

Biographies

Regine Dura works as a director, author, and dramaturg. After studying theatre/film and media, German, and literature and art education in Frankfurt/Main and video at the Berlin University of the Arts, she worked in Berlin and for the European Film Academy, Wim Wenders Produktion, and as a freelance curator and jury member. Since 2000, she has been working with the documentary theatre director Hans-Werner Kroesinger. She is responsible for play development/concept and text, e.g., for *Stolpersteine Staatstheater*, (Staatstheater Karlsruhe, 2015), with which they were invited to the Berlin Theater-treffen 2016. Since 2019, she is also co-director of productions including *Frontex Security*, *Burning Earth* (*Brennende Erde*, Schauspiel Leipzig, 2020), *Westwall* (Staatstheater Mainz, 2021), and *Room 600* (*Saal 600*, Staatstheater Nuremberg, 2021).

She has received various scholarships and residences, including a DEFA scholarship, the Research Grant of the Berlin Senate, scholarships from the Cultural Academy Tarabya (Istanbul) and Villa Kamogawa (Kyoto), and the #TakeCareResidency Hebbel am Ufer (Performing Arts Fund).

In 2021, she was awarded together with Hans-Werner Kroesinger the Poetikdozentur Landau for “new standards in documentary theatre”.

Hans-Werner Kroesinger studied at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies at the Justus Liebig University in Giessen with Andrzej Wirth and Hans-Thies Lehmann from 1983 to 1988. In 1987, while still a student, Kroesinger began working as an assistant director and dramaturg for Robert Wilson. He was involved in the productions of *Hamletmaschine* in New York and *The Forest* in Berlin. In 1989, he became Heiner Müller’s artistic collaborator on the *Hamlet/Hamletmaschine* production at the Deutsches Theater Berlin. Since 1993, his productions have been staged at venues including the Berliner Ensemble, Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin, and the Hebbel am Ufer HAU in Berlin. He took part in documenta X in Kassel in 1997. Since 2000, he has collaborated regularly with Regine Dura.

Hans-Werner Kroesinger and Regine Dura are considered among the most important representatives of contemporary documentary theatre in Germany. Kroesinger’s works have been invited to national and international festi-

vals such as “Politik im freien Theater” (Hamburg 2003, Dresden 2009, Freiburg/Basel 2014), “Internationale Keuze” Rotterdam (2007), “Bitef” Belgrade (2014), “Mess” Sarajevo (2014), Steirischer Herbst 2016, the Berlin Theatertreffen (2016) and the Berlin Theatertreffen in China (2017).

In 2012, Kroesinger was a visiting professor in the Scenic Research program at the Ruhr University in Bochum, which has since been established as the Schlingensief Professorship.

Lee Kyung-Sung is a theatre-maker from Korea. He was born in Basel, Switzerland, in 1983 and moved to Korea in 1987. He majored in theatre directing at Choong-Ang University and performance practice and research at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London. In 2008, he founded *Creative VaQi*. In 2010, he became the youngest winner of the prestigious East Asia New Conception Theatre Award for *Let Us Move Your Sofa* (2010) and also received the Doosan YonKang Artist Award for *Namsan Documenta* in 2014. He is a director with exceptional abilities utilizing a diverse range of sensory stage languages to convey the problems of modern society. His works engage in genre-deconstructing, multimedia experiments, and reducing dependence on text, maximizing the possibilities of the message’s multisensory transmissibility with an exacting and critical mindset while actively countering such logocentrism by utilizing media, installation, and performance. His work was presented in numerous festivals worldwide, including Festival Tokyo in Japan, Black Box Theatre Festival in Hong-Kong, the Melbourne Live Arts Festival, and Theaterformen in Germany. He was invited as a guest artist by Kinokuni International Arts Center with his company *Creative VaQi* in 2018.

Since 2015, Kyung-Sung Lee has served as the 3rd artistic director of the Seoul Marginal Theatre Festival and has curated three editions of that festival. He is a professor at the Department of Acting at Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul.

Li Yinan is the professor of dramaturgy and theatre studies at the Central Academy of Drama, Beijing. Her research focuses on various aspects of new dramaturgy (including dramaturgy for documentary theatre, dance, and new media art). She teaches courses on New Dramaturgy and Documentary Theatre in the BA, MA, and PhD programs. She is also a theatre director. Her theatrical productions include *Have/Have not (You Mou)* (2015), *Home (Jia)* (2016), *In the Dream Land (Ying De Zun Leng)* (2017), *Water Margin (Shuihu)* (2017), and *The Black Temple (Heisi)* (2017). She is the Chinese translator of Hans-Thies Lehmann’s *Postdramatisches Theater* (1999).

Boris Nikitin is a theatre director, author, and essayist, who was born in Basel as the son of Ukrainian-Slovakian-French-Jewish immigrants. Nikitin writes and directs in the international independent theatre scene as well as in established city theatres. He also curates festivals, talks, and symposiums.

Nikitin has been exploring the representation and production of identity and reality since 2007. His plays seek the boundary between illusion theatre and performance, between documentary, propaganda, and fake. In the process, they sometimes completely resolve the contradiction between offensive dilettantism and artistic virtuosity, between concept and grand theatrical gesture. Time and again, the plays are rewritings of classical material, as in *Woyzeck* (2007), *The Broken Jug* (*Der zerbrochne Krug*, 2010), or *Hamlet* (2016). “Like few others, Boris Nikitin is currently leading theatre to a critical point,” according to a German professional journal. Recently, Nikitin has increasingly been dealing with the relationship between art and illness.

In 2017, Nikitin was awarded the J.M.R. Lenz Prize for Drama of the City of Jena for his oeuvre. In 2020, he received the Swiss Theatre Prize.

Kai Tuchmann works as a dramaturg, director, and academic. He holds a directing diploma from the Ernst Busch Drama Academy in Berlin. He is a guest professor at Beijing’s Central Academy of Drama—where he, together with Li Yinan, has developed the curriculum of the first dramaturgy BA program in Asia. He has held research fellowships at The Graduate Center, CUNY (Fulbright), the Mellon School of Theater and Performance Research at Harvard University, and the Academy for Theatre and Digitality in Dortmund (Germany). Kai also teaches dramaturgy and theatre management at Zurich University of the Arts, Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi, and the Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts. In his research, Kai argues for an understanding of dramaturgy as a practice that expands the possibilities of theatre. As dramaturg, he has collaborated with Hans-Werner Kroesinger (*The Suppliants*, [*Die Schutzflehenden*], Mainfranken Theater Würzburg, 2012), Wen Hui (*RED [HONG]*, 2015), and Zhao Chuan (*The Refuse [Feiwu]*, 2015), and *The Gele Mountain [Geleshan]*, 2018).

Kai’s artistic works have examined the afterlife of the Cultural Revolution in present-day China, the effects of urbanization on the population of migrants in Europe and Asia, and the ontological status of embodiment vis-à-vis digital technology.

His stagings and dramaturgies have been invited to i Dance Hong Kong, Seoul Marginal Theatre Festival, Zürcher Theater Spektakel, Kunstfest Weimar, Festival d’Automne à Paris, Wuzhen Theatre Festival, Asia Society New York, and OCAT Shenzhen, among other events.

Wang Mengfan works as an independent theatre director and choreographer in Beijing. She studied art history and dance studies in China and Germany. Her first theatre project, *50/60-Old Ladies Dance Juchang* (*50/60-Ayimen De Wudao Juchang*), was created in Beijing in 2015. The work was premiered at the Beijing Nanluoguxiang Performing Arts Festival and presented at the VIE Festival in Bologna. At the 2017 Beijing Fringe Festival, she created her second

dance theatre piece, *The Divine Sewing Machine* (*Shensheng Fengrenji*), which featured thirteen children.

She was selected as a “Dance Hopeful (*Hoffnungsträger*)” by the German dance magazine *tanz* in its 2018 yearbook. Her most recent production is *When My Cue Comes, Call Me, And I Will Answer* (*Gai Wo Shangchang Deshihou, Jiao Wo, Wo Hui Huida*) which premiered in 2019 at Wuzhen Theatre Festival. In 2021 she was awarded the Pro Helvetia Studio Residency, in the context of which she is collaborating with *Theater HORA* to reconsider how different bodies are choreographed as “problems” in the context of dance.

Wen Hui, who was born in Yunnan, is a dancer, choreographer, documentary filmmaker, and installation artist from China. Originally trained as a folk dancer, she attended the Choreography Department of the Beijing Dance Academy from 1985 to 1989 and was then a choreographer in the *Oriental Song and Dance Ensemble of China* (*Dongfang Gewutuan*). In the 1990s, she studied modern dance in the United States and Europe, including at Folkwang University in Essen and Pina Bausch’s dance company in Wuppertal. In 1994, Wen Hui founded China’s first independent dance theatre group, the *Living Dance Studio* (*Shenghuo Wudao Gongzuoshi*), together with filmmaker Wu Wenguang. With *Report on Body* (2004), she and her team won the ZKB Prize of the Zürcher Theater Spektakel. With the support of the Goethe-Institut, the *Living Dance Studio* produced the piece *RED (HONG)* in 2015, a reflection on the model opera as a cultural-political symbol and a part of the collective consciousness during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Wen Hui has participated in numerous independent Chinese and international festivals. Her works are shown at theatres, museums, and art centers. She is presently working on *I am Sixty*, which premiered in autumn 2021. Wen Hui lives in Beijing.

Zhao Chuan, born in 1967, works across theatre, literature, film, and visual art. He creates alternative and socially engaged theatre and is the founder and artistic director of the Shanghai-based theatre collective *Grass Stage* (*Caotaiban*, established in 2005). As a theatre-maker and writer, he has created various theatre works across China together with *Grass Stage* for over a decade. However, they are often unable to present these works in conventional theatres.

The group encourages people from different backgrounds to consider human living conditions and historical issues and stimulate participants and audiences to respond to those issues through a creative process, rehearsals, performances, and post-talks. Given its strong interest in social practice, the group’s theatre activities have often been considered too rough, ideological, marginal, and undefined by the mainstream. In recent years, *Grass Stage* has supported industry workers in making their own theatre pieces; through dialogues with young people from diverse backgrounds, the group has developed stage plays on youth issues in today’s China.

His theatre works include *Wild Seeds* (Zacao, 2018–2019) and a trilogy (*Shehui Juchang Sanbuqu*) about contemporary Chinese society (2006–2017), comprising *World Factory* (*Shijie Gongchang*), *The Little Society* (*Xiao Shehui*), and *Madmen's Stories* (*Kuangren Gushi*). During the pandemic in 2020, *Grass Stage* started the new series *Theatre of Contagion* (*Renchuanren Juchang*).

Zhao Chuan has been awarded several international literature awards, including the Unita Prize for New Novelists (Taiwan, 2001). His publications include fiction, essays, and art criticism: *On Radical Art: the 80s Scene in Shanghai* (author, 2014), *The Body At Stake: Experiments in Chinese Contemporary Art and Theatre* (co-editor, author, 2013). He is also the producer of an independent documentary titled *Shanghai Youth* (2015). He has been involved in many international art residencies, collaboration projects, and teaching.

Zhuang Jiayun is a graduate of playwriting from the Central Academy of Theatre in Beijing. She received her PhD in Theater and Performance Studies from UCLA and held an Andrew Mellon Fellowship. She has worked as a concept developer and writer at CAMLab at Harvard University and as a dramaturg for the PlayMakers Repertory Company. In 2017, Jiayun and Shanghai-based choreographer Fan Jiang founded *The Three Bowls Co-op*—a performance group that experiments with new storytelling mediums and technological possibilities in theatre and performance. At the Academy for Theatre and Digitality in Dortmund (Germany), Jiayun is currently developing her latest project, *FXKE*, a performance installation on dis/information dissemination and public engagement in the post-truth era.

