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Maya Petrovna aka Maja Petrovna Hilcisin is an operatic 'crossover' mezzo-soprano, film music composer and cross-disciplinary performance artist. Influenced by surrealism, she unfolds her music thru immersive art performances, which are written, directed and performed by Maya, who also composes the original music and designs the costumes and scenography, performing each of her songs in a different character.



While carrying Ukrainian surname, Maya was born in Sarajevo, in a country that no longer exists, Yugoslavia. It's a place of majestic mountains, contrasted by bleak soviet style buildings that follow you through the country like Mona Lisa from Alcatraz. Strong imagination was a place of survival.

Maya's first touch with music began with few years of intensive trainings in pre-junior rhythmic gymnastics, under Bosnian champion Aida Hadžić. At the age of 10, her country dismantled into a war. It was during the Sarajevo 1992-1996 war when Maya taught herself how to read music, exploring first dissonances on a guitar with improvised fishing line strings.

After the war, Maya attended a three year of formal music education in operatic singing, classical guitar, and piano at Sarajevo Music School. Soon after graduating, she left post-war Bosnia, settling for few years in Barcelona, then Holland before becoming an Australian citizen.

Maya spent last two decades working in film and international performance industry in London, Europe, Sydney, and Asia. Her art performances include opening for the 2019 Sydney VIVID Festival, and sold out Club Kooky with her show 'The Womb of Universe and Boob Monster', a series of residencies at the exclusive celebrity hub London Box Soho with her closing operatic act 'Moth', and 'Music for the eyes' CODA show at Sydney Opera House (2005). Maya's self-directed shows have travelled from London to Rome Film Festival, International Sarajevo Film Festival, London Fashion Week, headlining Croatias Seven Days of Creation Festival at medieval Pazin Castle, Porec Art Festival (Lapidarium Museum), Prague SWAN, Venice Associazione Awai & Berlin Manoeuvre Studios Art Festival.

Maya is a graduate with Master Degree in Film Music Composition at Sydney AFTRS. Her credits include singing and composing original orchestral scores for 10 Apple podcast series about film, Australia, by an acclaimed film director Baz Luhrmann, spot featuring Annie Leibovitz, a global advertising campaign Tourism Australia (Revolver Film and Bazmarq), and Suzie Lovitt film about young Jude Law's son, produced by Sadie Frost. She scored music for 28 movies, from short, TV to documentaries, some of which were recorded with Sydney Studio Orchestra and screened on international film festivals.

Maya's collaborations include featuring as a solo performer/character designer in video 'Song of I', for UK's multiple Grammy nominee Steven Wilson, directed by Lasse Hoile. In the UK, Maya recorded vocals and lyrics for an ambient/industrial album 'Blood Debts' by Years of Denial, produced by DJ/producer Jerome Tcherneyan (Dead can dance), released on digital and vinyl in 2017.

The concept behind Maya's shows was built in London. She continues to expand her artistic practice thru a lot of research which led to her independent creativity, working on the composing of original music/narrative/filming, and designing the projection/scenography and costumes. Maya taught herself how make costumes, and the knitting of folkloric woollen crafts with her mother (an ancient tradition of Eastern Europe) has influenced her detailed costume work. She re-visited the discipline of gymnastics, which has influenced the presence of physical theatre in her shows. Surrealist paintings are usually the birth place for her ideas in costumes and scenography.

Her new soon to be released solo show VERITAPHOBIA is an immersive surrealist sonic and performance art experience, self-directed and performed by Maya, who composed the original music and designed the multiple-costume changing scenography. Maya will sing, and transform through series of otherworldly costumes that represent faces of society, who live in a transitional state between now and the future, channeling humanity's fragile relationship with the earth. Veritaphobia brings Maya's new compositional work that fuses contemporary opera with Eastern European vocal technics, orchestral brass work blended with industrial drones, and choirs entirely created with her voice.

