

PERFORMANCE PROSPECTUS

**ON THE
BOARDS**

Radosław Rychcik *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields*

JAN 13 - 16, 2011

CO-PRESENTED WITH THE POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

Radosław Rychcik : director

Tomasz Nosinski : actor

Wojciech Niemczyk : actor

Władysław Jankowski : manager

Grzegorz Kaczmarczyk : sound design

Mariusz Ciesielski : lighting design

Dorota Sobstel : assistant to the director

NATURAL BORN CHILLERS

**Maciej Matysiak, Bartosz Ignor,
Michał Lis, Piotr Lis**

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A NOTE FROM OTB

A couple of trusted colleagues tipped us off about *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields*. We requested video, and once it arrived, we gathered around a computer to watch. And then something happened which almost never happens when we watch videos: we went crazy for the show. Jump around the office, oh my god, this is amazing kind of crazy.

When we caught up with director Radosław Rychcik (aka Radek) and company during their stint at the T:BA Festival in Portland this past September we saw that many others were having the same response. We literally heard random bartenders and passersby on the street talking about the show. Monologist Mike Daisey was performing at the festival and even worked them into a show he's creating, talking about their propensity to drink and sing until sun up, saying how they make theater from the heart and how this is a rare feat. Seattle's Dayna Hanson and collaborators were there, too, and told us an anecdote involving hanging out with the Poles, drinking in the back of a moving Penske truck with more singing and impassioned conversations about making art. With heart.

So why does this show and why do these artists have everyone so worked up? One might say it's because *Cotton Fields* is representative of a kind of Eastern European physical theater not seen in the states much but that's too simplistic and doesn't speak to the nuance found in Radek's approach. Yes the actors gyrate and purr their way through the dense little play but they manage a kind of honesty where everything feels on the line in their strange negotiation without ever feeling hammy or put on. Radek teases a lot from minimal elements – spare staging and some dry ice – with a confidence not usually found in someone just turning 30. Of course, having a band of the “Chillers” caliber helps push the drama considerably with the driving score imbuing the text with life and relevance. Overall, the experience reads like a clever theatrical proof with clear, undisputable logic, though math is rarely this entrancing.

Sarah Wilke & Lane Czaplinski

RADOSŁAW RYCHCIK Q & A

What prompted you to use live music and this band for *Cotton Fields*?

i saw the band playing in some club and there was a spark. i thought that their music is the best suitable space for the show. the actors are like frontmen of the band. characters' demands should be performed with rock'n'roll expression.

What about this play attracted you?

the emotional intensity in characters relation and also the beautiful, poetic language of koltès' text.

In the states we tend to generalize Eastern European theater as physical, but you clearly incorporate more than just this. How would you describe your approach?

it's an idea of hysteric theatre, meaning very emotional, less psychological. it cares about finding an emotional gesture for characters' intension and demand.

You've done a lot for being relatively young. Where do you see yourself going from here?

i'm thirty now and don't feel that i've done a lot. i feel young and i have to scream.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RADOSŁAW RYCHCIK

1. Radosław Rychcik got his start in theater as the assistant on *Factory 2*, a now infamous production by Poland's legendary director Krystian Lupa. The 7 1/2 hours long performance about Andy Warhol and Marilyn Monroe has elicited critical acclaim everywhere that it has toured. Learn more about [Krystian Lupa](#).

2. Rychcik has a tendency to take on imposing texts. While he has directed more stage friendly pieces such as Bertolt Brecht's *In the Jungle of Cities*, he has also adapted Gustav Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Roland Barthes' *A Lover's Discourse* for the stage. *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* shows his prowess with taking on these kinds of text and making them stage-ready.

3. Rychcik asked the Natural Born Chillers, the house band, to work on *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* after walking into one of their concerts. Listen to some of their music on their [MySpace](#).

4. He's young! Rychcik was born in 1981 and has been working his field ever since finishing at the University of Warsaw and the Krakow Theatre Academy.

5. The play actually comes from French playwright Bernard-Marie Koltès. Read about his inspirations (from [Rimbaud](#) to [Fellini](#)) in this [timeline of his life](#).



BIOS

NATURAL BORN CHILLERS

Maciej Matysiak, Bartosz Ignor, Michal Lis and Piotr Lis

are all members of Natural Born Chillers – a band from Ostrow Wielkopolski, is a band of 5 musicians who deliver a high-power sound that combines energetic electronics with the depth of live instruments, charismatic vocals, and a strong visual element. Their music is like an explosive love affair between electro and rock'n'roll, techno and punk rock. Every show is performed almost like a DJ set with dynamic compositions by NBC and live remixes of top-shelf club hits. NBC has played the most popular clubs and underground cultural events in Poland.

myspace.com/thenaturalbornchillersosterdam

Radosław Rychcik (*director*) b. 1981, Rychcik is a young director living and working in Poland. He began his career as an assistant to renowned director Krystian Lupa on Factory 2 and later worked on Stanislaw Wyspianski's drama *Protesilas and Laodamia*. In 2008, Rychcik directed *Dictator*, a performance based on the Charlie Chaplin film, for the Wybrzeze Sztuki Festival in Gdansk. Most recently, Rychcik has presented his staging of *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments by Roland Barthes* at the Drama Theatre in Warsaw, and *Versus: In the Jungle of Cities*, an adaptation from Bertolt Brecht at the New Theatre in Krakow and the Under the Radar Festival in New York.

Władysław Jankowski (*manager*) has served as international relations manager of the Stefan Zeromski Theatre since 2005. From 1983 to 2004 he was a manager for the National Stry Theatre in Krakow.

Grzegorz Kaczmarczyk (*sound designer*) b. 1981, Kaczmarczyk has been a sound director at the Stefan Zeromski Theatre since 2008.

Mariusz Ciesielski (*light designer*) b.1978, Ciesielski has been a light director at the Stefan Zeromski Theatre since 2001. In 2009/2010 season he was selected by the theatre audience as the winner of the Wild Rose Award for excellence.

Dorota Sobstel (*Assistant to the Director*) b. 1982, Sobstel is PhD Candidate at The Interdisciplinary Institute of Research at Artes Liberales of Warsaw University. She is a graduate of The History Department at Warsaw

University (2008) and did post-graduate studies in Cultural Diplomacy (2010) at Collegium Civitas and The Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Warsaw. She was granted the Minister of National Education Scholarship (2005/2006) and Socrates-Erasmus in Great Britain and Ireland (2004-2006). She studied Creative Writing and Theatre Studies at Queen's University in Belfast and Trinity College in Dublin.

She is a translator, English teacher, curator of diversified artistic and theatrical projects. She has worked as Radosław Rychcik's manager since 2008; she managed the project *Venus: In the Jungle of Cities* based on Berthold Brecht's play at the New York based Under the Radar Festival in 2010. She was the author and translator of theatre workshops held at UCLA and The Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles in 2010.

She has been collaborating with Teatr Nowy in Kraków (since 2008) and The Stefan Zeromski Theatre in Kielce (since 2009) as a dramaturg and literary director; she has also been involved in academic projects of The Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards in Pontedera in Italy (since 2009). She is the Vice-President of the Tadeusz Boy-Zelenski Association LiteRacje in Warsaw (since 2010), and is a member of the board of editors of the literary-artistic quarterly LiteRacje.

Tomasz Nosinski (*actor*) is an actor at the Nowy Theatre in Cracow, and has collaborated with the Laznia Nowa Theatre in Cracow. A graduate of the State Theatre School in Cracow, Mr. Nosinski has performed in productions based on Bernard Maria-Koltes, Dea Loher, Zbigniew Herbert, Robert Musil, and William Shakespeare. In January 2010 he performed in another Radoslaw Rychick's production, *Versus – In the Jungle of Cities* based on Bertold Brecht at Under the Radar Festival in New York. Nytheatre.com wrote then: "Nosinski is demented, twitchy, and totally fascinating in this role."

Wojciech Niemczyk (*actor*) is a member of the permanent company at the Stefan Zeromski Theatre. He debuted there in *Nighttime in a Certain Neighborhood* based on a work by Herbert Berger. In 2007 he graduated from the State Theatre School in Cracow, and he also studied archeology at the Jagiellonian University. During his theater studies he was involved in a number of theatrical projects and television productions. Among of his many interests are guitar (electric and bass), ice skating (three years coached the hockey club), martial arts, archeology and cooking. In the Kielce Theatre he has performed in productions based on William Shakespeare, Antoine de Saint-Exupery, Herbert Berger and Bernard-Maria Koltes.

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Radosław Rychcik photos by Maciek Zórawiecki

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