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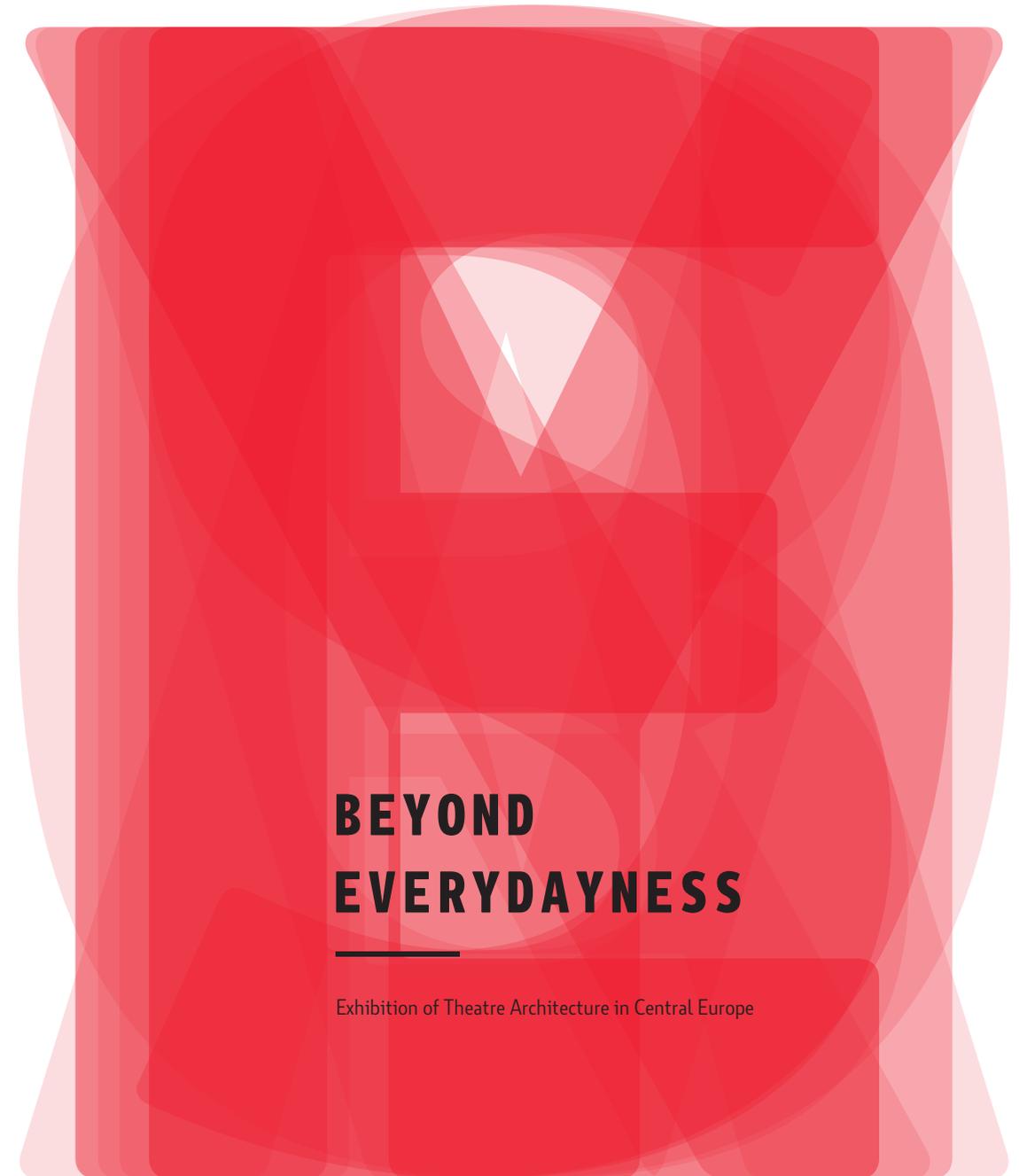
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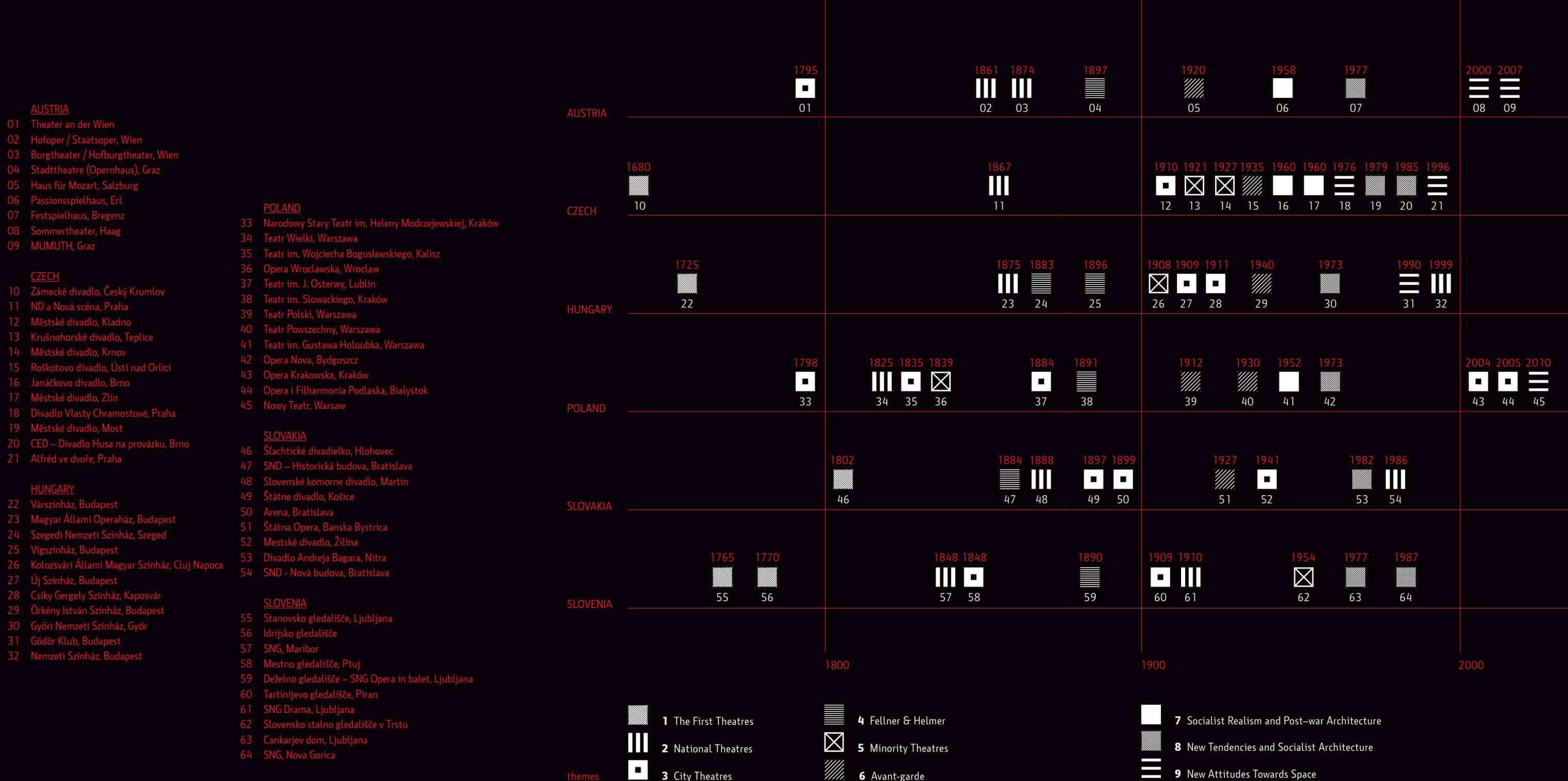
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# BEYOND EVERYDAYNESS

Exhibition of Theatre Architecture in Central Europe



themes



- 1 The First Theatres
- 2 National Theatres
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- 4 Fellner & Helmer
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- 7 Socialist Realism and Post-war Architecture
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Attending the theatre is one of mankind's last remaining rituals in our time. Although during some eras the theatre has meant more to us, and during others less – and even though one cannot read and summarize its entire history – its architecture can undoubtedly be a certain measure of its significance for us.

By theatre architecture we mean a playhouse: a building destined for permanent theatrical use. A theatre's architecture signifies power, independence, oppression, a regime, and of course democracy all at the same time. Every regime that has ruled in Central Europe has left its mark on the playhouses. So, in this way Central European theatres have become silent storytellers of history. They have been changed during the last two centuries, rebuilt and renamed. They occupy the most important areas of the cities, and represent not only an overview of European architecture but also an overview of European reality. Hardly anywhere else in the world have so many languages been used at one time in theatres, in a space as small as Central Europe. This anomaly, which we take for granted now, that only one language is used in the theatres of one state, is reflected in the cultural decline of Central Europe in the second half of the 20th century. This exhibition draws attention to the cultural diversity of Central Europe and tries to find a common universal language through the architectural field.

This exhibition brings the public a different dimension of the Central European space, which is more than simply its collective historical background, or even its more recent collective transformation process.

To map out a comprehensible formula of the course of architectural events in multilingual Central Europe, we placed the buildings that we chose on two main axes: the time axis, and the current political geographical axis which serves as a loose guideline of the region.

This is the background for the following nine topics that blend together and overlap each other in time, and with regard to the different conditions of theatre life in the particular countries.

**The first theatres** were built at different times in each state. The first theatre buildings that were preserved were castle playhouses, places for private entertainment of the aristocracy.

**National theatres** are spread across three centuries, from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>, and have been transformed on the way from a means of national self-determination, to the regimes' buildings that lack the architectural value of their predecessors.

**City theatres** arose at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and were reacting to the new conditions which came with massive industrialization. This group of playhouses brings with it a new urban dimension of the city and its social services.

**Fellner & Helmer** are a pair of architects who brought a series of fire protection measures to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and to the whole Central European region. They were the most productive architectural office in Europe at the time.

**Minority theatres** serve as a counterpart to the contemporary state activities, change the conception of the region, and offer a different view of the political map. These theatres are a direct contrast to the ideology of „one nation one state“ which found its home here in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Avant-garde** approached the theatre as a new, complex artistic concept. But with regard to the rich heritage in the field of theatre architecture, very few new theatres were built. However, the avant-garde changed the entire understanding of theatrical space, and subsequent eras would profit from this.

**Socialist realism and post-war architecture**, return to more traditional theatrical spaces brought a strong ideologization of space. Ideology overruled both private and public space. The unfulfilled longing of modernism for a single truth led to the realization that there is no ideal, and thus opened a base for experimenting in subsequent generations.

**New tendencies and socialist architecture** in which the multifunctionality of the space was greatly enhanced, creating a paradox – rebuilding a theatre space became so demanding and difficult that it often lacked any sense and was gradually abandoned. The urbanist experiment had been expanded in the form of oversized buildings placed in or near to historical city centers.

**New attitudes towards space** have been emerging in the last two decades. In the private activities of enthusiasts and politicians, there is a change of scale and a return to the smaller ritual space. At the same time new oversized playhouses are also being built, which shows that even this contemporary consumer society desires immortality.

## The First Theaters – theatre as entertainment, castle theatres, private (aristocratic) theatre



- 10 Zámecké divadlo, Český Krumlov / CZ
- 22 Várszínház, Budapest / HU
- 46 Šľachtické divadielko, Hlohovec / SK
- 55 Stanovsko gledališce, Ljubljana / SL
- 56 Idrijsko gledališče, Idrija / SL

The space of the castle theatre is connected with private productions designated primarily for aristocrats and their guests at aristocratic residences. The theatres were part of the structure - either as a room with the function of a theatre or as a separate theatre building. This form of private performance was a common part of theatre life from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The beginnings of private theatres designated for a select audience, which was allowed access to a certain space - or for those who would be specifically invited to a performance, date back to the Middle Ages. This includes ecclesiastical theatres which performed in monasteries and convent schools, or on the grounds of universities. In later periods however, they were also carried out in the private areas of noble or burgher residences.

Despite the fact that almost every aristocratic seat, château or palace had a private theatre over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, very few of them have been preserved in their unaltered state up to the present day. The Castle Theatre in Český Krumlov, within the territory of the present-day Czech Republic, is a unique monument of world renown in this respect, because it has been preserved in a practically intact form. One specific aspect of this, one of the oldest Baroque stages, is the preservation of the furnishings of the auditorium, the orchestra pit and the stage equipment from the year 1766, in addition to the original building constructed in the year 1682. An extensive theatre inventory has also been saved including sets, costumes, props, lighting bodies, librettos, and musical scores.

Numerous additional examples of historical theatre stages can also be found in Europe, however, they are in varied stages of preservation. Original theatre buildings have been saved in Italy in Sabbionetta, Vicenza or Parma, but without the theatres' collection. The German speaking areas, Ludwigsburg,

Gotha, Bayreuth, Bad Laustadt, Schwetzingen, Weitra, Lambach or Grein contain, apart from the structures, partially preserved theatre machinery and theatre inventories. A similar situation can be seen in France in Versailles, Compiègne, Valençay, Digoine and Cirey.

Thus, the only European monument comparable with the Castle theatre in Český Krumlov is the Baroque theatre in Drottningholm Palace, Sweden, dating from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, where the original theatre building has been preserved along with the theatre technology, scenes, props, costumes and the repertory.<sup>1</sup>

The phenomenon of private theatres has remained with us up to the present day from amateur theatre performed in burgher salons in Central European cities particularly in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to the Czech performances of the so-called family puppet theatres (in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), leading up to the private (and during the totalitarian regimes also illegal) productions carried out in private flats in cities behind the Iron Curtain in the 1970s. Club theatre in the narrowest sense can still be considered private in the present day, as well as theatre designated for any kind of closed society which might be carried out in various spaces, from rented community rooms up to actual theatres rented for non-public performances.<sup>2</sup>

1/ State Castle and Chateau Český Krumlov. Castle Baroque Theatre.  
[http //www.zamek-ceskykrumlov.eu/prohlidkove-trasy/zamecke-barokni-divadlo/](http://www.zamek-ceskykrumlov.eu/prohlidkove-trasy/zamecke-barokni-divadlo/),  
accessed January 24, 2010.

2/ Petr Pavlovský – Vladimír Just, Bytové divadlo. Základní pojmy divadla  
(Flat Theatre. Basic Theatre Concepts), Divadelní revue, 2001, no. 1,  
[http //www.divadlo.cz/art/clanek.asp?id=1612](http://www.divadlo.cz/art/clanek.asp?id=1612), accessed January 24, 2010.



**\*=215 Šlachtické divadlo, Hlohovec 46**

English name Empire Theatre

Location Zámok 7, 920 01 Hlohovec

Architect Pietro Travaglia

Architects of interiors Pietro Travaglia

Project unknown

Construction 1802

Artists Pietro Travaglia (ceiling painting in the theatre hall); Pietro Travaglia or F. J. Prokop (?) (relief decorations in the fascia under the roof)

Opening night not documented

Reconstructions 1960–62, Rajmund Hirth (reconstruction and annex building to the corridor connecting the theatre and former riding hall, construction of the new theatre facilities in the former riding hall); 1961, A. Kuco, J. Beňušík (restoration of the ceiling paintings)

Capacity of auditorium approx. 130

The castle theatre served as a source of private pleasure and social presentation. The only preserved structure of its kind in Slovakia, originally created because of the fashion for building private theatres in noble seats in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was built by the Nitra district administrator Jozef Erdödy as part of the modernization of the estate in Hlohovec in 1802. The direct inspiration for this act was a visit by Francis II, the Holy Roman Emperor.



**\*=241 Idrijsko gledališče, Idrija 56**

English name The Miners' Theatre in Idrija

Location Trg sv. Ahacija 5, 5280 Idrija

Architect unknown

Architects of interiors unknown

Project an older storage building adaptation

Construction after 1770 or 1775

Artists Jurij Tavčar (interior decoration, 1872)

Opening night not documented

Historical names Werkstheater Idrija (alternative German name 1775–1918)

Reconstructions 1823, 1832 and 1844 (some renovation of the boxes); 1872 (interior painting decoration); 1892–1895 (neoclassical entrance extension with pilasters, garland cornices and a triangular gable, windows enlarged into the 7 side-doors due to fire safety, the walls decorated with horizontal carved lines, the external staircases and the extension containing dressing rooms on the northern side removed, the design of the boxes and the stage probably changed); 1905 (the boxes and the stage removed, closure); 1913 (partly renovated, electricity installed, a new stage set up); during WWI (stage removed); 1920 (stage put in again); 1923 (stage removed – space turned into a storage space); 1952, Marjan Mušič (space changed into a cinema with the dividing walls in the western semi-circular building part); 1983–1987, Silvij Jereb (renovated and turned into a film theatre); 1989 (renovated again after a fire, dividing walls removed and the interior turned into a single auditorium with a sloping floor and 211 seats, toilets and a staircase to the balcony with a projectionist's booth added in the western part)

Capacity of auditorium 211

The history of one of the oldest theatre buildings in Slovenia is closely linked with the development of mining of mercury. The structure was financed by donations as well as contributions from mine employees as part of the wider urban planning of the town during the period of its greatest prosperity, the Baroque period. Over the course of its existence it underwent a number of remodellings, with the Baroque style of the exterior remaining preserved. It functions today as a cinema.



**\*=140** Zámecké divadlo (Castle Theater), Český Krumlov **10**

One of the oldest castle type Baroque theatres in the world. The structure has been preserved in almost undisturbed state from the year 1682 along with the auditorium furnishings, the stage and the stage technology dating back to the year 1766. The extensive theatre inventory is also unique: scenes, costumes, props, lighting bodies, librettos and musical scores. This is the only European monument comparable in significance with the Baroque theatre in Sweden's Drottningholm Palace from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**\*=316** Várszínház (Castle Theatre), Budapest **22**

This monumental building was originally the Franciscan church of Saint John in the Middle Ages. During the Turkish occupation of Budapest it was transformed into a mosque only to be later reconstructed into a Carmelite monastery church. After the dissolution of the order, the church was adapted into a theatre with a capacity of 1,200 seats by Farkas Kempelen. It has served as a theatre for performances in the Hungarian language since 1790.

**\*=321** Stanovsko gledališče (Estates Theatre), Ljubljana **55**

This Baroque theatre building was constructed in 1765 on the site of the former Estates riding school according to a design by Lovrenc Prager based upon plans drawn up by Candido Zulliani. It was renovated and expanded in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; burned down in 1887. A new Neo-Renaissance building, still home to the Slovenian Philharmonic up until the present day, was built on the site of the Estates Theatre according to a project by the Austrian architect Adolf Wagner in 1891.

## National Theatres – as a path toward national self-determination

# 2

- 02 Hofoper / Staatsoper, Wien / AT
- 03 Burgtheater / Hofburgtheater, Wien / AT
- 11 ND a Nová scéna, Praha / CZ
- 23 Magyar Állami Operaház, Budapest / HU
- 32 Nemzeti Színház, Budapest / HU
- 34 Teatr Wielki, Warszawa / PL
- 48 Slovenské komorné divadlo, Martin / SK
- 54 Slovenské národné divadlo, Bratislava / SK
- 57 SNG, Maribor / SL
- 61 SNG Drama, Ljubljana / SL

The construction of national theatre buildings was a symbolic act which served to manifest attempts by the intellectual elite at national self-determination within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. A tendency to emphasize the importance of individual nationalities with attempts to emancipate their cultures began to be institutionalized at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries within the multi-national state unit centrally managed from Vienna.

National identity was qualified by language, with the main goal having been the establishment of a theatre in which performances could take place in the national language, as opposed to the German. This did not, of course, mean that the building of national theatres in the lands belonging to the Austrian Empire after 1804 automatically amounted to a negative view in relation to the government and the rulers. This is in evidence, for example, from the positive circumstances which accompanied the founding of the Czech National Theatre. Austria as a Constitutional monarchy, whose constitution from 1867 was considered to be one of the most liberal in Europe, supported Czech nationalist activities.

A group of intellectuals focused around writers, translators, and one of the most renowned promoters of the Hungarian language Ferenc Kazinczy became interested in the establishment of a National Theatre in Budapest at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Leading figures within the Hungarian reform movement of Count István Széchenyi, who significantly supported the emergence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences through financial donations and also contributed

to the linking up of Pest and Buda with the Chain Bridge, were also involved in the question of establishing a Hungarian National Theatre.<sup>3</sup> In 1837 the Hungarian theatre was opened in Pest, which carried the name National from 1840. A decision was made regarding the remodelling of the theatre in the 1890s, and subsequently its location was changed several times in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Negotiations concerning the construction of a new National Theatre were drawn out, beginning in 1965. The new building was finally put into operation in 2002.

The cases of these new structures of the Slovak and Hungarian National Theatres are similar in certain respects – in Bratislava and in Budapest they were both finally carried out over the last twenty years and involving major problems. The construction of the Hungarian National Theatre has been connected with a whole range of political scheming. The government commission was awarded without a competition. The project was originally prepared for another plot of land. The structure already under way in the centre of the city was actually abandoned with the explanation provided that costs needed to be cut. The National Theatre currently stands on the periphery of the city.

The Slovak National Theatre represents the culmination of attempts at constructing a theatre building initiated in 1888. The competitions for construction of a new building lasted fifty years, beginning in 1928. The victorious design for the competition which was announced in 1979, was finally constructed during 1986–2007. The traditional space concept ensures the functional character of the operations, with the massive architecture not denying, however, the period of its origin. The construction process met with various complications, for example, an attempt involving selling the building over the course of the construction work to a private development company, which would have completed it and opened it as a cultural congress centre, in which the troupe of the Slovak National Theatre would have only rented certain spaces. A wave of resistance on the part of both artists and the general public eventually prevented this step. The theatre was completed using money from the state budget and opened in 2007.

It is of interest that the construction of national theatres, whether in Prague, Bratislava or Budapest, experienced a long and distressful process of creation involving various conflicts, from the selection of the building land, to the appearance of the building, from the method of financing, to the regularity of the architecture competition, and many other issues, and that these difficulties stretched from the 19<sup>th</sup> century all the way up to the present day.

3/ Széchenyi, István, [http://www.omikk.bme.hu/archivum/angol/hm/szechenyi\\_i.htm](http://www.omikk.bme.hu/archivum/angol/hm/szechenyi_i.htm), accessed January 8th, 2010.



### \*=185 **Nemzeti Színház, Budapest 32**

English name National Theatre

Location 1097 Bajor Gizi Park 1, Budapest, District IX.

Architect Mária Siklós

Architects of interiors Bernard Trevillion

Project 1999

Construction 2000–2002

Artists Miklós Melocco (ornamental gate with actors Klári Tolnai and Zoltán Latinovits); Péter Párkányi Raab (statues of Hilda Gobbi, Imre Soós, Kálmán Latabár, József Timár as Willy Loman); Sándor Klígl (statue of Éva Ruttkai); László Marton (sculptures Tamás Major as Richard III, Imre Sinkovits as Moses and base-reliefs of thirteen actors); Péter Török (the landscape architect of the garden)

Opening night 15<sup>th</sup> March 2002, Imre Madách: Az ember tergdíája (Tragedy of Man)

Capacity of auditorium 619

This is both the newest and at the same time most bizarre theatre complex in Budapest. The structure of the National Theatre as a focal point for political manoeuvring. The government commission for the theater took place without an architectural competition. The project was initially created for a different plot of land. The already initiated construction work in the centre of the city was abandoned due to a need to lower costs. This was a successful attempt at linking development with culture. The massive architecture reflects the period of its origin.



### \*=216 **Slovenské komorné divadlo, Martin 48**

English name Slovak Chamber Theatre

Location Divadelná 1, 036 80 Martin

Architect Blažej Felix Bulla

Architects of interiors Blažej Felix Bulla

Project 1888 (?)

Construction 1888–1890

Artists Karel Vítězslav Mašek (curtain design)

Opening night 31<sup>st</sup> December 1889, Svetozár Hurban Vajanský: Polnočná scéna (Midnight Scene)

Historical names Národný dom (National House, 1890–1944); Slovenské komorné divadlo (Slovak Chamber Theatre, 1944–1951); Divadlo slovenského národného povstania (Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising, January–October 1951); Armádne divadlo (Military Theatre, 1951–1957); Armádne divadlo Slovenského národného povstania (Military Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising, 1957–1960); Divadlo slovenského národného povstania (Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising, 1960–2003)

Reconstructions 1909–1910, Blažej Felix Bulla (extension of the original construction); 1926–1927, Ján Palkovič (in all probability reconstruction of the stage, replacement of the wooden ceiling with a reinforced concrete one); 1940–1941 (reconstruction of the theatre hall to a cinema, reconstruction of the entrances on the exterior of the building, new staircase, new windows, installation of the central heating); 1952–1953, Ľubomír Šlapeta (building reconstruction into a theatre, a new entrance, reconstruction of the stage, auditorium and entrance atrium); 1989–1994, Vladimír Kordík, Mikuláš Röhrbock (extension of the Studio to the historical building); 2001–2008, Vladimír Kordík, Jaroslav Pizinger, Vlasta Illiev, Venceslav Illiev, Richard Kalmár (reconstruction of the historical building)

Capacity of auditorium hall 188 seats below, 48 seats on the balconies, studio 178 seats

This multipurpose building contains a hotel, shop spaces, offices and a theatre designed by the leading Slovak architect Blažej Felix Bulla. The idea of incorporating a specific national style into the project was supplanted with the employment of Renaissance Revival architecture, which served as a kind of declaration of national awareness and identification with the Classical tradition.



**\*=323** Burgtheater / Hofburgtheater (Imperial Court Theatre), Wien 03

The second oldest theatre building in the world after the Paris Comédie-Française. The theatre was a symbol of political representation: initially the Empire (in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century), eventually the Republic (after reconstruction in 1945–1955). The theatre was the exclusive dominant feature of the new urban plan with the Ringstrasse. The theatre served as a space for the production of various renowned artists as well as a site of contention amongst them: the authorial cooperation between Karl Hasenauer and Gottfried Semper fell apart over the course of the construction work.

**\*=324** Hofoper / Staatsoper (Vienna State Opera), Wien 02

This extravagant, grand structure was built on the prominent site of the newly created Ringstrasse. The interior of the Imperial-Royal theatre was decorated by leading artists. The theatre is a museum of painting, sculpture art and the industry of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was generously financed by the Imperial court.

**\*=38** Národní divadlo (National Theatre) – Historic building + Nová scéna (New Stage,

**\*=147** Laterna Magika), Praha 11

The construction of this theatre served as a symbolic act of national awareness. The actual building process embodied political and professional quarrels. The Provisional Theatre was built after two unsuccessful competitions. Its structure was incorporated into the monumental realization by Josef Zitek from 1881. After a fire in the theatre that same year, Zitek refused to work on the reconstruction, with the work consequently assigned to his colleague Josef Schulz.

During the period of so-called 'normalization', the administration facilities of the historic theatre building were completed along with the building of the annex of the New Stage initially under the management of Pavel Kupka, and later under Karel Prager. The structure was one of the most controversial buildings in Czechoslovakia at the time of its creation. It is now an essential part of the history of Czech Modern architecture.

**\*=132** Magyar Állami Operaház (Hungarian State Opera House), Budapest 23

This grand structure created according to a project by Miklós Ybl, the winner of an invited competition announced in 1873 was equipped with the most modern stage technology of the day. This was also the case with the reconstruction work carried out between 1980–1984. It holds a reputation as one of the finest theatre buildings in Hungary up until the present time.

**\*=228** Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa (Grand Theatre – National Opera), Warszawa 34

The victorious project by the Italian architect Antonio Corazzi from a competition announced by the Lord Mayor of the city in 1825 resulted in the construction of one of the most modern theatre buildings of the day, in terms of its placement in the city, its structure and the functional layout of the rooms. This grand structure was almost completely destroyed during WWII.

**\*=246** SNG Drama (The Slovenian National Theatre Drama), Ljubljana 61

After the opening of the Carniola Regional Theatre in 1892, the German inhabitants of Ljubljana decided to build their own theatre building. The project was created by Alexander Graf, a former member of the Fellner and Helmer studio, as a modification of their designs for theatres in Ústí nad Labem, Ostrava and Most. It is a typical Central European series production of a Neo-Baroque structure enriched with Art Nouveau décor.



**\*=248** SNG Maribor (The Slovenian National Theatre Maribor), Maribor 57

A varied architectural whole on an extensive piece of land in the Medieval centre of the city. The theatre was the first in the locale and came about according to a plan by two railway engineers, Adam Wiesinger and Gustav Lahn. It was the centre for the social life of the German speaking inhabitants of Maribor up until the dissolution of Austria-Hungary in the year 1918. It is the largest cultural institution in Slovenia and one of the few in Europe with a playhouse, opera and ballet all under one roof.

**\*=224** Slovenské národné divadlo (Slovak National Theatre), Bratislava 54

The competitions for construction of a new building for drama, opera and ballet lasted fifty years starting in 1928. The victorious design in the competition announced in 1979 was done by the young architects Peter Bauer, Martin Kusý and Pavol Paňák and was finally realized over 1986–2007. The traditional space concept ensures the functional character of the operations.

# 3

## City Theatres

– theatre as part of the growing city.

Theatre as a social service.

- 01 Theater an der Wien, Wien / AT
- 12 Městské divadlo, Kladno / CZ
- 27 Új Színház, Budapest / HU
- 28 Csiky Gergely Színház, Kaposvár / HU
- 33 Narodowy Stary Teatr im. Heleny Modrzejewskiej, Kraków / PL
- 35 Teatr im. Wojciecha Bogusławskiego, Kalisz / PL
- 37 Teatr im. J. Osterwy, Lublin / PL
- 43 Opera Krakowska, Kraków / PL
- 44 Opera i Filharmonia Podlaska, Białystok / PL
- 49 Štátne divadlo, Košice / SK
- 50 Arena, Bratislava / SK
- 52 Mestské divadlo, Žilina / SK
- 58 Mestno gledališče, Ptuj / SL
- 60 Tartinijevo gledališče, Piran / SL

The construction of new theatre buildings within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy was closely connected with interventions into the city structures which occurred over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The new conditions arising from massive industrialization brought about new needs for urban planning. Of essence in the process was the establishment of extensive new suburbs, which often exceeded the original historic city in terms of both area and population. Massive urban renewal took place during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, changing the face of cities throughout the entire territory of the monarchy. The city core of walled Medieval and Baroque fortifications was abandoned in favour of large urban concepts with new wide streets and ring roads. Large construction programmes bringing new tasks for architects, with theatre buildings ranking among them, arose on the sites of the demolished fortifications.

The government structure concentrated in Vienna implemented the inclusion of smaller regional towns into a unified, homogenous culture as part of the framework of the ethnically varied state. Shared urban planning concepts with new wide ring roads with adjoining parks were introduced throughout the entire monarchy. Railway lines, railway stations and administrative buildings along with seats for cultural institutions were constructed. Theatres and opera buildings, concert halls, courts, state offices, universities and even museums were often designed by architects with state-wide operations, introducing to local centres

'a characteristic hierarchy of space, models of buildings, a repertoire for public institution buildings and the historicising style of the centre. The Vienna Fellner and Helmer studio, for example, built theatres, concert halls and opera houses in practically all of the larger cities in both parts of the monarchy.'<sup>4</sup>

New tasks for architects came about in the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, primarily in Bohemia and Moravia, where an escalation of the Czech-German language conflict became manifest, this being apparent in the establishment of competing cultural institutions Czech theatres, museums, libraries and educational institutions in Prague and in Brno which functioned in a parallel fashion alongside older established German institutions.

4/ Eve Blau, V hlavní roli město: architektura a středoevropské kultury (The City in the Main Role: Architecture and Central European Culture), in: Eve Blau – Monika Platzer (ed.), Zrození metropole: Moderní architektura a město ve střední Evropě 1890–1937 (The Birth of the Metropolis: Modern Architecture and the City in Central Europe) (exhibition catalogue, 15th December 1999–1st March 2000, Metropolitan House in Prague), Obecní dům a Praha – Evropské město kultury roku 2000 (The Metropolitan House and Prague – European City of Culture the Year 2000) Prague 2000, p. 8.



**\*=322 Theater an der Wien, Wien 01**

English name The Theatre on the Wien River

Location Linke Wienzeile 6, 1060 Vienna

Architect Franz Jäger the Elder, Anton Jäger the Younger, Joseph Reymund the Younger

Project 1778 (E. Schikaneders request for building a theatre for the Emperor)

Construction 1800–1801

Artists Franz Jäger the Elder (Papageno Gate); Jacob Schroth (decoration sculptor); Vincenzo Saccetti (theatre painter); Mathias Gail d. Ä. (theatre painter); Mayer (master gilder)

Opening night 13<sup>th</sup> June 1801, Emanuel Schikaneder: Thespis Traum (Thespis' Dream), Franz Teyber: Alexander

Historical names Kaiserl. Königl. privilegiertes Schauspielhaus Theater an der Wien (Playhouse of Imperial and Royal Privilege Theater an der Wien – official name in time of opening); Theater an der Wien – Das neue Opernhaus (Theater an der Wien – The New Opera House, official name from 2006)

Reconstructions 1845, C. Latzel (indentation of the understage and implementation of modern stage machinery; removal of the auditorium's second parterre; integration of new stage lighting – candles; oil, petroleum and gas lamps); 1900–1902, Ferdinand Fellner, Hermann Helmer (refurbishment of the wooden understage with a steel and brick construction; removal of the fourth gallery); 1962, Otto Niedermoser (auditorium receives original colour design again; restoration of frescoes and other stucco work; installation of a heating- and air-handling system, as well as lowerable concert platforms in the front part of the stalls, a revolving stage and a new headlamp system, oil-induced transformers for current supply; amplification of the fundament - ferro-concrete structure).

Capacity of auditorium 1,145; 70 standing room

One of three theatres established in the suburbs of Vienna; the others were Theater in der Josefstadt and Leopoldstädter Theater. This was the most comfortable and most modern theatre in the city until the construction of the Vienna State Opera in 1869. It was popular with both the burgher and aristocratic public.



**\*=127 Narodowy Stary Teatr im. Heleny Modrzejewskiej, Kraków 33**

English name Helena Modjeska's National Old Theatre

Location 31-010 Kraków, ul. Jagiellońska 5

Architect Szczepan Humbert

Construction 1798–1799

Artists Carl Wilhelm Gropius (designer of curtain); Andrzej Lisowski (painting decoration of a part of interior)

Opening night 1<sup>st</sup> January 1799, Friedrich Julius Ziegler: Die Freunde (Friends)

Historical names 1799–1842 there wasn't one official name; Teatr Krakowski (The Krakow Theatre, 1842–1893); Stary Teatr (The Old Theatre, 1941–1944, 1945–1946, 1954–1956); Teatr Dramatyczne Kraków – Stary Teatr (Drama Theatres Krakow – The Old Theatre, 1946–1954); Stary Teatr im. Heleny Modrzejewskiej (Helena Modjeska's Old Theatre, 1956–2001)

Reconstructions 1841–1842, Karol Kremer and Tomasz Majewski (renewal of the roof, stage and auditorium, new decoration of the facade, connecting the old building with the new building, which was bought for the purpose of extension of the theatre); 1903–1906, Tadeusz Stryjeński and Franciszek Mączyński (new facade, rebuilding of the main hall); 1943–1944, Bronisław Opaliński and Marcin Bukowski (renewal of the building, new technical equipment, new dressing rooms)

Capacity of auditorium 350 Duża Scena (Grand Stage), 262 Scena Kameralna (Chamber Stage), 116 Nowa Scena (New Stage)

This is one of the oldest preserved theatre buildings in Poland. A private owner, the prefect Jacek Kluzewski, began to use his two apartment buildings for theatrical purposes in 1798. The structure underwent three extensive remodellings: from a scheme taken from the Medici Palace (Palazzo Medici Riccardi) in Florence, to the Art Nouveau sculptural adaptations, to the facade of the present appearance making reference to the time period of its founder.



**\*=44** Městské divadlo (Town Theatre), Kladno 12

The construction of the theatre was a result of the social life of the inhabitants of this mining town. The initial project failed to impress the town assembly or the owners of the Poldi steel factory, which was a negative factor in terms of the financing. A turning point occurred with the participation of the mayor in the preparation process. The purchase of the wooden construction of a theatre arena from Prague brought about decreases in the costs. Its ground plan also reflects the freely conceived layout of this Modernist theatre building constructed according to a design by the young Jaroslav Rössler.

**\*=179** Új Színház (New Theatre), Budapest 27

This structure was squeezed into a vacant lot in 1909 on a narrow street in a heavily developed area between the elegant, historically significant Andrassy Boulevard and the busy commercial point of Király. It has a fascinating Art Nouveau facade by Béla Lajta. The original Parisiana concert hall was soon after transformed into a theatre and completely remodelled in 1990.

**\*=188** Csiky Gergely Színház (Csiky Gergely Theatre), Kaposvár 28

The distinct structure sits in the unique environment of an extensive park outside the centre of the main town activity. It is an example of the early application of a reinforced concrete construction. It demonstrates the remarkable thinking of the burgher population in Hungary. The building is not merely a servile imitation of the theatre architecture of the capital or a copy taken from foreign models. It is instead an original combination of Hungarian Art Nouveau and Modernism.

**\*=117** Teatr im. Wojciecha Bogusławskiego (Wojciech Bogusławski Theatre), Kalisz 35

Theatre as testimony of the turbulent history of the city. Three structures. The first from 1835 completely burned down. The second from 1896–1900 was destroyed at the beginning of WWI. Only the third of these, designed in 1919 by Czesław Przybylski and ceremonially opened for operations in 1936, has survived up until the present.

**\*=123** Teatr im. Juliusza Osterwy (Juliusz Osterwa Theatre in Lublin), Lublin 37

Public competition announced in 1882 amounted to three challenges: designing a theatre building as well as the headquarters for an association of merchants whose financial support was counted upon for the realization of the project; coming to terms with the irregular construction plot; employing a steel construction within the framework of special fire safety provisions. The success of the young architect Karol Kozłowski arose envy on the part of his colleagues as well as a tumultuous discussion in the Warsaw press.

**\*=112** Opera Krakowska (Krakow Opera), Krakow 43

The first Polish opera house built after the political transformations in 1989. The renowned Krakow architect Romuald Loegler, with his co-authors Piotr Urbanowicz and Grzegorz Dresler, won the competition announced in 2002. The Post-Modern composition consists of three parts: the red of the main building, the green of the former riding school and the colourfulness of the administrative parts reminiscent of a supermarket.



**\*=236** Opera i Filharmonia Podlaska (The Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic), Białystok 44

The largest cultural institution in Eastern Poland, will open in 2011. The project by Marek Budzyński, one of the leading contemporary Polish architects, respects to a maximum extent the exclusiveness of the locality on the top of the Mary Magdalene Hill between the Jewish and Orthodox cemeteries where the Czesław Niemen Amphitheatre originally stood. The holy character of the locale has remained preserved: the monumental architecture is inspired by classical forms while blending in with the framework of the landscape. The variability of the space makes use of cutting edge technology enabling realizations of an inexhaustible number of staging ideas.

**\*=213** Štátne divadlo Košice (State Theatre Košice), Košice 49

The plan on the part of the city assembly to build a new theatre building outside the city centre met with opposition on the part of the inhabitants. The new project by the Budapest architect Adolf Lang, the winner of the second competition for the construction of the theatre, consequently replaced the original building on the main square. The overwhelming positive response on the part of the public was confirmed by the presentation of the theatre as part of the Hungarian exposition at the international exhibition in Paris in 1900.

**\*=97** Arena (Arena Theatre), Bratislava 50

One of the oldest theatres in Bratislava was renewed during the 1990s by a foundation for renewal of the Arena Theatre. The original summer stage was transformed into a building in 1898 and has maintained its appearance up until the present day.

**\*=212** Mestské divadlo (Town Theatre), Žilina 52

Theatre as a declaration of the strength of the uniting of the nation with the Catholic Church within the framework of the Slovak State. This impressive structure by the Opava architect of German origin Otto Reichner, with a theatre hall, school and both ceremonial and administrative spaces for the Church, was placed onto the Medieval centre of the town. The project was inspired by a main figure of the Italian architecture at that time – Marcello Piacentini.

**\*=243** Mestno gledališče Ptuj (Ptuj City Theatre), Ptuj 58

The theatre makes up the Baroque dominating feature of the Medieval core of one of the oldest towns in Slovenia. It was supplied with a richly decorated facade combining Neo-Renaissance and Neo-Classical Revival elements in 1892. The facade was removed by the Nazis as part of a plan to renovate the theatres in Maribor, Celje and Ptuj "in a German spirit". The complete reconstruction from 2006–2007 by the Maribor studio Plan B brought about the renewal of the original facade and the minimalist design of the interior.

**\*=242** Tartinijevo gledališče (Tartini Theatre), Piran 60

The historicising forms were gradually replaced with the Art Nouveau style. The planned construction of the theatre was connected with both the industrial and economic prosperity in the final quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the expansion of the Medieval town structure and the rapid growth of tourism. Nearby Portorož, earlier a modest sea locale, was transformed into a cosmopolitan tourist resort at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

# 4

04 Stadttheater (Opernhaus), Graz / AT

25 Vígszínház, Budapest / HU

38 Teatr im. Slowackiego, Kraków / PL

47 Slovenské národné divadlo, Bratislava / SK

59 Deželno gledališče SNG Opera in balet, Ljubljana / SL

24 Szegedi Nemzeti Színház / Szeged / HU

The company was incredibly productive both within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as well as outside of it. Their mark has transcended the era of their existence and entered 'into general knowledge', not only among the specialised public but also with theatre or architecture lovers. Wider public is aware of the fact that the focal point of the creative work of the Fellner & Helmer Studio involved the designing of theatres.

The shared activity of both of these architects dates back to 1873. Their cooperation was of a particularly rare kind, because from a legal perspective the company did not actually exist. It was never recorded in the Trade Register or with the industrial chamber. When involved in legal functions, they would function as a private company agreed upon in front of a notary.<sup>5</sup> It was based upon the friendship between the two partners.

That Fellner's father was also an architect proved to have been a decisive fact for the successful development of the newly established practice. Both authors actually developed a scheme for theatre space in their designs for theatre structures which Fellner senior had already made use of in his design for the Vienna Stadttheater. Thanks to this irreplaceable legacy, the company consequently practically obtained a European monopoly on designing of theatres. The studio was in fact so productive that forty-eight theatre buildings were realized according to their projects on the not modestly sized territory demarcated by Hamburg, Zürich and Odessa, out of which thirty were within the territory of Austria-Hungary. Designing theatres in the 19<sup>th</sup> century actually amounted to a quite precarious existence for architects. It could lead to glory and laurel leaves, as in the case of Gottfried Semper and his Dresden Opera, or to

catastrophe in the form of suicide and premature death, as in the cases of Eduard van der Nüll and August Siccard von Siccardenburg who could not handle the sharp criticism on the part of the public directed against their Vienna Opera.

The contribution of Fellner and Helmer primarily consisted of the novel functional design of the space within the framework of theatre buildings, it having to unite three distinct functions: 1st a space for meeting – the entrance hall, 2nd a space for gathering – the auditorium and 3rd a space for acting – the stage. Previous generations of architects tended to attempt to place these spaces under one roof. Fellner & Helmer, however, had a preference for loosening the firm links between them, gradually thus culminating with a composition with three functionally distinct parts (Volkstheater in Budapest, Neus deutsches Theater in Prague, Volkstheater in Vienna). Apart from the functional arrangement, they were also interested in the symbolic level of the structure: church facades with a columned portico, loges and a coat-of-arms clearly imply that this involves a theatrical structure. This scheme was made use of in various stylistic versions, the Neo-Renaissance (Brno, Liberec, Prague), the Neo-Baroque (Karlovy Vary, Szeged) or also the Art Nouveau (Jablonec nad Nisou, Giessen). They tried to adapt the cosmopolitan style to the 'national' conditions.

The theatre buildings created by the Fellner & Helmer Studio have been serving their purpose for more than one hundred years, with small adaptations of course. They have, at the same time, become an integral part of the urban planning structure of the cities in which they were built. One cannot of course state 'that they came into being directly for them' as the design was not always created specifically for a certain city, as can be seen, for example, with the design originally intended for the Free Royal City of Osijek in Croatia, which the architects transferred and consequently carried out in a more or less unchanged form in Klagenfurt.

Although no shared 'Imperial' style actually developed in Austria-Hungary, the theatres of Fellner & Helmer Studio serve to confirm, along with railway stations, the shared identity of the countries of the former monarchy.

5/ Dana Hladíková, Divadelní architektura ateliéru Fellner & Helmer v Čechách a na Moravě (The Theatre Architecture Studio of Fellner & Helmer in Bohemia and Moravia), in: Průzkumy památek 2002, year 9, no. 2, p. 147.



### \*=325 **Stadttheater (Opernhaus), Graz 04**

English name City Theatre (Opera House)

Location Kaiser-Josef-Platz 10, 8010 Graz

Architect Hermann Helmer and Ferdinand Fellner

Architects of interiors Ferdinand Fellner

Project 1897

Construction 1898–1899

Artists Ernst Hegenbarth, Hans Brandstetter, Ludwig Kosig (figural sculptures in auditorium); Hugo Löffler (ceiling paintings); Carl Duxa (composer portraits in gouache above the gallery entrances); Alexander Rothaug (curtain Light's Victory over Darkness); Atelier Ludwig Structius (stucco decorations)

Opening night 16<sup>th</sup> September 1899, Friedrich Schiller: Wilhelm Tell; 17<sup>th</sup> September 1899, Richard Wagner: Lohengrin

Historical names Stadttheater (City Theatre)

Reconstructions 1983–1984, Gunther Wawrik (modernisation of stagecraft; erection of an administrative building, connected to the main house or stage by a glass bridge; amplification of the fundament, enlargement of the proscenium; relocation of the orchestra pit; renovation of the auditorium –restoration of stucco work, renewal of the lighting system, new carpets etc.

Capacity of auditorium 1,205 ; 200 standing room

#### Stadttheater (Opernhaus) (City Theatre), Graz

The theatre is the pride of the city and was particularly popular with a nationalist thinking, progress-oriented elite. Fellner and Helmer prepared the commission 'in the Baroque style of the period of Johann Fischer von Erlach', a theatre building with two monumentally conceived facades.



### \*=198 **Szegedi Nemzeti Színház, Szeged 24**

English name Szeged National Theatre

Location 6720 Deák Ferenc Street 12, Szeged

Architect Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer

Architects of interiors Mihály Szekeres (reconstruction 1986)

Project 1881–1882

Construction 1882–1883

Artists Ármin Kern (fresco of the auditorium ceiling); Antal Tápai (statues of József Katona and Ferenc Erkel on the facade); András Albert (decorative lamp bodies); Lajos Óvári and István Eigel (painted windows); Károly Krajcsovics (bronze smithwork of the entrance gates); József Kóthay (bronze masques of the ground floor foyer); Mór Seifmann and Lengyel Lőrincné (upholstery work after the fire)

Opening night 14<sup>th</sup> October 1883, János Szabados – Ferenc Erkel: Ünnepi költemény (Festive Poem); Lajos Pósa: Prológ (Prologue); Lajos Dóczy: Utolsó szerelem, részlet (Last Love, fragment)

Historical names Szegedi Városi Színház (Town Theatre Szeged, 1883–1945)

Rreconstructions 1885–1886, Jiraszek and Krausz Limited (burned down on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1885; reconstructed 1885–1886, capacity of the interior space reduced to 1,500); 1978–1986 Márton Maár, Mihály Szekeres (full reconstruction, capacity decreased to 750, inside height of the foyers increased, new staircases built, double revolving stage and new lower stage machinery, expansion of service, storage and rehearsal areas in the basement, 1978–1986); capacity of the auditorium was decreased when the sound control device was replaced to the auditorium and the back audience rows were taken out

Capacity of auditorium 689

#### Szegedi Nemzeti Színház (Szeged National Theatre), Szeged

Lajos Lechner created the plan for the renewal of the city after destructive floods in 1879 resulting in the creation of a new permanent theatre building. The eclectic Neo-Baroque architecture of the studio of Fellner and Helmer, a subject of sharp criticism by Hungarian architects, was hit by a fire shortly before the official opening. The hasty repairs actually lasted through another one hundred years of operations all the way up to the complete remodelling finished in 1986.



**\*=55** Vígsház (Comedy Theatre of Budapest), Budapest 25

This typical Neo-Baroque building from the production of Fellner and Helmer was built over the course of one year (1895–1896) and had been preserved in an almost intact state up until the end of WWII when it was destroyed during bombardment. It underwent costly, but unfortunately insensitive, reconstruction work at the beginning of the 1950s. It was reopened on the occasion of Stalin's birthday under the name Theatre of the Hungarian People's Militia.

Teatr im. J. Słowackiego (Juliusz Słowacki Theatre), Krakow 38

**\*=122** Project for a new theatre came about on the basis of an international competition announced by the Lord Mayor of the city. The emotionally tense atmosphere led to doubts concerning the verdict of the jury and the victorious design by Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer supported by Tomasz Pryliński from Krakow was not realized in the end. The winner of the new, this time invited, competition was Jan Zawiejski in 1890.



**\*=249** Deželno gledališče – SNG Opera in balet Ljubljana (Ljubljana Opera House), Ljubljana 59

This has been the centre for Slovenian cultural life since the fire in the Estates Theatre in 1887. It was the first institution of its kind from the beginning of planning exclusively for performances in Slovene. It was a project by Jan Vladimír Hráský and Anton J. Hrubý who came to Ljubljana as an employee of the Fellner and Helmer Studio. The facade with its combination of Neo-Renaissance and Neo-Classical Revival elements is indicative of the studio's. The design of both the stage and auditorium show the influence of Semper's second opera in Dresden.

Slovenské národné divadlo – Historická budova

**\*=227** (Slovak National Theatre – Historical Building), Bratislava 47

The construction of a new theatre as a question of the prestige of the German inhabitants of this multi-cultural city. Fellner and Helmer prepared the project for the building with theatrical, concert and restaurant functions. After a tragic fire in the Vienna Ringtheater in 1881, a multi-functional structure was constructed. The building and operations of the theatre were connected up with conflicts between the German and Hungarian burghers over dominance within the city. It is the seat of the Slovak National Theatre since 1920.

# 5

## Minority Theaters

– mixture of cultures. Theatre as “an island”, theatre as an “export”

13 Krušnohorské divadlo, Teplice / CZ

14 Městské divadlo, Krnov / CZ

26 Kolozsvári Állami Magyar Színház, Cluj Napoca / RO

36 Opera Wroclawska, Wroclaw / PL

62 Slovensko stalno gledališče v Trstu, Trieste / IT

The Habsburg Monarchy, as a multi-national state unit, was actually composed of various national minorities. Certain lands under their administration could not express the existence of an obvious national majority. This state of affairs brought with it a variety of cultural activity, along with attempts at national determination. These language influenced conflicts manifested themselves in, amongst other things, the establishment of theatres in the final third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which allowed performances in minority languages which were fighting for national self-determination. This situation was also behind the founding of national theatres.

After the dissolution of Austro-Hungary in 1918, the national states were established on the principles of national self-determination and ethnological unity. Their geopolitical borders, however, failed to correspond with the national borders and certain national groups consequently lived within the territory of several countries. Only two of the new countries, the remains of the Republic of German Austria and the significantly diminished Hungarian Republic, could be viewed as national states along the Western European model.<sup>6</sup>

The multi-cultural climate of the monarchy continued to exist. This situation was necessarily reflected in the representatives in the offices responsible for the planning of development in towns and cities, where institutions serving the language defined national minorities also had to be included. At times these were actually the majority in certain areas, such as for example the seventy percent

representation of German speakers in the population of the town of Teplice within the territory of the Czechoslovak state in 1921 where a decision was made regarding the construction of a new German theatre. This extensive multi-functional building, including a community centre, was constructed according to a design by Rudolf Bitzan. Aside from the theatre, it also included a chamber stage, a cinema, dance hall and a complex of restaurants. There were several theatre buildings designated for German national minorities in the border areas of Czechoslovakia, built around the end of the 1920s: in Františkovy Lázně (Artur Payer, 1928), in Krnov and in Kamenický Šenov (Leon Kammel, 1928, 1929).<sup>7</sup> The theatre building in Krnov also functioned as a cinema in the pragmatic spirit of the period.

Minority theatres, however, do not always have to be marked out by their nationality. It is the form which is important. It was for example, the illegal flat theatres, or the theatres which functioned in the countries of the Eastern Block in the framework of the grey zones of the regimes as a form of endurance activity, or even alternative theatres, or those which were not organised as primarily commercial organisations. Islands in the sea of a majority culture, however, need not to be only experimental theatres on small stages. Working within a permanent theatre building also need not – by any means – entail being anchored in the official, contemporary mainstream culture. Alfréd Radok, for example, worked exclusively out of permanent theatre buildings.<sup>8</sup>

6/ Eve Blau, V hlavní roli město: architektura a středoevropské kultury (The City in the Main Role: Architecture and Central European Culture), in: Eve Blau – Monika Platzer (eds), Zrození metropole. Moderní architektura a město ve střední Evropě 1890–1937 (The Birth of the Metropolis. Modern Architecture and the City in Central Europe 1890–1937) (exhibition catalogue, 15th December, 1999–1st March, 2000, Obecní dům v Praze), Obecní dům a Praha – Evropské město kultury roku 2000 (The Municipal House and Prague – European City of Culture in the Year 2000), Prague 2000, pp. 12–14.

7/ Jiří Hilmera, Česká divadelní architektura (Czech Theatre Architecture), Theatre Institute in Prague, Prague 1999, p. 116.

8/ Marta Ljubková, Menšina v menšině: Rozhovor s Janou Pilátovou o jiných cestách divadla (A Minority in a Minority: An Interview with Jana Pilátová on Alternative Theatre Paths), A2, 2008, 19th March, no. 12, <http://www.advojka.cz/archiv/2008/12/mensina-v-mensine>, accessed 20th January, 2010.



**\*=317 Kolozsvári Állami Magyar Színház , Kolozsvár / Cluj / Napoca 26**

English name Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, Hungarian Opera of Cluj

Location 400023 Emil Isac Street 26–28, Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár)

Architect Géza Márkus and Frigyes Spiegel

Architects of interiors Géza Márkus (1910)

Project 1908

Construction 1908–1910

Artists Tibor Szervácus (bust of writer Zsigmond Móricz); Sándor Benczédi (busts of Jenő Janovics and Lili Poór); András Kós (bust of William Shakespeare); Romulus Ladea (bust of Ion Luca Caragiale); András Márkos (bust of Maxim Gorky); Mátyás Varga (ceramic plate with the image of the theatre in Farkas Street); Ferenc Ács (oil painting with the theatre in Farkas Street)

Opening night 18<sup>th</sup> July 1910, Ödön Farkas: Ünnepi nyitány (Festive Overture); Pál Kovács: Az obsitos (The Veteran)

Historical names Kolozsvári Nyári Színkör (Summer Stage of Cluj, 1910–1919); Kolozsvári Magyar Színház (Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, 1920–1941); Magyar Nemzeti Színház (Hungarian National Theatre, 1941–1945); Kolozsvári Városi Színház (City Theatre of Cluj, 1945–1949)

Reconstructions 1959–1961, Ioan Paiu, János Sóvágó (new foyer built, the theatre extended, interior and exterior reconstruction); 2007–2008, Teodor Raiciu (a new wing attached to the building, comprising a studio theatre and dressing rooms)

Capacity of auditorium 860

This theatre is historically the youngest in terms of the three independent theatre buildings within the territory of this Romanian city. The Art Nouveau structure by the Pest architects Géza Márkus and Frigyes Spiegel was sharply criticised by Károly Kós, a citizen of Transylvania and a leading figure of Hungarian architecture. It functions up to the present day as a centre for Hungarian cultural activity in Romania.



**\*=277 Slovensko stalno gledališče v Trstu, Trieste 62**

English name Trieste Permanent Slovene Theatre

Location Via Petronio 4, 34100 Trieste-Trst, Italy

Architect Edo Mihevc with assistants Olga Rusanov and Boris Rozman

Architects of interiors Edo Mihevc (including Chair Y designed for the theatre)

Project 1951–1954

Construction 1957–1964

Artists Avgust Černigoj (intarsia decorations in the small hall and foyer); Avrelj Lukežič (panels in the bar); Jože Cesar (panels in the bar); Klavdij Palčič (stained-glass windows); Frančišek Smerdu (door-handles ornamented with bronze reliefs, large chandeliers made from Murano glass and series of tapestries – kilim rugs – from Pirot on balcony)

Opening night 12<sup>th</sup> December 1964, Bratko Kreft: Po brezkončni poti (Along an Endless Path)

Historical names Kulturni dom (Cultural Centre)

Reconstructions 1987 (Main Hall renovation of seats); 2001 (renovation of interior – foyers, entrance hall, staircases – plaster wall coverings); 2008 (renovation of the facade, the roof, air-conditioning equipment; setting up the new Small Stage)

Capacity of auditorium Main Hall: 550, Small Stage: 99

A cultural house as a chronicle of the political changes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was built twenty years after the end of WWII as a reaction by the Slovenian community in Trieste to the fire in the National House in 1920. The unconventional Modernist project of Edo Mihevc, a student of J. Plečnik and native of Trieste, was built between 1954–1964 thanks to financial contributions from local Slovenians as well as countrymen living in Yugoslavia and the USA, despite the fact that Trieste had become part of Italy as a result of the Treaty of London. At present it is the only national theatre financed from the budget of another state other than the one it linguistically and territorially belongs to.



**\*=62** Městské divadlo (Town Theatre), Krnov 14

This was one of the theatres built in the late 1920s in the border areas of Czechoslovakia for the German national minority. It is a remarkable example of an Expressionist building with a partially preserved interior. The author of the project was Leo Kammel, a student of Jan Kotěra, who was influenced by his time in Vienna where he carried out a range of mainly residential projects over the course of the 1920s and 1930s. His work developed the Decorativism and Expressionism inspired by the work of Peter Behrens and Clemens Holzmeister.

**\*=19** Dům kultury – Krušnohorské divadlo  
(House of Culture – Krušnohorské Theatre), Teplice 13

The aim of building a Sudeten German national theatre in this border town with a seventy percent German population was successfully realized despite the town having found itself on the periphery of interests of the newly established Czechoslovak Republic. Their efforts culminated in an ambitious project for a multi-functional centre by the Czech-German architect Rudolf Bitzan.

**\*=120** Opera Wroclawska (Wrocław Opera), Wrocław 36

This remarkable, modernly equipped Neo-Classical Revival theatre building for 1,600 spectators, designed in 1841 by Carl Ferdinand Langhans, the most renowned architect working at the time in Silesia, was a symbol of the success of the German burghers in Wrocław. The egalitarian design of the auditorium with loges on four floors on a half-circle ground plan clearly declares the pure bourgeoisie character of the theatre, as opposed to the courtly.

# 6

- 05 Haus für Mozart, Salzburg / AT
- 15 Roškotovo divadlo, Ústí nad Orlicí / CZ
- 29 Órkény István Színház, Budapest / HU
- 39 Teatr Polski, Warszawa / HU
- 40 Teatr Powszechny, Warszawa / HU
- 51 Štátna opera, Banská Bystrica / SK

The architecture of the 1920s formulated a relationship with democracy. The new countries emerging after the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy were involved in solving different construction needs other than new theatre buildings – first and foremost housing, administration buildings, schools, department stores and spas. Designs for multi-functional buildings to house community and projection halls were also important, these being key facilities for liberal entertainment. They had to provide sufficient space for film as the new medium, which was undergoing rapid development and which at the same time embodied the visions of the new democratic period.

The theatre of the 1920s and 1930s was not seeking out new permanent buildings, but first and foremost, new means of expression. The re-evaluation of the space relationships between the stage and the auditorium were carried out by means of scenography, as opposed to architecture. Theatre forms reflect the political and social system in which they function. In similar fashion as with traditional theatre spaces which were constructed in the Baroque period reflect the feudal power structures – transformations in space relations – or the seeking out of non-conventional spaces for organising theatre performances, arises out of changes in the social, political climate. Stanisław Wyspiański presented the drama *Liberation on 'a naked stage'* as early as in 1903 in the Krakow theatre without any scenery as decoration. It was a complete suppression of the illusionist. Space experiments also took place in the 1930s in Poland, with the main protagonists being amongst others, Iwo Gall, Andrzej Pronaszko, Stefan Bryła and Stefan Żeromski whose *Studio* played in an old boiler room in Warsaw in 1933 with the actors blending in with the spectators.<sup>9</sup>

9/ Marta Romanowska, Stanisław Wyspiański, [http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os\\_wyspianski\\_stanislaw](http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os_wyspianski_stanislaw); Monika Mokrzycka-Pokora, Andrzej Pronaszko, [http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os\\_pronaszko\\_andrzej](http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os_pronaszko_andrzej); Teatr Wybrzeże

Perhaps the most impressive example of fulfilling the idea of a variable theatre space consisted of the unrealized project for the Total Theatre in Berlin which Walter Gropius created for the director Erwin Piscator in 1927. The technical furnishings of this building would have allowed for transformations to the space relationships between the stage and the auditorium, from a depth design (proscenium and depth perspective stage) up to a central arena, and with the employment of light projections creating a united 'total' space of the play.

Several attempts at constructing new theatre buildings can be seen on the Czech scene. One of these was the unrealized project for the Liberated Theatre (*Osvobozené divadlo*) in Prague from 1927 by Josef Chochol created in cooperation with the director Jiří Frejka. The distinct space design included an auditorium with a circular ground plan with a central stage accessible via a system of bridges and lifts.<sup>10</sup> A number of competitions were organised during the 1930s, with, however, only a minimum of actual successful realizations. An example of one of these would be the theatre in Ústí nad Orlicí by Kamil Roškot. The building is designed with the typical pragmatism of the 1930s as a multi-functional structure, with a theatre alternating with a cinema. The ground floor houses a restaurant, café and a dance hall, serving a community function.

The Coastal Theatre in Gdansk, [http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/in\\_te\\_wybrzeze\\_gdansk](http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/in_te_wybrzeze_gdansk); Halina Floryńska-Lalewicz, Stefan Żeromski, [http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os\\_zeromski\\_stefan](http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os_zeromski_stefan), accessed 23rd January, 2010.

10/ Jakub Potůček, Projekt Osvobozeného divadla (The Project for Liberated Theatre), <http://www.archiweb.cz/buildings.php?action=show&id=1137&type=4>, accessed 23rd January, 2010.



**\*=88 Roškotovo divadlo, Ústí nad Orlicí 15**

Name Roškotovo divadlo

English name Roškot Theatre

Location Husova 1062, 562 01 Ústí nad Orlicí

Architect Kamil Roškot

Project 1934–1935

Construction 1935–1936

Artists Alexius Appl (light from the 1970s), Michal Tomšej (marble relief in the entranceway, 1980)

Opening night 27<sup>th</sup> September 1936, Bedřich Smetana: Tajemství (The Secret)

Historical names Theatre in Ústí nad Orlicí (1936–1994)

Reconstructions 1978- 1980 (improvement of technical equipment, replacement of some original elements of the mobiliary with modern ones; 1981–1982 (reconstruction of the stage and removal of all technical equipment); 1982 (general repairs of the facade); 1984 (repair of the roof, repaving of the area in front of the building); 1986 (reconstruction of washroom facilities, renewal of seating, artwork structural repairs)

Capacity of auditorium 470

The theatre is a remarkable example of Czech Functionalism confirming the role of amateur groups in spreading culture and in initiating the construction of theatre buildings of more than mere regional importance. This multi-functional building with a theatre, cinema, restaurant and dance hall was designed according to a project by Kamil Roškot. The concept of the theatre is based on the thesis of modernization and the democratization of space. The conical form of the stage without side balconies serves to ensure the equality of all the seats in the auditorium.



**\*=327** Haus für Mozart (House for Mozart), Salzburg 05

Reconstruction work by Clemens Holzmeister from the years 1937–1938. The rough surfaces of the mass correspond with the surrounding mountain massif. The monumental architecture with pure forms making reference to the architecture of old Salzburg has been disturbed by ideologically influenced interventions. The Fascist reconstruction work by Benno von Arent ruined the Modernist work of art.

**\*=318** Örkény István Színház (Örkény István Theatre), Budapest 29

The project for a theatre from 1939 was designated for a dwelling and administrative complex of buildings on the new Madách Street in close proximity to the historic centre of Budapest. The design was carried out by Gedeon Gerlóczy, one of the most significant figures in Hungarian Modernist architecture and evoked negative reactions in the specialised press at the time of its creation.

**\*=125** Teatr Polski (Polish Theatre), Warszawa 39

The first Polish Modernist structure. The elegant Neo-Classical style makes reference to the French Empire. It contains truly unique technical equipment. This was the predecessor to the rationalist Warsaw school. One of the most impressive works of Polish architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century designed by Czesław Przybylski.

**\*=105** Teatr Powszechny im. Zygmunta Hübnera (Powszechny Theatre), Warszawa 40

Adaptations to a cinema for the needs of a theatre according to a project by Andrzej Stypinski from 1944. This was the first theatre to function after WW II in Warsaw. It is a valuable structure in terms of its architecture and has undergone three remodellings due to expansion and modernization. It is listed on the list of contemporary cultural heritage of the Association of Polish Architects. It is home to a successful and prosperous theatre.

**\*=218** Štátna opera (State Opera), Banská Bystrica 51

The construction of the theatre amounted to a search for new means of expression. The victorious design for the competition for a multi-functional building with a theatre, hotel and restaurant from 1912 by István Medgyaszay, a pioneer in the use of reinforced concrete constructions in Hungary, was finally not carried out after the dissolution of the monarchy. A second competition from 1925 was won by the Functionalists Vojtěch Šebor and Gabriel Schreiber. The realization of the third victorious project by Emil Belluš, an invited competition this time, embodies the path of the traditionally trained architect towards the abstract language of Modernism.



06 Passionsspielhaus, Erl / AT

16 Janáčkovo divadlo, Brno / CZ

17 Městské divadlo, Zlín / CZ

41 Teatr m. st. Warszawy im. Gustawa Holoubka / PL

Although the art practice of Socialist Realism had already been firmly established in the Soviet Union, having begun there in the 1930s, it surprisingly did not have a clearly defined programme, as is evidenced by the numerous paradoxical accounts of theoreticians of the emerging style. The Czech architect J. Wein stated the following in his views regarding the future of architecture, 'We answer in all honesty that we do not know, that we are still searching. We only know that it will be different from that up until now, as the previous work was indicative of another time period.'<sup>11</sup> The continual emphasising, 'openness' and non-prescriptive programme was connected with this perplexed and undefined programme proclamation. This was only the case, however, in questions of art. In the case of ideology, a definite unity ruled, as is confirmed by the Czech literary theorist Zdeněk Nejedlý 'It is understandable that there are writers of various styles on our side of the barricade, by this I mean in terms of literary views, not in terms of ideology or politics.'<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps the most radical expression of Socialist Realism outside the area of the former USSR is the monstrous structure of the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw. During 1952–1955, this 'generous gift to the Polish nation from the Soviet nation' was constructed, and is at present still viewed with considerable disagreement. All urban planning and architectural plans carried out in the 1950s were part of the programme of rebuilding the capital city which had been almost completely destroyed during WWII. The new structure of the Palace of Culture and Science was intended to be a new, impressive dominating feature. The choice on the part of the Polish people of this architectural embodiment of the representation of the ruling regime instead of, for example, a metro system<sup>13</sup>

11/ Jindřich Vybíral, *Majáky převratných idejí (Beacons of Transforming Ideas)*, in: Sorela, česká architektura padesátých let (Sorela, Czech Architecture of the 1950s) (catalogue exhibition, National Gallery Kinský Palace, 14th April – 22nd May, 1994). Prague 1994, pp. 61–65. Republished: *Architekt XL*, 1994, no. 8, p. 6; citation according to Karel Kouba, *Mytologizace v umění socialistického realismu (Mythologizing in Socialist Realist Art)*, <http://www.sorela.cz/web/articles.aspx?id=61>, accessed 20th January, 2010.

12/ Ibid.

13/ Joanna Derdowska, *Angažované stavby: co s nimi? (Involved Structures: what to*

do with them?) (Vítkov, Reichstag, Palace of Culture), <http://www.sorela.cz/web/articles.aspx?id=93>, accessed 20th January, 2010.

out of the offered gifts can be viewed critically in retrospect today, however, even the pre-war Modernist architecture had required essential interventions into the city structure. The Palace of Culture as a central point in the new Warsaw is one of the best examples of Manhattanism<sup>14</sup> in Central Europe. At the same time, the Palace of Culture and Science symbolised for many the hated Soviet rule, there were serious attempts at bringing about its demolition appearing after 1989. At the beginning of 2007 the structure was added to the list of Polish cultural monuments. A percentage of the public, of course, disagreed, with 'a fifth of the respondents to an Internet poll by Gazeta Wyborcza voting for the option that the Palace be razed to the ground.'<sup>15</sup>

There was a short period after the war when possibilities existed for building upon the Functionalist tradition and staging ideas of Avant-garde theatre of the 1920s and 1930s. Although theatre buildings did undergo remodelling in order to repair the damages of the war, a minimum of new buildings emerged.

The other countries of the Eastern Bloc were also influenced by the import and consequent institutionalization of directed implementation of Socialist Realism as the only 'genuine artistic method' starting in the beginning of the 1950s. New theatres were not built in this era either. Theatres, or combined function halls, were built as part of cultural houses which were intended to support the educational policies of the ruling Communist party. These were mainly established in towns and cities connected with the building up of heavy industry, the opening of mines, and with the military.<sup>16</sup>

The situation began to change in the middle of the 1950s when the influence of Socialist Realism gradually eased and architects were able to begin to express themselves in a freer manner. Toward end of the 1950s and through the 1960s, consequently, there was a new wave in theatre art and scenography, which itself created the need for new theatre buildings.

The perception of the architectural production from the period of Stalinism has remained ambiguous, despite it being an essential part of the history of Central Europe. The interest of contemporary art, literature, and cultural historians in this theme, however, suggests that there is an interest in placing it into the narrative of our past.<sup>17</sup>

14/ Rem Koolhaas, *Delirius New York*

15/ Pavel Janáček, *Socialistický realismus co s ním? (Socialist Realism what to do with it?)*, A2, 2007, May 30, no. 22, <http://www.advojka.cz/archiv/2007/22/socialisticky-realismus-co-s-nim>, accessed 20th January, 2010.

16/ Jiří Hilmera, *Česká divadelní architektura (Czech Theatre Architecture)*, Theatre Institute in Prague, Prague 1999, p. 142.

17/ Pavel Janáček, *Socialistický realismus: co s ním? (Socialist Realism: what to do with it?)*, A2, 2007, 30. 5., no. 22, <http://www.advojka.cz/archiv/2007/22/socialisticky-realismus-co-s-nim>, accessed 20th January, 2010.



**\*=35 Městské divadlo, Zlín 17**

English name Zlín City Theatre

Location Třída Tomáše Bati 4091/32, 761 87 Zlín

Architect Karel Řepa (co-creator, competition-winning design from 1957), Miroslav Řepa (co-creator competition-winning design from 1957 and realisation of the project), František Rozhon (co-creator of the realised project)

Project 1957–1960

Construction 1960–1967

Artists Jan Habarta, Alois Šutera, Ludmila Hladíková, Děvana Mírová, Marie Rychlíková (ceramic works); Zdeněk Holub (painting in the main foyer); Miloslav Chlupáč, Čestmír Janošek (co-creators of the fountain behind the theatre with the statue Human Torso; concrete structured wall); Zdeněk Kovář (figurative relief – Drama, Poetry, Music in the entrance vestibule to the operational part of the theatre); Hana Lendrová, Sylva Řepková (co-creators of the celebratory textile curtain in the Great Hall); Luboš Moravec (statue The Flying Muse in front of the main facade of the theatre); Milan Obrátil, Zbyněk Slavíček (co-creators of the mosaics in the vestibule); Vladislav Vaculka (creator of the tapestries in the buffets); Zbyněk Slavíček, Milan Obrátil (monumental mosaic in the lower foyer)

Opening night 11<sup>th</sup> November 1967, Jiří Mahen: Jánošík (Jánošík)

Reconstructions 1989 (repairs of the main space, reduction in the number of seats, creation of the chamber stage – Studio G, post 1990 renamed Studio Z)

Capacity of auditorium Great Hall: 687, Small Theatre in the club: 80, Studio Z: 84

Attempts prior to WWII to build a theatre were brought to a halt by the events in 1938. The spaces of an adapted cinema failed to meet the demands of a permanent theatre stage. An anonymous competition was announced in 1957. Karel and Miroslav Řepa's winning project significantly influenced the urban design of the centre. Development lent the town a big city scale. The theatre fits in with the surrounding buildings. The level of traffic was underestimated however, and the square in front of the theatre has been degraded at present into a busy intersection.



**\*=110 Teatr Dramatyczny m. st. Warszawy im. Gustawa Holoubka 41**

English name Gustaw Holoubek Drama Theatre of Warsaw City

Location 00-901 Warszawa, pl. Defilad 1

Architect Lev Rudnev (architect of Palace of Culture and Science)

Construction 1952–1954 (building of Palace of Culture and Science, where is headquarters of the theatre)

Opening night 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1955, Stanisław Wyspiański: Wesele (The Wedding)

Historical names Teatr Domu Wojska Polskiego (Theatre of the Polish Army House, 1955–1957); Teatr Dramatyczny m. st. Warszawy (Drama Theatre of Warsaw City, 1957–2008)

Capacity of auditorium Great Hall: 570, Small Stage of Halina Mikołajska: 120, Hall of Witold Zatorski: 60

The Palace of Culture and Science was 'a gift to the Polish nation from the Soviet nation' built in the exact centre of the capital. This new brutal dominating architectural feature was a specific redefinition of Historicism, through the so-called National Style. It is a mix of Art Nouveau, Socialist Realism and Polish urban architecture. It is a communist factory for art and science. It is home to three theatres and other additional cultural institutions.



**\*=328** Passionsspielhaus (Passion Playhouse), Erl **06**

The simplicity and strictness of the structure with a sacral expression in the foothills of Kreuzbühel Mountain fully corresponds with the repertoire. The almost four-hundred-year tradition of performing passion plays in Erl in Tyrol continues within the monumental architecture of Robert Schuller from 1958–1958.

**\*=136** Janáčkovo divadlo (Leoš Janáček Theatre), Brno **16**

The shared project by Jan Vášek, Vilém Zavřel and Libuše Žáčková-Pokorná emerged victorious from a series of competitions of varied success announced starting in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up until 1958. The monumental depersonalized architecture of Neo-Classical Revival forms with a marked decorative element is significantly different from Vášek's design of the theatre as a severe, large-scale conceived prism with glazed facades which he succeeded with in one of the pre-war competitions.

# 8

- 07 Festspielhaus, Bregenz / AT
- 19 Městské divadlo, Most / CZ
- 20 CED – Divadlo Husa na provázku, Brno / CZ
- 30 Győri Nemzeti Színház, Győr / HU
- 42 Opera Nova, Bydgoszcz / PL
- 53 Divadlo Andreja Bagara, Nitra / SK
- 63 Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana / SI
- 64 SNG Nova Gorica, Nova Gorica / SI

The lack of practicality in the planning of Socialist architecture often led to projects either not being realized, or the process taking a particularly long time. The results of the large-scale intentions to construct theatre buildings or multi-functional structures containing theatre halls, often served to demonstrate that there were different approaches at the time of the origin of the project, than in the period when the buildings were actually placed into operations. A paradoxical situation often arose when the new structures embodied concepts and tendencies which were no longer current.

Each country of the former Eastern Bloc contains at least one example which confirms this slow tempo in the process of realization, and demonstrates the related anachronistic appearing design. This can be seen in the late Modernism of the Opera Nova in Bydgoszcz (project 1961, realization 1973–2006), the structurally Organic architecture of the Town Theatre in Most (project 1967–1968, realization 1979–1985), the brutality of the National Theatre in Győr (project 1969–1971, realization 1973–1978) or in the Post-Modern creation of the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava (competition 1979, project 1981–2006, realization 1986–2007) and the Slovenian National Theatre in Nova Gorica (project 1987, realization 1987–1994).

The realizations of these ambitious projects often resulted in irreversible interventions into the existing town structure. Parts of the original architecture of the historic centre were demolished as a result of the construction of the oversized building of the Andrej Bagar Theatre in Nitra, the impact of which is still apparent at present, and it cannot conceivably be rectified. The building of the National Theatre in Győr with its adjoining square is also situated without any attempt at a closer connection with the surrounding architecture. In light of the

character of the town structure, the scale of the building is so exaggerated that it could easily have served the function of the new National Theatre in the capital city.

The theatre in Most represents a somewhat different problem. It was built according to a design by Ivo Klimeš in connection with the large-scale mining of brown coal. Its symbolic placement on an elevated open area allows the monumentality of the structure, which surprisingly fits organically into the urban planning of the town, to stand out. Its inclusion is at the same time a reaction to the right-angled dehumanization of the prefabricated architecture of the surrounding buildings, and an attempt at creating an intimate atmosphere with a human scale, derived from the functioning of natural structures. This is influenced by the intentions of Wright's organic architecture. The attempt at a natural flow in the gradually growing open town structure was only successfully developed, however, in the case of the Most building, with the adjacent park landscaping, and also partially in the layout arrangement of the adjoining square.<sup>18</sup>

The monumental building of the Bregenz Festival House is a successful example of an attempt at integral incorporation into the town landscape realized outside of the former Socialist countries. The theatre building is situated on the banks of Lake Constance and connected up to an outdoor lake stage by a jetty. A competition for expanding the building, constructed over the years 1977–1980 according to a project by Wilhelm Braun, was organised only twelve years after its opening. The two phase reconstruction by Dietrich / Untertrifaller Studio (1997, 2006) transformed the building into the typological conglomerate of a theatre and a multi-functional congress centre, the articulated forms of which make reference to the construction of the theatre stage on the surface of the water. The square in front of the main facade is designed as a circular park with a water element in the centre, while the landscaping on the opposite southern side, created by the garden architect Günter Vogt<sup>19</sup>, is designed as a natural lowland forest, for walks and recreation.

18/ Ludmila Hájková, Městské divadlo v Mostě alias Divadlo pracujících v Mostě (The Town Theatre in Most alias the Workers' Theatre in Most), <http://www.theatre-architecture.eu/cs/db/?theatreid=34>, accessed 20th January, 2010.

19/ Dietrich / Untertrifaller, Festspielhaus Bregenz, <http://www.dietrich.untertrifaller.com/project.php?id=161&type=KULTUR&lang=en>, accessed 20th January, 2010.



**\*=114 Opera Nova, Bydgoszcz 42**

English name New Opera

Location 85-070 Bydgoszcz, ul. Marszałka Focha 5

Architect Józef Chmiel, Andrzej Prusiewicz

Project 1960

Construction 1960–2006

Opening night 17<sup>th</sup> April 1994, Piotr Czajkowski: Eugeniusz Oniegin (Eugene Onegin, 1st Opera Festival in Bydgoszcz); 21<sup>st</sup> October 2006, Ignacy Jan Paderewski: Manru (Manru, official opening)

Capacity of auditorium Grand Hall: 800, Small Hall of F. Kryszewiczowa: 189

Construction of the building lasted almost fifty years. It is reminiscent of late Modernist and Neo-rationalist ideas. This is a paradox of new structure as a monument to earlier concepts. The victorious project by Józef Chmiel from a competition in 1960, was a sculpturally conceived composition of four circles. It was finally constructed by Andrzej Prusiewicz in 2006 after numerous changes, reductions, and the inclusion of the ability to function as a congress centre.



**\*=214 Divadlo Andreja Bagara, Nitra 53**

English name Andrej Bagar Theatre

Location Svätoplukovo námestie 4, 950 53 Nitra

Architect Juraj Hlavica, Mária Žitňanský, Štefánia Rosincová (Design Institute of Culture in Bratislava)

Authors of the interiors Juraj Hlavica, František Kalesný, Ľubomír Mihálik, Mária Žitňanský

Project 1978–1981

Construction 1982–1992

Artists Tibor Bártfay (sculptural décor, the sculpture of Andrej Bagar in the entrance hall); Juraj Marth (sculptural décor, central wall composition in the foyer); Marián Prešnajder (painter, design of the curtain); Katarína Šujanová (painting décor, textile composition in the lounge)

Opening night 19<sup>th</sup> September 1992, Jozef Hollý: Geľo Sebechlebský (Geľo Sebechlebský)

Capacity of auditorium Large Hall: 577, Studio: 100-150

This was one of the first modern multi-functional theatre buildings in Slovakia. The scale and placement within the city structure served as a presentation of the high cultural level and vitality of the so-called 'normalization' Socialist regime. The city has still not come to terms with its immense volume and solitary urban character. The theatre, nevertheless, ranks among the most successful in the country due to its well-equipped theatre space, technological equipment and quality dramaturgy.



**\*=329** Festspielhaus (Festival House), Bregenz 07

The theatre is a complicated technical-logistic mechanism. The articulated forms of the building on the banks of Lake Constance make reference to the construction of the theatre stage on the surface of the water. A competition for expanding the building was organised only twelve years after the opening in 1980. The two phases of the reconstruction study by Dietrich / Untertrifaller (1997, 2006) transformed the theatre complex into the typological conglomerate of a multi-functional congress centre.

**\*=34** Městské divadlo (Town Theatre), Most 19

The mining of brown coal brought about a fatal intervention to this historic town. The construction of a new town with the most luxurious civic equipment of the day served as a celebration of the regime of the time. The new theatre was symbolically placed on an elevated open area. The building serves to recall the organic-structuralist tendencies in Czechoslovakian architecture of the 1960s.

**\*=307** Centrum experimentálního divadla – Husa na provázku

(Centre for Experimental Theatre – Goose on a String Theatre), Brno 20

The layout of the theatre building serves as an answer to the experimental poetics of the troupe. The theatre has three stages designated for carrying out the widest possible range of performances: the chamber stage came about through adaptations to the Gothic cellars of the historic House of Fanal, the Elizabethan atrium stage serves for outdoor productions while the third is the main and most spacious building of the new stage. The wishes of the commissioner were fulfilled to the maximum extent in terms of the variability and simple modifiability of the theatre space.

**\*=196** Győri Nemzeti Színház (National Theatre of Győr), Győr 30

This is the only independent theatre building in Hungary designed and built from the end of WWII up to 1989. It began to be immediately referred to as the ski jump by the inhabitants of Győr due to the vertically articulated line of roofs. The side facades were decorated by Victor Vasarely. Despite its exaggerated scale, the structure became the new architectural dominant feature of Győr.

**\*=320** Cankarjev dom (Cankar Hall), Ljubljana 63

The process of realizing the largest construction project in the area of culture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Slovenia began in 1977. This multi-functional cultural and congress centre was built according to a project by Edo Ravnikar. It was intended to fulfil the desperate need for a modern space which would provide a quality facility for artistic, educational as well as commercial activities on the highest possible level, this having been missing in the capital up until that point.

**\*=252** SNG Nova Gorica (Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica), Nova Gorica 64

Theatre as a symbol of transformation. This Post-Modern creation of Vojtech Ravnikar and his colleagues from 1987–1994 closed off the eastern part of the main square in Nova Gorica. The building's pillars emphasise the portal of the main entrance while the materials employed make reference to the Modernist tradition of the town which was only founded after 1947 as a new regional centre after the new border was established between Yugoslavia and Italy, with Gorizia remaining on the other side, in Italy.

# 9

## **New Attitudes Towards Space – a new view of space, new functions for theatre, new possibilities for art**

08 Sommertheater Haag, Haag / AT

09 MUMUTH, Graz / AT

18 Bytové divadlo Vlasty Chramostové, Praha / CZ

21 Alfred ve dvoře, Praha / CZ

31 Gödör Klub, Budapest / HU

45 Nowy Teatr, Warsaw / PL

The conception of the theatre space has changed along with transformations of theatrical strategies. Ways of designing the technical area and its aesthetic organisation can be observed on the one hand in connection with the development of architecture, and on the other hand in relation to the development of theatre. The amphitheatre is the ideal construction type with accumulated functions designated for the theatrical means of communication which came about in the Middle Ages. This elementary form of space had not to be necessarily drastically changed up until the present day, as it provides perfect conditions in terms of visibility and acoustics. It is also a space whose layout enables an environment of co-participation on the part of the audience. It has been gradually transformed from a ritual, where the participants were the duo of the priest and the believer, to a ritual where the participants are the duo of the actor and the spectator.<sup>20</sup> The amphitheatre is an ideal space for carrying out the ceremony which takes place between the participants and the public, this represents a valid value up until the present day.

When observing contemporary theatre space, one cannot forget the heritage of the Baroque space, which was the result of attempts at constructing an illusionary picture of the world. With this construction type, a basic division of the originally united space into two independent areas took place, these being

distinct parts in terms of importance: the stage (at times further divided into a front and rear) and the auditorium, separated by the portal (the stage frame). The layout of a number of theatre buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, still operating up until the present, arise from the Baroque spatial scheme with the portal in this case supporting the illusion of the events on the stage to the maximum extent.

Modernist tendencies at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries began to call into question the illusionary depiction of the picture of the world, although their approaches did not manifest themselves in the form of the creation of a new type of gathering space. The Avant-garde movements of the 1920s and 1930s did not build new theatre buildings which would correspond to their poetics, but did lean toward innovative approaches when employing scenographic means. At the same time, rapid developments came about with the new medium of film – the space demands which were solved through the construction of a range of new cinemas and projection halls. Although the already existing theatre spaces were functional, their innovation was consequently not one which met with particular interest. Questions connected with the designing of theatre space were additionally disturbed by the onset of WWII and the two consequent totalitarian regimes which ensued and which were actually able to exploit this illusionary art to perfection.

20/Věra Ptáčková, Divadlo na cestě mezi nebem a zemí (Theatre on the Path between Heaven and Earth). Kazimierz Braun, Divadelní prostor (Theatre Space). Divadelní revue (Theatre Revue), 2002, no. 3, <http://www.divadlo.cz/art/clanek.asp?id=2296>, accessed 20th January, 2010.

The variable space became fully established after the War. Newly emerging theatre buildings are distinguished by the employment of sophisticated technology as the result of the enormous number of norms and rules which function upon the same principles for a hall for either 600 spectators or a small chamber theatre with 20 visitors. Alternative troupes, however, primarily sought out locales which would provide the highest possible amount of variability of space. New spatial designs for buildings designated for drama performance in particular were sought out in West Germany in the 1960s.<sup>21</sup> Apart from official, in particular opera, stages, smaller experimental buildings are also built with flexible arrangement of the space allowing for direct contact between the actors and the spectators. Post-industrial buildings become ideal spaces for contemporary theatre, whether that be Trafó in Budapest or Elektrarna in Ljubljana.

Requirements for contemporary theatre operations have been met on one hand in spaces which have been secondarily adapted for their use (reconstruction or conversion of buildings originally used for something other than the theatre function), and on the other hand, less frequently, with the construction of new structures. If and when a space is able to accommodate various types of staging productions, it becomes more advantageous from the economic perspective. Of great importance, however, is the problematically defined category of 'the psychology of the space which has a positive influence on the character and impact of the art [...], since the most important object in the theatre is the living person, while the remaining things surrounding are only the necessary provision, serving to express the mystery of existence.'<sup>22</sup>

21/ Miroslav Melena, Divadelní architektura dnes: O změnách v chápání divadelního prostoru (Theatre Architecture Today: On Changes in the Understanding of Theatre Space), A2, 2007, June 13, no. 24, <http://www.advojka.cz/archiv/2007/24>, accessed 20th January, 2010.

22/ Ibid.



**\*=331 Sommertheater Haag, Haag 08**

English name Summer Theatre Haag

Location Hauptplatz, A-3350 Stadt Haag

Architect nonconform architektur vor ort ZT KG

Project 1999–2000

Construction 2000

Opening night 13<sup>th</sup> July 2000, Carlo Goldoni: Der Diener zweier Herren (Servant of Two Masters)

Capacity of auditorium 600

This seasonal, itinerant theatre recalls ancient European traditions. The performances take place directly in the centre of activity, on the main square. The auditorium is a temporary, mobile construction which alters the life of the town, redefining the scale of the surrounding architecture for a certain period.



**\*=160 Alfred ve dvoře, Praha 21**

English name Alfred in the Courtyard Theatre

Location Františka Křížka 495/36, 170 00 Prague 7 – Holešovice

Architect Jindřich Smetana, Tomáš Kulík

Project 1996

Construction 1996–1997

Opening night 11<sup>th</sup> May 1997, Festival mimického a komediálního divadla (Festival of Mime and Comic Theatre)

Capacity of auditorium 80–100

One of the few theatre buildings carried out on a green field in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the territory of the capital city. This was a remarkable private initiative of the founder of the theatre: Ctibor Turba, mime, choreographer, director and teacher at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, who decided to make use of the apartment building he obtained in restitution after 1989 for theatre operations. The initial idea of a temporary summer stage was replaced, due to the noise from the surroundings and the sound difficulties of performance, by an independent structure ingeniously incorporated into the inner court.



**\*=330** Music Theatre (MUMUTH), Graz 09

This is a platform for discussion regarding contemporary performing arts. It is a space for interdisciplinary research and events. The central building of the University of Music and Performing Arts in Graz – MUMUTH (Haus für Musik und Musiktheater) was finally launched in March 2009 after fifteen years of preparations and two years of realization work.

**\*=315** Bytové divadlo Vlasty Chramostové (Flat Theatre of Vlasta Chramostová), Praha 18

The origin of all theatre plays can be found in private theatre where performers and visitors would come together. Architecture at a later point divided these two groups, placing one in the auditorium and the second lifted up onto the stage. The Flat Theatre of Vlasta Chramostová returned to the equal arrangement of these two groups in the interior of a private flat, transferring the truncated public space into the purely private during the time of so-called 'normalization' in Czechoslovakia.



**\*=319** Competition for a National Theatre – Gödör (Gödör Club), Budapest 31

The architecture competition announced in 1997, when the first prize was awarded to the Dune Stúdió run by the architect Bán Ferenc, stood at the beginning of the story which was to bring a new National Theatre to Budapest. After changes in the government in 1998, a new competition was not arranged. Instead the city dealt with a cultural institution such as the National Theatre in a developer manner.

The torso of the concrete garages of the original design at present houses the renowned Gödör Club. The move on the part of the National Theatre to the periphery of the city has not, however, wiped this site from the cultural map of Budapest.

**\*=237** Nowy Teatr, Warszawa 45

The idea behind the building of this cultural centre in the widest sense, a locale incorporated into the city structure as opposed to a separate cultural zone, came from the artistic director Krzysztof Warlikowski. The large-scale space of the former headquarters of the Warsaw waterworks and waste disposal provides enormous artistic potential. The project for the reconstruction builds upon 'the garage' past of the anti-elite and democratic New Theatre.

## BEYOND EVERYDAYNESS

### Exhibition of Theatre Architecture in Central Europe

#### Project leaders

Ondřej Svoboda, Jan K. Rolník

#### Curator of the exhibition

Igor Kovačević

#### Leading Experts

Austria Fritz Trümpi

Czech Republic Jiří Hilmera, Ondřej Svoboda

Hungary Eszter Molnárné Aczél, Mihály Vargha

Poland Monika Jarzyna, Piotr Morawski

Slovakia Henrieta Moravčíková, Olga Triaška Stefanović

Slovenia Helena Pivec, Ivo Svetina

#### Production

Olga Plchová

#### Graphic design

ZGD studio

#### Architectural layout of exhibition

MOBA studio

#### Photography

Martina Novozámská

#### Realization team

Anna Cékány, Dorota Buchwald, Viera Dlháňová, Tereza Dufková, Vladislava Fekete, Tamás Gajdó, Mariana Holá, Hermína Horváth, Sylvia Huszár, Magdalena Kořová, Peter Krečič, Jan Látal, Kateřina Lopatová, Silvie Marková, Milada Mercová, Dušan Nelec, Éva Németh, Barbara Novakovič Kolenc, Olga Plchová, Anita Rákóczy, Jan K. Rolník, Marjan Slapar, Igor Sapač, Dana Schlaichertová, Ondřej Svoboda, Attila Szabó, Jolana Teuberová, Dominika Začková, Bogo Zupančič, Markéta Žáčková

#### Translations

David Livingstone, Zdislava Kratěnová, Attila Szabó, Heather McGadie

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#### Organizers

Národní  divadlo



SLOVENSKI  
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Hungarian  
Theatre Museum  
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## Cooperating Archives

### A

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### HU

BTM Kiscelli Múzeum (BTM Museum Kiscell), Építészforum (Architect Forum), Bajor Gizi Színészmúzeum (Gizi Bajor Actors' Museum), OSZK Színháztörténeti Tár (Theatre Collection of the National Széchenyi Library), Magyar Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary), Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár Budapest Gyűjtemény (Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library Budapest Collection), Vígszínház (Comedy Theatre in Budapest), Magyar Állami Operaház (Hungarian State Operahouse in Budapest), Örkényi Színház (Örkény Theatre in Budapest), Győri Nemzeti Színház (National Theatre in Győr), Nemzeti Színház (National

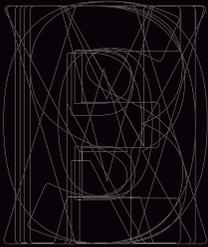
Theatre in Budapest), Új színház (New Theatre in Budapest), Nemzeti Táncszínház (National Dance Theatre in Budapest), Szegedi Nemzeti Színház (National Theatre in Szeged), Kolozsvári Állami Magyar Színház (Hungarian State Theatre in Cluj), Kaposvári Csiky Gergely Színház (Gergely Csiky Theatre in Kaposvár)

### PL

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### SK

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