

# PALM OFF FEST



DIVADLO  
POD PALMOVKOU  
20-31 10 2017

# THE SEVENTIETH SEASON OF DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU 2017/2018





# PALM OFF FEST PROGRAMME 2017

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<b>20. 10.</b>	19:00 Main stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>HENRIK IBSEN</b> <b>A DOLL'S HOUSE</b>	Dir. Jan Nebeský Divadlo pod Palmovkou Prague (CZ)
<b>21. 10.</b>	17:00 Palmovka Synagogue	<b>CENTRAL EUROPE DOCUMENTARY FILMS SERIES</b> <b>DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING SUPERIOR ORDERS + THOSE</b>	Dir. Viktor Oszkár Nagy, András Petrik, Krisztina Meggyes, HUN, 2015 <i>Voluntary contribution</i>
	19:00 Palmovka Synagogue	<b>CENTRAL EUROPE DOCUMENTARY FILMS SERIES</b> <b>DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING FC ROMA</b>	Dir. Rozálie Kohoutová, Tomáš Bojar, CZ, 2016 <i>Voluntary contribution</i> <b>Screening followed by discussion with authors</b>
<b>22. 10.</b>	14:00 Palmovka Synagogue	<b>CENTRAL EUROPE DOCUMENTARY FILMS SERIES</b> <b>DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING THE QUEEN OF SILENCE</b>	Dir. Agnieszka Zwiefka, PL, 2014 <i>Voluntary contribution</i>
	15:30 Palmovka Synagogue	<b>BOLLYWOOD DANCE WORKSHOP</b>	Bollywood dance workshop for families and children <i>Voluntary contribution</i>
	19:00 Main stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>Based on Stanisław Wyspiański's play The Curse</b> <b>KLATWA / THE CURSE</b>	Dir. Oliver Frljić Teatr Powszechny, Warsaw (PL) <b>Show followed by discussion with authors</b>
<b>24. 10.</b>	19:00 Behind the Curtain of Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>STEFANO MASSINI</b> <b>LEHMAN TRILOGY</b>	Dir. Michal Dočekal Divadlo Husa na provázku, Brno (CZ) <b>Show followed by discussion with authors</b>
<b>25. 10.</b>	19:30 Studio PALM OFF Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>TOMÁŠ BARÁNEK</b> <b>HOW TO PICK UP A WOMAN 2.0</b>	Dir. F. X. Kalba Studio PALM OFF Divadla pod Palmovkou, Prague (CZ)
<b>26. 10.</b>	19:00 Behind the Curtain of Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>ANNA FRANK</b>	Dir. Šimon Spišák Nové divadlo, Nitra (SK) <b>Show followed by discussion with authors</b>
<b>28. 10.</b>	19:00 Behind the Curtain of Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>PHILIPP LÖHLE</b> <b>WE ARE NOT BARBARIANS!</b>	Dir. Vilmos Vajdai Katona József Színház, Budapest (HUN) <b>Show followed by discussion with authors</b>
<b>29. 10.</b>	19:00 Main stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>ŽO LANGEROVÁ</b> <b>BACK THEN IN BRATISLAVA</b>	Dir. Patrik Lančarič Slovenské komorné divadlo Martin, Martin (SK) <b>Show followed by discussion with authors</b>
<b>31. 10.</b>	19:00 Behind the Curtain of Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou	<b>THOMAS BERNHARD</b> <b>HISTRIONICS</b>	Dir. Agnieszka Olsten Teatr im. Stefana Jaracza, Lodz (PL) <b>Show followed by discussion with authors</b>

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DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU IS A THEATER SCENE  
OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF PRAGUE



THE PALM OFF FEST 2017 FESTIVAL IS ORGANIZED BY  
DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU, ZENKLOVA 34, 180 36, PRAHA 8.

THE 2<sup>ND</sup> SEASON OF THE PALM OFF FEST ORGANIZED BY DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU  
ON OCTOBER 20-31, 2017 IS HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF JAN WOLF,  
COUNCILLOR OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF PRAGUE

#### PARTNERS



#### MEDIA PARTNERS







## FESTIVAL TEAM:

### FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Michal Lang

### FESTIVAL MANAGER

Ivana Wojtylová

### FESTIVAL DRAMATURGE

Jan Jiřík

### PRODUCTION

Viktorie Schmoranzová & Aneta Nádvorníková

### PR

Eliška Černá & Vendula Ježková

### MARKETING

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### MODERATING OF DISCUSSIONS

Jan Jiřík and Romana Štorková Maliti

### HEAD TECHNICIAN, DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU

Jan Špíšek

### CZECH SUBTITLES

Anna Plasová (The Curse, Histrionics) and Jiří Zeman  
(We Are Not Barbarians!)

### PALM OFF FEST 2017 WOULD LIKE TO THANK TO:

Ivan Krejčí, Wiesław Cichy, Tatjana Langášková  
and Kateřina Zdanowiczová (Czech Centre, Warsaw),  
Lucie Orbók and Jiří Zeman

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### PALM OFF FEST 2017 PROGRAMME BULLETIN MADE BY:

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Dear theatre friends,

I have the honour of cordially inviting you to the second gathering of Central European theatres, the PALM OFF FEST, October 20-31 at Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre. I am very pleased to note that we have received the European festival EFFE label, thus becoming a member of the prestigious festival community initiated and supported by the European Festivals Association. This is both a call to responsibility and a motivation. The focus of the PALM OFF FEST 2017 is sharpened by increasingly pressing political and cultural issues: What is the state of democracy in the post-communist countries? What is the present position of Visegrad countries in the EU?

Our programme offers interesting and engaging responses to such questions. One of this year's festival highlights is certainly the Warsaw Teatr Powszechny production *The Curse* by renowned director Oliver Frlić. Yet all the other productions are well worth seeing. Discussions following performances—which were an audience favourite last year—will be part of this year's festival, too. Guests will include actors and directors but also prominent personalities from Czech intellectual life. You can also read their analyses and views in this festival bulletin. And just like last year, PALM OFF FEST is offering a rich accompanying programme, including a film festival featuring some of the best Central European documentaries. The film festival was prepared by our partner, the Documentary Film Institute, and its project KineDok. The aim of this project is to enlarge and support documentary film audiences and to acquaint the general public with documentary film through screenings in unconventional places, including this year at the Palmovka Synagogue.

Enjoy reading this booklet, but more importantly: Come! You're invited!

**Michal Lang**  
*PALM OFF FEST 2017 director*

Dear theatre lovers,

We live in an information era; yet it's become increasingly difficult to locate facts and information in order to form one's own opinion about an issue. We can view this problem as having two sides: the difficulty of selecting relevant information versus a huge number of sources, comments and perspectives. I mention this because it is connected to the theme of this year's PALM OFF FEST festival, "Central Europe." Issues explored in this second annual festival include: definitions of "Central European"; does democracy flourish in the Central European area, how it is doing and where it is heading to; what is the position of the Visegrad countries in the EU; the migration issue; and a number of other complex questions. It isn't easy to find answers. Yet to use culture as a mediator helping us to find at least partial answers and penetrate the issues—that's truly a unique opportunity!

In the second half of October, from October 20th through to October 30th 2017, the stages of the Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre will host productions from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. As part of the diverse accompanying programme, visitors will have the chance to participate in discussions with authors and actors, as well as watch quality documentary films from Central European countries, brought by the KineDok project to the Palmovka Synagogue.

However, we should also mention the everyday activities of the Divadlo pod Palmovkou! In the second half of their season, in 2018, the theatre will be celebrating its 70th anniversary and pay homage to a person whose life is connected to the creation and activity of the theatre as no one else's: the actor and playwright Jan Skopečka.

Let me wish profound cultural experiences and new findings to all festival goers and a very fruitful 70th theatre year to the entire Divadlo pod Palmovkou crew.

**Jan Wolf**  
*Prague councillor*



Dear participants and visitors of the PALM OFF FEST festival,

It is a great honour for our municipality to again welcome this important theatre festival to our neighbourhood. The organisers of the festival did a great job with the first year, as documented by the fact that the festival received the much appreciated EFFE (Europe for Festivals/Festivals for Europe) label. Should you look at this year's programme you'll see that the programme is of the same high quality.

It is certainly beneficial that festival organizers aren't afraid to ask questions about pressing issues. In any case, finding answers to questions about the state of democracy in the post-communist countries or the position of the Visegrad countries in the EU won't be easy. Certainly, both questions will raise various answers, differing according to opinions and attitudes of individuals.

I don't want to predict what conclusions should be reached. I would only like to stress that we should all bear in mind that a person with a different opinion isn't our enemy but our respectable opponent, someone whose view can be enriching because he forces us to look for facts supporting our opinion and to argue better. Let's remember the words of our first president, and probably the most important person in this country's history, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk: „democracy is discussion“.

Wishing you all an interesting cultural experience,

**Roman Petrus**  
*Prague 8 Mayor*

As a director of the Slovak Institute I am very happy to be part of the second year of the PALM OFF FEST. This year the festival chose a very important issue, one requiring all our attention. The search for answers has to start in the past... when the voice of democracy fell silent in the personal stories of strong women, such as Anna Frank or Žo Langerová, the main female heroes of two Slovak productions presented at the festival. One of the forms of dealing with the issue of man's freedom is through live dialogue on a theatre stage...

**Vladimír Valovič**  
*Slovak Institute director*



# PALM OFF FEST – MEETING OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN THEATRES AND DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THEATRE, ART AND SOCIETY

Discussions with authors and artists became a natural part of the festival programme during the first year of the international theatre meeting PALM OFF FEST. We were lucky at Palmovka to welcome the directors of every production, especially internationally acclaimed Polish directors Krystian Lupa and Jan Klata. It would have certainly been a pity to miss them in Prague! Yet the discussions between artists and the audience mean much more to us than a mere “presentation” of the stars of contemporary European theatre direction.

We purposefully chose the word “meeting” to describe this festival. “Meeting” has several meanings for us: first of all, it’s about meeting—viewing, attending—important Central European productions. Yet this is only the first step towards the meetings between audiences and theatre makers from the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. I’d call the first step a passive one. The second step, an active and conscious one, is, in our view, discussions with the artists—the translators, playwrights, actors, and directors. The first year revealed that both sides have the will and the need to meet in dialogue. Discussions, originally planned as short meetings after the shows, sometimes took several hours and much more than just the show was talked about. Discussions touched on the general issues concerning the present state of theatre culture in the given country, but they would also open up issues of the relationships between theatre and the society in which it originates and which it reflects. Theatre thus became a sort of magnifying glass, offering us opportunities to meet the culture and society of our closest neighbours, and enabling us to start or deepen the dialogue across national borders in our part of Europe.

This year, too, discussions will follow all guest productions. Meetings with artists will also take place within the accompanying programme, a series of documentary films from the Visegrad countries screened on October 21st and 22nd in the synagogue at Palmovka.

Based on our experiences last year, we will enlarge the discussion format for this second year of the PALM OFF FEST. This is also due to the fact that this year’s productions open important and quite complex issues, which touch our entire society. We want to seize the occasion. By means of theatre shows we hope to address the pressing cultural, social, and, at the end of the day, political issues of Central Europe. For this reason we have invited authors and audiences but also some prominent figures of the Czech intellectual scene as well as contemporary witnesses to each discussion. You can look forward to Jiří Pehe, Milan Znoj as well as the daughters of Oskar Langer and his wife Žo Langeřová whose destinies are exposed in the production Back Then in Bratislava by the Slovak theatre SKD Martin.

Be our guest in the Divadlo pod Palmovkou and the Palmovka Synagogue not only for the shows but also for the discussions.



**Jan Jiřík**

*PALM OFF FEST 2017 dramaturge*



# LOOKING BACK OVER THE PAST YEAR



# PAVEL ŠVANDA: ON CENTRAL EUROPE

Central Europe exists and we exist in it, but it's not easy. The belt of countries stretching from the Baltics and Poland southwards has a complicated past. The Renaissance period had little effect, and the overseas discoveries that made the West into what it is now didn't inspire Central Europeans. Instead, they suffered from an exhausting fight against Ottoman expansion. Though mosques weren't erected in Vienna, Budapest and Bratislava, churches, theatres and galleries were paid for at a high price. The post-1918 fall of Central Europe into the "disintegration zone" represented a difficult formative experience. For the rest of the 20th century, states, borders and citizens would be destroyed, renewed, moved and renamed. This was certainly connected to the frantic politics of the great powers but also to the explosion of intolerant, almost genocide-oriented local ideologies. After the fact, we like to make the tragic history whirlwind more pleasant by telling each other stories about how we fought bravely and won. But in our subconscious we all carry the dramatic collective experience, some of us less, some of us more. This means we have a deeply rooted mistrust toward any idea of the future. At times, mistrust is also the source of politics of the Visegrad Four countries. Since autumn 1989, we've enriched ourselves in all respects, but our anxieties remain. This is obvious in the results of a number of public opinion surveys and sometimes in the slightly hysterical tone of the media.

For decades, relatively shallow national cultures focussed on fighting all sorts of enemies. Nowadays, a non-problematic egoistic sensuality is on offer. Seize the day! However, our acute frame of mind can't be improved by extreme Freudianism reducing the contents of human lives to energetic sex. We also struggle with traditional tendencies to collective equalitarianism, strengthened by the now fashionable statement that everyone has to be equal, in each and every way to everyone else, thus further enhancing a sort of permanently irritated state of mind. What remains neglected is a deeper existential anchoring to our individual existences. This, in my opinion, is the source of our restlessness.

No community can function successfully without a natural inner differentiation and diversity, supported by laws and free criticism. Unfortunately, a well-functioning social system can't be figured out. Such system is a reflection of cultural values the society trusts at the given moment. We now live with a colourful mix of ideas resembling bric-à-brac or bazaar. A piece of furniture inherited from a representative of the Enlightenment here, a piece or two from Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk's inheritance, some memories of war heroes, an armchair of an aunt from Vienna there, fragments of Christian values, a bit of "Eastern wisdom", a Russian tea urn over there, and don't forget a poster from an anarchist squat, the pain of political prisoners mixed with bruised nationalist pride. Add to this a fascination with allegedly almighty digital culture. Is it strange that we feel uncertain? We stumble over intertwined and disordered thoughts. We ignore the directions of main roads and of side roads alike. Let's not expect much from politicians in this state of mind. Let them at least take care of the currency, budget, safety and security, healthcare and so on. Nevertheless, I believe that as time passes patient cultural initiatives, undertaken without pride, or almost so, could provide us with the cure.



# JIRÍ PEHE: CAN CENTRAL EUROPE BE SAVED?

The Central Europe Milan Kundera wrote about years ago in his essay *The Stolen West or The Tragedy of Central Europe* doesn't actually exist anymore. His was a Central Europe which, even after the disintegration of Austro-Hungarian Empire, could be identified with the territory of the former monarchy, and, most importantly, with a recognizable culture.

An original, shared cultural identity and a source of inspiration for the rest of the world originated here; until recently it emanated a specific *Zeitgeist* in literature, fine art, music, and essay writing. Kundera argued that despite its unique character, Central European culture and thought were anchored in Western civilization. According to him, attaching parts of this region to the Soviet Empire amounted to a kind of kidnapping by the "Byzantine" East, an area left untouched by many of the milestones of Western civilization and ignorant of the Enlightenment.

When the Soviet areas of Central Europe emerged, post 1989, as politically free, there seemed to be no obstacles for a cultural revival of the region and its return to what used to be an inner connectedness. However, it gradually became obvious that this wouldn't be easy.

The Nazi occupation eliminated Jewish intellectuals, who played an amalgamating role in bringing together various national cultures within the monarchy. The Soviet occupation then divided the region into countries which remained part of the West and countries which found themselves geopolitically in the East for over four decades.

Communities of dissidents, working together and sharing their intellectual and cultural productions, originated in these countries. In many respects, these communities continued in the spirit of early 20th century Central Europe, e.g. in caricaturing bureaucratic apparatuses and their language. Yet at the same time, they were quite different from the cultural and intellectual communities in Austria or northern Italy which were lucky to escape the Soviet rule. And they differed from such communities in Slovenia and Croatia, too, i.e. countries which also ended up under the communist rule, but not the Soviet one.

Thus far, efforts at reviving Central Europe by means of Visegrad cooperation haven't been very successful. For several reasons: the Visegrad group is primarily a political regional association which, despite its efforts to promote also cultural and civic cooperation, isn't an organic entity. This is partly due to the fact that only the southern parts of Poland used to be part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and therefore a part of Central Europe.

Present day Poland is a country which feels like a European – not necessarily a Central European only – power. Its population is actually larger than that of the remaining three Visegrad countries combined. The historical connective tissue of the Visegrad Four is more located in the shared experience of communist trauma under the Soviet rule than the shared culture in which today's Austria, Slovenia, Carpathian Ruthenia, Croatia and northern Italy as well as Transylvania and Bukovina had played their role.

Cultural projects, including those whose aim is to revive the Central European identity, originating within the Visegrad deserve praise, yet it's important to bear in mind that to reach this aim won't be easy.

It becomes apparent that without the anchoring role of Vienna (while acknowledging the fact that the geopolitical core of Central Europe has shifted to Warsaw) a number of political pathologies resurface in all four member countries. This includes a virulent nationalism which, in many respects, conceptually picks up pre-war historical threads in individual countries. Thus, Visegrad, seen from the Western perspective, isn't identified by its distinctive cultural identity and intellectual production, but rather by a strange sort of political "backwardness" that fears a united Europe and considers liberal democracy problematic.

Obviously, and ironically to some extent, it could be said that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy isn't a brilliant example of political modernity and that in a number of issues the Visegrad countries continue and perpetuate older political pathologies. Yet unfortunately, this political "backwardness" isn't, in the Visegrad part of Central Europe, tempered with any of the brilliant cultural and intellectual, truly "Central European" production that the late Austro-Hungarian monarchy supplied the world with.

Yes, there is a chance that by means of various joint cultural events and exchanges, a new Central European identity will see daylight within the Visegrad area and its gravitational field will attract other countries which belonged to Central Europe a century ago. It's for this reason that we should praise any cultural event organized under the Visegrad umbrella. However, it won't be easy to "save" Central Europe. As of now, civic societies in Visegrad countries, and the youth especially, gravitate, culturally, much more towards the West of Europe than towards one another.

the author is a political scientist,  
writer and political commentator

# MILAN ZNOJ:

# THE NEW RIGHT IN CENTRAL EUROPE

A new Central Europe is being born and one wonders. Poland and Hungary are the leading countries of this political change and, doubtlessly, they change Visegrad into an EU disintegration alliance. The Czech Republic is joining in, or at least it holds its tongue, as much as it feels uneasy and is careful. When Viktor Orbán, last year in Krynica in Poland, resolutely voiced his adherence to a conservative contra-revolution, Jaroslav Kaczyński just as resolutely added that the Poles welcomed the conservative revolution. Czech politicians are less vocal in their critiques and tend to shift their dislike for Brussels to “technical details”, such as immigration quotas etc. Nevertheless, while their steps are “gentle and within legal limits”, the direction is just the same.

This is why, in the case of the Czech Republic, we should speak of a “sneaky” conservative revolution. However, its traces are quite visible. Let’s remember the slogans we shouted after the fall of communism: Return to Europe! Let’s make it sweet for Europe! And now? No to euro! No to quotas! The former president and the former leader of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), Václav Klaus, who would like to start a conservative revolution in the Czech Republic, promulgated the idea that elections are useless and that what we need is a new “civic” Velvet Revolution. So far, Klaus is still a general without an army. The question, though, is for how much longer, because soldiers are already being recruited and a few clowns trying to seize the occasion.

Central Europe has thus become the paradise of a new right which sees EU institutions as its enemy and is in the process of shaping its political profile. The new right mixes neoliberalism with nationalism, because privatization of the welfare state remains part of its programme. Nevertheless, this programme is meant to be channelled to the benefit of the country’s economic elites so the right can keep inveighing against global capitalism. This new right has its social programme, too, especially when it comes to national solidarity, understood as social help for its tribesmen.

Last but not least, this right is populist. It categorically refuses traditional, established national and European elites and casts them as nation’s traitors. The right reverts to mass propaganda in order to strengthen its political power, a power built directly on the relationship between leaders and the people. Therefore, there’s nothing incomprehensible about Václav Klaus changing from a radical opponent of civic society into a proponent of civic revolution. Let’s rejoice that so far it’s just a gentle conservative revolution within the legal framework!

This, unfortunately, provides a breeding ground for the revival of the Central Europe concept. The aim of Central Europe, or “Centre”, is a conservative revolution which yields new political ground to broken societies and looks at Western Europe with contempt. Seen from the perspective of the “Centre”, the West equals an alienated, declining society, paraphrased as multicultural, bureaucratic, liberal, even socialist, but mostly as uprooted and lacking faith, determination, and firmness. Orbán’s Fidesz marked the beginning of such an attitude in Hungary; Kaczyński’s PiS took charge of the initiative in Poland. Now it’s the Czech Republic’s turn...

# MARTINA PECKOVÁ ČERNÁ: WE'D MISS VISEGRAD AS MUCH AS WE'D MISS CENTRAL EUROPE, OR LET'S ALSO HOLD TO CULTURAL INSTINCTS

In recent months, opinions about the harmfulness of our membership in the Visegrad Group and the artificial nature of this alliance have been voiced with increasing loudness. Indeed, due to the impact of rising populism and nationalism in Hungary and Poland, and the unfortunate bull-in-a-china-shop dance of Visegrad about immigrant quotas, the Visegrad brand went quickly out of fashion both on the national and international stage. Do those twenty-five years of cooperation between the V4 countries truly belong to the history of other artificial, yet at their time meaningful constructs, such as the Czechoslovak nation? Let's leave the decision as to whether the fashionable item is Visegrad, Austerlitz or Danube to the politicians. One thing is certain: culturally, we'd miss Visegrad as much as we'd miss Central Europe.

The V4 group is still seen as a successful project of dissident elites whose main goal was joint integration into European structures and the creation of parliamentary democracy with a functioning market economy. After the slow-down during Klaus's era, V4 cooperation took a new breath at the end of the 1990s. This was enhanced by the International Visegrad Fund which has supported, since its creation in 2000, shared art, culture, education and research projects. Indeed, it is a foreign policy tool created in order to promote cultural and intellectual values and foster the image of a Central European region. Yet, with the exception of the Northern countries, no other regions (e.g. the Benelux or the Mediterranean countries) have agreed as yet on establishing a multilaterally funded and transparent means of support. This, too, is a reason for moderate joy.

In the current, highly politicized situation, artists approach the Visegrad "brand" with reserve. And actually, who would, even in more peaceful times of global and seemingly endless possibilities of cooperation, volunteer to identify oneself with a similar label? Despite that fact, constant and intense circulation of theatre, dance and music productions and personalities from the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary across the region is not a foreign policy theory but a natural need and a lived reality. Furthermore, there are areas which can be, beyond any doubt, considered very successful examples of social transformation. I speak here primarily of independent experimental theatre and dance organizations and groups, which, in the timespan of a generation, have in many cases achieved high levels of professionalism, gained international reputations and built sustainable infrastructures for future projects. In the words of a Moldavian participant of a Visegrad travelling conference we organized last year: "Cultural operators in Visegrad countries put all their energy to get the Soviet man out of his post-Soviet depression and they succeeded in doing so mainly thanks to the activities of independent artists."

For example, the Prague Arts and Theatre Institute, together with our counterparts in Bratislava, Warsaw and Budapest, launched a long-term promotional and research strategy project called Performing Arts Central Europe–Visegrad Countries Focus, a project very much concerned with the dense philosophical-historical issues related to the notion "Central Europe". As much as we accentuate Visegrad cooperation and the synergy

of smaller countries—both useful in the competitive struggle for attention at main international forums—we consider the legacy of Central European values to be of utmost importance. In a wider geopolitical context, this includes the German-language culture which is of key importance for a stable Central Europe, hence German engagement in Ukraine. The project was born in 2011, a year when "austerity" programmes began to control Europe, the Hungarian cultural scene was fending off the first attacks by Orbán's crew, and the Polish EU presidency voiced its intention to expand the Eastern Partnership countries. Here, our Polish counterparts did a great job, especially to help preserve independent culture, though they are foregoing this line of engagement at the present. While reflecting on the 20th anniversary of the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, questions of identity and relations with the West have reemerged. Is the period of (n)ostalgia for torn cultural and, at times political, connections in this part of Europe a result of declining interest in the West? Or is it a real effort to restore the Central and Eastern European cultural sense of belonging? It's probably both. In any case, this process is part of the much needed European cultural redefinition. The revision of non-critical worship of the West is further stressed because of cuts to public expenditures on education, healthcare and culture. Some in the intellectual and cultural community look askance at instrumentalized approaches to cultural projects, arguing about at what cost to art is culture promoted as economic policy—something politicians won't get emotional about anyway. Shouldn't Central Europe launch an offensive and strive to become important culturally? As Václav Havel put it: We aren't pardoned prisoners in Europe anymore, but we are still considered poor renegades.

We've been an official member of the European Union for over thirteen years and the EU is just the way we made it, regardless of the power of our political representation to participate in its functioning and decision-making. The fear of the unknown reigns in both Eastern Europe and in the West. And it becomes obvious that we are, even today, more likely part of the unknown. We can mostly blame ourselves for it. If the core of identity of any community is culture, then let's finally settle accounts with the demagoguery of "cherries on a cake". Perhaps we will then get to Kundera-esque authentic cultural values. In Central Europe such values have always been primarily cultural resistance: resistance to fashions, ideologies and manipulations of power.

the author is a teatrologist,  
translator, and cultural manager



# HENRIK IBSEN: A DOLL'S HOUSE

Friday October 20 2017 at 19.00  
Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Divadlo pod Palmovkou  
Praha (CZ)

*Even ingenuous heroines have their secrets*

**Translation:** František Fröhlich  
**Directed by:** Jan Nebeský  
**Dramaturgy:** Daria Ullrichová  
**Stage design:** Jan Nebeský a Jana Preková  
**Costumes:** Jana Preková  
**Music:** Miroslav Hloucal  
**Movement advisor:** Nataša Novotná

Premiere: December 16, 2016  
Show duration: 2h 20min with a break  
English subtitles

The marriage of Nora and Torvald Helmer seems a model of happiness. He tends to his career and she is the most devoted wife any ambitious man could wish for. Yet—in her husband's best interests—Nora has incurred a debt in the recent past. Despite her efforts to correct her mistake, she is now in the hands of an extortionist. How will Torvald, who is systematically moulding Nora into the shape of perfect wife and mother, deal with the approaching disaster threatening his ambitious plans? What lurks beneath the surface of a seemingly ideal couple, and their perfectly happy marriage?

Ibsen's famous play caused a scandal when first published and it is surprisingly still relevant. Nora's final decision seemed immorally emancipated at the time; in our moment, the author's ironic distance relates to both the decision and to the doll-like Nora herself. Director Jan Nebeský, who has found the ideal Nora in Tereza Dočkalová, has received much acclaim at prestigious international festivals for his previous productions of Ibsen's plays. Nebeský's *A Doll's House* staging in Divadlo pod Palmovkou also marks his return to the theatre stage where he presented, in 1988, his first, much appreciated production of Ibsen's play *Ghosts*.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Torvald Helmer:** Jan Teplý  
**Nora, his wife:** Tereza Dočkalová  
**Dr. Rank:** Jan Hušek  
**Kristine Linde:** Kateřina Holánová  
**Nils Krogstad:** Radek Valenta  
**Maid:** Hana Seidlová

Piano Jakub Tököly  
Saxophone Petr Kalfus

## DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU

*The beginnings of the Divadlo pod Palmovkou, which in September 2017 started its jubilee 70th season, date back to August 1948 when young actors formed a new theatre group. Later on, they moved to their present building, a site with a theatrical tradition dating back to the 19th century, when it was one of the few places where Czech plays were staged. In its first years, the theatre, then known as Městské a oblastní divadlo, staged a classical dramatic repertoire while also presenting new theatre plays. Later on, the theatre was renamed Theatre of S. K. Neumann and became a hotbed of actors who would significantly influence the look of modern Czech theatre.*

*In the 1960s, the Prague Libeň's theatre led by Václav Lohniský was one of the most closely watched theatres in the country and would often offer new views on the possibilities of the dramatic art. Back then, the theatre focussed on classic repertoire and musical comedies as well as new Western European plays—it was often the first Czechoslovak theatre to stage them. The theatre's most noticeable production was the European premiere of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, though Lohniský's rediscovery of Bertold Brecht was also extraordinary. In the 1970s and 1980s the Theatre of S. K. Neumann didn't maintain its quality level of the 1960s but remained one of the top Czechoslovak theatres with a company of quality actors. The theatre was renamed Divadlo pod Palmovkou in 1990, and it is now recognized as one of the premier Czech theatres. In 2002 and 2013 the theatre suffered heavy flooding; following the 2013 floods, Divadlo pod Palmovkou closed its doors for two years to embark on reconstruction. Michal Lang has been director since September 2013, and has put together a new, ambitious group of artists. At present, Divadlo pod Palmovkou focuses on new renditions of classical theatre plays and new pieces, including authored plays commissioned especially for the theatre, as well as theatre adaptations. In the past year, Divadlo pod Palmovkou's productions were the most often nominated ones in several critical opinion polls and theatre awards. The theatre has two auditoriums: the Main Stage for an audience of 250 and Studio PALM OFF for 80 spectators. In 2016, Divadlo pod Palmovkou organized the first year of an international festival of Central European theatres, the PALM OFF FEST.*



“I don't like to explain. I don't like to preach. I like to have fun and search together with the artist what's in the text and behind it.”

(from an interview published in the theatre programme to the A Doll's House production)

“All the gold in the world is worth twenty minutes of meditation on humbleness, on what can be given through me to others. I pray to sound real. I try to change the world. To change the theatre. Theatre is my means of expression. And I have things I want to say.”

(from an interview published in the theatre programme to the A Doll's House production)

“Tereza Dočkalová excels in the title role. A seemingly picture perfect naive woman gradually uncovers her dark places and she clings to her expression of a cute, legally incapable doll regardless of the increasing share of dignity and nerves it takes. The main character's contradiction becomes the main motive force. The way Dočkalová uses it, leaves the viewer in doubt as to when this outwardly silly woman just pretends and when she is herself. Or perhaps she's more herself when she pretends...”

(Vladimír Mikulka, Divadelní noviny)





# THE CURSE / KLATWA

(Based on Stanisław Wyspiański's  
play *The Curse*)

Sunday October 22 2017 at 19.00  
Main stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Teatr Powszechny im. Zygmunta Hübnera  
Warsaw (PL)

*The most scandalous production of the 21st century!*

**Directed by:** Oliver Frlić

**Dramaturgy:** Goran Injac, Joanna Wichowska,  
Agnieszka Jakimiak

**Costumes:** Sandra Dekanić

**Light design:** Jacqueline Sobiszewski

**Stage design cooperation:** Małgorzata Dzik

Premiere: December 18, 2017

Duration of the show: 1h 20min, no break

Czech subtitles

The performance is intended for adult audiences only

A stroboscope is used and loud music is played

**Discussion with authors follows after the show**

Oliver Frlić, one of the most renowned Bosnian-Croatian directors and playwrights and one of the most distinctive representatives of European critical theatre, aims at encouraging discussion about complex social and political issues. Frlić's productions cause stormy reactions, both in the ex-Yugoslavian countries and in Germany, where he often works. *The Curse*, which premiered in February 2017 in the Warsaw Teatr Powszechny, was no exception: hours after its first night, *The Curse* became a hot topic on the Polish political and social scene. Representatives of nationalist and religious fundamentalists, but also politicians, condemned the production. A criminal complaint was filed against the authors. Major European dailies, such as *The Guardian*, *Le Monde*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* among others, reported on the play and the events it stirred, making it—without exaggeration—the most watched theatre event of the 21st century.

*The Curse* is based on a 1899 play by Polish modernist author Stanisław Wyspiański depicting a forbidden relationship between a parish priest and a young girl—subject matter that caused a scandal when the play was staged for the first time. In his rendering, Frlić kept only a few sentences from Wyspiański's original play. Frlić considered the play's issues, not its language, most important and he searched for their current shape in the (Polish) present. The result is a multi-layered dramatic essay that examines the relation of Polish society to the Catholic Church and asks questions about the sense and purpose of critical and political theatre in the contemporary world.

This year, Czech audiences have had the opportunity to encounter Oliver Frlić's work twice already: older productions from Slovenia and Germany were staged in Prague and Olomouc. *The Curse* is Frlić's most recent work and so far has only been staged in Poland and in a special guest performance at Berlin's Maxim Gorki Theater. This Prague performance marks its second international appearance.

## **TEATR POWSZECHNY IM. ZYGMUNTA HÜBNERA**

The theatre, founded in a former cinema in 1945 by actor and cultural organiser Jan Mroziński, was first called *Teatr Popularny*. In September 1945, it changed its name to *Teatr Powszechny* and gradually became the most important theatre stage among Warsaw Municipal Theatres. In the mid-1950s, the theatre became well-established, known in both Warsaw and Poland alike. Its fame is due to its unconventional repertoire choices of Polish theatre plays, its original direction and brilliant acting. Following the

## **CAST:**

Karolina Adamczyk

Klara Bielawka

Maria Robaszkiewicz

Barbara Wysocka

Julia Wyszynska

Jacek Beler

Arkadiusz Brykalski

Michał Czachor

arrival of artistic director and director Zygmunt Hübner in 1975, *Teatr Powszechny* made further steps toward becoming a truly modern theatre. Hübner, a head of the theatre since 1976, aimed at producing courageous and timeless theatre; intellectual, thoughtful and morally (rather than politically) engaged. In 1975, *Teatr Powszechny* premiered A. Wajda's rendition of Danton's Death, one of the greatest events in the history of Polish theatre. The theatre staged a number of productions which stirred the political and social mood of communist Poland, including Václav Havel's one-act plays. Zygmunt Hübner, who bravely stood up to communism his entire life, died in 1989, almost simultaneously with the fall of the communist regime. In 1991, in Hübner's memory, the theatre changed its name to *Teatr Powszechny Zygmunta Hübnera*. In the 1990s, the theatre continued to pursue Hübner's direction, but enlarged its scope with contemporary Western, and especially British, plays. In 1996 young actors founded *Teatr Montownia*, one of the most interesting ensembles of recent years; the group presents productions, in cooperation with *Teatr Powszechny*, aimed at younger generations. *Teatr Powszechny*'s productions often stir emotions and cause tumultuous discussions among critics and audiences about society and traditions – just as in Hübner's times. In 2009-2010, the theatre building underwent extensive reconstruction and modernisation and now has three modern auditoriums. The main stage is intended for production aimed at the general public; the variable studio scene is a place for dialogue and discussion, often about the ethical condition of contemporary life; and the smallest stage is dedicated to experimental productions by young playwrights. Since 2013, the theatre has been led by Paweł Łysak and Paweł Sztarbowsky. Continuing Hübner's legacy, Łysak and Sztarbowsky aim at producing theatre that is active both on and off the stage. The theatre works with Polish leading directors, e.g. M. Kleczewska and G. Garbaczewski, as well as international ones, such as O. Frlić or A. Schilling. Professional critics consider the theatre's ensemble to be one of the best in Poland. *Teatr Powszechny* organizes many activities, thus developing an alternative means of contact with its audience. The activities include discussions, a community garden, or participation in a summer street festival aimed at achieving positive social change in Praga, one of the most economically depressed neighbourhoods in Warsaw.



“Knowing what the Living Theatre did in the U.S. or what the Flemish New Wave did, all I can say to those who think I’m not doing art is: Go back to school.”

(gazeta.pl)

“The fundamental task of theatre is to question that which we understand as obvious.”

(krytykapolityczna.pl)

“The refined structure and precise narrative of *The Curse* stir up delight; the performance grips and seizes viewer’s emotions. Despite expectations, the form, which is not important for Frljić, because it’s meant to serve the content, is constructed in a way that makes this play one of the best theatre productions in (many) years. Perhaps even the best, as much as such judgment can seem arrogant. To be on the safe side, I’ll just write that it’s definitely Frljić’s best production I’ve ever seen.”

(Jakub Majmurek, krytykapolityczna.pl)



# STEFANO MASSINI: LEHMAN TRILOGY

Tuesday October 24 2017 at 19.00  
Behind the curtain of the Main Stage,  
Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Divadlo Husa na provázku  
Brno (CZ)

*Dějiny kapitalismu ve třech hodinách*

**Translation:** Irena Novotná  
**Directed and adapted by:** Michal Dočkal  
**Dramaturgy:** Miroslav Oščatka  
**Stage design:** Dragan Stojčevski  
**Costume design:** Sylva Zimula Hanáková  
**Music:** Ivan Acher

Czech premiere: May 3, 2017  
Show duration: 3 hours with a break

**Discussion with authors follows after the show**

He arrived to New York in 1844 with a suitcase. He opened a tiny shop. His two brothers followed. Soon, they built a business which eventually became the fourth largest bank in the U.S. Its fall in 2008 and record-breaking bankruptcy amounting to 200 billion dollars launched the global economic crisis, an event that continues to impact people around the world. A fascinating portrait of a German Jewish family, *Lehman Trilogy* provides a deep view of U.S. history and a breath-taking depiction of the history of capitalism. The French production of the play received the Critics' Award and was nominated for the prestigious Molière award. In Italy, it bewitched critics and audiences alike and received five Ubu Awards. This is the first Czech rendition of the play.

In his vast trilogy on the Lehman Brothers Company, Italian playwright and director Stefano Massini deals primarily with the phenomenon of American capitalism: he exposes its positive and negative aspects and characteristics. During its 150 years of existence, Lehman Brothers was extremely successful in targeting and investing in ground-breaking industries and technologies. Yet, the company also made a series of problematic decisions, and eventually went bankrupt – an event that shook the entire globe. Hard work and avarice: Lehman Brothers.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Henry Lehman (1822–1855):** Adam Mašura  
**Emanuel Lehman (1827–1907):** Jan Kolařík  
**Mayer Lehman (1830–1897):** Tomáš Milostný  
**Philip Lehman (1861–1947):** Dalibor Buš  
**Robert Lehman (1891–1969):** Milan Holenda  
**Herbert Lehman (1878–1963):** Martin Donutil  
**Irving Lehman (1876–1945):** Tereza Marečková

All actors also act multiple other characters

## DIVADLO HUSA NA PROVÁZKU

*Husa na provázku, whose name references Jiří Mahen's 1925 collection of experimental texts Husa na provázku, was created in 1967. Back then, under the leadership of dramaturge, teacher and theatrologist, Bořivoj Srba, a group of amateur theatre artists, most of them students at Brno art schools, began to experiment with dramatic shapes, thus continuing in the tradition of inter-war avant-garde theatre.*

*The impetus for the theatre was to create an experimental stage, a cultural centre bringing together artists of the same generation and viewpoints. To Srba, the main creative principle was "irregular" dramaturgy, i.e. searching for new subject matter in non-dramatic texts. Later on, Husa na provázku developed other priorities, such as experimentation, openness in dramaturgy, acting in non-theatrical places (including in the streets), physical readiness and awareness of the latest tendencies in the international theatre scene as well as of social and political events. Under the leadership of Eva Tálská, Zdeněk Pospíšil and Peter Scherhauser, Husa na provázku joined the ranks of the most progressive Czechoslovak theatres. In April 1969, when the future Czechoslovak president Gustáv Husák became one of the Communist Party leaders, the name of the theatre was censored and it had to leave out the "goose". The theatre's new name, Theatre on a String, in fact symbolized too accurately its activity in the 1970s and 1980s. The theatre ensemble would often, and successfully, represent Czechoslovak theatre culture at international events, and its contacts with Polish theatres were of special importance. Yet at the same time, it was being restricted by the communist regime and faced the constant threat of having to shut down. In 1972, the ensemble became a professional one. In 1986 the Experimental Theatre Centre (CED) was created, a project which included the construction of a new, modern theatre space for experimental theatre and research as well as space for social meetings, studies, and discussions. The project was brought to life in 1993 by architects Karel Hubálka and Jiří Hakulín. Since then, Husa na provázku is "housed" in the premises of the Experimental Theatre Centre. Vladimír Morávek has been the artistic director since 2005.*



“It’s the history of capitalism of a kind, respectively a history of the European-Atlantic world of the past 170 years, when an incredible acceleration of pace occurred.”

(Michal Dočekal about the production)

“The story isn’t about financial issues only, but also about men of resources, such as Bata, Skoda and others. It’s a story about founding fathers and their sons, whose success makes them almost immortal but it can also catch up with them.”

(Michal Dočekal about the production, Brněnský deník)

“The play cannot be rendered merely as a family saga of Jewish immigrants from Bavaria. Soon enough, the Lehman family got involved and intertwined with the destiny of the entire country and of the rapid civilizational development of 19th and 20th century America and the world. Dočekal’s directing deals with this unwritten request brilliantly: we become witnesses, especially in the first part of the show, to an appealing if explosive mixture of American dreams and tragedies. (At times, the black-and-white stage and costume design give the impression of finding oneself in a “crazy” world of the grotesque.)”

(Josef Mlejnek, Divadelní noviny)



# TOMÁŠ BARÁNEK, TOMÁŠ DIANIŠKA: HOW TO PICK UP A WOMAN 2.0

Wednesday October 25 2017 at 19.30  
Studio PALM OFF, Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Studio PALM OFF, Divadlo pod Palmovkou  
Prague (CZ)

*Dramatic version of the Czech bestseller on the technology of love hunt*

**Directed by:** F. X. Kalba  
**Stage design:** Lenka Odvárková  
**Music:** Jakub Hlobil  
**Dramaturgy:** Ladislav Stýblo

World premiere: February 10, 2017  
Duration of the show: 1h 20 min, no break

Please note: Show appropriate for audience aged 15y +  
A stroboscope is used during the show

Are you unhappily in love? Do you want to finally meet a girl? Do you want to win the heart of a woman who ignores you (or get back the one who left you)? Do you want to become the man women will fight for? This play by Studio PALM OFF focuses on love relationships and their stereotypes. It offers steps and "tricks" of universal validity and almost total efficacy when hitting on girls and women of any character, shape, and age...

Tomáš Baránek, the author of the book, worked as a relationship counsellor for several years and collected extensive knowledge about gender stereotypes and the most common communication mistakes men make when starting a relationship. His bestselling book, translated into Slovak and Polish, features a number of practical exercises begging to be translated for the stage. Tomáš Dianiška, the author of the dramatic rendition, is a successful actor, playwright and theatre organiser and was, in 2016, named a Talent of the Year by the prestigious Theatre Criticism Award.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Eva:** Tereza Dočkalová  
**Nikol:** Šárka Opršalová  
**Kamil:** Jakub Albrecht  
**Filip:** Tomáš Dianiška

## STUDIO PALM OFF

*In the 1980s, intimate performances were staged in the foyer of the Divadlo pod Palmovkou, while the classical repertoire was performed on its Velká scéna (Main Stage). In 1989, the Divadlo na zkušebně was founded to continue such experiments; however, this stage soon ceased to exist. The space was then adapted as a rehearsal room and depository for props and decorations. In 2004, Malá scéna (Small Stage) was built in the theatre's attic. Several intimate performances were successfully staged here. However, regular theatre production directed by Divadlo pod Palmovkou didn't last long: since 2007, the space has been also available to other theatre groups (Divadlo Letí, Komorní činohra Praha), providing them with a permanent place of operation. In 2013, with the arrival of the new head of the theatre and art director, Michal Lang, Malá scéna changed its focus and was adapted for the needs of experimental theatre, with a capacity for an audience of 80. At present, Studio PALM OFF functions as a platform for contemporary theatre, new drama, "punk" theatre: artists can try out visual and dramatic experiments at the limits of theatre and test out new dramatic texts. The studio presents productions by Divadlo pod Palmovkou as well as productions by its "befriended" theatre groups, such as Divadlo F.X. Kalby, one of the most progressive Czech young theatre groups, or the theatre Cabaret Calembour. So far, Studio PALM OFF has presented the following performances: a political cabaret Miloš Ubu, a Hrabal-inspired media study Hrabě ti? aneb Hrabal, and a contemporary Polish play A Couple of Poor, Polish-Speaking Romanians. In cooperation with Divadlo F. X. Kalby the Studio staged successful performances of 1000 věcí, co mě serou, Přísně tajné: Hrubá nemravnost, Mickey Mouse je mrtvý, Mlčení bobříků, Jak sbalit ženu 2.0, and Dotěrnosti.*



“The most important question always is: How would Michael Jackson do it? When you love pop and you’re not ashamed about it, it can become art eventually.”

(Tomáš Dianiška in an interview for Divadelní noviny)

“The most difficult part about theatre is to get to its meaning. But that’s a director’s task, and they hate me because my play is quite superficial, it’s just jokes.”

(Tomáš Dianiška, Divadelní noviny)

“It’s no wonder that Tomáš Dianiška, with his perverse nature and tendency to make fun of all things, decided to transfer Baránek’s book onto stage. The book asks for it. Possibly any problem a man could have when picking up a woman (and there are plenty) is addressed with sound advice and accompanied by a “natural” dialogue between a man and a woman. All Dianiška had to do was bring those micro stories together into an odyssey of a loser in the quest for happiness embodied by a woman he was successful at picking up.”

(Dominik Melichar, Divadelní noviny)



# ANNE FRANK

Thursday October 26 2017 at 19.00  
Behind the curtain of the Main Stage,  
Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Nové divadlo  
Nitra (SK)

*Performance on motives of The Diary of a Young Girl*

**Concept:** Šimon Spišák a Veronika Gabčíková  
**Dramatisation:** Šimon Spišák  
**Directed by:** Šimon Spišák  
**Stage design, costume design and puppets:** Karel Czech  
**Dramaturgy:** Veronika Gabčíková

Premiere: November 19, 2016  
Duration of the show: 1h 30 min, no break

**Discussion with authors follows after show**

Anne Frank is a theatrical production of the famous *The Diary of a Young Girl*. Its director, Šimon Spišák, constructed the play through monologues, thus accentuating the inner world of the teenager heroine, as well as her emotional and sentimental suffering. The production relies on the excellent acting of Lucia Korená and Ivan Martinka. Through their performances, the dramatic story of Anne Frank sends an exceptionally raw, strong and contemporary message.

Anne Frank was just thirteen years old when she was forced into hiding during the Second World War; for two years she, her family, and four other people lived in the back part of an Amsterdam house. Between June 12, 1942 and August 1st, 1944 she noted down everything that went on around her, but also inside of her, all her sorrows and joys. In March 1944, she heard a call to citizens on Radio Oranje asking for their war notes to contribute to a collection for historical research purposes, and she set to rewrite her notes into a book. Anne made the last entry into her diary only days before she and her family were discovered by German soldiers and transported to a concentration camp. Anne Frank died of typhus in the Bergen Belsen concentration camp. Her diary survived and her father, Otto Frank, the only family member who survived the war, saw it published. Šimon Spišák's production is an original reaction to the present rise of European nationalism and neo-Nazism.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Anne Frank:** Lucia Korená  
**Peter van Daan, father, mother, Miep, Mr. van Daan, Mrs. van Daan, Mr. Düssel, Mortie, cat, and others:** Ivan Martinka  
**Broadcaster:** Martin Nahálka  
**Anne's voice:** Alica Cvečková

## NOVÉ DIVADLO

*Nové divadlo was founded by several former members of Karol Spišák's Staré divadlo (Old Theatre) who broke off and established their own ensemble Nové divadlo (New Theatre). Nové divadlo's first premiere took place on June 10, 2016 in Nitra cultural centre Hidepark. The play Swimming Pool by Slovak playwright Bára Kubátová, written for Nové divadlo, is a satirical, unsentimental, and cruel view of relationships between men and women. Directed by Šimon Spišák, the production drew attention for its healthy insolence and the sharpness of its contemporary and uncompromising message.*

*The theatre's second premiere was a children's show Baby Goats and Wolf, written by Šimon Spišák and based on the notorious fairy-tale. The authors developed an original take on the mysterious character of the wolf, placing him in a wider context where the wolf is not just a stand-in for danger and evil but is also understood on the symbolical and mythological level. Nové divadlo's third production, Anne Frank, is also a Šimon Spišák's piece of work. The production, based on the renowned The Diary of a Young Girl, is about hatred, fear and the strength of man's faith in the future.*

*Theatre journalist Daniel Ballay wrote of the production: "Instead of merely reconstructing diary entries, the authors of the theatrical version of the Diary presented secrets and intimate recesses of adolescence in a playful manner (...) By doing so, they achieved a production which is not sentimental but genuine in its search for human warmth, a paradox in times of general hatred and increasingly less justified xenophobia." Nové divadlo's latest addition to its repertoire is the play Four Women at the End of the World, written and directed by Juraj Nvota. The original staging of the play, reminiscent of cabaret with elements of stand-up comedy, is subtitled "four women on a small stage, who have much to lose because they don't hide anything" and looks into the depths of the women's souls and worlds. Nové divadlo is now housed in the Dům Matice slovenské in Nitra.*



“Our production is very contemporary, as it points out things happening today: we are seeing a surge of extremism, we are seeing elements of fascism appear.”

(dramaturge Veronika Gabčíková in an article by Jana Černáková, Naša Nitra)

“When a man stops respecting another man of a different origin, viewpoint or religion, the risk is that the evil, which influenced millions of people during the Second World War, returns, albeit in different form, today.”

(dramaturge Veronika Gabčíková in an article by Jana Černáková, Naša Nitra)

“Silencing Anne is a strong motive: she is loud, she wants to dance and sing. She’s full of the desire to live, to understand the world, she can’t submit quietly and obediently as her sister Margot can. Such an Anne could be a positive model for today’s generation, too. Yet, according to surveys, today’s young people aren’t roused from their passive apathy by positive examples but by the radicalized rhetorics of new ‘leaders’.”

(Martina Mašlářová, Konkrétne o divadle)





# PHILIPP LÖHLE:

# WIR SIND KEINE BARBAREN! / WE ARE NOT BARBARIANS!

Saturday October 28 2017 at 19.00  
Behind the curtain of the Main Stage,  
Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Katona József Színház  
Budapest (HUN)

*A very topical, grotesque social satire about refugees*

**Translation:** Gábor Kerényi  
**Adaptation:** Krisztián Peer  
**Directed by:** Vilmos Vajdai  
**Dramaturgy:** Tamara Török  
**Stage and costume design:** Nóra Juhász  
**Lyrics:** Zsolt Máthé  
**Light design:** Krisztián Balázs  
**Sound:** Márk Balázs  
Czech version of the lyrics by Jiří Zeman

Premiere: January 7, 2017  
Duration of the show: 1h 50 min, no break  
Czech subtitles

## Discussion with authors follows after the show

A married couple. New tenants, another couple, live next to them. The first meeting is a bit strained, but soon the couples agree they have the same hobbies: super large TVs for the men, yoga for the women. A polite friendship can develop. Until one night, a mysterious foreigner appears at their doors. One couple refuses him resolutely. The woman from the second couple offers a helping hand and provides the man with shelter. All politeness ends here...

The successful black comedy by German playwright Philipp Löhle premiered three years ago in Konzert Theater Bern. The authors of the Budapest production transferred the text to the reality of today's Hungary. In doing so, the audience witnesses the disintegration of traditional and declared values of the middle class as it faces the refugee crisis.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Barbara:** Andrea Fullajtár  
**Mario:** István Dankó  
**Linda:** Hanna Pálos  
**Levente:** Zoltán Rajkai  
**Also appearing:** László Czinke, Tibor Kardos, Janka Kertész, Kata Milla Kovács, Gitta Szendrey, Áron Tamaskó, Violetta Vigh (members of the Katona Behívó programme)

## KATONA JÓZSEF SZÍNHÁZ

*Katona József Színház Theatre, with over 100,000 visitors per season, is one of Hungary's best-known and most-visited theatres. Its productions, focussing on pressing issues and questions of contemporary life and society, make use of modern and innovative approaches. Katona József Színház was founded in 1982 by a group of actors and a director from the Hungarian National Theatre. The theatre is housed in the former Chamber Theatre of the National Theatre. The theatre's name references József Katona (1791-1830), a playwright, translator, and an important representative of the early stages of Hungarian national dramatic history. Katona is also known for his historical plays, one of which was set in Bohemia and dealt with the Hussite movement.*

*Historically, Katona József Színház produces realist theatre, though not realist in the sense of the narrowly understood realism of style, but in the overall aesthetic sense, i.e. in the way it relates to reality. The theatre ensemble, as is traditional in Hungarian theatre culture, is based on and motivated by psychological and realistic approaches to acting, but the ensemble's approach to the works staged is innovative, requiring knowledge of modern dramatic language enriched with avant-garde tendencies.*

*Katona József Színház isn't a theatre for select audiences; on the contrary, it tries to address the largest and most various audience possible. The theatre's aim is to encourage unrestricted dialogue with its audience. Since 2011 Gábor Máté has been head of the theatre, and the theatre is a member of the international theatre network mitos21. Top directors from contemporary Hungarian theatre appear regularly as guests in Katona József Színház, including Gábor Zsámbéki, Tamás Ascher and Viktor Bodó, to name but a few.*



“Young people are the future; it’s for them we fuck this country up.”  
(director Vilmos Vajdai)

“The actors are brilliant: their acting is sharp and elaborated in the smallest detail; at times crossing the line of absurd, they caricature consumerist society, with all of its phobias and decay.”  
(Noémi Marik, Vasárnapi Hírek)

“Probably no one has ever dealt with endangered European culture with such humour. This ever-present, lacerating humour gives you goose bumps and is not easy on the audience. In the first unguarded moment, it draws the viewer into the story, and leads him through the first shy smile and embarrassed giggles through to the final ecstasy of crazy laugh.”  
(Katalin Kálai, art website ART7)



# ŽO LANGEROVÁ: BACK THEN IN BRATISLAVA

Sunday October 29 2017 at 19.00  
Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Slovenské komorné divadlo Martin  
Martin (SK)

*A dramatization of one of the most powerful novels about Europe under communist rule*

**Dramatization:** Peter Pavlac  
**Directed by:** Patrik Lančarič  
**Dramaturgy:** Monika Michnová  
**Stage design:** Jozef Ciller  
**Costume design:** Jana Kuttnerová  
**Music:** Vladislav Šarišský

Premiere: November 6, 2015  
Duration of the show: 3h, including a break

**Discussion with authors follows after the show**

Back Then in Bratislava is a dramatization of Žo Langerová's autobiographic novel *Back Then in Bratislava (My Life with Oskar L.)* which won the Book of the Year award when it was published in Slovakia in 2007, twenty-eight years after its English edition. Published in Czech recently as *I Lived with a Dedicated Communist*, the novel impressively narrates unsentimental and honest memories of Žo's life with the Slovak leftist intellectual Oskar Langer. Oskar Langer was one of the key witnesses in a show trial with Rudolf Slánský and was sentenced to twenty-two years of imprisonment for his forced testimony.

In her novel, Žo Langerová succeeds in maintaining a critical distance from her husband's ideological blindness, despite believing in his innocence, and she doesn't hide her lack of confidence in "socialism with human face". Langerová's book is not a mere testimony of life behind the Iron Curtain, it's also an excellent piece of writing including facts, personal views, emotions and suggestive details, as well as impressive, albeit bitter, humour. The theatrical adaptation doesn't seek to moralize, but to start a discussion about the communist totalitarian regime, to disclose painful and unpleasant issues and to fight against false sentiment and nostalgia for the former regime.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Žo:** Jana Olhová  
**Zuzka:** Lucia Jašková  
**Táňa:** Zuzana Rohoňová  
**Women:** Eva Gašparová, Lubomíra Krkošková, Nadežda Vladařová  
**Men:** Michal Gazdík, František Výrostko, Jaroslav Kysel

## SLOVENSKÉ KOMORNÉ DIVADLO MARTIN

*Slovenské komorné divadlo in Martin was founded in 1944 as the second professional theatre in Slovakia. The town of Martin had a long theatre tradition, which is why the idea of founding a Slovak professional theatre was considered after the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918. The first Slovak professional theatre was founded in Bratislava however, with most of its productions in the Czech language. Martin professional theatre was thus established only in the 1940s thanks to the initiative of Ján Marták, the vice-president of the Centre of Slovak Theatre Amateurs; Ivan Turzo, journalist of Naše divadlo (Our Theatre) magazine; Jozef Oiger-Hronský, manager of Matice Slovenská; Andrej Bagar, actor and director, and others.*

*The newly-founded theatre's first premiere took place on January 22, 1944 under dramatic circumstances. Directed by Andrej Bagar, Slovenské komorné divadlo staged Verhaeren's play Philip II., an anti-totalitarian production, thus clearly showing which side politically it had taken. The production was banned and the existence of the young theatre seriously threatened. During its sixty-five years of existence, Slovenské komorné divadlo has gone through many stages. In 1951, upon requests from the crew, the theatre's name changed to Slovak National Uprising Theatre. The theatre kept the name for a few months only: on October 6, 1951, it was renamed Army Theatre. In August 1961, the theatre returned to civil administration and reclaimed the name Slovak National Uprising Theatre. It worked under this name until 2003 when it returned to its original name, Slovak Chamber Theatre.*

*The Slovak Chamber Theatre greatly influenced the formation of Slovak theatre culture and has always been an important "hotbed" of actors. Some of them remained faithful to the theatre for their entire careers, e.g. Nada Hejná, Emil Horváth father, Katka and Jaroslav Vrzalovci, Štefan Mišovic, Eliška Nosálová, and others. Others left after their debuts, or after several roles in the Martin theatre. Of older actors, Otibor Filčík's generation should be remembered, i.e. Jozef Kroner, Elo Romančík, Mária Kráľovičová, Karol Machata, Vlado Müller, Ivan Letko, Eva Krížiková and Eva Rysová. Among actors of the middle generation, stand-outs include Emil Horváth son, Marta Sládečková, Ivan Romančík, Peter Bzdúch, Milan Kňažko and Marián Geišberg. The Slovak Chamber Theatre has always inspired young authors and has been a creative workshop of contemporary theatre. It has been represented at prestigious international festivals in Moscow, Belgrade, Torino, Wrocław, Edinburgh, Skopje, Cividale del Friuli, Zagreb, Hannover, Cologne, Hradec Králové, Prague, Plzen, Český Těšín, Olomouc, Zlín and Nitra, and has received numerous awards.*

[www.skdmartin.sk](http://www.skdmartin.sk)



“At the beginning, it usually brings only pain, sorrow and suffering, yet there is always a chance to clean things up and find a place, not only on the map but also in the hearts of those who mutually honour each other’s values. These people can then create a society which is much closer to the ideal than the society which surrounds us, unfortunately, in Slovakia today.

(Peter Pavlac, dramaturge of the production)

“It’s important to remind ourselves of our past, even the recent one. The production Back Then in Bratislava is not only a testimony of life in socialist Czechoslovakia or a book about terrible court cases, it’s also a proof of the strength of a woman who wouldn’t give up in such difficult times and even succeeded in preserving her moral values.”

(Katarína Cvečková, Pravda)

“In 2007, when I read Žo Langerová’s Back Then in Bratislava, I was a dramaturge of the drama department in the Slovak National Theatre. Back then, I could hardly imagine how much this novel would affect my life...”

(Peter Pavlac, dramaturge of the production)





# THOMAS BERNHARD: HISTRIONICS

Tuesday October 31 2017 at 19.00  
Behind the curtain of the Main Stage,  
Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Teatr im. Stefana Jaracza  
Lódź (PL)

*You can't do anything at all...*

**Directed by:** Agnieszka Olsten  
**Translation:** Jacek St. Buras  
**Stage and costume design:** Joanna Kaczyńska  
**Music:** Kuba Suchar  
**Light design:** Robert Mleczko

Premiere: December 18, 2015  
Duration of the show: 1h 50 min, no break  
Czech subtitles.

The performance is appropriate for audience aged 16 years +.  
**Discussion with authors follows after the show.**

*Histrionics* is a bitter grotesque about a famous actor, director and playwright longing for a world-changing artistic performance: an art that would deal with smallness and dilettantism. This desire will be satisfied once he stages his play *The Wheel of History*. Unfortunately, his theatre ensemble is his family, which he tyrannizes, hurts and humiliates; his theatre is the village pub; and his audience are the villagers on whose receptiveness and stability he cannot rely... In *Histrionics*, Thomas Bernhard deals with issues fundamental to his art, i.e. the distorted relationship of post-war Austria to its own history; the pompousness and narrow-mindedness of theatre folk; and the limited possibilities of theatre as such.

*Histrionics*, directed by renowned director Agnieszka Olsten for Lodz theatre Teatr Stefana Jaracza, presents, among others, Agnieszka Kwietniewska who excels in the title role of Bruscon. Stefan Jaracz Theatre's rendition has received a number of awards, including The Golden Mask for the best director in 2015/2016, awarded to A. Olsten; The Golden Mask for the best male part in 2015/2016, awarded to A. Kwietniewska; and the Main Award for the best female performance at an international theatre festival Boska Komedia 2016 in Krakow.

## CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Bruscon:** Agnieszka Kwietniewska  
**Mrs. Bruscon:** Urszula Gryczewska  
**Ferruccio, their son:** Marcin Korcz  
**Sára, their daughter:** Agnieszka Więdołcha  
**Inn keeper, him:** Seb Majewski  
**Inn keeper, her:** Dorota Kiełkowicz  
**Erna, their daughter:** Linda Rojewska

## TEATR IM. STEFANA JARACZA

*Teatr Stefana Jaracza theatre was founded in 1888 as a Polish -language stage. The theatre has resided at its present address since 1909. Its focus is on European and Polish classic repertoire, often featuring the best Polish actors. In 1939, after the beginning of the Second World War, the theatre was shuttered and replaced by the German Theater zu Litzmannstadt. The composition of Lodz population after the war changed dramatically and the city saw the arrival of many members of the new Polish intelligentsia.*

*Teatr Wojska Polskiego (Polish Army Theatre) replaced Theater zu Litzmannstadt. From the beginning, a number of excellent actors and directors were among its members. Between 1946-1949, the theatre was led by Leon Schiller, a renowned director and the founder of modern Polish theatre. The theatre's success in these years included its 1947 guest appearance in several Czechoslovak towns and, for a while, the title National Theatre. The theatre focussed on classic drama as well as on contemporary, original Polish and European dramatic productions. After 1949, when "social realism" became the only acceptable artistic direction, the theatre changed its name to Teatr Stefana Jaracza and a less happy period began: many actors left for Warsaw and Wrocław as well as for the newly founded Lodz Teatr Nowy (New Theatre). The ensemble stabilized in the 1960s when it started focussing on productions in collaboration with actors' input, and on comedy and music theatre. In 1966, Jerzy Grzegorzewski, an excellent Polish director, made his debut in the theatre and remained here until 1976. In the 1980s, Teatr Stefana Jaracza became one of the leading Polish theatres and was again called the National Theatre. At present, it ranks among the top Polish theatres with a well-balanced and high quality ensemble. The theatre focuses on original renditions of classic repertoire, highlighting its actors, as well as on brilliant productions of contemporary Polish and international plays and theatrical adaptations.*



"I do nothing to impress. The only thing I aim to do is to try and put into order this terribly chaotic world, for myself, and perhaps to show it to others, too.

(Agnieszka Olsten, Dziennik Polski)

"I would love to be an old, mature director who does *Odyssey's Return*, keeps her distance as she testifies about the world and offers people hope. However, I can't do that because the world I live in isn't nice, it's a world that hurts me. I see unemployment, rape and murder, aggressive, evil and corrupted people."

(Agnieszka Olsten, Dziennik Polski).

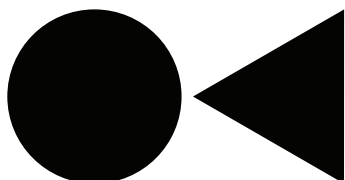
"Spending an evening with *Histrionics* is interesting and addictive; you will have an encounter with total acting. Agnieszka Kwietniewska, a wonderful guest appearance from the Wrocław Teatr Polski, immediately takes over the auditorium and won't let go of her rule for the slightest moment."

(Renata Sas, Express Ilustrowany)





# CENTRAL EUROPE DOCUMENTARY FILMS SERIES



## KINEDOK PROJECT

KineDok is a new kind of international community, a unique film club and an alternative distribution platform connecting makers of documentary film to their audiences and fans. KineDok scales the barriers of traditional cinema and brings a shared experience to your local club, café or gallery; it invites you to watch a film on a large screen and offers opportunities for discussion with the filmmakers in an informal environment. KineDok's basic message is: these personalities, these questions, these genres, these places and countries shouldn't be overlooked!

Films are screened in established multifunctional spaces— galleries and halls where concerts, theatre and dance shows are held on regular basis — but KineDok also utilizes less traditional, smaller places such as clubs, cafés, stations, chapels, social care centres etc. Local distributors and communities of young people interested in documentary film are the driving forces behind the KineDok project. Screenings are followed by discussions with the filmmakers or experts in the field.

In cooperation with its international partners, including One World Romania Association (Bucharest, Romania), Restart (Zagreb, Croatia), Éclipse Film (Budapest, Hungary), Krakow Film Foundation (Poland), Filmtopia (Bratislava, Slovakia), Bergen IFF (Norway) and Activist38 (Bulgaria), the Institute of Documentary Film (IDF) creates a permanent distribution network for documentary films covering the territory of its partner countries, thus helping to substantially increase audience numbers and develop interest in documentary film over the long term.

KineDok project together with PALM OFF FEST 2017 festival will screen three Central European documentary films in the unconventional space of the Palmovka Synagogue.

[www.kinedok.net](http://www.kinedok.net)

## THE PALMOVKA SYNAGOGUE

Originally called the New Synagogue or sometimes the Libeň Synagogue, the synagogue in the Prague Libeň neighbourhood is now one of the most treasured Jewish monuments of its kind in the Czech Republic. It is also one of the few remaining buildings of what was once the second largest Jewish settlement in Prague, stretching between the synagogue and today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou. This neighbourhood was almost completely demolished in the 1980s and the early 1990s.

The foundation stone of the synagogue was laid on November 23, 1846 in the presence of Archduke Štěpán. The synagogue, built in the neo-Roman style and featuring some oriental and eclectic details, took twelve years to complete and was consecrated in 1858. Its original facade had expressive stucco decorations which were simplified over the years. The synagogue's interior has a typical basilica look. Its main space consists of three high-ceilinged naves with lateral gallery arcades, each supported by a series of five massive prism pillars. The interior was originally arranged along the lines of Christian churches, with benches organized in rows and oriented towards the East.

The synagogue is marked by various remodelling efforts and bears scars from an adverse, forty-years-long period, during which it also served as a stage props and design storehouse for the S. K. Neumann Theatre (today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou); a role which probably saved it from demolition. It's worth mentioning that at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, the renowned writer Bohumil Hrabal worked in the synagogue as a propman and stage technician.

The synagogue's raw, authentic, and unrestored look has been temporarily preserved and serves as a memento to its history, a history which the Serpens association underlines in its multi-genre cultural projects organized on the premises.

[www.sdruzeniserpens.cz](http://www.sdruzeniserpens.cz)



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Saturday October 21 2017 at 17.00  
Palmovka Synagogue

## DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING: *SUPERIOR ORDERS + THOSE*

Directed by: Viktor Oszkár Nagy, András Petrik, Krisztina Meggyes  
Hungary, 2015  
In original version with Czech subtitles  
Voluntary contribution

Two views of a crisis before its media frenzy. *Superior Orders* is a film about a border: on one side the refugees, on the other voluntary guards—but also a priest helping immigrants determined to cross the border at any price. Those brings us to a small Hungarian village. Its inhabitants' peace is disturbed by an unexpected event: a refugee camp is erected just a few kilometres away. The villagers start a loud protest. The new situation opens up issues related to tolerance, fear of the unknown and migration. It also reveals another hidden problem. Two kinds of people live in the village: a majority of elder villagers who accept the presence of foreigners, and younger, richer people who become increasingly angry and consider the foreigners' presence a needless risk they don't want to run.

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Saturday October 21 2017 at 19.00  
Palmovka Synagogue

## DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING: *FC ROMA*

Directed by: Rozálie Kohoutová, Tomáš Bojar  
Production: Pavla Kubečková & nutprodukce  
Czech Republic, 2016  
Voluntary contribution  
Discussion with authors follows after the show

In autumn 2015, a new and unusual team joined the lowest rung of Czech football competition. TJ Junior Roma is a regional football club from Děčín, composed mainly of Roma players. Despite the fact that every football fan knows the UEFA campaign Say No to Racism, it seems that the campaign hasn't made it to the Czech football pitch. As soon as TJ Roma entered the competition, other teams refused to play against the club. That's why the club won most matches by default. The film follows the club during one strange football season.

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Sunday October 22 2017 at 14.00  
Palmovka Synagogue

## DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING : *THE QUEEN OF SILENCE*

Directed by: Agnieszka Zwiefka  
Poland, 2014  
In original version with Czech subtitles  
Voluntary contribution

A deaf girl from an illegal Roma settlement escapes from cruel reality into a world of rhythm, dance and imagination. Ten year old Denisa is an outcast for several reasons: she's an illegal inhabitant of a Roma camp in Poland, a woman in a patriarchal society, and she's deaf. Even the children from the settlement shout at her "the stupid one". Yet such an accusation couldn't be further from the truth. Denisa lives in her own world: a world filled with dance and music. Since she found a box with Bollywood films in a dustbin, she has wanted to dance and dress just like the beautiful women in the films, and she attempts to restage the films' dances with children from the settlement. It's her way of surviving extreme poverty, aggressive attacks of people living near the camp, and the threat of expulsion. Dance enables her to be who she wants to be and express what she can't say: joy, sadness and even fear.

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Sunday October 22 2017 at 16.30  
Palmovka Synagogue

## BOLLYWOOD DANCE WORKSHOP FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Voluntary contribution

Bollywood is the informal name of film production originating in Mumbai, the centre of the Indian film industry. The word, combining the former name of the metropolis, Bombay, and the famous American film centre, Hollywood, was originally a mocking title for Indian film production shot in Hindi in Mumbai. It is also inaccurately used for the entire Indian film industry. Outside India, Bollywood film production is often mocked for its kitschy and cheap aspect, yet it is immensely popular with Indian audiences for whom it is primarily made. Bollywood is one of the largest global film producers: in 2014, Mumbai film studios produced 252 new films, with an audience of over 3 billion.

The vast majority of Bollywood films consist of romantic musicals, off-beat or sentimental romantic comedies, and musical-dramas. Music, singing and dancing play key roles in many genres, stories, formats and situations that would be unthinkable in European and American cinematography. The importance of music and dance come in part from the ancient tradition of Indian theatre and its complicated system wherein each movement and sound carries its own specific information, its content being of key importance to understanding meaning as well as communicating emotions to the audience. Try and discover the secret of Indian contemporary popular culture and the original magic of the most commercially successful film studios in the world!

Divadlo pod Palmovkou  
presents

# SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE

# PP

70<sup>th</sup> SEASON

DIVADLO  
POD PALMOVKOU



WWW.PODPALMOVKOU.CZ

Based on the screenplay by Marc Norman & Tom Stoppard  
Adapted for the stage by LEE HALL

Music Paddy Cunneen Translation Jitka Sloupová

Shakespeare's work is quoted in translation by Jiří Josek

Original West End production by Disney Theatrical Productions & Sonia Friedman  
Productions, director Declan Donnellan and stage designer Nick Ormerod

The project is created under the auspices of the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



Aradno

BANDI



Regina  
DAB Praha



XANTYPA

Radio Wave



CATERING

Dvojka  
Český rozhlas