



International theatre festival Baltic Circle celebrates its 20th anniversary

The programme for the 20-year-old theatre festival's celebratory year includes both familiar and new artists, landscapes and forms of performance. The works examine time and propose alternative futures while moving in autumnal darkness. The festival will be held in Helsinki and [online](#) on November 20–28 2020.

“Time spent with others feels very special and fortunate during Baltic Circle’s anniversary year. Organising an international festival when getting together and travelling are restricted has challenged us to seek and try new ways of making and experiencing art. It has also compressed the festival to its most essential parts: facilitating shared experiences, interaction and togetherness,” says the festival’s artistic director **Hanna Parry**.

What kind of structures and practices are upheld in performing arts right now? Or in the future? These pressing issues are examined in [Forecasting movements](#), a video work curated by researcher and curator **Giovanna Esposito Yussif** and Hanna Parry, where performing arts professionals, artists and researchers shake the performing arts stage into something new and different.

Socially and ecologically sustainable ways of doing are also examined by [VeiculoSUR](#), a residency and artistic group that unites artists, activists, students and researchers and moves virtually in six countries and on two continents. Working in South America and Europe, the group questions and re-negotiates social norms and makes space for alternatives. Finland’s contribution to the group includes artist, architect and researcher **David Muñoz Alcántara**, writer and researcher **Maryan Abdulkarim**, choreographer **Mario Lopes** and artist **Fjolla Hoxha**.

The festival’s premieres examine time, the environment and change, and focus their gaze on resplendent shades of darkness. The basis of [Ghost in the Atom](#) by **Felicia Honkasalo**, **Akuliina Niemi** and **Masi Tiitta** is the world’s longest funeral; the one that takes place in the spent nuclear fuel repository Onkalo on the west coast of Finland, 435 metres deep underground. By utilising VR technology, the piece celebrates the meaning of remembrance and the passage of time, and is available to one viewer at a time.

[Black Mercedes](#) is a new five-hour-long solo performance by writer and performance poet **Niko Hallikainen**. This speech accompaniment to Princess Diana’s televised funeral from 1997 acts as a portal to the unexamined ruins of collective subconsciousness. The festival’s second prolonged work [Nightschool](#) lasts from dusk till dawn and dives into the various layers of night and darkness, taking its participants on a journey through a fantastic November night. The piece is created by a collective formed by **Milla Martikainen**, **Maija Nurmio**, **Pauli Riikonen** and **Essi Rossi**.

Maija Hirvanen and **Juha Valkeapää**’s first collaboration [Life as we know it](#) reflects on change, the future and the surprising nature of life. In the sound piece [Listening to Sparks](#), **Francesca Grilli** looks likewise into the future with the young oracles of last year’s festival performance of *Sparks*. Director, actor and performance artist **Tuire Tuomisto**’s [Post Corpse or kraa kraa](#) flies to former hospital Lapinlahti’s tree branches in order to celebrate the power and anarchy of the body as well as its adaptation to change.

Baltic Circle's anniversary programme also includes stories, sounds and images from throughout the years. [Pohjat / Grounds](#) is a self-contained sound piece on the 20-year-old festival, its phases and works. Created by dramaturge **Milka Luhtaniemi**, critic **Matti Tuomela** and sound designer **Tatu Nenonen**, the piece includes various artists from the festival's past as well as Baltic Circle's former and current festival leaders. The festival will also release a publication that discusses current topics relating to the festival programme.

Photographer **Tani Simberg** has captured Baltic Circle's performances, audiences and clubs every year since the festival's inception. [A jubilee exhibition](#) that presents Simberg's works unfurls views of the progress that has taken place in the last 20 years both in Baltic Circle as well as in the history of theatre and performing arts. The festival's last evening is celebrated with [Vuosttaš álbmogat -klubba](#) on Lapinlahti's shores, where Sami rap artist **Ailu Valle** performs together with Greenlandic **DJ Uyarakq**.

The festival expands this year from a six-day festival to an event centred on two weekends that the audience can enjoy in a more leisurely way than before. The programme and information on the festival as a whole are available on [Baltic Circle's homepage](#).

Baltic Circle is an international theatre festival that creates intensities in the city, takes stands on current questions and ignites dialogue. The festival offers its artists space to imagine and explore what theatre and performing arts could be, and to its audience, it offers an opportunity to experience the newest trends in performing arts. Q-teatteri acts as the main organiser of the festival, which was founded in 2000.

Baltic Circle's tickets are now available at Tiketti and Q-teatteri.
Tickets 0–15 €, donative tickets 50 €

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