

# **PALM OFF FEST**

**We want something different!**

# PALMOVKA PRIDE

SEASON  
2022–2023

DIVADLO  
POD PALMOVKOU

# PP



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# PALM OFF FEST 2022

**We want something different!**

**14. 10. – 26. 10. 2022**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Gathering of Central European Theatres

<b>14. 10.</b>	19:00	<b>Opening of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the palm off fest festival</b> <b>Katarína Kucbelová – Peter Palik:</b> <b>THE BONNET</b>	Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou Directed by: Peter Palik Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre Zvolen, Slovakia Performance in Slovak. <i>Discussion with authors follows after the show.</i>
<b>15. 10.</b>	12:00	<b>Forum for the Future of Culture Warsaw:</b> <b>SOLIDARITY AND CARE</b>	Online broadcast
<b>17. 10.</b>	19:00	<b>Alin Neguțoiu:</b> <b>romeo&amp;juliet2022</b>	Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou Directed by: Alin Neguțoiu Divadlo pod Palmovkou Prague, Czech Republic Part of the Face to Faith Project. In Czech with English subtitles. <i>Discussion with authors follows after the show.</i>
<b>19. 10.</b>	19:00	<b>Dmytro Levytskyi:</b> <b>THE BEILIS CASE</b>	Behind the curtain of the Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou Directed by: Dmytro Levytskyi Jam Factory Art Center Lviv, Ukraine Part of the Face to Faith Project In Ukrainian and English with Czech subtitles. <i>Discussion with authors follows after the show.</i>
<b>22. 10.</b>	19:00	<b>THE GAME</b>	Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou Directed by: Žiga Divjak Slovensko mladinsko gledališče in coproduction with Maska Ljubljana Ljubljana, Slovenia In Slovenian with Czech subtitles. <i>Discussion with authors follows after the show.</i>
<b>24. 9. – 19. 11.</b>		<b>The exhibition</b> <b>JACUZZI OF DESPAIR</b>	Gallery Světova 1, street Světova 1, Prague 8 Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday from 13:00 to 19:00 <i>Voluntary contributions</i>
<b>26. 10.</b>	19:00	<b>Gianina Cărbunariu:</b> <b>WASTE!</b>	Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou Directed by: Gianina Cărbunariu Schauspiel Stuttgart Stuttgart, Germany In German with Czech subtitles. <i>Discussion with authors follows after the show.</i>

**DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU IS A THEATRE  
OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF PRAGUE**



**THE PALM OFF FEST FESTIVAL 2021 IS ORGANISED  
BY DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU, ZENKLOVA 34, 180 36, PRAGUE 8.**

**THE CO-ORGANISER OF THE PALM OFF FEST FESTIVAL 2022  
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Karolína Juráková (*The Beilis Case*), Marta Darom (*The Game*),  
Easy Talk (*Waste!*)

### ENGLISH SUBTITLES

Easy Talk (*romeo&juliet2022*)

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Martin Ponec.

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Dear friends,

The sixth edition of the Prague meeting of Central European theatres is here! Palm Off Fest is an international theatre festival, a communication platform that brings the Czech audience information from the countries of Europe that are not part of the mainstream. So far. We did that already in 2018 when the second edition of our festival focused on the political crises in Hungary and Poland. Back then these issues were not yet covered by Czech media.

This year you will see productions discussing issues that resonate in the public space of each European country, from which we bring this year's themed selection of productions. We bring you the opportunity to get a first-hand experience of the refugee crisis in Slovenia and neighbouring countries before the Covid-19 crisis, and to learn about the issue of illegal disposal of German sorted waste in poor areas of Romania. Is there still an Iron Curtain between the East and the West? What is the relationship between the countries of the former socialist bloc and the countries of Western Europe? Palm Off Fest still sticks to its original intention, i.e., to ask uncomfortable questions related to socio-political issues stirring up Central European countries and others.

We are members of the European Union, and our festival also aims to promote the awareness that we are part of one territorial unit, especially now, when Ukraine, invaded by Russia, fights not only for its own freedom but also for ours.

This year's Palm Off Fest includes a mini festival of productions created within the Face to Faith project funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union, at which Divadlo pod Palmovkou participates.

Dear theatregoers, colleagues and friends, come and meet us!

**Michal Lang,**  
Director of Divadlo pod Palmovkou  
and Palm Off Fest Festival



Dear festival goers,

As the Mayor of Prague 8, I am glad that we are once again a partner of the now, dare I say, traditional Palm Off Fest. The festival has become a fixture of the theatre calendar, bringing interesting perspectives on the current situation in Europe. And especially at a time when Ukraine is bravely defending itself against the incursions of the barbaric Russian hordes, this festival is of great necessity. Last but not least, it also introduces Czech audiences to international theatres that we would probably find difficult to get acquainted with otherwise. I consider all of the aforementioned to be very valuable, and I wish the organisers a lot of strength and energy not only this year but also for future festival editions.

**Ondřej Gros,**  
Mayor of Prague 8

# WE WANT SOMETHING DIFFERENT!

Welcome to the sixth edition of the meeting of Central European theatres Palm Off Fest 2022 in Prague's Libeň neighbourhood. This year's programme will once again bring remarkable productions from Central European countries, but this time it is complemented by three productions created within the international theatre project Face to Faith. Divadlo pod Palmovkou participates in this project alongside theatres from Poland, Italy, Israel, Germany, Ukraine and Finland and deals with issues of faith and its misuse in today's world. We are very pleased to welcome our colleagues from Lviv, Ukraine, from Jam Factory Art Center, who premiered their new production *The Beilis Affair* in August, despite the war and Russian aggression. The production goes back more than a hundred years to Kyiv, which was then under Russian administration and the trial of Mendel Beilis took place here in 1911-1913. Imperial Russia used the trial to create an internal enemy: the members of the Jewish minority. *The Beilis Case* shows which similar and even identical mechanisms to control public opinion are used by contemporary Russia in relation to the invasion of Ukraine. The *romeo&juliet2022*, a production that Divadlo pod Palmovkou staged within the Face to Faith project, is included in this year's Palm Off Fest programme. The production by Romanian playwright and director Alin Neaguțoiu loosely follows the „Romanian line“ of last year's festival edition when we hosted *The Golden Dragon* production by Romanian director Catinca Drăgănescu.

It has become a tradition that directors featured in the Palm Off Fest return to Divadlo pod Palmovkou. Let's recall two productions by the Polish award-winning director Jan Klata, whose production *The Enemy of the People* was performed at the first edition of the festival and who then directed two productions at Divadlo pod Palmovkou: *Measure for Measure* in 2018 (the production won the Production of the Year at the Theatre Critics' Awards) and *Faust* in 2019. Catinca Drăgănescu also returns to our theatre and her first Czech production will premiere at Divadlo pod Palmovkou a few days after the festival ends.

By the way, the last performance of this year's Palm Off Fest is also quite Romanian. Romanian theatre has gained international attention in recent years and Romanian theatremakers are increasingly seen on European stages. We are therefore delighted to bring *Waste!*, a production by the award-winning and much sought-after author and director Gianina Cărbunariu from Stuttgart, Germany. The production discusses the illegal disposal of German sorted waste in the poor regions of Romania and has a form of a documentary theatre, but its aesthetics are closer to a revue, or perhaps even a fairy tale.

The opening performance of Palm Off Fest 2022, *Čepec* (The Bonnet) by Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre from Zvolen, Slovakia, also takes us to the periphery. The play is based on the successful novel by Katarína Kucbelová and reflects on the persistent stereotypes of the Central Slovak countryside, be it gender stereotypes or prejudices against non-Slovak, especially Roma communities.

Finally, I want to mention *The Game*, a production by the Slovene theatre Slovensko mladensko gledališče. Regular festivalgoers will recall that we hosted this theatre at Divadlo pod Palmovkou back in 2019. This year's performance is by acclaimed Slovenian director of the youngest generation, Žiga Divjak, and

is a documentary about the dubious practices of the Slovenian border police used to deal with the arrival of immigrants from Middle Eastern countries.

Since its beginning, Palm Off Fest has been trying to bring its audience productions offering an artistic reflection of the current social, cultural and political debate in the country. That is why this year we invite you to discuss with the authors after each festival performance. We see our festival as an opportunity to get acquainted with international productions but also as with their authors, with whom our audiences can discuss the performance they have seen and other issues.

In recent years we've acquired the habit to give Palm Off Fest a framing title. Often it is a powerful and even provocative one. This year, the sixth annual meeting of Central European theatres goes by the slogan „We Want Something Different!“ and it is also the motto for all the productions included in this year's programme. Yet the slogan also characterises the setting in which we prepared Palm Off Fest 2022. After two challenging pandemic years, we didn't even have time to take a deep breath before Russia's unprecedented aggression against independent Ukraine was launched. These events have furthermore strengthened our sense of uncertainty in today's world.

Let's seize the opportunity to talk again with our international colleagues and let's talk not only about theatre but also about the world we live in.

**Jan Jiřík,**  
dramaturg festivalu Palm Off Fest



# FROM REVIEWS AND REPORTS ON THE PAST EDITIONS OF THE FESTIVAL

“The 5th annual Palm Off Fest theatre festival opened on Friday, October 15, with the *Alpha*. Operomanija, a Lithuanian experimental company dedicated to new opera, brought to Prague a genre combining modern opera and comics. (...) I’ve never thought I’d find the fusion of opera and comics so appealing, but after seeing *Alpha*, this connection seems natural to me. The static element that still appears in some opera productions today is not at all a nuisance here; on the contrary, one can safely take one’s eyes off the singer and enjoy the visual comics delight while listening to minimalist melodies, spanning over Spanish, synthetic and horror music. I wish this centaur of artistic genres with the body of an opera and the legs of a comics would gallop beyond the borders of Lithuania.”

Barboba Sedláková, [www.divadelni-noviny.cz](http://www.divadelni-noviny.cz) (18. 10. 2021)

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“Palm Off Fest will again present the most important theatremakers and productions from the Central European countries. And for the fifth time, it opens to other art forms and platforms. The documentary film programme, created in collaboration with the KineDok project of the Documentary Film Institute, will present six Czech films. ‘The documentary part of the 2021 festival will take the audience to different areas of contemporary life marked by the necessity to come to terms with its changeability and a number of pressures: social, economic and climate changes, the changing status of human labour, the contemporary notion of individual freedom and dignity, and the attitude of man to landscape and animals,’ says Walter Nagy from KineDok.”

protisedi.cz (11. 10. 2021)

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“*The Golden Dragon* was staged in Pod Palmovkou Theatre by the Romanian Theatre of Andrei Mureşan. The play by contemporary German playwright Roland Schimmelpfennig tells a grotesquely brutal story about a small Chinese restaurant where the drama of one tooth takes place, while seemingly unrelated situations occur in the neighbouring apartments. The atmosphere of cramped space and loss of privacy is characteristic of The Golden Dragon restaurant, but the dialogues taking place in the adjacent apartments have an air of hopelessness. As the stories of each character and one tooth intertwine, the impression that none of them has control over their destiny grows stronger. It’s as if we were watching a slow-motion shot of a falling plane: there is no possibility of help but to watch. (...) At the very end, the two actors stripped naked and laid down on white camp beds, their bodies covered in red paint and covered with plastic foil. The image resembled a snapshot from a supermarket cooler, where shrunken chicken breasts and thighs in bloody water huddle side by side, waiting to see what happens next. Encouraged by this scene and the neon sign, let’s storm butcher’s shops and coolers and EAT MORE MEAT!”

Barboba Sedláková, [www.divadelni-noviny.cz](http://www.divadelni-noviny.cz) (25. 10. 2021)

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“The Palm Off Fest theatre festival has become one of the most interesting Czech cultural events, where genres lost their importance, yet where all performances are linked by a clear theme. (...) The main programme presented a well-curated selection of Central European theatre: two performances from Hungary and one performance from Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia. A clear concept, both aesthetic- and theme-wise, was even more obvious this year. The motto *Heroes Like Us*, borrowed by the festival’s dramaturges from Thomas Brussig’s book, was successfully used to cover a variety of performances that complemented each other well and accentuated the unclear border between heroism and anti-heroism, and the understanding of the imperfections in politically motivated decision-making. (...) As voiced at the discussion Festivaly, kam se podiváš, organised by Czech Radio Vltava, Palm Off Fest is seen as an event not restricted by genre categories but defined by a clear theme. This year’s edition again excels in continuous, well-thought dramaturgy and a natural political aspect of theatre – something we are still getting used to here.”

Ondřej Škrabal, *Alarm* (6. 12. 2019)

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“Palm Off Fest, the international festival of Central European theatre (...) hovered around the theme *Heroes Like Us*. The excitement of a festival that has attracted attention since its beginning because of the renowned names of directors it brought and its clear focus on reflecting on the society and politics in our region has somewhat evaporated this year. (...) Despite that, it seems that the concept of the festival could remain functional in the future. The political situation and increasing social tensions in the Visegrad countries and Europe suggest that. The shows and performances presented at the fourth edition were pointing at the mechanisms and philosophical sources of such development, at populism, authoritarianism, and the danger of destroying democracy.”

Marie Reslová, *Divadelní noviny* (25. 11. 2019)

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“The fourth edition of Palm Off Fest has just ended in the Pod Palmovkou Theatre. The focus of the festival has remained clear since its first edition: Central European stages, especially from Poland and Hungary, and political theatre. Created on a whim, the festival has already brought to Prague some very interesting plays, including Frlijić’s *The Curse*, applauded so much that it almost brought Brno down some six months later. This year’s edition is also proof that the wave of political theatre is gaining momentum in proportion to what extent opinions on political events divide the society.”

Jana Machalická, *Lidové noviny* (6. 11. 2019)

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“Can we recognize a fascist in contemporary society? Is it necessary to help migrants? Are gay marriages meaningful? What is life like in the 21st century? These and many other questions were raised in the penultimate production at the Palm Off Fest. *Naopak*, a production by Swiss director and author Boris Nikitin was created in collaboration with Slovensko Mladinsko Gledališče theatre from Slovenia and its almost cabaret-like form sets a distorted ‘mirror to our present’.”

Veronika Holečková, Divadelní noviny (2. 11. 2019)

“Fortunately, Palm Off Fest offered political theatre of a different kind than the one brought by the annoyingly standardised general criticism of global capitalism from progressive leftist positions (to which many young Czech authors now adhere). The only title of this kind came from Slovenia. Hungarian and Polish theatremakers avoided generalisations: it can be guessed that they have enough concrete stimuli of domestic provenance for their politically engaged work.”

Vladimír Mikulka, Deník N (11. 11. 2019)

“The final three days of the Palm Off Fest were dedicated to various forms of European xenophobic radicalism. By far the most powerful experience for me was the Saturday marathon of documentaries, without which I would have had a much harder time understanding the theatre shows in the main programme. All directors succeeded in earning the trust of the anti-heroes of their films and in creating an honest portrait of people who are or were capable of committing or sanctioning cold-blooded brutality and were not ashamed of it.”

Barbora Etlíková, Nadvadlo (7. 11. 2019)

“Maybe it’s because of our shared history with the Hungarians, or maybe they just managed to accurately point out problems that are not necessarily local, but both evenings spent at the Pod Palmovkou Theatre left me with a strange bittersweet feeling. In a sense, it is amusing to see that we are not the only country dealing with cases where all one can do is shake one’s head in disbelief.”

Barbora Sedláková, Divadelní noviny (1. 11. 2019)

“Following the clearly articulated dramaturgy of the Palm Off Fest and cult shows in its Studio Stage in the attic, the theatre succeeded in collaboration with the celebrated European director, Jan Klata. Pod Palmovkou Theatre keeps on showing us that theatre doesn’t need to be a language-bound local affair.”

Marcela Magdová, Ceny divadelní kritiky – Divadlo roku 2018, Svět a divadlo 1/2019

“The festival’s name, Palm Off Fest, refers to Prague neighbourhood and theatre, to which it is linked. It is not a huge festival, but its size doesn’t diminish its insistent and engaged voice. The festival creates an opinion platform based on belief that in Europe “stuff” happens both in cultural and political sphere. It shows how closely linked and unseparable these phenomena are. Indeed, some authors, dramaturges, and critics try to do so, but the result is a strange mix of two-faced aestheticism and a comic pretense of “high art” snobbishly overlooking pressing social issues.”

Martin Macháček, idnes.cz (23. 11. 2018)

“The Estonian *Revolution*, Polish *Justice*, and one of Oliver Frljić’s most recent plays *GORJKI – Alternative for Germany?* share the same vision, i.e. to begin a discussion in the society via unconventional staging. Revolution fights for culture as such while Justice moves on the borderline of theatre, journalism, and public hearing. Actors from the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin present a personal, aggressive drama that includes an application submitted to German extreme right-wing party. These three ensembles showed the possible looks of the future political theatre at Palm Off Fest festival which recently took place in Prague.”

Ondřej Škrabal, ČRo Wawe (5. 11. 2018)

“It is not easy to have a thoughtful dramaturgy that is well put together around a central idea. However, Palm Off Fest festival manages to do just that. Furthermore, it creates an opinion platform based on the important fact that the major, and quite problematic events in present-day Europe are taking place in both cultural and political field.”

Veronika Štefanová, ČRo Vltava (26. 10. 2018)

“Palm Off Fest was founded two years ago by Michal Lang, director and art director of the Pod Palmovkou Theatre, and Ivana Wojtylová, actress, teacher and former art director of the Těšín Theatre. During the two past years the festival has become one of the most successful theatre events, both among general public and theatre experts. The festival succeeded in bringing shows by exceptional European theatre makers, such as Krystian Lupa, Jan Klata, Oliver Frljić, Vilmos Vaidaj, Agnieszka Olsten, Eduard Kudláč, and Ewelina Marciniak.”

luk – redakce portálu, Praha.eu (12. 10. 2018)

“Palm Off Fest made a great start and has become one of the best and most meaningful cultural events in Prague.”

Jiří P. Kříž, Právo (17. 10. 2018)

“The sold-out shows of the 11-day festival attracted an audience of 1253 spectators. The majority of visitors seized the opportunity to stay for discussions, thus witnessing debates of authors and experts commenting on political, social and religious issues. The most animated discussion followed the Polish production *The Curse*, attended by the entire theatre company, the dramaturge of the play Goran Injac, directors of the Teatr Powszechny, Paweł Łysak and Paweł Sztarbowski, and political scientists Jiří Pehe and Milan Znoj. As expected, the show became the highlight of the festival and provoked a very vivid discussion among experts and the general public, something rarely seen in the Czech context.”

Divadlo.cz (14. 12. 2017)

“For the second year in a row, Palm Off Fest offers socially-engaged theatre despite the fact that it’s not easy to secure its place among other comparable events: Prague Crossroads, which headed in similar direction, emerged only a month before Palm Off Fest, and the Pragerteaterfestivals deutscher Sprache, which offers the best of – mostly political – theatre from the German-speaking region, takes place a month later. Yet, festival dramaturges didn’t get scared and came with theatre from the Visegrad Four countries. And not just any theatre. The festival succeeded in presenting the “best of”, namely, Polish production, thus beating the Pilsen festival DIVADLO, which also focuses on V4 countries.”

Vladimír Hulec, Divadelní noviny (14. 11. 2017)

“Divadlo pod Palmovkou deserves a credit: without much fuss, it breathed life to a festival focussing on Polish, Slovak and Hungarian theatre and brings interesting productions for the second year in a row.”

Jana Machalická, Lidové noviny (28. 10. 2017)

“What a great idea to mix theatre festival with the non-theatre crowd: philosophers, political scientists... Everything is interconnected, and theatre can reflect moods and events in the society fast, sensitively and efficiently.”

Jarmila Book ve facebookové diskuzi festivalu Palm Off Fest (12. 10. 2017)

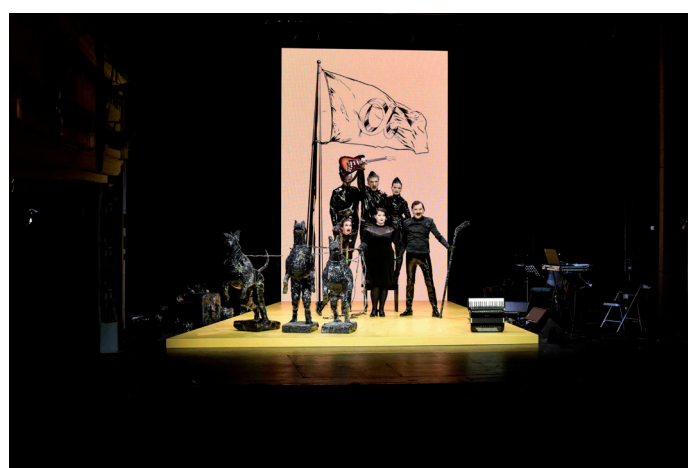
“Let’s hope that Palm Off Fest festival will bring theatre productions from neighbouring countries like this one also in the upcoming years.”

Divadelní noviny (6. 6. 2016)

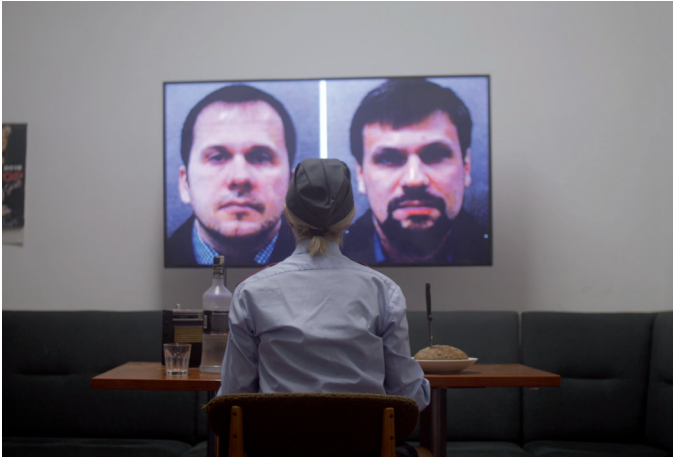
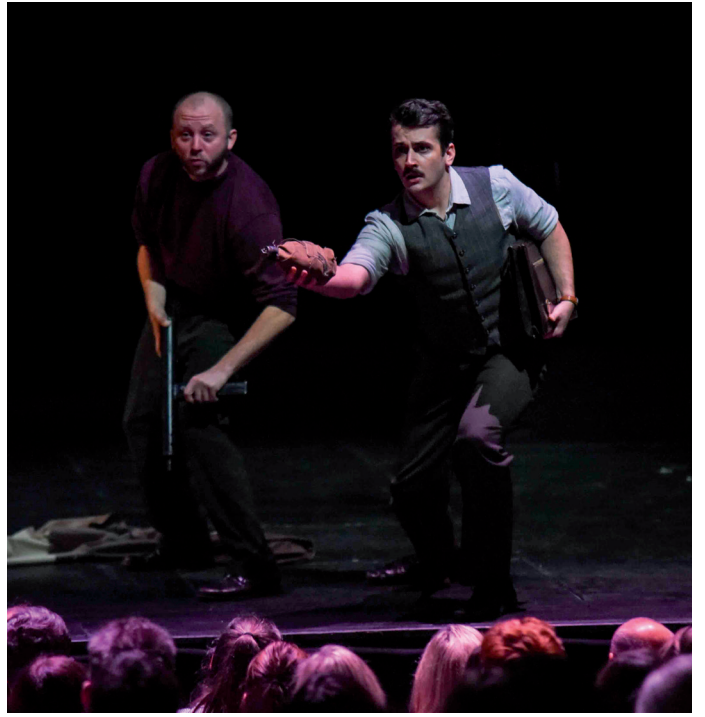
# PALM OFF FEST 2016-2021

## Five festival years in photographs









Photography: Miloš Skácel





# **MAIN PROGRAMME**



# Katarína Kucbelová – Peter Palik

## THE BONNET

Friday, 14 October 2022 at 19:00  
Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou  
Opening of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Palm Off Fest

Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre  
Zvolen, Slovakia

*Live theatre metaphor inspired by a book about an authentic search for one's roots.*

**Directed by:** Peter Palik  
**Dramaturge:** Uršula Turčanová  
**Stage design:** Peter Palik  
**Costume design:** Viktória Csányiová  
**Screenings:** Veronika Šmírová  
**Music:** Martin Geišberg  
**Music cooperation:** Daniel Špiner  
**Movement cooperation, choreography:** Libuša Bachratá

Premiere: 17. 5. 2021  
Show duration: 1 h 30 min  
*Performance in Slovak.*

**Discussion with authors follows after the show.**

The story of Katka, who leaves the bustling city for a remote village, is the story of the contemporary Slovak countryside and all its pros and cons. The production is based on the documentary novel with the same title by Katarína Kucbelová, which has won her considerable acclaim in Slovakia among both professional and lay readers. The author's unusual first work of fiction impressed with its compelling oscillation between a frank personal confession and objective observations about the contemporary Slovak countryside, including all the stereotypes present in contemporary Slovakia. Most situations encountered are directly related to the region in which Zvolen theatre operates: the action takes place in the village of Šumiac pod Kráľovou hoľou and in Banská Bystrica and, among other things, it deals with the theme of the Roma pogrom during the Second World War and offers a contemporary illustration of (neo)Nazi activities in this area. The devastating consequences of the war, however, have left generations of women and men with harsh words and a life uncompromisingly planned by their parents...

### CHARACTERS AND CAST:

**Katka:** Tereza Kmotorková, as a guest  
**Iľka:** Dana Karolová  
**Young Iľka:** Mária Knoppová  
**Gizela, Iľka's mother-in-law:** Svetlana Hank Sarvašová  
**Iveta, Iľka's mother, Katka's mother:** Iveta Marcineková  
**Iľka's father, Director:** Ondřej Daniš  
**Iľka's husband, Journalist, Roma boy:** Daniel Výrostek  
**Psychologist, Neighbour:** Lucia Letková  
**Jano, Flute player:** Juraj Smutný  
**Milan, Varínčan, Policeman:** Marek Rozkoš  
**Man, Roma boy:** Ján Marcinek  
**Šumiac residents, Roma people, men, women, children, choir:** everyone

### DIVADLO JOZEF GREGOR TAJOVSKÝ THEATRE (DJGT)

*The Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre (DJGT) in Zvolen is the largest cultural institution founded by the Banská Bystrica Region. It is a professional theatre with a permanent ensemble of actors and a wide repertoire that reflects regional needs and issues but has also national and international overlap and ambitions. The theatre brings high-quality shows, ensuring strong audience interest and attendance and, especially in recent years, also increased interest among the professional public. The repertoire of the DJGT includes productions for children, young students, adult audiences and theatre connoisseurs. The programme includes fairy tales, works of classical playwrights, plays from the compulsory school reading lists, historical plays dedicated to important personalities of the region and Slovakia, musical comedies and musicals, comedies and new Slovak plays. The history of the DJGT begins in 1949 when it was founded and started to operate in the premises of the former Grand Hotel under the name of the Central Slovak Theatre. Five years later, the theatre was named after the prominent playwright, teacher and politician, Jozef Alojz Gregor (1874–1940). In 1959, the original drama ensemble from Zvolen joined a singing ensemble based in Banská Bystrica, initially operating under the name of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre. In 1972, the name of the group was changed to the Opera of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in connection with the change of the focus of the ensemble, and the headquarters of the DJGT drama group moved to the Banská Bystrica Opera House, while the stage in Zvolen became an auxiliary stage. In 1993 the drama and opera companies were split and since then the drama company operates in Zvolen under the old name DJGT, while the opera company operates in Banská Bystrica under the name of the State Opera. The Zvolen drama theatre has been continuously shaped by outstanding theatre personalities, who have staged over four hundred premieres to date. In 1994, the theatre reopened after extensive reconstruction and now has, among other things, barrier-free access and a special box for disabled spectators. The large hall with a capacity of 330 seats has modern equipment and so is the stage. The 90-seat studio is a space for more intimate plays and projects. The theatre is the venue for prestigious cultural events at a local, regional and national level. DJGT presents its work regularly on tours in Slovakia and abroad and participates in a number of theatre festivals and shows.*

"Despite my partial reservations, the new Zvolen theatre production is one of the shows that are likely to prove their quality not only in the context of the local scene but also on the national scale."

Martina Mašíárová, KOD, issue no. 8, year 15, 2021

"A sign on the stage says, 'You'll get used to it.' It is a universal statement and a piece of advice for many generations of women. (...) It is quite cruel to see how desperately little love there was in most marriages in the past and how much there was of accepted infidelity and harsh behaviour towards one's own children. The production reflects very powerfully the racism and paradoxes present in many regions which, despite their direct experience with Nazi terror in the past, now have home guards once again roaming in their forests."

Soňa Jánošová, SME, 15. 10. 2021

"The production stimulates the viewer's sensitivity, and its unbiased attitude calls for tolerance of different worldviews. (...) The coexistence of locals with the Roma community is a burning issue in Zvolen (...). At a time when extremism is on the rise in areas where fascism was fought during World War II, it's inevitably an up-to-date issue."

Viktória Oroszová, Monitoring divadiel, 12. 4. 2022



# Alin Neguțoiu

# romeo&juliet2022

Monday, 17 October 2022, at 19:00  
Main Stage, Pod Palmovkou Theatre

Divadlo pod Palmovkou  
Prague, Czech Republic

*Can we become whom we want, look how we want, and do what we want in the online world?  
An emotional digital thriller.*

**Directed by:** Alin Neguțoiu  
**Translation by:** Artificial Intelligence  
**Dramaturgy:** Iva Klestilová and Ladislav Stýblo  
**Stage design:** Cosmin Stancu  
**Video editing:** Mara Oglakci

**CHARACTERS AND CAST:**  
**Eva:** Tereza Dočkalová  
**Priestess:** Pavla Gajdošíková  
**Adam:** Adam Vacula  
**Priest:** Tomáš Dianiška

Premiere: 8. 4. 2022  
Show duration: 1 h  
*Performance in Czech with English subtitles.*  
**Discussion with authors follows after the show.**

A young couple is offered a generously rewarded opportunity: in an online reality show they have to play themselves and try to get as many followers as possible. However, the seemingly easy task shatters everything that has been valid so far... Is it possible to present oneself in online reality in a way to remain truly oneself? Is what we do nowadays really our choice, or is it just a formula that we want to fit into comfortably? What is the real picture of the Hell humanity is going through because it follows the Image instead of God? The multimedia theatre production was created by the young Romanian director Alin Neguțoiu, who conceptually used several of the technological possibilities of artificial intelligence, including the Czech translation of the play made by the electronic neural network, a pioneering thing in the Czech theatre context.

**romeo&juliet2022 is part of the Face to Faith project co-financed by the EU Creative Europe Programme. ([www.face-to-faith.eu](http://www.face-to-faith.eu)).**

Face  
to Faith

## **DIVADLO POD PALMOVKOU (POD PALMOVKOU THEATRE)**

*The beginnings of the Divadlo pod Palmovkou 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. In the past years, Divadlo pod Palmovkou's productions were the most often nominated ones in several critical opinion polls and theatre awards. Divadlo pod Palmovkou's productions were successfully presented to audiences in Germany, Poland, Lithuania and Slovakia. At present, Divadlo pod Palmovkou focuses on new versions of classic dramas, as well as on new plays, including theatre adaptations and author plays. The theatre has two stages: the Main Stage for an audience of 270 and the PALM OFF Studio for an audience of 80. In 2016 Divadlo pod Palmovkou organised the first year of Palm Off Fest, the international festival of Central European theatres. In 2018, Divadlo pod Palmovkou was awarded the Theatre of the Year by the Ceny divadelní kritiky Awards. In 2021 Divadlo pod Palmovkou took part in a international cooperation project of European theatres Face to Faith; in September 2022 it organised the Prague part of the international conference Forum for the Future of Culture.*

"The funny 'white' duo openly reveal that they serve a digital god. However, when you deal with this god, there is far more risk of hell than heaven in, as Adam and Eve discover. They resolve to revolt but quickly become aware of its futility. The contamination by virtual reality is inevitable. If individuals were to escape these snares, the present form of civilization would have to cease existing. (...) The theme and the stage form are matched by the language of the text, filled with English words, social media jargon, vulgarisms, and technology-related words. Abbreviations, codes, hates. Divadlo pod Palmovkou staged productions by international authors in the past years: let us recall the Polish director Jan Klata and his version of *Measure for Measure* (which won the Theatre Critics' Award in 2018) and *Faust*. The *romeo&juliet2022* is the most modest one of the three, but it is the most 'trendy' one and fits quite well into the theatre's Dianiška-esque line, so we can assume that this digest will find its audience."

Josef Chuchma, divadelni-noviny.cz

"Pavla Gajdošíková and Tomáš Dianiška play the role of mediators of the evening, while Adam Vacula and Tereza Dočkalová are cast as Adam and Eve, or if you prefer Romeo and Juliet of our time. They have signed up for a special reality show, where they have to play themselves on the one hand, but on the other hand, they have to gain as many followers as possible. One task kind of negates the other, which actually speaks for itself. The new *romeo&juliet2022* uses their story to reflect on the current hypertrophied world of social networks, their overuse and their overrating. In the case of the couple, it is also a reflection on their devastating influence or share on the rise of present-day disinformation confusion we encounter everywhere."

Tomáš Štástka, iDNES.cz

"(...) The production looks in a rather novel way at the phenomenon of the present-day, i.e. online self-presentation on various social and media platforms, which not only overshadows the physical reality but also affects a certain easiness and spontaneity. The need for genuine reciprocity and personal communication is relegated to the hunt for likes and followers. The form chosen, in which the viewer becomes a participant in a kind of a multimedia „hellish” installation, in the end somewhat trumps the message of the play, yet the peculiar experience and food for thought are there anyway."

Helena Grégrová, i-divadlo.cz



# Dmytro Levytskyi

## THE BEILIS CASE

Wednesday, 19 October 2022, at 19:00  
Behind the curtain of the Main Stage,  
Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Jam Factory Art Center  
Lviv, Ukraine

*The true story of Mendel Beilis, accused of the murder of a Christian boy, shows the monstrous methods of Tsarist and contemporary Russia.*

**Directed by:** Dmytro Levytskyi

**Dramaturgy:** Lesia Berezdetska

**Text:** Dmytro Levytskyi, Lesia Berezdetska, Anastasiia Lisovska, Piotr Armianovskyi, Nadiia Kalyniuk, Oksana Leuta (quotations from Mendel Beilis' book *The Story of My Suffering* are used in the text).

**Music:** Mariana Kločko

**Designer:** Serhij Petljuk

**Movement:** Nina Khyzhna

**Lights:** Sofie Kokuienko

**Media:** Volodymyr Fanta

**Project managers:** Liuba Ilnytska, Bohdan Hrytsiuk

**Production manager:** Oleksandra Shutova

Premiere: 8. 8. 2022

Show duration: 1 h 40 min

*Performance in Ukrainian and English with Czech subtitles.*

**Discussion with authors follows after the show.**

The Jew Mendel Beilis was accused of a murder of a Christian boy at the time of Tsarist Russia. The anti-Semitic trial, which took place in Kyiv from 1911–1913, was part of the events Tsarist Russia used to make Jews its “arch-enemy” with the aim of exploiting social sentiment for political purposes. One of the results was a bloody series of large-scale anti-Jewish pogroms... The same repressive methods are applied by Russia today, as it implements its new imperial policy of war against Ukraine and its citizens. Beilis' case is seen by the authors of the production through the prism of their authentic experience of war and Russian imperial policy. A documentary production dedicated to the theme of faith and its relevance to present-day society, which was rehearsed to the sound of sirens warning of Russian missiles...

**The Beilis Case is part of the Face to Faith project co-financed by the EU Creative Europe Programme. ([www.face-to-faith.eu](http://www.face-to-faith.eu))**

Face  
to Faith

### CAST:

Piotr Armianovskyi, Nadiia Kalyniuk, Oksana Leuta, Anastasiia Lisovska

### JAM FACTORY ART CENTER

*“The Jam Factory Art Center was founded by historian and cultural entrepreneur Harald Binder. Currently, the organisation is led by a small team primarily engaged in the revitalisation of a former industrial site at 124, Bohdana Khmel'nytskoho St in Lviv. The Center's main aim is to reflect on ongoing processes in Ukrainian and international art and culture and to open up opportunities for dialogue with the public by means of performances, multimedia events, educational activities, exhibitions and research. Jam Factory Art Center is a space for cultural and art projects, exhibitions, art festivals and performances, and a platform for international cultural and artistic cooperation. The organization is also a platform for discussions about the most important artistic and philosophical topics, it raises important social issues, and initiates interactions between artists, professionals in culture, and visitors – adults, youth and children. Although the Jam Factory Art Center team focuses primarily on the presentation, development and research of contemporary Ukrainian and Eastern European art, the organization is also an established part of the international cultural scene. In the future, the plan is to form a group of collaborating curators and theorists to carry out their own research projects, publish their findings and thus participate in composing the image of contemporary art. As stated on the organization's website, “Jam Factory Art Center is a contemporary art institution. For us, this means being active in a particular space and time, taking a critical stance on global and local social processes, and representing and supporting artists and art professionals who show an active social and political interest in the present-day conditions.” Since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Jam Factory Art Center has also sought to support Ukrainian artists. “It is in these times of deepest crisis for the country that art and culture are most needed to reflect on human conditions in a reality dominated by violence and pain. We need the hands and the voices of artists to express in a profound and lasting way what happens in our minds and souls today. (...) We launch the Artists in War Program to support and encourage artists to come back to artistic work and become voices of the society that is living through the most devastating times.”*



# THE GAME

Saturday, 22 October 2022, at 19:00  
Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Slovensko mladinsko gledališče in coproduction  
with Maska Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

*A game with no rules and no laws but with unlimited police power, increasingly brutal violence, growing danger, shrinking opportunities and an increasingly distant final destination...*

**Directed by:** Žiga Divjak  
**Scientific cooperation:** Maja Ava Žiberna  
**Assistant director:** Ana Lorger, Nika Prusnik Kardum  
**Dramaturgy cooperation:** Katarina Morano  
**Stage design:** Igor Vasiljev  
**Costumes:** Tina Pavlović  
**Music, sound and video design:** Blaž Gracar  
**Speech advisor:** Mateja Dermelj  
**Translation of recordings:** Barbara Skubic  
**Light designer and technical manager:** Igor Remeta  
**Producer and manager:** Tina Dobnik

**CAST:**  
Primož Bezjak, Sara Dirnbek, Maruša Oblak,  
Matej Puc, Vito Weis

**RECORDED ACTING:**  
Hamza Aziz, Zaher Amini, Khalid Ali,  
Behnaz Aliessfahanipour

Premiere: 10. 6. 2020

Show duration: 1 h 45 min

*Performance in Slovenian with Czech subtitles.*

**Discussion with authors follows after the show.**

People who have made their journey halfway across the globe to escape wars, persecution, violence and crushing poverty call the last few hundred kilometres of their journey from Bosnia and Herzegovina to their destination in the European Union the Game, using the English word. Many people try many times, even twenty or thirty: they have to succeed once. For many, this game ends fatally. Based on testimonies collected in the Border Violence Monitoring Network database, this production by the well-known Ljubljana-based theatre Slovensko Mladinsko explores the role and responsibility of Slovenia and its border policy for the lives and fates of people on the run. The production has won several awards at the prestigious Borstnik Grand Prix Festival (Best Production, Best Director, Actor, Young Actor, Dramaturgy, Set Design, Music and Sound Design) and a Special Jury Award for social sensitivity at the Slovenian Drama Week (2021).

## **SLOVENSKO MLADINSKO GLEDALIŠČE**

*In English, the Slovensko mladinsko gledališče – which literally translated means Slovenian Youth Theatre – is called the Mladinsko Theatre. It carries its history in its name. And at the same time it surpasses it. Mladinsko: For or of youth. The Mladinsko Theatre was established in 1955 as the first professional theatre for children and youth in Slovenia. The theatre never underestimated its young audience. Since the very beginning, it has tackled heavy topics, like the Holocaust, coming of age, and love in the times of revolution. During the first 25 years of its existence Mladinsko staged a number of successful productions for and about young people that had significantly influenced the formation of the young Slovenian generation. After 1980, as the political situation in then-Yugoslavia became more relaxed, the Mladinsko Theatre succeeded in widening its scope, connecting political criticism and provocative aspects of its productions with innovative performance processes and fresh poetics. The theatre succeeded in addressing audiences across age groups, becoming attractive for everyone interested in contemporary modern theatre processes and political and social issues. The Mladinsko Theatre is always on the move: it performs a significant portion of its performances on tour. From the early days, the theatre toured many towns and theatres in Slovenia, as well as other countries of (then) Yugoslavia. Since the early 1980s, the theatre has been firmly embedded in the theatre landscape of Europe and, since the 1990s, also South America and other continents. The Slovensko Mladinsko Gledališče Theatre left a lasting impression in over forty countries around the world, especially due to its versatile scope of productions and its ensemble capable of making the most of music, choreography, and acting, while ignoring the system of celebrities. On its website, the theatre says: "We are a theatre. But we expect more than just "watching" from our spectators, we try to engage them into a dialogue and make them active participants. We create performances. But we don't create in a vacuum. We critically observe our society, comment on it and strive to shape it. Mladinsko is a theatre organism that tries to penetrate into the public space from the stage, so that for us, the public space becomes an equal space for performance. Mladinsko is not just a theatre."*

„The text is composed of testimonies and presents a chilling two-hour picture of Europe, and it will dawn on you that Auschwitz, trucks converted into gas cells, Jasenovac or Sajmište did not fall from the sky, nor did they return there after the end of the war. In view of the bestial treatment migrants receive from some of the police forces with the tacit blessing of Europe, it is evident that all the horrors, which we thought were historical relics buried by the victory over Nazism, are still around us today, in our immediate neighbourhood.“

Aleksandra Glovacki, Nova

„While the action on stage is, in keeping with the subject matter, essentially reduced to the ‚talking man‘ (which for many migrants is often all they have left), the subject is also mirrored in the repetition of ‚the same‘, which may exhaust the viewer, much like the vicious circle in which the migrants are trapped. It is not a performance that tries to be enjoyable – in fact, it is by this ‚rigidity‘ that we begin to realize the utter indifference of the ‚system‘ to legal and ethical principles; an indifference, which is becoming increasingly prevalent even on our own doorstep.“

Gregor Butala, Dnevnik

„The key to the performance is its thoughtful organization and choice of texts. (...) It is the uniform structure of confessions and the inconsistent place of action that raise the question of whether this kind of police violence is systematised and whether there is perhaps a national consensus on procedures; if police forces act in the same way in different parts of the country, then at whose behest do they act in that same way? (...) This is an important performance that – at a time when politicians are calling for ‚tighter border control‘ – sheds light on the current situation, which represents an utmost decay of the basic principles of legal and ethical conduct.“

Anja Radaljic, Delo



# Gianina Cărbunariu

## WASTE!

Wednesday, 26 October 2022, at 19:00  
Main Stage, Divadlo pod Palmovkou

Schauspiel Stuttgart  
Stuttgart, Germany

*A documentary tale of Western European waste exports and the wonders of Eastern European business that is worth seeing before we start believing the fairy tales.*

**Text and directed by:** Gianina Cărbunariu

**Stage design:** Dorothee Curio

**Music:** Emilian Gatsov

**Lights:** Stefan Schmidt

**Dramaturgy:** Carolin Losch, Christina Schlögl

**Choreography collaboration:** Louis Stiens

**Translation:** Fabiola Eidloth

**Cast:**

Boris Burgstaller, Elias Krischke, Jannik Mühlenweg,  
Sebastian Röhrle, Christiane Roßbach

Premiere: 17. 3. 2022

Show duration: 1 h 40 min

*Performance in German with Czech subtitles.*

**Discussion with authors follows after the show.**

Waste sorting is actually a very sensible and important thing to do and today, some people promote it with a pseudo-religious zeal. It is all the more worrying that some of this carefully sorted waste is disposed of in a way that fatally pollutes the environment. Approximately fifty per cent of sorted plastic waste is not recycled at all but directly incinerated – including in cement factories. In Romania, very hazardous substances, for which there are no functional recycling solutions, are also processed with dramatic consequences for the health of the population. The global waste business generates great profits, mafia structures are being set up, and waste seems to be the new gold... Therefore, we cannot help but wonder whether the European Union is indeed a community sharing the same values, or whether economic interests prevail. Are we exploiting economic differences within the EU to solve environmental problems at the expense of others on the one hand, and to recruit cheap labour on the other? How about global solidarity? Based on her own extensive research, the well-known Romanian author and director Gianina Cărbunariu creates an environment in which she combines absurd reality and fiction into an electrifying and bizarrely tragicomic show.

### SCHAUSPIEL STUTTGART

*Schauspiel Stuttgart is one of the most renowned institutions of German-language theatre. Together with the Staatsoper Stuttgart opera house and the Stuttgarter Ballett, it forms the three-ensemble Staatstheater Stuttgart – the largest multi-ensemble theatre in Europe, which has more than 1,350 employees from over 50 nations and performs over 1,000 performances for around half a million spectators a year. While the opera and ballet company of Stuttgart's State Theatre are housed in one of the few German opera houses to survive the Second World War almost unscathed (it is a remarkable building built between 1909 and 1912 to the designs of Munich architect Max Littmann), the drama company Schauspiel Stuttgart is housed in a new modern building called the Kleines Haus, built in 1962. The Schauspiel Stuttgart is one of Germany's most progressive venues for contemporary author's theatre and as such discusses strong pressing and political issues, including controversial ones. The art director Burkhard C. Kosminski sees the theatre as a platform for constructive dialogue in the city centre and relies on a strong ensemble of 32 actors that includes artists from Poland and Croatia. Together they strive to move, challenge and entertain their audience. The two main drama venues in Stuttgart – the Schauspielhaus and the Kammertheater – present works by contemporary authors and innovative adaptations of (modern) classics. It is befitting that the artists on stage and in backstage are as diverse as the international city of Stuttgart and its inhabitants: theatre artists from all over Europe come together to chart the utopias of a multilingual and diverse European future.*

**Gianina Cărbunariu** (born in 1977) is one of the most famous figures of contemporary Romanian theatre. Since 2004 she has worked as a director and playwright throughout Europe, including theatres in London, Madrid, Bologna, Stockholm, Munich and Berlin. Her theatre works were staged at many international festivals, including Festival d'Avignon, Wiener Festwochen, New Drama Festival in Moscow and Festival TransAmériques in Montreal. She has won numerous awards for her directing and dramatic work. Her plays, which deal mainly with social and political themes in the context of Europe, have been translated into many languages. In 2020, a film based on Gianina Cărbunariu's play Uppercase Print (directed by Radu Jude) was screened at the Berlin Film Festival. Since 2017, she is the art director of Teatrul Tineretului and curator of the theatre festival in Piatra Neamț, Romania.

„(...) People complain about the smell, the dust, and the destruction of the landscape. But then ammonia leaks into the stream and the fish die. The director develops an absurdist setting in which the actors play with trout masks. A famous Schubert song is sung. And then a bear with black fur and terrifying teeth appears as if it defied nature, from which it wants to remove everything foreign. It is only on closer inspection that the real function of this figure becomes clear: he is a symbol of the politics of the radical right.“

Manfred Jahnke, Die deutsche Bühne

„If anyone thought they were in for a production that would appeal to the conscience of the audience, they realized after only a few minutes that they were wrong. Gianina Cărbunariu and the ensemble tackle the subject in such a colourful and playful way and with such exaggeration that it is – despite its seriousness – great fun. The authors skilfully blend facts and fiction in this so-called documentary tale. And *Waste!* proves once again that reality is often much more absurd than we think.“

Christoph Feil, Heilbronner Stimme

„According to the research, that director Gianina Cărbunariu did for *Waste!* (...) a large part of the waste that we have – not without pressure – carefully collected, sorted and taken to recycling bins does not end where we thought it does, i.e., in a recycling facility. Much of this waste is transported to poorer countries where it is cheap to dispose of, such as Romania. There, destroying one tonne of our rubbish does not cost EUR 250 to 400, as it does in Germany, but only EUR 15 to 20. Indeed, *Waste!* is shocking at first sight, especially as it explains what a large part of our waste is used for in Romania: as a substitute for coal; disguised as a ‚green‘ fuel, it fuels, for example, German (!) cement plants – including three branches of Heidelberg Cement, which promotes sustainable ecological concrete on its website. (...) Greed and corruption on the one hand, and powerlessness and lawlessness on the other.“

Verena Großkreutz, Theater heute







# **SIDE PROGRAMME**



# FORUM ON THE FUTURE OF CULTURE WARSAW: SOLIDARITY AND CARE

**15 October 2022, at 12:00**

*Online broadcast*

A project defining the role of culture and seeking new stories is now needed more than ever. We are facing an armed attack by Russia on Ukraine that cannot be ignored. We are experiencing irreversible social changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as political and generational changes accompanied by a revolt of citizens leaning towards populist authorities and threatening democratic values. We have understood that climate catastrophe is a very real threat.

In the face of these crises and the rapid transformation of social and political reality, it is necessary to redefine the concept of culture and the tasks and responsibilities of the institutions that create it. These are the issues we will be addressing at the Forum on the Future of Culture. The motto of this year's event will be „Solidarity and Care“ – values that we consider to be the basis for a new way of thinking about culture and society.

We understand culture as a series of factors that organise our lives. We have been talking about this as we face an unprecedented rise of populism permeating the political life of modern democracies. We supported progressive values as the fascist line of social life was growing - and as resistance and self-organisation of citizens were growing too, fortunately. We followed trends in contemporary culture and tried to understand the relationship between cultural people and social movements. We looked at the rebel movement and discussed institutional changes in the Polish cultural sector.

We have to think not only about an innovative project for the cultural sector but also about solving the set of problems we are facing. The culture we have in mind is created not only in large and medium-sized cities but also in small centres. In large institutions and community centres, but also on the internet or on the street during civil protests. Inherent in this conception of culture are the issues of ecology and climate change, migration, women's rights and LGBT+ community.

In order to show this diversity and to reflect on the redefinition of the social role of culture, the first part of the forum will take place outside Warsaw, unlike previous editions. From mid-April to the beginning of June, we will meet in 12 different locations in Poland – we want to show the diversity of Polish culture and the issues that are currently relevant to it. In early October we will move to Warsaw and several other European capitals to sketch a broad map of the challenges we face today.

We want to invite you to discuss building a culture based on values such as solidarity and care. We want to invite you to act together.

**The 2022 Future of Culture Forum is organised with the support of the City of Warsaw.**

**A link to watch the online broadcast of the conference will be posted on the Divadlo pod Palmovkou website and the festival's social networks.**

[www.forumprzyszloscikultury.pl](http://www.forumprzyszloscikultury.pl)

# Exhibition: JACUZZI OF DESPAIR

**24. 9. 2022 – 19. 11. 2022**

**Gallery Světova 1, Světova Street 1, Prague 8**

Opening hours: from tuesday to saturday, from 13:00 to 19:00

*Voluntary contributions*

Exhibition of works by artists Anežka Abřtová, Josefina Leon Ausejo, Bolla Szilvia, Nada Elkalaawy, Dominik M.iek, Sharon van Overmeiren and Din Bar Varshavyak.

Nouns and adjectives are usually complementary, but not infrequently contradictory. The contrast allows us to look at the work of this diverse group of artists - the process by which they arrived at their expression and the way they present it. Art itself is a language of counterpoint in which the viewer/viewer finds and reflects on his/her own way of looking at the everyday world.

*The Jacuzzi Of Despair* exhibition is part of the As we grow project - a series of exhibitions focused on Intergenerational dialogue, exchange of inspirations and opportunities. Young male and female artists in creative dialogue with Basim Magdy, Sharon Van Overmeiren and Ai Wei-wei.

Producers: Rivers, Vorlicek, Xu

*Gallery Světova 1 is located in the vicinity of the Divadlo pod Palmovkou in Světova Street. The gallery exhibits works by art school students. The concept of the project is "by students for students", and the gallery offers exhibition space for art students and their expression. The gallery aims at offering young people at the beginning of their career the opportunity to gain experience, striving to offer the best platform possible to student from all of Czech Republic.*

[www.svetova1.cz](http://www.svetova1.cz)

S1

# THE PLACE WHERE GOLEM WAS MOULDED...

## A short guide to Divadlo pod Palmovkou's surroundings

Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre is located on one of the main streets in Libeň, former suburb, now an inner-city district of Prague. The area was inhabited as early as in the Palaeolithic period and the first written mention dates back to 1363; however even before that time, a stronghold was built by local noble family, owners of the land, on a rock above the Rokytká stream. Later it was rebuilt into an impressive castle, a building which now houses the Municipal Authority offices. A village spread out around the stronghold, benefitting from the strategic location near Vltava river ford and on a crossroad of important routes going to Silesia and Lusatia.

Since the 16th century, Jews started to settle down in Libeň as plots of land were reserved for them in the former wetlands situated right in front of today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre. The Jewish community was quite large for the period and soon they obtained major privileges from the nobility, namely self-administration. The famous legend of Golem, in one of its many versions, is set in this area at the time of the first Jewish settlement, when Rabbi Loew allegedly moulded Golem from the soil from Vltava river shore in Libeň.

Different noble families had owned Libeň village until 1662, when it became property of the Old Town of Prague. Local Castle became summer residence of the mayors of Prague, and later on residence of Habsburg monarchs and their families during their visits in Prague.

Several other settlements, vineyards and orchards were founded around Libeň and the area became a favourite one-day trip destination of inhabitants of Prague. In the 19th century, the

area underwent a dynamic development thanks to its proximity to Prague and at the same time the availability of free land; large industrial sites were built – an engineering plant, foundry, two breweries, distillery, cement-tube manufacturing plant and several textile and leather processing plants, but also a trans-shipment port (later transformed into a shipyard) and a number of other industrial sites. In just 25 years, the population of Libeň increased by 12,000, thus transforming a small town by Vltava and Rokytká rivers into a dynamic industrial suburb of Prague. A regular tram line connecting Libeň to the city centre opened in 1896 and offered a great opportunity for local theatre entrepreneurs producing theatre and musical shows in the former inn "U Deutschů" (the current Divadlo pod Palmovkou building is located on the same plot of land). Libeň became part of Prague in 1901.

The industrial plants, alongside tenement buildings, small factory workers' houses, shops and pubs scattered around the irregular and varied landscape gave the neighbourhood its unique genius loci and attracted extraordinary inhabitants with extraordinary destinies.

The idiosyncrasy of Libeň was made immortal in the novels of the famous Czech author Bohumil Hrabal who spent the happiest time of his creative life in the vicinity of Divadlo pod Palmovkou. Unfortunately, in the 1960s and 1970s, the neighbourhood underwent a major rehabilitation and a large part of the old houses, streets and nooks was destroyed. The present-day booming new development is gradually transforming the area around Pod Palmovkou Theatre into a new modern urban centre. However, some remarkable places from the past have resisted...





### 1. Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre

Zenklova Street 34, Prague 8

An inn called "U Deuschů" used to stand where today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre is located and theatre and musical productions had been staged here since the beginning of the 19th century. Thanks to its location on a busy street, which progressively became a main avenue, the inn thrived and its shows were quite popular also because they were performed in Czech language. In the 1880s, a wooden theatre was built in the yard of the inn, which was later turned into a hotel. The wooden theatre was soon rebuilt into a stone theatre, which underwent several reconstructions; the current building, in Art Nouveau style and sporting some remarkable original architectural features, dates back to 1907. It is worth mentioning that the then newly built theatre was the first venue to stage Franz Lehár's *Merry Widow* after its premiere in Vienna. However, the theatre business failed to flourish in Libeň and the repeated attempts to set up a permanent professional theatre group failed. In 1920s, the hotel with its theatre hall was acquired by the Czech Social-Democrat Workers' Party who turned it into "The People's House" and a cinema called "Svépomoc" (Self-help). During the Second World War, the theatre hall served as Wehrmacht's non-military arsenal warehouse. In the 1950s, the building was acquired by the then Městské a obecní divadlo (Municipal Theatre), and today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou, which has been housed in these premises ever since. The facade of the building is a result of many reconstructions: at the course of the years, it changed from an exuberantly decorated facade in romanticising style into a minimalist one. A major reconstruction took place in 2002 following the catastrophic floods during which the level of water on the ground floor and in the theatre hall reached the height of over two meters. The last large reconstruction of the interiors and the ground floor facade took place in 2014.



### 2. Libeň Castle

Zenklova Street 1/35, Prague 8

The Castle was built at the end of the 16th century on a rocky outcrop between Vltava and Rokytkva rivers where a medieval fortress used to stand. It underwent several major reconstructions and modifications; the current building is mainly in rococo style and dates back to the late 1700s. In 1608, Emperor Rudolf II and his brother Matthias signed the so-called Libeň Peace Treaty in the Libeň Castle, by which Rudolf conceded to Matthias the rule of Hungary, the Austrian Danube countries and Moravia and the succession right to the Bohemian as well as the imperial throne, while he kept the rule over Bohemia, Silesia and Lusatia. The Castle later became property of the Old Town of Prague and the summer residence of the mayors of Prague and then of the imperial family during their visits in Prague. Today, the Castle houses the Municipal Authority of Prague 8 and hosts many cultural events during which it is possible to admire the richly decorated interiors with beautiful paintings and the chapel, a remarkable piece of architecture.



### 3. St. Adalbert's Church

U Meteoru 599, Prague 8

One of the most valuable early Art Nouveau heritage sites in the Czech Republic, the church was built between 1904 and 1905 according to the design of the architect Emil Králíček. The church is mostly wooden, a rare occurrence in this country, as it was initially intended as a temporary building for a period of five years. In 1987 it was declared an intangible cultural heritage site and in 2001 it underwent a costly renovation. St. Adalbert's Church is remarkable thanks to its impressive system of vertical masonry structures and complexly shaped and richly decorated timber roof trusses. The roof, which is 23.7 m high, takes the shape of a four-sided helmet with a tip and a poppy capsule. The interior arrangement of the uniquely preserved temple features a triple vault with a 7.2 m clearance. This impressive site with an extraordinary architectural and artistic value serves as a Roman Catholic parish church.



### 4. Libeňský svět – the centre of Libeň history and culture

Pivovarnická 1022/3, Prague 8

The cultural and community centre Libeňský svět (Libeň World) opened to the public on 17 September 2021 in one of the few social halls of interwar Prague that withstood the test of time. The building used to house a popular restaurant frequented by Bohumil Hrabal and many cultural and social events were held in the social hall. The house, where Libeňský svět is now based, was also home to Eduard Štorch, a prominent Czech writer and teacher, whose work, drawing mainly on prehistoric history, influenced generations of children and young people. In recent years, the impressive hall of the Libeňský svět, built in a functionalist style, was used for various purposes, among them a Muslim prayer room, and has been mostly inaccessible to the public. The aim of the Centre for Libeň History and Culture is to preserve the history of this important municipality (and a Prague district since 1901) as a specific social, cultural and industrial area whose significance reaches far beyond the city's borders. Activities of Libeňský svět will not be limited to collecting and documenting, but, in compliance with demands of the 21st century, it will go actively forward to meet the citizens. This is why it will strive to develop its historical legacy in various areas of contemporary life, especially in the education of the upcoming generations. At present, Libeňský svět houses an exhibition presenting a cross-section of Libeň history, bringing the atmosphere of old and present-day Libeň closer and introducing great Libeň personalities. The exhibition also includes original photographic collages created by artist Václav Špal from photographs provided by Libeň residents, as well as other items, whose number will increase over time. Opening hours: Tuesdays and Saturdays, 1.00–7.00 pm.



### 5. a 6. Jewish Quarter and Jewish Cemetery in Libeň

*Koželužská Street (fragments of the Jewish Quarter) and Libeň Bridge opposite to the Palmovka tram stop (Jewish Cemetery)*

The oldest mention of Jewish settlement in Libeň dates back to 1561. In the 16th century, it was the second largest Jewish settlement in Prague and there were more Jews than Christians living in Libeň. In the 18th century when the Empress Maria Theresa expelled Jews from Prague, the Jewish community in Libeň counted 744 members. The very centre of the Jewish ghetto was located just opposite today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou in Koželužská street. On the other side, the ghetto stretched to the bank of one of Vltava river branches – the reason why the entrances of some of the houses were on the first floor. During the Second World War, almost all members of the Libeň Jewish community were murdered by the Nazis. One of the rare survivors was Arnošt Lustig, the famous writer born here. The Jewish cemetery (6) was located near to the ghetto. It was established in the late 1600s, was last used in 1892 and was gradually reduced in size. First in 1875 to make space for the construction of a railway station; then in the 1920s because of the construction of a bridge. It was definitely destroyed between 1964 and 1965, as part of the “embellishment” of the area when the last remaining, and the most valuable, part was covered by soil and debris. There is almost nothing left of the Jewish quarter today. Most of the buildings were destroyed during the insensitive rehabilitation in the 1950s and 1960s which was completed in the 1990s. Today, in place of the former Jewish ghetto, you can find spacious office buildings; only a few last houses remain in the vicinity of the restaurant “U Horkých”.



### 7. Palmovka Synagogue

*Ludmilina Street 601/4, Prague 8*

The old Libeň synagogue was located in the heart of the Jewish ghetto. Once the discriminatory laws banning Jews from living outside of the ghettos were repealed, a new synagogue was built at a prestigious location near the main Libeň street, then called Mayor's Street (today's Zenklova Street). The founding stone of the new synagogue was laid in 1846 in the presence of Archduke Stephen. It was built in Neo-Romanesque style with oriental features. The original facade had distinct decorative stucco most of which was not preserved. The impressive interior of the synagogue, which used to be richly decorated, is built in basilica style with a high three-nave structure and side galleries, each placed atop five pillars. The synagogue was heavily damaged during the war and during the communist period, when it was used for many different purposes. Today, it is entrusted to Serpens Association that opens it regularly to public, organises concerts, theatre show and exhibitions. It has been kept in the state in which it was preserved as a memento of the past.



### 8. Old Libeň and the former house of Bohumil Hrabal

*Na Hrázi Street, Prague 8*

In the immediate vicinity of Divadlo pod Palmovkou, near the staff entrance, you will find 326/24, Na Hrázi Street: there used to stand a small house with a ground-floor flat situated in its courtyard, a former blacksmith's workshop, which was rented out in 1950 by Bohumil Hrabal, the very famous and one of the most widely-read Czech writers. It was in this very house, in the Na Hrázi Street (Dyke street), which Bohumil Hrabal used to refer to as “the dyke of eternity”, that he wrote his first books and some of his most famous novels. The ground-floor flat was not very suitable for living, but it appealed to the artist inspired by surrealism by its out-of-the-ordinary and decadent atmosphere. It became a meeting point of Hrabal's friends, such as Egon Bondy. The house is referred to in several of Hrabal's novels, as are its surroundings and the entire Libeň neighbourhood. The house was quite conveniently located near Hrabal's workplace he left shortly before becoming famous. In fact, Hrabal worked as stage technician in the then Divadlo S.K.Neumanna theatre, today's Divadlo pod Palmovkou. He was also cast in several minor roles and recalls this time in one of his short stories. He was forced to leave his beloved flat in 1973 because it became unfit for living. The house no. 326/24 was pulled down together with other houses in 1988 because of the metro line and the construction of the oversized bus station that has never been fully used. Opposite to the staff entrance of Divadlo pod Palmovkou you will find a memorial stone, which was supposed to become the founding stone of Hrabal's centre. Not far from there stands Hrabal's wall, a piece made by the artist Tatiana Svatošová who covered the wall with a number of Hrabal's quotes, a large portrait of the writer and several authentic objects from his house.



### 9. and 10. Park promenade alongside the Vltava River and Libeň Bridge

*U libeňského mostu Street*

*and U českých loděnic Street and adjacent parking grounds*

A2, probably the most important, most frequented and also the most beautiful Prague cycling path, runs through the historical centre of Prague and passes near the Libeň Bridge. Near Pod Palmovkou Theatre the path undergoes a landscape and park re-development. The total length of the cycling path that crosses the city and its surroundings from south to north is 31 km. It starts in the Central Bohemian village of Vrané nad Vltavou and ends in Roztoky u Prahy. In the Libeň area, it passes close to the sites where important industrial buildings were once located, including the famous Rustonka engineering factory, which was one of the first engineering factories in Prague (a large steam engine factory was built here in 1832, and in 1850 it was purchased by the British manufacturer Joseph Ruston, who expanded it considerably). Rustonka became famous for the production of machinery and parts for the sea and river steamships, bridges and roof structures, and included a large river port. Since the

1960s, the site of the engine house has been gradually abandoned, and buildings demolished in 2006-2007. The heritage-listed boiler house was demolished in 2014. A part of the site has been converted to a park. Also worth mentioning is the Libeň Bridge, considered an architectural gem of interwar architecture. It was built in 1928 according to the plans of architects František Mencl and Pavel Janák and is listed as the only cubist bridge in the world. It is also remarkable that it is not one bridge, but a complicated system of six bridges. The most valuable part is undoubtedly the part stretching over the Vltava River, which is made in a completely unconventional and very impressive way, perfectly summarising the modern aesthetic sensibility of the interwar era. The promenade along the Vltava and the A2 cycling path continue below the Libeň Chateau (2) and to Thomayer's Gardens with rock formations. Directly below the Libeň Chateau, near the confluence of the Rokytka River with the Vltava, there is another interesting monument – the Löwit's Mill. The heritage building of the former large water mill dates to 1747 in its present-day form, but the first written mention of a mill on this site dates back to 1530. The mill building was thoroughly renovated in 2000 and has since been used for cultural events. However, after the disastrous floods in 2002, when the water reached up to the roof, it was not used for cultural events until September 2019. The former site of Libeň River Port and Czech Shipyards the vicinity of the Mill are now gradually transformed into a new neighbourhood with luxury housing. Thomayer's Gardens, situated on the banks of the Vltava River and the adjacent rocky hillsides, are a nature trail and the St. Adalbert spring springs up in the Liběňka well. The park also includes the White Rock natural monument - the rocky promontory significant for its rare organisms was named after Eduard Štorch's novel *The Mammoth Hunters*, which partially takes place here.



### 11. Invalidovna - Hôtel des Invalides

*Sokolovská Street 24/136, Prague 8*

Prague's Invalidovna was inspired by the famous Parisian Les Invalides and built between 1731 and 1737 to serve as a residence for soldiers injured in the wars fought by the Habsburgs. The initial capacity of the building was 4,000 men. The plans were devised by two famous architects, Josef Emanuel Fischer von Erlach and Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer, but only one ninth of the initial project was eventually built. Despite that, Invalidovna is an impressive Baroque building with several wings and a park. The premises served their initial purpose until 1919, then they housed the Military History Archive and Central Military Archives until 2014. This building of great historical value has been falling into decay during the last several decades, especially after the 2002 floods that caused damaged to precious archive materials. In 2017 it was declared a national cultural heritage site, thus listed as one of the most valuable historical monuments in the country. In 2018 it became property of the National Heritage Institute. A large reconstruction of the building is planned. It should be finished by 2024 and in the future, the building is intended to house museums, galleries and community and education centres.



### 12. Operation Anthropoid Memorial – place of the ambush on Deputy Reich Protector R. Heydrich

*Zenklova Street, near Vychovatelna tram stop*

On May 27, 1942, the plot to assassinate one of the most influential Nazi officials and main architect of the Holocaust, the Deputy Reich Protector and Chief of the Reich Police Reinhard Heydrich was successfully carried out at this very place by Czechoslovak soldiers Jozef Gabčík and Jan Kubiš. They were trained in Britain and sent to the Nazi-occupied territory of former Czechoslovakia by the Czechoslovak Government in exile as part of the Operation Anthropoid. The assassination was carried out in a tight curve in Libeň while Heydrich was driving by in his open car on his way from his country residence in Panenské Břežany to his headquarters at the Prague Castle. It took place between 10.31 and 10.35 AM. The explosion of a specially modified anti-tank grenade wounded Heydrich in the face and on his body, causing damage to his lungs and spleen. Kubiš and Gabčík managed to escape. The bicycle wounded Kubiš used to escape was left behind at the then Bata shoe shop – today's drugstore – in the vicinity of Divadlo pod Palmovkou theatre. Unfortunately, the bicycle was later used to find the soldiers in hiding. Heydrich died of his wounds on June 4, 1942 in Bulovka Hospital near the place of the attack. Massive and brutal reprisals and investigation followed: the Czechoslovak paratroopers, members of the commando, were eventually discovered in their hiding in the crypt of St. Cyril and Methodius Church in Prague. On July 6, 1942, 800 German soldiers laid siege to the church. The seven soldiers were able to resist for an unbelievable 7 hours. After using all their ammunition, the surviving paratroopers committed suicide. The Nazi retaliation resulted in thousands of Czechs being imprisoned and murdered, and two villages, Lidice and Ležáky, burnt down. The attempted assassination is considered the most successful operation of the Czechoslovak resistance movement. In 2009 the Operation Anthropoid Memorial was erected at the very place of the attack. These historical events inspired several successful films and many books. In 2021, Divadlo pod Palmovkou created a production *The Magnificent 294*, that also deals with the events of the assassination of Heydrich.



William Shakespeare

SEASON  
2021–2022

DIVADLO  
POD PALMOVKOU

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Directed by:  
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Premiere:  
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