



Young **EUROPE IV**

The Classroom Plays

EIGHT PLAYS

NINE THEATRES

EIGHT COUNTRIES

YOUNG EUROPE IV

The **European Theatre Convention's** artistic collaboration project **Young Europe IV** is a three-year programme devoted to expanding the canon of European theatre literature, by writing new plays for young audiences.

Between 2021 - 2024, nine ETC Member Theatres from eight countries have worked on developing **eight new texts on diverse, inclusive themes written for young audiences.**

The playwrights were guided, provoked and challenged in their writing process by mentors from across the European theatre scene.

The classroom plays, which go against the grain of European theatre literature dominated by the white, heterosexual, male perspective, were performed at participating theatres in the season 2023/24 and featured at the **Young Europe IV Festival at Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica, from 17 - 19 April 2024.**

De Toneelmakerij
The Netherlands

Teatru Malta
Malta

Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica
Slovenia

Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe
Germany

Slovak National Drama Theatre
Slovakia

Belarus Free Theatre
Belarus/UK

Junges! Staatstheater Braunschweig
Germany

Cyprus Theatre Organisation (THOC)
Cyprus

Young Vic
UK (Associate partner)

Mentoring

The nine emerging playwrights working on the project received guidance from the dramaturgs at the nine collaborating ETC Member Theatres, but also from four established theatre mentors, whose work is regularly staged around Europe:

- Patty Kim Hamilton
- Mohammad Al Attar
- Dounia Mahammed
- Dino Pešut

Awarded Project

The Young Europe IV project is the recipient of the prestigious Art Explora – Académie des Beaux-Arts European Award.

Among 150 applicants and six finalists in its category, Young Europe IV was elected winner for its innovation in access to culture, and rewarded with a €50,000 prize!



YEIV receiving the Art Explora – Académie des Beaux-Arts European Award
© Matthieu Joffres, Art Explora

KEY FACTS

8 COUNTRIES

9 THEATRES

8 NEW PLAYS

4 MENTORS

1 FESTIVAL

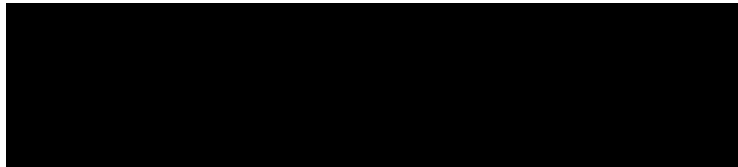
The Classroom

PLAYS



ROOM RUMOURS

by *Matin Soofipour Omam*
(*Badisches Staatstheater
Karlsruhe*)



FAT

by *Zoe Apostolidou* (*Cyprus
Theatre Organisation*)



WHAT'S UP!

by *Tereza Trusinová* (*Slovak
National Drama Theatre*)



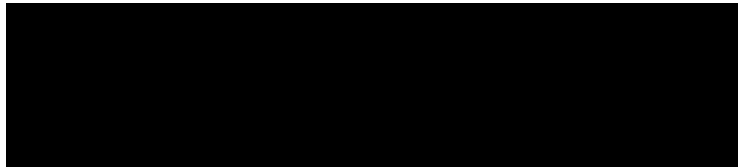
GUTZ

by *Kurt Gabriel Meli & Alex
Weenink* (*Teatru Malta*)



(SURVIVING) THE SUBSTITUTE LESSON

by *Emel Aydoğdu* (*Junges!
Staatstheater Braunschweig*)



LITTLE STARS

by *Jaka Smerkolj Simoneti*
(*SNG Nova Gorica*)



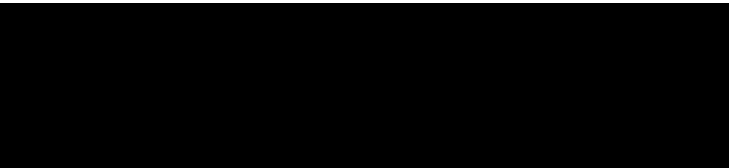
HASSAN & MOSES

by *Tomer Pawlicki* (*De
Toneelmakerij*)



LUCKY

by *Olya Voronkova* (*Belarus
Free Theatre/Young Vic*)



THE FULL TEXTS OF THE PLAYS CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM ETC'S [PLAYS DIRECTORY](#), IN THEIR ORIGINAL LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe (Germany)

Written by **Matin Soofipour Omam**

Directed by Lydia Ziemke / suite42

Recommended for age 12+

Premiere on 4 October 2023

In the beginning was the word. Which word? Who decides and who then speaks that word? In a classroom, the answer is usually simple: the teacher takes the floor, the class listens, speaks when being asked, and the curriculum determines the topics. In the process, many of the students' thoughts and questions remain unspoken.

With this interactive classroom play, Matin Soofipour Omam has invented a theatre game which sends two actors* and a class of students on a journey of discovery. They encounter stories that would otherwise have no place in a classroom, find common as well as their own languages, and thus create this play together.

Theatre-maker Matin Soofipour Omam has written an equally playful and poetic piece. She asks questions about power and responsibility, traces the effect of words and tells stories from her classroom. A play that was written especially for school classes and cannot be performed without them.

Dramaturgy: **Mona vom Dahl**

Mentor: **Dounia Mahammed**

Costumes: **Cennet Aydoğan**

Theatre Pedagogy: **Pascal Grupe**

With **Pascal Grupe/Hadeer**

Hando, Laman Leane Israfilova



YEIV Classroom Play 'Room Rumours' © Arno Kohlem

ROOM RUMOURS

WHAT'S UP!

Slovak National Theatre - Drama Ensemble (Slovakia)

Written by **Tereza Trusinová**

Directed by **Robert Roth**

Recommended for age 14+

Premiere on 22 November 2023

"What are you coming up with today?"

One classroom, a bus to school, a therapeutic clinic, and two teenagers. Šimon and Zoja. Classmates. Besties. Their lives. Interwoven and separate. They have known each other for a long time. But do they know each other well? Themselves and each other? It's hard to say. They are beginning to think that perhaps not. What happens next, and what to do about it? Every person experiences a certain identity crisis in their youth. Adolescence is a struggle, a feeling of helplessness and uncertainty about the future.

Such moments can be quick and harmless, but they can also result in deeper mental health problems. It's important not to be afraid to ask for help when needed. After all, no one is alone.

We will open these topics and then discuss them with all the students and experts directly in the classroom. The author based her play on interviews with several professional capacities but also on a field survey among people aged 14-17.

Dramaturgy: **Mário Drgoňa**

Mentor: **Dino Pešut**

Set & Costume: **Jana Němečková**

Cast: **Alexandra Lukáčová, Kristóf Melecsky**



YEIV Classroom Play 'What's Up' © Bara Podola

Junges! Staatstheater Braunschweig

Written by **Emel Aydoğdu**

Directed by **Nazlı Saremi**

Recommended for age 12+

Premiere on 26 January 2024

The substitute teacher introduces herself. Her own identity becomes the content of the lesson, due to a mysterious guest. What makes us who we are? How did we get that way? Young author Emel Aydoğdu writes for a teen audience. She writes about life from her perspective and explores the question of what language does to people, how people are shaped by society, and that sometimes the unsaid weighs heavier than the said.

Based on a personal story, something larger than one's own experience unfolds; written for a classroom, it takes place there as well. Here, different native languages meet, and in the foreground is a person who teaches, reports, portrays, and in the process discovers something for himself.

Dramaturgy: **Josef Bäcker**

Mentor: **Patty Kim Hamilton**

Stage & Costume Design: **Shayenne Di Martino**

Cast: **Mariam Avaliani, Luca Füchtenkordt**



YEIV Classroom Play '(Surviving) The Substitute Lesson' © Melina Rudolf

(SURVIVING) THE SUBSTITUTE LESSON

LITTLE STARS

Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica

Written by Jaka Smerkolj Simoneti

Directed by Živa Bizovičar

Recommended for age 15+

Premiere 16 February 2024

During the main break, after an uninspired lecture from the school psychologist Mrs. Kavka, an incident occurs between two high school students. At first glance, the circumstances seem unclear. Oto, a brilliant athlete, is left with a fractured orbital rim. Miki, a model student is the obvious culprit. Through their conversations and the conversations with the school psychologist, the background of the dispute is slowly revealed, and it goes beyond the mere eruption of teenage violence.



The play doesn't thematise the violence itself, but searches for its causes: the feeling of powerlessness, peer bullying, body image issues, sexual identity, societal pressure, and similar.

Somewhere beyond the classrooms, hallways and school walls, an intimate relationship develops between Miki and Oto, one they perhaps never expected. Caught between the expectations of others and their own desires they try to hold onto this island of freedom, convinced it would not survive the collision with the world. In doing so, they encounter those who were supposed to help them navigate, but who cannot come up with a thing more helpful than the mantra "little stars, little stars, help me."

Translation: **Barbara Skubic**

Dramaturgy: **Nik Žnideršič**

Mentor: **Dino Pešut**

Music: **Gašper Lovrec**

Stage Design & Video: **Dorian Šiško**

Cast: **Marjuta Slamič, Gašper**

Lovrec, Jakob Šfiligoj

Cyprus Theatre Organisation (Cyprus)

Written by **Zoe Apostolidou**

Directed by **Elena Sokratous**

Recommended for ages 12-18

Premiere on 24 February 2024

Frixos has been dealing with pressure in school and at home because of his weight, often hides behind screens to make friends, has to deal with his mom's incessant comments and attempts to make him thin, and sometimes avoids going to places or doing things. He feels fine with himself, and his health is good, but this doesn't seem to matter to others, who only see a fat person in him, with all the prejudices this entails (him being lazy, of bad health, disorganised etc.). What will this lead to?

Dramaturgy: **Marina Maleni & Kiki Argyrou**

Set & Costumes: **Sosanna Tomazou**

Movement: **Yannis Economidis**

Cast: **Naya T. Karakosta, Aris Kyprianou**

Music: **ecati**

Mentor: **Mohammad Al Attar**

FAT



YEIV Classroom Play 'FAT' © Theodora laokovou

Teatru Malta (Malta)

Written by Kurt Gabriel Meli & Alex Weenink

Directed by Chantelle Micallef Grimaud

Recommended for age 16+

Premiere on 8 March 2024

Jack has been sneaking into his old high school all year. Why? Because the canteen's sausage rolls are the best, obviously. That's not the only reason.

In those classrooms, Jack fell in love with James... before a big argument split them apart.

In those classrooms, Ms Stefania was building him up...all while Ms Ciangura was tearing him down.

Jack has been sneaking into his old high school all year.

Why? Because he's wondering why he never had the guts to say what he needed to say in those fucking classrooms.

GUTZ is a coming-of-age classroom play for post-secondary schools (16+) that explores young people's relationships with power, shame and the act of standing up and speaking out against the louder voices in our lives.

Dramaturgy: Ruth Borg

Mentor: Dounia Mahammad

Education: Karl Cassar

Cast: Miguel Samuel, Miguel

Formosa, Michela Galea



YEIV Classroom Play 'GUTZ' © Elisa Von Brockdroff

GUTZ

HASSAN & MOSES

De Toneelmakerij (The Netherlands)

Written by Tomer Pawlicki

Directed by Timothy de Gilde

Recommended for age 12+

Premiere on 19 April 2024 at the Young Europe IV Festival

Hassan and Moses are best friends. At school, they have a ritual together. Every break, they go out for fries together at the cafeteria near school. Their gimmick is that Moses always brings his own jar of mayonnaise, because it's cheaper, and Hassan gladly joins in. One day, they make a TikTok showing how much this saves them in the long run and how many extra fries they can buy for it. Their video is a hit, and they go viral. They keep making TikToks, and call themselves the Mayo Brothers.

Hassan is Muslim, Moses is Jewish. As the mayo brothers, they mock each other and their backgrounds. Because they are friends, they can push each other quite far, until the Israel-Palestine conflict flares up again and puts their friendship on edge. At the start of the play, their animosity has reached a peak, also because of followers demanding them to take sides. Will they be able to reconcile and bring the mayo brothers back online?



YEIV Classroom Play 'Hassan & Moses' © Jan Hoek

Translation: **Purni Morell**

Dramaturgy & Mentor: **Paulien Geerlings**

Mentor: **Mohammad Al Attar**

Education: **Martien Langman**

Cast: **David Roos, Juan Zyad**

Belarus Free Theatre & Young Vic (Belarus/UK)

Written by **Olya Voronkova**

Directed by **Shauchuk Yuliya**

Recommended for ages 16-18

Premiere date 06 April 2024

Dasha and Mikita meet at a refugee centre in Poland. They share a complex and fear-filled experience of fleeing from the horrors of war in Ukraine. Dasha can't find her grandma, who went looking for their cat that ran away from the centre. Mikita steps in to help, marking the beginning of a relationship that unfolds in London where they both try to settle.

Can one truly start a new life after losing everything?

The play examines the emotional and psychological challenges faced by young refugees, underscoring the importance of support systems in the healing process and highlighting the pervasive loneliness that often accompanies it. Their together is not just about finding a new life in London, but also about grappling with deep-seated trauma. Together, they navigate this challenging process, highlighting the ups and downs of coping and the fragile hope for recovery.

Dramaturgy: **Nikolai Khalezin** (BFT)
& **Teunke van der Sluijs** (Young Vic)
Assistant Director: **Raman Shytsko**
Cast: **Taisa Piatrova, Raman Shlykau**
Mentor: **Patty Kim Hamilton**

LUCKY



ABOUT ETC

Founded in 1988, the European Theatre Convention (ETC) is the largest network of public theatres in Europe. It is an arts organisation that promotes European theatre as a vital platform for dialogue, democracy and interaction that responds to, reflects and engages with today's diverse audiences and changing societies. ETC's programme of grants and events support networking, professional development and artistic collaborations for theatre staff across Europe – championing theatre as a key European art form for the 21st century.

ETC has over 60 members in more than 30 countries and is supported by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

European Theatre Convention

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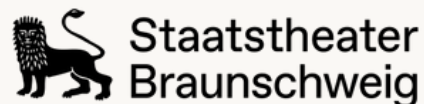
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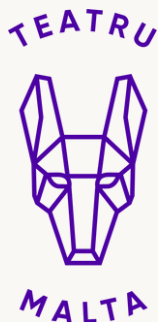
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YOUNG EUROPE IV PARTNER THEATRES:

DE TONEELMAKERIJ



Young Vic



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