

## **A look into the past**

The theme of the Festival: *Ode to Joy?* (past - present - future) is very clearly articulated in many productions, which are presented at the festival. The past as value, as historical memory is revealed from different perspectives by modern playwrights and directors. Their works have social and political aspects.

For example, *The Hearing*, the play by the contemporary Czech playwright Tomáš Vůjtek, is not just the story of Nazi leader Eichmann and his crimes. First of all, it is a play about general history of the world, which includes several countries. The Holocaust and the totalitarian regime, which are embodied in the figure of Eichmann the epitome of human evil. That evil is the driving force of war and a world devastation vector. This is especially true for today's world, where armed conflicts and deliberate killing of people take place. The relevance of the performance is of particular importance for Ukraine, the country where the war has lasted for two years and innocent people are killed.

Similar aspects are addressed in the play *Back Then in Bratislava*, which is also based on real dramatic events in Czechoslovakia in 1950-1960. A family tragedy is revealed on a huge historical canvas. The totalitarian regime was destroying everything and everyone on its way, no one is spared. The family tragedy revealed to the audience reminds us of the validity of human values. The main character of the play is a woman of a strong spirit who overcomes the tricks of the ruling regime. Her life is a struggle for survival, a fight for the lives of her daughters. To a large extent, the genre of the production can be termed as a melodrama, but the historical aspect passes through the whole performance.

Productions based on historical events or documentaries have an important value for modern art. In this case, theatre serves as a tool for the reflection of society about its past and awareness of its present. History serves as a lesson not to repeat the tragic events of the past years. And we can say that in this case a play is a mirror through which we can see different angles - the past, the present and a vector of the future.