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## SUMMARIES

### WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THE PUBLIC...

*Vasil Stefanov*

The article examines some questions of the present-day situation in the Bulgarian theater. The most important one is the public's attitude to the theater. During the last 10-15 years many factors have influenced it, first of all television. Today the public clearly is sending a message that it wants to see a show, something amusing, preferably funny. The performance that it enjoys should be funny or at least entertaining and should not last more than 2 hours. And since the theatrical activities should yield to the market principle of supply and demand, the repertoire gradually becomes oriented towards the new preferences of the audience. The comedies, often quite mediocre, enjoy full house, shows of dubious quality turn out to be the most profitable. It is not surprising that they usually dominate the repertoire. The serious, rich in content and artistically complex performances rarely enjoy great success. This compels the best young directors that want to make really good modern theater to turn to the small theatrical halls where they can stage more innovative performances based on interesting, problem-inspired classical and modern dramaturgy. But what are the consequences? What perspective is there for a theater that is not funny or entertaining?

### IS THE TRANSITION OVER FOR THE BULGARIAN THEATRE?

*Nikolay Iordanov*

The article offers a general view over the new tendencies in Bulgarian theatre. It supposes that the years between 1989 (the beginning

of the democratic changes) and 2007 (when Bulgaria became a member of EU) set up a separate period with its own specificity. It influenced the whole cultural life, as well as the theatre which had important intellectual and spiritual role for the society during the whole 20 century. Today the socio-cultural situation is different: the theatre has artistic and political freedom, but it has to compete for the public with the cable TV, internet and show-business. From the other hand, it is a challenge which helps the theatre to define its own language and aesthetics.

The years of transition are interesting with the cultural mix of artistic tendencies and approaches: if the psychological theatre with the dominance of the director's interpretation of the dramaturgical text was the mainstream in Bulgarian culture, the improvisational, anthropological, physical / dance, environmental and other types of theatre as alternative scenic forms appeared. During the last several years also the multimedia- and reality- performances are the new artistic phenomena.

But most the aesthetic discoveries happen predominantly in the non-repertory theatres which are concentrated in the capital. The paradox of the Bulgarian theatre today looks like that: the political change is over, but the real reformation of the theatre system in the country is about to begin.

### BULGARIAN THEATRE AFTER 1989: RECONSTRUCTIONS

*Kamelia Nikolova*

The article describes and analyzes the development of the Bulgarian theatre after the political changes in 1989. Two main periods could be defined during the last two decades – the period of the transition (1989-2007) and the period after

2007 when our country became a member of the EU. The first one is characterized by an extensive process of basic reforms, transformations and innovations in different directions of the theatre life and it consists of two stages, delimited by the end of the 20 century. The second period has just started but its general characteristic are well visible – the theatre situation today is more stable and at the same time it is too conservative and unvaried.

During the 90s the contemporary Bulgarian theatre experienced its most interesting and creative time. The first decade after 1989 brought the enthusiasm from the unlimited freedom. The theatre tried to test everything that had been missed or was forbidden during the previous years. Many new titles and playwrights, new theatre aesthetics, forms and styles, new names and companies appeared. The experiments ranged from innovative attempts and mixed practices in the psychological theatre through dominant activities of the alternative theatre to different forms of the postmodern performance. The innovations began to fade away during the second stage of the transition period (late 90s–2006). At that time the theatrical practice used mainly the discoveries of the 90s and mixed them with strategies of the conventional and popular scene. Most of the outstanding and creative events of this decade were created by a small number of people and companies, especially by few directors of the new generation, which appeared in the 90s.

Today, in the first few years of the second period of Bulgarian theatre after 1989 the tendency to return to more secure and traditional theatre forms becomes stronger. The monotonous theatre landscape shows very clearly that the situation of the transition period is

exhausted and it needs actual and effective contemporary decisions and developments.

### **TRANSITION AND HUMOR PERCEPTIONS IN THE THEATER**

*Romeo Popiliev*

The article examines the presence of the comic in Bulgarian theater during the transition period, but not as an empirical fact but as a movement and presence of the general public views and the theater artists towards it. Because for the Bulgarian theater the comic has always been very important; for the Bulgarian in general – due to the difficult times he has gone through. The first part of the article makes a short review of the history of the theater from the 1960s to the present times. The author gradually withdraws from high pathetic and naturally leads us to the comic as a point of view – with the slight growth of the dramatic vision on life at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. During the transition years we notice that laughter is present everywhere but exactly for that reason it seems that it is nowhere. The author looks for the reasons behind this present deficit and excess of laughter: the painful introvert character of the Bulgarian theater and drama, willingness to contemplate but not to act, the extreme devaluation of the politically comic, the pressure of the electronic media with the dubious aesthetics of the show programs, etc.

### **AESTHETIC CONCEPTS AND STYLES IN THE BULGARIAN THEATER AFTER 1989**

*Violeta Decheva*

The article presents the structural changes in the theater after 1998 through the prism of drama, cleared of any genre qualifications and pre-

senting itself in two acts: In 'act one' (up to 1998) the key word is 'freedom' while the situation is charged with the energy of the falling apart of the communist state and the will for radical change. In 'act two' (from 1989 up to the present) the key word is 'stability' and that is why the situation is dominated by pragmatism and the will for a stable functioning of the institutions. The first act can be defined as revolutionary-existential because the dominant tendency in Bulgarian theater (as well as in society) is for a revolutionary change of the existing then theater and existential, since the revolutionary zeal is dominated by the effort for all points of view and choices to be embodied in a new theatrical expression. As typical for the period up to 1989 are examined the processes of the bargaining in of popular culture, the staging authors "for the first time in Bulgaria", the rereading of classics (including Bulgarian), doing away with the authors' cult and marginalization of the psychological theater which, together with Stanislavski, symbolized socialism. Analyzed also are the most interesting phenomena, aesthetics and directors' styles during this period which present the changes in the theatrical language and the different behavior strategies in the field of theater: the poetic ascetic of the Theatrical Workshop „Sfumato”, Stefan Moskov's and Alexander Morfov's carnival aesthetics, Lilia Abadzhieva's plastic-body quasi-surrealism, Galin Stoev's postmodern resistance of authorities, Marius Kurkinski's neo-naive admonitory theater and Yavor Gardev's game with cultural codes.

The second act is defined as hedonistic because its leading tendency is to strive for pleasure, comfort, aim for comfort and pleasure. Society is dominated by media, computers and consumer moods. All phenomena, aesthetics and individual styles that have emerged until 1998 continue to develop and gained the statute of

authoritative, institutionalized theatrical activities. But as most typical for the decade the author indicates the lack of alternative groping, of proposals for new type of theater structure in the new cultural context.

### **LIBRI DE ARTE LUDICRA. BOOKS ABOUT ACTOR'S ART IN BULGARIA FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE XXI CENTURY**

*Joanna Spassova-Dikova*

The text studies the recent books (more than 50) about the actor's art in Bulgaria, written during the last decade by Bulgarian theatre scholars, critics, directors, actors, teachers in acting, journalists and theatre fans.

Several types of texts could be defined – encyclopedias, anniversary issues, historical and theoretical books and monographs, collective works with portraits, autobiographies, interviews, methodological and practical text-books.

Most of the works have descriptive character. Others have normative orientation and usually are from the sphere of theatre education and practice. There is a small number of scientific researches and doctoral thesis about actor's art, which follow a descriptive-normative paradigm. What do we remember today about the Bulgarian actors from the past? How the stage art in our country has developed so far and where does it go? What shall we know in the future about today's actors? Writing or not writing? However, it is better to write, to seal in words, sounds and images the shreds of human lives.

### **IS PUPPET THEATER IN A CRISIS?**

*Elena Vladova*

The text discusses and analyses the three key points of creative energy that are vital for the contemporary

