



INFERNO:21

The word hell probably evokes negative emotions in almost everyone. Anxiety, suffering, torment, fire, agony, the loss of one's soul... But what does hell look like in the 21st century? And how can we escape it? Is it merely something excessive – a relic of the past that stands in the way at the end of history, leaving us with no choice but to laugh at it? Or is descending into hell an essential part of finding a way out? And where does it all end? INFERNO:21 explores the darker sides of human nature, moral dilemmas, and the consequences of our decisions. It touches upon themes of guilt, punishment, loss, and the search for inner meaning.

This original, experimental, interdisciplinary work explores the existence of the contemporary individual – the SELF – who finds themselves in the deepest depths of hell. In mythology, heroes, poets, philosophers, and demigods descend into the underworld to change their fate. Today, anyone can enter the underworld, because it is accessible to all. It is a fictional space within our minds, deeply shaped by emotions. This is the INFERNO of the 21st century. An exhibition of contemporary values, video mapping of human despair, dramatic situations of everyday life, and the music of a possible future of human relationships.

Concept, Direction and Texts: **Veronika Trokšiarová**

Dramaturgy and Poetry: **Miroslav Lukačovič**

Video Art and Spatial Installation: **Alex Zelina**

Costume Design: **Michaela Zajačková**

Set Design: **The Creative Ensemble**

Wig Design: **L-Revolution**

Song Lyrics and Music: **Michaela Dzamková, Ľuboš Janák, René Sorád, Viktor Války**

Movement Collaboration: **Nikola Kozáková**

Lighting Design: **Boris Adamčík**

Production: **Verona Štepanovič, Veronika Trokšiarová**

Performers: **Michaela Dzamková, Ľuboš Janák, René Sorád, Viktor Války, Veronika Trokšiarová**

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Š.E.M. Company

www.divadlosem.sk

FB|IG: [@divadlosem](https://www.facebook.com/divadlosem)

divadlosem@gmail.com

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English Translation of the Performance Texts

THE BOTTOM

Avatar 1:

There are days when we are the ones hanging,
and days
when others hang in our place.
Then you lie quietly buried in flowerpots,
rummaging through the remains
of your own dried-out roots.
There, darkness will cling to you
like the sun clings to the sky
when you need a harvest.

The cross-eyed, stinking miser takes nothing,
even as he reaches towards your knees.
His head has succumbed to crematorium syndrome –
everything dead inside has turned to dust.

Avatar 2:

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Avatar 1:

You are, in fact, constantly giving in to altruism,

even as detergent foams in your throat.
After all, every proper shepherd
eventually turns into his own sheep.

Avatar 2:

But what do you think that means?

Avatar 1:

Sometimes a pagan god will stop you

and ask which way you're going.
Tell him you're heading straight ahead,
but keep your mouth shut and keep walking.
He might crucify you.

Avatar 2:

But what do you think that means?

Avatar 1:

And if your legs happen to hurt...

just keep climbing.
You'll get somewhere.

And if you happen to be stopped by God,
barefoot and dead,
then you've arrived.

Avatar 2:

But what do you think that means?

LEVEL 1

VOICE-OVER:

The contemporary human being is an individual living in the present day, characterised by a complex identity, social position, and interactions within the society and culture they inhabit. The contemporary human being is perceived as a member of a group – the family – which forms the fundamental unit of social interaction and support. In this context, the individual is often understood as a recipient of love, care, and upbringing, someone who needs support, protection, and guidance from other family members. Their achievements, experiences, and needs are important to the entire family and are often celebrated or addressed together. Overall, from the family's perspective, the human being is seen as a unique and invaluable individual.

The contemporary human being is a unique and invaluable individual with personal needs, closely connected to another contemporary human being through shared experiences, memorable moments, and the relationships they create together.

For example: one contemporary human being can descend with another to the lowest possible point of human existence, where darkness, hopelessness, and immense suffering reign. Society perceives the contemporary human being as a subject of rights and responsibilities granted within a legal and moral framework. Their freedom, dignity, and opportunities are essential to the functioning of a just and healthy society. Therefore, concern for the well-being and development of every individual is one of the main goals and fundamental values of modern society.

What do you look like now?

The contemporary human being, characterised by a complex identity and social position. The contemporary human being, a member of a group – the family, the fundamental unit of support. The contemporary human being, a recipient of love, care, and upbringing, needs

support and protection. Their achievements, experiences, and needs are important. Overall, the human being is a unique and invaluable individual. The contemporary human being, together with another contemporary human being, wants to find the surface, a place where human existence is possible. The contemporary human being, a subject of rights and responsibilities. Their freedom, dignity, and opportunities, a just and healthy society. Therefore, concern for the well-being of the individual is one of the main goals.

A goal.

What do you look like now?

The contemporary human being, identity, position. The contemporary human being, member, family, fundamental unit. The contemporary human being, love, care, upbringing. Their support, protection, achievements, important. The contemporary human being, a unique being. The contemporary human being, with another, find the surface. Place. Existence. The contemporary human being, rights and responsibilities. Their freedom, dignity, opportunities, just and healthy. Concern for well-being, one of the main goals.

Goal. Goal. Goal.

What do you look like now?

Goal.

Look closer.

Goal. Goal.

LEVEL 2

VOICE-OVER:

How many times do I have to tell you?

Smile.

How many times do I have to tell you?

You're so skinny, from the side you look like a photograph.

As long as you live under my roof...

Have you made any friends yet?

LEVEL 3

VOICE-OVER:

So I opened a separate account called TAXES.

Well, I'm getting a refund now.

Eighteen hundred and something euros. Twenty thousand.

Twelve euros.

Well, I actually got a refund in my first year too.

It cancels out.

How?!

I don't know.

If I put money aside from every gig.

I had eighteen thousand.

Eighteen hundred and something euros. Twenty thousand.

Then I added up all my gigs since the beginning of the year.

I definitely haven't earned twenty thousand. Definitely not.

You still have that sixty-percent expense deduction.

Well, you have to deduct it.

I don't understand any of this.

I've probably got about a thousand euros.

Twenty thousand.

What you earn basically gets cancelled out.

What you earn – sixty percent of it gets deducted.

Then I'll buy myself a MacBook!

LEVEL 4

Avatar 1

Good evening, my name is Michaela Dzamková, I have a doctorate in art, and this is my rant for today.

You all keep giving me shit,
medicine, law, all your bullshit.
Study this and study that,
art is for fucking idiots.

Finish your degree and find a man,
make yourselves a baby, two or three,
let the whole family see
you're no worse than anybody.

You need a mortgage, you need a flat,
be pretty, always look your best,
modest, fertile, always smiling,
start behaving like a woman.

Dismissed, I've been dismissed,
dismissed, I'm not that great.
Dismissed, I've been dismissed,
dismissed, I asked for so little.

You've turned into a little grey mouse,
you seemed so exceptional,
when you were still at home with us,
troubles stayed away.

The moment you left home,
you lost your dignity.
Come back down to earth, this isn't you,
just liberal insecurities.

What more do you want from me?
You're not getting a groom.
Build a house, plant a tree,
you know very well I am, I am, I am...

Dismissed, I've been dismissed,
dismissed, I'm not that great.
Dismissed, I've been dismissed,
dismissed, I asked for so little.

Dismissed, I've been dismissed,
dismissed, I've been dismissed,
dismissed, dismissed,
dismissed, I'm not that great.

Dismissed, dismissed,
dismissed, I asked for so little.

Dismissed.

Avatar 3

I'm a fucking little brat,
I don't know how to show respect.
A bad little gay boy, wearing a women's tank top, size S.

A dishonest guy,
looking for dirt on everyone.
When I see myself,
I struggle to find the words.
Every straight guy falls at my feet.

You're wicked, bitch-ass times.
These days, being an asshole is enough.
You'll strip us of our purpose
with your brain liposuction.

The future has no prospects.
You'd rather escape this rhyme.
You're calculating beasts.
Which one of us won't survive next?

You're a mistake! You're here by mistake!
You're the traffic lights of the world's idiots.
You want to turn us into political manoeuvres,
dead gay people into nothing but statistics.

My ex wears the colours of the Green Guard.
He's a VIP at the party's swingers' parties.

This is our home! This is our home!

This fucked-up era is packing my bags!

Words like weapons, taxes,
what the hell else is going to happen to us?
I'm just an angry little gay boy,
I've had enough of your disgusting fakes.

Avatar 2

Permanently empty eyes,

nodding your face up and down.

Laugh at the fact you should have jumped by now.

Hold your breath and cut yourself in half.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Because it's what we deserve,
there's no other way.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Because it's what we deserve,
there's no other way.

Help, help, help, help, help.

What else is left? We're in this together.

Take a walk in the park and step over a corpse.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Because it's what we deserve,
there's no other way.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Because it's what we deserve,
there's no other way.

Help, help, help, help, help.

That's our beautiful culture,
where the only human is the one who stays silent.
Even as there are fewer and fewer of us,
if you're different, you must be destroyed.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Because it's what we deserve,
there's no other way.

Help, help, help, help, help.

Because it's what we deserve,
there's no other way.

Help, help, help, help, help.
Help, help, help, help, help.

It's what we deserve.

Help, help, help, help, help.

THE SURFACE

So, will you be coming back tomorrow?