

# FIST

20th Festival of International Student Theatre (FIST 2025)

PLAY AGAINST HUMANITY

September 27th and 28th, Art Pavilion “Cvijeta Zuzorić”



FIST 2025  
IGRA PROTIV  
ČOVEČANSTVA  
27-28. SEPTEMBAR

ŠPRINT



*Welcome to FIST 2025, which this year takes a leap into becoming a specialized theatre festival that brings together students from all over the world to jointly open questions of play and humanity. Play is part of humanity – a universal language that connects us all.*

*Game by game – a playground, and Belgrade, by 2027, is becoming the largest playground in the world, promising solutions to interconnected global crises – even though it is precisely the games of corruption, media manipulation, and environmental devastation, unfolding before our eyes, that are their true cause. Where there are games, there are also players: those who establish their own rules, which we, “in the name of humanity,” are expected to follow.*

*This year’s FIST asks: is there a place for humanity on that “nationally significant” playground?*

*If humanity is what should remain after this game, FIST 2025 chooses to play – against.*

*Team of the 20th FIST*

**FIST is an international student theatre festival** that for two decades has encouraged creativity and engagement of young artists. Founded as an independent initiative of students of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, from the Department of management and production in theatre, radio and culture, the festival has been carried on from generation to generation, remaining contemporary, relevant, and provocative. Each year, FIST gathers students and artistic academies from various countries and, through carefully developed concepts and themes, presents performances that reflect on current artistic and social currents.

This year's, the 20th edition of FIST, is being created in an altered reality - at a moment when the student blockades at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, which began in November 2024, are still ongoing, in parallel with a growing wave of civic resistance. The festival opens burning issues that shape our everyday lives, directing a critical gaze toward the EXPO event.

**FIST 2025** adopts the format of **EXPO 2027** but transforms it into a space of debate and resistance, exploring open questions of **corruption, media manipulation, and environmental devastation**. The EXPO slogan is **"Play for Humanity"** - FIST calls it **"Play Against Humanity."**

FIST 2025 transcends conventional frameworks of performing arts festivals, offering a fairground-like space where **theatrical interventions, expert debates, and exhibition programmes** alternate.

**PROGRAM**  
Play against humanity

**Art Pavilion  
"Cvijeta Zuzorić"**

**SATURDAY  
September 27**

**12.00-21.00**  
Exhibition:  
PLAY AGAINST HUMANITY

**18.00**  
Performance:  
PLAY WITH(OUT) COMMUNITY

**19.00**  
PUBLIC DISCUSSION  
(THAT NEVER TOOK PLACE)

**SUNDAY, September 28**

**12.00-21.00**  
Exhibition:  
PLAY AGAINST HUMANITY

**18.00**  
Film screening:  
EXPO 2027: A LEAP INTO  
THE FUTURE (FDU IN BLOCKADE)

A DIALOGUE ON A NATIONAL LEVEL  
(THAT WILL NEVER TAKE PLACE)

**19.00**  
Performances:  
PLAY FOR PROFIT & PLAY  
BETWEEN GREEN AND GREED

**20.00**  
Closing ceremony: FIST 2025  
BRINGS THE GAMES TO AN END

## **PANEL DISCUSSIONS:**

### **PUBLIC DISCUSSION (THAT NEVER TOOK PLACE)**

EXPO asks you for the name of its mascot, FIST empowers you to ask about everything that belongs to you.

FIST 2025 opens a public discussion on EXPO 2027 - a discussion that never took place.

By law, public discussions must precede the adoption of important laws and urban development plans. Nevertheless, the Lex specialis for EXPO was adopted without debate. In the same way, outside of public view, attempts were made to pass its amendments. When the discussion was finally held, citizens' remarks were almost entirely ignored, and the proposal is now in parliamentary procedure. Public hearings on spatial plans were postponed, shortened, and finally turned into electronic ones, further stripping the public of meaningful participation and reducing it to mere formality.

That is why FIST 2025 opens the public debate that never took place - open to citizens, experts, and the repeatedly invited official representatives of relevant institutions and the EXPO team. Everyone will be able to ask questions, comment, receive answers, and jointly shape a document to be sent to the relevant authorities as the citizens' position. See you on Saturday, September 27th at 19.00 at the Art Pavilion "Cvijeta Zuzorić."

We also invite you to join us on Sunday, September 28th, from 13:00 to 17:00, when we will, in a working atmosphere, continue to collect, analyze, and systematize comments.

### **NATIONAL-LEVEL DIALOGUE (THAT WILL NEVER TAKE PLACE)**

Within the screening of the film FDU in Blockade about the EXPO, the event "National-Level Dialogue" was planned. This event was organized in response to a public invitation by the Minister of Finance, who, after watching the film, invited students to freely contact him with dilemmas concerning the EXPO and emphasized that the state always communicates openly about projects of national importance. FIST took this invitation seriously and officially reached out to the minister and his colleagues to join us for a discussion about the film. Unfortunately, no one has responded so far. The question remains: has the idea of a national-level dialogue been given up on?

On Sunday, September 28th at 18:00 at the Art Pavilion "Cvijeta Zuzorić" you will have the chance to enjoy the film. And the following silence?

## **THEATRICAL INTERVENTIONS**

Theatrical interventions emerge as the result of work by international author teams made up of students of arts faculties from Serbia and abroad (Iran, Turkey, Greece, Croatia, Switzerland, Russia) who were invited to, during their seven-day stay in Belgrade, create small-scale artistic actions and performances within the existing socio-political context.

**Saturday, September 27th, 18:00, Art Pavilion “Cvijeta Zuzorić”**

### **Play WITH(OUT) COMMUNITY**

The performance deals with a comparison of media manipulation in Serbia and Iran, exploring the conflict between propaganda and reality and the way culture and tradition are used as shields of power. Through the lens of global and local projects, such as EXPO, it asks whether they bring real development or only the illusion of stability, and how images of power shape community perception.

Author team: Arash Azarm (Iran), Nadežda Petković (Serbia), Magdalena Nešić (Serbia).

**Sunday, September 28, 7 PM, Art Pavilion “Cvijeta Zuzorić”**

### **PLAY FOR PROFIT**

The performance explores the tension between public interest and private gain, raising the question of whether the EXPO 2027 project truly leads to national progress or is merely a stage for the private enrichment of political and economic elites. Through the performance, the audience faces the dilemma of whether public funds and resources, such as land and water, are being used for the benefit of all citizens or exploited for personal profit.

Author team: Teodora Rakić (Serbia), Mikhail Medvedev (Russia), Ursula Dolički (Switzerland/Croatia), Radosav Janjić (Serbia), Vuksan Burzan (Serbia).

## **GAME OF GREEN AND GREED**

The performance questions what happens when “sustainability” becomes a slogan behind which clean water, soil, and air disappear. Inspired by the EXPO project in Belgrade, but also by global patterns of megalomaniac manifestations, it deals with the hypocrisy of narratives that promise greenery while in practice erasing nature.

Author team: Elena Matić (Serbia), Alminanur Dinler (Turkey), Michaela Poulou (Greece), Lena Baljak (Serbia).

## **EXHIBITION**

The exhibition programme at the Art Pavilion “Cvijeta Zuzorić” is realized in cooperation with the [Youth Biennale](#).

In the Pavilion “Cvijeta Zuzorić,” within the Youth Biennale, an oasis has been created - a temporary territory of freedom, without leaders and without prohibitions, a place that redefines utopia. FIST 2025 reinterprets this oasis, pointing to the cracks surrounding us: media that produce an image of order and normality while chaos simmers around us; networks of corruption deciding where to build and where to demolish; and the consequences of those decisions that remain in the soil, water, and air. These forces are not separate but run through the entire space - quietly, invisibly, but crucially for understanding the life we are playing with.

Our playground is located precisely in the crumbling Pavilion “Cvijeta Zuzorić,” a space of national heritage that still gathers and gives voice back to artists and citizens. Investments in culture are directed toward new pavilions erected on shaky foundations, without permits and without sense, while culture exists only where the community lives.

This playground is not infinite - it is limited by the pavilion’s walls. But other playgrounds grow and spread endlessly, swallowing everything before them and erasing the oases we rely on. If they are playing with us - it is time we play against.

Playground editors: Jovana Stefanović, Anja Nedeljković, Nemanja Stanimirović, Nikolija Jovičić

## **CLOSING CEREMONY: FIST 2025 BRINGS THE GAME TO AN END**

We are pleased to announce that the ambassador of FIST 2025 is Professor Miloš Pavlović - a master who does not need to act as a hero, for the speed of others may dazzle, while integrity and composure remain undefeated.

On Sunday, September 28th at 20:00 at the Art Pavilion "Cvijeta Zuzorić," our ambassador Miloš Pavlović will close the festival.

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