

March, 2016

Dear Janis, Sumaya, US Embassy, National Theatre Ballet, Ibrahim Spahić, Sarajevo Winter Festival, Academy of Music and Academy of Dramatic Arts,

I hope this finds you all well. Since some time has passed after the workshops and performance in February, I wanted to send a note of reflection and appreciation to all of you. I will start this by saying: thank you. Thank you Janis and Sumaya for coming, thank you all who made it possible and supported this visit, workshop and performance. Thank you also for enabling us all to participate in this great program and providing us with the humbling opportunity to perform in the new Vijećnica.

I have to stress a special thank you for enabling us, freelancing performers working outside of academies and theaters to participate in this amazing project. The decision to also make this workshop free of charge for the participants is not only a bold move for this festival and the dance crowd (on an international level), but also a move that opened more doors and allowed for an exhibit of Bosnia and Herzegovina's dance and voice scene to be fairly well represented at the Vijećnica performance. I have to recognize that not many projects share this diverse a cast. Bravo.

Janis' group session at the end of the workshop, at the American Corner, showed how dancers, musicians and singers from both theatre and music academy, as well as us, freelancers cherished the time and effort that she took to teach us improvisation, modern/contemporary movement, breath and vocal technique that enriched not only our artistic practice individually, but made us discover interdisciplinary connections with colleagues working in fields "different" from ours.

To me, this whole project showed how much arts in Bosnia and Herzegovina (as well as other segments of the country) need interdisciplinary connections, and how much we are constrained by institutions, the way the government functions and even our own education to develop creatively in contemporary ways, while still practicing the classics that provide us with a solid ground to work off of.

Thank you all again for making the workshops and performance possible and I sincerely hope that we will have the chance to work more together in the future and that next year we will be able to host Janis' whole company in Sarajevo and repeat the great experience with a new performance. If any of you needs help in making that possible, I as an individual can say that I am happy to help in any way I can, and I am sure that the other workshop participants are as happy to help as I am.

Thank you, once more. Hvala.
Sincerely, Alen Kerić