



The first International Festival of Participatory Theatre and Audience Development

Puppet Theatre at the Crossroads in Banská Bystrica, 2023

Press Release

A summary from September (*Growing With Theatre 1*) an an invitation for October (*Growing with Theatre 2*)

“As children, we seldom get to pick what theatre we go to and which performance we see. We might not be able to pick where we sit, or even what we wear. It’s usually the adults who make decisions about our visits to the theatre. They choose when and where we go, and they are the ones who shape our relationship to theatre with their choices and their behavior.”

(Michaela Váňová, Theatre Minor, Czech Republic)

The first part of the first International Festival of Participatory Theatre and Audience Development, *EDUFEST*, took place on September 21 and 22, 2023, featuring six artists and two lecturers who led educational workshops. Two hundred and seventy-seven audience members attended the performances, 35 took part in the workshops, and sixteen professionals from the fields of Arts and Education took part in discussions.

September’s programme offered five performances for the youngest audiences which explored various approaches to theatrical form. Examples include: the absence of the fourth wall, various ways of immersing the audience and including them in the story through storytelling, the interaction of the body with various materials, combining contemporary circus and interaction, and communicating with young audiences using sounds and music. Aside from the premises of the Puppet Theatre at the Crossroads, visitors to the festival also visited the Garden of the Central Slovak Gallery.

The aim of the festival – to highlight possibilities of informal education through theatre – was also realized thanks to two extraordinary workshops. Both workshops (*Principles of Puppetry in Pedagogical Practice* led by Barbora Krajč Zamišková and *Dramatic Play for Youngsters* led by Czech university educator and theatre lecturer Alžběta Ferklová) initiated, for the first time, a new





form of communication with the participants, through which we hoped to highlight various possibilities and methods of informal education for the youngest audiences.

The programme was completed by a discussion titled *Coffee Hour: About Theatre after the Theatre* and the exhibition of Czech comic artist TOYBOX titled *Aquarelles to accompany Kamil the Play*.

“Thank you very much for the opportunity to attend the workshop. It exceeded our expectations and we will definitely come again.” (UMB BB students)

“The lecturer was incredible!” (Monika)

“Thank you for a lovely, enriching experience.” (Jakubko and Janka)

The September part of EDUFEST was successful, and we are pleased that our audience members left happy.

On October 19 and 20, we would like to extend a heartfelt invitation to the second part of the festival, *Growing with Theatre 2*, dedicated to children between six and eleven years of age, with an equally interesting and attractive programme including theatrical performances and workshops with renowned lecturers from the Czech Republic and Slovakia. University educator and theatre lecturer Michaela Váňová will lead the *Take the Kids to the Theatre!* workshop and also introduce her eponymous book during the *Coffee Hour* discussion. We will also offer an interesting change in the form of a workshop titled *Telling Through Sound* with Pavlína Dusilová, a lecturer from Kunsthalle Prague, which will take place directly in the classroom. On Friday, October 20, we will host an extraordinary performance by Polárka Theatre from Brno, *Marie M.*, which tells the story of Maria Montessori, inventor of the Montessori technique of education. We hope you will be able to choose something from our programme, and that together, we can find a different approach to education: more effective, more modern, more active.

EDUFEST is realized in collaboration with various theatres and educational groups, such as DOX Prague, EduDrama Bratislava, The Theatre Institute in Bratislava, Kunsthalle Prague, Post Bellum, the Central Slovak Gallery, the Academy of the Arts, various elementary and high schools in Banská Bystrica, and more.

Supported by the Slovak Art Fund.

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Medzinárodný festival participatívneho divadla a rozvoja publika

1. ročník 2023

Zážitkové semináre. Tvorivé ateliéry. Divadelné predstavenia.

Dva dni v každom mesiaci

SEPTEMBER NOVEMBER
OKTOBER DECEMBER

Výnimoční lektori a výnimočné lektorky. Skvelé divadlá.

Bábkové divadlo na Rázcestí
Skuteckého 14
974 01 Banská Bystrica
tel.: +421 48/ 412 55 13
mobil: +421 907 807 999
e-mail: bdnr@bdnr.sk
web: www.bdnr.sk; <https://bdnr.sk/edufest/>

“Cultural literacy can help us accept, value and respect views that are different from our own. In doing so, it prevents us from taking polarized stances typical for today’s informational and cultural wars.”

**(Ragnhild Tronstad, Norway, participant at the Education through Theatre Conference
Bábkarská Bystrica 2022)**