

DIVADELNÝ ÚSTAV
BRATISLAVA
THE THEATRE INSTITUTE

THEATRE^{SK}

Made in Slovakia



drama



opera



puppet theatre



ballet



dance

premises every year), A4 became an alternative multicultural space. Besides the performances of the SkRAT Theatre, the centre hosted concerts of contemporary classical music, gigs of popular Slovak and international underground bands, presentations of new forms of performing art, dance projects, film evenings and so on. In 2012, a non-transparent public bid, called to find a new renter, forced A4 out of the V-club premises. From one day to another, A4 had to find a new place. For a few months, it rented one floor in the functionalist-style building, formerly a department store specializing in clothes, which had in the meantime become a cultural sight and the residence of the Dunaj Culture Centre – one of the most visited multicultural locations in Bratislava. After about three months, the Association moved to another famous functionalist building – the former YMCA. There, adopting a DIY attitude, the Association members reconstructed the underground theatre and pub in the basement. Surprisingly, in only a few months, the place was full of people and A4 transformed its zero space to a space for contemporary culture.

Another relevant space for independent art was set up by the theatre company known as Pôtoň. Its creative team Iveta Ditte Jurčová and Michal Ditte founded Pôtoň as an amateur theatre company in 2000. Three years later, the theatre was transformed into an independent professional association which, from the very beginning of its existence, took a pronounced path – focusing

divadlo
pôtoň



on controversial social issues based on field research and authentic material. The group first resided in the town of Levice until they managed to rent the former building of a culture centre in the village of Bátovce in 2008. According to the contract, the rent is free of charge and runs for 30 years. The building has been reconstructed and now is the home to the new Centre for Art and Creativity. This crowned Pôtoň's many years of effort to find a place to create art, do workshops, organize residential stays, set up incubators, and perform community-based or educational activities.

For some years, experimental theatre events have successfully found their home ground in the internationally oriented Station Žilina-Záriečie, established in the building of a former train station. Station Žilina-Záriečie offers a variety of art activities, as well as theatre and dance projects. It has been an independent cultural space, an art lab, and the place to go for a community of activists since 2003. The aim has been to set up an artistic station providing space for critical thinking, creativity, and education.

In 2009, the Station got attached to its building and new premises were built so that it could be used for contemporary theatre and dance. It was dubbed S2 and built using 3,000 beer crates, 800 haystacks, 10 m³ regular wood boards, 60 OSB boards, 120 old train sleepers, a 12-metre-long ship container, 2 trucks of clay, 10,000 nails, 1 km of threaded bars, 1,000 nuts, bolts and washers,

1,500 wood screws, 1 truckload of gravel to even up the terrain, 1 extension cable for electricity supply, 2 wheelbarrows, and 1 small scaffolding. 7,000 Euros sufficed to build a place which doubled the room capacity of the Station. Simultaneously with S2, a plan was made to create S3, another low-budget space. S3 gallery and studios will be built from eight discarded ship containers. The three-story building will incorporate workshops, studios, and will provide room for work and exhibitions. Since 2004, Station Žilina-Záriečie has been a member of Trans Europe Halles, an international project of independent culture centres. The Station is managed by civic association Truc sphérique which was founded in 1998.

In 2011, Anténa was set up – a network of culture centres and organizations active in independent contemporary art and culture in Slovakia. The network was created in order to improve the position of independent culture in the society. It represents independent culture centres in their communication with bodies of state administration and self-government, contributes to the creation of professional conditions for its members, initiates collaboration, experience exchange, drawing up of common projects, and supports the distribution of artistic productions. Anténa acts as an umbrella organization for 10 culture and art spaces: A4 – Space for Contemporary Culture (Bratislava), Tabačka Kulturfabrik (Košice), Theatre on the Platform (Košice), The Pôtoň Theatre

(Bátovce), Záhrada – Centre for Independent Culture (Banská Bystrica), Station Žilina-Záriečie (Žilina), Theatre from the Passageway (Banská Bystrica), The Mining Station (Banská Štiavnica), KC Dunaj (Bratislava), Klub Lúč (Trenčín) and other affiliated organizations and associations.

The Barracks/Kulturpark Košice was established as part of the Košice – European Capital of Culture project, one of the largest investment projects in Košice. Unfortunately, the barracks, military warehouses and the attached area, all of which should have been reconstructed in 2012, are still not finished. The original concept of the Barracks as a centre of independent culture suffered from the personal changes in the entire Košice ECC 2013 project and now the new proposal has abandoned the initial idea – today, the Košice Barracks are deemed to become a city culture centre which aims to provide a space for the integration and interconnection of activities performed by other culture centres. The former team responsible for the Barracks and the ECC 2013 project did not give up on their original idea and founded Kulturfabrik Tabačka one year later. After a prolonged struggle with the city council, they finally succeeded in taking the building of a former tobacco factory. Just like the Záriečie station in Žilina, or A4 in Bratislava, Košice now also has a centre for contemporary art and culture which acts as the platform for new, independent, and underground culture.