

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate



## What is freedom? What are its faces and limits? International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra invites to explore the answers through the art

***30th anniversary of the fall of Communism lends an opportunity to celebrate the freedom we won, and yet also to contemplate the faces of freedom in the world today. The 28th edition of the International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra (27. 9. – 2. 10. 2019) opens space for a lively debate about freedom, unfreedom and the fragile line between the two.***

Freedom of thought, opinion, movement, creative activity or communication.

Freedom of an individual and society. Divadelná Nitra – the most defined festival of stage art in Slovakia – carries on its tradition of highlighting pressing socio-political issues. The focus of the 2019 edition faces of freedom shall be reflected in the smorgasbord of noteworthy stage projects from Slovakia and abroad, and in the range of off-programme events.

The faces of freedom in time and space is the leitmotif of twelve productions brought by commended theatre companies from the Czech Republic, Russia, Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia. “We face the evidence of breach of

freedoms in Slovakia, along with the neighbouring countries, and elsewhere in the world. That tests our threshold of sensitivity to freedom. Ultimately, it raises our awareness of the fact that freedom must be relentlessly protected,” explains Festival Director Darina Kárová

## Fight for freedom from Antiquity to the present day



Overblown emotions and actions escalate a love story with discordant, even sinister undertones. Devastating freedom shown in full display. The National Theatre Opera, Prague will open the 28th year of Divadelná Nitra with its stellar production of ***Sternenhoch***, widely acclaimed by Czech critics.

This extraordinary musical-dramatic work is based on the romanetto *The Sufferings of Prince Sternenhoch* by Czech philosopher and novelist Ladislav Klíma, a contemporary of Franz Kafka. The book offers a unique blend of low and high art, of grotesque and horror, of sophisticated philosophy and the dullness of everyday life. It follows the story of degenerate Prince Sternenhoch, who decides defiantly to marry Helga – a woman of inferior birth. Only later, he comes to realise that his beloved is a witch.

Librettist and composer Ivan Acher and director Michal Dočekal have brought new life into the world of high art and caught the attention even of those who had formerly had no interest in the genre. Acher says he was already spellbound by *The Sufferings of Prince Sternenhoch* at the age of 17.

*“It intrigued me by its formulation of such high-calibre ideas and by a strange*



*thoughtfulness in how it connected the wisest threads of philosophical extracts against the backdrop of something absolutely vile,” he said on the ArtZóna segment on ČT Art.*



They revel in indulgent celebration, run amok in orgies and test our moral standards. The Bacchae are the retinue of the Greek god Dionysus, who decides to enter an unequal fight with a mortal – King Pentheus.

**The Bacchae** – a new production by the Slovak National Theatre, Bratislava appearing at Divadelná Nitra 2019. This play by the Ancient Greek tragedian Euripides spans the millennia to offer a cruel, bloody yet cathartic tragedy of the contemporary individual bound by moral extremes.

*“It is interesting that this Greek tragedy perfectly captures and expresses the moral crisis of today’s individual. The crisis is brought about by a constant oscillation between two extremes, between the liberal and conservative to absolutist perspective on governing society. The Bacchae offers a view of freedom precisely in this confrontation of history with the present,”* explained the curator of the festival’s Slovak programme section, theatre director Júlia Rázusová. In her view, the play’s philosophically and visually compelling scenes that depict the ecstasies of a hedonistic society kept in check by the rule of power and order tell of the limitations imposed on the will and freedom by necessity and fate.

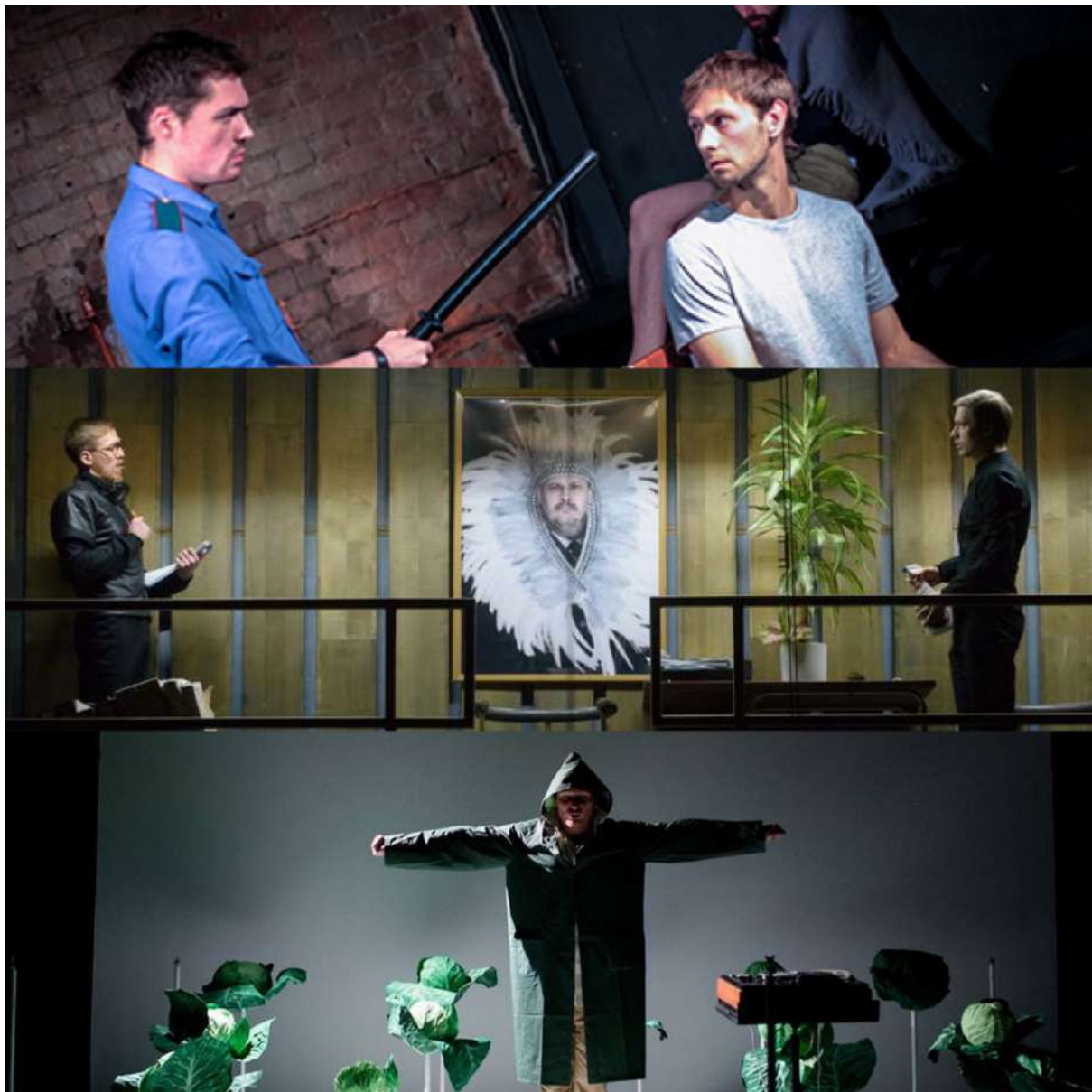


Another Slovak production in the main programme of this year's Divadelná Nitra that turns to an ancient text is ***The Bible*** by Aréna Theatre Bratislava. It features the reading of roughly 50 pages from the Book of Books, giving audiences an opportunity to confront the question whether the Bible is merely a historical document without relevance today or a still valid guide to moral life. This riveting musical-visual performance by actor Juraj Kukura raises perennial questions about morality, conscience, faith and the power of spirituality in the current, morally tumultuous age.

The dramatic rendition itself evokes the urgency of these questions – at one point, Juraj Kukura crucifies his own suit on a canvas he has just painted black. Lively scenic readings are accompanied by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, Joseph Haydn, Georg Friedrich Händel, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ivan Acher and other composers performed by the Slovak Chamber Orchestra. Like *The Bacchae*, the play was directed by Rastislav Ballek.

**Unfreedom of the political system that surrounds us**





An ordinary man suddenly finds himself being interrogated. Yet he nor the police officers have any idea why so. Still, they are kind, trying to show him – a man worn by life – to show the meaning of life in this world. The comedy [A Man from Podolsk](#), the last of works by the director Mikhail Ugarov who died unexpectedly last year, is steeped in absurd humour. Yet, more deeply it reflects the issues brought about by the acquired freedom in the post-Soviet territory and civil uncertainty in a country where laws and their interpretation can be changed anytime. In Russian, Teatr.doc has the status of dissident theatre.

Machinery squashing a man is the legacy of the cult novel [Catch XXII](#) that makes a comeback on Slovak stage after three decades. The Andrej Bagar Theatre was the second in Slovakia to stage Heller's dramatisation of the novel that warns against the fatal threat that bureaucracy can pose on the freedom of individual. The production, with ambiance, live music and playful directorial interpretation by Ján Luterán also touches upon Slovak context, enjoys high

viewer popularity.

Manipulation is easy, particularly is a roughneck skilfully covers lies with witty humour and conduct that wins sympathies.

The monodrama ***Moral Insanity*** from the Prešov National Theatre invites Festival visitors to enter the underworld of a dirty information game. Inspired by Umberto Eco, the co-author of the text and actor in one, Peter Brajerčík, sheds sharp light on a contemporary social tendency to believe hoaxes, fake news and conspiracy theories. The production illustrates the work of stage director Júlia Rázusová, the curator of the Slovak part of the 2019 main Festival programme.

## Freedom lost in motion

Without an address one isn't entitled to freedom. The politically concerned production from Hungary, ***Addressless*** – *Vagabond Role Game* is brought by the ensemble STEREO AKT in their debut at Divadelná Nitra. The performance literally draws spectators into the dead-end situation of the homeless today. Performative interactive play about how to survive on the street make spectators contemplate the choice between altruism and comfort zone. Would you offer a helping hand, or is it easier to turn away? In addition to the actors, the performance also features a person who is homeless in real life, and a field worker.



Healthy body isn't merely home to healthy spirit, but also to unhealthy nationalism. The comedy ***Second Essay on Gymnastics*** comes from the independent German company Hauptaktion that also makes its debut at the Festival. The production explores the gymnastics movement Turnen and its connection to different historical periods in Germany over the 200-year history of the movement. The ensemble of eight performers presents on stage a grotesque catalogue in which the exercising bodies articulate the ideals of their time.

## Art without limits – freedom to create

Festival Divadelná Nitra will also offer space for unconventional projects that build upon crossing limits – such as genre, mental and physical limits. The production ***eu.genus*** by the company Honey and Dust / Med a prach offers an



extraordinary experience that takes spectators into an art studio. There, directly at a public rehearsal, spectators will be given the freedom to move between the ideas of the stage director Andrej Kalinka and his team.



A clown show for adults? The excitement of building image castles and their subsequent destruction. The joy of discovery of items of everyday use and of inventing their new purpose. The light and gripping production by the Czech experimental ensemble Wariot Ideal, *The Depths* is a celebration of imagery. "A mime, musician and fine artists come across like Roháč's classical three bugs transposed to the surrealist world of Švankmajer; spectators are invited to join in," explains Ján Šimko, the curator of the Festival international programme.

**Theatre about the loss of communication between relatives**

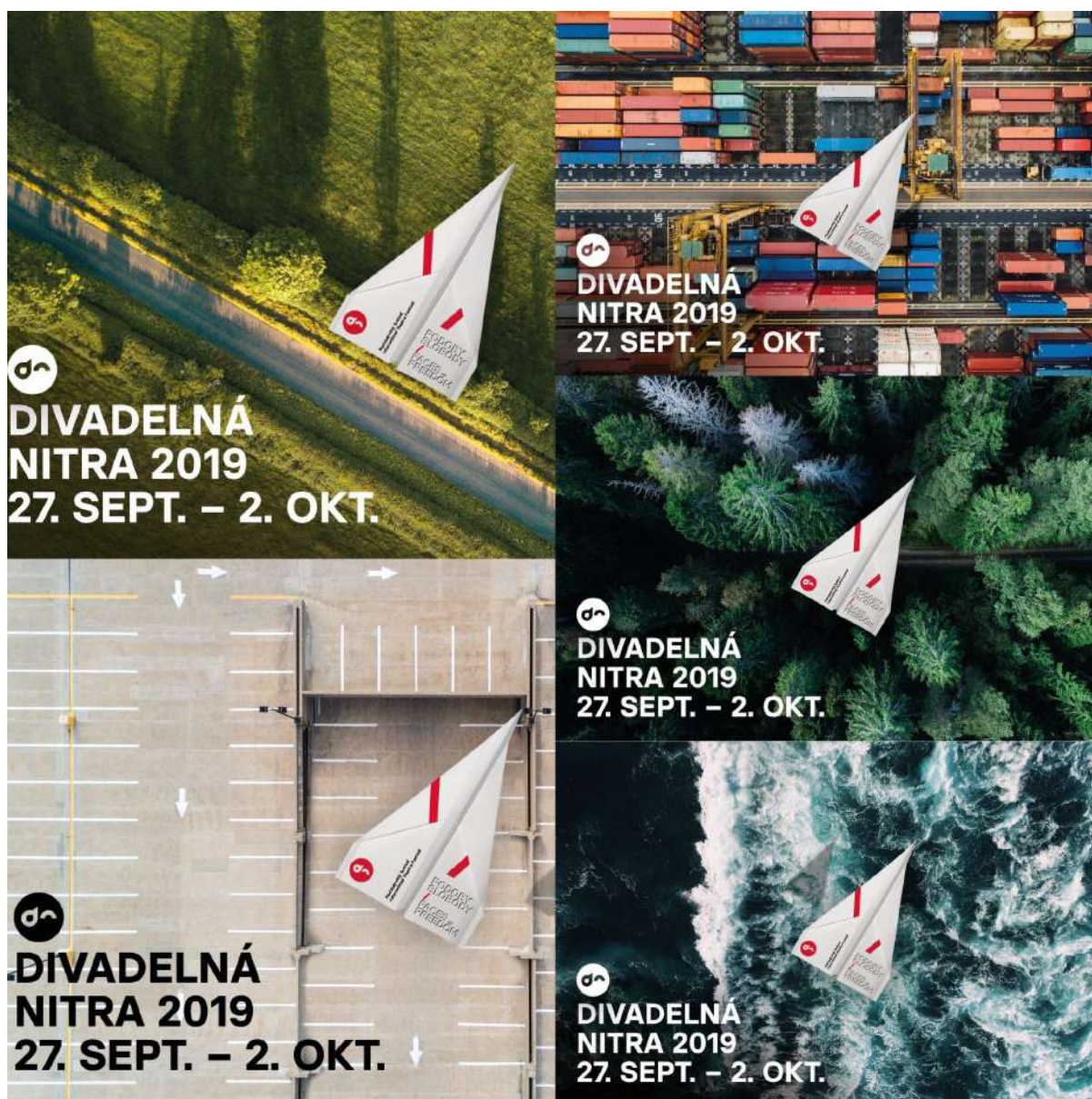


When two modern people, as if cut out from happy-living guides, start longing for yet another toy, they get themselves a dog. Even though they don't know how to look after it. Contemporary Polish comedy ***Holy Noodle*** by Komuna Warsaw, directed by Agnieszka Smoczyńska, offers a unique take on life in partnership that has been hollowed and it explores it, idiosyncratically, through the eyes of a dog named Noodle.



Festival Divadelná Nitra presents, after some time, a piece that will draw both children and adults. The award-winning production ***Stories of Walls*** by the Bratislava Puppet Theatre offers a visual artistic experience for anyone aged from 9 to 99. The stage director Katarína Aulitsová, in tandem with the fine artist Markéta Plachá, created an ingenious mosaic of personal and public walls and borders which we keep hitting upon.

## New page, visuals and online presale!



28th edition of Divadelná Nitra will be held in the following venues in the city of Nitra: The Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra (DAB), The Karol Spišák Old Theatre in Nitra, Nitra Gallery, Regional Public Learning Centre, The Karol Kmeňko Regional Library, as well as in the Párovské Háje Culture Centre, in the Festival Tent and elsewhere on the square Svätoplukovo námestie.

All information about the forthcoming 28th edition of the International Festival Divadelná Nitra, held from 27 September to 2 October 2019 in Nitra, is available on the redesigned website. Along with the website, Divadelná Nitra is launching online tickets sale that opens on 1 August 2019.

Tickets are available at:





#### Main organizer:

Association Divadelná Nitra

#### Main co-organisers:

The Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra, The Karol Spišák Old Theatre in Nitra, Nitra self-Governing Region, The City of Nitra

#### Projects of Divadelná Nitra Association supported by



Projects of Association Divadelná Nitra are supported using public funding by Slovak Arts Council, main partner of the projects



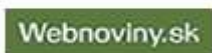
Co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union



#### The main media partners



#### Media partners



#### Partners



Medzinárodný festival Divadelná Nitra

Svätoplukovo nám. 4

950 53 Nitra

Slovenská republika

<http://www.nitrafest.sk>



Nechcete naďalej dostávať tieto maily?  
Môžete [nastaviť svoje preferencie](#) alebo [odhlásiť sa z odberu](#).

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Asociácia Divadelná Nitra · Svätoplukovo nám. 4 · Nitra 950 53 · Slovakia

