

NANA BILUŠ ABAFFY is an artist with a background in philosophy and a foreground in experimental performance and choreography. Nana takes a maximalist approach to artistic endeavour and works through dance, text, play, moving image and social intervention. She is interested in the pursuit of knowledge through embodiment and wants to know what her body is looking for. Nana believes that there is irreducible variation in the human experience and works towards establishing a space for that difference in search of landscapes where alterities can be envisioned. She is the founding member of a secretive collective that performs in explicitly illicit spaces and enjoys engaging in ChoreoGraphic acts of extreme tree hugging and site specific protest dancing.

Nana has been mentored by choreographer Meg Stuart since 2018. She has been making fiercely independent work since 2013: in afterhours biomedical libraries, galleries, theatres, forests, heritage buildings, supermarkets, private apartments, fields, former women's prisons, car parks, religious halls, dance institutions, soon to be demolished office buildings, and some more dance and art institutions (in that exact order). She is currently teaching contemporary art theory at Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles.

In 2022, Nana is due to present new choreographic work at Chunky Move Melbourne, commissioned by NextMove. In 2021, Nana undertook an artist residency and creative development at Beursschouwburg, with long-term collaborator Tehran/Brussels artist Parvin Saljoughi. In 2020, Nana and Parvin were due to present new video/live performance work for the 2020 Tehran Contemporary Sculpture Biennial [cancelled]; and were commissioned to present a new choreographic/expanding cinema work as part of the 2020 Next Wave Festival in Melbourne [postponed]. Nana also undertook the Chunky Move Solitude virtual residency; and contributed to ArtStations Foundation Poland virtual works.

In 2019, Nana and Parvin presented a live performance/video work curated by Flash Art Magazine, as part of the exhibition 'Rooze Mabada', at Giardino Segreto Palazzo Durini in Milan; presented choreographic work *Green Nasim* that was selected as part of the Live Works Performance Award at the 2019 Drosesera Festival; and were artists in residence at Centrale Fies Art Work Space in Italy; and at workspacebrussels/Kaaistudios. Nana was commissioned to present *POST REALITY VISION [private parts one to three]* at the biannual Dance Massive Festival / Dancehouse Melbourne; and was an Arts House CultureLAB artist in residence.

In 2018, Nana was a finalist in the Keir Choreographic Award, commissioned by the Keir Foundation, Carriageworks Sydney, and Dancehouse Melbourne, for her work *POST REALITY VISION [part zero]*; presented the experimental choreographic work *INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE CREATIVELY MALADJUSTED episode 104* as part of the biannual Melbourne Festival of Live Art, supported by Phillip Adams BalletLab and Theatreworks; undertook an artist residency with and was commissioned by Santarcangelo Festival in Italy to present *ISFTCM episode 105*; was invited to undertake the res+ref artist residency as part of Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels; and was commissioned by Runway Experimental Art Magazine to make a video based dance art work.

In 2017, Nana undertook an artist residency with and was commissioned by the biannual Underbelly Arts Lab & Festival to present *ISFTCM episode 103*; and was commissioned by Lucy Guerin Inc to present *RIP Meatdog...Meatdog Lives!* as part of P4SS. In 2016, Nana was supported by the dance boards of the Australia Council for the Arts and the Ian Potter Cultural Trust to train with choreographers Ivo Dimchev, Trajal Harrell, Mårten Spångberg, playwright Mark Ravenhill, and video artist Tacita Dean; and was involved in the creation of an ABC documentary on the iconic underground urban explorer group The Cave Clan. In 2015, Nana was selected to participate in a director's masterclass with Romeo Castellucci at the 2015 Venice Biennale of Theatre; and was involved in the creation and realisation of *iliads*, a durational dance performance piece led by artist Ben Speth. Nana's work has received further support from the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria; City of Port Phillip Cultural Development Fund; FCAC Artist Residency; Bluestone Arts Space; the Croatian Institute of Movement and Dance and Zagreb Dance Centre.

Nana completed her Master of Fine Arts at the Institut Supérieur des Arts et Chorégraphies – Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles in 2021. She also holds a First Class Honours degree in Philosophy and has been awarded a Postgraduate Scholarship in Creative Writing. She received an Australian Postgraduate Award for her thesis dealing with the Aeschylean tragic cycle and satyr play in connection to artists Kazimir Malevich, Marcel Duchamp, VALIE EXPORT and Martha Graham. Nana has served on the editorial committee of peer reviewed arts journal *Colloquy: text theory critique*, as well as on the committee of the postgraduate Faculty of Arts Colloquium at Monash University. Nana is a published researcher and has been invited to present her work on ancient tragedy at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and at Oxford University. She is currently on the panel for the Australia Council for the Arts, as well as for the City of Melbourne Arts.

Nana is a Zagreb born, Melbourne/Brussels based alien. Make contact: aktionshose@gmail.com

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>>> REVIEWS OF PAST WORKS

/// “Nana Biluš Abaffy’s anarchic Post Reality Vision... presented complex visions of how the inherently organisational practice of choreography might produce revelatory states of chaos.” [UN MAGAZINE] ///

/// “A VISION FROM BEYOND CHAOS - Nana Biluš Abaffy stands out among peers for making movement-based pieces that draw chiefly from experimental theatre.” [THE AGE] ///

/// “What we see here is a kind of staged counter-insurgency. Post Reality Vision proposes an assault against the palaces of representation and a disruption of the mediated gaze. The corporeal is asserted in all its awkwardness... it’s a comic but nonetheless sincere attempt by the performers to reclaim autonomy over their own objectification... there are moments of comic delicacy, too. Biluš Abaffy is so light on her feet. And her gestures have a kind of exaggerated expressivity. An ironic intensity.” [WITNESS PERFORMANCE] ///

/// “Nana Biluš Abaffy has work to do, and those in her immediate vicinity best beware. A puss in boots who will walk all over contemporary forms of representation, Abaffy’s boots are mad for walking... this wry performance is also an ironic commentary upon artistic stasis and, despite an apparent shambolic form, is nicely tuned and structured in a deceptively disciplined manner. Like Plato’s cave, this performance lingers in the mind as a statement about the potential for art to dispel tedium - in art’s struggle with death - and the barely concealed terror of being alive...” [TONY RECK REVIEWS] ///

/// “Sometimes art can sweep you off your feet and take you somewhere magical, this performance is one such occasion... Post Reality Vision, created by Nana Biluš Abaffy, is a ludicrously fun affair, a manage-a-trois between three virile dancers, who slip effortlessly between the roles of protagonist, antagonist and art director.” [MELBOURNE CRITIQUE] ///

/// “... very impressed by the intensity of Nana's talent. One of the most valuable events in the professional life of a curator is when you see the work that is so innovative that it is still in its pre-figurative state, not fitting into any of existing trends or formats. I believe that Nana is such a pre-trend setter, an early sign of an artistic approach that might become a trademark of the new generation of artists. It is characterized by intensity and fragility of performative presence; open and fluid format of the work that allows for indefinite number of variations; and refusal to produce formalized statements in favor of communicating through mechanisms of affect and empathy. The work draws on a wide range of influences, from philosophical texts to the post-internet wildness of imagery; and it feels like an embodiment of newness.” [EVA NEKLYAEVA, CURATOR SANTARCANGELO FESTIVAL] ///

/// “strong poetic badass work” [MEG STUART, CHOREOGRAPHER] ///

/// “We need dance that initiates revolution not Orphic neophytes. We need dance that emerges from a clear practice of social and political engagement. What value is a momentary liberation of the senses? Why not work for a permanent liberation? ... The Secretive Dance Team creates site-specific live performances incorporating urban and natural landscapes and found interiors into expansive if enigmatic dance dramas full of strenuous and fantastical posturing and passages of anarchy. Miracle in Aisle 6 was the group’s third production, it was performed only once, and was not supported by any funding or presenting organisation.

And it was free. We go to a place, not to an institution. Or, if the place is an institution, it is not that sort of institution... A waxing moon. Grey buildings. An audience that does not recognise itself. And then – a tableau no-one could anticipate. And then – movements, thoughts, feelings, actions... Chaos is a key ingredient in all Secretive Dance Team performances. Dancers sometimes appear carried away by the thrill of performing somewhere they shouldn’t be performing. There is much recklessness and occasional bursts of violence... It is good to be outside the supermarket. It is good to be outside the church... watching cosmic secrets unfold, outlined bodies radiating to the stars.” [ASSEMBLING THE POLITICAL, DANCEHOUSE DIARY] ///

/// “performed in an obscure zone neither public nor private... What is at stake for the secretive dancer, and for her audience, is never clear, and perhaps never can be clear... A genuine reconciliation of the two tribes, audience and performer... What to say, except that it is – against all probability – a beautiful, natural moment... A dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was.” [NEANDELLUS] ///

/// “Ingmar Bergman has risen from the grave” [CHRIS BOYD, PERFORMANCE CRITIC] ///

/// “an elaborate performance poem for four voices, a surreal fantasy and an installation-immersion... It’s this kind of detail, the extension of the theatrical experience, that makes Psychoknot Theatrics stand out as a serious company, a team capable of pushing boundaries and breaking new ground.” [TIME OUT] ///

/// “the obliterating cure of Psychoknot Theatrics... extremist anti-theatre... this is no doubt a company which puts itself on the absolute outer margin of theatrical playfulness.” [DAILY REVIEW] ///

/// “an excitingly devastating emotional journey.” [HECKLER] ///