



**Politics and Community Engagement  
in Doctoral Theatre Research**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

**70** LET  **JAMU**



The increasing political tension around the globe poses a number of challenges to current theatre practice as well as to its scholarly reflection. Based on live social contact, theatre is a fundamentally political art form as it always takes place within a particular social setting involving particular physically co-existing people.

Considering politics in the most general sense as affairs of the community, it has become obvious that the interest in theatre's political, i.e. participatory, mobilizing and potentially transformative, aspects has been increasing both in theatre practice and theory as well as the interest in theatre's relationship towards the public sphere and the issue of social responsibility. The intensity of theatre's political engagement has grown on multiple levels and has been mediated through different genres, often referred to as "political theatre", "documentary theatre", "radical theatre", and "applied theatre".

What creative methods are being used when practising politically engaged theatre nowadays? In what respects do artists consider the impact that their theatre work has on communities? How is artistic research approached in terms of application in the field of politically engaged theatre? Finally, what innovative methods for analysing the political dimension of theatre are being developed? The conference will discuss the attitude towards these issues among the theatre makers and researchers who are currently pursuing their PhDs. They will also pay attention to the political aspect involved in doctoral studies themselves.

The Conference of Doctoral Studies in Theatre Practice and Theory has been organised as a biennial event by the Theatre Faculty of Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts Brno, Czech Republic, since 2003.

The conference provides a platform on which different concepts of doctoral studies and research in the field of theatre practice and theory can be contrasted.

The event has been attended by over one hundred doctoral students from Europe, Africa, North America and Asia who have come here to introduce their research in progress to an international audience and discuss common methodological issues.

# FRIDAY

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017

8.30–9.30 **Registration**

9.30–9.40 **Conference Opening**

9.40–10.10 **Keynote Speech**

➤ **Tony Fisher – Joel Anderson**

The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, United Kingdom

Against Theatrical Community: The Theory of the Joker in the Engaged Political Theatre of Augusto Boal – a Dialogue

10.10–10.20 **Discussion**

Chair: David Drozd

10.20–11.20 **Discussing Transformative Potential of Theatre**

Chair: Lucia Repašská

➤ **José de Ipanema – Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany**

Brazilian Radical Theatre – Political Resistance and Dialectical Expression

➤ **Michal Hába – Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic**

Politics, Self-Irony, and Estrangement Commentary in Theatre, Demonstrated by the Lachende Bestien Company Productions

➤ **Nivedita Gokhale – University of Lincoln, United Kingdom**

Voicing Domestic Abuse Against Women through Digitised Theatre in India

11.20–11.50 **Discussion**

11.50–12.10 **Coffee break**

12.10–12.50 **Theatre Festivals and Social Engagement**

Chair: Nad'a Satková

➤ **Ján Balaj – Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, Czech Republic**

Theatre Festival as an Institution – Political Engagement and Social Responsibility

➤ **Tomasz Ciesielski – University of Lodz, Poland**

Horizontalizing Through Touch

12.50–13.10 **Discussion**

13.10–14.30 **Lunch**

14.30–15.50 **The Political in Studying PhD**

Chair: Klára Skrobánková

➤ **Melanie Sterba – Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Germany**

Exposing the truth is like – MONSTROSITY

➤ **Harriet Plewis – University of Northumbria at Newcastle, United Kingdom**

Gossip, Anecdote and Shorthand: Towards a Tentative Dissident Citation Practice

➤ **Yogendra Agrawal – University of Rajasthan, India**

Doctoral Theatre Studies in India (Social Contexts and Responsibilities)

➤ **Zofia Smolarska – The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw, Poland**

The Politics of Theatre Craftsmanship Versus the Political Craft of Theatre Research

15.50–16.20 **Discussion**

16.20–16.40 **Coffee break**

16.40–17.40 **Theatricality – Public Space – Politics**

Chair: Jan Motal

➤ **Giovanni Campus – University of Sassari, Italy**

The City as Theatre: Performing Political Space

➤ **Orestes Pérez Estanquero – Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain**

«¿Que no! ¿que no! ¿que no nos representan!» Between People Assembled, in Their Own Name

➤ **Justus Wenke – Leipzig University, Germany**

Theatrical Practices beyond Art and Social Interaction

17.40–18.10 **Discussion**

18.10 **Banquet**

# SATURDAY

4<sup>th</sup> November 2017

## 9.30–10.50 **Strategies of Mobilisation and Resistance**

Chair: Jan Motal

- **Nika Leskovšek** – University of Ljubljana, Slovenia  
The Strategies for Mobilisation of the Spectator Before and After Slovenian Independence (From *NSK* to *Manifest K*)
- **Shiv Singh Palawat** – University of Rajasthan, India  
Studying "Marxism" in Modern Indian Theatre and Varied Perspectives
- **Michal Denci** – Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, Slovakia  
Dario Fo: Working Class Hero
- **Pierre Nadaud** – Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, Czech Republic  
Testimony as an Act of Political Resistance

## 10.50–11.20 **Discussion**

## 11.20–11.40 **Coffee break**

## 11.40–12.40 **Stimulating Communities**

Chair: Andrea Jochmanová

- **Jitka Vrbková** – Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, Czech Republic  
Message from the Actors with an Extra (Chromosome)
- **Klaudia Antal** – University of Pécs, Hungary  
Documentary Theatre as (Politically Engaged) Community Theatre
- **Radka Kulichová** – Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, Czech Republic  
Research in Performing Arts Interpreting the Production of *Alice's Adventure in the Land of Signs* into Czech Sign Language

## 12.40–13.10 **Discussion**

## 13.10–14.30 **Lunch**

## 14.30–15.50 **Theatre – Terror – Social Change**

Chair: Klára Skrobánková

- **Małgorzata Szum** – The Institute of Art of The Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland  
British Theatre in "War on Terror" (2001–2005)
- **Maryam Dadkhah Tehrani** – University of Tehran, Iran  
Ideology and the Textual/Political Unconscious in Iranian Dramatic Literature
- **Albena Tagareva** – Institute of Art Studies of Bulgarian Academy of Science, Sofia, Bulgaria  
The Political Aspect in the Stage Design during the Socialist Realism in Bulgarian Theatre
- **Alexandra Marinho Oliveira** – Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany  
Politics of Images: Brecht's *War Primer* and *Journals*

## 15.50–16.20 **Discussion**

## 16.20–16.40 **Coffee break**

## 16.40–17.40 **Power and Participatory Theatre Practices**

Chair: Lucia Repašská

- **Matthias Sterba** – Leipzig University, Germany  
Beyond Ideology? – Critical Approaches in Theatre Studies
- **Lukáš Brychta** – Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic  
Implicit Political Power of Interactive Theatre
- **Joanna Kocemba** – University of Warsaw, Poland  
Participatory Theatre: Possibilities of Division

## 17.40–18.30 **Discussion**

## 18.30 **Banquet**





# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**DR TONY FISHER, BA, MA, PHD**  
**DR JOEL ANDERSON, BA, DEA, PHD**

**Against Theatrical Community:**

**The Theory of the Joker in the Engaged Political Theatre of Augusto Boal – a Dialogue**

Augusto Boal's 'Theatre of the Oppressed' is both a celebrated theory, and an influential set of practices which seek to harness the pedagogical, political, and emancipatory powers of theatre in the service of a transformation of social situations and their structures of domination. In this contribution, taking the form a dialogue between two characters, we situate Boal within an engaged political theatre tradition, in contradistinction to the more common deployment of his theories and practices, where they exist as a model for the application of theatre to community contexts, assimilating a once-radical dramaturgical methodology to serve social and governmental policy agendas. Central to this is Boal's figure of the 'Joker': while in 'applied' and participatory theatre practices this figure has been cast as a facilitator, we seek to recover the Joker as a dramaturgical actant, responsible for the identification and intensification of antagonism – the very thing suppressed by consensual politics (but yet that without which there can be no politics). Through the dialogical form, we analyse the stakes of political theatre today, its relationship to the state (or what Alain Badiou has called 'the state of the situation') and propose precepts towards a theory of the Joker as not only the vector of dissensus, but also the guarantor of spectatorial autonomy, the tester of truth within the theatrical situation, and the means by which political theatre might resist the closure of representation.





## DR JOEL ANDERSON, BA, DEA, PHD

SENIOR LECTURER, COURSE LEADER MA THEATRE CRITICISM AND DRAMATURGY  
THE ROYAL CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH AND DRAMA, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

### Curriculum Vitae

I studied at Queen Mary University of London and Université Paris VIII, and trained at the École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq. I worked with Augusto Boal and later in numerous French theatre companies, including multiple projects with Théâtre de l'Opprimé in Paris, which also led to further ventures across Europe, Africa, and South America. In addition to theatre, I have worked in the fields of film, television, and photography. I have previously taught at Kingston University, Queen Mary University of London, HM Prison Pentonville, Brunel University London, and at several schools in France. I have in recent years given doctoral seminars in Germany, and lectures in China, and have served as Visiting Professor at the University of London Institute Paris.

I have presented research at international academic conferences, and have been an invited speaker, most recently in Korea and France. In addition to sharing research at conferences and symposia, I have given public talks, most recently at Asia House, London.

I was a member of the executive committee of TaPRA from 2005-2010. I have served as external examiner at Goldsmiths and LASALLE College of the Arts, and as an PhD examiner for Lincoln University. I have previously received funding from the AHRC, the University of London Central Research Fund, and from the European Cultural Foundation, for a project with UN RWA in Jordan.



## DR TONY FISHER, BA, MA, PHD

READER IN THEATRE AND PHILOSOPHY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH (RESEARCH DEGREES)  
THE ROYAL CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH AND DRAMA, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

### Curriculum Vitae

I am a theatre academic and researcher but also have a highly interdisciplinary background – first having trained in fine art then film-making, before going on to study philosophy, writing my doctoral thesis on problems of history and phenomenology in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. I also worked as a scriptwriter for several years in the UK film industry and have an ongoing interest in making experimental documentary film.

Having grown up in Newcastle-upon-Tyne during the dark days of Thatcherism, I sought refuge in the Tyneside Cinema where I first developed a love for European cinema. I went on to study fine art before moving to New York, where I studied with some extraordinary teachers at the Whitney Museum of American Art's prestigious Independent Study Programme, such as Hal Foster, Yvonne Rainer and Ron Clark. It was during my time in New York that I encountered theatre and performance for the first time – particularly through the work of the Wooster Group. Returning to the UK, I became involved in film-making before returning to higher education, eventually going on to complete a PhD in philosophy at the University of Essex. I first began teaching as a visiting tutor at Northumbria University and Middlesex in their fine art departments, then as a sessional lecturer teaching philosophy at Birkbeck before taking up a full-time post at Central in 2007. At Central, I teach MA students dramatic writing, dramaturgy, and theatre history as well as, for the PhD programme, research skills and methods.

As a researcher, I am particularly involved with the Theatre, Performance and Philosophy working group at TaPRA where, until recently, I was a co-convenor, as well as the Performance Philosophy network. I have published work in various journals that explores intersections of philosophy, performance and theatre history. I have recently completed a monograph that examines – in the form of a 'critical history' or genealogy - the long and profound influence that government had on the development of the modern European stage. I am co-editor of a 2016 collection, *Performing Antagonism: Theatre, Performance and Radical Democracy* that looks at problems of political performance by drawing on the insights of post-Marxist political philosophy and the theory of agonistic democracy. Two further edited collections are in the pipeline: one of the ways in which Michel Foucault continues to influence theatre and performance scholarship; and the other on performance and failure.



# SPEAKERS

### **Doctoral Theatre Studies in India (Social Contexts and Responsibilities)**

The entire world is a stage. In India somewhere between 2,000 BC and 4th century AD Bharat Muni wrote the *Natya Shastra*, which is considered to be the world's earliest and most elaborated book on drama and performing arts. The *Natya Shastra* covers each and every aspect of dramatic production, from stage design to make-up, music, dance, and every detail of stagecraft; it also sheds light on every aspect of the use of musical instruments. The *Natya Shastra* can easily be called a book which lays the foundation stones for performing art studies in India and even in the world. Since the ancient times the theatre tradition in India has come a long way in terms of techniques, plots of plays, and production styles. In India there are very varied and versatile theatre traditions from folk forms to traditional ones. The sociological aspects in Indian theatre have a rich history as well. The theatre of India has always played a role within the society. In India contemporary theatre is still searching for its professional status and economic values but the sociological values are always evident there. Nowadays, contemporary amateur theatre in India is mainly dependent on government funding by the culture ministry and state government, and the playwrights and directors always portray the evils of the society and the system. The themes of social evils like illiteracy, population explosion, gender violence, and corruption in the government system are a constant presence in the plays of contemporary Indian theatre. My presentation will discuss contemporary Indian theatre and the doctoral research methods and sociological perspectives as well as the ways in which doctoral research in theatre faces present-day challenges, especially in India, a country that does not have many institutions for theatre research.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Yogendra Agrawal is pursuing his PhD, developing his thesis *The Use of Indian and Western Acting Styles in Twenty First Century's Hindi Theatre (An Analytical Study)* at the Department of Dramatics, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, and Qualified National Eligibility Test for Lectureship in the Dramatics conducted by University Grants Commission, New Delhi, India. He holds a Master of Arts degree in Dramatics from the Department of Dramatics, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, and a postgraduate diploma in Dramatics from the same department. He has presented more than ten research papers at national and international level conferences and seminars and has published two research papers in nationwide journals in India. He has participated in over thirty productions as an actor and backstage artist (performed in India and abroad) and he has also conducted more than a dozen workshops for secondary schools, colleges, universities, and NGOs in the capacity of a theatre trainer, faculty member, and expert. In India he has worked with theatre directors of national and international renown. He was involved at various positions in organization of five national level theatre festivals and theatre events. He has been invited to participate on numerous drama competitions and drama and theatre festivals on the state and national level as a jury member.

Yogendra Agrawal is a member of ISTR (Indian Society for Theatre Research) the Indian Chapter of IFTR (International Federation for Theatre Research), a long-time member of Raj Lok Vikas Sansthan, Jaipur, and an active member of Antraal Theatre Group, Jaipur. He is a long-time member of the professional theatre group Rang Sanskar Theatre Group, and also the founding member of The Wings Research Scholars Unit, Department of Dramatics, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India.

## KLAUDIA ANTAL

UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS, HUNGARY

### Documentary Theatre as (Politically Engaged) Community Theatre

In my presentation I would like to focus on the question whether documentary theatre can be regarded as *a politically engaged community theatre*, and if so, from what perspective. Firstly, I will define what I understand by the terms “politics” and “community theatre”: “Politics revolves around what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak” – declares Jacques Rancière, who says that the distribution of the sensible determines those who have a part in the community. Hence the politics of theatre is reflected in the redistribution of the sensible and the social space as well as in the rebuilding of the community, and if the term “politics” – returning to the etymology of the word – is used to refer to collective thinking, discussion of communal issues, and presentation of possible solutions, the genre of community theatre can be deeply political.

Secondly, in order to determine what documentary and community theatre have in common, I will analyse two Hungarian productions: *While You Are Reading This Title, We Are Talking about You* is based on a student performance which was interrupted by the Head of the Theatre Department at the University of Theatre and Film Arts. The documentary performance starts with looking back at this case, which serves merely as a springboard for the present actors to talk about the opportunities an entrant has, the actor training at the university, the possibilities of making a living in theatre, and the generation gap in theatre. The other play is the *Hungarian Locust Tree*, which demonstrates how the locust, brought in from the USA, has become a symbol of the Hungarian nation and politics, and poses the question whether anything and anybody can be regarded as Hungarian if it/s/he takes roots in the land.

### Curriculum Vitae

Klaudia Antal (born 1990 in Budapest) graduated in Theatre Studies; she is currently pursuing her PhD studies at University of Pécs, Faculty of Literature. The topic of her doctoral research concerns the political aspects of participatory theatre. From this point of view, she examines the genre of community theatre, theatre in education programs, documentary theatre, and board game theatre. Since 2013, she has been working at the Jurányi House and writing criticism (among others) for *Theatre Magazine*.

E-mail: [antal.klau@gmail.com](mailto:antal.klau@gmail.com)

**JÁN BALAJ**

**JANÁČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS IN BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC**

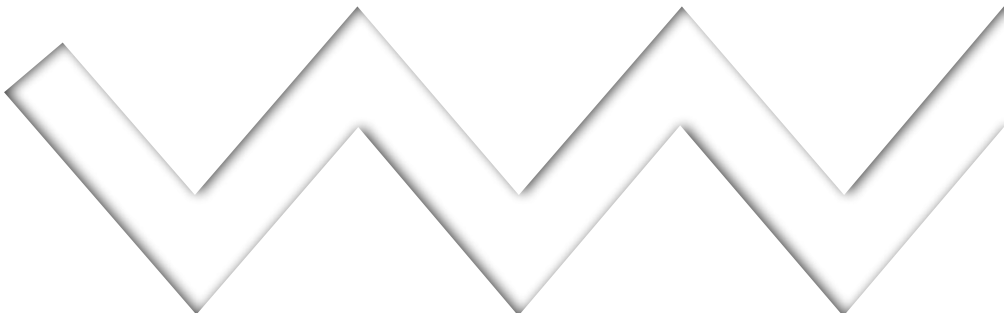
### **Theatre Festival as an Institution – Political Engagement and Social Responsibility**

The paper discusses the current position of theatre festivals with regards to their political and social engagement. Following practical examples of noteworthy and trend-setting theatre festivals around Europe, the paper aims to underline their role and define the ways in which they contribute to the discourse on politics and social issues. What are the curatorial strategies of the political engagement of a festival in terms of programming as well as other activities including community engagement (audience development) that has emerged as one of the central conditions within international/European grant schemes? The paper also focuses on the way in which theatre festivals as institutions approach issues of social responsibility and integrate them into their practice. The festivals selected in order to discuss the above mentioned concerns are the ones that try to overcome the form of the festival as “art presentation”, aiming instead to become an integral part of the discourse and attempt to foster social change.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Ján Balaj studied Theory and Criticism at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. As a grantee of the National Scholarship Program he spent a semester reading theatre dramaturgy at the Zurich University of Arts. During his studies he was participating on the Istropolitana Project festival as a dramaturgy board member and editor of the festival daily (in 2016 in the capacity of the editor in chief). Since 2015 he has been working as a dramaturge at the International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra.

E-mail: [balaj.jan@gmail.com](mailto:balaj.jan@gmail.com)



## **Implicit Political Power of Interactive Theatre**

The paper focuses on political and social aspects of immersive as well as more broadly interactive theatre by using the authorial production *Pomezí* (Borderland) as an example. It presents this form of theatre as a space for amplification of theatre's implicit political power.

Whereas explicitly political theatre mediates its message especially through its content, interactive theatre forms amplify the political potential of this medium by means of their form. The spectator is confronted not only with the content which s/he can approach from a disengaged perspective, but also with the whole event s/he is a part of. Therefore, s/he cannot gain distance from what is taking place. In interactive theatre forms audience members face the obligation to make decisions and to act. Consequently, their opinions and actions form a part of the conceptual framework of the performance. The aim is not to posit that interactive theatre is more political than other theatre forms but to assert that here the political potential of the theatre medium is realized along a different axis than the one related to content.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

Lukáš Brychta's main focus is on selected trends of contemporary theatre and performance practice. He also applies the principles which he finds of theoretical interest in his artistic practice. He graduated from the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (DAMU) majoring in Theatre Theory and Criticism. There he currently carries out his doctoral project focused on game aspects of theatre and performance of the last twenty years, concerned mainly with different forms of spectator engagement, such as interactivity and participation. During his master's studies he was taking part in the pilot program Theatre Practice in Non-Traditional Spaces (Department of Alternative and Puppet Theatre, DAMU) and at the moment he studies Directing and Dramaturgy of Alternative Theatre at the same department alongside his theoretical doctoral studies. Lately, his main point of interest has been the so-called immersive theatre.

E-mail: [luk.brychta@gmail.com](mailto:luk.brychta@gmail.com)

## **The City as Theatre: Performing Political Space**

References to theatre and dance are abundant in urban studies; however, they almost exclusively serve as a metaphor. Urban studies, predominantly concerned with arts under the species of visual appearance, neglect to investigate the question of their specificity rather than their inter-disciplinarity.

Indeed, from ancient rituals to contemporary street theatre an intentional and staged action can play a central role not only in the processes of sense-giving and community building, or what is today called "place-making", but also in the "production of space".

The aim of my research is to investigate the theoretical basis, the role and regularities of performing arts in urban practice, especially with respect to re-activating and regenerating public spaces. Through the specificity of performing it will hopefully be also possible to clarify the performative aspects of every artistic intervention, interpreted as a combination of form and event.

I have selected three directions or tools derived from practice and literature to be tested for the purpose: the rhythm-analytical method as sketched by Lefebvre, the trialectical logic, elaborated by the Situationist International, and the category of liminality defined by Turner. I assume that these theoretical tools or directions can be integrated into a unity, identifying the liminal space as the third element capable of turning every dialectic relation into a spatial one, and making rhythm the unifying element of space and time.

Thus, my research will also look at political protests as a performance related to the occupation of space and construction of identity through synchronization.

The relationship between theatre and politics is indeed radical and the recent tendency towards forms of performative and participatory public art that radically shift the politics of spectatorship appear to reconnect these concepts, calling for the adjustment of various devices of urban life including its decision-making processes.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

Giovanni Campus graduated in Philosophy in 1999 from the University of Sassari, focusing on medieval and contemporary philosophy, critical thought, and visual and performing arts. He has approximately fourteen years of working experience in management of artistic and cultural projects and communications as a journalist, press officer, media and institutional relations, communications, and project manager. He is a member of the editorial board of the academic journal *Giornale Critico di Storia delle Idee* (Journal of Critical History of Ideas), edited by the University of Sassari in association with the University San Raffaele in Milan (<http://www.giornalecritico.it>). His PhD research project at the Department of Architecture at Alghero focuses on the relationship between rhythm and space and the role of performing arts in open and public places. The title of his dissertation is *The City as Theatre: The Performing Space*. He is currently enrolled in the final year of his PhD study.

E-mail: [gicampus@uniss.it](mailto:gicampus@uniss.it)



## **Horizontalizing Through Touch**

The theatre community in Poland is divided into many, not always sharply defined, groups that are constituted by a common aesthetics and/or organizational situation. Their majority experiences significant underfunding. The resulting deepening atomization of the theatrical community clearly has a negative impact on the structure of the repertoires, programs, festivals, and co-productions. It also reflects the residues of hierarchies drawing distinctions between “high” and “popular”, politically “correct” and “incorrect” culture. Despite its mostly critical attitude towards these divisions, the theatre community keeps involuntarily repeating or mirroring them.

The festival Dotknij Teatru (Touch the Theatre) that has been taking place since 2010 is an exception: built around the celebration of the International Theatre Day, the event crosses all standard divisions and boundaries. Having been established as an educational project, it is essentially a festival of premieres and workshops, which greatly stimulates the entire theatre life in Lodz, and, on a smaller scale, across the country. The proposed article will confirm the democratizing character of Dotknij Teatru by discussing both its genesis and sources of the success achieved by its organizers. It will also point out the potential weaknesses and risks of such projects. Hopefully, in this manner I will be able to identify the strategies that may be used to implement similar projects.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

Tomasz Ciesielski is a performer, dancer, and theatre researcher. Since 2009 he has been a member of the Theatre Association Chorea; during this time he participated on following projects (workshops, performances): *Antic/Dance in Re-Construction*, 2010, *Oratorium Dance Project*, 2011, *Touched/Moved*, 2015. In 2011 he started cooperating with Granhøj Dans (Denmark), which resulted in the international productions of *Men&Mahler* and *Rite of Spring Extended*, both awarded Årets Reumert Vinder. He works as a Research Assistant and PhD candidate at the University of Lodz with a program focusing on the anthropology of theatre and the possibilities of applying neurosciences and cognitive sciences to dance and theatre studies. He authored the first Polish monograph presenting the developments in dance neuroaesthetics titled *The Dancing Mind. Dance and Movement Theatre in Neurocognitive Perspective*, holding workshops on the same topic in Poland. He is also the secretary of the editorial board of the *Polish Dictionary of Dance in the Twentieth and the Twenty-First Century*. In the capacity of a Lecturer at the Academy of Music in Lodz he teaches choreography and dance techniques.

E-mail: [ciesielski\\_t@uni.lodz.pl](mailto:ciesielski_t@uni.lodz.pl)

## MICHAL DENCI

ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA

### Dario Fo: Working Class Hero

The paper analyses the relationship between preferences in the artistic expression and political belief in the work of Dario Fo.

Dario Fo is particularly well-known as the author of *Mistero buffo*, a performance inspired by folk theatre forms such as *commedia dell'arte*, which is considered to be his masterpiece. Fo, in cooperation with his wife, the actress Franca Rame, wrote and produced many other plays, frequently based on real facts and true stories. A number of these plays are generally considered to be inferior works especially with respect to the quality of their scripts. However, Dario Fo's plays ought not to be assessed as autonomous dramatic texts since they were often written for a specific audience or for a special occasion. Fo presented many of his performances in front of a big audience consisting mainly of "working class" spectators and his dramatic form was adapted to this audience. The artistic preferences of this author were based on his political beliefs.

In discussing Dario Fo's theatre production it will be acknowledged that his works ought to be seen within their context. At the same time, the discussion will be founded on the realization that the political beliefs of this performer can be perceived not only on the level of the content but that they also influenced the form of his theatre.

### Curriculum Vitae

Michal Denci was born in 1987 in Bratislava; in 2006 he graduated from bilingual Slovak-Italian grammar school Ladislava Sárú 1 in Bratislava. In 2009 he finished the bachelor degree program Musical, Theatrical and Artistic Disciplines at the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature, University of Florence, and in 2012 he graduated with honours from the same university in the master's degree program Musical, Cinematographic and Theatrical Management with a thesis on Slovak theatre in the twentieth century. After finishing his studies he worked as an assistant director and production manager at the Arena Theatre in Bratislava. Subsequently, he was employed as an event manager and library assistant in the Italian Cultural Institute in Bratislava. At present he works at the cultural department of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region. At the same time he is enrolled in the PhD program at the Department of Theatre Studies, Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, focusing on Italian theatre of the twentieth century.

E-mail: [michal.denci@gmail.com](mailto:michal.denci@gmail.com)

## ORESTES PÉREZ ESTANQUERO

AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA, SPAIN

<<¡Que no! ¡que no! ¡que no nos representan!>> **Between People Assembled, in Their Own Name.**

Between 2006 and 2012 in Barcelona I witnessed various social and scenic events that stood out because of their transversality, which arose from the real. Similar events took place at the time in other cities around the world. The *political fiction* and the *scene of fiction* were then definitely in question. Their slogan was: "No! No! They do not represent us!". The transversal events that took place in the squares and streets, as well as on the stages of the main theatrical venues of Barcelona in the time-frame mentioned promoted their own forms of representation and participation.

Participants in the demonstrations of 15-M, also known as the *movement of the indignant*, and the participants in the demonstrations in favour of the independence of Catalonia came from various political parties or from none at all. The nature of these demonstrations placed participants beyond any "traditional" political or ideological representation. Participants in the stage works such as *Dar patadas para no desaparecer* (Collective 96°), *Mi madre y yo* (Gómez), *Felicidad.es* (Espinosa), and *Pendiente de Votación* (FFF, Bernat) came from different "recognized scenic disciplines" (theatre, dance, opera, circus, etc.) or from none of them. The nature of these productions places the participants beyond any specialization or disciplinary representation. In both groups of events the participants, the people assembled, acted in their own name.

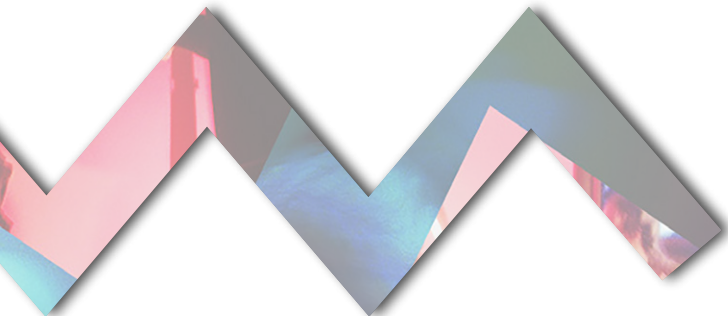
My doctoral thesis-in-progress discusses the actions of human agents in a set of stage productions that may be classified as "documentary, applied, and radical theatre" because they are founded in the cosmos *of the real* (i.e. Martin, Gare and Mumford, Sánchez, Urraco, etc.), or, more specifically, in the cosmos *of the real people present* and in a relationship, in a certain creative encounter. In the presentation however, I will be reflecting on the relationships between the studied biographical (Heddon) and immersive (Machon) scenic events and the social ones that envelop them with respect to their forms of representation and participation. In addition, I will be answering, among others, these questions: What presence do these events have in the social and scenic life of Barcelona today? Are these transversal approaches already history?



## Curriculum Vitae

Orestes Pérez Estanquero (born 1962 in Habana, Cuba) is an artist and a PhD candidate (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, UAB – Universidad de las Artes de Cuba, ISA). After his degree in Dramatic Art (1985) and his master's degree in Arts at ISA (2002), he earned an MA in Performing Art Research at UAB (2008). As an actor he has participated in theatre, cinema, radio, and television productions. He played, among others characters, Prospero in *Otra Tempestad* by Teatro Buendía at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and Fidel Castro in the Argentinian film *Hasta la Victoria Siempre*. He worked as a theatre director, among other companies, with Semaver Kumpanya in *Chamaco* (2006) in Istanbul. In Cuba he taught undergraduate (as teacher of Drama at International School of Havana), graduate, and postgraduate university courses (as a Senior Adjunct Professor of Acting at ISA). He has participated in several festivals: Perth, Cadiz, Caracas, Edinburgh, etc. His research focuses on the field of theory and practice of acting. He has published in theatre journals such as *Assaig de Teatre*, *Conjunto*, *Gestos*, and others. He has presented his research at the annual conferences of the International Federation for Theatre Research: Barcelona, 2013, Warwick, 2014. He is a member of the National Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba and a member of the Association of Professional Actors and Directors of Catalonia. Pérez Estanquero is a founding member of Teatro Buendía, an iconic Cuban theatre group.

E-mail: [orestesbcn@yahoo.es](mailto:orestesbcn@yahoo.es)



**NIVEDITA GOKHALE**

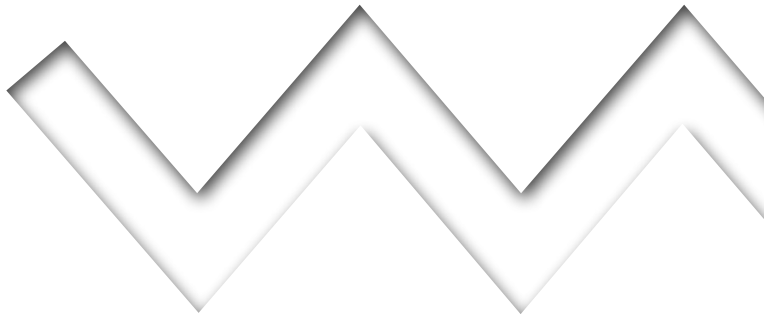
UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN, UNITED KINGDOM

### **Voicing Domestic Abuse against Women through Digitised Theatre in India**

According to BBC News Asia, "About once every five minutes an incident of domestic violence is reported in India, under its legal definition of 'cruelty by husband or his relatives'". As per the statistics of National Crime Records Bureau of India, 309,546 crimes against women were reported in the year 2013. Unfortunately, the numbers are still on the rise but this is a statistical overview of how 'domestic abuse' in India is very much an existing issue that definitely needs to be voiced. Can this voice be lent through digital theatre? Can theatre prove to be an effective medium for articulating domestic abuse?

Drama is an 'aesthetic' manifestation of truth that is contrived through 'experience'. As an expression, theatre is responsible for reproducing the archetype of this 'truth' that is experienced by an individual.

This paper aims at studying the possibilities of utilising the medium of digitised theatre to increase the awareness about domestic abuse and develop a range of interactive digital channels within Indian communities to broaden the reach of this effort. This study will also examine an activity that vocalises the testimonies of victims of domestic abuse through conducting extensive theatre activities. These activities comprise physical exercises that are extemporised and further digitally processed to reach a synthesis of building a performance. The core motive of this exercise is to produce a performance by creating accounts of real situations and establishing a process of psychoanalysis through digitisation. Hence this paper analyses the utilisation of digital theatre to enhance the articulation of social issues in a truer sense and inculcating the idea of fighting this issue, as women, men, and especially, as humans.

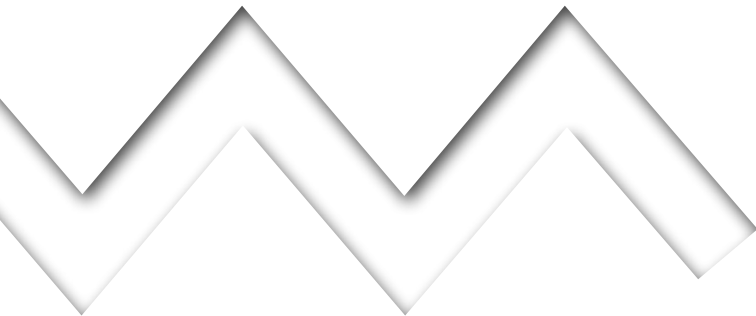


## Curriculum Vitae

Nivedita Gokhale is currently pursuing a PhD in Drama from the University of Lincoln, UK on contemporary Indian political theatre. As theatre is an art form, its viability thrives on reflecting the social realities and also on instrumenting a 'real' change within the system. Political Theatre is one of the key strands of Indian Theatre as it is used as a tool for raising socio-political awareness and community development and redefining notions of Indian social concepts. Based on the theory of conscientisation, political theatre has always been responsible for influencing, forming the political opinions of the masses, and devising activism through performance. Tradition represents a vital approach in conceiving political theatre in India; it draws upon the dynamism of Indian culture and engages constantly with it to create regenerative institutional forms.

This includes learning from traditional contexts and formulating the learning to reconstruct the structural representation of theatre. From the pre-independent era of initiating movements against the British rule through theatre, the post-independent era of establishing a connection with the liberated nation, promoting political theories that were more oriented towards building people's new political identity, to the contemporary political theatre that concentrates on socio-political awareness, Indian political theatre has been an intersection of art, realism, and social relevance. Hence, it has been observed that the traditional forms of theatre have been constantly reconstructed over the period of time. Therefore it is necessary to study the ways in which these reconstructions are instigated by analysing the progression of Indian political theatre and activism within the context of the new age of 'digitisation' by establishing channels of relatable interpretations and by inventing theatre models that enhance the experience of digital apprehension of political theatre.

E-mail: [niveedita.gokhale@gmail.com](mailto:niveedita.gokhale@gmail.com)



## MICHAL HÁBA

ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

### Politics, Self-Irony, and Estrangement Commentary in Theatre, Demonstrated by the Lachende Bestien Company Productions

The presentation focuses on the (im)possibility of a political statement in theatre and its impact on the society. The production of *Ferdinand!* (the presenter being simultaneously the author, director, and performer), points to theatre's limitations with respect to influencing societal debate. Despite "every theatre being political", its impact on changing societal discourse is limited, in fact nil. In *Ferdinand!*, Ferdinand Vaněk Today features as a notion – "artist-intellectual-élite" – engaging in a monologue (since the Havelian Brewmaster representing the masses is absent today) on the (im)possibility of a political statement in contemporary theatre. The dialogue is replaced with a monologue and the story with "discursive narration" (a term associated with Pollesch). René Pollesch and the Berlin Volksbühne, the flagship of German political theatre (where the presenter underwent his internship), are the counterparts to the debate on the effectiveness of (Czech) political theatre. Both Ferdinand Vaněk Today and the presenter express themselves by commentaries and postcommentaries – the author and the protagonist become one. Irony and self-irony are fundamental needs of the author/ /presenter: to avoid embarrassment and pretence by not treating serious things seriously when facing the limited possibilities of theatre to change anything.

In commenting on the production of *Sezuan*, the author introduces the necessity of estranging estrangement itself, as well as the Brechtian principles in political theatre today (it is from Brecht that the political aspect of present-day theatre derives), and also the principle of estranging the demonstrated action in order to deal with the fact that theatre is representation. The use of language for a functional statement is discussed, as well as the depiction of specific political events involving the danger of turning them either into satire or generalization.

### Curriculum Vitae

Michal Hába, born 1986 in Prague, graduated in Direction from the Department of Alternative Theatre at DAMU. He was an assistant to Dušan D. Pařízek and Alexander Riemenschneider (Komedie Theatre, Prague). He underwent an internship in Berlin (Volksbühne, Frank Castorf), and participated on the Berliner Theatertreffen International Forum (2016).

He has worked as director, actor, and performer both in independent and state-run theatres. He is the head of the travelling social theatre company The Horse and Motor Theatre and the artistic director of Lachende Bestien (where he directed the productions of *120 Days of Freedom*, *Cries of the Nightjar*, *Kohlhaas Terror*, *Pornogeography*, *Ferdinand!*, and *Sezuan*)

In Nitra, Slovakia, Michal Hába directed *Huckleberry Finn* (Staré divadlo Karola Spišáka Theatre). He collaborates with theatres Husa na provázku, X10, and D21 (*Macbeth*, 2017, director). His doctoral research focuses on "pretence" in theatre, "playership", and political theatre.

E-mail: [michalhaba@email.cz](mailto:michalhaba@email.cz)

# JOSÉ DE IPANEMA

GOETHE UNIVERSITY FRANKFURT, GERMANY

## Brazilian Radical Theatre – Political Resistance and Dialectical Expression

The *Brazilian Radical Theater* (TRB) is an approach to theatrical poetics established in 1988 by the actor, director, playwright, and professor Ricardo Guilherme (b. 1955) from Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil. It is a methodology that provides guidance to actors and directors during the preparation and rehearsal process. The aim of this performative lecture is to investigate the way TRB addresses the will to change oppressive structures through promoting a transformation in the audience's perception. The poetics, with a history of more than fifty performances, embodies a dialectical approach in its principles and on its scene to depict social reality as fundamentally dynamic and subject to permanent influence of forces in confrontation. The lecture, as a part of a PhD research conducted under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Müller-Scholl at Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany, will try to establish a productive affinity between TRB's principles and modern reception of Bertolt Brecht's key theories. The method creatively upcycles *Gestus* and *Verfremdungseffekt*, presenting a critical viewpoint on the contemporary agenda in a scene that relies almost entirely on its unique acting style.

Inspired by the current turbulent political situation in Brazil, where class struggle is evident more than ever and a thorough revision of communal engagement is required, a performative lecture based on Peter Handke's *Self-Accusation* will be presented. *Radical* acting will be discussed as an original way of approaching Brechtian legacy and provoking the critical reasoning of the audience while identifying the actor as the main source of theatricality. A radical actor presents two independent narrative structures that are placed in mutual confrontation in front of the audience: the narration of the plot and the physical performance of its cause.

## Curriculum Vitae

José de Ipanema, born in 1976 in Rio de Janeiro, is a Brazilian actor, producer, and a PhD candidate at Theatre Studies Department of Goethe University Frankfurt in Germany. His current research attempts to establish a productive relationship between Brazilian theatrical methodology called Teatro Radical Brasileiro (TRB) and the modern reception of Brecht's fundamental theories with an emphasis on their dialectical and political aspects. Having been awarded a Master in Performing Arts degree at UNIRIO in Rio de Janeiro, in which he investigated the acting style of TRB, he is the author of the book *O Ator Radical – Fabulação, Presença e Mito* (The Radical Actor – Fable-telling, Presence and Myth). In 2016 he presented a paper based on his PhD research at the latest International Brecht Society (IBS) session in Oxford, England. As an actor and producer, he worked on various theatre productions in the Brazilian cities of Fortaleza and Rio de Janeiro.

E-mail: [ipanema6969@hotmail.com](mailto:ipanema6969@hotmail.com)



## JOANNA KOCEMBA

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW, POLAND

### Participatory Theatre: Possibilities of Division

Participatory theatre, which is always political and which is the subject of my PhD research, involves the participation and creative activities of amateurs, representatives of various social groups. It is inclusive, engaging, and communal, close to the ideas of emancipation through art. Participatory theatre is a strategy of socially engaged art, which consists in collective decision-making about the artistic and social form of works or activities. Its essence is the creative activity of a group of people, professionals and amateurs, invited to act together. Creators of participatory theatre have a very special opportunity to influence human life. Not only do they talk from the stage about particular topics, but they also engage people in theatrical activities, take them on the stage, and allow them to create their own stage statement, preparing a situation reflecting on social life. However, participatory theatre is also a varied phenomenon. For instance, from a political perspective, following the reflection of Jacques Rancière one can say that each participatory theatre is political. Nevertheless, observing individual participatory theatre productions, there is no doubt that the level of political engagement is scaled – i.e. it is not always involved to the same degree. Following the lead of Paweł Mościcki, it may be stated that performances may be engaged in a parapolitical, political, or metapolitical way.

Distinctions may also be drawn between different strategies of engaging the community to participate in participatory theatre, different levels of participation of the participants in the preparation of the performance and, of course, different aims with which the participatory theatre is being prepared. During my presentation I will answer the question of how we can divide participatory theatre and which of its types can be distinguished within these divisions. Moreover, special focus will be given to the methodological difficulties that different types of participatory theatre introduce into research conducted as part of a PhD project.

### Curriculum Vitae

Joanna Kocemba is a graduate in Cultural Studies and Theatre Studies from the Institute of Contemporary Culture at the University of Lodz, a PhD candidate at the Institute of Polish Culture at the University of Warsaw, and also a member of the Culture Animation Team and the Postgraduate Studies of Theatre Pedagogy Team. In the years 2011-2014 she was a contributor to the culture section in the newspaper *Dziennik Łódzki*. She currently collaborates with the Węgajty Theater, the Topographie Association, For Contrast portal, Humanities of the XXI Century research group, Ochota Theatre, and Melpomena Amateur Theatre Competition. She published, among others, in *Reflections*, *Contemporary Culture*, *Folk Literature*, *Didaskalia*, and *Teatr*. Her fields of interest are theatre for social change, socially engaged theatre, alternative and independent theatre, amateur theatre movement, participatory theatre, participatory art, and cultural animation. She is developing a PhD thesis on participatory theatre. She is currently collecting material and formulates the opening chapters.

E-mail: [joannakocemba@gmail.com](mailto:joannakocemba@gmail.com)

## RADKA KULICHOVÁ

JANÁČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS IN BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

### Research in Performing Arts Interpreting the Production of *Alice's Adventure in the Land of Signs* into Czech Sign Language

I am going to talk about my research into interpreting a stage production into Czech Sign Language for deaf audiences. Myself and other members of Hands Dance (a group of hearing and deaf interpreters focusing on interpreting of performing art) have carried out several cultural projects.

I intended to help both deaf and hearing audiences understand the production. Therefore, along with the Burantetr theatre company and a group of deaf and hearing interpreters, I staged a theatre production called *Alice's Adventures in the Land of Signs*, which was inspired by the well-known story by Lewis Carroll.

I worked with the director of the production, a dramaturge, actors, and interpreters during the rehearsal of the production. We did not want our interpretation to be merely a transliteration, so we developed some principles for translating the words of each character. We wanted to retain the content and also the wordplay of the original work in both languages, i.e. Czech and Czech Sign Language. We were seeking equivalents in sign language for the language and logical wordplay which is typical of Carroll. The best method was to work with deaf theatre consultants to explore the most suitable strategies. It was necessary to translate conceptual metaphors. The interpretation of the poem *Jabberwocky* was one of the project's biggest challenges.

In my presentation, I am going to describe the way in which we rehearsed our production, speak about methodology, and discuss feedback from both audience groups, i.e. the hearing and the deaf. Developing new projects for people with disabilities is important because it enables them to participate in everyday life. Deaf interpreters can thus engage in the performing arts. The production informs the hearing community about sign language and "the world of the deaf".

### Curriculum Vitae

Radka Kulichová graduated from the Department of Drama Education for the Deaf at the Theatre Faculty at the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno. At present she is a doctoral candidate at the same university, developing a dissertation on performing arts interpreting into Czech Sign Language. Along with her fellow interpreters, she has established an artistic group that experiments with interpreting performing arts into sign language.

Her doctoral research focuses on performing arts interpreting of a production into Czech Sign Language for the deaf. Radka wants to create an opportunity for the deaf audiences to be able to participate in cultural activities from which they would have otherwise been excluded.

E-mail: [kulichova@jamu.cz](mailto:kulichova@jamu.cz)



**The Strategies for Mobilisation of the Spectator Before and After Slovenian Independence  
(From *NSK* to *Manifest K*)**

In her doctoral dissertation *Spectator, Community, Mobilization: The Transformative Power of Performing Arts After the Performative Turn*, Nika Leskovšek is investigating the potential of performing arts to induce social engagement in the spectator at times in which there is "nothing that is in common" (Robert Esposito). The research focuses on different modes and strategies of addressing the spectator in relation to changes of the political framework. In Slovenia, a radical political change took place in 1991 when the Republic of Slovenia seceded from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and declared its independence. This initiated a political transition from one-party communist system towards a multi-party representational democracy and also an important ideological shift from collective actions connecting equal members seeking community, solidarity, and compassion, towards neo-liberal capitalism in democracy, which paved the way for market economy, competitive relations, individualism, and, especially, political indifference. The main objective of the paper is to identify and analyse the strategies for mobilisation of the spectator before and after Slovenian independence and illustrate them on practical examples (from *NSK* to *Manifest K*).

**Curriculum Vitae**

Nika Leskovšek graduated in Philosophy and Comparative Literature and Literary Theory from the Faculty of Arts (University of Ljubljana); the title of her thesis was *Beckett and Berkeley: In the Light of Perception*. In 2013, she also graduated in Dramaturgy from Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television with a thesis titled *Chance or the Essay about Moving the Rules*. In 2014, Nika Leskovšek received the Taras Kermauner Foundation Fellowship as a young researcher of Slovenian drama. She regularly conducts research in the field of contemporary drama for the literary and cultural magazine *Sodobnost*, writes analyses of performing arts for the performing arts journal *Maska* and for *Dialogi*, a magazine for culture and society. She has worked in different capacities such as researcher, theatre critic, theatre dramaturge, and moderator of symposia and round tables involving experts from the field of performing arts. She is a member of the Association of Theatre Critics and Researchers of Slovenia (DGKTS) and of the editorial board of the aforementioned *Maska* journal. She was a jury member at the Week of Slovenian Drama festival in 2016 and 2017 and at the Days of Comedy festival in 2017. Since 2016, she has been working as a junior researcher at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (University of Ljubljana). In the same year, she enrolled in the Performing Arts Studies PhD program at the Academy. The working title of her doctoral thesis is *Spectator, Community, Mobilization: The Transformative Power of Performing Arts After the Performative Turn*, in which she is investigating the potential of performing arts to induce social engagement in the spectator.

E-mail: [nika.leskovsek@gmail.com](mailto:nika.leskovsek@gmail.com)

# ALEXANDRA MARINHO OLIVEIRA

GOETHE UNIVERSITY FRANKFURT, GERMANY

## Politics of Images: Brecht's *War Primer* and *Journals*

The aim of this paper is to analyse Brecht's *War Primer* and *Journals 1934-1955* within his creative process. The investigation discusses the way in which the extensive collection of pictures from mass media magazines influenced Brecht's dramaturgy. During his exile, from 1933 until 1949, the German playwright lived in different cities, initially in Prague and finally in Zurich, and relied mostly on radio news and mass media magazines to have access to information about political matters. The play *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* represents a case study of the correlations between those images and his work. Written in just three weeks during his 1941 Scandinavian exile, the play is a satirical allegory of National Socialism. It becomes clear that Brecht was inspired by an iconographic collection, mostly organized in the play's *Inspiration Book*, to define the *Gestus* of the scenes. Finally, the paper poses a provocative question: in what way do the *politics of images* interfere with the contemporary theatre scene?

## Curriculum Vitae

Alexandra Marinho Oliveira (41) is a Brazilian actress and director holding a MA in Visual Arts (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro) with a research on theatre and photography related to her staging of Peter Handke's *Self Accusation*. She graduated in English Literature (Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro) and post-graduated in Theatre Education (CEFET/Ceará). She is currently a DAAD's Scholarship holder at Goethe University in Frankfurt, conducting her studies as a PhD candidate since 2015 with the dissertation topic *Bertolt Brecht and Theatre Photography: Aesthetic and Political Involvement*. The dissertation, supervised by Professor Nikolaus Müller-Schöll, investigates the background of the creative processes that influenced the theatrical productions of the playwright and director Bertolt Brecht through the photographic medium. As a member of International Brecht Society, Alexandra presented a paper titled *Brecht and Photography* at the 15th Symposium of International Brecht Society in Oxford, 2016.

E-mail: [marinhoalexandra@hotmail.com](mailto:marinhoalexandra@hotmail.com)



## PIERRE NADAUD

JANÁČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS IN BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

### Testimony as an Act of Political Resistance

To me, developing a play with its performers (as co-authors or as a collective in a devising process) entails introducing a testimony into the public sphere as the main source of the discourse and its truth. According to the notion of the micropolitic derived from Felix Guattari, "there is no scientific objectivity in the sphere of the discourse, even the so-called neutrality in the relation as the so-called analytic neutrality". Hence, every discourse in its truth could be understood as a testimony, that is, sharing of the truth of a subject regarding a situation or a problem. When working with actors on a topic, problem, or situation, we do not pretend to become experts on the given topic or even defend a thesis. We only testify and develop the truth of the actors-subjects and citizens regarding those problems and situations. This is a highly political gesture to me, because in our political world there is no place left for meeting among feeling and thinking subjects, no place for testimony, but instead there is a struggle between pundits or lobbyists who pretend to speak objectively, making us obey. Working artistically with a testimony can be fraught with two pitfalls: by collecting aspects of existence, words and gestures that are too specific, we are facing the risk of reducing the sharing to an unraveling of peculiarities. If we generalize too much, we accumulate generalities that claim to provoke an encounter even though nothing in the person is really engaged. How to produce these singular and shared words and movements and how to convey them? This is the problem that remains constant in my creative and teaching work. I am trying to analyze some of my methods within this paper.

### Curriculum Vitae

Pierre Nadaud is a dancer, actor, and director, but also a teacher. After finishing his master's study of Philosophy at Paris VIII University, he moved to the Czech Republic in 1997. Due to his keen interest in theatre and body poetic, he enrolled in the Department of Nonverbal Theatre at HAMU in Prague, where he graduated several years later. He is currently the Director of the Department of Physical Theatre at the Theatre Faculty of JAMU in Brno.

E-mail: [pnadaud@yahoo.fr](mailto:pnadaud@yahoo.fr)



## **Studying “Marxism” in Modern Indian Theatre and Varied Perspectives**

The history of theatre in India is very rich and diverse, from the great tradition of Sanskrit theatre to Parsi theatre and the great “people’s theatre movement” of the pre-independence era. The element of protest in Indian theatre has its roots in the period of the Great Indian Freedom Struggle. After 1857 plays like *Neel Darpan* set the parameters of theatre of revolt and protest against the British atrocities against poor Indian farmers and workers. The British Government responded by introducing the Dramatic Performance Act of 1876 which empowered the local police and administrations to restrict dramatic performances.

From this point onwards, Indian dramatic artists and playwrights have adopted other styles and techniques to perform plays with elements of protest. Parsi theatre used mythological characters and historical figures and allusive texts which were not understood by the British but could be easily understood by local people. The proper “Marxist” angle in Indian theatre came with the establishment of IPTA (Indian People’s Theatre Association) in 1943 and the famous “people’s theatre movement” broke out which helped in the freedom struggle of the country on the cultural front. Since then, many playwrights and theatre groups have been working with the Marxist angle in their texts and performances. The study of theatre at university theatre departments and institutes always pays close attention to Marxism and theatre. As Marxist ideology is constantly losing ground in present-day India due to various reasons, the Marxism-related doctoral studies in theatre are also facing certain challenges. The presentation of this paper will discuss various perspectives of studying “Marxism” in the context of Indian theatre, its social relevance and challenges.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

Shiv Singh Palawat is working on his PhD thesis on the topic *Influence of Marxism on Post-Independence Hindi Theatre* at the Department of Dramatics of the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. He is currently working as a Senior Research Fellow at the department. In 2009 he was awarded an MA in Dramatics from the Department of Dramatics, University of Rajasthan. He passed the National Eligibility Test for lectureship in the subject of Dramatics in 2010. In 2013 he was awarded a Junior Research Fellowship and in 2016 the Senior Research Fellowship from Government of India University Grants Commission.

Shiv Singh Palawat is a founding member of The Wings Research Scholar’s Unit at the Department of Dramatics, University of Rajasthan. He also holds the membership in the Indian Society for Theatre Research, the Indian Chapter of International Federation for Theatre Research and is a member of IPTA (Indian People’s Theatre Association), a UNESCO associate. He is also a member of Antraal Theatre Group, Jaipur.

He has extensive experience in theatre acting and direction. He directed the production of *Do kaudi ka khel* (an adaptation of Brecht’s *Threepenny Opera*) at the Department of Dramatics in 2017; the same year he directed the production of *Adhi raat ke baad*, written by Dr. Shankar Shesh. He was also the director of *Hayate-Janbida*, *Awaz ka neelam*, and *Kitna gahra kitna satahi* for IPTA Jaipur. He participated on more than thirty productions and over one hundred stage shows all over the country as an actor.

An accomplished scholar, he presented research papers at several prestigious international and national level conferences at the University of Rajasthan, IIS University Jaipur, University of Mumbai, Goa University, and Aligarh Muslim University.

## HARRIET PLEWIS

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY, UNITED KINGDOM

### **Gossip, Anecdote and Shorthand: Towards a Tentative Dissident Citation Practice**

*This paper will look at the power dynamics and structural hierarchies that exist within academic practices, particularly within the context of a practice-based PhD. I will focus on how these dynamics operate in relation to scholarly citation and the supervisor/supervisee relationship. I will ask whether there is a case to be made for an expansion of current traditions and habits, especially when looked at from the point of view of performance practice.*

There are many rules and standards which govern citation practices within the academy and print publication. Some are explicit but sundry others are implied and could be said to take the form of a totalising pressure or an obligatory act of faith.

In this performed paper, I will look at the context in which academic citation currently operates and make the case for the inclusion of more 'informal' practices, such as gossip, lived experience, and anecdote. I will also look at how and why the act of referring can often be reduced to a shorthand and the ways in which this process might be exclusionary. I will put forward some methods I have been developing to combat this narrowing of access to the academic research field and elaborate upon my practice-based investigation into feminist approaches to citation. This includes processes I have begun to call 'body-citation', 'practical homage', and 'embedded referencing'.

I will also interrogate the supervisor/supervisee relationship, asking if the widely acknowledged habits of citation are reinforced by the current approaches to supervision.

Taking my own practice-based PhD as a starting point and drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed, Ann Cvetkovich, Chris Kraus, and my own performative research with artist Nicola Singh, I will question the historical exclusion of gossip and anecdote from research discourse and wonder aloud whether it is time for an atypical approach to citation practice in order to broaden and evolve who gets mentioned, why they get mentioned, and, perhaps most importantly of all, how they get mentioned.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Harriet Plewis is a British artist currently based in London. Her activity is rooted in performance, feminist pedagogies, and the moving image. Her work looks at the mechanics of co-authorship and how theory intersects with practice and is often made in collaboration with specific groups, be they schoolchildren, residents of a particular area, or members of enthusiast organisations. She has an AHRC funded MFA from Newcastle University and sits on the advisory board of Platform North East, an organisation that develops and promotes live art in the North East of England. She is currently a funded PhD researcher in Visual Arts and Performance at Northumbria University. She is also an Associate Artist of Wunderbar. As well as producing sole-authored film works, Plewis works collaboratively as Bower Fleming Plewis with filmmakers Deborah Bower and Mat Fleming. From 2007 to 2013 she was a director of the Star and Shadow Cinema in Newcastle Upon Tyne: a volunteer-built, volunteer-run hub for political action, good times, and art beyond the mainstream. She has been an Associate Lecturer at Newcastle and Northumbria Universities and is currently teaching the Critical Approaches to Theatre and Performance Laboratory modules at Portsmouth University. She has over ten years of experience in developing and delivering performance-based workshops in a wide range of settings.

E-mail: [hiplewis@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hiplewis@yahoo.co.uk)

## ZOFIA SMOLARSKA

THE ALEKSANDER ZELWEROWICZ NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART IN WARSAW, POLAND

### The Politics of Theatre Craftsmanship Versus the Political Craft of Theatre Research

The main aim of my paper is to present the vexed position of a young researcher who conducts research at theatre institutions and interviews workers that occupy the lowest social and economic positions within them.

What problems with the access to interviewees could occur? How to create atmosphere of trust between the researcher and the interviewee? What can ruin this trust and how to rebuild it if this happens? Should a researcher stay detached while hearing about work abuse of the interviewees? How to politically reflect on a researched group even if the group itself does not want to be perceived as politically engaged?

I will base my reflections on the results of my own qualitative field research, which consists of interviews with over one hundred craftsmen and technicians from dramatic, puppet, and music repertory theatres in Poland. I will also give a broader context of the lively debate, currently taking place in Poland, about historically established power structures and unsuccessful present-day approaches towards democratizing domestic theatre institutions.

### Curriculum Vitae

Zofia Smolarska is a theatre critic and an Assistant Professor at the Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw, where she graduated in 2014; she is the author of the book *Rimini Protokoll. Blind Alleys in Documentary Theatre*, an editorial-board member of the monthly *Teatr* and the academic on-line magazine *Polish Theatre Journal*, and a vice-president of the Polish Society for Theatre Research (PTBT). As a dramaturge and assistant director, Smolarska has collaborated, among others, with Edit Kaldor (Amsterdam) and Rimini Protokoll (Berlin) on their participatory theatre projects. Her PhD thesis is focused on craftsmanship in the context of the organizational dysfunction in Polish state theatres after the political transformation.

E-mail: [zofia.smolarska@at.edu.pl](mailto:zofia.smolarska@at.edu.pl)





**MATTHIAS STERBA**  
LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY, GERMANY

### **Beyond Ideology? - Critical Approaches in Theatre Studies**

Nowadays a rebirth of ideology criticism in projects researching politics of theatre practices is taking place. These studies discuss developments in theatre aesthetics against the backdrop of the transformation of political attitudes guided by neoliberal standards. These developments in politics are introduced into a context of developments in theatre styles and aesthetics. The main assumption of these approaches is that aesthetics is connected to political ideologies. A recent study by Adam Alston discusses immersive theatre in England and its conjunction with what Alston calls 'neoliberal ethos'. In analysing immersive theatre productions, the study focuses on different styles of interaction between the performer and the audience. The study states that immersive theatre productions are fitting very well into neoliberal ideology, because they are offering an individual experience to the audience. Therefore the audience is asked to participate in a special way, which Alston describes as 'entrepreneurial participation'. This form of participation is based on a special set of values like entrepreneurialism, risk, agency, and responsibility, which are comparable with values of neoliberal ideologies. My presentation tries to analyse the different epistemological premises of the thesis and asks what relations exist between values and ideology. Furthermore, I want to discuss the conditions and boundaries of critical approaches in theatre sciences.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Matthias Sterba studied Philosophy and Historical Research at the University of Leipzig. He is part of the devised theatre collective gruppe tag and carried out a variety of performances and pieces often related to socio-cultural contexts. Subsequent to his graduation he worked at the Leipzig Dance Archive and at the Institute for Theatre Studies in Leipzig. Since 2016 he has been conducting his PhD research of political practices in contemporary theatre under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Patrick Primavesi. The focus of the research is on the specific strategies of creating utopian projections in performing the political.

E-mail: [matthias.sterba@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:matthias.sterba@uni-leipzig.de)



## MELANIE STERBA

MARTIN LUTHER UNIVERSITY OF HALLE-WITTENBERG, GERMANY

### Exposing the truth is like – MONSTROSITY

My performative lecture is an approximation on male projections of me as a female scientist. Since the beginning of my studies of philosophy in 2007 I have been constantly confronted with utterances of (mostly ageing, white, heterosexual, male) academic teachers, that made a connection between my body and my intellect. Maybe they believed to be in a good company – haven't the great philosophers been doing the same for centuries? Sometimes those comments were harmless, sometimes hurtful – the ones I experienced personally as well as those of the already dead. What is it about female bodies that makes philosophers so small-minded? Since I started writing my PhD about love with a clear reference to feminist theory I have become more acutely aware of this problem – and at the same time those utterances became more frequent and even more aggressive. This is no coincidence but a symptom of a social problem – universal gender troubles. In my performance, I will combine documentary theatre and video projections. It is a fast-forward reconstruction of ten years in academia with a female body behind reason. The material is a montage of correspondence, diary entries, and reminder logs. To clarify the social scope of the problem I will add discursions into social science and feminist art and literature.

### Curriculum Vitae

Melanie Sterba (born 1985) qualified as a fashion seamstress and she studied Social Sciences and Philosophy in Leipzig. Currently she is writing her PhD on concepts of love in the context of performative philosophy and feminist theory. Since 2008 she has also been a part of the devised theatre collective gruppe tag.

E-mail: [melanie.sterba@gmail.com](mailto:melanie.sterba@gmail.com)



## MAŁGORZATA SZUM

THE INSTITUTE OF ART OF THE POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, WARSAW, POLAND

### British Theatre in “War on Terror” (2001-2005)

I am writing my PhD thesis on the tendencies in British theatre in the last three decades. Two chapters of the work shall be dedicated to the way British theatre immediately responded to 9/11 and the “War on Terror”. My approach is to explore the selection of repertoires and staging choices (e.g. classical and Shakespearean dramas in contemporary warfare settings), study the topics of new playwriting and their genres (focus on documentary/verbatim theatre, particularly on London stages), as well as analysing the perception of audiences and their engagement in theatre events. A complexity of discourses on different levels and varying narratives evolved in British theatre, sometimes against the backdrop of historical and social circumstances, capturing the insecurities felt collectively and more deeply through politically engaged theatre.

For the sake of brevity, I will limit the presentation of my research to the period of the years 2001-2005, illustrating the resurgence of political theatre in the wake of 9/11 and until the time of the 7/7 London bombings.

### Curriculum Vitae

Małgorzata Szum graduated in Culture Studies from the University of Lodz Philology Department with a specialisation on Theatre Studies and Theatre Criticism (her master's thesis was titled *The Poetic of Samuel Beckett's Theatre. The Structural Elements of the Last Drama Plays*). In 1994-1995 she was granted the UK Government's Chevening Scholarships and completed her postgraduate diploma study at the City University in London (Arts Administration, Department of Arts Policy and Management; internship at Royal National Theatre in London). In the years 1995-2001 she was the Head of the Theatre Division of the Arts Department at the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and a member of the Council of National Competition for Staging Polish Contemporary Drama. In 2001-2005 she worked as a Deputy and Acting Director of the Polish Cultural Institute in London and in 2006-2009 she was the Head of the Literary and Publishing Department at the National Theatre in Warsaw.

In 2009-2014 she served as a Culture and Public Affairs Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C. Currently she holds the posts of the Editor in Chief of the National Theatre's website and the Head of Communication and Marketing Division at the National Theatre in Warsaw.

Małgorzata Szum has published numerous essays, interviews, and articles about Polish, British, and US contemporary theatre, new playwriting, and theatre administration. She contributed to Polish theatre magazines *Teatr*, *Dialog*, *Didaskalia*, *Taniec*, and *Scena*. Currently she is in the second year of her PhD research at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland. She is writing her PhD thesis on the tendencies in British theatre in the last three decades, completing its opening chapters.

E-mail: [maszum@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:maszum@yahoo.co.uk)

## ALBENA TAGAREVA

BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, SOFIA, BULGARIA

### The Political Aspect in the Stage Design during the Socialist Realism in Bulgarian Theatre

The National Theatre was a scene of the unfolding of the most important and momentous theatre processes. In Bulgarian history, 9 September 1944 was a turning point. It was a time when, with the help of the Soviet Army, the Fatherland Front led by the Communist Party seized power in a political coup. This major political upheaval had an immediate effect on both the country's public life and the arts. The National Theatre – the country's premier theatre stage had to be transformed into an 'agent of new ideas', Socialist Realism being the form that was supposed to make this happen. Achieving this on the stage, both thematically and in each of the elements of a production, became the task and a challenge for the National Theatre, especially after 1948, when this form established itself as the only approved style.

The period between 1944 and 1968 constitutes the framework of the research as a time when the aesthetic of Socialist Realism became the main and only practice that the artists were using if they wanted to be a part of artistic life. However, this process did not run smoothly. It can be divided into two or three shorter periods connected with the Soviet and global history in which the standards of Socialist Realism were changing in response to the Party and to political signals from the Soviet Union. This made the artists' professional and even everyday life really difficult. They found themselves in a precarious situation in which they did not know whether their art would be acceptable for the party. The paper focuses on several examples from theatre history to show how the standards of Socialist Realism were changing set design aesthetic.

### Curriculum Vitae

Albena Tagareva works as a Research Assistant at the Institute of Art Studies at Bulgarian Academic of Sciences in Sofia, where she is also conducting her PhD research. Her interests focus on the field of scenography and theatre history. As a junior researcher she has participated in several conferences with papers based on her PhD thesis *The Set Design at the National Theatre from 1944 until 1968*.

She also works as a freelance theatre critic and observer. Her articles are frequently published in professional theatre periodicals. She is one of the junior contributors to Bulgarian cultural magazines such as *Homo Ludens* and *Literaturen vestnik*, and she also contributes to *The New Dramaturgy Platform* website – an online platform for contemporary performing arts, theory, and criticism. She is also interested in contemporary performing arts and the combinations of media art and theatre.

In 2013 Albena Tagareva was invited to join the jury of the Ikar National Theatre Awards. As a theatre critic and researcher she appeared as a guest at international festivals and professional theatre forums. She was invited to Malta Theatre festival Poznań, Poland, Polska New Theatre, a special event organized within the Year of Public Theatre in Poland and the Year of Polish Theatre, Croatian Theatre Showcase Program in Zagreb, and others.

E-mail: [albena.tagareva@gmail.com](mailto:albena.tagareva@gmail.com)

## MARYAM DADKHAH TEHRANI

UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN, IRAN

### Ideology and the Textual/Political Unconscious in Iranian Dramatic Literature

The concept of the unconscious was first used by Sigmund Freud in analysing the patient's mind, but has since been applied to literary theory and analysis. During the twentieth century and with recent critical approaches, psychoanalytical concepts have been re-defined and applied to new goals. One of these new definitions was Jonathan Culler's textual unconscious and another was the notion of political unconscious established by Fredric Jameson. The former relies on textuality and its relation to the text's unconscious and the latter obviously concerns the social-political aspects. The thought on political unconscious is indebted to Althusserian Marxism and Pierre Macherey's literary theory. Althusser sees ideology as the imaginary relation of the subject to her/his real condition. He also emphasizes the symptomatic reading which reflects on the unsaid and the silences in a reading of a text. Macherey, Jameson, and Eagleton provide the literary theory for this thesis that allows the examination of the unconscious and its relation to ideology in plays. The research relies on these concepts and, after giving an account of the social-economical state of Iran in 1960s and 1970s, lays a foundation for applying the perspective of ideology and theatrical mode of production to selected plays of that era. In this way the mutual relation of theatre and history as the real would be examined since history is not comprehensible except in textual form and this form is present in theatre.

### Curriculum Vitae

Maryam Dadkhah was awarded a PhD in Theatre Studies from the University of Tehran, Iran. In May 2017 she finished her doctoral thesis discussing the reaction of dramatic texts to the rapid changes in Iran's social-political situation during 1960s and 1970s. The era led to the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and it appears that the artists were aware of the situation, but their reaction towards it was completely different. Theatre, politics, psychoanalysis and their interactions constitute a field of interest in her further research.

E-mail: [maryam.dadkhah.tehrani@gmail.com](mailto:maryam.dadkhah.tehrani@gmail.com)



## JITKA VRBKOVÁ

JANÁČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS IN BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

### Message from the Actors with an Extra (Chromosome)

Every theatre with disabled actors is a sort of community theatre: the productions convey a message about this minority – the message that this minority does exist in the first place. Every spectator is thus confronted with the question of what is his/her attitude to these people, and what is the attitude of the majority of the society.

The disabled actors, who are the main focus of the presentation, are actors with an extra twenty-first chromosome (Down syndrome, DS). They are indeed special in following respects: In every moment of the performance, the spectator has to be aware of the fact that the actors are different in terms of their bodies, movements, speech, sounds, etc. (Actors with other disabilities usually bear some similar characteristics with the majority).

Actors with DS have a very specific stage presence, and they are able to exist just in the present with a high level of emotion. Facing this reality, the spectators have to ask themselves: why cannot my life be so filled with presence and emotion too?

People with DS have a special ability to communicate, to make close contact with others. Their speech and behaviour is not aggressive as is very often the case with other mentally handicapped people; on the contrary, their body language is slow and soft. Thus they can change our approach to communication, because in the way they approach it there are no winners or losers.

The presentation will consist of an analysis of two productions: *Who am I?* (my own artistic research project with Theatre Aldente) and *Statek Milosci* by Warsaw-based professional theatre Teatr 21. In each of these productions the message, conveyed to the audience in different way, is in fact the same: change your mind! Life of people with DS is valuable: and what about your own?

### Curriculum Vitae

Jitka Vrbková was born in 1984 in Brno, Czech Republic. She studied Directing and Dramaturgy at the Department of Dramatic Theatre at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Theatre Faculty (receiving her bachelor's degree in 2008), and Theatre Dramaturgy at Theatre Faculty, Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, (graduating with a master's degree in 2010). She was also teaching scriptwriting at JAMU and dramaturgy at JAMU's Theatre and Education Atelier (2012–2014). She has been enrolled in the PhD program at JAMU since 2014.

In 2008 she founded Theatre Aldente, which started as an independent student artistic group, creating site-specific projects, poem theatre, and devised performances. A change came in 2013 when her daughter was born with Down syndrome. As a result, the dramaturgy changed from "site specific" to "actor specific", specializing in theatre with actors with Down syndrome. This is also the reason why she began her PhD studies.

The topic of her doctoral thesis is theatre with actors with mental handicap. She develops performances with these actors (as a form of artistic research) and she also visits other similar theatres to familiarize herself with their methods. Her aim is to show that theatre performed by handicapped actors is not worse than the "usual one"; on the contrary, it can discover new dimensions of theatre in general and of actor's performance in particular.

E-mail: [vrbkova.jitka@seznam.cz](mailto:vrbkova.jitka@seznam.cz)

## JUSTUS WENKE

LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY, GERMANY

### Theatrical Practices beyond Art and Social Interaction

Theatrical practices, for example performative interactivity, influence the public. Notions like self-staging, activating or emancipation of given role concepts can be identified in everyday practices and theatrical events. Thus, theatricality designs society and changes the perception of involved parties. This character of theatricality has a political impact. Theatricality as a cultural technique – costuming, assertion and appearance, change of roles, play the “as-if”, and the organization of alternative narrations and world-images through fiction and illusion – was never limited to artistic works or theatrical high culture. The changed perspectives on physical presence and time structures, for instance through the medium of the internet, influence theatrical forms of expression, reception, and participation. Nevertheless, for example the publicly subsidized German “art theatre” and the theatricalisation of everyday life still appear to be on the opposing fronts. Dramatic art still seems to be tied with professionalization and institutionalization, some theatre makers and spectators react to the liquefaction of theatrical forms by exclusion of the cultural milieus that are supposedly inferior in their forms of expression. The presentation explores the connecting lines and differences between theatrical practices in art and social interactions.

### Curriculum Vitae

Justus Wenke studied Dramaturgy at the University of Music and Theatre in Leipzig until 2005. He has worked as a dramaturge in various fields, focusing on contemporary drama, authoring performance and participatory projects; most recently he was a dramaturge at Schlosstheater Moers. He currently works as a concept developer, copywriter, dramaturge and is also involved in artistic research. Since 2016 he has been developing his PhD thesis about audience concepts in the context of theatrical practices. He also participates on the colloquium with Prof. Patrick Primavesi at the Institute of Theatre Studies, University of Leipzig.

E-mail: [justus.wenke@notraces.net](mailto:justus.wenke@notraces.net)







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Theatre Faculty of Janáček Academy of Music nad Performing Arts in Brno  
Mozartova 1, 662 15 Brno  
Czech Republic



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