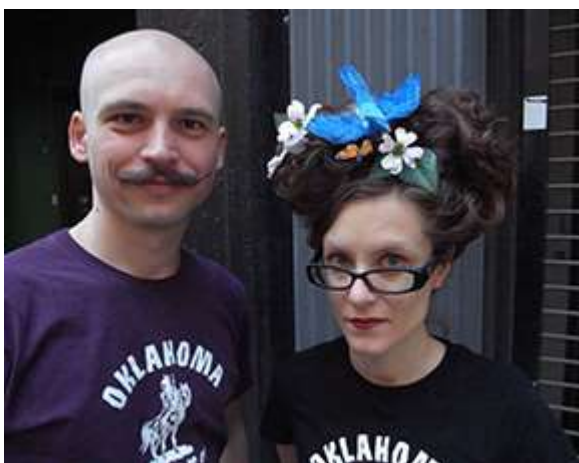


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~~L A N O I T A N R E T N I M E D Z I N Á R O D N Ý~~

Divadelná Nitra 2017 starts tomorrow! The world-renowned director from Slovakia will, for the first time, emerge triumphant on the domestic stage

25 years ago he left Slovakia to go to the USA and became one of the most successful contemporary theatre creators in the world. For the first time Slovak spectators have the opportunity to get acquainted with a production of Pavel Líška, born in Skalice, at the Divadelná Nitra 2017. The International Theatre Festival Divadelná Nitra 2017 starts tomorrow, September 22, and will be held until September 26. It will enter its 26th edition with the theme #FUNDAMENTALS. The main attention will be paid to the core values of the human life and society.

After hosting at prestigious festivals, finally at home



The Nature Theatre of Oklahoma, founded by Pavol Líška ten years ago with Kelly Copper, his partner, in New York, is one of the most valued Off-Off Broadway companies not only in the United States, but also in Europe. After hosting at prestigious festivals, including the Festival d'Avignon Festival and the Theatertreffen in Berlin, they will open the International Theatre Festival on September 22, 2017 with their production **PURSUIT OF**

HAPPINESS, which analyses and ironizes the prominent "American Dream" in almost

Tarantino style.

And Pavol Liška is exactly that person, who has every right to talk about "American Dream". He left the USA in 1991 as a fresh 17-year-old college graduate after his unsuccessful attempt to enter the university in Slovakia". In America I found, despite all the mistakes and testing, what I liked, and I totally devoted myself to it. I did not think about any dream in America, and at those times, as well as now, it seemed to be a cliché. Reality is, anywhere, too severe to become a dream,"says Pavol Liška, who has been living in the United States for 25 years already.

Dishwasher who loved the art

His success on the international theatre scene, however, was preceded by 15 years of hard working experience. He also worked as a dishwasher in a Mexican restaurant, a guard at a dance studio or a museum, and also picked wild flowers on the marshes in New Jersey. "We have invested all our money into our artistic work, for which we had time only in the evenings and at weekends. We did not even have the slightest hope, that we could ever do art for a living, but we did it with passion and devotion, as if it was the most important thing in our life. And even, if there were five people in the theatre in the room, we rented: four of our friends and one, who was invited out of the street", mentions Pavol Liška.



TRAILER PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

What does personal happiness mean?



their Creator, and which governments have been tasked to protect.

The unique production **PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS**, which will be presented at Divadelná Nitra, pays attention to the founding document of the United States of America, the Declaration of Independence. It places "the pursuit of happiness" among the "unalienable rights" which it asserts have been given to all human beings by

But what does, actually, this "personal happiness" mean? What does this "basic right" warrant us? What all can be justified by it? To what bad consequences can it lead? How many (American) dreams have been broken? And there remained only a destroyed battlefield. These are questions, which are raised by this production.

Pursuit of Happiness, however, is not a serious socio-political critique, but rather a dance-poetic mockery with elements of archaic cowboy dances," describes Martina Vannayová, a member of Divadelná Nitra Artistic Board.

The production has appeared on the basis of collaboration between American duo Liska - Copper from the Nature Theater of Oklahoma, New York and a movement theatre EnKnapGroup from Ljubljana, Slovenia. Firstly, they communicate through sending letters to each dancer separately. This was the footing for the text, which was finally written in verse by Pavol Liska and Kelly Copper. The text blends "high" with "low", banality of language with philosophical references in the original style, and all this is presented in the intensive and breath-taking presentation of EnKnapGroup members, who come from six countries (Great Britain, Sweden, Hungary, Slovenia, Belgium, Croatia).

What we have never done before

"While creating each production, we try to do, what we do not know and what we have never done before. Especially, because we are interested in the conflict between our incompetence and our genius, when we are forced to achieve almost impossible, and when we are the masters of something, we have no idea about ", explains Pavol Liška his reaction for a proposal to cooperate with the dance group. They asked themselves, what is the most difficult for the dancers. "It turned out, that it was a language. So we wrote a sophisticated text in verse, using iambic pentameters, the best we could do. While



creating, we tried a lot of approaches and looked for the most radical one, in which the text and the show can sound the best”, describes Pavol Liška their work.

“Cardboard decoration, cowboy outfits and constantly spreading violence - are the caricatures of Tea Party and Trump. In the great scenario – as always, when it is written by Liška and Copper, but it sounds as if it was written by Arthur Miller and [Anton Pavlovich Chekhov](#). Quotes, associated with clichés from the everyday American street and with sitcoms, parody American dream, that millions of Americans are still searching for with more passion and determination than ever before”, he wrote in a review in Theaterkrant. for the unique production.

The International Festival Divadelna Nitra is held under the auspices of the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic Marek Mad'arič, Chairman of Nitra Self-governing Region Milan Belica and the Mayor of the City of Nitra Jozef Dvonč.



[The main festival programme](#)

[All info about tickets](#)

All actual information you can find at: www.nitrafest.sk and www.facebook.com/divadelna.nitra

> Contact

International Theatre Festival

DIVADELNÁ NITRA 2017

22. – 26. Sept 2017

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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, Institute of Documentary Film, Praha, 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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