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~~L A N O I T A N R E T N I M E D Z I N Á R O B N Ý~~

## The first name of Divadelná Nitra 2017: Provocative theatre hit from the Czech Republic

One of the most precise and provocative view on the Czech society after November ´89. In such a manner media denote one of the most appreciated production of our neighbours – [Actor and carpenter Majer talking about the state of his homeland](#) presented by Prague [Studio Hrdinů](#). This production will be a part of the main programme of the International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra, which takes place during September 22 - 26, 2017.

*What is the Czech Republic? Where does it begin and end? Who wants to live here? Who lives here and why? Who or what is guilty for a current disgust of Majer and his kind to the Czech Republic? Can the current Czech president be blamed for that?*



"Patriotic" psychological research of David Zábanský, the winner of Magnesia Litera as a Discovery of the Year, was accompanied by an extraordinary media outburst before the premiere. Articles cropped up with information, that a renowned young writer defends the president Miloš Zeman and renounces a "Prague Café Society". "Needless to say, that this production tells about Zeman, but also about Havel and Klaus. Moreover, here he decides, if he should leave his homeland or not, which is the relationship of our homeland towards other homelands, also it will be about elites and society, borders and borderless, disregard, sloth, responsibility of the intellectual minority, and about things, which we all do to make our native land really like a homeland", writes news website Novinky.cz in its review.

Such an artistic group: a writer David Zábanský, a director Kamila Polívková and an actor Stanislav Majer are trying to reveal causes of hostile political atmosphere and to analyse a homeland phenomenon and „Czech“. According to the review of the internet journal Aktualne.cz they deserve a prize for leaping on the thin ice of controversial themes and artistic provocation to contribute to the cultivation of a social discussion and deepening empathy within schizophrenically ambivalent Czech society.

This production shows an excellent play of a well-known and famous Czech actor Stanislav Majer, who has gained the Theatre Critics' Award for the Best Actor in 2016 for his performance in the monodrama, which is also named after him. Moreover, he was also put on the first place by the audience inquiry at web portal i - divadlo.cz.

Actor and carpenter Majer talking about the state of his :[David Zábanský](#)  
,[Kamila Polívková](#) :People like Majer, director , [Stanislav Majer](#) :cast, homeland  
set and ,[Jan Horák](#) :dramaturgy ,[Ivan Acher](#) :music ,[Adriana Černá](#) :costume designer  
light design: Antonín Šilar

## PERFORMANCE TEASER

*I repeat, there is more good than nauseating in our homeland, and we cannot find here an absolute detestation, this belief is a solid part of my worldview, while Majer: In our homeland there is more nauseating than good and extreme disgust is here on a daily basis. Just look at the state of our homeland, its political representation, general culture and then at the domestic situation in comparison to the political and culture representation of a homeland in the near or far neighbourhood. Majer and his kind simply think, that everything is possible, that much is possible, that something is possible. Majer and his kind are convinced, that one can have a home wherever he chooses. Majer and his kind do not like words "nation" and "native country". Furthermore, Majer and his kind are even against usage of the word "homeland" because it reminds them German, almost forgotten word "Heimat".*

**The main programme of the International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra will be presented at a press conference on July 25, 2017 and online ticket sales will start on August 7, 2017.**

## **Discoverers and curators. How is the main foreign programme created?**

Divadelná Nitra, with its 25-years history, has gained a good reputation not only on the domestic, but also on the international stage by becoming the place of discovering new names of European creators.

"When we were the first, who brought from Poland such well-known directors as Warlikowski or Jarzyna, who did not even resonate at home at that times, it was a real success. The Polish theatermakers still remember this event. We also experienced some identical situations with other names and countries. Just look at the list of directors carried out over the last 25 years. Some of them have been premiered at Divadelná Nitra and today they have gained European awards: Nekrošius, Bodó, Schilling, Varnas, Moguchy..." says the founder and director of Divadelná Nitra Darina Kárová.

How and who finds, chooses these talents for the programme of Divadelná Nitra? Many creators wish to get their productions to the main programme, there is a great variety of offers from different countries. However, since its creation Divadelná Nitra has a special selection tour. There is a team of curators - members of Artistic Board, who set up a puzzle of foreign works. These are people, who see dozens of productions per year by visiting European theatres and festivals, or seating next to video monitors and decide, which productions will be presented on festival stages. Divadelná Nitra records many foreign troupes, which have just performed on its stage for the first time in front of the Slovak audiences. And frequently this festival includes great and prestigious names.

The collection of tips precedes the selection of productions, several stages of interviews with foreign consultants, festivals' or direct theatres' visits, long-term monitoring of European directors and their productions. Then the four-member Artistic Board works with dozens of tips, which are selected on the basis of chosen videos, reviews, and references. "We try to see personally productions, which are chosen to the narrower selection, and only then we decide, if we will choose it to the main programme or not," explains Dáša Čiripová, a member of Artistic Board.

"I concentrate myself on various, often contradictory criteria. I ask myself: would it be interesting for Slovak spectators? Festival spectators? Can this production be 'transferable' to another theatrical, social context? Will it be 'understandable' in our

country? Does the production, in my point of view, deliver something vital, essential? Is there something formally original, unique, something, what we have not seen yet? What does the production communicate about: values, attitudes, opinions – aesthetic, political, social? And finally, what is the proportion of price and quality? ", describes Martina Vannayová, who has been a member of Artistic Board of Divadelná Nitra for 15 years.

Divadelná Nitra is also famous for its "red thread" of annually urgent themes in the programme of the festival. And when we try to sort out themes of our 25-year history into the time sequence, we will see some milestones in our social development.

The largest international theatre festival in Slovakia will enter its 26th edition with the theme #FUNDAMENTALS, which will focus on core values. "It is natural that we, as programme curators, are especially interested in theatres, directors and artistic troupes with a well-defined political attitude and script, who are working on current, strong and even painful and courageous themes. On the other hand, we struggle to bring not only creators, who can identify phenomena in the world around us, but also those, who do not resign not only formal, but also aesthetic quality of their works ", describes Jan Balaj.

"We strive to follow trends and tendencies of the contemporary theatre, which now cross the boundaries of classical theatre medium as well as boundaries of purely dramatic forms", says Dáša Čiripová. "An indispensable provocation of themes and their formal processing is not what we are actually working for," adds Ján Balaj. "We are living in such times, when people throughout the world almost every day develop and discover new things. That's why it is natural, that even a theatre, which wants to reflect and present this era, cannot make steps backward, but forward," he concludes.

In any case, it is impossible not to think about spectators during the selecting process. "The professional view is important, because a curator should be able to estimate and denominate, why this or that production is more preferable, which one is of the better quality, unique or the best," says Martina Vannayová.

"I would be glad, if spectators gain not only aesthetic, but also philosophical experience from Divadelná Nitra. To restart the process of spectators' thinking", completes Dáša Čiripová.

## Members of Artistic Board of Divadelná Nitra 2017

Ján Šimko



He studied psychology and theatre science. He is the co-founder of the Prague-based M.U.T. Theatre, which operated from 1999 to 2005. In 2007 he founded the Theatre Association Tucet in Bratislava, which was oriented towards the authorial theatre. From 2007 – 2009 he worked as a dramaturge and artistic director of Theatre Institute's Studio 12 in Bratislava. As a dramaturge he also worked at the Acropolis Palace in Prague (1999 – 2002) at the Prague Theatre Festival of German Language. Since 2010 he has worked as a dramaturge at the Literary and Dramatic Centre at Radio and Television of Slovakia.

Translates from English. And since 2004 he has been a

member of the Artistic Board for selecting foreign productions for the International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra. Moreover, he was a curator of the international project of the Association Divadelná Nitra *Parallel Lives – 20th Century through the Eyes of the Secret Police*.

## Martina Vannayová

She studied theatre science and dance theory. From 2002 to 2008 she worked at the Research and Editorial Office at the Theatre Institute in Bratislava. As a dramaturge she cooperated with the majority of Slovak theatres, mainly with Astorka Korzo '90 Theatre, Aréna Theatre in Bratislava, Debris Company, Košice State Theatre. She also acted as a dramaturge of radio performances in RTVS. She has participated in several foreign student internships, including the prestigious theatre journal Theater der Zeit and the Schauspielhaus Hamburg. She is the author of the book *Landvermessungen* about the East European Theatre, which was published in Germany. She is involved in the translation of German-language theatrical plays. Since 2002 she has been a member of the Artistic Board, she has also participated in the international project of the Association Divadelná Nitra *Parallel lives - 20th Century through the Eyes of the Secret Police*.



## Dáša Čiripová



She has graduated from the Department of Theatre Science and Latin. She worked at the Theatre Institute, the Film Institute and the Goethe Institute in Bratislava. She is a co-founder of the theatrological *kød* journal, which she has led as a chief editor from 2010 to 2014. Nowadays she works at the Department of the Theatre Studies in Academy of Performing Arts and the Slovak Academy of Sciences. She has regular publications in various domestic and foreign periodicals. As a dramaturge she cooperates with Debris Company and Association Gaffa. She has been a member of Artistic Board for selecting foreign productions at Divadelná Nitra for three years

already, she was also a curator of the Slovak program in 2016, since that year she is also a coordinator of the year-long educational project *How to understand theatre*.

## Ján Balaj

He studied at the Department of Theory and Critics of Dramatic Arts. During his studies, as a member of the dramaturgical board, he participated in the organization of the International Festival Istropolitana Project. As a selected participant of the National Scholarship Program, he completed a research fellowship in the theatre dramaturgy at Zürich University of Art. Now he is a PhD student at the Theatre Arts Faculty of the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno. He is the youngest member of the Artistic Board at Divadelná Nitra and has been working here since 2015.



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All actual information you can find at: [www.nitrafest.sk](http://www.nitrafest.sk) and [www.facebook.com/divadelna.nitra](https://www.facebook.com/divadelna.nitra)

### > Contact

International Theatre Festival

DIVADELNÁ NITRA 2017

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Svätoplukovo nám.4, 950 53 Nitra, Slovakia

Tel./Fax: +421 37 6524 870

Mobile: +421 903 554 475

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

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### Main organizer::

Association Divadelná Nitra

### Main co-organizers:

Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra, Karol Spišák Old Theatre in Nitra, Nitra Self-Governing Region, The City of Nitra, Theatre Institute Bratislava

### Co-organizers:

Amnesty International, C.A. Peace and Good, Klokanček Child Care Centre, Living Memory, Post Bellum SK, Private Conservatoire in Nitra, Regional Edifying Centre in Nitra, Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union – Regional Centre in Nitra, Elementary School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Bratislava, The J. Rosinský Elementary Arts School in Nitra, The Karol Kmeňko Regional Library, The Nitra Gallery The Nitra Museum, The Prince Pribina Elementary School, The Tatra Nitra Cinema Club

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