

A Festival in Motion

Nová dráma/New Drama on the pulse of the times

The essence of Nová dráma/New Drama Festival is not just to present existing productions in the main competition programme, but also to stimulate creative writing (through the above mentioned Drama competition and the more recent project New Writing which focuses on children and youth).

The festival's image is completed by lectures and workshops held by international experts in new drama and performance art (Hans-Thies Lehmann, Aleks Sierz, Árpád Schilling, Aleksandra Jovićević, Viliam Dočolomanský, Justina Jaworska), playwrights – as patrons of the festival (Dea Loher, Ivan Vyrypaev, Gianina Cărbunariu, Roland Schimmelpfennig, Falk Richter, Jon Fosse, Wole Soyinka etc.), as well as by theme exhibitions (set design and new drama, costume art, theatre photography). Taking care of the festival audience requires constant teamwork with colleges and universities from all over Slovakia – during the festival, students are an important part of the audience constituting the festival's educational segment. Every year, the organizers give the Student Jury Award and hold young criticism seminars for young critics.

Audiences reacted positively when in 2007 the festival programme was extended by a special section called "Focus" which was designed to present European theatre cultures with which Slovakia might cooperate in the future (Romania, Russia, Serbia, Finland, Slovenia, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel, Croatia, Ukraine, Turkey, Greece, Austria). The Focus section offers a truly focused view of international theatre which allows to compare global theatremaking with contemporary Slovak drama and theatre, creates space for discussion and provides the audiences with a taste of international theatre. Focus curators come from the countries in question and are asked to select the best theatre works produced in the previous years. Usually, Focus is made up of one production, lectures, stage readings of

contemporary plays, interviews with playwrights, an exhibition and symposium on intercultural cooperation.

It has always been important for the life of any festival to exist in an intellectual atmosphere – to arrange meetings with creators, panel discussions, international conferences, seminars, film and video projections or exhibitions. This is a confirmation of the concept with which the festival has identified and which it has kept enforcing.

One of the advantages of Nová dráma/New is the fact that its essence is the phenomenon of current drama which keeps changing and thus never allows the festival to stagnate and be inactive. Thanks to this, Nová dráma/New Drama is different every year. To program it anew forces the organizers to listen carefully, to follow European trends and to harmonize them with Slovak particularities.

The Nová dráma/New Drama festival tries to meet strong criteria and build its brand based on four key principles: preservation of cultural identity, promotion of cultural diversity, development of creativity, and stimulation of engagement in cultural life. We sincerely hope that the coming years will validate the importance of this effort.

Vladislava Fekete

Director of the Theatre Institute and director of the Nová dráma/New Drama festival

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Stage Plays Atlas

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About the project

GREEN DRĀMA supports new stage texts addressing ecology, environmental and nature protection. We are convinced that these themes remain under-represented in contemporary theatre. The project has brought together fifteen playwrights from Slovakia.

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Some texts are poetic, some visionary. Some texts are inspired by real events and those raised by the media. They all point out the current state of affairs and ask where we are heading towards if we don't start acting right now.

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The project also brought in three dramaturges, Vladislava Fekete, Andrea Dömeová a Miriam Kičiňová. The authors also attended lectures on the theme as addressed through the lens of theatre studies and ecology.

We are delighted that the project has seen the light of the day and facilitated the emergence of fifteen stage texts with their pressing appeal.

List of authors and stage texts

Miklós Forgács
Visiman (water ember)

Uršula Kovalyk
Waif T's Private War

Peter Janků
Gold Rush

Dodo Gombár
In the Language of a Tree

Dušan Poliščák
Silent Voice

Slavka Cíváňová
Pictures from the
Mountains

Gabriela Alexová
Nothing Against Bipeds

Jana Micenková
Mindfuck

Adriana Krúpová
The Well

Pavol Weiss
Brief History of Incinerators

Dušan Vicen
Thank you for not breeding!

Marek Godovič
Dark Tourists

Kamil Žiška
Upgrade Jules Verne

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Samuel Chovanec
Poetic Science

Tomáš Procházka
The Last One or I want you to
panic

About the texts

MF

MIKLÓS FORGÁCS
Visiman (water ember)

Mr Forgács refers to his play as a walk through a learning trail. In between reality and poetic fantasy, he explores human urge to control the nature and tame it – as if that were the answer instead of the cause of all problems.

D P

DUŠAN POLIŠČÁK
Silent Voice

The play is set in the context of Slovak mining community. Mr Poliščák highlights the importance of raising individual voice within the wider public. He asks whether we are indeed able to change anything in face of the power of the powerful.

AK

ADRIANA KRÚPOVÁ
The Well

Ms Krúpová addresses the issue of human ecological migration. The world found itself in a state when it suffers from water scarcity. People are thus forced to leave their homelands. The locals are hiding in underground bunkers. More than the scarcity of water, however, they fear what they believe are dangerous migrants from Africa.

KZ

KAMIL ŽIŠKA

Upgrade Jules Verne

The text is inspired by Jules Verne and his works in which he was literally a visionary inventor of all kinds of machines. Mr Žiška contemplates how circumnavigating of the world in 80 days would be like in the near future, when major smog conceals Big Ben and a massive island made of plastic waste expands, with utmost speed, across the globe.

UK

URŠULA KOVALYK

Waif T's Private War

Ms Kovalyk portrays the futile struggle of an ordinary person with the power of the wealthy and powerful. Developers decide to cut down a park in front of a bloc of flats which is home to the two lead characters, wheel-chair-bound Mummy and her daughter Tanya. Tanya sees no other option than to take power in her hands.

SC

SLAVKA CIVÁŇOVÁ

Pictures from the Mountains

In her learning play written mainly for children and youth, Ms Cíváňová advances the issue of environmental education for children. She addresses environmental issues through two lead characters, the environmentalist and activist Michal Baran and his son Silvester. She points out that a single deed merits more than a thousand words.

PWW

PAVOL WEISS

Brief History of Incinerators

In his interactive stage-ecological seminar, Mr Weiss plays out a number of historical situations with immolation as a common denominator. The situations include, inter alia, witch-burning in the Middle Ages, the Shoah, or the self-immolation of Ján Palach in Prague in protest against the Soviet-led occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

PJ

PETER JANKŮ

Gold Rush

The play explores the contested issue of gold mining using cyanide. The two lead characters, the journalist Milan and ecological activist Juraj fight for the common good. They pay high price for their attempt to stand up to the mighty. Mr Janků asks whether the only rule of the day is the evil conquering the good.

GA

GABRIELA ALEXOVÁ

Nothing Against Bipeds

In her humoristic text, Mr Alexová looks at humans through the perspective of trees and forest animals. What might they make of humans?

DV

DUŠAN VICEN

Thank You for Not Breeding

The text addresses the issue of overpopulation on the planet. Mr Vicen raises a complex moral dilemma that many face: Does it at all make sense to give birth to a child into this devastated world?

ScH

SAMUEL CHOVANEC

Poetic Science

In their poetic lecture performance, Mr Chovanec together with András Cséfalvay offer something of a lecture that subjects the world to irony. They point out that conspiracy theories are often more important and influential than specialist facts. They also raise the issue of the increasing practice to join different social groups and casts, the members of which set themselves against those who do not share their view.

DG

DODO GOMBÁR

In the Language of a Tree

Mr Gombár's poetic text is a personal statement of an apple tree. Her existence is closely linked to a boy, the innocence of his childhood, his first love, and the difficulties of coming of age. The apple tree, as the silent observer, remains in place while everything around is changing.

JMM

JANA MICENKOVÁ

Mindfuck

In her conversational drama, Ms Micenková asks whether egotism is always bound to prevail over common good. The characters manage to lay their hands on a magical creature that might be able to save many lives. Instead, they decide to use the creature to make capital. Their short-sighted approach leads to the very extinction of the only miracle they had literally at their fingertips.

MGG

MAREK GODOVIČ

Dark Tourists

Mr Godovič portrays the world of catastrophic dystopia. He asks whether the world is indeed heading to a state when the only option to experience the Earth unpolluted is to buy a holiday in an imitation, an artificially created sci-space where perfection reigns.

TTP

TOMÁŠ PROCHÁZKA

The Last One or I want you to panic

Observing humans, how they treat their surrounding nature, Mr Procházka poignantly asks whether we might, after all, deserve all that is falling upon us ... perhaps humans are mere waste that should ideally be get rid of.

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THEATRE INSTITUTE IN BRATISLAVA

Jakubovo nám. 12

813 57 Bratislava

SLOVAKIA

www.theatre.sk

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