JURY AWARD JUSTIFICATION

We saw a great variety and diversity of pieces that show vitality and growing potential of the Slovenian dance scene. That is why the decision was not easy to make.

We defined some criteria before watching the shows, which might be relevant not only for these performances, but also for the future development of dance and performance and Slovenia.

Our intense discussions were guided by the following criteria:

- critical perspective and sense of urgency,
- radical and recognizable artistic language,
- potential and next steps exceeding the project.

One performance that kept us occupied for a long time turned out to be the one that impressed us the most, the one that became the winner.

And this is:
TOGETHER
by Leja Jurišić and Marko Mandić

In times so focused on individuality, to reflect on and to practice being together in different senses and dimensions seems not only urgent and necessary, but also deeply critical and subversive towards dominating culture. The Utopian – and yet so deeply rooted in theatre – idea of community between performers and viewers becomes real in this shared space and time created by the piece.

The shuffled playlist creates a common emotional ground referring to our collective knowledge of music and the pop universe. The live written text creates an exceptional experience of the here and now.
At the same time, pop culture fantasies of a couple, or duo in dance terms, become deconstructed in a playful game with classical role models and gender stereotypes. This piece is excessive in various ways, and through this excess very generous and embracing. It seems impressive how artists navigate in the field of performance art and dance history. They consciously repeat known and sometimes even cliché gestures, leading us through different concepts by means of embodied practice.

Or, we can also put it like this:
it was risky, it was funny, it was violent, it was excessive, it was human, it was touching, it was pop, it was intelligent, it was political, it was daring, it was a challenge.

We’ve seen two extraordinary performers both exceed their usual medium, which makes us very curious about the possibilities for this collaboration to evolve and about their next artistic steps.

Members of the jury:
Rainer Hofmann - artistic director of SPRING Performing Arts Festival Utrecht, The Netherlands
Dorota Sosnowska - PhD, Assistant Professor at University of Warsaw's Institute of Polish Culture
Kira Kirsch - artistic director of theatre BRUT, Vienna, Austria