

Extreme Costume on display at the Prague Quadrennial: intense, extravagant, buoyant

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As part of the next Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, the world's largest performance design event held in Prague once every four years, the Extreme Costume exhibition will present costumes created by designers from around the world, and made out of extreme materials. „*Our original impulse was the theme of “extreme material,” with a greater focus on form than on content. Extreme. Provocation. Extreme costume, extreme material, extreme use, extreme size, extreme relationship... Extremists provoke.*”, explains the curator of the project, Simona Rybáková. And the result is this: an exhibition of costumes, videos, and photos from over fifteen countries, conceived by designers such as Paweł Althamer, Achim Freyer, Madaleine Trigg, Pat Oleszko, Constance Hoffman, Misha Le Jen, for events such as the Bregenz Festspiele or the Netherlands Opera, and made out of ice, paper, bullets, balloons, hair, cookies. This exhibition will include a series of talks exploring costume design from the points of view of different disciplines. The Extreme Costume exhibition is competitive, and is a part of the Prague Quadrennial world exhibition of performance design and architecture, bringing to Prague over 40,000 visitors from all over the world, thus making the Czech capital the center of the performance world for those very special 11 days, from June 16-26, 2011.

At the Extreme Costume exhibition you will find costumes made of unexpected – and extreme – materials: a costume composed of ice created by Leo Fressato is coming from Brazil, and Eloise Kazan's Mexican *Queen Tamora* is completely dressed in bullets. Belina Radulović's costume is made out of hairs, Pirjo Valinen, out of paper, and Konstantinia Vafeiadou, out of plastic. Marina Reis created a costume composed of transparent pockets and progressively filled with daily trash, and Rolando M. de Leon's *Queen Trash* will highlight the garbage issue.



Gender will be investigated by costumes such as Constance Hoffman's muscular half-naked *Louis XIV*, Youlian Tabakov's deformed body by the costume entitled *Foot Notes about Beauty*, Lise Kitten's *Sixty Nine* is made exclusively out of bras, and Hedra Rockenbach and Karin Serafin's *Final 01*, shows a naked woman in a plastic tube-dress that the audience shoots with a pink paintball gun, thus progressively covering her body. Achim Freyer's *Hagen From Gotterdammerung*, designed for the Los Angeles Opera's *Ring Cycle*, combines the use of sculpture and painting, craft and dress making.

Misha Le Jen's *Extreme Birthday Suits* will be exhibited on water, in order for the visitor to understand how he made his boots walking on the water apparently without a person wearing them. Another floating costume on display will be Paul Brown's *Aida-waterproofed!* used for the representation of *Aida*, the opera shown on the lakefront stage at the Bregenz Festspiele.

Paweł Althamer's *Common Task* will continue the journey of the artist's neighbors appearing in various places in extraordinary golden uniforms – after Brasilia, Mali, and Brussels, their next stop will be the Prague Quadrennial.

Disappearing Extreme Costumes. Madeleine Trigg's *Sutre* is an installation progressively disappearing from the body of the lady wearing it, and Mariaelena Roque's *Aurembiaix Moon Woman* is made out of cookies, thus disappearing while being eaten by visitors.

"The costumes present us with their messages using metaphors as well as the materials from which they have been made: clothing made of ice dissolves with the warmth of the human body, a cloak is lightened and lifted by the water that is the stage, light gives substance to its inner object, multiple items of everyday use tell their stories.", adds Simona Rybáková.

Accompanying the exhibition, Costume Talks will explore costume design from the points of view of different disciplines, cultures, and design strategies, looking into extreme conditions of making costumes thanks to a series of sessions by costume artists, designers, and experts. Among the speakers we will find Caroline Evans, Professor of Fashion History and Theory at the University of the Arts London, and Marite Mastina and Rolands Peterkops, Mareunrol's fashion designers, a fashion brand from Latvia, winner of the 24th International Festival of Photography and Fashion, Hyeres 2009.

Exhibited costumes **Pawel Althamer**, *Common Task*, Poland // **Desirée Bastos**, *Scene for a Costume*, Brazil // **Paul Brown**, *Aida–waterproofed!*, Austria // **Leo Fressato**, *The Penetrating Costume (The girl and the autumn)*, Brazil // **Achim Freyer**, *Hagen From Gotterdammerung*, USA // **Karolína Heřmánková**, *Kultivar*, Czech Republic // **Constance Hoffman**, *Louis XIV*, USA // **Marie Jirásková**, *My little pony*, Czech Republic // **Eloise Kazan**, *Queen Tamora*, Mexico // **Lise Klitten**, *Sixty Nine*, Denmark // **Nikolina Kostova**, *I Thy Soul*, Bulgaria // **Rolando “Rollie” M. de Leon**, *Reyna Basura (Queen of Trash)*, Philippines // **Misha (Mikhail) Le Jen (Lezhen)**, *Extreme Birthday Suits*, Russia // **Fruszina Nagy**, *Porshce*, Hungary // **Pat Oleszko**, *Betty Boob*, USA // **Jana Preková**, *Body*, Czech Republic // **Belina Radulović**, *A Journey to Rome (Caravaggio)*, Slovenia // **Emma Ransley**, *Inhabiting Dress*, New Zealand // **Marina Reis**, *Parangolixoluxo 2*, Brazil // **Francisca Rios - Madaleine Trigg - Cristina Valls**, *Sutre*, UK // **Hedra Rockenbach - Karin Serafin**, *Final 01*, Brazil // **Marialena Roqué**, *Aurembiaix Moon Woman*, Spain // **Iván Sánchéz**, *Celebration of the Barbarians*, Mexico // **Lauren Skogstad**, *Becoming*, New Zealand // **Youlian Tabakov**, *Foot notes about beauty*, Bulgaria // **Konstantinia Vafeiadou**, *Inspired by Beckett*, Greece // **Pirjo Valinen**, *Body and surface*, Finland // **Yi - Meei Wang**, *The Spurt of Blood*, Taiwan // **Yu - Teh Yang**, *Body sound*, Taiwan

For editors: What is the Prague Quadrennial?

The Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space is a leading world artistic event – a presentation of contemporary work in a variety of performance design disciplines and genres including costume, stage, lighting, sound design, and theatre architecture for dance, opera, drama, site-specific, multi-media performances, and performance art.

Founded in 1967, the Prague Quadrennial has presented work from more than 70 countries on 5 continents. The exhibition draws thousands of performance and theatre professionals, students, and spectators from all over the world. At the most recent Quadrennial in 2007, 35,000 visitors came to enjoy installations, photos, videos, and live performances of work ranging between theatre and visual arts, as well as more than 500 events, workshops, performances, presentations, lectures, and discussions.

Prague Quadrennial Director **Pavla Petrová** // General Commissioner **Boris Kudlička** // Artistic Director **Sodja Lotker** // Executive Director **Daniela Pařízková** // Extreme Costume Curator **Simona Rybáková**

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