

**In middle of April, the Storm of Creativity and Theatre swept through Brno in
the form of the International Festival of Theatre Schools
SETKÁNÍ/ENCOUNTER.**

The 34th edition of The International Festival of Theatre Schools SETKÁNÍ/ENCOUNTER 2024, organized by students of JAMU, took place from April 16th to 20th in various theatres across Brno: Studio Marta, Divadlo na Orlí, Divadlo Husa na provázku, and, of course, at the Theatre Faculty of the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts. Theatre productions were presented by a total of eight countries – the Czech Republic (represented twice, by DAMU from Prague and the organizing JAMU), Slovakia, Austria, Poland, Latvia, Switzerland, Ukraine, and Serbia.

The festival also featured moderated discussions on performances and workshops. The workshop "Greener Theatre?" (led by Anna Rouhu from Finland) focused on making theatre productions more sustainable, including discussions and group work imagining what such sustainable theatre could look like. In the workshop "Site Specific and Socially Engaged Art," Sarah Günther (Germany) presented socially engaged street performances by the artistic group Pneuma Szöv. The "Jazz Dance Training" workshop, facilitated by Dr. David Strnad (Czech Republic), introduced participants to the basics of jazz dance. The last workshop, entitled "Mindful Movement and Flow Acrobatics," organized in collaboration with the [International Visegrad Fund \(IVF\)](#) and led by Adam Mašura (Slovakia), focused on applying mindfulness techniques in the context of the body and its movement. The "V4 Discussion" (also organized in collaboration with the IVF) addressed social issues as reflected in the artistic environment, particularly focusing on safety, similar to the previous year.

In addition to the main program, attendees could take in the festival's Off-program, which included an opening procession, concerts, parties, as well as welcoming and closing ceremonies. The Opening Parade started from the Theatre Faculty of JAMU, passed through Freedom Square, and led to the Courtyard of the Old Town Hall where the opening ceremony took place. Following that, four bands performed: Toad Planet, Ghost of You, Krajina Ró, and Mezi Patry Klid. Subsequent evenings featured parties at the venues Kavárna

Trojka and ArtBar Druhý Pád, where visitors enjoyed music from bands like Midnight Swimmers, InFlus, Tribble-J, NESSYE, Space Bandits, Beach Bum, the JAMU Jazz Band, and DJ Rubenze. The closing ceremony and subsequent party took place at the Theatre Husa na provázku, accompanied by the band Kolorez and DJ Sterk and DJ Palec.

This year's jury consisted of three professionals and one teatrology student (since one of our goals is to help prepare future theatre critics). The jury members were Maria João Vicente, a dramaturge, educator, and actress from Portugal; Márton Birta, a Hungarian director, actor, and educator; Tata Tavdishvili, a Georgian lecturer, director, and performer; and student juror Viktor Hájek, a master's degree student in theatre studies and cultural anthropology at Palacký University in Olomouc.

During the closing ceremony, the jury awarded the Marta Awards. In the category of Directing, Kristina Kellerová and Jovita Siu Ji Chin were awarded for the production anytime, anywhere. The jury particularly appreciated innovative and transdisciplinary approach which brings together multimedia, visual arts, movement and poetry through practical research. In the category of Female performance, Barbora Šimová received the award for the production The Image of a Woman / The Origin of Clouds or What It Means to Believe in Something for the ability to powerfully express character's, feelings, and emotions non-verbally. The Marta Award for Male performance was given to Matīss Kučinskis for his heartfelt portrayal of deep feelings of hopelessness, enamourment, calculation and hope in the production of Hello, Out There!. In the category of Female performance, the award was given to Nina Perge for her deep and honest experience of the play which she conveyed sensitively on the stage in the production of 4.48 Psychosis.

The festival would not have been possible without the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the State Cultural Fund of the Czech Republic, the City of Brno, the City District Brno-střed, and the International Visegrad Fund, whose mission is to support steps towards sustainable regional cooperation in Central Europe.

The festival was held under the auspices of Mgr. Jan Grolich (Governor of the South Moravian Region), Mgr. Martin Baxa (Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic), the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports of the Czech Republic, the Czech Commission for UNESCO, JUDr. Markéta Vaňková (Mayor of Brno), Ing. Arch. Vojtěch Mencl (Mayor of Brno-střed), and the European Festivals Association (EFFE: Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe).

The main media partner of the festival is Czech Television.

We thank all these partners for supporting the International Festival of Theatre Schools SETKÁNÍ/ENCOUNTER!

You can look forward to the next edition of the festival, its 35th, scheduled for April 1st to 5th, 2025.

Brno 20th of April 2024

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