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"ЦеШо": все про новий театральний проект Влада Троїцького

TseSho: Everything you want to know about Vlad Troitsky's New Theater Project

At GogolFest this September, director Vlad Troitsky is present a new musical project, TseSho. He's predicting it will have the same success as DakhaBrakha and Dakh Daughters.

By Darya Slobodyanik

Vlad Troitsky has one phrase for his new project: "the bomb." "It's going to be the bomb, believe me. Write about it now because you won't catch it in Kiev next year." We're sitting in the DAKH theater on Lybedskaya Street, in his office. Around us dash Troitsky's "progeny," as he calls them: The young ladies of Dakh Daughters, the GogolFest team, which is gearing up first and foremost for the September festival, and Vlad's newest protegees, the five young makers of TseScho (What's That). DAKH's offices are three tiny rooms, where everything is cramped and packed with set pieces. But there's room in Troitsky's theater for all.



На Марусі: шорти, sasha.kanevski; блуза, Anna October; пальто, Mulberry; чоботи, Santoni. На Катерині: сукня, Maison Margiela; жакет, Each x Other; чоботи, Virbeytu. На Надії: сукня, FLOW; штани, Maison Margiela; сукня, Monse; пояс, Frolov; туфлі, Lake Studio. На Марічці: боді, Faith Connexion; юбка, Chloé; тублі, Lake Studio. На Ігорю: сорочка, Virbeytu; штани, sasha.kanevski; ботинки, Marsèll

A producer, director, theater theorist, cultural torchbearer, Troitsky is 52 years old and has spent the last 25 years of his life in theater. His name in Ukraine has become synonymous with contemporary art. Troitsky's main talent is to gather lots of diverse young people passionate about art around him. He then launches successful projects with them. That's how in 2004 DakhaBrakha grew from a group of DAKH actors to an ensemble that now performs at the Glastonbury Festival and on the BBC. Next came Dakh Daughters, who have firmly established themselves in Europe. "I like it when people have a hunger, a burning desire," says Vlad. "When I started to work with these young folks, I immediately understood that I was sowing in fertile soil. Their youthfulness is impressive. They learn so easily and I think they'll quickly achieve something big."



На Марічці: боді, Faith Connexion

There are five actors in *TseScho*. Marichka Shtyrbulova plays accordion and sings. Igor Mitalnikov, the group's only guy, is in charge of percussion. Marusya Bernos plays cello. Katerina Petrashova plays the harmonica, and Nadia Golubstova the upright bass. The oldest performer is Igor at 26 years old, the youngest Marusya, who's 22. Troitsky admits that their youth and boldness won him over from the moment they met. Despite their youth, they are all experienced artists. They've already been working together as a small theater ensemble, *Teatr-Pralnya*, for two years now. They founded *Pralnya* when they were still fourth-year puppetry students at National Karpenko-Kary Theatre, Cinema and Television University.

"When we graduated from the university, our instructors asked us, 'There's one spot at the Kiev Puppet Theater. Who wants it?' None of us wanted it. We all agreed that we weren't going to work at state-run theaters. By that time, we'd traveled to some European festivals. We had a vision of an ideal synthetic theater, a theater/laboratory. We understood that we wanted to work in a theater that didn't exist, so we decided to start one ourselves."

At a festival in Poland, the group met director Marcin Brzozowski and invited him to Kiev. They created a play together, «Ми є» *Mi e*, which they've successfully performed at European festivals. Then they came up with several musical sets and played various Kiev clubs and festivals.



На Надії: сукня, FLOW; штани, Maison Margiela; сукня, Monse; пояс, Frolov; туфлі, Lake Studio

They met Troitsky almost a year ago: Vlad invited Marichka to his play *Ale viter*, then watched a few of Pralnya's videos, and he was hooked. "There's a bit of troublemaking in what you do. I said, okay, you and the rest of the kids should stop by tomorrow," the Pralnya actors recall, remembering the words that would change their fate. After more than half a year under his direction, they put together a program for their first performance, which you'll get to hear in full at GogolFest.

They presented a teaser at Atlas Weekend this summer. It included Ukrainian and European poetry as well as poems written by the actors, politically loaded for the most part. The Dakh Daughters come to mind as you watch, their eclectic mix of genres and styles, their easy transition from English to French, from rap to folk singing, from low to high, from humorous to tragic.

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That said, *TseSho* feels far more political and focused on today. “I am hurting because nothing hurts,” recites beautiful Nadia, standing behind the bass. Her song is an excerpt of a Facebook update, that certain kind of strolling newsfeed that each of us creates every half hour, but in performance form. “So many Ukrainian soldiers have died in the Anti-Terrorist Operation zone.” “A boy named Vanya from Ivano-Frankivsky woke up and found his right sock.” “An animal shelter in Canada has real beds for cats.”

This kind of information dump from the news doesn’t hit you in the head, but in the eye. “These young folks have such energetic desire for civic engagement, but they never thought they could turn it into art,” Troitsky says. “To me, an artist who doesn’t deal with today’s problems isn’t an artist. You need to understand where you are, here and now. That’s the whole point of contemporary theater.”

Photos by Armen Parsadanov
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