

# Routine by Mia Bradić

Mia Bradić performed a very playful improvisation entitled: *Routine*, starting from the *Score #1: Unpacking a Bag of Your Own* on the bus stop next to Saint Francis Church in Split, on April 7, 2021, in the frame of Misplaced Women? Workshop led by Tanja Ostojić.



*Routine* by Mia Bradić, *Misplaced Women?* Workshop Split, 2021. Photo: Tanja Ostojić

When I was preparing for the second day of the workshop, I packed with the intention of collecting things that I interacted with in the past few days. The idea for the performance to occur on the bus stop came naturally to me, because I spend a lot of my daily time waiting for, inside, or chasing buses due to the circular migration.

The performance itself was over 15 minutes long improvisation. I was only certain of the objects packed in my backpack and that I wanted to use the circus discipline of contortion as a guide for my movement. As a young circus artist, I cannot get professional circus education in Croatia and will have to leave my country (but also friends and family, culture, language...) to pursue my dreams. However, I am already living through this kind of scenario on a micro level. The town of some 25 000 citizens where I live, Solin, prides itself of being the town with the most children per capita in

Croatia, but at the same time, it has no content for young people, including the non-existence of a high school. That's why I have to travel every day, spending hours in traffic, because my education, training and pretty much all activities are happening in Split.



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In fact, my everyday backpack looks similar to the one I used in the performance, overflowing with stuff. It was a nice experience to connect my daily routine to a bigger picture of packing and leaving my current life behind, which I will be experiencing in just a few months, and it felt healing to use this performance to express my disappointment with the lack of resources for young people in Croatia and the general under-appreciation of (circus) artists in our society, which both affect my reality and, among other things, my decision to leave.

I was not surprised by the lack of interest from the people passing next to the bus stop, mostly because performances in public spaces are very rare in Split, and people are not used to this format and the role they could potentially play in it. I think for the participants and organisers of the workshop who were also the biggest audience for my performance, the most interesting interaction was the one of a probably homeless man stopping for a moment, almost as if I'm in his spot or as if he is trying to see if he knows me. At the end of the performance, the lady who got out of the bus on this stop advised me to get my picnic blanket off the floor, so it doesn't get dirty, but she said it in a very caring way, which made me happy.



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I have also just now, three weeks later, while watching the video of my performance, noticed a really interesting link between advertisements placed in the bus stop, which are focused on commercially exploiting women's desire to look good (often only in the ways that are considered socially acceptable), and me putting clothes on myself in unanticipated ways, as well as putting on mascara in those clothes.

I've previously participated in workshops that required the participants to perform in the public space, but this one felt different because of the focus being put on the misplacement of women, and the fact that I was performing in what is practically my hometown — in a space that is an important part of my everyday life. I was also very much inspired by all the performances from other participants and the dialogue we had about the position of women in our society and the role of misplacement has in shaping our identities.

I was honoured to perform earlier that day alongside Alejandra while Tanja was talking about her own experiences in which she managed to escape rape and sexual assault. As a feminist and an ambassador of an organisation which focuses on eradicating violence against women and girls, I

regularly hear stories like hers, often ending even worse for the survivor. Yet, before this performance, I haven't explored it artistically. While performing, I was carefully listening to Tanja's words, I tried to imagine myself in her place and I let the emotions caused by this lead my movement. The space where we performed was also very symbolic, because these kind of stories are, in most cases, distorted in the media and the survivor, if she chooses to step forward, often doesn't have any control of the narrative. In this piece, I felt Tanja was having full control over her story and in that sense, it felt like the story wasn't just hers, but of all women who experienced rape and sexual assault, and who could, through Tanja, claim their power back.

About the contributor:

My name is **Mia Bradić** and I'm an 18-year-old circus artist from Croatia. For the past 11 years, I have been learning aerial skills (hoop, silks and trapeze) in Cirkus Kolektiv (Split), where I now teach aerial silks to children and adults. Contortion is also a circus skill I have been practicing for the past three years in Room100 (Split). I'm very passionate about creating positive change in the world, even if it's small-scale. That's why I became a Fridays for Future member working on climate justice, WAVE (Women Against Violence Europe) Youth Ambassador, and I have created a project "Leave a mark", which connects the topics of gender equality and art through workshops for young teenage girls.

Text written in English and translated to Croatian by Mia Bradić

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*Routine* by Mia Bradić, *Misplaced Women?* Workshop Split, 2021. Photo: Tanja Ostojić



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