА

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Главната цел на трудот е да се укаже на важноста на применетиот театар што се изведува надвор од класичниот однос на изведбата на сцена пред публика во театарска зграда. Улогата на применетиот театар е многу по-комплексна и е насочена кон засилување на критичкото размислување и на самодвербата на маргинализираните социјални групи во заедницата, развивање креативни процеси во образованието со вклучувањето драма во едукацијата на учениците од основните и од средните училишта. Трудот укажува на функционалноста и на вредноста на сите техники што ги користи применетиот театар за да влијае врз формирањето нова театарска публика преку активности за анимација. Основната хипотеза во овој труд е да се докаже дека формите на применетиот театар влијаат врз развојот на културните потреби на публиката, како и дека, запознавајќи се со формите на применетиот театар, публиката развива длабоко позитивен став кон театарот. Во трудот ќе се користи интердисциплинарен теориски метод, што подразбира употреба на следниве теории: теоријата на применетиот театар од Патрик Павис, Јакоб Леви Морено, Аугусто Боал; теориите за публиката и за рецепцијата на уметнички дела на Викторија де Александер, Дарко Лукиќ, Маја Ристиќ, Предраг Огњеновиќ. Исходот од целото истражување треба да обезбеди теориски, но и практичен увид во можностите што ги нуди применетиот театар за развој на публиката во театарот.¹

Клучни зборови: применет театар, анимација на публика, отворени театарски форми, креативност, публика, уметнички прием

¹ Трудот се заснова на проектот „Техничко-технолошката состојба и потенцијалите на Домовите на културата во Република Србија“ (проект број TR 30651), финансиран од Министерството за образование, наука и технолошки развој на Република Србија.

1 Introduction

Meeting the two face to face, eye to eye. When I come close, we will replace our eyes, I will look at you with your eyes, and you will look at me with my eyes.

Jacob Levi Moreno

Since the appearance of the avant-garde² theater of alternative³ forms of performance, at the beginning and middle of the twentieth century, the theater has gained a new place in the development of the social community and the cultural needs of the citizens. While the classical theater, which was created through the process of performing a classical play in a closed stage box in magnificent baroque theater halls of the traditional type (theaters built in the XVIII and XIX century), based its poetic performance on a straightforward relationship (aesthetic and ideological communication) of ensemble and audience and vice versa, theatrical forms created in the middle of the XX century required radical approaches to the idea and theme of the play. The styles of expression of artists are also more radical. Interactivity with the audience is becoming more and more important, and the theater is increasingly intended not only for elite audience groups, but also for everyone who wants to learn something, reconsider life values, solve their psychological problems or influence the quality of life through theater, behavior, emotional development and social intelligence. Since Jerzy Grotowski (2009) put forward the idea in the poetics of the *Poor Theater* that actors do not need rich scenography, clown noses and enormous halls and plays to express themselves, and since when did Eugenio Barba consider theater to be a set of signs, but also part of the multiculturalism of an open society and nation, the boundaries of theatrical performance in formal, expressive and content terms have significantly expanded. More and more plays are performed

² Although, as Slobodan Stojanović states in the book *Dramatic Directions of the 20th Century*, we define the beginnings of the avant-garde theater with the appearance of Alfred Žari's play *King Ibi* (1896), which provoked a stormy reaction in public not because it was ugly and impudent, but because it has already called into question the basics of dramatic aesthetics with his play. Then, many changes in terms of performance aesthetics, but also theatrical content that should now be more radical and engaged in the shortcomings of a society made in their works Wedeking, O'Neil, Haupman, Toler, Chapek, Pirandello, Brecht's epic theater, as well as philosophical theater of Sartre and Camille. However, to understand the connection between avant-garde theater and applied theater, the emergence of ritual theater is important, which is most prominently embodied in the work of the Living Theater, whose performances include dramatic aesthetics. Then, many changes in terms of performance aesthetics, but also theatrical content that should now be more radical and engaged in the shortcomings of a society, as made in their works by Wedeking, O, Neil, Haupman, Toler, Chapek, Pirandello, Brecht's epic theater, as well as philosophical theater of Sartre and Camille. However, for understanding the connection between avant-garde theater and applied theater, the appearance of ritual theater is important which is most prominently embodied in the work of the Living Theater, whose performances involved the audience directly in the performance itself, the actor strives to achieve perfection in acrobatics and strives to invite all participants and the audience to a ritual performance.

³ We see the connection between alternative and applied theater in the non-institutional nature of applied theater, which is directly related to the tendency of alternative theater not to be part of the dominant cultural currents. On the other hand, applied theater, as an alternative, strives for open forms and can be performed on streets, squares, in various non-specific spaces for classical theater performances.

in open spaces, while artists, but also drama pedagogues, work with people who do not represent the classical theater audience. Thus, theater becomes a part of everyday life, which is the basic goal of applied theater - influence in the widest possible circle of inhabitants of the planet who want to improve their assertive rights, view the work of art and its reception, using the techniques of applied theater. Bearing in mind that applied theater is also an interdisciplinary theater discipline, representing a synthesis of dance, drama, stage movement, song and songs, it includes research in sociological, psychological and social sciences in its work process. His influence on the theater audience is more open, more direct in relation to the performances of classical drama theater. Its strength "lies" in the desire to educate the citizens of the community how to stand up for their rights and become aware of many needs they were not aware of (right to diversity, right to work, right to education, right to personal choice, right to oppose relations), but also the right to present views on changes in the way of life of an individual society through projects (of an ecological nature, for example).

By applying the forms of applied theater, citizens can express their dissatisfaction with environmental pollution, which are some of the burning issues that theaters deal with today. a circle of theatrical and creative practices that relate to participants and participants and audiences outside of conventional, mainstream theater, in a world of theater that deals with ordinary people and their stories, local circumstances and needs (Lukić 2016: 16).

Theater is not just an aesthetic experience, a creative performance of a performer limited by a "ramp", a "fourth" wall, but a real experience that happens "here and now". It is a socially engaged theater, as well as a theater that enhances the cognitive needs of the audience.

The theater has been a collective of society since ancient Greece until today, it is a place for re-examining the degree of democracy and society. Theater as a reflection of social time is shaped by the interest in social change (Ristovski 2017: 13).

And since applied theater addresses a wide audience and often focuses on many social and cultural phenomena, it is the most engaging compared to other forms of performing arts. Applied theater is deeply connected with various forms of education, animation of the audience and the search for new forms and forms of performing practices. However, although the name and the term are generally accepted in academic and popular literature, as well as in the professional community, it is necessary to point out individual problematizations and disputes of "applied theater" (Lukić 2016). Thus, for example, Joan Cohen-Cruz (2010), points out that the name "engaged performance", she advocates (calling her entire book just that), includes everything that is called "applied theater", but surpasses it as a much broader phenomenon, defining it through the term "engaged theater". Therefore, she advocates that the practices of "applied theater" be viewed as an integral part of a broader project of "engaged performances" in articulating their positions in a continuum of different forms of artistic expression. Despite considerable terminological inconsistency and confusing arbitrariness in naming by many theorists, for a very

useful understanding of terms and elimination of misunderstandings, it is very useful to look at how Milena Dragičević-Šešić very precisely distinguishes methods of action and special features of engaged theater, dissident cultural model, radical art, performance anarchism, community theaters, artistic alternatives and research theater, as well as the modalities of their hybrid forms and interpenetrations (Lukić 2016: 22).

It seems that the best definition we can make based on all the above is that applied theater is a set of all performing practices, as well as that it contains elements of alternative theater in its forms, socially engaged Brecht's theater that utopianly wants to change the world. Applied theater is an open theater in the broadest sense of the word, which is intended for everyone, theater lovers, professionals, audiences. By participating in the process of applied theater, both artists and audiences acquire new knowledge, communication skills and group work by developing their personality and social activism. Participants understand the right to advocate for any form of stigmatization in their own environment. Created outside of elite traditional theater forms, applied theater is intended for people with special needs, women victims of violence, prisoners, high school and primary school students, stigmatized social groups (minorities, for example, emigrants), women who want to be educated, and people who want to heal their "spiritual (read emotional) wounds" – trauma.⁴ We can also state that it is a democratic form of performing arts because although there are clear differences in the forms of applied theater, no legality in the work of the group is outlined and absolutist. Fluidity, openness to the audience, openness to deal with provocative and "forbidden" issues of a society, are the interests of applied theater. Real attitudes towards reality and confrontation of the audience and participants within it are the basic features of the social engagement of the applied theater. As soon as we ask about the connection between the presented reality and the dramaturgical or stage form, we assume the existence of a dialectical relationship between them: the nature and analysis of reality influences the chosen dramatic form and vice versa, the used dramatic form illuminates and influences the cognition of that reality.

But the connection between reality and the aesthetic universe is not at all obvious. It has long been thought that it can only be direct and mimetic, that is, that the work is a reflection (though very little true) of the outside world. In that case, it is possible to observe the process of representation, stylization, and even distortion of the presented world, if on the contrary we consider that dramaturgical and stage writing is not directly and mimetically subordinated to the imprint of the real, that it shapes

⁴ Stress, trauma and crisis are terms often used as synonyms, although there are several definite terms, it seems the most applicable starting point that defines stress as a process that includes components of a particular event or situation in the external environment, assessment of events and changes in psychological and physiological functions. Stressor, stressful events and stressful situations are most often defined as individual, new or prolonged pressure on a person, which requires increased effort to overcome the situation and to adapt to it. According to the source, stressors are divided into physical and sociocultural, and according to duration into short-term and long-term, continuous or not. Prolonged exposure to stress can lead to trauma or the occurrence of a traumatic event. A traumatic event often has a short duration and high intensity, it is perceived as dangerous, threatening and "outside the usual experiences." An event is considered traumatic if a person experienced it as a threatening, emphasizes Aleksandar Hadžić in the collection of papers *Trauma is our story*.

reality according to its desire. That is why we need to penetrate into the processes of functionalization and ideologization that indicate the dramatic transition between the dramatic text and the text of the play and the intertext (Pavis 2004: 293).

The relationship between the representations of reality in applied theater is direct and obvious because the boundaries between the performer and the shown are erased, and the dramatic text or pretext itself is an occasion for play, regardless of whether it is educational theater, psychodrama, community theater, museum theater, social theater, theater that heals different people, prison theater, as forms of applied theater.

2 Features of applied theater

Unfortunately, the social position of traditional theater is mostly characterized by its pronounced exclusiveness, literally “exclusivity”. In such a context, the practical invisibility of minority social groups is striking and the representation of different individuals who are simply marginalized and denied the right to access and participate in public cultural events, including theaters, is completely neglected (Lukić 2016: 32).

Due to the numerous crises that the world is facing: economic, emigration, the Corona virus pandemic, institutional, traditional, repertory theater is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain, finance it and find an audience, because for already a year the inhabitants of the planet are adhering to social distances to protect their health. Although the institutional theater will start to play in front of mass audience again and play an exclusive repertoire when the crisis is over, the audience more than ever needs direct contact with an animator, actor, performer, group support, play or psychological work to get rid of fears (anxiety) that are an increasingly common occurrence due to the growing uncertainty in which the world finds itself today. The intimacy, avant-garde and interactivity of applied theater also influences the development and animation of the audience, and that is the audience that after active participation in applied theater workshops will acquire basic knowledge about theater, and possibly, fall in love with theater and after persistent work in applied theater become a regular theater audience.

The theorist, but also the practitioner of applied theater, the creator of the theater of the oppressed, Augusto Boal (2000), in the traditions of Marxist ideology, sought to develop a deep interest for theater with the audience, but also to help sick people, socially weak, through various forms (theater forum). He believed that the theater could make the life of citizens on social margins better. Augusto Boal was a humanist in theater, showing through his work how much applied theater is a part of social action and how necessary it is for the “healing” of every individual who indulges in interactivity in the performance of applied theater. Unlike the usual method of political or street theater, which, when talking about real events (strikes, corruption) implies a passive attitude of the spectators during the performance, trying only to encourage thinking about problems and possible future action (for which no specific instructions are given), the theater of the oppressed as the theater of animation, is looking for an active spectator who will be encouraged to think, then to act, and

on the stage to be able to try all the solutions that he himself proposes to achieve the goal. Therefore, the performances of the theater of the oppressed very often ended with the organization of specific committees, rallies, strikes, the transfer of the struggle from the stage to life (Dragičević - Šešić 2012: 139). Boal wanted to break the connection with the Aristotelian system and the dominance of dramatic action and text that made audience obedient, not thinking critically about the phenomena around him and achieving only aesthetic or emotional experience, which is significant, but usually does not lead to following changes: cognitive, changes in patterns of behavior, and then changes in the social environment or the personal life of the individual. Therefore, the choice of theme for the play and the repertoire of the theater of the oppressed will depend on the environment in which Boal and his actors, often amateurs, students of final studies in social sciences operate.

If the show should interest as many people as possible in various environments, then the topic is general, it refers to the so-called civilization issues: imperialism, neocolonialism, war, pacifism, racism, generational relations, solidarity, humanism. Acting in local communities, the "theater of the oppressed" explores the specific problems of that environment, and even more specifically, it affects very specific groups in that environment, down to the individual man, his individual problems, feelings of oppression. This encourages the residents of that community to participate in the preparation and performance of the play. Starting from these, quite concrete, local problems, theater workers will lead the play in such a way as to reveal the essential phenomena, the principled relations that exist in society and which in that individually investigated and presented case is only repeated (Dragičević - Šešić 2012: 140).

In addition to thematic engagement, Augusto Boal is cited and seen as a representative of applied theater to its exploratory and "open" relationship to the form and structure of the work performed, the diverse genres and styles that actors and all participants use to illuminate critical points in the community. Both the experiences of Boal's "troupe" and travels in France, Germany and Stockholm have shown that the audience wants to participate, they want to be part of the theatrical process. So the audience is an active participant, not just a passive participant in a theater play.

In essence, it could be said that the theater of the oppressed has two basic principles: the first to help the spectator become a participant in the dramatic action, and then he can (the second) extrapolate into his real life the action he performed in theatrical peaks (ibid., 145).

In the *Theater of the Oppressed*, the audience talks to the performers after the play, it is the subject of the performance, not an object that is just a link of traditional theatrical performance: an ensemble on one side that plays according to the instructions of the playwright and director and the audience. Boal's theater as a form of applied theater is sometimes radical for audiences accustomed to the splendor of theater halls, passivity and enjoyment of the observed, but for her Boal's theater is more accessible because it takes place on the streets, squares, on different continents.

3 A psychodrama between theater and reality

Jakov Levi Moreno is the next significant creator of applied theater, as the creator of psychodrama, which cannot be defined as a theatrical form, because it is a group psychotherapeutic process imbued with theatrical elements. Moreno took the inspiration for the creation of psychodrama from the theater, applying all the phases of the creation of a theatrical play to a process called psychodrama, which is used as a form of applied theater.

Psychodrama is a technique of psychological and psychoanalytic search that seeks to resolve the internal conflict of the participants - based on the acting of several protagonists, who play according to an improvised scenario with a few given instructions. The initial hypothesis of the psychodrama process consists in the following: action and acting, more than a spoken word, can provide a clearer expression of the difficulties of interpersonal relationships and errors at the level of reasoning (Pavis 2004: 45).

Observing theatrical performances, children's play, its spontaneity and immediacy, Moreno (2016) concluded that acting, elements of acting, changing roles, exploring someone's character, can help people overcome conflicts in their environment, personal internal conflicts, but also overcome mild forms of psychological problems (neurosis, although psychodrama can also help in the treatment of psychosis). For Moreno, working in a group and group dynamics is extremely important for an individual who will experience his transformation if he "opens" and together with members of the "community" going through different stages of work in psychodrama manages to overcome the problems that bother him by influencing everyday life by changing his pattern of behavior. Relationships are studied in psychodrama, attitude is more important than the goal we should reach. From our intentions, thoughts, associations, experiences, we objectively build a world according to which our intentions are governed - the world as an intent is emphasized by Zoran Đurić. There is no practical gain or success in psychodrama, but there is laughter, immediacy, play and various interpersonal relationships. The motto of psychodrama is to be direct. That means getting rid of *a priori* approach to the world. There is no need for knowledge, anticipation, longing - these are all features of the *a priori* world. Techniques used in the psychodrama process are mirroring, role swapping, behind-the-scenes techniques, multiple self, doubles, while the order of "performance" is almost identical to the theatrical process from the first rehearsals, warm-up, to performing scenes on stage with the help of a psychodrama director or theater director, in other words – the director.

4 The invisible audience of applied theater

Applied theater, like classical theater, cannot exist without an audience. Peter Brook (1995) said that the last word about the quality, the success of the play is always given by the audience, which decides whether one play is of quality or not. If the audience is the essence of the theater, as is the acting ensemble as well as the actor – educator and animator in applied theater, the problem we need to shed light

on now is, what exactly is a theater audience? What is its role in the theater, but also how the tools and techniques of applied theater affect its creation, expansion. As Vera Ikononov (1980: 356) emphasizes, the audience is neither a mass nor a crowd. It represents an organized set of people that makes up a temporary organizational system in the theater while the play lasts, sharing with them similar interests and experiences during the play. When the play is over, the organizational system “disintegrates” and invisible connections disappear and a new audience comes to the theater (Ristić 2014: 25). We call the theater audience those people who have a positive attitude towards the theater, who “love” the theater and who regularly attend the same. Predrag Ognjenović in the study *Psychological Theory of Art* (1996) brings a very broad and I would say democratic position which says that every person in the audience is a potential creator, and that a work of art is not created for an institution or an exhibition in a museum, but that creation should be stimulated by the inner motivation of the individual artist. By laughing, keeping silent, ignoring the played content, the audience influences the course, the realization of the play.

After being long forgotten or considered a negligible factor, the viewer is today a favorite subject of study in the semiology or aesthetics of reception. Nevertheless, there is a lack of a homogeneous perspective that could unite different approaches to the viewer: sociological, socio-critical, psychological, semiological. It is difficult to see all that is implied by the fact that we cannot separate the viewer as an individual from the audience as a collective factor. The spectator-individual is imbued with the ideological and psychological codes of various groups, while the hall sometimes creates a single entity, a body that reacts as a compact whole (participation) (Pavis 2004: 117).

When we study and research the audience from a sociological point of view, then we examine its origin, its cultural, economic capital (Bourdieu), lifestyle, subculture from which it comes.

The sociological approach is often limited to examining the composition of the audience, its taste, reaction. Questionnaires and trusts during the performance and after it, allow to reach refined results, to measure reactions to the performance as a set of stimuli. Then the thing is taken over by experimental psychology, and even philosophy, which quantifies reception (Pavis 2004: 117).

If sociology is focused on researching the needs that the audience has, on the “horizons of expectations” (de Alexander 2007) and the meanings that the audience interprets, then psychology studies the emotions of the viewers, thought processes, memory, forgetting.

The aesthetics of the reception is in search of an ideal and implicit spectator. It starts from, in fact, the very questionable principle that there is only one good way of receiving and understanding directing and that everything is structured in relation to that almighty recipient. In reality, it is actually much different, because it is the view of one or more spectators that makes up the stage production, giving meaning to the performance conceived as a changing set of narrators (Pavis 2004: 118).

The viewer makes a series of choices on a conscious and unconscious level, combining memory, prejudices in relation to the play, the actors who play, the content itself. “The impression that an artistic performance leaves on the viewer, Brecht notes, depends on the impression that the viewer leaves on the actors. In the theater, the audience determines the course of the play” (Pavis 2004: 118). Based on previous research, the cultural needs and habits of the audience of the drama theater and the audience of the National Theater in Belgrade conducted at the Institute for the Study of Cultural Development in Belgrade⁵, as well as on the interdisciplinary research of the audience of musical theater in Serbia, which I conducted for the purpose of writing the study titled *Audience of Musicals*, the audience primarily wants an emotional experience from the theater, and only then cognitive and aesthetic experience. Although traditional views are primarily related to the educational role of the theater, empirical research has shown that the audience in the theater is looking for an escape from reality. Thus, one spectator in Slobodan Mrdja’s research (2020) in an open question emphasizes that she goes to the theater mostly to watch comedies or musical performances, musicals, because that way she can escape from everyday problems, pressures imposed by the struggle with existence. According to the results of the empirical research of the audience published in the book *Audience of the Musical*, we can see that the audience is connected not so much to the director and the dramatic text, but to the story (plot) in which they can recognize part of their personal destiny. The audience is looking for literature on the stage they have already read and therefore it is not surprising that one of the most watched plays in the last ten years is the opera – the musical *Les Misérables* of the Opera and Theater Madlenianum directed by Nebojša Bradić as well as domestic comedy: *Mrs. Minister* or drama *Lady with camellias* by Aleksandar Dima performed by the ensemble of the National Theater in Belgrade.

Lukić defines the audience of the applied theater as “invisible” because they are not citizens who regularly go to the theater. The audience of applied theater consists of sensitive and stigmatized social groups, people with special needs, traumatized experiences which participation in the work of applied theater enables socialization, “healing” of psychological problems, strengthening the right to diversity and education, if it is Roma or women from rural areas and areas affected by war and poverty (Afghanistan). It is the audience of a completely new market.

Of course, the term market does not have to be understood literally in the economic sense of a group of customers, but the market can be understood as an area of exchange between producers and consumers of cultural content in clearly defined

⁵ The latest research by the Institute for the Study of Cultural Development, *Cultural Participation of Serbian Citizens* by Slobodan Mrdja and Mariana Milankov, showed that the largest percentage of theater audiences in Serbia are women (64.2%) from urban areas (75.4%) and mainly from the age group of 31 to 45 years (32.2%), while the average age of the active theater audience is 40 years. The largest percentage of the audience are people with higher education (52.8%). The largest percentage of the audience are experts (46.1) and the largest number of active audiences visited theaters 5 times a year (80.7%). The dominant genres that the audience prefers in all categories, active audience, regular theater audience and potential theater audience are “standard genres”, comedy and drama, although there is an increased interest in the musical.

conditions of cooperation. Equally, invisible performers are seen as very useful and necessary, so far mostly neglected workers (artists) in an inclusive understanding of innovative processes of cultural production (Lukić 2016: 257).

Applied theater has found its practical application in Asian countries, in India, for example, where women activists hold joint gatherings, strengthening the desire for independence and education through conversations and exchange of ideas, which is not often the case in this country among women. Many European Union projects support applied theater projects⁶ that, primarily in workshop work, use fluid sculpture techniques, frozen paintings, drama games, theater paintings, drama inclusion (dramatic depiction of a situation, problem). In the educational process, the techniques of applied theater contribute to the opening of individual problems of the participants, but also to very socially engaged topics such as violence, self-esteem, drug and alcohol abuse.

Andjelija Jočić and Miloš Dikić in their article *What is a creative drama process* speak about the effect of a specific way of working within the application of drama in education, emphasizing that it is a way of learning through a creative drama process.

Learning through the creative drama process is learning for life. Through the experience of drama, participants connect personal experiences with the subject of learning, for example a historical event or the theme and plot of a literary work. A play that may or may not arise from the process will be the joint work of all participants, team members. Creative drama allows young people to communicate what they need to express in a strong and touching way. It is the most direct way in which the pedagogue can bring the teaching material closer to the participants, and the attitude towards learning also changes significantly. Since the drama process always thematizes the personal materials of the group members, students become the owners of their process, learning and knowledge. The learning space ceases to be a space of pressure and coercion and is conquered as its own space in which young people invest time, emotions, energy (Jočić, Dikić 2020: 25).

Jakob Noar, an Israeli psycho-dramatist in his psychodrama processes he performed with volunteers (psychologists) in education, people suffering from depression, anxiety, but also students who want to work on themselves around the world, dealt with issues, transgenerational heritage using all stages of work in psychodrama (from warming up, to setting tasks, games, and finally closing psychodrama), directing participants to discover their roots, origins and family, build a better future for themselves, creating a more objective and positive vision of themselves and their future lives.

An independent theater troupe from Serbia *Dah Theater* uses the forms of drama, forum theater, and interactive theater in their play *Lost City*. Performers of

⁶ It is not surprising that the European Commission, through the European Commission programs, organized a very professional public debate on the topic *The role of culture in promoting the inclusion of refugees and immigrants*, on two occasions during 2016, with the involvement of a large number of individuals, institutions and associations in the field of culture throughout the European Community. On the other hand, the construction of the audience has been set as one of the priorities of the European cultural policy precisely elaborated by the Creative Europe program, prepared in the period between 2016-2017.

this performance, which has been performed around the world, perform in front of an audience that enters the public transport in which the play is performed, which “tells a story” about their city or village. In relation to the city, the area in which they are guests, the director Diana Milošević and the actors of the troupe first study the history of the local place, customs and, based on the collection of material, create scenarios that present to the public in public transport. The work of the Dah Theater troupe can be called applied theater because all their performances advocate the strengthening of human rights (*This Babylonian Confusion*, *Women of Dada*), the right to diversity, including the audience in performances, not only as passive observers, but as active participants.

Edu Theater within the international theater network of children’s theater *ASITEŽ* in the form of research “laboratories” researches and points out to young participants that they also have the opportunity to express and achieve their individual needs within the families in which they grow up. *Bazart* from Serbia implements projects that advocate the application of drama in education, while within the master’s program from the Applied Theater, Academy of Arts in Novi Sad, students realize their chamber theater interactive projects that explore the themes of trauma (78 days - concept and direction by Branko Bajić) after the NATO bombing of Serbia. We find elements of applied theater not only in independent troupes, work with young people, but also in professional, institutional theaters and plays by Tomi Janežić (Galeb, Traveling Theater Šopalović) who directs all his plays using the principles and techniques of psychodrama⁷. Each installation by Tomi Janežić is partly a documentary, a rehearsal that takes place directly in front of the viewers. Warming up of actors, conflicts and relationships between characters is achieved by psychodrama techniques that enable actors to more objectively consider the motivation of the characters’ behavior, and of course other forms and ways of work that Stanislavski set are no less important for the world theater.

5 Conclusion

The contents of the applied theater are not planned in advance. Performers can be professional actors as well as directors, but the language they speak and the *mise-en-scène* are not strictly set, as is the case in classical theater. And these are the real reasons that give strength to the applied theater to influence the development of a new theater audience. Given the fact that the troupes of applied theaters go to non-traditional theater spaces such as schools, prisons, hospitals, and visit the Cultural institutions and that the form of performance of applied theater is always interactive, it will contribute to troupe members and audiences in interaction. It will also help in strengthening behavior and attitudes, psychologically. Then the audience and performers together will be able to strengthen their critical thinking, because through play everyone knows their physical being, while dialogic forms are part of their lives illuminating many problems that plague them, whether they come from family, work environment, or different social community. If applied theater offers audiences at least a partial answer and a way out of the “dark tunnel” of trauma, stress, negative thoughts, bad interpersonal relationships or allows stig-

⁷ See more in the magazine *Scena*, 1-2, 2016. Novi Sad: Sterijino pozorje.

matized groups to strengthen their rights and opportunities, allows them to participate in group dynamics more, not to feel lonely and rejected – then it is a unique form of direct performance led by a director, pedagogue or psychologist, but also a unique way to find a new audience. Additionally, it creates a real deep need for art. You will create only when you understand the process, when you participate in the play and when you realize that the theater is a “great illusion” that is intended for all citizens of the world, not just the elite, educated or wealthy individuals.

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