

Berlin, 25th May 2022

TABORI AWARD INTERNATIONAL | Nicoleta Esinencu & teatru-spălătorie JURY STATEMENT

The Expert Jury of the Fonds Darstellende Künste honors Nicoleta Esinencu & teatru-spălătorie with the Tabori Award international 2022.

Teatru-spălătorie is an independent artists' initiative founded in 2010 by Nora Dorogan, Nicoleta Esinencu, Doriana Talmazan, Artiom Zavadovsky and Kira Semionov among others, offering artists of Moldovan independent culture scene an opportunity to express themselves, be heard and take a stand on social and political current affairs.

In their works, the collective creates an echo chamber for politically and socially relevant issues. The group challenge the audience as they deal with explosive issues such as questions of nationalism and xenophobia in "A(II)Rh+", the Holocaust in "Clear Story", or capitalism and its relentless tendency to create new forms of exploitation and colonization in "Requiem for Europe" (2018) and "Symphony of Progress" (2022). They also bring the developments of family policy in the Moldovan state to the stage with the specific situation after the collapse of the Soviet Union in their performance "Abolition of the Family" (2020). Highlighted here should be the dynamic artistic interplay in the simultaneous calling out of policies and histories in Western Europe while addressing issues that are happening in their own communities. The collective is exploring a practice that raises this possibility of debate and discussion in a way that allows their proposal to be bold and to the point. Before the collective starts interpreting existing clichés and stereotypes, they name them. This fascinating reflection within societal and social – as well as one's own – boundaries is produced in a reduced aesthetic that comes across as explicitly anti-spectacle, thus underlining the strength of the explicit themes and content.

As politically-oriented and difficult as the topics are, they are nonetheless told in an intimate and undogmatic way. The actors present the stories so pointedly that the audience cannot be sure whether the story is fiction or autobiographical. The resulting uncertainty lies between the personal material and the body of the performer on the stage, and creates a tremendously powerful tension, leaving the audience with the passionate, emotional stories well after the performance has ended.

This strong effect on the audience is made possible by a very concise storytelling and a great awareness of the text, which the performers embody with precision. The high quality of the text is demonstrated in the artistry of its documentary and personal nature. It is this precision and sobriety of the material on the one hand, and at the same time the constant subversion of this biographical material through sounds, play of light, and distortion, that triggers an aesthetic experience of the political.

The Expert Jury of the Fonds Darstellende Künste awards the Tabori Award international 2022, endowed with 15,000 EUR, to Nicoleta Esinencu & teatru-spălătorie for a fascinating and unique theatrical/performative form, combining the individual personalities of the performers and controversial political themes with an apt aesthetic, creating unforgettable productions that have a special appeal across borders and audiences. With this award, the Jury specifically aims to support daring, courageous, and often controversial artists, who might not receive enough public support in their local backgrounds and whose practice is key for the further development of performing arts - both locally and transnationally.



Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schneider
Director for the Board



Holger Bergmann
Executive Director