Dear xxxxx,

Thank you for your question. I have been thinking about it for a few days now and I don't have a design yet. Can it wait? My head is slow these days.

> *I'm writing this text with a giant plate of Plexiglas™ leaning against my left shoulder*
> *It stands between me and the window.*
> *When I'm not looking at the computer, I'm looking at the Plexi (in the Plexi? Through the Plexi?)*

I looked for inspiration on Facebook. I ended up on a forum called 'Union of Scenographers'. For years, members had mostly been posting imagery of old backdrops and illusions. In March, the virus suddenly turned it into a vibrant platform for sharing sketches and renders of what they call 'pandemic theatres': proposals for infection-free tribunes and stages. Many of my colleagues are working on the same question you asked me. All over the world, scenographers are designing performances-spaces in line with the restrictions of social distancing. They are staying up late, thinking of ways to be together without touching. The race is on. We seem to be looking for some kind of space-vaccine. But I'm sorry to say that I haven't found it yet.

> *The plastic plate is much heavier than I thought. When my shoulder gets numb, I let it rest against my head for a while. The friction makes my hair static.*

Most of my online colleagues seem to agree that a circle is the best form to start from.
360 degrees all around the performer.
A circle makes space for a maximum number of spectators on the front row, spread out evenly around the action.
In that circle, the audience can reach their seats from the periphery, without touching each other. The chairs are placed in units: boxes for one or two, separated from the others and the stage with what looks like Plexiglas™ panels.

On my way to the atelier this morning, I stopped at the shop on the corner. Nabil, the owner, had just finished screwing a Plexi on his cashier. The light blue protection film was still on it. I showed him the soap, the coffee, the mint and he typed them in the register. When I wanted to pay, we found out that I couldn't give him my bankcard.

> *It is hard to see the plastic.*
> *I try focusing on a scratch a few centimeters from my left eye.*
> *It hurts inside my eye.*

I throw my card over to his side of the plastic. The contactless paying doesn't work so I need to type in my code. How are we going to do this? Will he come out or do I climb in his tiny space?

Or do I give him my code? And why are we
talking in sign language all of a sudden?

*I can see my laptop screen with my hands reflected in the plastic. Weightless they are
hovering in a void. Looking at the ghost image of my screen, I can keep on typing.*
.yllautca nuf etiuq si siht ekil gnitirW
.tnaw I revetahw etirw nac I
,sucof esool I nehw dnA
.edistuo weiv a htiw wodniw a ta gnikool m'I dna sraepasid txet eht

He ends up unscrewing the panel so my hand can
slide under and type the code. Afterwards,
before I retreat out of this plastic guillotine, he
puts some disinfectant gel in my hand.

I hear my own breath.
I can even see it.
There is a bit of condense forming where the Plexiglas™ touches my nose.
I will have to clean it when I'm done.

I hope the design you asked will come to me soon. For the moment I'm not there yet.
In the meantime, I wish you all the best and thank you for your patience,

All the best,

Jozef