



## Neft Theatre & Parade-Fest Kharkiv

These emerging, independent theatrical projects are located in Ukraine's east, the city of Kharkiv, where they experiment with productions in non-standard artistic spaces both psychological and physical.

Parade-Fest is in its third year and has the stated objective, according to festival art director Veronika Sklyarova of "*rethinking the image of Kharkiv through art.*" Attracting largely a young audience, the Festival inserts itself and its educational, performative and urbanist scheme into the city's routine each autumn. They have worked with both local artists and those from western Europe (including the UK), to interrogate concepts touching on directing, acting and the ability of theatre to exist organically in urban spaces.

The director and founder of the Neft Theatre, Anton Vusyk, has pursued a vision of updating tired theatrical forms by surrounding himself with filmmakers, actors, choreographers, digital artists and contemporary musicians who believe that contemporary theatre must be as courageous as it is artistically innovative. Freedom of expression, social relevance, audience interactivity and provocative forms are core principles at Neft. Its current repertoire includes a performance born of the Stravinsky ballet, *Apollon Musagete*; a talk show treatment of Orpheus, called *Public Talk*; and transgressive sendups of treasured "Ukrainian classics". The troupe lacks reliable rehearsal space and performs in rented and site-specific locations.

Both projects are currently developing approaches to current social dialogues around the formation of critical thinking, civic consciousness, human rights, LGBTQ+ issues and The Other. They are open to all new experiences and approaches.