

Amfiteater Symposium on

AMATEUR THEATRE

Where: **SLOGI – Slovenian Theatre Institute (Mestni trg 17, Ljubljana)**

When: 8–9 November 2019

Slovenian Theatre Institute in cooperation with Amfiteater – Journal of Performing Arts Theory, Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, University of Ljubljana (AGRFT UL) Research Group, JSKD – Public Fund for Cultural Activities of the Republic of Slovenia and the international research group STEP

The symposium will be held in Slovenian and English.

Head of symposium: Maja Šorli

International committee: Maja Šorli, Gašper Troha, Nika Leskovšek, Anneli Saro, Joshua Edelman, Vicki Ann Cremona



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organized by:

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Slovenski gledališki inštitut (SLOGI), Friday 8th and Saturday 9th November 2019

Head of symposium: Maja Šorli

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Edited by: Maja Šorli in Amadea Karin Ilic

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Amateur theatre has historically played the role of a place where theatre changes occur. Whether it was the beginnings of professional theatre in Slovenia (the Dramatic Society), alternative theatre groups (e.g., Living Theater, Pupilija Ferkeverk Theatre, Experimental theatre Glej, Pekarna Theatre) or the introduction of contemporary dance. The rise of the precariat now brings up questions about the various possibilities of professional and semi-professional activity in culture. Even so, amateur theatre is rarely a subject of academic interest. This symposium will try to fill this gap. It will focus on the historical role of amateur theatre in Slovenia, on the current image of certain theatre phenomena (Theatre of the Oppressed, the Škofja Loka Passion Play, festivals, children's groups ...) and on the search for parallels with amateur theatre in some other European countries (Denmark, Estonia, Malta, Hungary, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom). The scientific symposium is complemented by a roundtable on the status and opportunities of amateur theatre today.

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SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

FRIDAY, 8 November 2019

9.00-9.20 Registration: Introduction

9.30-11.30 Tomaž Toporišič: Between Seduction and Suspiciousness of Experimental, Amateur and Professional

Barbara Orel: The Amateur Theatre Sphere and the Alternative Theatre of the 1970s

Ana Kocjančič: Valo Bratina: An Architectural and Scenographic Work for Folk and Work Stages (Hrastnik, Duplica, Trbovlje, Štore, Vrhnika, Ljubljana (Moste, Bežigrad), etc.)

Ana Vrtovec Beno: "This is, what is our own!"
The Preservation, Presentation and Use of Cultural Heritage in Amateur Theatre

11.00-11.30 Discussion

11.30-12.00 BREAK

12.00-13.20 Quirijn L. van den Hoogen: Deep into the Province: A Proposal for a Comparative Research Project on the Role of Culture and Art in Peripheral Regions Across Europe

Louise Ejgod Hansen: The Participatory Turn as a Challenge of the Distinction Between Professional and Amateur Art

Attila Szabó: The National English Language Drama Festival in Veszprém - Artistic Development, Social Functions and Community Building

13.00-13.20 Discussion

13.20-15.00 LUNCH

15.00-17.30 Aldo Milohnič: Workers' Stage (Delavski oder) and an Amateur Effect of "Proletarian Acting"

Barbara Polajnar: Theatre of the Oppressed as a Form of Artivistic Theatre in Slovenia

Tomaž Krpič: "The Passion Play has Healing Power!"
Elements and Controversies of the Theatre Community of the Škofja Loka Passion Play

Kaja Novosel: Čufarjevi dnevi: A Celebration of Culture in the City of Jesenice

Manica Maver: Speech and Theatre Education in Children's and Youth Drama Groups

16.40-17.30 Discussion

SATURDAY, 9 November 2019

9.30-11.10 Gašper Troha: The Amateur Theatre of Today and Its Self-Image in Slovenia

Anneli Saro, Hedi-Liis Toome: The Challenges of Estonian Amateur Theatre

Beate Schappach: Research on Amateur Theatre in Switzerland

Vicki Ann Cremona, Marco Galea: Transitioning Between Cultural Policy and Amateur Theatre Practice

Hans van Maanen, Marline Lisette Wilders: On the Relationship Between Complexity and Competence Within Spectator's Experiences: Amateur Versus Professional Theatre and Their Audiences

11.10-11.30 BREAK

11.30-13.00 Roundtable: Amateur Theater and its Role Today

Amateur theater has played various roles in history. From educational, religious, national, to dissident. What is the role of amateur theater today? What is its place in the Slovenian cultural space?

Contributors: Barbara Orel, Marko Bratuš, Aleksandra Kmetič (KUD Trzin), Peter Militarev, Gojmir Lešnjak - Gojč
Moderated by Matjaž Šmalc, JSKD - Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities

Hans van Maanen and Marline Lisette Wilders

On the Relationship Between Complexity and Competence Within Spectator's Experiences: Amateur Versus Professional Theatre and Their Audiences

In the STEP City Study, STEP researched theatre systems through the prism of selected cities in individual countries. The study compared the theatre systems and the annual supply of theatrical events, divided between production and distribution, but also audience demographics and the experience of the audiences who visit different theatre types in the four cities where audience and reception research was performed; Groningen (NL), Tartu (EE) Debrecen (HU) and Newcastle (Tyneside) (UK). Comparative results on professional performances in these four cities were published in a special issue of Amfiteater, volume 3 (2015). This presentation will offer a deeper reflection upon some of the quantitative results from the Groninger data set concerning a comparison between amateur and professional theatre performances and their audiences. We will highlight the relationship between the complexity rate of performances and the cultural competence of audiences within spectator's experiences and consider if and how experienced audiences of professional theatre differ in their theatrical experiences from less experienced visitors of amateur theatre.

Before he retired in 2011, **Hans van Maanen** was a professor of arts and society and theatre studies at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. He is a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Cultural Policy and served as a member of the executive committee of the IFTR and as vice-chair of the Fund for the Stage Arts of the Netherlands. His main area of research is the functioning of the arts in society. One of his main publications is How to Study Art Worlds. On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values (AUP 2009).

Marline Lisette Wilders is assistant professor of arts in society at the University College Groningen and in the Department of Arts, Culture and Media at the University of Groningen. She specialises in audience and reception research, studying aesthetic experiences in relationship to the experience of space and place. She received a fellowship from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research for her post-doctoral project From Working Space to Theatre Space: the user perspective, looking into the effects of adaptive reuse of industrial heritage sites for the functioning of the performing arts and built industrial heritage in society. She took part in the project Cultural Heritage and Improvised Music in European Festivals (CHIME), which was funded by the European Union and explored the uses and re-uses of different types of heritage through the study of jazz and improvised music festivals.



Hedi-Liis Toome is a lecturer of theatre studies at the Institute of Cultural Research at the University of Tartu, Estonia. She has a PhD in theatre studies from the University of Tartu, which she defended in 2015. Her research interests include theatre sociology, theatre systems, reception and audience research and the use of qualitative and quantitative methods in theatre studies. She is also the head of Estonian Theatre Researchers and Theatre Critics Association and the host of a radio programme about theatre. She has also worked in theatres and theatre-related organisations as well as organised theatre festivals.

Beate Schappach
Research on Amateur Theatre in Switzerland

Swiss amateur theatre is characterised by a wide range of traditions, aesthetic forms and societal functions. The presentation sheds light on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of non-professional theatre in Switzerland.

Qualitative aspects: After a short contextualisation of amateur theatre within the Swiss theatre landscape we will provide examples of non-professional productions to illustrate the wide range of forms and aesthetics.

Quantitative aspects: In 2019, we continue our empiric research on Swiss amateur theatre and present the current state of our project “mapping amateur theatre companies”. Since this research is work-in-progress, not only results will be presented, but also methodology, challenges and limitations will be discussed.

Beate Schappach studied theatre and German literature in Berlin, Zurich and Berne. Since 2002, she has been working as a researcher and lecturer at the Institute for Theatre Studies, University of Berne, Switzerland. In 2011 she finished her PhD on AIDS in literature, theatre and film. Her research interests include contemporary theatre, dramaturgy, and theatre and medicine. She is president of the Swiss Society for Cultural Studies and worked as a dramaturg for theatre productions and curated several exhibitions in Germany and Switzerland.

Vicki Ann Cremona, Marco Galea
Transitioning Between Cultural Policy and Amateur Theatre Practice

How does cultural policy consider the needs and development of amateur theatre practice? This paper will be taking amateur theatre in Malta as a case study, where policy has not provided measures to sustain professional theatre; consequently, theatre practice is generally amateur. Malta has seen various efforts at creating cultural policies, with an official policy finally launched in 2011, which has never been fully put into practice. A strategy document for 2020 was also launched in December 2015. These efforts have all examined theatre practice, and following European trends, there has also been policy interest in “creative industries”. The paper will discuss organisational and ethical issues regarding the relationship between amateur theatre and cultural politics and examine the ways policy looks at the transition between amateur and professional theatre. The paper will examine the way and to what extent amateur theatre has been dealt with in these official documents and whether policy really focuses on the specific needs of amateur companies. It will also analyse the funding criteria and opportunities for amateur performances and will discuss amateur practitioners’ experiences regarding accessing these funds. It will review recent attempts to create a more professional level by recently founding and funding institutional bodies in the performing arts, in particular, Teatru Malta, described as “A national theatre without walls”. This will be compared to another recently constituted organisation, ZfinMalta, the national dance company. The paper will refer to studies carried out by the STEP project that have been published by Amfiteater (2015) and theoretical writings on amateur theatre as well as current research conducted by us as part of the STEP amateur theatre project.

Vicki Ann Cremona is chair of the School of Performing Arts at the University of Malta, and lectures within the Theatre Studies Department. She was appointed Ambassador of Malta to France between 2005–2009, and to Tunisia between 2009–2013. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR). She has published internationally, mainly about theatrical events and public celebrations, particularly Carnival, Commedia dell’Arte, theatre anthropology, Maltese Theatre and costume. Her most recent publication is entitled Carnival and Power. Play and Politics in a Crown Colony.

Marco Galea is senior lecturer in Theatre Studies at the University of Malta. His main area of specialisation is theatre in Malta in the 19th and 20th centuries and he is particularly interested in issues of language, identity and representation. He has published articles and book chapters in this area and has edited several books. In recent years, on behalf of the School of Performing Arts at the University of Malta, he has been co-ordinating the efforts to create a digital archive for the performing arts in Malta. Redefining Theatre Communities, a book he co-edited with Szabolcs Musca, is being published by Intellect in late 2019.

SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND BIOGRAPHIES

FRIDAY, 8 November 2019

Tomaž Toporišič
Between Seduction and Suspiciousness of Experimental, Amateur and Professional

The paper will deal with a history of the often contradictory, yet sometimes exceptionally constructive and creative relations between the institutional repertory theatre scene and experimental, alternative, non-institutional performing arts’ practices, often characterised by the “drama-based theatre” as amateur. The author is interested in the ways and reasons behind the conscious decision of the experimental theatres and groups of the 1960s to the 70s (Gledališče Pupilije Ferkeverk, Gledališče Pekarna, Gledališče Glej, Nomenklatura, Vlado Šav and Vetrnica ...) to eliminate from their circles classical drama actors and to replace them with non-professional and non-classically trained performers. How and to what extent did they follow the example of American avant-garde theatre, Richard Schechner and Performance Group, Eugenio Barba, Jerzy Grotowski and others? In what ways did this decision influence the future of the relations between dramatic, no-longer-dramatic, professional and experimental, experimental and amateur theatre? And finally, how are the relations, contrasts and synergies interwoven nowadays between classical drama, postdramatic, experimental, performative, amateur theatre and devising or collaborative theatre and performance practices?

Tomaž Toporišič is a dramaturg and theatre theorist, an associate professor in the history and theory of drama and performing arts and vice-dean of the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, University of Ljubljana. His primary research interests are contemporary performing arts, literature and visual culture. He is the author of four books on contemporary performing arts. His latest essays: “The New Slovene Theatre and Italian Futurism”, “(Re)staging the Rhetoric of Space” and “Deconstructive Readings of the Avant-garde Tradition in Post-Socialist Retro-avant-garde Theatre”. He was the artistic director and a dramaturg of the Mladinsko Theatre and he co-founded the Exodos Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts.

Barbara Orel
Amateur Theatre Sphere and the Alternative Theatre of the 1970s

There were various experimental theatre groups active in the Slovenian territory at the end of the 1960s and 70s of the 20th century, Gledališče Pupilije Ferkeverk, Pekarna, Nomenklatura, LKB – Literarni klub Branik, Gledališče čez cesto, amongst them. Coming from the amateur theatre sphere, they offered an alternative in relation to repertory theatre as well as toward experimental theatre as an institution (in the 70s, that was Experimental Theatre Glej). They had a common tendency for non-acting, as they themselves referred to their efforts in presenting beyond representation. The contribution deals with the theoretical definition of non-acting in performances of the aforementioned groups and shows that it led to presence or presentness, which is characteristic of performance art. Non-acting is defined by the term “non-matrixed acting”, as developed by Michael Kirby. More specifically, non-acting is presented in contrast to enacting presence in the ritual (based on considerations of Richard Schechner and Victor Turner). In doing so, the paper sheds light on the relationship between amateur and professional theatre production in the 1970s and presents the reasons why the alternative performing arts of that period have been excluded from the processes of evaluating the history of theatre for a long time.

Barbara Orel is a professor of performing arts and the head of the research group of the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, University of Ljubljana. She has participated in the research projects of the Theatrical Event working group of the International Federation for Theatre Research and curated the Slovenian national theatre festivals the Week of Slovenian Drama (2006–2007) and the Maribor Theatre Festival (2008–2009).

Ana Kocjančič

Valo Bratina: An Architectural and Scenographic Work for Folk and Work Stages (Hrastnik, Duplica, Trbovlje, Štore, Vrhnika, Ljubljana (Moste, Bežigrad), etc.)

After his retirement in 1946, the actor, director and set designer Valo Bratina (1887–1954) started to work with amateur theater groups as an architect and the constructor of their stages and theatre buildings. In the museum collection of SLOGI – the Slovenian Theatre Institute (and Museum) a large number of his architectural plans and sketches for these theatre stages have been preserved, such as drafts for the Cultural Centre in Hrastnik, for the Theatre Hall in Dol near Hrastnik, for a stage of the Union House in Duplica, for the Sokol's stage in Zagorje, etc. He was also the constructor of some worker's stages in Ljubljana. For example, he planned the reorganisation of the amateur theatre stage in Moste (1948), in Bežigrad, and a stage of the association of trade unions in Ljubljana. The collection of SLOGI also includes some of his scenic drafts for the performances on these stages.

In the presentation, we will discuss the last fruitful years of Bratina's architectural and scenographic activity within the amateur theatres, with particular emphasis on the Cultural Centre in Hrastnik, where he planned and constructed the entire building with a façade, theatre hall and stage as well as all technical and stage equipment (fly system, curtains, horizons and scenery).

We shall also look at some of his set designs for the performances of those workers' stages, for example, the stage design for Finžgar's *Divji lovec* (The Wild Hunter) for the Cultural Centre in Hrastnik, for Krefl's *Celjski grofje* (The Counts of Celje) for Cankarjev dom in Vrhnika (1949), etc. We will compare those scenographies with some examples of Bratina's stage designs from the period between the two world wars, when he was working on the professional stages in Slovenia. We will try to understand in what ways and how much his scenography style changed or adapted to the small dimensions of the amateur stages and other atmosphere of those theatres and the new period after World War II.

Mag. Ana Kocjančič is an art historian and researcher of the history of scenography in Slovenia. She completed her master's degree on the topic "Scenography in Slovenian Drama Theatres in the Interwar Period (1918–1941)" in 2006, in the Department of Art History of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. Since then, she has been researching the history of Slovenian scenography and its connection with the development of Slovenian fine arts and the effects of European theatre movements and European fine art on its development. Between 2006 and 2009, she was a professional assistant in the field of scenography and theatrical techniques in the emergence of a new theatre terminological dictionary, which was created and published (2008) at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) in Ljubljana. She is the author of the monography *Prostor v prostoru – Scenografija na Slovenskem od 17. stoletja do leta 1991* (The Space Within the Space – Scenography in Slovenia from the 17th Century to 1991) and many articles and exhibitions as well as television and radio shows on the development of Slovenian scenography.

Ana Vrtovec Beno

"This is, what is our own!"

The Preservation, Presentation and Use of Cultural Heritage in Amateur Theatre

In the last decades, we face an emergence of different theatrical events that try to present historical events of a specific local community and thus enhance visibility and have a positive impact on cultural tourism. Ethnologists and cultural anthropologists have found numerous examples of such revivals which stem from a genuine desire to preserve local traditions. We will present different approaches and case studies from the Slovenian ethnical space. The most important aspect of such theatrical events is the contents, as the emphasis is on presenting different local traditions, that is, dance, crafts, important historical figures. As these traditions are well known by the local community, it is something that is shared between actors and the audience. Thus, such performances are usually very popular. We will investigate how these traditions influence the selection of the theatrical space, the time of performance, costumes, props, articulation, gesticulation, etc.

Ana Vrtovec Beno is working in the fields of ethnology and cultural anthropology. She focuses on Slovenian ethnology and cultural heritage, especially on contemporary amateur theatre, which was also the topic of her PhD thesis. She has written several articles that were published in scientific journals in Slovenia and abroad and has participated in numerous conferences and symposia.

SOBOTA, 9. november 2019

Gašper Troha

The Amateur Theatre of Today and Its Self-Image in Slovenia

Amateur theatre has a long tradition in Slovenia that goes back to the first Slovenian dramatic texts in the 18th century that were stimulated by the circle of intellectuals around Žiga Zois. Later, it was amateur theatre that started the so-called professionalisation of Slovenian theatre as it was Dramatic Society in 1867 that decided to build solid, professional foundations of its development. In the second half of the 20th century, it was a context for experimental theatre (for example, *Oder 57*, EG Glej, Pekarna), where new theatrical trends and dramatic writing has emerged. After the independence in 1991, the social changes also brought about several changes in amateur culture and theatre. The paper focuses on the presentation of contemporary amateur theatre in Slovenia. Its way of financing, its role in the cultural system and, based on a recent survey done by the Zveza kulturnih društev (Association of Cultural Societies) in 2019, the self-image of amateur theatre groups. The questions that arise are: What is the meaning of amateur theatre today? Who is financing it? What are its goals, number of productions, etc.?

Gašper Troha graduated from the Department of Comparative Literature and Literary Theory of the Faculty of Arts and the Academy of Music, both of the University of Ljubljana. In 2007, he received his PhD with the dissertation "Artikulacija odnosa do oblasti v slovenski drami 1943–1990" (The Articulation of the Relationship to Authority in Slovenian Drama 1943–1990). His research focuses on the sociology of literature, especially concerning the questions of the contemporary world and Slovenian drama and theatre. He works part-time at the Faculty of Arts and heads the Arsem Publishing House. In addition, he was the programme director of the Vilenica International Literary Festival (2010–2013) and the general director of the Creativity Directorate at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia (2013–2014). He has contributed to numerous national and foreign scientific journals and edited several scientific monographs, among them, *History and its Literary Genres, Literarni modernizem v »svinčenih« letih* (Literary Modernism in the Years of Lead) and *Lojze Kovačič: življenje in delo* (Lojze Kovačič: Life and Work). His recent publications include a book on cultural opposition and Slovene dramatic literature entitled *Ujetniki svobode* (Prisoners of Freedom).

Anneli Saro, Hedi-Liis Toome

The Challenges of Estonian Amateur Theatre

In a situation of urbanisation and emigration, the local communities in the Estonian countryside are shrinking. In the presentation, we will analyse the main challenges of Estonian amateur theatre and how the sustainability of amateur theatres in sparsely populated areas is influenced by cultural politics.

When professional theatre is subsidised centrally and annually by the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Endowment, then amateur theatres are mainly dependent on local municipalities and the Cultural Endowment. Support for amateur (in Estonian folk) culture depends on the budget, the system of allocation of subsidies and cultural values of local municipalities. Mostly small municipalities do not subsidise hobbies of adults. But extracurricular activities of young people (under the age of 27) are supported centrally by the Ministry of Education and Research. This means that the sustainability of amateur theatre is highly dependent on financial and temporal resources of local people.

In 2019, we carried out an empirical research among Estonian amateur theatres asking about their financial situation, organisational structures and main challenges. The results proved that amateur theatres are mainly subsidised by local municipalities and usually they form a part of a local cultural organisation (for example, local cultural centres). Often municipalities provide space for rehearsals and performances free of charge, but the activities of the groups working there are not financed. Three main challenges for amateur theatres relate to membership (conservation of number of members, recruitment of new members, etc.), repertoire (finding suitable repertoire, paying for authorship rights, etc.) and financing. In the presentation, we will elaborate on the challenges in the context of the Estonian sociopolitical situation and initiate a discussion about the possible solutions of improvement.

Anneli Saro is professor of theatre research at the University of Tartu, Estonia. In 2010–2014, she was lecturer of Estonian culture at the University of Helsinki. Saro has been a convener of the international working groups STEP – Project on European Theatre Systems (2004–2008, 2017–) and Theatrical Event (2011–2017). She has been active as the editor-in-chief of *Nordic Theatre Studies* (2013–2015) and as a member of the executive committee of the International Federation for Theatre Research (2007–2015).

Saro has published articles and books on Estonian theatre history and systems, performance theory and audience research. She has edited books and special numbers of journals.

Kaja Novosel

Čufarjevi dnevi: A Celebration of Culture in the City of Jesenice

Čufarjevi dnevi is a Slovenian festival for amateur theatre groups from Slovenia and Slovenian speaking regions from neighbouring countries. It commemorates Tone Čufar and is organised by the Theatre of Tone Čufar in Jesenice on the anniversary of his death. The origins of the festival go back to the year 1988 when the first informal gathering was held by the then theatre director Miran Kenda and carried out by some of the preselected amateur theatre groups. At first, the festival did not have a competitive nature, but by 2000, six out of eight performances were competing for the grand prix and a jury prize. For the last three years, the festival also includes youth performances that are all competing for the Nova Gaz reward – awarded to the most innovative production. In my paper, I explore the historical development of the festival: its gradual shift from simple gatherings to its current competitive form and its expanding influence throughout Slovenia, neighbouring regions and on the theatrical endeavours in the city of Jesenice. I put special emphasis on the festival's impact on the local community and take into account local specifics that are shaping it. Čufarjevi dnevi plays a crucial role in Jesenice's cultural production and has an even wider societal influence as the festival (with its diverse programme) is beginning to gain broader recognition. This is of utmost importance to the city of Jesenice as its industry is still ravaged by the social and industrial changes in the last decades and therefore it lacks a large mass of theatregoers on its own. The latter fact makes it even more remarkable that the festival has not only survived but managed to develop and flourish with the constant help and desire of its organisers to improve the festival's structure and quality. In my contribution I underline the pivotal changes that lead towards a high quality, structured and multiday theatre event and explore them in the context of wider regional and national cultural politics.

Kaja Novosel has a bachelor's degree in dramaturgy and performing arts and is continuing her postgraduate studies at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, University of Ljubljana. Within her field of expertise, she fluctuates between writing stage plays, which she prefers, and expanding her knowledge on the theory of drama. For her bachelor's thesis "Moja polja, polna sreče" she received the Academy Prešeren Award for Students. Novosel co-edits the Oder (Stage) section of the online magazine Koridor, while in her free time she's learning sign language on the advanced level and hopes to gain a certificate as a Slovenian sign language interpreter.

Manica Maver

Speech and Theatre Education in Children's and Youth Drama Groups

Being part of an amateur drama group is a valuable experience for children: it teaches them to speak in public, to use cultivated speech, to overcome anxiety, to control their body, it helps them to be more assertive. In a drama group the young actors learn not only to perform onstage but are also taught other skills which are very important in everyday life: they learn to work in a group, to listen and follow directions, to observe. Their creativity and imagination are stimulated, and they have fun.

The paper will focus on several aspects of working with children and teenagers in a drama group. First, the facilitator must bear in mind not only drama production related goals, but also some pedagogical ones: the final goal should not be just the final drama production, but also the personal growth of every individual of the group. The mentor must dedicate some time to exercises with which the individuals get to know and trust each other, then to movement activities, improvisation, which is a good way to start training some important acting skills. When the group starts rehearsing a play, it is better for the facilitator to wait before assigning the roles and to do the first reading with all the actors, discuss the plot, the characters and the main characteristics of the play with them. Special attention should be given to the young actors' speech. In fact, acting in an amateur drama group is a unique opportunity to learn something about cultivated speech.

Being a mentor in a drama group needs a lot of work and planning. The results of the hard work are not always visible immediately, sometimes they are only evident after many years. The drama production will not be perfect, but the mentor will generate a group of spontaneous, creative and assertive young people who will speak in public clearly and without big anxiety issues.

Manica Maver, a professor of Slovene at Slovenian upper secondary schools in Trieste, graduated in Slovene and English from the Faculty of Fine Arts and Philosophy in Trieste and later received her master's degree in Speech Forms at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, University of Ljubljana. She has also been educated in theatre pedagogy and has been involved in speech and theatre education for children and young people. For several years, she directs youth drama groups and participates in Matejka Peterlin's Summer Little Theatre School. She is the artistic director of the Trieste Radio Stage, where she works as an actress, director and author of texts and dramatisations. She is the author of a tutorial guide for amateur drama groups Luč na odru (Light on Stage).

Quirijn L. van den Hoogen

Deep into the Province: A Proposal for a Comparative Research Project on the Role of Culture and Art in Peripheral Regions Across Europe

This paper presents a comparative research project on the role of art and culture in peripheral regions across Europe. It is informed by the growing inequalities between cities where the "winners of globalisation" reside and the peripheral regions in Europe that are not so well-connected to the global economy. The project aims to assess the strategies of cultural agents outside major city centres by asking how the spheres of arts and culture, the local economy and "the social" interact in peripheral regions. Do these interactions contribute to sustainable (local) cultural/artistic milieus and to regional development? And how can such a contribution be demonstrated? The research project will provide an understanding of the strategies and interactions of cultural agents in peripheral cultural ecologies. It will also provide a grounded framework for the value assessment of art and culture in peripheral regions which can be used as, or to improve on existing, frameworks for strategic management and/or public accountability of their operations.

Quirijn Lennert van den Hoogen studied business administration and arts and arts policy at the University of Groningen. For several years, he worked as an official for cultural policy in the Netherlands at the provincial and municipal level and for the Association of Dutch Municipalities. Currently, he teaches art sociology and arts policy at the University of Groningen. He was editor-in-chief of the Dutch Handbook for Cultural Policy and is a member of STEP (Project on European Theatre Systems). He initiated the national working group of cultural policy researchers at the Boekman Foundation in Amsterdam.

Louise Ejgod Hansen

The Participatory Turn as a Challenge of the Distinction Between Professional and Amateur Art

Theatre has increasingly been influenced by a broader cultural development away from a clear distinction between producer and consumer towards more participatory and co-creational practices (Reestorff et. al. 2014, Erikson et. al. 2019). In this paper, I will look at the hybridisation of amateur and professional theatre practices in children's theatre and discuss how it influences the way in which we understand the role and value of cultural activities in the life of children. All my cases are Danish and I will discuss the analysis of them against a background of both a strong, internationally recognised tradition for producing professional theatre for children and against a strong tradition for thinking about children's culture in which the distinction between culture for, with and by children has been a backbone for many years (Mouritsen, 1996).

My main case will be Stepping Stone, a project led by Aarhus Musikskole in which children co-create a visual and musical performance within a predefined creative framework. The result is then presented in a professional setting. This case will be supplemented with additional cases within a broader field of children's culture including not only theatre projects, but also:

- Kultur på Tur in which seven cultural institutions engaged professional artists in producing art with children and afterwards presenting it alongside professional art at a festival for children;
- the third children's opening of the European Capital of Culture 2017 in which all municipalities invited children to participate in a local opening event framed by a shared theme and conceptual framework;
- the exhibition Alkymistens Laboratorium in which children could interact with an installation (or scenography) created by the professional artist Cecilia Westerberg.

Key questions discussed in the paper are: Who is to benefit from such projects? The participants or the audience? How do we understand the relationship between product and process? What is the role of the professional artist? How is the social and the artistic balanced in creative processes with an end-product as an objective?

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Attila Szabó

The National English Language Drama Festival in Veszprém – Artistic Development, Social Functions and Community Building

Founded in 2009, the English language drama festival represents a unique slice of the Hungarian amateur theatre system. Organised by the American Corner in Veszprém, a mid-sized Hungarian city located in the Western part of the country and an important regional centre, the festival bridges between the systems of foreign language education and artistic development, uniting theatricals from all corners of the country, connecting several generations. The first participants of the festival have become organisers by now – groups of primary school, secondary school, university and post-university players are regular attenders, being inspired and motivated by each other's performances. Although the festival invites a jury of theatre and language specialists, who give detailed feedback after each presentation – followed by a discussion with the other participants – prizes are not given, as the festival is not competitive. As a regular member of the jury, I will give an overview of the systemic characteristics of the festival's productions, investigating if a special set of analytical tools is needed (and used) for the assessment of these presentations and how the theatre makers take use of the festival's public forum for their artistic development.

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Aldo Milohnič

Workers' Stage (Delavski oder) and an Amateur Effect of "Proletarian Acting"

In the historiography of Slovenian theatre there is a commonly acknowledged thesis, claiming that so-called drama societies (dramatična društva) were the most important factor in the gradual transition from dilettantism to the professionalisation of Slovenian theatre. In the history of Slovenian theatre there also existed a parallel stream – workers' stages, which were established in many of Slovenian cities, especially after World War I. These were amateur stages, which were driven more by the idea of social emancipation than that of establishing professional and national theatres. So far, workers' stages have only partially been explored, and Ferdo Delak's wish that the documentary contributions, which he collected more than half a century ago in the publication of *Delavski oder na Slovenskem*, would once be used "as firm material for the real history" of this incredibly interesting and unique phenomenon in the history of Slovenian theatre, sadly still remains unrealised. This is a great pity, considering that some of them – Ljubljana's Workers' Stage (Delavski oder) in particular – were staging quality performances. The thesis of this contribution is that this was made possible by a distinctive way of performing developed in the Workers' Stage at the time when it was run by Bratko Kreft and Ferdo Delak, and that it also did not succumb to the temptation of entering a non-productive (and inevitably already lost) competition with the Slovenian professional theatres. Apart from this, Brecht's idea about "the simplicity of acting", which ought to be "the alpha and the omega of proletarian acting" can help us explain the success of the Workers' Stage. In his opinion, the actors who practice "proletarian acting" are amateurs, however, they are by no means dilettantes. It is apparent Brecht uses these two notions – amateur and dilettante – in mutual opposition. In the manuscript's fragment entitled "Amateur and Dilettante" (Amateur und Dilettant) from a concise plan for a newer completed text "Six Chronicles on Amateur Theatre" (Sechs Chroniken über Amateurtheater), Brecht regards amateurism as a positive notion, while dilettantism for him applies to a bad version of amateurism, one that cannot develop its own mode of artistic expression, in other words, one that cannot overcome a mere mimicking of art professionals. The contribution will present findings on the repertory and performing arts' practices of the Workers' Stage in Ljubljana (partially also of other important workers' stages in Slovenia) using Brecht's perspective of this particular conceptual and methodological differentiation; by analogy with his "estrangement effect" (Verfremdungseffekt), it can be called an amateur effect of "proletarian acting".

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Barbara Polajnar

Theatre of the Oppressed as a Form of Artivistic Theatre in Slovenia

The Theatre of the Oppressed is a widely used method – for theatre-based activism, pedagogical and educational purposes, even as a tool for promoting social justice, but it can also have therapeutic effects. Its beginning dates to the 1960s and is attributed to Brazilian director, writer and politician Augusto Boal, although its various techniques have later spread across almost one hundred different countries around the world. The Theatre of the Oppressed represents a place to talk about topics otherwise not addressed and gives voice to people who otherwise remain unheard. As such it democratises theatre and gives it back into the hands of the people. The basic concept of the Theatre of the Oppressed is power, through which the method explores, discusses and exposes power relations between the oppressor and the oppressed. With this in mind, the Theatre of the Oppressed demolishes and erases the conventional positions of power among the (active) actors and (passive) spectators, as it creates a space for dialogue among them and places them in a new position of actively involved spect-actors (spectators and actors in one).

In Slovenia, the Theatre of the Oppressed has been continuously and thoroughly present from 2010 through workshops, educative modules, theatre plays, various programmes and projects, festivals and conferences. In this paper, I will present three examples of good practices of the Theatre of the Oppressed in Slovenia, which are adapting and developing the method of artivistic theatre for the Slovenian audience. The first example is the international project LegiLAB 4 Progress (Pekarna Magdalenske mreže Maribor). The project explored the Legislative theatre technique in four different countries (Slovenia, Scotland, Poland and Italy). It adapted and applied the exploration to the specific needs and political situations of the countries. The second example is the development of new practices of the Theatre of the Oppressed in KUD Transformator, namely Impro-forum and the children's performance *My Fairy Rights*. The third example is the international project *Resilient Revolt*, which is addressing environmental and climate change issues through the method and multiplication of the produced performance, developed with international partners in their respective countries.

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Tomaž Krpič

"The Passion Play has Healing Power!"

Elements and Controversies of the Theatre Community of the Škofja Loka Passion Play

This paper explains how the modern staging or re-enactment of Škofjeloški pasijon (the Škofja Loka Passion Play or, in Latin, *Processio locopolitana*) constructs a distinct passion play theatre community. The paper also examines the controversies associated with the passion play community. Around 1715, Father Romuald (1676–1748) wrote a script for a passion play that is the oldest preserved dramatic text written in the Slovenian language and which was performed during Lent in almost every year until 1768. After Slovenia's political system changed in 1991, interest in the passion play revived, but there have since been only a few performances of it (in 1999, 2000, 2009 and 2015). The next performance will be in 2021. The performance of the passion play is deeply affected by collective amateurism and dilettantism. Even if future productions of the passion play are eventually developed to a higher professional level, the Škofja Loka passion play will always remain a people's theatre that demands a passion play theatre community with medieval roots in a modern society.

The first part of the paper will describe the elements of the passion play theatre community: (a) a group of passion play participants; (b) a number of shared theatrical regulations/conventions; (c) a community sentiment of belonging together; (d) the non-deliberate construction of the passion play theatre community; (e) the wider goals towards which the passion play theatre community strives; (f) the locality and relative permanency of the passion play theatre community; and (g) the passion play theatre's communal epistemology. In the second part, I will describe several controversies related to the theatrical and social phenomena of the Škofja Loka Passion Play: (a) a religious/secular controversy; (b) a play/performance controversy; (c) a theatre/community controversy; (d) a dilettantism/professionalism controversy; (e) conservatism/progressivism controversy; (f) history/presence controversy; and (g) an epistemology/faith controversy.

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