

**BRNO
THEATRANIA
CONFERENCE**

**2021
JUNE 1ST-3RD**

**ON ON ON ON
ON ONLINE**

TUE 1st June

14:00 – 14:20 CONFERENCE OPENING

David Drozd

Department of Theatre Studies, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University

Andrea Jochmanová

Department for Theatre Research JAMU, Department of the History of Theatre, Moravian Museum

Mariana Orawczak Kunešová

Department of Romance Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ostrava

14:20 – 15:20 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Dariusz Kosiński: Central-European Theatre Avant-garde. (Reclamation or Reimagination)

15:30 – 16:30 Theoretical Concepts of the Avant-garde I.

Hanna Veselovska: Technicism in the Avant-garde Theatre. (The Clash of Meanings and Forms)

Jindřich Toman: Shifting Structures, Asymmetric Networks

Martin Bernátek: Theatre Architecture for the Avant-garde

17:00 – 18:00 Theoretical Concepts of the Avant-garde II.

Andrea Jochmanová: “Wir haben kein Theater!”/ “We Do Not Have Any Theatre!” (Czech Avant-garde Stage in 1920s)

Yana Partola: Avant-garde Theatre and Audience

Martina Musilová: À la recherche du Henri Bergson perdu. (Searching for the Trails of Bergsonism in Czech Avant-garde Concepts)

18:00 SUMMARY

19:00 OFF PROGRAMME

**Historiography of the Avant-garde
and fifty years' experience of Avant-garde research.**
Interview with Professor **Henri Béhar**, one of the founders
of the avant-garde research in France.

WED 2nd June

14:00 - 15:00 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Didier Plassard: Avant-garde Theatre and Puppetry: A Reappraisal

15:15 – 16:30 Directors, Performance and Staging

Jiřina Hofmanov: Avant-garde Directors and Repertory Theatre

Jana Cindlerov: Jindřich Honzl between Vančura and Vančura

Iva Mikulov: Performative Activities of the Brno Devětsil Circle

+ *The Presentation of the Book by Jiří Knapík about Opava’s Vest Pocket Revue - Heller & Kristian aneb Opavská Vest pocket revue (1933) / Hra „Kaolin a Majolika“ a inspirace Osvobozeným divadlem. Edice pramenů. Slezská univerzita v Opavě 2020.*

17:00 – 18:15 Scenography and Theatre Objects

Valentyna Chechyk: Alexandra Exter’s Theatre and Ukrainian Scenography of the 1910-1920s

Monica Yadav: Emergence of Theatre Object as a Repository of Memory.

(An Investigation into Tadeusz Kantor’s Practice of Inter / Post-World War Theatre)

Vlasta Koubsk: Antonín Heythum (1901-1954) Stage Designer, Architect, Industrial Designer

18:15 SUMMARY

19:30 OFF PROGRAMME

Record of Bohuslav Martinů’s Opera:

The Three Wishes/Tři přn/Les Trois Souhails ou les Vicissitudes de la vie.

Introduction by Helena Spurn,

Department of the Theory and History of Fine Arts, University of Ostrava.

THU 3rd JUNE

14:00 – 15:00 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Fabrice Flahutez: Upside-down Theatre. Lettrism and the Legacy of Dada and Surrealism Avant-gardes (1945-1968)

15:10 – 16:10 Dance and Body/Self Performance

Meghan Forbes: Mira Holzbachová and the Czech Interwar Avant-garde

Dorota Gremlicová: Dancing Death: The Critical and Choreographic Perception of Kurt Jooss' The Green Table in Prague in 1930s'

Margarida Brito Alves: Within and Beyond the Classroom. (The Theatrical Educational Practices of Salette Tavares in 1974)

16:30-17:30 Exchanges and Dialogues I.

Mariana Orawczak Kunešová: André Breton on the French and Czech Stages

Petr Christov: Wow, Have You Read It? Czech and French Avant-gardes on the Pages of French and Czech Journals and Revues

Michal Zahálka: "Correct, but It's a Translation" (Jindřich Hořejší and Contemporary French Drama)

17:45 - 18:30 Exchanges and Dialogues II.

Sarah Flock: Brussels-Prague: Artistic Dialogue Between Two Peripheries

Tomaž Toporišič: The Slovene Avant-garde and the Conceptual Crisis of Europe

18:30 SUMMARY

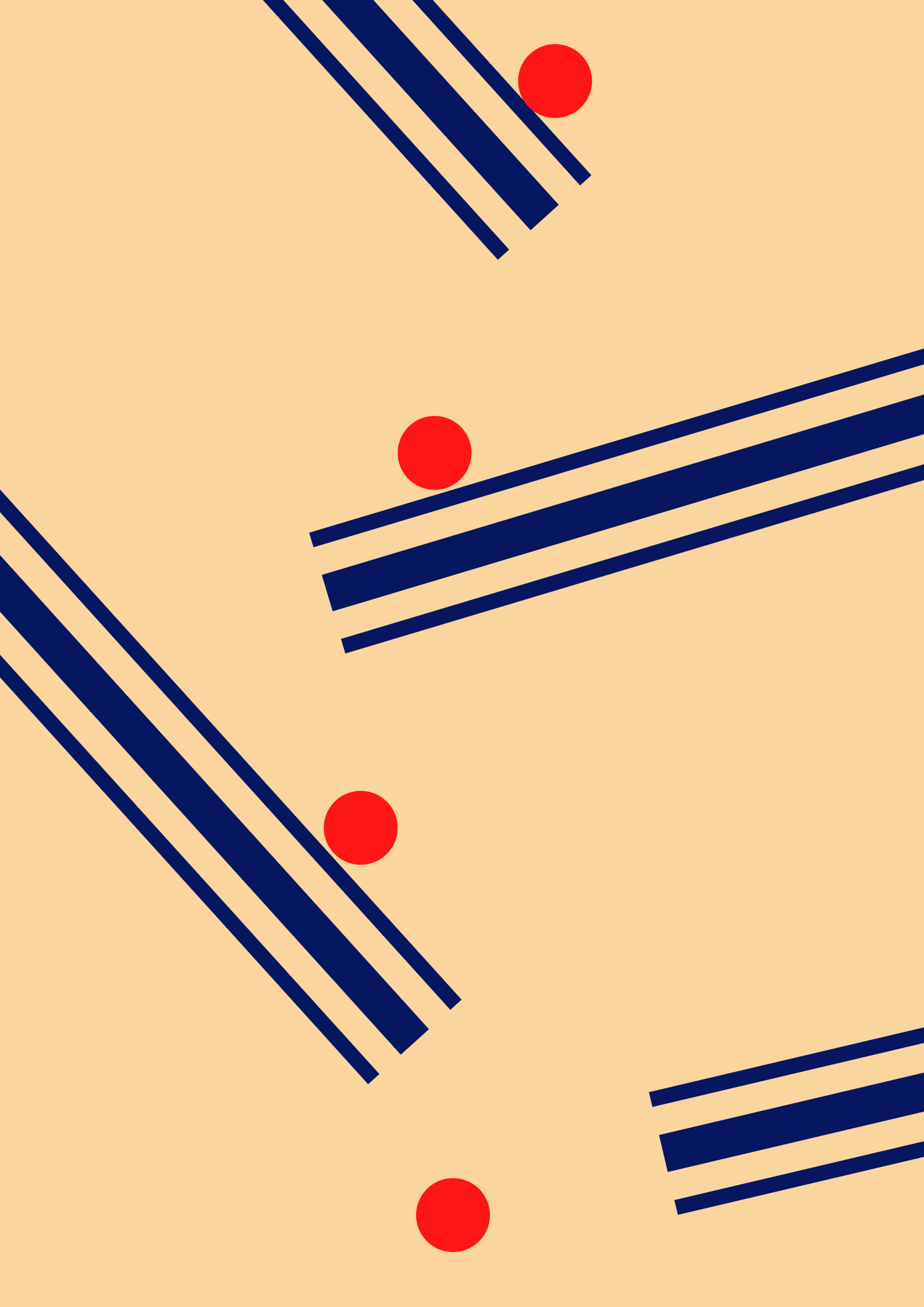
19:30 OFF PROGRAMME

Discussion with **Anna Pravidová**, the Curator of the Exhibition

-Toyen, the Dreaming Rebel-

the National Gallery Prague, the Hamburg Kunsthalle

and the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris.



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Dariusz Kosiński

Central-European Theatre Avant-Garde: Reclamation or Reimagination

In 2014 while working as a program director of the Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute in Warsaw, I initiated a project on Central-European theatre Avant-garde. It was called 'The Reclaimed Avant-garde'. After several events and transformations, it finally took a form of an international research project financed by the Polish Ministry of Science and Education. It formally started in 2018 and is scheduled to be finished in 2023 with the publication of the 'Lexicon of the Central-European Theatre Avant-Garde'. Launching the project seven years ago, we proposed a certain thesis about the existence and historical importance of a specific artistic and cultural phenomenon developed in the region stretching between two powerful theatre cultures of Russia and Germany and two seas: the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean. Our initial intuition was that despite all the cultural, political, social and historical differences between such different countries as Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Georgia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia, theatre avant-garde of this part of Europe has something in common besides the obvious fact that it is not highly and widely recognised in the world. We started the project to check and prove this intuition having at the same time a simple goal to learn more about each other. I think that we have already achieved the latter aim and that now not only we – the members of the group – know each other better but that the knowledge about the fascinating world of Central-European theatre Avant-garde becomes more and more accessible in our countries. But what about the Reclaimed Avant-garde itself? Is it a real historical phenomenon or a projection, a reimagination fuelled by some kind of historical wishful thinking? In my presentation I will try to answer the question in a form of a working report of the project still in progress.

Dariusz Kosiński is a professor at the Institute of Polish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. He is also a former research director of the Grotowski Institute in Wrocław (2010–2013) and the Raszewski Theatre Institute in Warsaw (2014–2018). He was a member of the editorial board of Jerzy Grotowski's collected texts. He is the author of the history of Polish theatre and performances *Performing Poland* (2010, English translation 2019) and the books about Jerzy Grotowski (including *Grotowski. Przewodnik*, 'Grotowski. A Guide', Wrocław 2009). Since 2016 he has been a leading researcher of the international research project 'Reclaimed Avant-Garde. Theatre Avant-Garde of the Central-Eastern Europe'. He is also active as a theatre critic of an important Polish political and cultural weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*.

Technicism in the Avant-garde Theatre: The Clash of Meanings and Forms

One notable feature of the early 20th century was a fascination with technicism in practically all spheres of life. Thus, it is no coincidence that avant-garde art was actively engaged in the propaganda of technicism as a platform for creating a new reality. For the avant-garde theatre, technicism also became one of the key trends manifested both at the level of new meanings and in stage technology as well as the organisation of theatrical space.

Technicism referred mainly to the ideas of industrialisation and urbanism, the fascination with which soon changed to a message about their threat to human civilization. At the same time, technicism served as the basis for the creation of constructivist and documentary scenography. Besides, technicism had a significant impact on acting technique, prompting the introduction of Meyerhold's biomechanics into the theatre practice.

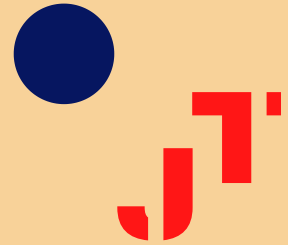
Numerous studies into the practical manifestation of technicism in European theatre have described and analysed innovative stage solutions that made the avant-garde theatre a truly unique aesthetic phenomenon. However, far less attention is paid to how the technical achievements of the theatre contributed to or, on the contrary, contravened the propaganda of urbanism and industrialisation, or whether on the whole they performed rather narrow functional tasks.

From the indicative list of such avant-garde performances as *The Wedding Party on the Eiffel Tower* (Cocteau, 1921), *The Magnanimous Cuckold* (Meyerhold, 1922), *The Man Who Was Thursday* (Tairov, 1923), *Tiresias' Breasts* (Honzi, 1926), *The Good Soldier Švejk* (Piskator, 1928), *The Dictatorship* (Kurbas, 1930), one can understand that the pressures of technicism on humanity were denounced and ridiculed, and urbanism and industrialisation were proclaimed lifesaving.

Our task is to study the multi-functionality of technicism in the avant-garde theatre. It is important to trace exactly what tasks were assigned to technicism by various avant-garde directors, and how, depending on the ideological doctrine, the meanings that were produced by technicism acquired either a positive or negative connotation and eventually happened to be 'turned over'.

Hanna Veselovska is a professor, theatre critic, and scholar. She works as a senior research fellow at the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine.

Her research and publication interests include modern theatre theory, Ukrainian theatrical avant-garde. Among her recent books are *The Twelve Productions by Les' Kurbas* (2005), *The Theatrical Intersections in Kyiv: 1900-1910s. Theatrical Kyiv's Modernism* (2006), *Ukrainian Theatrical Avant-garde* (2010), *History of the Ukrainian Theatre: From Genesis to the Early 20th Century* (in co-authorship, 2011), *Modern Theatrical Arts* (2014), *Maria Zankovetska National Academy Ukrainian Drama Theatre. Time and Fates (1917–1944). Part 1* (2016), and *Theatre of Mykola Sadovskyj (1907–1920)* (2018).



Jindřich Toman

Shifting Structures, Asymmetric Networks

The present contribution addresses questions emerging in connection with the idea of cultural hierarchies and asymmetries. Focusing on Czech historical avant-garde I review selected cases of practices that generate and structure such asymmetries. Three areas are discussed: Poetism, the Left Front, and Czech Surrealism.

The first case indicates efforts to manage asymmetries by creating a balanced and confraternal state of the avant-garde network. Poetism was open to international collaboration and sought contacts in France, Germany, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere. At the same time, Paris was recognized as a centre; Štyrský and Toyen moved there for several years.

With the open politicisation of the avant-garde in the late 1920s, especially with the emergence of the Left Front, asymmetries become visible under the impact of an alternative center, Moscow, while reciprocity mechanisms are relatively rare. This is traceable in conceptual terms, but also physically — some Czech architects move to the USSR.

Finally, the Surrealists operate largely within the bounds defined by Paris and assert vertical loyalty to Paris as is visible, for instance, during Nezval's disbandment of the Surrealist group. Still, their network reveals some reciprocal features. Although in many ways proselytic, the Breton/Eluard visit to Czechoslovakia represents a mutual network management. Czech Surrealists also publish in France, thus contributing to a softening of asymmetries.

Overall, the above cases illustrate strategies in which asymmetries are managed and structured. Additional concepts, including active peripheries or group internal hierarchies, can also be considered.

Trained in Czechoslovakia, Germany and USA, **Jindřich Toman** follows an academic path defined by languages and cultures of Central and Eastern Europe. His current research addresses interfaces of visual culture and cultural history, with topics including Central European avant-gardes and modernist book design (cf. his *Photo/Montage in Print*, Prague, 2009). He also co-curated the exhibition of the Czech Surrealist Jindřich Heisler at the Art Institute of Chicago in 2012 (see J. Toman & M. Witkovsky, eds., *Surrealism under Pressure*, Yale UP and Art Institute of Chicago, 2012) and an exhibition of interwar Czech design (see J. Toman and Z. Sylvestrová, eds., *Horizonty modernismu*, Brno: Moravská galerie, 2015).


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Martin Bernátek

Theatre Architecture for the Avant-garde

The paper zeroes in on two projects of theatre space designed by the members of Devětsil Group in 1920s: The Devětsil Stage by Zdeněk Pešánek and The Liberated Theatre by Josef Chochol. To reveal the contradictions in the theory and practice of avant-garde, I focus on the Group's contradiction in rejecting "the institution of art", on the one hand, and attempting to design a new art institution, on the other. Additionally, I dwell on the Devětsil representatives' reflections on the aesthetics of the new theatre space (see e.g., Honzl, Frejka) with regard to radical anti-capitalist and pro-socialist rhetoric of the Devětsil Group. Close reading of Devětsil publications, such as *Život*, *Fronta*, *Pásmo*, along with Peter Bürger's canonical book *The Theory of the Avant-garde* was done in order to re-politicize Czechoslovak historical avant-garde.

The aforementioned projects are compared not only to other similar interwar modernist and avant-garde theatre space designs at Bauhaus (Gropius, Molnar, Weininger), but also to some less known projects, such as Simultaneous Theatre in Warsaw designed by Szymon Cyrkus and Andrzej Pronaszko, as well as to other theaters designed by avant-garde theatre-makers, such as *Théâtre de l'Exposition* in Paris (1925) by Auguste Perret. Common principles of simultaneity of actions and universality of stage(s) and their manifestations in theatre architecture are highlighted as key elements of a new theatre institution as a medium of avant-garde practice, which is understood as joint aesthetic and political project. To interpret a theatre space as a medium that actively sets up a new organic community out of disparate individualities, I employ a concept of the apparatus/dispositif, widely discussed in the fields of film studies, critical theory and philosophy.

Martin Bernátek is an assistant professor and an area head of Theatre Studies at the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, Palacký University Olomouc. In his research he focuses on theatre spaces of interwar avant-garde theatre in Central Europe and relations between theatre and audiovisual forms in the early 20th century. He is a member of an Editorial Board of *ArteActa Journal for the Performing Arts and Artistic Research*. He is a co-organizer of *Josefov Summer School* on the politics and aesthetics of cultural performances. His recent publications include a monograph *Czech Theatre Photography* (in Czech and English, 2018) co-authored with Anna Hejmová and Martina Novozámská, a chapter on E. F. Burian and Miroslav Kouřil's project of the Theatre of Labour in the book *Reclaimed Avant-garde: Spaces and Stages of Avant-garde Theatre in Central-Eastern Europe* (in English, 2018), edited by Dariusz Kosiński and Zoltán Imre.



Andrea Jochmanová

'Wir haben kein Theater!' / 'We do not have any Theatre!' – Czech Avant-garde Stage in the 1920s

After WWI, a young generation of artists involved in art, aesthetics, and technical development got interested in theatre work as well. Those who stood at the origins of the avant-garde stage in the newly established state of Czechoslovakia were seeking inspiration for their programme in actual social and pro-social visions built upon an illusion of re-development of the whole social structures which, as far as we know now, remained only an idea and led to the crisis of theatrical culture. The leading figures of Czech avant-garde kept in connection with the European artists and worked on the international profile of Czech art. They also worked on preparing theoretical conceptions of up-to-date theatre and performing art, while others took care of the practical application of those concepts. After all, the first avant-garde stage was connected with Vladimir Gamza, born in Russia, who brought the inspiration of the MAT Studios (esp. Meyerhold, Vakhtangov and Sulerzhitsky) to Czechoslovakia. At the same time, the very first practical project inspired by this actual trend was completed by the Union of Modern Culture's (called Devětsil): a concept combining the theories of poetism and constructivism as an anthropo-centrified unity.

The first theatric groups of young artists had already been trying to find different theatre style; they had been searching for a theoretic understanding of theatre as modern art mirroring the ideals of after-war visionaries. During the 1920s, a wide range of avant-gardist activities in cooperation with the artists from abroad was happening. While using the modern techniques, theatre theory and praxis merged into a synthetical unit connecting all the elements of theatre.

Theatre experiments in the 1920s helped to find modern ways that innovated theatre art and brought a new insight into the stage and its three-dimensional layout. Acting was regarded as the art which creates a synthesis of movement, rhythm, dynamics, and speech in the very modern way of voice-work. Avant-gardists managed to transform the appreciation of theatre as the synthetic art through their cooperation with personalities who represented modern architecture, design, painting, music, dance, and art of acting. The most important role in this composition of the elements was assigned to a director who created his individual poetics as the synthetical artwork.

Mgr. Andrea Jochmanová, Ph.D. is a researcher in Czech theatre history interested in the references between theatre and folklore, theatre and gender, cultural anthropology studies and theory of games. During her studies at Masaryk University Brno (1998–2006) she took interest in Czech theatre history. She presented the upshots of her research in a number of lectures for teatrological institutes in the Czech Republic. Until 2009 she had worked as an assistant professor at the Department of Theatre Studies at Masaryk University Brno.

Since 2006 she has also worked as a curator of manuscripts and scenography collection at the Department of Theatre History at the Moravian Museum in Brno, where she has been trying to apply Osolsobě's minimum theatrale, i.e. ostension while preparing an exhibitions of artefacts connected with theatre history. In 2010 she started to work as an assistant professor at the Department for Theatre Research at JAMU Brno where her study *The World behind Space. Jiří Frejka's Production in the 1920s* was published in 2012.

Avant-garde Theatre and Audience

The avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century as a form of radical protest have not left theatre behind. Since traditional forms of theatre had lost their power over the audience, the avant-gardists advocated for the reform of theatre by offering the audience their own, sometimes not always 'edible', exotic 'dishes'.

They seemed to deny everything in the theatrical system – drama, author, actor, director, word, stage space... Everything, but not the audience. Despite the avant-gardists' bravado claims of 'being booed', the audience was vital to them as an object of provocation and scandal.

The audience ceased to be a passive observer; the theatre persistently invited it to co-create the performance. Theatre reformers used the most radical forms of activating their spectator. In practice, this resulted in numerous experiments to create an action that would destroy the usual shapes of the stage-box and unite the spectator and the stage in an indivisible whole. Various forms emerged: performance-rally (Meyerhold), discussion-play and dramaturgy of fact (Terentyev), 'art of action' and 'collective creativity' (theatre named after G. Mykhailychenko by Tereshchenko), 'theater of accentuated influence' and 'theater of accentuated expression' (Kurbas). The boundaries between the stage and the auditorium were finally destroyed.

Some directors approached the issue of studying the spectatorship with all seriousness, and even involved scientific means. The most productive in this were Meyerhold and Kurbas. At their performances, they interviewed the viewers to explore their reactions and needs. Kurbas also introduced into his Berezhil Theatre a study of the audience's reactions during the performance. Yet, in a desperate battle for the audience, most directors were left defeated and disappointed.

Yana Partola works as an associate professor and the head of the Theatre Department at Kharkiv National Kotlyarevsky University of Arts. She holds a PhD in Art. She is also a theatre critic and theatre historian and the author of numerous articles, research papers, and reviews.

She participated in a number of international conferences, such as 'Les Kurbas within the World and Ukrainian Cultural Contexts', 'Avant-garde of 1920-30s and Modern Theatre Process', 'Current Issues in Music and Theatre', 'The Role of a Theatre Critic in the Cultural City Time and Space' and others). She is also a member of the jury of several Ukrainian and international festivals Kurbalesiya, Anima, Theatronic and others, an expert for Ukrainian Theatre Festival and Award GRA. She was a leader, coordinator, supervisor, or moderator of several art projects such as 'Ukrainian Theatre in the Epoch of Transformation: Live', theatre programme Artist to Children, theatrical educational 'Space of Borders', and Ukrainian-Polish project UKRoPOLis – 2014. Her publication and research interests include Ukrainian theatre and drama history, theatre and audience, theatre education.

Martina Musilová

À la recherche du Henri Bergson perdu (Searching for the Trails of Bergsonism in Czech Avant-garde Concepts)

The contribution will be devoted to the trails of Bergsonism in the concepts of Czech interwar Avant-guard artists and theorists, such as K. Teige, J. Frejka, J. Voskovec, J. Werich, V. Renč, A. M. Píša, etc. Two Bergson's books were translated into Czech during 1910–1920s: *Le Rire* (1900, Czech 1916), *L'Évolution créatrice* (1907, Czech 1919) and they influenced the Czech reception of the vital avant-garde movements, especially Dadaism and Surrealism. Bergson's concepts of laughter, duration, and creativity can explain specific tendencies of Czech Avant-guard towards improvisation, spontaneity, and anti-illusionist principles, or against the mechanisation of life and the extremist ideologies (left/right).

Doc. Mgr. Martina Musilová Ph.D. specialises in the 20-century acting and the theory and anthropology of acting. In her research she focuses on theatricality of public events. She studied theatre at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague (1992–2000), where she defended her thesis 'Healthy Schizophrenia. Influences of Brechtian Epic Theatre and the Alienation Effect in Czech Modern Acting' in 2007. During her university studies, she attended the course Dialogue Acting with the Inner Partner (DAMU, Prague). Since 1999, she has been an assistant of the Dialogue Acting with the Inner Partner both in Prague and Brno. Since 2009 she has been working as an assistant professor at the Department of Theatre Studies FF MUNI in Brno; in 2013–2019 she worked at the Department of Theory and Criticism, and since 2019 she has been a member of the Department of Authorial Creativity and Pedagogy of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. Since 2011, she has worked with the Studio of Physical Theatre at JAMU's Theatre Faculty in Brno. As a dramaturge, she has worked with the directors J.Adámek and P.Tejnorová on a long-term basis. She is an editor of the books *Experimentální hry* (FRA, 2005) by Ernst Jandl and Frederike Mayröcker and *Mluvit a naslouchat* (FRA, 2019) by Gertrude Stein.



Didier Plassard

Avant-garde Theatre and Puppetry: A Reappraisal

Puppets, marionettes, shadows, and automata play a major part in the theatre of historical avant-gardes, both as a tool for experimentation and as a model for the stages of the future. While much research, including my own book *L'Acteur en effigie* (1992), has been devoted to the inner analysis of the plays, of the performances, and of the projects where the human body was substituted with artefacts or hidden by masks or costumes which dehumanised it, I will here examine them from an external point of view, as parts of a 'theatrical system' (Marotti).

How far, for example, can we consider the use of puppetry, in the practice and theory of the historical avant-gardes, as an extension of the fascination that artists and writers had been expressing for it since the end of the 19th century? What kind of relations can we observe between the experiments of the avant-gardes with the artistic, sociological, and economic mutations which deeply affected, at the same time, the professional field of puppet and marionette theatre? Did the place given to puppetry in the theatrical landscape of the avant-gardes anticipate new modes of collaboration between the various branches of performing arts, or did it rather reproduce their separation and hierarchisation?

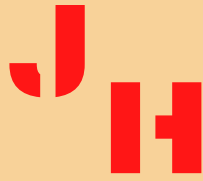
Recontextualising the avant-garde aesthetics of puppetry within the theatrical system of their time will help us to better evaluate the contribution to the renewal of performing arts.

Prof. Dr. Didier Plassard is a full professor of Drama and Performance Studies at the Paul Valéry University of Montpellier, France. His research fields include avant-garde theatre, stage direction, dramaturgy, multimedia, and puppetry.

His main publications are *L'Acteur en effigie* (L'Age d'homme, 1992, Georges-Jamati Award of Theatre Aesthetics); *Les Mains de lumière* (Institut International de la Marionnette, 1996, 2004); Edward Gordon Craig, *The Drama for Fools / Le Théâtre des fous* (L'Entretiens, 2012); *Mises en scène d'Allemagne(s)* (CNRS Editions, 2014). He was also the editor-in-chief of *Prospero European Review* (2010–2013), guest editor with Cristina Grazioli of *Puck – La marionnette et les autres arts* (2014) and with Carole Guidicelli of *Art Press 2*, 'La marionnette sur toutes les scènes' (2015).

He was awarded a Sirena d'oro (Arrivano dal mare!, Italy, 2012) and was made a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres (Ministère de la Culture, 2015).

Since October 2019, he has been the Principal Investigator of *PuppetPlays*, a five-year research programme funded by the European Union (ERC Advanced Grant 835193).



Jiřina Hofmanov

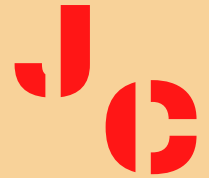
Avant-garde Directors and Repertory Theatre

What happens when avant-garde directors enter repertory theatre? How does it look when forward thinking about the stage stumbles upon comedies full of cliches, stereotypes, infidelity, and superficial jokes?

Some answers could be derived from Jindřich Honzl's and Emil František Burian's work in the National Theatre in Brno. Two out of the three biggest names of Czech theatre avant-garde were employed here between 1929 and 1932. They were working with comedy plays of different quality and different types of humor and tried to transform them into something not only funny but aesthetical and intelligent on the stage.

Jiřina Hofmanov is enrolled in the doctoral program in Theatre Studies at Masaryk University in Brno. In her current research, she deals with staging Anton Pavlovich Chekhov's plays at the time of the so-called normalization. In general, she focuses on the Czech theatre after WWII and also on theatre reviewing. She has contributed to a number of printed and online theatre platforms, in two of which she was an executive editor, and she has been a part of several festival magazines. She also works at the Janček Academy of Music and Performing Arts mainly as a book editor.





Jana Cindlerová

Jindřich Honzl Between Vančura and Vančura

This paper covers two theatrical performances based on Vladislav Vančura's text and directed by Jindřich Honzl (of which the second one was in collaboration with Antonín Dvořák) at the Prague National Theatre.

The two performances in question brought together an avant-garde playwright and an avant-garde director, as well as highlighted the two distinct but major points of Honzl's theatrical-aesthetic development and transformation during a turbulent period in 1945–1949: Honzl the avant-gardist building his stage direction on modernistic principles transforms into Honzl the socialistic-realist serving the new “modern art”.

With the stage production of *Teacher and Pupil* (*Učitel a žák*, premiered 1945), the National Theater Studio was opened. Besides its avant-garde traces, Honzl's stage production also comprised modern stage design (Toyen) and continued the legacy of the “*Osvobozené divadlo*” (Liberated Theater) where Honzl had performed *Teacher and Pupil* for the first time eighteen years ago.

Yet, his later production of *Josefine* (*Josefína*, premiered 1949) at the Josef Kajetán Tyl Theater (also known as “*Stavovské Divadlo*”) already included the sound (literally) of the joyfully singing proletarians. Indeed, one contemporary review described this dramaturgy-directorial conception in its title as follows: “From social romanticism to socialist realism.”

The two stagings of Vančura's plays show a change not only in the director's artistic approach, but also in the criteria and style of Czech theatre criticism. Both productions received a great response from critics and spectators: a fact that should override all the harsh evaluation of Jindřich Honzl's last eight years of work (and life).

It should be noted that Jindřich Honzl's artistic “agony” began undoubtedly after the February coup and continued all through his lifelong theatrical career, which had begun with the poetistic revolution of “youth and life” when he had been looking for a better tomorrow...

Mgr. Jana Cindlerová, Ph.D., had studied Czech Studies at the Silesian University, Opava, and Theatre Studies at Masaryk University, Brno, and she completed her doctoral studies in scenology at DAMU, Prague, under the supervision of Prof. Jaroslav Vostrý. Her dissertation thesis on five dramas written by Karel Čapek was published in 2016 (Prague, DAMU/KANT).

She is the Head of the Department of Cultural Dramaturgy with the Theatre Focus. As a part-time lecturer at DAMU, Prague, she gives talks on the history, theory and critique of theatre. In 2014–2016 she was a theatre lecturer at the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre, Ostrava. She also cooperated with the Society of Brethren Čapek, and as a theatre reviewer with Czech Radio, Vltava, in particular.

Her scientific studies are published in various journals and anthologies, particularly *Disk*. She is a co-author of two monographs *Word and Image on the Stage* (Prague, DAMU/KANT, 2010) and *At the Edge of the Worlds: Fantastic Literature in Interdisciplinary Exploration* (Brno, Masaryk University, 2016). In addition, she is a co-author of the translations of Balkan dramas (in cooperation with Hasan Zahirovič). Of these, a contemporary play written by a Croatian playwright Nina Mitrovič *This Bed Is Too Short, or Only Fragments* was staged for the first time in the Czech Republic at Činoherní klub in Prague under the direction of Martin Čičvák (2012). She appreciates and supports amateur theatre and public recitation as a regular member of jury boards. She is a professional lecturer of rhetoric.

Performative Activities of the Brno Devětsil Circle

In my paper, I would like to focus on the performative activities of the members of the Brno Devětsil Circle between 1924 and 1927. These activities consisted of specialised lectures in the Vesna Hall and at the Faculty of Arts, multiple exhibitions in Barvič and Novotný Salon, the so-called 'eight o'clock' events and eccentric carnivals in St. Bogyi Bar. These events were supplemented by unique typographies and artistic concepts created by Zdeněk Rossmann, Václav Rošťlapil, and František Podešva. I shall analyse these activities and incorporate them into the context of the period theatre and visual art. Primarily, I would like to focus on the way how the theme of the variety shows, circus art or cabaret reflected in the daily Rovnost or the magazine Pásmo, which was published by the members of the Brno Devětsil Circle. My theoretical conclusions would be based on the articles by Karel Teige, Jindřich Honzl, Jiří Frejka, and Jaroslav Bohumil Svrček. My presentation aims to introduce the performative activities of the Brno Devětsil Circle as well as to demonstrate the importance of the Circle in the artistic movements of that time.



Mgr. Iva Mikulová, Ph.D. holds an MA degree in Teaching Czech and German Languages for Secondary Schools, from Palacký University, Olomouc, and a BA degree in Theatre History and Theory from Masaryk University, Brno. She received her PhD in 2016 at the Department of Theatre Studies, Masaryk University, having defended her doctoral thesis 'Theatre Director Karel Novák (1916–1968)'. She worked as an archive manager and dramaturg assistant at the Zlín City Theatre (MDZ) in 2012–2014. With Marcel Sladkowski, she co-authored a monograph *Městské divadlo Zlín, 70 sezon* (2015). Between 2014–2017, she worked as an executive editor of *Theatralia* journal (published by the Department of Theatre Studies, Masaryk University). Currently, she is an assistant professor at the aforementioned department, and she also has a research position at the Department of the 20th Century and Contemporary Literature, Institute of Czech Literature, CAS. Her major field of interest is the Czech regional theatre of the second half of the 20th century with special focus on the period of 1950s.



Alexandra Exter's Theatre and Ukrainian Scenography of the 1910-1920s

The article is dedicated to the theater practice of the artists, who developed Alexandra Exter's plastic ideas on the stage of Ukraine during the 1910-1920s.

Exter's in-depth knowledge of French and generally European culture and its contemporary state, her creativities with the Parisian avant-garde (Robert and Sonya Delaunay, F. Leger, and others), and her personal contribution to the innovation in art and design (interior objects, fashion accessories, books, set design) inspired not only students, but also associates and colleagues. A convinced avant-garde artist, A. Exter generously shared her achievements with her compatriots through various creative projects such as exhibitions of pictorial and decorative art, publications, lectures, workshops, and art studios. The history of her art has been described in detail by D. Gorbachov, G. Kovalenko, M. Kolesnikov, A. Nakov, etc. The list of the artists who have been associated with her creative laboratory is rather long and includes Ukrainian artists and stage practitioners.

The article focuses on the projects by the fundamental figures of scenography of the Ukrainian avant-garde theatre (Vadym Meller, Anatol Petritsky, Les Khvostenko-Khvostov), as well as on the little-known or completely unknown theatrical experiences of Petro Zhabkin, Olga Axelbirt, Eduard Krimmer, Volodymyr Bobritsky, and others. The circle of the Ukrainian adepts of Exter's theatre innovation also included early Isaak Rabinovich, who gained fame in Russian theater and cinema, and early Sergei Yutkevich, who later became a well-known Russian film director. The influence of Exter's theatre is also felt in the works of a Polish stage designer Felix Krassovsky during his "Kiev period" and artist Mykhailo Andrienko-Nechitailo, the representative of the Ukrainian diaspora in Paris.

The period of 1910s through 1920s in Ukrainian was marked by the decisive transition of Ukrainian scenography to the volume-plastic organisation of the stage space. Irrespective of the elements of the individual style, geometrisation of architectural structures, their conditional nature, abstraction, love for the texture of the material, desire to dynamise the decoration image, and finally, use of intense colour, often in contrasting combinations (love for red and blue colours), as well as decorativism were the elements shared by the Ukrainian stage designers. These qualities would not lose their relevance even during the period of strictly functional selection of the means of expression – in the era of constructivism.

Valentyna Chechyk, PhD, graduated from the Kharkiv Institute of Arts with a degree in theatre history (2000). She is currently a lecturer and assistant professor's at the Chair of Theory and History of Art, KSADA. She teaches courses on the history of European fine art of 18-20th centuries, and the history of theatre and stage design. Her research interests include the theatre and fine art of Ukraine and Europe in the 20th century. She has participated in various international scientific conferences (Czech Republic, Poland, Russia, Ukraine) and has published on Ukrainian avant-garde set design. She is a co-author of a monographs Boris Kosarev. The 1920s. From Painting to Tea-Movie-Photo (Kiyv, 2009).

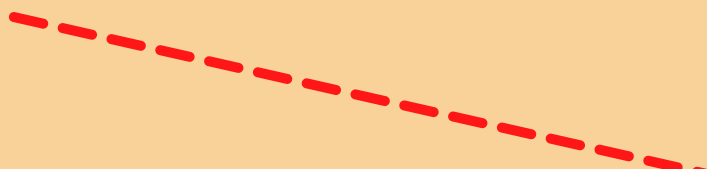


Monica Yadav

Emergence of Theatre Object as a Repository of Memory: An Investigation into Tadeusz Kantor's Practice of Inter/ Post-World War Theatre

Tadeusz Kantor, a modern Polish director, set designer, photographer, and painter in his essay *The Autonomous Theatre* (1956) writes about freeing theatre from drama. Theatre is a practice in itself with 'neither logical, analogical, parallel, nor juxtaposed relationship with drama' (Kantor 1956, 116). Kantor's avant-garde theatre was an attempt at abstraction that would take away its audience from any meaning of a referent that lies outside the theatre or dramatic text. He desperately strived for a theatre where an audience experiences a powerful spectacle meant for all dead and living. Kantor's abstraction is built on 'found objects' left behind after the butchery of war, rescued from their destiny of decay and destruction to their formation as art objects. These useless left-over objects were crowded / mixed together with actors in a black 'wardrobe' theatre, where actors could not easily be distinguished as either objects or subjects. In other words, the actors could no longer act as brute subjects upon objects. The objects lose their meaning and exist as an empty autonomy. There is more to say about the conceptual presence of objects as the objects of theatre than to relegate them to a material effect of the society's production system. After the war (after a trauma), when humans are/ can no longer be a repository of memory, does Kantor create through his theatre practice objects in/ of theatre which are also repositories of memory?

Monica Yadav is currently a Ph.D. scholar at the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, India. Her current interests include philosophy, theatre studies, and neurology with a specific focus on trauma and theatre objects. She recently published an essay titled *Action, Body, Technology: A Study of Cave, "The Man Who" and Hands* (2019) in the *Journal of Somaesthetics*.



Vlasta Koubská

Antonín Heythum (1901–1954): Stage Designer, Architect, Industrial Designer

The presentation will focus on some of the latest findings from the life and work of an important Czech avant-garde stage designer and architect Antonín Heythum, which have been discovered in the last three years. Based on this fresh data, a new monograph mapping Heythum's work in its entirety is under way. It will encompass information about the artist's interwar activities in Czechoslovakia and specially his activities in the USA for the first time. (Heythum lived in the USA from late 1938 to 1953. In 1954 he died in an alpine town Rottach-Egern). The latest findings are mainly based on the unknown to this time family archive stored in Ostravice in the Beskydy Mountains and the Archive of American Artists of the Smithsonian Institution in the USA in Washington. The family archive documents contain mainly personal and work correspondence and a collection of photographs, while the Washington archive documents reveal his exhibition and pedagogical activities in the field of industrial design in the war and post-war period. A lot of unpublished materials come from the collections of the National Gallery in Prague.

In addition to the description of these new findings, the paper will focus on the remarkable connection of architectural, exhibition, and scenographic works of Heythum. His theatrical work is often included in the field of constructivist scenography, which is only partially true and in general proves to be inaccurate. The paper tries to describe the basic creative principles of Heythum, his theoretical attitudes and opinions. Attention will also be paid to his lecture on scenography from 1934, the manuscript of which is stored in a private collection.

Doc. PhDr. Vlasta Koubská lectures on the history and theory of scenography at the Department of Stage Design at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. For many years she worked as a curator and head of the art collection of the National Museum, Theatre Department. Based on her knowledge of the collection of costume and stage designs, she has prepared a number of exhibitions (USA, Great Britain, Taiwan, France, Italy, Germany), articles and monographs, which mainly deal with Czech avant-garde scenography of the 1920s and 1930s. She paid attention mainly to the following stage designers: František Tröster, František Zelenka, Josef Čapek, Bedřich Feuerstein, František Muzika, Vlastislav Hofman, Alexandr Vladimír Hrska, František Tichý, Jaroslav Malina, Otakar Schindler, Zbyněk Kolář, Jana Zbořilová, Karel Glogr, etc.



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Fabrice Flahutez



Upside-down Theatre. Lettrism and the Legacy of Dada and Surrealism Avant-gardes (1945-1968)

Lettrism, founded by the Romanian poet and theorist Isidore Isou in 1946 in Paris, immediately positioned itself in a certain continuity with dada and surrealism. The reasons for this assumed filiation are multiple, but the first being the radical rejection of the order imposed by the Cold War celebrating categories as formalism (abstract and non-abstract painting) which consolidated the rivalry of the two geopolitical blocs that are the West and the East. For more than two decades (1945-1968), art in Eastern Europe, but also American art or what was done in France, were cataloged according to these categories deemed obsolete by the Lettrists. According to Isou, art had to be constantly an adventure of creation and constantly changing the world and sensitivity. There would therefore be no question of conforming to a system of images to satisfy an order of the world. Based on this observation, Isidore Isou claimed a filiation with Surrealism and a fortiori with Dada which were internationalist currents of thought and especially whose poetic or plastic creation was to be freed from established aesthetic categories, national considerations, etc. His total project, which he calls *Crématique*, would therefore revisit Dada, Surrealism and the European Avant-garde in order to bring out another way of making art connected to life. His project would also be supported by a desire to reissue forgotten texts and Dada works and to make the critical reception, retrace the history of Dada and the creation of the twentieth century. So, we rediscovered in Paris thanks to them, texts and a whole history of protest. It is interesting to note that in this enterprise of refounding the arts, Isidore Isou would work the theatre, but also dance and music, photography or painting as media needing interpreters, guides, in short, audiences to exist. Painting, for example, would become theatre, cinema would become performance, photography would become text, etc. It is about nothing more than showing that these proposals aimed to involve artists, but also people in very Dadaist performative practices and to rebuild links between people that wars and partitions had weakened. Art mixed with life at the foundation of Dada was therefore also at the heart of the new international avant-garde that had been Lettrism.

Fabrice Flahutez is Professor of the History of Art at the University of Lyon-Saint-Etienne in France. He is the author of many books and articles on Lettrism and the Situationist International, including *Le lettrisme historique était une avant-garde 1945-1953* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2011), as well as several edited volumes with Fabien Danesi and Emmanuel Guy, *La fabrique du cinéma de Guy Debord* (Paris: Actes-Sud, 2013), and *Le Lettrisme et son temps* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2018). He is currently working on the 'Global Surrealism' exhibition at the Tate Modern and the MET New York, as well as curating 'Lewis Carroll and Surrealism' at the Strasbourg Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art.

Staging Devětsil: Míra Holzbachová and the Czech Interwar Avant-Garde

In the context of the interwar avant-garde in Europe, the Czech group Devětsil is relatively understudied, but the contributions of women within Devětsil have received even less attention. The dancer and choreographer Míra Holzbachová was one of very few female members of Devětsil and made her major contributions to the group on the stage of the Osvobozené divadlo. Having previously studied modern dance in Hamburg with Rudolf von Laban (who had also been an instructor of her contemporary Milča Mayerová) and performing in cities such as London, Paris, and Moscow, Holzbachová's international influences and connections were well aligned with the pan-European scope of Devětsil, as were her leftist politics.

This paper explores an early moment in Holzbachová's long career, when she was a Devětsil member. It considers her stage work as captured in the avant-garde magazines as well as popular publications of the time and asks how these representations can nuance our understanding of Devětsil activities and its project of Poetism. For instance, on the cover of the 1926 issue of the Brno Devětsil magazine *Pásmo*, a photomontage highlights Holzbachová specifically. Her visage appears several times in the montage, and her name recurs in a bold, capital font, the insistent repetition and alteration of lights and darks summoning the effects of a flashing advertisement on an electric sign board. Elsewhere, images of Holzbachová dancing that appear in another Devětsil magazine *ReD*, likewise appear in the popular illustrated paper *Pestrý týden*, indicating that her appeal extended beyond a small avant-garde circle to reach a wider audience. For the Brno Theatralia conference, I will trace the recurrence of images of Holzbachová across a range of magazines, as part of a larger argument I am making that positions the women of Devětsil as those who actually managed to reach the wider, middle-class and proletarian audience to whom the group supposedly aspired in their manifestoes and theoretical statements.

Meghan Forbes holds a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where she completed her dissertation 'In the Middle of It All: Prague, Brno, and the Avant-garde Networks of Interwar Europe' in 2016. She is currently preparing her first book manuscript on the avant-garde and technologies of print as a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Leonard A. Lauder Research Center for Modern Art. Meghan has received numerous fellowships in support of her work, including a Fulbright Award (2014–15) to Berlin, Germany. She is the sole editor of *International Perspectives on Publishing Platforms: Image, Object, Text* (Routledge, 2019) and co-curator of *BAUHAUS↔VKhUTEMAS: Intersecting Parallels* (Museum of Modern Art, 2018). Previously, Meghan was the C-MAP (Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives) Fellow at MoMA for Central and Eastern Europe and Czech Lecturer at the University of Texas at Austin.



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Dorota Gremlicová

Dancing Death: The Critical and Choreographic Perception of Kurt Jooss' The Green Table in Prague in 1930'

The anti-war choreography *Der grüne Tisch* (The Green Table) by Kurt Jooss, one of the leading exponents of the *Ausdruckstanz* in Germany, won in 1932 the choreographic competition in Paris. It became an implementation of Jooss's concept of the *Tanztheater* and earned him the position of a paragon of emancipated modernistic dance. In Prague it was performed by Ballets Jooss in 1937, and it drew great attention, both critical and choreographic. The critical reflection concentrated on its pacifistic message and unusual rendition of the central figure of the Death (Max Brod). In the avant-garde dance circles it was theoretically and practically accepted as a way into a new thinking about dance art (Joe Jenčík, Saša Machov).

In the paper these various types of reactions to *The Green Table* specifically and to Jooss choreographic creativity in general will be analysed and put into the contemporary Prague artistic (dance) context. The still-alive choreography of *The Green Table* itself can serve as the main referential point to this analysis despite the inevitable differences and changes in the interpretation. The kinetographic score of the choreography originally created by Jooss himself is also available for the detailed study of the movement structure. Kurt Jooss published some 'manifesto' of the *Tanztheater*, too, explaining his understanding of the new modernistic theatrical choreographic form as opposing to the concept of the absolute dance formulated by Mary Wigman. These sources could help to identify the features, components, and qualities of *The Green Table* reflected as significant and inspirational in the Czech environment.

Prof. Mgr. Dorota Gremlicová, Ph.D., studied choreology at the Dance Department of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. She is a professor of the Choreology Study programme there (history of Western and Czech dance, dance in the sociological perspective, analysis of dance, theoretical reflections of dance). Her research activities include dance as social acting, stage, social and folk/national dance relations, dance and modernistic art. She has been a member of the Study Group on Ethnochoreology ICTM since 2002.



Margarida Brito Alves

Within and Beyond the Classroom – The Theatrical Educational Practices of Salette Tavares in 1974

With a background in philosophy/aesthetics, Salette Tavares (1922–1994) was an artist who began to develop her work in the scope of the Portuguese New State dictatorship (1933–1974). Having started as a poet, she became known as an artist during the 1960s in the context of the Portuguese Experimental Poetry Group's activities, which established connections with other internationally-acclaimed authors who questioned the dimensions of language and were particularly inspired by Brazilian visual and concrete poetry.

Along with a continuous and committed theoretical reflection, her work combined literary production and artistic practice, which resulted in creating a dually contaminated field that extended to visual poetry and to a three-dimensional production she called 'spatial poetry'. Furthermore, driven by an interest in the phenomenological and performative features of the artwork, she not only elaborated pieces that included a relational dimension, but also collaborated in producing the first happening in Portugal, in 1965.

After the 1974 Carnation Revolution, and at time when pedagogical methods were being questioned and reformulated in several art schools in Portugal, Salette Tavares taught courses on Aesthetics at Ar.Co, or Centro de Arte e Comunicação Visual, an independent art school created in Lisbon in 1973, where she had the opportunity to develop experimental educational processes during the 1970s. Blurring the boundaries between artistic practices and teaching, Tavares configured performances that were presented as classes (or the other way around) and that, as a theatrical, participative, and collective event, included the (mis)interpretation of children's stories, the creation of an opera environment, and the enactment of different characters, as well as gardening and a picnic.

Taking into consideration the theatrical dimension of some of her pieces and pedagogical methods, this paper aims to discuss Salette Tavares's creative trajectory by presenting and discussing different ways in which her work unfolded.

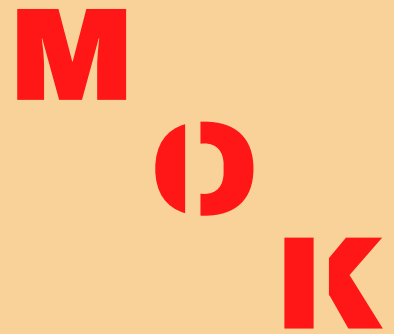
Margarida Brito Alves is an associate professor at the Department of Art History of the NOVA Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities in Lisbon.

She is a board member of the Art History Institute, where she coordinates the Contemporary Art Studies research group and the "Spatial Practices in Contemporary Art" research line.

She holds a PhD (2011) and an MA (2006) in History of Contemporary Art from FCSH-UNL, and a BA in Architecture (2000) from FCT-UC. Her PhD thesis studies the transformation of the concept of space in 20th-Century Art, taking the notions of heterogeneity, tridimensionality, and performativity as complementary perspectives.

She is the author of different publications in scientific journals, edited books and exhibition catalogues, and of the books *A Revista Colóquio / Artes* (Lisboa: Colibri, 2007) – a book which was awarded the SNBA/José de Figueiredo Prize 2008 – and *O Espaço na Criação Artística do Século XX. Heterogeneidade. Tridimensionalidade. Performatividade.* (Lisboa: Colibri, 2012).

She co-curated the exhibitions *Salette Tavares: Visual Poetry* (Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, 2014), *Co-Habitar* (Casa das Galeotas, Lisbon, 2016) and *I Hope You will Drop by Someday, Unannounced* (Livraria Sistema Solar, Lisbon, 2019) and *As Leis Próprias do Mar, Distante do Mundo Dirigido Pelas Leis da Terra* (Convento dos Capuchos, Lisbon, 2021).



Mariana Orawczak Kunešová

André Breton on French and Czech Stages

The founder of Surrealism André Breton had a specific relationship both with theatre and Czechoslovakia.

If theatre was for him a genre deserving suspicion because of its lack of spontaneity, he would at the same time state in the First Manifesto that nowhere did the spontaneity reveal itself in such a free way as in the dialogue. He not only wrote plays (in collaboration with Soupault and Aragon) but also desired, as his correspondence shows, to 'put' his characters on stage.

Breton's relationship with Czechoslovakia is well known: from the time he first met Nezval and Honzl in Paris in 1933 till the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Surrealist Group in 1938, he warmly supported Czech partisans of Surrealism, to such an extent that he mentioned in his letters that the members of the Czechoslovak Surrealist Group were his best friends. His conference stay in Czechoslovakia in spring 1935 was for Czechoslovak Surrealism an event of essential importance. The paper intends to explore the traces of the Surrealism founder's plays in the interwar stagings in France and Czechoslovakia. First, I shall concentrate on the figure of André Breton, on his role in French and Czech Avant-garde and Avant-garde theatre. Then, I shall focus on two Breton's plays: *S'il vous plaît* (If You Please, written in collaboration with Soupault in 1919, staged in Paris in 1920 and in Prague in 1928), and *Le Trésor des jésuites* (The Jesuit Treasure, written in collaboration with Aragon in 1928, intended to be staged in Paris the same year; staged in Prague in 1935), and their staging specificities, including the context: reasons for their staging choice, translation, reception.

Additionally, the intention of the paper is, if enough proofs in the context of the chosen topic are found, to contribute to the debate regarding the differences between French and Czech Surrealism.

Mariana Orawczak Kunešová holds a PhD from the Paul Valéry University of Montpellier, France, and Masaryk University, Czech Republic. She works as an assistant professor at the University of Ostrava, Czech Republic. In 2017, she published her thesis, supervised by Didier Plassard, as a monograph *L'Absurde dans le théâtre Dada et pré-surréaliste français* (Brno, 2017). She has published articles on Jarry, Roussel, Apollinaire, Breton, Vitrac and on the notion of the absurd. She also edited the proceedings of the conference *Alfred Jarry et la culture tchèque*, organised together with *Société des amis d'Alfred Jarry* (Ostrava, 2008). Since 2020, she has been dedicating herself to the reception of French avant-gardes in Czech interwar theatre (Czech Science Foundation Research Grant).

WOW, HAVE YOU READ IT?

Czech and French Avant-gardes on the Pages of French and Czech Journals and Revues

In May 1923, a fresh French theatre journal *Choses de théâtre* dedicated a special volume to theatre in an almost brand new Czechoslovakia. Not has only an established French playwright Charles Vildrac shared his experiences of his stay in Prague, but many of prominent Czech theatre makers contributed to the “numéro tchécoslovaque” as well: Kvapil, Hilar, Čapek, Hilbert, Hofmann, Tille or Nejedlý, Jelínek, Blahník...

French readers had a unique opportunity to get familiar with a milieu of contemporary Czech (and briefly Slovak as well) theatre: the insight was bright and showed close relations and mutual respect between both French and Czech cultures. On the other hand, differences were tangible.

In 1920s, French modernist and avant-garde theatre, literature, and poetry (not speaking about architects!) have spread like wildfire on the pages of Czech (avant-garde) periodicals. Many of its Czech contributors and readers were fluent in French (or understood it at least!); that is why we can find poems and texts in French next to the attempts of translations. In short; Czech readers could enjoy actual contributions of “the most contemporary” French authors of their times (with pictures, photos and illustrations included).

The other side of the coin - very attractive for today's research - is that almost all of these fascinating contributions appeared in journals, magazines, and revues which were disappearing as quickly as they had been created, (including a short publishing history of the above mentioned French revue *Choses de théâtre*). However, short life does not mean less influence. On the contrary, they had the power of the meteorites.

Well, let us have a closer look at this “concert of start-ups” (of the periodicals) and 1 try to explore this chapter of French (avant-garde) theatre via the pages of Czech avant garde journals, such as *Orfeus*, *DISK*, or *Revue Devětsil*.²

Doc. Petr Christov, Ph.D. is an associate professor of the Department of Theatre Studies of Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic.

He is also theatre critic, university teacher, and translator.

The research fields include French theatre and drama, medieval theatre, contemporary drama, translation of plays and novels, and theatre criticism.

He is also an author of the books *Gérard de Nerval a jeho dvojenec* (Gérard de Nerval and its Double, 2017), *Maurice Maeterlinck: Krátké hry o smrti* (Maurice Maeterlinck: Short Plays about the Death, 2014), *České drama dnes: rozhovory s českými dramatiky* (Czech Drama Today: Interviews with Czech Playwrights, 2012) and a translator of works by Alfred Jarry or Maurice Maeterlinck.

Michal Zahálka

'CORRECT, BUT IT'S A TRANSLATION' (Jindřich Hořejší and Contemporary French Drama)

Avant-garde French playwrights of the 1920s and 1930s had major influence on Czech theatre – naturally also thanks to their translators. Among the most prolific of those was Jindřich Hořejší (1886-1941), a well-known poet who lived in Paris for several years around 1910s and later established himself as a close collaborator of the National Theatre Prague, with 25 translations staged only in the National Theatre between 1924 and Hořejší's untimely demise in 1941. While he was a man of diverse talents and interests, translating a whole range of works from Racine's *Phèdre* to popular farces for the Vlasta Burian Theatre, Hořejší's forte was contemporary drama (Jean Giraudoux, Georges Neveux, Paul Claudel, Jean Cocteau and others), providing materials for directors such as Jindřich Honzl, E. F. Burian, or Jiří Frejka. In this paper, I would like to use Hořejší as an example to briefly present the overall practical functioning of the theatre translation business in interwar Prague. I will characterise Hořejší's approach to theatre translation and define his position in the context of translation theories of the era. Analysis of Hořejší's own articles detailing his views on the theoretical aspects of translation will be featured, as well as insights into the stage life of his translations.

Michal Zahálka is a translator, book editor, theatre scholar, and dramaturg. Graduate of Theatre Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, he has worked as a theatre critic for several years, while also serving as one of the programmers for the International Festival THEATRE in Pilsen (since 2012). In 2018 and 2019, he worked as a dramaturg in the new Prague City Theatre artistic management. Since 2016, he has been employed as an editor at the Publishing Department of the Arts and Theatre Institute. His translations include contemporary British (Torben Betts, David Hare, etc.) and French (Florian Zeller, Pauline Peyrade, etc.) drama. He is currently taking part in REDRAMA project at Masaryk University, translating John Dryden's *All for Love* and Aphra Behn's *The Emperor of the Moon*.




Sarah Flock

Brussels-Prague: Artistic Dialogue Between Two Peripheries

Belgian Symbolism – and inter alia its two leading figures Maeterlinck and Verhaeren – was well-known among modern creators of international scene. While the connections between Belgian movement and Paris or Moscow have been a subject matter of several studies, few publications are fully dedicated to its relationship with Prague.

The aim of my presentation is two-fold. First, I will discuss Belgian Symbolism in its national historical context. Then, I will outline Verhaeren's and Maeterlinck's literary specificities. And finally, I will point out the similarities between the context of Belgian and Czech creations. The purpose is to start a dialogue between the two Belgian French-speaking symbolists and Czech Avant-garde, focusing – but not exclusively – on Devětsil. With this aim in mind, I follow the connections, on the one hand, between Verhaeren, Neumann, and Hilar, and on the other hand, between Maeterlinck, Čapek, and Burian.

Sarah Flock obtained her PhD in Czech Studies and Theatre Studies at the Free University of Brussels (ULB, Brussels) and Charles University (Prague) in 2011. Her main research topics include the relationships between the Czech Republic and Belgium in the 20th century and Czech theatre, particularly Otomar Krejča. She is a member of the editorial board of *Slavica Bruxellensia*, a co-editor of *Les Tchèques et les Belges, une histoire en miroir* (2008), the editor of *Theatre after 1989, East-Central European Theatre ReflActions* (2012). She is currently a scientific collaborator at Ciasp at the Free University of Brussels, works for the Department of History at the Catholic University of Louvain and teaches history in Brussels.





The Slovene Avant-garde and the Conceptual Crisis of Europe

The presentation will concentrate on three artistic initiatives which gave specific shapes to the multiple and complicated relations between the (theatre) avant-garde and the post-war crisis of identity in Central European art and culture. I will link three specific representational tactics of these three 'events': (1) an expressionist play by Slavko Grum *An Event in the Town of Goga*, first performed in 1931, (2) the leading Slovene constructivist and avant-garde poet Srečko Kosovel's manifestative thoughts on Europe in Crisis as stated in his almost unknown and highly neglected diaries and sketches of dramatic fragments written in the 1920s, and (3) Ferdo Delak and August Černigoj's manifestos of New Slovene Stage and the Constructivist Triestine Circle.

Using those examples, I will try to show how the post WW1 crisis in a Central-European corner between Trieste, Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Belgrade, Italian Futurism and Fascism, 'Barbarogenius' of Ljubomir Micić and Expressionism were all linked to a political, cultural, and aesthetic, as well as ethic crisis. To what extent the aesthetic revolutions of the Constructivist Circle in Trieste, Tank and Dada Tank in Ljubljana and Zagreb, Delak's *Worker's Stage*, and Grum's expressionist plays in Ljubljana were the artistic and human responses of the avant-garde artists to the newly developed crisis in Europe after 1918?

I would like to finish with a teaser from Kosovel's poem 'Ljubljana is Asleep': 'In red chaos a new humanity / is approaching! Ljubljana is asleep. / Europe is dying in a red light.'

Tomaž Toporišič is a dramaturg and theatre theoretician, an associate professor in history and theory of drama and performing arts and a vice-dean of the Academy of Theatre, University of Ljubljana. From 1997 to 2003 he was the artistic director and from 2003 to 2016, a dramaturg of the Mladinsko Theatre. In 1995 he co-founded Exodos Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts. In 2013, he was a guest programmer of Maribor European Capital of Culture. He was a curator of several exhibitions for Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (PQ). His primary research interests are contemporary performing arts, literature, and visual culture. He is the author of four books on contemporary performing arts. His latest essays include 'The New Slovene Theatre and Italian Futurism', '(Re)staging the Rhetoric of Space', 'Deconstructive Readings of the Avant-garde Tradition in Post-Socialist Retro-Avant-garde Theatre', and 'Death and Violence in Contemporary Theatre, Drama, and Novel' (with Oliver Frlić, Anja Hilling, Simona Semenič, and G. W. Sebald).





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