



DIGITAL COLLECTION OF EUROPEAN ROMA THEATER AND DRAMA

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Who Laughs Last?

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RAMÓNA FARKAS

Tonight you will be part of Füszi's first stand-up show. As we all know, stand-up is a male business, thus we only have female performers here. But those who come here often know that there is nothing new under the cellar's ceiling – here us women play male roles as well.

Firstly, about the performers: even though most of us belong to the minority, we're all heading in the same direction. Where, I don't know. And if that makes you feel uncomfortable... don't worry, we feel the same. This is also part of the show. It's okay if you don't laugh. No problem, really. I'm happy to shock you or something. Any reaction is fine.

So tonight we have Lucia Lakatos who'll occasionally laugh at herself for you, too; Orsolya Balogh who's old enough to be our mother but thank God she is not; and here is Abi who... watch out, you must help me 'cause math is not my strongest point... claims to be 50% Hungarian, 50% Spanish and half Gypsy. And I'm Ramóna Farkas, I have the honour to be the fluffer tonight.

To introduce myself, I'll start with a story that describes well where I come from. In our old house lived an old woman who went nuts, so much so that her 18 dogs lived in 100 m² and she stayed in the pantry. She never left it. When she died, in the pantry, the paramedics had to cut off her legs in her wellingtons because she never took them off. They threw the remains in the garden well, which they had to bury afterwards. This is my first childhood memory. I still think of it fondly. My parents disciplined us with this and other similar horror stories if we got up to mischief or didn't go inside. Then the "old haaag" stepped out of the well.

Do you see the twisted logic? Her legs are cut off but she steps out. From the buried well.

That's how I became a "mentally healthy" adult.

(...)

ABIGAIL MERINA CAMACHO

Hi there, hello-hello!

Guess what? Before this performance we participated in a stand-up training and the stand-up gal there said that it's good to use a mic because it gives you confidence – you can hold onto it, it protects you. Well... we got no mic from the theatre but luckily I always have something on me that gives me confidence. But one is not supposed to drink on stage, so... Rami, thanks for fluffing. You're all done and dusted. You need this more than me. Leave me a sip, I'll be back in 20 minutes.

So, hello, hello! It'd be right to introduce myself. My name is Merina Camacho Abigail... or I've just very badly cursed everyone here.

Could you please repeat my name? I try not to look at the paid extras...
Merina Camacho Abigail. Ca-ma-cho, Ca-ma-cho.

Here is this girl, her name is Ca-ma-cho.

Occasionally she likes a macho

Her loud voice is heard everywhere,

she was the headmaster's nightmare.

It's not a typical Hungarian name

Half Hungarian and half Spanish is the flame

with a pinch of violin in her laugh

I'm very weary of my Gypsy half

A tough concoction in my blood

I'm pretty much screwed, bud.

So everyone knows my name now, right? Together, just once more, the whole thing! Well done. It wasn't that difficult, was it?

This felt really good, I've always wanted to try it.

Okay, we can now move on to the joke. What was it? Right, my name. Why don't I just pass my ID around? It'd be easier.

It's in the cards that this won't make the show any more entertaining. But the doors have been closed, so there is no way out. Anyway, you've paid for it already. With some exceptions... compliments to the complimentary ticket holders! So you'll enjoy it to the last cent!

Anyway, do you know the feeling when you go abroad, introduce yourself and they pronounce your name in a funny way? Why wouldn't you, most of you must have been abroad, you don't look North Korean to me. Or shall I skip these intellectual jokes? No worries.

(...)

ORSOLYA BALOGH

Let me share a couple of things about myself at the beginning:

It may not be visible but I'm disadvantaged; first of all I'm past forty, I have no children and I'm single – okay, I'm divorced, but that's the same. That'd be more than enough in our little homeland to draw suspicious looks trying to figure out how I screwed it. What keeps me alive if I wasn't even able to bring a child into this world? Let alone the personal income tax refund fuckery that doesn't apply to us, but honestly, I'm even prepared for a total confiscation of all property of those childless. I've been thinking about how to motivate myself to have children, I thought I'd take out a family loan, but then I realised I'd have to couple up for that, too. You know, like a monopoly card: find a partner and take out a loan; so that wouldn't work for me either.

And guess what, despite all this I must say I feel better than when I was younger.

Why is that the case? Definitely not that I'm exclusively drinking mineral water bottled with Eva Mendes' tears, neither is it my plastic surgeon and well... I've also gotten more medals for my gymnastic achievements among the sheets earlier. However, with the passing years I realised a couple of things, for example now I know what is really important for me and don't give a fuck about what others think about that. So I'm surely not compelled to conform any more. And that's

good, makes me easy. And that's very welcome, believe me, I don't know whether you know, but apparently, women in their fifties become invisible.

Do you see me, by the way? Thank God.

Well, I sometimes long for invisibility, this summer a guy cycled by and screamed at me "Great tits!", I almost shat myself from fright. That may be the reason why I was so outraged and cried after him "Okay and who cares? Shut up!" Even I was shocked, did I really say this out loud or just think it?

My life started late, when I was 37, not because that's when I climbed out of my mommy's belly. Just a little mental disorder, but don't be scared, I won't sit in your lap and pull your hair, I'm taking my medicines.

(...)

LUCIA LAKATOS

Thanks for introducing me, Orsi, at least there is a mom-role that wasn't cast to you. By the way, I don't know why I am continuously badgered with being late, as far as I know it's polite to be 5 minutes late. What's more, I have heard in the past that it's a must. Other than that I was only late once, and then, too, it's not that I was late, the bus came too early. Which is a problem because where I live they go every week – week and a half – so I had no other choice but to get a car. Okay. DAD.

He has 3 cars: a 4x4, a BMW and an old-timer Merc. I say he'll surely give me one. The Merc would be best but if it's the BMW I won't burst out in tears either, a little tantrum may be expected. I rush over, see him in the garage. I see none of them are in there.

"Where are the cars?"

"One of them is at the mechanic (I guess the BMW), your mom took the other and your sister took the last."

How lucky! Once again I can enjoy the benefits of a big family, how cool it is to be the youngest and the umpteenth... Whatever. Instead there are 2 work cars: two

six-person minivans, so-called bricklayer transporters parked next to the garage. Dad points at one of them:

"You can take that one but watch out 'cause it doesn't take second gear."

"Why do you give me that one then?"

"Because the other one doesn't take first either, so this is easier to start."

I look at him in tears.

"But Dad, I'm not dressed for this."

"Shall I lend you work clothes, too?"

I had no choice, I had to take the transporter. In high heels and skirt, I'm climbing up the worker's truck, all my dignity lost. But I have to be in time for the rehearsal with the girls.

Luckily, I managed to find a spot close by. I park parallel on the left, I've been indicating to the left for ages, I slide a bit forwards on the right to make space for the minivan. That very moment a cab pulls up to my ass, a centimetre away from the tow hook. Motherfucker! What can I do? There are two options: either I drive a couple more rounds to find a new spot but I'll definitely be late, or I jump out and send the entire line of cars back to hell. I'm a tough girl but not enough to jump out, so I just toddled out to set it straight with all those sorrows stopping behind me.

I knock on the cab's window. A well-combed elderly gentleman. I say:

"Hi, Sir, I have one question: why?"

"Miss, you were turning right, I thought you'll continue that way."

"I see! Obviously I'm indicating left because I want to turn right. Just because I'm a woman, tricky and unpredictable! Is that it? Let's drop these stereotypes, anyway how did you know I'm a woman? What is this gender propaganda when the back window rocks a wall-to-wall, led-illuminated numberplate for 'SÁNDOR'? Why would I be a woman? Leave me alone, I have no time for this!"

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