



Krystian Lada is a Polish stage director, librettist and opera leader currently based in Belgium and working internationally in the fields of opera, music theatre and classical music. In his artistic practice, Lada explores alternative forms of collaboration between artists, policy-makers and citizens. His projects are informed by the feminist and post-colonial perspective on the classical repertoire and aim at developing new intersectional platforms for exchange between diverse social and cultural groups. Lada often involves local communities in his creative process, as well as on stage of his productions. He believes that opera - as an art form and as an institution - can be a vital engine for inclusive evolution of the society and give the voice to the underrepresented groups. Lada is the first recipient of Mortier Next Generation Award for the exceptional talent in the fields of opera and music theatre.

STAGE DIRECTOR

Lada's most recent stage directing works include 'Bellini's I Capuleti e i Montecchi' and critically acclaimed Verdi's 'Nabucco' as an open-air spectacle for Opera Wroclawska. Next to his large-scale repertoire stagings, Lada created and produced new immersive and site-specific opera formats such as 'Unknown, I Live With You' (based on poems by Afghan women), 'Aria di Potenza' (combining opera arias and speeches by contemporary politicians) for Nuit Blanche Brussels, as well as 'Farewell Dijkzicht - Requiem for a Hospital' for Operadagen in Rotterdam - an opera parkour through an abandon hospital. The fruit of Lada's passion for the classical music are several innovative formats at the intersection of concert, installation and music theatre, including 'A Girl and A Gun' for the National Forum of Music in Wroclaw and 'Symphony of Expectations' (that brings Schönberg's 'Erwartung' and Berio's 'Sinfonia' together) for Opera



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Ballet Vlaanderen and Klara Festival in Brussels. His drama theatre work includes staging of Büchner's 'Woyzeck' for Amsterdam Fringe Festival and 'Your Presence Is Required'. Lada was an Artistic Associate of Ivo van Hove with the critically acclaimed production 'Network' that was premiered at the National Theatre of London and presented on Broadway.

Lada began his career in Polish television, and worked for media production houses as a tv director, reporter, copywriter and creative director. He went on to study dramaturgy, and to undertake literary research at the University of Amsterdam. Currently, Lada advances his research on opera as a fellow of Wissenschaftskolleg - Institute for Advanced Study in Berlin.

As part of his professional stage directing training he followed a series of workshops among others at Pina Bausch Tanztheater and ateliers by Patrice Chéreau, Katie Mitchell, David Pountney and Manfred Trojahn in the framework of the European Network of Opera Academies. Moreover, he attended the Theater Kampnagel International Summer Academy "Performing Politics" in Hamburg with workshops by Philippe Quesne, Forced Entertainment, Nature Theater of Oklahoma, Shermin Langhoff, Mark Ravenhill and Hans-Thies Lehmann.

LIBRETTIST & DRAMATURGUE

Lada has worked with contemporary opera composers incl. Nico Muhly, Annelies Van Parys, Andrzej Kwieciński and Katarzyna Głowicka. His librettos have been commissioned and presented by the festival Operadagen in Rotterdam ('Slowness'), Ostade Theatre in Amsterdam ('The Dead Class: Requiem') and Polish National Opera ('Requiem for an Icon'). Lada's stage adaptation of Katharina Hacker's novel 'Tel Aviv' was nominated for Kölner



Theaterpreis. His 2017 adaptation of Janáček's 'The Diary of One Who Disappeared' for Music Theatre Transparant (directed by Ivo van Hove) has been successfully touring international festivals.

As a dramaturg, he has worked for leading European companies including Dutch National Opera, La Monnaie, Berliner Staatsoper, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Polish National Opera - Teatr Wielki, National Forum of Music in Wrocław, Opera Wroclawska, Opera in Poznań, International Theatre Amsterdam, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Netherlands Theatre Festival, Holland Festival and International Choreographic Arts Centre in Amsterdam. He has collaborated with opera directors and visual artists including Pierre Audi, Mariusz Treliński, Berlinde De Bruyckere, Tobias Kratzer, Yuval Sharon, Lydia Steier and Kirsten Dehlholm (Hotel Pro Forma).

OPERA LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Lada has been involved in artistic management of several European arts and culture organisations.

Between 2013-2016 he held the position of Director of Dramaturgy, Empowerment and Communication and was an Artistic Deputy at the Belgian Royal Opera La Monnaie. There he initiated several pioneering projects and launched new formats for outreach and interaction with different audience groups incl. the intergenerational opera Medúlla with music by Björk and a sonic bike opera Finding Song Home by Kaffe Matthews, co-created with Brussels communities. He is an advisor to the Dutch Performing Arts Fund in the field of festivals.

In May 2017, Lada founded and has been since then General and Artistic Director of The Airport Society - a Belgian cooperative of opera artists and social game changers. The Airport Society initiates projects at the intersection of opera, activism and social



engagement. By developing projects outside of the traditional opera production schemes, they question the usual power and resources distribution in the field, and explore alternative strategies for opera creation, production and presentation.

Lada is active in the Opera Europa - the leading service organisation for professional opera companies and opera festivals throughout Europe. In 2019, he co-founded the Independent Opera Producers Forum that gives a platform for exchange and development of expertise in the field of opera creation that takes place outside of the traditional opera house infrastructures, or in partnership between the opera houses and independent producers.

Prior to that, Lada graduated from the Leadership Intensive program for promising professionals in the operatic field organised by Opera America. He was also a member of the Young Delegates program and Think Tank of Opera Europa.

MENTOR & TUTOR

Sharing his experience with others, empowering individuals by means of artistic creation and voicing perspectives that are excluded from the mainstream of the social discourse is an important part of his professional activities. He was a jury member of the Music Theatre Now 2018 worldwide competition for innovative opera and music theatre formats that has been organised by International Theatre Institute and was in the selection committee of DasArts Master program of the Amsterdam Theatre School. He is a mentor of Future Opera program for young composers by the Bergen National Opera and the ENOA (European Network of Opera Academies). Lada has curated the European Opera Days in the Netherlands, the event Fringe Fuel (a creative activism and professional empowerment



programme for artists) for the Amsterdam Fringe Festival, and the research and expertise platform United States of Opera (which focuses on the form and function of opera in contemporary society).

He used to collaborate with the Goethe Institute in the Netherlands where he developed and curated several socially engaged projects, incl. the Euro-Mediterranean Academy for Young Journalists. He realised the Kantor Happening Now festival - a series of workshops and lectures in Amsterdam popularising the oeuvre of Polish theater practitioner Tadeusz Kantor.

Upcoming engagements In the season 2019-20 Lada will focus on his stage directing projects. His future engagements include Szymanowski's Król Roger for the Savonlinna Opera Festival and the Croatian National Opera in Rijeka, Rossini's Sigismondo for Capella Cracoviensis and the Opera Rara Festival in Krakow, as well as Schoenberg's Erwartung and Berio's Sinfonia for Opera Ballet Vlaanderen and Klara Festival in Brussels. Polish National Opera - Teatr Wielki commissioned Lada with a new libretto for the opera Moniuszko à Paris (premiere in September 2020 during the Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music as a part of the Year of Stanisław Moniuszko, later to be presented as well at La Monnaie in Brussels). His immersive opera Unknown, I Live With You was showcased among others during Operadagen in Rotterdam in May 2019, and will be presented at the Opera Rara Festival 2020 in Cracow and at Kurt Weill Fest 2020 in Dessau.

