

UNLOCK THE CITY!

The theatre as a tool to re-think the landscape of the post-pandemic city

The Piccolo Teatro, in its debut as the leader of a winning Creative Europe project, has launched UNLOCK THE CITY!, a three-year programme created in collaboration with the Politecnico di Milano and another five international partners: Teatre Lliure | Barcelona [Spain], Teatrul Tineretului | Piatra-Neamț [Romania], Toneelhuis | Antwerp [Belgium], Østfold University College & Norwegian Theater Academy | Fredrikstad [Norway], The Academy of Performing Arts, AMU | Prague [Czech Republic]. The project forms part of an important and intense programme of European activities that Claudio Longhi has aimed to focus on ever since he took office.

The theme that the group of European theatres, academies and universities has been asked to reflect upon is the theatre as a tool to re-think the landscape of the post-pandemic city and, in particular, how to take on the concept of “limit” in urban terms. In addition to a rich programme of research and educational projects, as well as initiatives for local involvement, the project also provides for the creation of 12 performances.

For the Piccolo Teatro, these new productions, which are destined to become part of the programming for the upcoming seasons, will also involve some of its associated artists: Marta Cuscunà, Davide Carnevali and Sotterraneo.

The programme will take place in six European countries (Belgium, Italy, Norway, the Czech Republic, Romania and Spain) and will involve four theatrical institutions with a strong international presence (the Teatre Lliure of Barcelona, the Teatrul Tineretului of Piatra Neamț and the Toneelhuis of Antwerp, as well as the Piccolo), two expert academies of Performing Arts and theatrical programming (Østfold University College & Norwegian Theater Academy of Fredrikstad and The Academy of Performing Arts of Prague), as well as a university specialised in the study of the landscape (the Politecnico di Milano).

In each of the four “sample” cities (Antwerp, Barcelona, Milan and Piatra Neamț), **urban areas or locations that played a key role for citizens during the pandemic** will be identified, after which research will be carried out to explore the concept of limits (economic, social, physical, etc.) within the urban landscape. This research will take place on three different levels: community (subject), physical space (object), the relationship between theatre and urban area (relationship).

Over the course of the 36 months, thanks to **close collaboration between artists, theatre operators, students, university professors and experts (both local and international) on a range of disciplines**, and therefore **to the development of an integrated working method** - in which theatre hybridises with scientific research - the project aims to develop activities regarding:

- an examination of the territory and a study of the post-pandemic city landscape
- the creation and production of 12 performances by 10 European artists
- thematic workshops and educational courses aimed at university students

These actions will all share a single prime objective; to generate an increase in quality in terms of the habitability, accessibility and sustainability of urban spaces in post-pandemic cities through **awareness-raising within and the active involvement of communities, organisations and public administration**.

Just like the model of city from which it draws inspiration, UNLOCK THE CITY! will also be an open project that, through a replicable method and the presentation of concrete proposals for intervention to local administration aimed at contributing to European Union Green-Deal policies.

With regards to performances, UNLOCK THE CITY! will see the direct involvement and curation of at least **ten artistic organisations of varying type (directors, playwrights, artistic curators)**, who will not only play an organic role in the various processes of research and analysis of the chosen locations, but will also be called on to develop **12 performances** in the four chosen urban areas, three for each of the cities involved in the analysis.

In particular, performative creations are planned by:

CITY OF REFERENCE	ARTISTS INVOLVED	LEVEL	TYPE OF PLACE IN THE PANDEMIC CITY FROM WHERE THE EXPLORATION STARTS
Antwerp	▪ Thomas Verstraeten	(Object)	<u>Infrastructures:</u> Peripheral neighbourhood full of complexity, contradictions and ambiguities, of diverse urban composition. The night space of the city with its communities, is a social rather than physical space, where coexist a multitude of city sounds.
	▪ Bart Van Nuffelen/ <i>MartHa !tentatief</i>	(Community)	
	▪ Thomas Verstraeten	(Relationship)	
Barcelona	▪ Alexandra Laudo and Anna Puigjaner	(Community) (Object) (Relationship)	<u>Barcelona International Exhibition /Vaccination Center</u> Over recent years the halls have been a rooftop for homeless people during the pandemic, a Covid-19 vaccination centre and just recently a refugee welcome spot. This multifaceted location, serves as trigger to explore how pandemic has changed the way we live, looking in to 24/7 production schedules.

Milan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marta Cuscunà ▪ Davide Carnevali ▪ Sotterraneo 	<p>(Community) (Object) (Relationship)</p>	<p><u>Urban Park</u> Intended as (1) open space where metropolitan development and (anthropized) nature overlap, (2) area of self-aggregation and (regulated or not) sociability where different communities converge, (3) place where sports and habits are practiced that restore the cultural biodiversity of the city, (4) city dimension in which to socialize and act outdoors in a historical phase in which indoor activity is continuously put under risk.</p>
Piatra Neamt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Irina Moscu ▪ Bogdan Zamfir ▪ Daniel Chirila 	<p>(Object) (Community) (Relationship)</p>	<p><u>High School</u> The space in which the cultural, social, economic and political education of the individual is deeply influenced. Due to the pandemic restrictions, the access (not only from a physical point of view) in schools/ high schools' areas and campuses is very limited and there is the need to find new methods and meeting points to get together.</p>

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Artists' Bio

PICCOLO TEATRO DI MILANO – TEATRO D'EUROPA

Davide Carnevali - Author, theatre director and playwright

He received his doctorate in the Theory of Theatre from the Universitat Autònoma in Barcelona, with a period of study at Freie Universität Berlin. He has curated the dramaturgy of theatrical events with particular attention to the question of public spaces, ecological urbanism and environmental sustainability.

Marta Cuscunà – Theatre director, playwright, actress

She is a visual theatre author and performer. She combines activism – with a marked sensitivity towards feminist issues and a manifest commitment to the fight against racism and discrimination – with dramaturgy for figures.

Sotterraneo - Collective of artists: theatre directors, playwrights, actors

They began working as a research collective in Florence in 2005. The resulting working group aims to investigate the linguistic possibilities of theatre. They like to experiment with different formats, producing cross cutting and stratified pieces in search of form and content. These range from front shows to site-specific performances and tend to focus on today's contradictions and dark sides.

HET TONEELHUIS

Thomas Verstraeten - Theatre maker, actor and visual artist

He is the founding member of the theatre company FC Bergman. In his visual work and performances, he spins stories from the movements of the city and its inhabitants, from their visible and hidden stories and lives. 2017: he made The parade of men, women and those who look like flies from afar, a theatrical procession of thousands of Antwerp residents. 2021: he recreated the facades of his own

street in the Antwerp neighbourhood 'Seefhoek, where then 200 residents played themselves and their everyday lives during the Covid in a 6h performance.

MartHa!tentatief - Theatre company, collective of artists

Since 1995 it has been working on urban themes, resulting in highly accessible and often festive theatre productions. The original scripts by playwrights Johan Petit and Bart Van Nuffelen are often the result of in-depth research, in collaboration with academic scholars. Their productions are concerned with change' and inspired by the stories of ordinary people and all the different ways in which they set about dealing with change.

TEATRUL TINERETULUI

Irina Moscu - Theatre scenographer and director

She works in theatre at all scales, opera, film, music concerts, runway shows and events. In the last years she wrote and performed her own pieces in The National Museum of Contemporary Art and in The National Theatre Festival. She also started directing her own shows. In 2021 she won the Gopo Award for Best Set Design for "Uppercase Print" feature film directed by Radu Jude. Some of her projects were nominated for Best Stage and Costume Design by Romanian National Union of Theatre Artists & Hungarian Theatre Critics Association. She also received multiple awards and nominations, including The Romanian Architects Order Prize.

Bogdan Zamfir - Theatre and film actor; author and theatre director

He is a theatre and film actor. He works mainly in Frenchspeaking countries (Belgium and France). As an actor, he collaborated with the French director Joël Pommerat, but also with directors such as Christophe Sermet or Christine Delmotte-Weber. In Romania, he collaborated with the director Gianina Carunariu and the filmmaker Radu Jude. In parallel with his acting career, he develops projects as an author and theatre director. His projects address the relationship with the Other in a globalized world, the connections that are established between Man, Community and Geographic Space but also between the Great History (of the Group) and the Individual History (of the Subject).

Daniel Chirilă - Actor, playwright, theatre director, cultural manager

He is currently working as artistic director in the team of Teatrul Tineretului Piatra Neamț (since 2018), playwright, cultural manager and grant applications evaluator for cultural projects. He is also the founder and coordinator of Frilensăr cultural platform and has signed the dramaturgy, stage design and direction of the company's performances from 2013 to present day. Has collaborated as director and playwright with "Matei Vișniec" Theatre in Suceava, Toma Caragiu" Theatre Ploiești, Gong Theatre Sibiu, Țândărică Theatre Bucharest, Teatrul Tineretului Piatra Neamț. He has been the cultural manager of over a dozen artistic projects developed and coordinated starting with the year 2015. He is one of cofounders & coordinators of Educational Performing Arts Center C.E.V.A. (Community. Education. Future, Art).

FUNDACIÓ TEATRE LLIURETEATRE PÚBLIC DE BARCELONA

Alexandra Laudo - Artist

She is an independent art curator. She has received various awards and scholarships for her curatorial and research work and has also completed an M.A. in Visual Arts and Museology at New York University (New York). During the 2015- 2016 academic year, she was one of the eight participants in CuratorLab, the prestigious international curatorial research program at Konstfack (Stockholm).

Anna Puigjaner - Senior expert

She is a Doctor of Architecture, co-founder of MAIO, an architecture studio that works on spatial systems that allow variation and change over time for better social justice. She is currently teaching at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation GSAPP at Columbia University. Previously, she was a professor at the Royal College of Arts in London, at the Barcelona School of Architecture ETSAB / ETSAV - UPC and at the Massana School. Anna has been a finalist in the Rolex Mentor Protégé Initiative 2016, and awarded the Kitchenless City 2016 Wheelwright Prize for Harvard GSD Research.

HOGSKOLEN I OSTFOLD

Serge von Arx - Artistic director, researcher

Architect from ETH Zurich and Professor of Scenography is the artistic director of the scenography department of the Norwegian Theatre Academy (at Østfold University College) and external professor at the Danish National School of Performing Arts. In 1998, he began his long-term collaboration with Robert Wilson on over 50 stage, exhibition and design projects all over the world, as well as being an architectural consultant at “The Watermill Center” on Long Island, New York. In 2001, he opened his design studio in Berlin and since 2006 he is a resident in Oslo. He was part of the curatorial board for the Prague Quadrennial 2015 and 2019, and he is a member of various boards, notably for the Norwegian Artistic Research Program, and the Scandinavian Artistic Research Journal VIS.

AKADEMIE MUZICKYCH UMENI V PRAZE, AMU

Sodja Zupanc-Lotker - Senior expert

Graduated at Department of Alternative and Puppet Theatre, AMU. Master’s degree field directing dramaturgy at the same department in 1998. She gets also master’s degree at Curych, University of the Arts, ZHdK in 2012. Ph.D. degree in field Alternative and Puppet Theatre and its history at DAMU in 2017. She worked as artistic director of Prague Quadrenniale and curator of festival Prague Crossroads. She participated in many European projects as a dramaturg or curator. From 2007 works as external pedagogue at universities and from 2016 she works as internal employee at Department of Alternative and Puppet Theatre at DAMU.

POLITECNICO DI MILANO, POLIMI

Gabriele Pasqui - Professor of Architecture and Urban Studies

Director of the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies at the Politecnico di Milano, Delegate of the Rector of the Politecnico di Milano for the University's social responsibility policies, Full Professor in the disciplinary area of Urban Planning and Technique, Former President of the Three-

year course of studies in Urban Planning and the Master's course of studies in Urban Planning and Policy Design at the Politecnico di Milano. He is also a member of the Faculty of the Doctorate in Architecture, City, Design - curriculum in Spatial Planning and Public Policy of the IUAV.

Antonio Longo - Professor of Architecture and Urban Studies

Antonio Longo (Milan 1966), architect, is associate professor of Urban Planning at Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASU) of the Politecnico di Milano. He is coordinator of the Master's Degree Course in Landscape Architecture _Landscape Heritage at the AUIC School. He oversees urban design teaching workshops and is a member of the doctoral college of the Urban Planning, Design and Policy program at the same university. His research topics mainly concern the role of open space and landscape design in the reorganization and regeneration of contemporary territories, disciplinary integration, and the forms of the project in processes of territorial and landscape transformation and management, the relationship between landscape and infrastructure, the role of parks and water in the urban design of cities.