

Heiner Müller
HAMLET MACHINE

Space multimedia installation based on the monologue- play by German playwright Heiner Müller; put on stage in Slovakia for the first time 30 years after it had been written.

*“Should I talk about me
Myself who from whom
is the talk
if the talk is about me
Myself who is that”
(Heiner Müller, Landscape with Argonauts, 1981)*

stage concept, directed and performed by: Sláva Daubnerová

translation into Slovak: Ján Štrasser a Peter Zajac

music and sound design: Matej Gyárfáš

visual: Dušan Krnáč

choreography: Emil Píš

software design: Peter Gonda

technical support: Viliam Daubner

production: P.A.T. *platform for contemporary theatre*

opening night: 1st June, 2007, Bojnice

financial support: Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

Selected festivals:

Monodráma Festival Gárdonyi Géza Színház 2010, Eger, Hungary

Stara elektrarna 2009, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Yerevan International Shakespeare Festival 2008, Yerevan, Armenia

Festival Mitteleuropäisches Theaterkarussell 2008, Vienna, Austria

Festival Stretnutie 2008, Staré divadlo Nitra, Slovak republic

Festival Křižovatky 2007, Olomouc, Czech republic

Heiner Müller (born January 9, 1929 Eppendorf; died December 30, 1995 Berlin) was one of the most important German-writing playwrights in the second half of the 20th century. He extended the field of his works – that is, theatre plays – by writing poetry, prose, and theoretical papers. His works implement processing of other writers' texts, montages of fragments of historical and poetic materials, and quotes taken from his own plays. *Hamletmachine*, a short monologue-based play, emerged in the context of Müller's work on translation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and is called as being one of his most private texts.

'For 30 years *Hamlet* had been an obsession to me, so I wrote a short text, *Hamletmachine*, where I tried to destroy *Hamlet*.' The text, written in 1977, may be seen as a self-criticism of an intellectual and his inevitable failure in a given historical period. This non-dramatic text, structured into five scenes in which monologue-built sequences of *Hamlet* and *Ophelia* alternate, includes several motifs and stage directions intertwined. Müller himself described these five different juxtaposed prosaic fragments as monologue blocks. 'There were no more dialogues. I was constantly trying to come up with dialogues but it didn't work, there was no dialogue anymore, only blocks of monologues.' The tendency towards soliloquy in Müller's plays reached the zero point in this text. He himself called this development as 'a slow process of reduction'. 'My last play, *Hamletmachine*, has put an end to this. There's no more substance for dialogue, as there's no more history.' It's exactly history that appears to Müller as the only catastrophe, which, stuck amid a frenetic flow, constantly repeats.

The play is a labyrinth of identity, where the masculine principle confronts with the feminine one, procreation with violence, inner desire for solitude with the outer world. Failure to communicate, disillusion vis-a-vis the system in which a human being exists, resignation from any kind of activities, revulsion as the substantial feeling in life.

HAMLETMACHINE

