

*Dragana Alfirević, Gregor Kamnikar and Dejan Srhoj were part of the PSR event at ANTISEZONA, in the period between April 22 and 24 2021, sharing and performing the Obed practice, participating in the Close Encounters of a Dance Kind, Hangover session audience talk and contributing with a reflection: <https://antisezona.space/en/outerface/texts/antisezona-soft-resistance/>*

Our Ljubljana delegation has arrived to Zagreb upon the invitation of the curators and organisers of ANTISEZONA, although it is perhaps true that, to a certain extent, we have invited ourselves. The first day of ANTISEZONA, Gregor Kamnikar and myself were invited to unravel for the interested ones our long-term practice entitled Obed. We intended to do it by proposing that all of us go through a three-hour process utilising one or two tools extracted from Obed. We found it extraordinarily important that we were having an external gaze – both a gaze of an unexpected audience as well as a gaze outside of our locality, outside of (any) borders. It is only through such a gaze that we are able to realise what is it that we are doing and how it could be interpreted. Only through juxtaposing different viewpoints we are able to see new possibilities.

Ever since we have known Zagreb, we've seen that city and its people as an exception in this part of the world, in the sense of understanding the meaning of public good and the readiness to protect this public good with all means. Many situations in the past 15 years have confirmed this perception: the events concerning Varšavska street, Zagreb Dance Center and most recently the local elections. The public good as a common programme, an aspiration towards common successes, but also as being aware of the common nature of problems or accepting a potential conflict as a prerequisite for birthing a new position. Conceiving the world through the realisation that I cannot be well-off as long as the others are not is a feature of one part of contemporary politics and cultural policy, but also of a part of artistic production. I think that this type of policy is in close proximity – if not one and the same – to developing empathy while we watch people dancing on the stage. Hence by practising watching, we practise to delve deeper beyond the shell of life, beyond the appearance, and search for what it does and what it produces. That is why it is so difficult and so gratifying to watch dance.

I think about the manner in which dance concern us, how it touches us. And I wonder when and why did we reduce the many functions of dance and observing dance to a single, consumerist function: I like it, I don't like it, I will buy this and next time I won't buy that. In a sea of products, this is merely another one, not too attractive. How did we comply with this drastically diminished function of ourselves and the other one?

Although being curated, ANTISEZONA, the Zagreb initiative and the frame for performing – [www.antisezona.space](http://www.antisezona.space) – is a format that escapes the idea of festival; moreover, it is too short for a season. Conceived as an idea to distinguish and feature one part of local production in a separate space, ANTISEZONA explores itself through the collaboration of three co-curators, organisers and artists, who present their works in this frame, occasionally surrounding them with works of others.

Hence the performances and events enter into dialogue and create new meanings and connections in inter-spaces, meanings that could slip our attention if we were to watch each performance in their own place and in their own time. Two performances that we have seen at ANTISEZONA – How Many Cubic Centimetres Can My Body Take Up by Sonja Pregrad and Close-ups by Silvia Marchig – suggest a serious and thoroughly thought-out work on the process of gathering material. The encounter of those two performances in an amazing proximity produces a mutual offering. The montage deriving from watching the two performances one after another is highly interesting: a montage that keeps me busy the entire evening and the days to come, overlapping and differentiations of images, feelings, colours, scents, but also ideas and messages from those two universes. Meditations on the spectrum of femininity and the questions of identity outside the politics of identity or political correctness. The opposite of political correctness is not incorrectness, but something else...

Contemporary art has to be performed in a dialogue with something outside of the local context. Contemporary art has to be international, one way or another. Not because this is the criterion of the applications for funding at the Ministry of Culture and Media or because this way, we appear even more contemporary; it is in the nature of what we are doing to observe ourselves through the perspective of someone else and vice versa. The nature of contemporary dance is such that we need to see what our colleagues are doing in various places. Without this, we cannot provide for a minimum of hygienic distance required for the vitality of the perspective, so that it doesn't wear itself out or becomes overwhelmed; last but not least, we need it so that we can comprehend what is it that we have done.

The experience of being at ANTISEZONA tells me that ANTISEZONA is radical because it tackles relations and the ways in which we, as humans, co-exist in a certain space and time. The consequence of those relations, which are only partly agreed and reorganised along the way, is the change in hierarchy and in the method of deciding, an activation of potentials; through time and as a result of relations, we achieve the changed methodology of work, aesthetics or theme.

We were part of the PSR event at ANTISEZONA on SATURDAY, 24th April 2021 Called CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE DANCE KIND together with all the artists participating in the block of Antisezona: White box sessions with their performances and practices at the intersection of dance and gallery contexts. Participating were: Lada Bonacci, Marina Bura, Petra Chelfi, Nina Gojić, Lana Hosni, Silvia Marchig, Ivana Pavlović, Sonja Pregrad, Tehvan Ratsanik, Iva Nerina Sibila, Torvald Silver and Martina Tomić

Close Encounters of the Dance Kind is a hybrid format which balances between being an interview, a performance, a dialogue about methodologies of work and a private conversation. Artists, in front of an audience, transform talk about their artistic practices into short improvisational situations.

It was a very exciting opportunity to unfold the materials of our performance 'How many cube centimetres can my body occupy', which deal with feminism, queer and drag as a contemporary dance, choreographic and relational strategies, and to put them in conversation with embodied strategies of our Slovenian colleagues of Obed, the also feminist and radically inclusive politics of Divert team and work 'Close Ups'. We were working in the way that we were simultaneously asking questions to each other and performing answers and relations in front of the audience that was also participating, asking questions and talking to us. We think it was exciting for the audiences, but it was also informative and inspiring us for our future work.

Petra Chelfi, Martina Tomić, Ivana Pavlović and Sonja Pregrad