



DE FORSTUMMEDES TALE / SPEECH OF THE SILENCED ONES

NEW "CLASSICAL CABARET"

Poems: *Anna Akhmatova, Aleksandr Blok*

Translations to Danish *Mette Dalsgaard and Niels Brunse*

Playwright and stage direction: *Mette Borg*

Video and photo montages: *Yury Vladovsky*

Music: *Dmitri D. Shostakovitj, Hanne Tofte Jespersen*

Gitta-Maria Sjöberg soprano - the mature Akhmatova *Julia Lindgren* sopran - the young Akhmatova

Elisabeth Zeuthen Schneider violin *John Ehde* cello *Polina Fradkina* piano

Thomas Bang actor - conferencier *Mejrhold* *Yury Vladovsky* actor

Around 1910 St Peterburg's cabaret stages were hot spots for avantgarde artists. They met in a short blooming of free creativity in Russian theatre. Among them were the stage director Vsevolod Mejrhold and the poet Anna Akhmatova. Later both became friends of the composer Shostakovich.



WHY SHOULD WE MEET THEM IN 2024?

Because history seems to repeat itself.

Mejrhold played a key role in a total renewal of theatre - till he became a victim of Stalin's purges in 1940. Shot dead and "forgotten". Today he is counted as founder of modern theatre. As a conferencier in 2024 he comments both his own story and those of the other silenced voices.

Anna Akhmatova - by far one of the greatest 20th century poets - was excluded from the writers union, denied publication till her posthumous rehabilitation. She wrote

with a clear, modern voice on the shoulders of several millenia's classical poetry. Her poems were circulated in hand writing. In 2020 they have finally been published in Danish translations. The cabaret sets a number of them to music.

RELEVANCE IN 2024: The cabaret promotes ART AS A NECESSITY, A BLOWHOLE - it is about expressing oneself despite conditions, maintain hope during impossible circumstances and NOT go to the bottom.

HUMOUR: Cabaret may embrace both horror and hope. This cabaret is *not about* Russia nor about fleeing to avoid censorship and prosecution. But two of its performing artists have actually left Russia in March 2022 for political reasons, in protest of the Ukraine-invasion. They now live in Copenhagen.

CONCEPT: Singers, actors and musicians are together on the playground. We meet the silenced voices in songs and monologues - and in the projected scenography. Yury creates montages out of footage and photos so that we experience the figures of the past as a background for the contemporary.

MUSIC: New songs by *Hanne Tofte Jespersen* for Akhmatova poems. She sets them to music as a parallel work to *Shostakovich'* Blok-Romances opus 127 some of which are also heard.