



TEATRUL NAȚIONAL
RADU STANCA SIBIU
FONDAT ÎN 1788

ELECTRA



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AFILATĂ SUBIECTULUI AUTORITĂȚII A CONSILIULUI LOCAL AL MUNICIPIULUI SIBIU ȘI
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ELECTRA

Text: Sofocle, Euripide

Directed by: Mihai Măniuțiu

Decor: Cristian Rusu, Mihai Măniuțiu

Costumes: Cristian Rusu

Assistant director/ prompter: Sanda Anastasof

Cast:

Electra

Mariana Mihu-Plier / Gabriela Pîrlițeanu

Clytemnestra

Diana Văcaru-Lazăr

Orestes

Andrei Gilcescu

Pylades

Ștefan Tunsoiu

The Old Man

Marian Râlea / Pali Vecsei

Cristinis

Antonia Dobocan

Aegisthus

David Cristian

Coryphaeus

Adrian Matic

Choir

Cristina Stoleriu, Veronica Arizancu, Arina Ioana Trif, Viorel Rață,
Mihai Coman, Eduard Pătrașcu, Alexandru Malaicu, Ali Deac,
Liviu Vlad, Vlad Robaș, Horia Fedorca

IZA group of Maramureș

Ioan Pop, Anuța Pop, Ioachim Făt, Voichița Tepei, Gheorghe Kohut

Technical direction: Ștefan Bucșa Lights: Mihai Părau

Sound: Bogdan Ropcean Props: Nicolae Dogaru

Booths: Elena Hărșan Marketing coordinator: Ștefania Dogariu



Măniuțiu's "Electra" is a performance of the eternal, yet all present tragic, always willing to take the shape of the day, but preserving its perpetually essence, the inexorable destiny. The meeting between these two great texts of Greek tragedy – the founding texts of the great European cultural myths – and the traditional music performed live by the IZA group from Maramureș (Northern region of Romania) brings this extraordinary mythology into the present, causing the birth of a space of archaic confluences. "Electra" premiered on August 11, 2005. 20 years after its premiere, "Electra" returns to the "Radu Stanca" National Theatre in a new format, with the Iza group.

Electra and Orestes are the tool of destiny incarnated by the closed community (Electra is the axe, which the courtiers painted in blood on her back) and its members ensure its fulfilment.

It's the sign of the tragic descending from the palace to the edge of the world, the sign of the tragic conserving itself from the hard core of social life. It's a ghetto in the world today who has invented for itself ancestral operating mechanisms, reconstructed by Măniuțiu with mirror-clarity in which reverberate the instruments and voices of the Iza group.

"Maramureș is a miraculous place, and once, when I was there, I heard the voices of the ancient Elláda, the voices of Greek tragedy... Their music is from an archaic ritualistic area, which I didn't find at all foreign to Elláda. Rehearsals confirmed me that the Greek tragedy verb goes perfectly with the rhythms of traditional music from Maramureș and that they, the voices of the place and those of the ancient Greek world, spoke consonantly, they understood each other... I put special emphasis in my show on the current marginalization of these archaic areas and their slow destruction. Elláda, just like Maramureș, are marginal worlds... My show is, in fact, an essay in which I put two worlds in dialogue. And the end of the play speaks about the beauty of a world that still exists and the beauty of extinction, the tragedy, and the aura of this extinction."

Mihai Măniuțiu.



MIHAI MĂNIUȚIU

Born in 1954, Mihai Măniuțiu is currently the manager of the National Theatre in Cluj, a PhD professor at the Faculty of Theatre and Television, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj, and one of the most important directors of the moment, having also an academic and literary research which has materialized in several volumes of short stories, poems, theatre theory and Shakespeare studies.

Mihai Măniuțiu's work as a director has been rewarded with numerous awards at home and abroad: the UNITER Award for his entire activity, 2014; Prize for best performance, Shakespeare Festival from Gdansk, 1999 (for "Timon of Athens"); Best Director Award of the Year given by Flacăra cultural magazine, 1998; Prize for originality in directing at the "I.L. Caragiale" National Theatre Festival, 1992, etc.

For the production "Electra", staged at the "Radu Stanca" National Theatre in Sibiu, Mihai Măniuțiu won in 2008 the Best Director Award at the Ancient Theatre Festival in Merida, Spain.

“Electra will lose its relevance only when suffering, love or faith in powers that transcend us are no longer part of our humanity”

Two decades ago, you signed the direction of “Electra” in Sibiu. How did you manage the challenge of reviving this show 20 years later? What feelings have you about this project?

Mihai Măniuțiu: After 20 years... My God! Just like in the novel by Alexandre Dumas... I am happy to see that the show hasn't aged at all. It exudes the same good energy and the same cathartic aura just like in the first day, over 7000 days ago...

How has “Electra” changed into the current version? What new elements brings this production compared to the 2005 production?

M.M.: In the current version, the new generation of actors from Sibiu excel, together with a few “veterans” – and I confess that I am delighted with their performance.

What makes “Electra” unique in the contemporary Romanian theatre landscape?

M.M.: The exemplary combination between the exigencies of the Hellenic tragedy and the ancestral splendour of Maramureș music.

How have you worked with the young actors in the current cast compared to the 2005 cast? Is there a significant difference in their approach to the roles?

M.M.: Well, no! Where there is talent and passion, generational differences disappear. Today's team, like the first one, is professional, at the highest level, and fully capable of taking on difficult tasks and achievements.

Is there a universal message that “Electra” still conveys today?

M.M.: “Electra” will lose its relevance only when suffering, love or faith in powers that transcend us are no longer part of our humanity. Let us hope that the rituals that sustain us, day after day, in the face of quotidian challenges will not soon disappear. Electra tells us that all this will not perish but with us.



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The “IZA” group was founded in 1988 on the initiative of ethnomusicologist Speranța Rădulescu, to promote the authentic folklore of Maramureș on the international stages. Made up of five talented members, the group is led by Ioan Pop, a musician born in Poienile Izei, who perfected his talent in the “Mara” and “Maramureșul” ensembles. His work has been recognized by prestigious trophies such as the Golden Collar at the Dijon Folklore Festival (1976).

IZA’s first international tour took place in 1988 in France and Switzerland, marking the beginning of an impressive artistic career with performances in the USA, Canada, Europe, Asia, and India. Highlights include Glasgow Early Music Festival (1992), Expo Sevilla (1992), the Lyon Music Biennale (2004), and collaborations with renowned artists such as violinist Sherban Lupu. The group has collaborated with prestigious cultural institutions such as the Cluj National Theatre, the Museum of the Romanian Peasant, and TVR.

IZA promotes the authentic traditions of Maramureș, transmitting the beauty of the traditional music and dances in the country and abroad. The members of the group carry on the ancestral cultural heritage, singing at local and international events.



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“Don't let yourself live unrestrained, but not in torment. In all things the measure will succeed: it is the grace the gods have given us, the only one that checks their power. Once more I will say: if it is true that sin is the fruit of iniquity, from right judgment springs the happiness that we all love and covet. Above all, honour therefore the shrine of Righteousness: for the sake of gain, be not tempted overthrow it... Or else punishment will come. From the end that awaits thee, shall no longer shelter thee...”

Aeschylus



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Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, sacrifices one of his daughters, Iphigenia, on the altar of the gods, so that he can launch a war campaign against Troy as supreme ruler of all the Achaeans. On his return home, after the conquest of Troy, his wife, Clytemnestra, will avenge this barbaric sacrifice by murdering Agamemnon, along with her lover, Aegisthus, and taking control over the city. Orestes, still a child, goes into exile, protected by a servant, and Electra is stripped of her status as a king's daughter. She awaits, with those who remain loyal to her, the return of Orestes to avenge their father's murder.

For director Mihai Măniuțiu, the rituals and archaic musical traditions of Maramureș deeply resonate with the now forgotten idea that Greek tragedy was originally a musical tragedy. The music of Maramureș, which has accompanied the community's rites of passage for centuries, is capable of reviving on stage the spirit of Greek tragedy which was one of the essential sources of Western culture and influenced its further development.

The chorus, which also includes the musicians, is somewhat an extension of the character Electra, a collective character, acting as one body. In a way, the members of the chorus are Electra's shadows, her resonators, those who live, just like her, with the obsession of revenge.

The show is a unique artistic experience, an original, dynamic, provocative theatrical exploration of a classic story that takes on a new and fascinating life on stage.



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GLOSSARY OF MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS AND TERMS

“Tragedy is the simulation of a chosen and entire action, of some extent, in ornamented language, with various strings of special ornaments according to each of its parts, a simulation imagined by humans in action and not narrated – which by arousing pity and fear accomplishes the purging of these passions.”

Aristotel – Poetics

MITH: designates a story that refers to a distant past that the writer, and especially the poet, could not witness.

TRAGIC HERO: “In tragedy, heroes are not models: they are problematic” (J.-P. Vernant). They no longer have an absolute value but propose a questioning of human. They are not shown in their exemplary actions, but in difficult and more “humane” situations. Through myth, tragedy emphasises conflict and ambiguity. The tragic hero is a character who is close to the spectators but at the same time far from them.

THE CHORUS: distinguished from the characters by its group character. Its unity can be seen in the identical costumes of its members. The choir is a collective voice, singing in unison an emotion or an unanimously shared reflection. The chorus does not have an equal attitude towards all the characters and willingly takes a stand in favour of one of them. Driven by passion, they sometimes become directly involved in the action, giving aid and assistance to the hero in their support.

ATREUS HOUSE: A family named after Atreus, son of Pelops and Hippodamia, brother of Thyestes. The family became legendary because of the fratricidal hatred and atrocity that was passed down from generation to generation. Excess evil leads to new evil.

Disasters stalk the Atreid tribe. Crime runs through the generations, chased by vengeance. Tantalus slew the son of Pelops and served him to the gods at table. Atreus and Thyestes, sons of Pelops, together killed their brother Chrysippus. And Atreus killed some of the sons of Thyestes and fed him with food made from the bodies of the children. Another son of Thyestes also murdered Atreus. Finally, in the last ruthless murder, King Agamemnon perishes, murdered by Aegisthus, aided by his mistress, Queen Clytemnestra. Electra, Orestes and Chrysothemis will in turn be avengers and victims of the original curse.

“At the origin of evil, in each of the cases mentioned, lies, however, an act of will on the part of the first culprit, who, between law and sin, in a moment of blindness chose sin.”

D.M. Pippidi

“... the heaps of the dead, until the third generation, will tell many humans’ eyes that no mortal ought to entertain thoughts beyond their transitory nature; for excess, in withering, gives the spice of error, and the harvest that is reaped is a harvest of tears...”

Eschil

AGAMEMNON: Son of Atreus and Heropaea; brother of Menelaos. Legend presents him as the prototypical king par excellence, commander of the Greek army that conquered Troy. Compelled by the Oracles to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia so that the wind would blow the ships towards Troy, he won the war but was killed on his return home by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus.

CLITEMNESTRA: Daughter of the goddess Leda and twin sister of Helen. She was first married to Tantalus, son of Thyestes, but he was killed, along with his children. Agamemnon was forced to marry Clytemnestra, and the marriage proved inauspicious. The main reason for Clytemnestra's hatred against Agamemnon is the sacrifice of Iphigenia as an offering required by the gods.

CHRYSOTHEMIS: Daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. She reasons, weighs good and evil. There is nothing heroic, nothing manly in her nature. The weakness is of the sex, as the Latins would later define it: *laevitas animi*...

AEGISTHUS: Thyestes's illegitimate son made with his own daughter Pelopeia. Atreus ordered him to kill Thyestes, but Aegisthus did not commit the crime, recognizing his father. Having stayed away from the Trojan war, he seduces Clytemnestra, enticing her and plotting Agamemnon's murder.

ELECTRA: Daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Sister of Orestes, Chrysothemis and Iphigenia. Given into slavery by Aegisthus, she managed to escape. She rescues little Orestes from death and remains close to him all her life. Together with Orestes, she kills Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, thus avenging her father.

ORESTES: Son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Miraculously saved from the massacre by the intercession of his sister Electra, he flees to Phocida where he spends his childhood with his friend Pilades. He returns to Argos with the vengeful thought "driven by the gods" to do bloody justice. Not by armies, but by cunning, according to Apollo from Delphi. To this end, Orestes tells the old pedagogue to tell in the city and in the court, as envoy from a friend of the present masters, how he, Orestes, would have died in a chariot race in the Pythian games.



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About “Electra”

Applause greeted *Electra*, the “guest” language performance at the 22nd edition of the Festival of Francophonie in Limousin, on September 28 at the Théâtre-Opéra in Limoges. Played and sung in Romanian (subtitled in French), staged by Mihai Măniuțiu, “based on *Electra* by Sophocles and Euripides”, it is performed by the actors of the “Radu Stanca” National Theatre in Sibiu and the musicians from the Iza group, a traditional ensemble from the Maramureș region, in northern Romania. All that remains of the Greek tragedy is the theme of revenge, a pretext for the darker West Side Story-like tableaux and the rise of violence to the highly spectacular murder of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. But we must stop looking for reason in the violence of this ritual of death full of energy.

Thérèse-Marie Deffontaines, *Tragedy, Revenge and War at the Festival Francophonie in Limousin* (Le Monde, October 7, 2005).

Mihai Măniuțiu’s “*Electra*” is sublime and simple. With what ease this director makes us access the intense poetry of a tragedy that touch! Indeed... (...)

This show is a real feast, the spectator is carried away by such energy. It’s that of the chorus flowing, kicking, and dancing on stage. It is that of the musicians whose music hallucinates. It is that of individuals, *Electra*, *Oreste*, *Clytemnestra*...(...)

Mihai Măniuțiu’s genius is to have combined archaic culture and modernity, particularity, and universality.

Muriel Mingau, *Return to... “Electra”* (Le Populaire, October 1, 2005).

The presence of Iza group, with its marvellous music from Maramureș during the whole performance, creates a state of tension that gives the chorus the task of being more than an objective voice of the crowd, becoming a participant in the facts of the tragedy. People do not forgive; they demand revenge on Agamemnon. The act of *Electra* is determined by her will. But the distance from the ancient world of belief in gods, makes the spectators witness a revenge, makes them watch and listen, but not for a moment experience the “tragedy” of human.

Cristiana Gavrilă, *Christian Electra* (yorick.ro)

Electra

Tours in Europe and Asia

- ✓ 27 September -9 October 2005, Limoges, France, “Les Francophonies en Limousin”
- ✓ 24 -27 October 2005, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, “MESS -45th International Theater Festival Sarajevo”
- ✓ 6 -13 November 2005, București, “I. L. Caragiale” National Theatre Festival
- ✓ 2-7 July 2006, Lisbon, Portugal, MOSTRA INTERNACIONAL “O GRANDE TEATRO DO MUNDO” – MITE 06
- ✓ 29 July - 3 August 2007, Budva, Montenegro, “Grad Theatre City Budva, XXI Festival”
- ✓ 11-16 November 2007, Bruxelles, Belgium, “EUROPALIA”
- ✓ 4, 5 July 2008, Nicosia, Cyprus, “International Festival of Ancient Greek Drama”
- ✓ 26, 27, 28 August 2008, Merida, Spain, “Festival de Teatro Clasico”
- ✓ 21 May 2010, Pecs, Hungary, “Pecs European Capital of Culture 2010” (Tribuna, HotNews)
- ✓ 29, 30 August 2010, Tel Aviv, Israel, “Tel Aviv International Festival” (The Epoch Times, Institutul Cultural Român, Tribuna)
- ✓ 26 October 2010, Cluj-Napoca, tour held in cultural partnership with “AMBIENT” (Cluj-Napoca National Theatre, Știri de Cluj, Ora de Sibiu)
- ✓ 3, 5 April 2011, Adana, Turkey, “Turkish State Theatres Sabanci International Theatre Festival” (Sabancivakfi, Institutul Cultural Român, Ora de Sibiu)
- ✓ 13 April 2011, Poznan, Poland, “Polski Theatre Festival” (Ora de Sibiu, Culture PL)
- ✓ 9 November 2011, Ploiești, “Toma Caragiu Theatre Festival” (Teatrul Ploiești)
- ✓ 4 –8 April 2012, Bogota, Colombia, “Bogota Theatre Festival” (Radio Europa Liberă Moldova, Ziarul Făclia)
- ✓ 2 October 2012, Baia Mare, tour held in cultural partnership with “AMBIENT”
- ✓ 3 October 2012, Bistrița, tour held in cultural partnership with “AMBIENT”
- ✓ 26 June 2016, ELECTRA, Festivalul Internațional de Teatru “Miturile Cetății”, Constanța
- ✓ 26-29 October 2017, ELECTRA, Jiangxi Theatre Festival, Fuzhou, provincia Jiangxi, China, pe scena Tang Xianzu Grand Theater (Mesagerul de Sibiu, China. Org.cn)





The “Radu Stanca” National Theatre in Sibiu operates under the Local Council of the Municipality of Sibiu, as a public cultural institution, as well as a repertory performance institution, with about 120 productions, in its two departments: Romanian and German.

The “Radu Stanca” National Theatre takes further the legacy of almost five centuries of theatre tradition in Sibiu and the region. With a repertoire ranging from Greek tragedy to the most innovative experiment of the 21st century, Sibiu’s theatre responds to all contemporary challenges. Our performances try to capture the diversity of trends in the performing arts, from tradition, word and image to installation performances, dance theatre or musical performances.

Enhancing the national and universal heritage of drama literature and performing arts, as well as supporting creation and research in this field, are among the most important objectives of our institution. At the same time, we are constantly concerned with the realization of cultural-artistic projects in collaboration with artists and institutions in the country and abroad, with the aim of promoting excellence, originality, and creative vision. In recent decades, the prestige of the “Radu Stanca” National Theatre has been confirmed by numerous participations in tours, festivals, and other national and international artistic events, thanks to emblematic productions, such as the phenomenal shows *Faust* or *The Scarlet Princess*, directed by Silviu Purcărete.

The “Radu Stanca” National Theatre in Sibiu is the organizer of the Sibiu International Theatre Festival.



