

THEATRE

DORA ILI KO ĆE DA PROŠIVA PRSLUKE?

*DORA OR WHO'S GOING
TO STITCH THE VESTS*

ANDREJA KARGAČIN



**FREE
REPUBLIC OF
VIENNA
FESTIVAL**

13 – 16 June
Theater Nestroyhof
Hamakom

Doroteja Antić, called Dora, and the young theatre maker Andreja Kargačin have been friends since they were children. Now one of them is living in exile and the other does not know what is expecting her in Belgrade after the premiere of this play. The Serbian student protests began in November 2024. They were triggered when a newly renovated station roof collapsed in Novi Sad on 1 November 2024, killing 16 people. The negligent and overpriced renovation is one of a series of corruption scandals associated with the ruling Serbian Progress Party. Since 2024, the protests have evolved into a wider civil society movement and the government has reacted with arrests and accusations of terrorism. *DORA or Who's Going To Stitch the Vests* is based on the two friends' intimate letters and leads us into a world of police brutality, female rage, patriotism and the question of a liveable future – in a country that censors art and criminalises activism.

Language
Serbian

Surtitles
German, English

Duration
105 mins


barrier-free access

RESISTANCE NOW! TALK

14 June, *Systematic Attacks on Arts and Culture*
with Agnietė Lisičkinaitė, Igor Shugaleev and others,
more information at festwochen.at

‘There comes a moment
on stage when you’re no
longer sure whether the
performance is what we’re
watching, or whether we are
the performance.’

AUTONOMIJA NEWS PORTAL
ABOUT THE PLAY (2025)

Text Andreja Kargačin, Doroteja Antić **With** Andreja Kargačin, Natalija Stepanović, Doroteja Antić
Legal counsel, Legal advisor Emina Đuran **Dramaturgy, Mentorship** Ana Dubljević **Set design,**
Costume design Ema Pavlović **With music by** Katarina Ranković **Production coordination** Lenka
Miloradović **Consultancy** Borisav Matić, Miloš Lolić **Translation surtitles** Aleksandra Pejovic
(German), Jelena Babšek (English) **Surtitles** Aleksandra Pejovic

Production BITEF Theatre (Belgrade)

executed by the team of the Vienna Festival (Wiener Festwochen) | Free Republic of Vienna
World Premiere December 2025, BITEF Theatre (Belgrade)

22:42

5G 20

< 40



Dora A



Dear Dora, how do we explain the political context of our show to Western audience?

22:03 ✓✓

Dear Andreja, it's a question I ask myself many times, everytime I meet someone from Western Europe. Perhaps we should start in the 90s, when Yugoslavia fell apart, because not only did this trend of untranationalist politics as a tactic to hide the widespread looting and privatization start in the 90s, most of the Serbian political figures we are now fighting against have started their careers in the 90s.

22:04



I know you always want to talk about the 90s since you worked in human rights organizations, but I wouldn't confuse our audience with that. A lot of middle class people from Western Europe have a short attention span (no offence <3) so maybe we should start like this: in 2012, the Serbian Progressive Party came into power. Its leader, Aleksandar Vučić, has been doing the Putin/Medvedev thing, where he is sometimes prime minister, sometimes president, but always in charge.

22:06 ✓✓

I would just add that I was 11 when Vučić came into power and now I'm 24 and in exile. I've known his name more than half my life, can you imagine?

22:09



And I was 13. I am older and wiser and not in exile.

22:10 ✓✓

yet*

22:10 ✓

Then I would say how there have been many waves of protest against this authoritarian government but they all died down. In 2024 my friends and I started an independent activist organization called STAV (Students Against Authoritarian Rule) and have done several anti-government actions since.

22:11

Then in November 2024, the canopy of the railway station in Novi Sad (a city in the north of Serbia, where both of us grew up) collapsed and killed 16 people. That is when this last wave of mass student-led protests started.

22:14 ✓

I would also add that it collapsed right after it was renovated, and that the renovation money went into someone's pocket. The government has been actively obstructing the investigation since, because it was clearly a consequence of regime corruption.

22:16

Obviously, the government is threatened by the protests, and is trying to attack, discredit and incarcerate everyone they think is the leader (even though everyone knows the student movement has no leaders).

22:20 ✓

They literally kidnapped me and my friend once. But they returned us, so it was okay. I'm not that mad.

22:21



There was a big protest on the 15th of March 2025. It ended up being the biggest protest in the history of Serbia. So the Government needed a diversion. I think you should tell this part.

22:23 ✓✓

Three days before the big protest, 12th of March, I was at a meeting with 11 of my comrades, discussing the upcoming protest. We were illegally recorded by the Serbian secret service and our private conversation was broadcast on several televisions. Because of this conversation, warrants for our arrest were issued. Now we are under accusations of attempting to overthrow the constitutional order of Serbia. Can you imagine how stupid that is?

22:31

They are now probably dying to know what was the conversation. Be patient!!! Leave that for the show!

22:33 ✓✓

I will just add one thing – what is interesting is that a few of us happened to be outside Serbia at the moment because we went on a short trip. It was supposed to be a two day trip, but we never returned. Those who didn't leave the country were arrested immediately. After a few months, our ID and passports have been annulled.

22:34

The protests are still going on. No one was arrested for the murder of 16 people. Is that enough or did I leave out something really important?

22:37 ✓✓

Nope I think that's it. Maybe we should let them watch the play now.

Edited 22:38

BIOGRAPHY

Andreja Kargačin, born 1999, is a Serbian performance artist, theatre director, choreographer, visual artist, and writer. Kargačin attended Ballet High School in Novi Sad, in the Department of Contemporary Dance, and graduated in Theater Directing from the Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade. She is a member of the artistic-activist collective Shock cooperative / Led art and co-founder of the dance collective ČETA.

Kargačin's works are interdisciplinary, often politically charged, and deal with collective memory, totalitarian regimes, and gender roles. She has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Italy, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has completed residencies in Italy, Serbia, Sweden, and Germany. She worked for six months as a performance artist at Marina Abramović's exhibition *The Cleaner*.

In 2023, Kargačin received the Novica Tadić Award for the collection of poems *Slobodni dani Elene Čaušesku (Elena Ceaușescu's Days Off)*, and the Iskra kulture Award in 2024 for her entire artistic creation. Kargačins directed works like *HOLOPARTIZANKE* (2024), *At the Inland Sea* (2023) and *Brooklyn and Cats in Dumpsters* (2021) and created performances and installations.

DORA or Who's Going To Stitch the Vests is her first production that will be shown at the Vienna Festival (Wiener Festwochen) | Free Republic of Vienna.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

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