

# Encounters in Other Spaces – Performative Heterotopia in *The Labour of Panic* (2020) by BADco.

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*The space of our lives is neither continuous, nor infinite, nor homogeneous or isotropic. But do we know exactly where it breaks off, where it curves, where it disconnects and comes together? We confusedly experience cracks, gaps and points of friction, sometimes vaguely aware that something is stuck, that it breaks loose or collides. Though we seldom seek to learn more about it and more often than not, wander from one spot to another, from one space to another, without measuring, without taking into account or considering the course of space. The issue is not to invent space and certainly not to re-invent it (too many well-intentioned individuals are already there to reflect upon our environment...), the problem is rather to question space, or more exactly, to read space; for what we call everydayness is not the obvious, but opacity: a kind of blindness, or deafness, a sort of anaesthesia.*

Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*

*Imprisoned by four walls  
(to the North, the crystal of non-knowledge  
a landscape to be invented  
to the South, reflective memory  
to the East, the mirror  
to the West, stone and the song of silence)  
I wrote messages, but received no reply.  
Octavio Paz, «Envoi»*

## The Field(s)

Theatre may function without many of its elements: lights, props, music, or scenography, and in more radical examples even without actors (e.g. in Beckett's *Breath* or more recent *Nachlass* by Rimini Protokoll). However, there is the element of *space* that simply cannot be eliminated. Being a major condition of every performance, *venue* has been subject to various analyses of spatial studies in theatre. Beyond the walls of theatre buildings, where one mostly deals with the metaphorical aspect of a setting (stage location), there is also what Lehmann calls a metonymic space, where the performative goal is not a symbolic representation

of the fictional world but an attempt to occupy reality and serve as its extension.<sup>1</sup> Traditional theatre usually goes for the middle ground, avoiding vast open spaces as well as very intimate ones (centrifugal and centripetal according to Lehmann) in order to keep the relation between the spectator and the act of the performance rather predictable and unchallenged.

Theatrical space borrows from various disciplines, but Henri Lefebvre's «cumulative trialectics»<sup>2</sup> remains foundational in many aspects. In his *The Production of Space* (1974) one can find many prospects for the expansion of spatial knowledge in various fields of human spatiality (physical, mental, social). Within the three forms of social space that he defines – spatial practice (perceived place), representations of space (conceived space), and spaces of representation (lived space) – it is conceived space that is the most significant for theatre, since it includes relations to the production of knowledge, as well as systems of signs and codes relevant for social emancipation.

In the same year, 1974, Lefebvre's contemporary Georges Perec published his *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. In a highly innovative and playful manner he provides a wide range of dialectic guidelines for the development of new modes of thinking spatiality, which my colleague Nikolina Rafaj and I used in our recent one-month workshop (supported by SPID - Association of Scriptwriters and Writers for Performance) as a major resource to create a set of interdisciplinary tasks for artists and scholars who participated in the early phase of our research. Our goal was to create a database using the principles of autoethnography, docu-fiction, and scientific research in order to cover various cultural, political, and historical intersections relevant for the improvement of spatial policies in Croatia. Guided by the idea of «space-as-commons»<sup>3</sup> introduced by professor, activist, and architect Stavros Stavrides, our idea was to motivate participants to think beyond the notions of private and public space. Stavrides calls for common space to become a reference for new social relations and life in common. In his book *Common Space: The City as Commons*, he explores the interconnections between processes of spatial transformation and political subjectivation. Seeing common spaces as threshold spaces he argues that «threshold spatiality can insinuate itself into the dominant spatial order in the same way that emergent «non-identities» [...], «newcomers» [...] or inherently multiple «singularities» [...] can insinuate themselves into the dominant social order.»<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hans-Thiess LEHMANN, *Postdramsko kazalište*, Zagreb, Beograd: Centar za dramsku umjetnost i Centar za teoriju i praksu izvođačkih umjetnosti, 2004, 212.

<sup>2</sup> Edward W. SOJA, *Thirdspace*. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996, 61.

<sup>3</sup> STAVROS STAVRIDES, *Common Space: The City as Commons*. London: Zed Books, 2016, 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, 6.

Exploring the emancipatory and inventive potential of threshold spaces he examines contemporary forms of political subjectivation analysing how common spaces produce open collective identities. Distancing himself from both Eurocentric narratives that usually dominate this topic as well as from the utopistic visions of an ideal city, he develops new theories of spatiality ethics, which is, as I will later exemplify, what BADco. addressed in the field of performativity.

Following the ideas of Lefebvre and Michel Foucault, whose critique of traditional ways of thinking spatiality was underestimated and ignored for nearly three decades, Edward W. Soja develops his *critical thirding* as an essential step in transforming the binary logic of *either/or* into the dialectically open *both/and*.<sup>5</sup> His principle of *thirdspace* plays an important role in the further expansion of spatial knowledge and adds, with more precision than Foucault, socio-spatial and spatio-temporal dialectics to the traditional core of Western thought. His thesis is dominantly rooted in Lefebvre's concept of conceived space which Soja perceived as «a primary space of utopian thought and vision».<sup>6</sup>

The term *utopia*, initially coined in 1516 by Sir Thomas More for his book *Utopia*, was first used to describe an ideal model of a fair and free society. Contrasting the Greek *ou-topos* («no place») to a pun suggested in a prefatory poem on *eu-topos* («good place»), More's *Utopia* describes a self-contained community in which institutions and policies are governed by reason and justice. It is unclear as to whether the book was intended to be a serious projection of a better life or a satire that served as a platform to discuss the chaos of European politics. Russian scientist M.P. Aleksejev suggested that More was introduced to the *Poljica Statute* (1440) through Venetian emissaries in London, and that he incorporated some of its elements into his book.<sup>7</sup> Consisting of numerous legal regulations, the *Statute* was used to govern a community of twelve villages in northern Dalmatia, named (in the plural) after the Croatian word for field - *polje*.

The spatialization of cultural policies was further analysed by Kracauer, Beauvoir, and Fanon, but in a theatrical sense certain difficulties were less a matter of conceptualization and more of terminology. Space is quite an overdetermined word and can be used to describe the venue, the setting of the play, scenography, socio-cultural milieu, etc. In my analysis of *The Labour of Panic*, space, as a totality of relevant parameters, will be examined using the term *heterotopia*.

<sup>5</sup> E. W. SOJA, 60.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, 67.

<sup>7</sup> The Poljica Statute, <http://info.hazu.hr/files/listanje/glasnk/03-04/files/assets/basic-html/index.html#59> (access: 27 September 2020).

Foucault perceived heterotopias as real places and named a wide range of examples of such counter-sites of resistance (theatre was included too). He defined them as «a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted».<sup>8</sup>

Originally performed in the Grobnik field near Rijeka in July 2020, *The Labour of Panic* was not performed in Zagreb until later that year, in September. These two performances function as a spatial juxtaposition – at Grobnik the site was marked by the infrastructure of modernity: a racetrack circuit, an airport, a nearby highway, a landline, and an asphalt base. In Zagreb however, despite its many landlines and the closeness of urban landmarks, it was uncultivated nature that dominated.

Even though they were not seen during the performance, I believe that three nearby architectural elements highly determined the venue: the unfinished University Hospital, the shopping mall Arena Centar, and the sports venue Arena Zagreb, all of them being equally charged with meaning. Methodologically different from the site-specific plays of the 1970s that had aimed for reaching the audience on location in order to address political matters, BADco. decides to address political challenges of our time by using a specific location opposing three utopistic places, where failed visions of the past, present, and future meet.

The first and most evident coordinate, the University Hospital, is a huge unfinished building that stretches out over 217,000 m<sup>2</sup>. It was a major architectural project developed at the end of the 70s due to the demographic growth of Zagreb and the fact that many people from other parts of the country came to Zagreb (and still do) in need of medical care. Therefore, the plan was to construct a hospital close to the major highway entering the city. The project, thoroughly supported by the contributions of the citizens, started in the early 80s. However, it was not finished by the end of the decade. War stopped everything in the early 90s and by the time the war ended, the project was liquidated, the complex remained unfinished, and the funds evaporated. The second important coordinate is Arena Zagreb, the largest sports hall in Croatia. It was built in 2008, alongside with five others, for the purpose of hosting the 21<sup>st</sup> Handball World Championship. An expensive venue, creating further debts ever since, has recently, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, become a substitute for the lack of medical capacities in Zagreb. And finally, the third coordinate is a huge shopping mall known as Arena Centar, which stands as a signifier of the consumerist era we have been living in, implying the core value of the capitalist system.

<sup>8</sup> Michel FOUCAULT, Of Other Spaces, *Diacritics* 16/1 (1986), 24.

I refer to these three elements of scenography as *failed utopias*: the first one stands for the socialist system behind the communal project planned for the benefit of the entire society and opposing the monetization of the health sector and the inequalities in the health treatment of those in need. The second one underlines how Croatian sport successes are turned into national myths and misused to (emotionally) manipulate the society, deteriorating the social value system and imposing myth-maintenance as a national priority. Using sport successes to construct a utopia of pseudo-collectiveness, (world) dominance and common interest is a method often used by Croatian political elites. And eventually, Arena Centar, once the utopia of an envisioned capitalist system, was expected to enable not just a variety in choice of goods and services, but also freedom, development, and abundance.

Jill Dolan, in her *Utopia in Performance*, states that utopia is clearly a metaphor, but performance itself is not – it is quite the opposite, «it is a doing that can enable not-yet-conscious to be glimpsed, felt and strained toward».<sup>9</sup> Contrasting a vast, uncultivated field with the urban surroundings has also put things into a broader perspective than just the local, referring to the current ecological world crisis and the start of the Anthropocene era.

Even though geographically unmapped, this location was turned into a temporary reality where different performative and imaginative times overlapped, just as the visual frameworks. In the terms of spatiality, *The Labour of Panic* enabled a dialogue between failed utopias, textual and visual performative dystopias and the chasm created them, which I will further explore in the last section of this article. Creating both «constructed and abstracted»<sup>10</sup> realms, they have generated a performative space potent for heterotopic reading.

## The Panic(s)

Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, one of the most significant documents of the Weimar Republic, was a witness to the crisis and lack of security that eventually led to the Nazi era, and in it one can discover an interesting study of the rise and decline of Parisian shopping arcades, a kind of utopian promise that Benjamin uses to develop his cultural theory of modernity. In his chapter on shared heterotopias, Stavrides also refers to Benjamin's threshold awareness used to deconstruct the myths of the progress of his time. Such an awareness characterized his motif

<sup>9</sup> Jill DOLAN, *Utopia in Performance*, USA: The University of Michigan Press, 2005, 171.

<sup>10</sup> Joanne TOMPKINS, *Theatre's Heterotopias: Performance and the Cultural Politics of Space*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, 27.

of the *flâneur*, the ambiguous hero of modernity that stood «on the threshold of the metropolis as of the middle class».<sup>11</sup> I argue that in *The Labour of Panics* both temporal and spatial thresholds were addressed too, but the otherness that emerged as a side-effect is not to be perceived exclusively as a threat. Today's city is a more complex network than the nineteenth-century metropolis of Benjamin's era, therefore the relational layers of spatiality in this piece go way beyond the utopistic promises they oppose.

The satiric dimension of utopia is inevitably related to the topos of dystopia, the one that Ferčec announces through his text for this piece.<sup>12</sup> Satirizing «both society as it exists, and the utopian aspiration to transform it»<sup>13</sup>, dystopian worlds usually become a reification of disaster, in this case one that may follow, caused by the coronavirus pandemic, ecological devastation, alienation, and fear. One of the visual elements with the strongest dystopian character was also the number of land pits in which the performers end up in the final part. Just like the majority of contemporary Croatian literary productions, theatre is also much fonder of dystopic than utopistic visions of the world. Highly critical of socio-political constructs, but fundamentally incapable of even imagining an alternative, much of the local theatre production remains within quite a predictable range of pieces well-adapted to the imposed theatrical expectations.

Being part of the independent cultural scene in Croatia for twenty years now, BADco. (an abbreviation for Nameless Authors Society) has remained thorough, dedicated, and meticulous in their work of keeping artistic standards high and refusing to acquire the capitalistic norms of production. They often step into the tension between what Rancière calls *distanced investigation* and *vital participation* – the binary poles of theatre reformation that started with Brecht and Artaud, but get re-interpreted and re-implemented over and over again.<sup>14</sup> And while Rancière analyses these poles as being motivated by the critique of the spectacle, BADco., in this particular case, follows the traces of Paul Virilio, an intellectual descendant of Walter Benjamin.

Virilio's thoughts expressed in his *City of Panic* (2004) deconstruct the contemporary city as one of the greatest catastrophes of our time. Speaking of the *metropol-*

<sup>11</sup> Walter BENJAMIN, *The Arcades Project*, Cambridge-Massachusetts-London: Harvard University Press, 1999, 10.

<sup>12</sup> BADco. – Rad panike, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN9fMQKPgzK9YcmWFdSWTYdnBKzi99flF> (access 28 September, 2020).

<sup>13</sup> Chris FERNS, *Narrating Utopia: Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Literature*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999, 109.

<sup>14</sup> Jacques RANCIÈRE, *The Emancipated Spectator*, London: Verso, 2009, 4.

itics of a modern *claustropolis* Virilio moves across the urban political minefield – the imperative of progress, war tourism, dependence on electricity, dromology, distance, and the gravitational collapse of the body within virtual communities. Many elements of performance are explicitly connected to Virilio's observations (the territory of the field, the suits that performers wear, the twilight). Since space and body inevitably determine one another, it may be potent to include Virilio's observations on contemporary bodies: «There are three bodies: the desert is the face of the first, the TERRITORIAL BODY that sweeps humanity in its cosmic course. The second is the SOCIAL BODY of the human race that engenders life. Lastly, there is the person who speaks, who willingly comes to life, the ANIMAL BODY of the person passing».<sup>15</sup> In his post-humanistic tone Virilio underlines the effects of virtuality on all three aspects of the body, as well as describing numerous consequences of urbanization on the geopolitical body of society in the time of the Anthropocene.

The simultaneity of panic in performance was constructed by layering three major elements: the panic of timing (global ecological crisis, global pandemic), the panic of site (darkness, steep terrain, hordes of mosquitoes), and a performative panic (orchestra, text, movement). This triad was than intertwined with private, personal panics of the spectators/participants (existential fears, fear of infection, fear of the unknown).

In eleven stylistically impressive and dramaturgically structured textual fragments, Goran Ferčec connects a personified ending with a languageless beginning and rounds out the overall feeling of anxiety. In his first part, *Osvajanje otvorenog polja* (*To Conquer an Open Field*), he writes: «Every step turns movement into zero, into disability. Every attempt is zero, every step is zero».<sup>16</sup> Limitations highlighted by the text serve as spatial and temporal obstacles that are gradually developed into the hyperbolic atmosphere of an urban wasteland. However, the venue of the performance, without the material boundaries of a black or white box, enables the potential for an infinite expansion of viewing, as well as for a deeper understanding of zero. Enhancing its historical, philosophical, and scientific background, mathematician Charles Seife offers a lot of insight into zero and points out the following: «It was an Italian architect, Filippo Brunelleschi, who first demonstrated the power of an infinite zero: he created a realistic painting by using a vanishing point. By definition, a point is a zero—thanks to the concept of

<sup>15</sup> Paul VIRILIO, *The City of Panic*, Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2007, 124.

<sup>16</sup> BADco. – Rad panike, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN9fMQKPgzK9YcmWFdSWTYdnBKzi99flF> (access 28 September, 2020).

dimension».<sup>17</sup> The vanishing points one could have perceived during this performance opened up the perspective of infinite cycles behind the limited coordinate system we moved through.

In the sixth textual podcast, *Pas koji rastjeruje sve živo*, (*The Dog that Scares Everyone Away*) one can sense a resistance towards the unknown by the demands set to the language, to which the language, dependent on humans as it is, simply cannot answer. Still, what Ferčec manages to do with language is to conceptualize the awareness of a threshold – may it be physical, temporal, logocentric, economical, or corporal. His textual frameworks in this sense support the performative ones: urban vs. rural, socialism vs. capitalism, pre- vs. post-pandemic time, as well as the contemporary chasm caused by the ecological and migrant crises – all of these thresholds are enveloped by the performance as well. Separating while connecting and connecting while separating, thresholds are present both mentally and materially, which is why they not only ensure the act of passage, but also serve as the representation of one.<sup>18</sup> These representations are anthropologically known to be part of ritual acts, which one could also sense in *The Labour of Panic*. A marching orchestra playing music composed by Gordan Tudor contributed to the atmosphere of a ritual, ambivalent in its nature, as if one were attending a funeral and a wedding at the same time.

Benjamin's point that thresholds can perforate the unity of urban myths as well as the unity of history is translated by Stavrides into their potential to mark occasions and opportunities for change – he claims they can «create or symbolically represent passages towards a possible future, already existing in the past».<sup>19</sup>

## The Labour(s)

«Places of this kind are outside of all places» – says Foucault – «though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias».<sup>20</sup>

Reintroducing Foucault's concept of heterotopia to theatre studies, Joanne Tompkins argues that space plays a crucial role when it comes to the theatre's capacity for world-making. Being a fluid form that can embrace the historical and contemporary social context of spatiality, heterotopia, as understood by Tompkins via

<sup>17</sup> Charles SEIFE, *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*, New York: Penguin Books, 2000, 26.

<sup>18</sup> S. STAVRIDES, 69.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*, 71.

<sup>20</sup> M. FOUCAULT, 24.



Hetherington and Marin, can be identified within attempts to link visualisation and conceptualization in a form than enhances both.

However, as a result of Foucault's imprecision, the concept was in a theatrical context usually dismissed or applied quite ineffectively. Genocchio<sup>21</sup> and Topinka<sup>22</sup> critique Foucault for the lack of specificity in describing the concept, whereas Hetherington defends him arguing that its potential and power lies precisely in its ambiguity.<sup>23</sup> Despite the fact that the term has been overly broadened, Tompkins decides to reanimate it. In order to make it useful again she decides to keep it much more focused, her ideas being insofar aligned with those of David Harvey, who strongly objected to simplistic applications of the term that failed to account for its critical, disruptive, and political point.<sup>24</sup> Proclaimed either *passé* as a mere alternative to whatever it may refer to or dismissed due to the contemporary advance of multimedia and its layered spatiality now easily accessible in theatre, heterotopia was unlikely to be reconsidered as a term worthy of further analysis. Still, through a combination of theoretical insights and detailed case studies, Tompkins successfully demonstrates its cross-disciplinary nature and potential to stretch outside of the performative framework in theatre, encouraging research, activism, and socio-political changes.

Hetherington saw heterotopias as «spaces of alternate ordering»<sup>25</sup> - for him they were not necessarily fixed locations as they were for Foucault. He claims it is spatiality, regardless of whether it is abstract or actual, that provides them with meaning. As long as there is a dialogue with a real location, heterotopia can broaden its comparative function and extend its performative relevance. The key aspect of this extension is *unsettlement*, which Tompkins derives from Hetherington's conclusion about the major effect of heterotopia – they make things appear out of place. It is important to mention that Hetherington derives his extension of Foucault's concept via Louis Marin, who makes a distinction between utopia and utopics:

«Utopics, a play between imagined sites and ideas about the good society, involves the shift from ideas about the good society into the here and now of the actual pro-

<sup>21</sup> Benjamin GENOCCHIO, Discourse, Discontinuity, Difference: The Question of 'Other' Spaces, in: *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*, eds. Katherine Gibson – Sophie Watson, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1995, 38-39.

<sup>22</sup> Robert TOPINKA, Foucault, Borges, heterotopia: producing knowledge in other spaces, *Foucault Studies*, 9 (2010), 57.

<sup>23</sup> J. TOMPKINS, 22-24.

<sup>24</sup> David HARVEY, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009, 111.

<sup>25</sup> Kevin HETHERINGTON, *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering*, London, New York: Routledge, 1997, 53.

duction of social space. [...] Utopics does not just imply conscious attempts to create spaces of order, but insists that there is an uncontrollable process of deferral involved which means that utopias can never actually be achieved. Utopia, in the form of utopics, always exists in deferral, and this deferral is an ambivalent condition. The social ordering that emerges is as much an outcome of these deferred effects as it is of the intentions of the actors involved».<sup>26</sup>

It was also Marin who separated the homophonic prefixes More used to coin the term (*eu-topia* (gr.) as «good place» and *ou-topia* (gr.) as «no-place»). Hetherington perceived this chasm as a conceptual gap for further research. Strictly geographically, *no-place* cannot be located, but as Dolan outlines, it is «performance that always exceeds its space and its image, since it lives only in its doing, which is imagining, in the good *no-place* that is theatre».<sup>27</sup> With this in mind, I argue that in *The Labour of Panic* there is a spatial chasm between failed utopias in real space and announced dystopias in the realms of text and performance, which adds to other displacement effects.

Heterotopia had originally been used to describe a medical situation in which an organ is displaced from its usual location or position in the body.<sup>28</sup> Standing in the field in Blato, I literally had a feeling of being (in) a displaced piece of nature myself. This displacement effect, undoubtedly present in various aspects of this piece, is Althusser's concept created as a translative extension of Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*. Pristaš himself writes on Althusser and the relation of ideological, conceptual, and performative displacements to the effect of decentralisation.<sup>29</sup> This threefold concept is also transferred into the displacement of choreography in relation to the dominant ideologies of self-expression, economy, dance (the choreography is not danced out), and the function of the choreographer.<sup>30</sup>

Methodologically, Tompkins also develops a threefold system when interpreting theatre heterotopically – the space of the venue, the space of the narrative / performative, and the designed / directed space – all of which have an implicit or explicit potential to connect spectators to possibilities to challenge, underline, or subvert meaning.<sup>31</sup> Following her guidelines, I have tried to indicate elements of *The Labour of Panic* that can be read as a performative heterotopia:

<sup>26</sup> *Id.*, 56-57.

<sup>27</sup> J. DOLAN, 13.

<sup>28</sup> J. TOMPKINS, 18.

<sup>29</sup> Goran Sergej PRISTAŠ, *Exploded Gaze*, Zagreb: Multimedijalni institut, 2020, 74.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*, 77.

<sup>31</sup> J. TOMPKINS, 29-30.

There were no admission fees, which underlines the idea of a society where art and science, major elements of education and development, are to be equally available to everybody. The arrival to the venue required more effort than usual (no public transportation was available), underlining the idea of decentralization and marginalization as modes of resistance, distancing, and awareness.

Spectators, surrounded by various simultaneities, were skilfully turned into followers of the performance, but still given a choice in regard to attention and movement. The spectator had a true opportunity to be «an active interpreter, the one that develops their own translation in order to appropriate the story».<sup>32</sup>

Printed manuals on how «to adapt to the performance that didn't happen», made by artist Siniša Ilić, were handed out at the beginning of the performance. Tips like «surrender to emotions but remain prepared for their absence», «pursue perspective for a clear thought», «negotiate with sciatica in the left leg», are just some of these off-centre suggestions. Humour in relation to heterotopia might be another interesting field to examine, starting from its ambivalent role in More's *Utopia*.

Twilight, with its effect on both the performance and the spectators, stands for the cyclical ordering and temporal threshold, but also as an evident reference to Virilio. Interestingly, as it got darker, spectators did not just become more cautious, but also quieter and more considerate, as if they were moving through their own flat, taking care not to wake someone up.

Finally, I read the final scene – the pits with performers – less as a dystopian prophecy and more as a stubborn willingness to stretch the performance into the core of the things, as an unambiguous evidence of labour – intellectual, physical, and organizational – to create performance that would address the complex and fractal ideas of our existence. While the pits at Grobnik were made by gravel extraction for the construction of the nearby highway, the pits in Blato were on a hill made by the disposal of gravel from various construction sites in Zagreb. This also underlines Foucault's starting premises in his lecture *Of Other Spaces*, that we live in «the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed».<sup>33</sup>

Deeply rooted in the society it is a part of, *The Labour of Panic* moves in numerous directions and exceeds its topological dimensions. Ending in a question, the performance offers no solutions to the problems posed, yet it constitutes a space in which one has much greater odds of finding them.

<sup>32</sup> J. RANCIÈRE, 22.

<sup>33</sup> M. FOUCAULT, 24.

## Conclusion

Theatre surely cannot change the world, but there are structures that can open a broader perspective onto the complexities of modernity. The correlation between space and social order signifies that alternations to space are far more effective in generating change than other theatrical elements. Experimental zones between constructed and abstracted spaces may serve as rehearsals for socio-political transformations. Using the most recent piece of BADco., *The Labour of Panic*, I have tried to examine theatre's ability to reveal the unseen and to create the displacement necessary for heterotopia to be recognized. Not despite, but due to its ambiguity, I argue that the term still has the capacity to connect theatre practice and criticism with social history and geography, reinforcing theatre's role in expanding knowledge and communicating the value of spatiality which may elicit concrete social effects.

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## Sažetak

### **Susreti na drugim mjestima – izvedbena heterotopija u *Radu panike* (2020.) kolektiva BADco.**

Uzimajući u obzir ulogu i važnost prostora u izvedbenim umjetnostima, u ovo-  
me se radu reafirmira pojam heterotopije u teatru koji služi kao zamašnjak za  
promišljanje alternativnih društvenih uređenja i složenih društveno-političkih  
fenomena, kako lokalnih, tako i globalnih. Konstruirajući vremensko-prostorne  
simultanosti posljednji komad izvedbenog kolektiva BADco. *Rad panike* (2020)  
poslužio je kao primjer za moguće heterotopijsko čitanje teatra, budući da izve-  
dba funkcionira na više ravnina, objedinjujući pritom čitav niz izvedbenih i dru-  
štvenih prepreka, te mapirajući njihove koordinate na otvorenom polju lokaliteta  
Blato na rubu Zagreba.

III.

INTERMEDIJALNE STUDIJE /  
INTERMEDIAL STUDIES

