ABSTRACTS

CRITICISM

Kriszta Kedves: Nowhere to Feel at Home

Elderly care abroad is a topical issue affecting many people's lives, not only in the Székely region in Tranylvania but throughout Romania. In recent years, many have taken up work abroad; some to be able to finance the care given to their own elderly parents, others with the intention to use the earnings brought home to start an independent life: to build a house, buy a flat or start a family. Theatre director David Schwartz attempts to shed light on this complex set of problems in the verbatim theatre production *Mások élete* (*The Lives of Others*) created together with the actors of the "Csíki Játékszín" Theatre in Miercurea Ciuc, a performance which, according to critic Kriszta Kedves, cuts right to the bone, creeping under one's skin unawares, and engaging the spectator's mind for days.

Nóra Balázs: Art Is Never Free

After a nine-year hiatus, Nóra Balázs attended the Timişoara Euroregional Theatre Meeting TESZT with a mixture of curiosity and scepticism in her mind, since the festival's past editions had shaped her thinking about theatre. She was sceptical because, due to economic cutbacks, several planned performances were canceled at this year's festival; the number of invited professionals was radically reduced, and one of the workshops was called off. After the performances seen, the reviewer came to the conclusion that this festival, which fundamentally does not seek to reaffirm conventional theatrical forms, succeeded in presenting thought-provoking performances that appealed to the audience and even prompted them to see things from a different perspective. This is due to the fact that most of the productions in the programme, in one way or another, challenged the status quo we are accustomed to in our (traditional) theatres.

Leonidasz Purosz: The Parade of the Resourceful Resourceless

What is left of the Thealter festival, asks Leonidasz Purosz in his report. His answer is: a low-key event with a distinct character, austere but with packed auditoriums, a rich programme (drama, readings, children's theatre, puppet theatre, dance, performance art and concert theatre), a professional festival blog that is inspiring for both audience members and reporters; as well as a dedicated team – made up mainly of volunteers – who work tirelessly to provide a performance opportunity for tenacious and creative experimental theatre-makers, regularly returning companies and newly emerging groups.

Tamara Constantinescu: A Theatrical Liturgy About an Existential Journey

The play *I Am the Wind* is one of Jon Fosse's most enigmatic works. While one of the author's most representative plays, it bears the closest resemblance to Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. It was perhaps the open-ended structure of the play that attracted director Gábor Tompa when he chose to stage it. He dedicated the performance to the memory of his late wife, Tekla Tordai, which gave it an exceptionally personal dimension. In her review, Tamara Constantinescu describes the production staged at the State Hungarian Theatre of Cluj as one of the most powerful stage interpretations of Fosse's drama, whilet also ranking it among the most successful recent adaptations. Gábor Tompa's production is not a faithful illustration of the text, but rather a kind of reinterpretation of it: a meditation on death, loneliness and the possibilities of transcendence.

STUDY, ESSAY, BOOK REVIEW

Szabolcs Musca: The Theatre of Migration, the Migration of Theatre: Perspectives on Creating a (More) Inclusive Theatre and Cultural Sector

Szabolcs Musca's study provides a concise analysis of how the publicly funded European theatre (system) relates to migration, migrant artists and the productions they create. His starting point is that there is a structural tension between established theatres and increasingly diverse societies, as these institutions lack representation of communities with an immigrant background, as regards both their the audience and repertoire. Musca attributes this institutional shortcoming manifested in under-representation, to the attitude still prevalent in European societies, which treat the phenomenon of migration as an exceptional situation, rather than viewing it as a structural feature in contemporary Europe. He argues that even when traditional theatres do address the question of migration, they typically mirror the dominant discourses that frame migration as a crisis and a security issue. In his view, genuine change would be made possible by a profound transformation in the entire functioning of these institutions (repertoire, artistic programme, partnerships, staffing policy, audience development). Musca also addresses the aesthetic issues of the theatre of migra-

tion, offering visions that, in his view, challenge the status quo, for example through participatory theatre, immersive and expanded dramaturgy, as well as community-based theatre making. The study concludes with a brief overview of migrant theatre and cultural networks.

Sára Gábor: What Does a Hungarian Dramaturg Do in Germany? Dramaturgy in Municipal Theatres in Hungary and Germany

Dramaturg Sára Gábor has graduated from the former University of Theatre and Film Arts in Budapest before its politically motivated restructuring, and after having spent a few years at the Örkény István Theatre, she continued her studies within the framework of an international master's programme in dramaturgy in Frankfurt and Brussels before joining the staff of the Aachen Theatre. In this essay, drawing on this educational and professional experience, she compares the operation of municipal theatres in Hungary and Germany from the perspective of a dramaturg as regards the tasks and job requirements at a repertory theatre. Using as a point of departure the 'Einführung', that is, the genre of short introductory talks given to the audience before a theatre performance begins, she points out that, in German theatre culture, the dramaturg plays a more visible and integral role in the operation of the institution. Beyond participating in the creative processes in the strict sense, the dramaturg's role encompasses numerous communication tasks and duties pertaining to day-to-day operation, a significant proportion of which are aimed at connecting with the audience. This also means that the perception of the dramaturg's role in a municipal theatre is shaped by the expectations of the citizens. Gábor links this institutional-critical perspective to the historical context of the formation of the municipal theatre system, highlighting both the advantages and disadvantages of the dramaturg's differing role in the two cultures.

Flóra Molnár: Postcolonialism, Transnationalism and Institutional Critique in Contemporary German Theatre

In this article, Flóra Molnár reviews the volume entitled *"PostHeimat" – Inquiries into Migration, Theatre and Networked Solidarity*, edited by Ruba Totah and Jonas Tinius and published in English and German. The book published in 2025 contains interviews, essays and research articles relating to the artists, artisttic works and forums of the theatre network known as PostHeimat. PostHeimat is a network of creative collaboration that explores the opportunities available to refugee artists in contemporary German society, which is currently reshaped by migration, and examines how refugees from diverse cultural backgrounds can be actively involved in the creative process. This conception views theatre not merely as a performance space dedicated to art, but also as a social forum, a political institution that has power to shape society; Molnár's review summarises the texts included in the volume primarily from these perspectives, highlighting the postcolonial theoretical framework of the exploration.

Rosie Garton és Ildikó Rippel: *No Woman's Land.* Walking as a Dramaturgical Device in Staging Maternal Migration

Taking as a starting point the autobiographical performance *No Woman's Land* (2016) of the theatre company Zoo Indigo, this study examines performative walk as a methodology for conceiving a dramaturgy of migration. Through the exploration of the bodily experience of endurance, Ildikó Rippel and Rosie Garton have retraced physically the 220-mile journey of a refugee mother. The article argues that, through the concrete experience of walking and the staging of the mother's exhausted body, the performers created an authentic dramaturgy for the representation of migration. Drawing on the concept of kinaesthetic empathy, the authors argue that, as witnesses to the exhaustion and the walking performed on stage, the audience also gets its share in the experience of authenticity.

Rita Sebestyén: Unbounded Resistance, Grainy Snapshots

Rita Sebestyén has reviewed for our journal Ai Weiwei's book *On Censorship*, published in early 2026. Observing the strong reactions provoked by the book, Sebestyén argues that it might be more advisable to read this work, which critically examines both the more overt silencing practices of the Chinese totalitarian regime and the more covert ones of Western liberal democracies, as a manifesto with an original perspective stemming from Ai Weiwei's art, and its greatest virtue lies, at the same time, in its provocative potential to stimulate dialogue. Accordingly, Sebestyén surveys the relevant works of Ai Weiwei – thereby contextualizing the book, which is itself conceived as a complex work of art –, turning then to unravel the artist's interpretation of censorship. Ai Weiwei defines censorship as an action taken by institutions in power or by the dominant consciousness in a society, aimed at suppressing the voices and modes of expression of those outside the mainstream. Since this definition brings into play cultural and religious value systems, too, it becomes – along with the thought processes provoked by it – multi-layered and able to view the concept of censorship as more than simple politically motivated restriction.

Kriszta Kedves: Both or Neither? Reflections on the National Theatre of Târgu Mureș's production *Pali and Lea* From the Perspective of Theatre Pedagogy and Sexual Education

Theatre researcher Kriszta Kedves has linked together the fields of theatre education and sexual education in her doctoral research. In Transylvania, the field of theatre in education is understudied, whilst the subject of sexuality is still full of taboos. Therefore, the "Tompa Miklós" Company of the National Theatre of Târgu Mureș considered it important to touch on the subject staging the play *Pali és Lea* (*Pali and Lea*) in 2019, with the aim of initiating a discussion about sexuality with an audience of secondary school pupils (aged 15–18). In this article, Kriszta Kedves sets out to analyse this production, exploring certain theoretical and practical issues related to theatre education within the specific context of Transylvanian theatre culture.

INTERVIEW

Attila Budaházi – Rita Sebestyén: You Better Come Home with Me

Attila Budaházi and Rita Sebestyén have known each other for nearly thirty years as creative professionals working in the field of dramaturgy and theatre studies. They both arrived in the United Kingdom in the autumn of 2018. Budaházi moved straight from Miercurea Ciuc and the "Csíki Játékszín" Theatre to Edinburgh, where he obtained qualification as a drama therapist. Sebestyén, with her experience gained at the "Tamási Áron" Theatre in Sfântu Gheorghe and the Babeș–Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, moved first to Budapest for fifteen years, then spent five years in Denmark before arriving in England. They often followed and supported each other's work from afar. Their conversation focuses on the professional responses they give to such shared experiences as growing up under a dictatorship, theatre making in a minority community, and the challenges of emigration.

Eszter Biró: "I Am Outside and Inside at the Same Time"

Réka Kincses, a theatre and film director, as well as playwright originally from Târgu Mureș, moved to Germany in the mid-1990s after having completed her university studies in Budapest. The theatre maker living currently in Berlin is interviewed about her experiences of emigration, multicultural existence, and its influence on her identity and creative work by Eszter Biró, who once worked as a dramaturg in Romania, and has herself been living in Germany for over ten years. According to Kincses, it was precisely her departure from the familiar home environment that gave her the courage to embark on her creative career in the first place, moreover, the outsider's observing and reflective perspective inherent in living abroad also shapes the works she creates in Hungary or Romania. One such example is the production *Karácsonyozzatok velünk, vagy úsztatok haza* (*Either Celebrate Christmas with Us, or Go Home*), staged at the Örkény Theatre in Budapest, in which a Transylvanian couple visit their daughter who has moved to Germany.

Anikó Varga: "I Feel Good Here"

Panna Adorjáni is a writer, theatre maker and musician from Cluj-Napoca, currently living in Berlin. Her professional career is linked to the journal *Játéktér*, too, as she has been a contributor since the inception of the publication, and she served subsequently as editor for two years. In this interview conducted by Anikó Varga, the artist discusses her various experiences connected to emigration, the personal and professional reasons behind these, the differences in the economic and cultural conditions of independent artists' life in Eastern and Western European societies, the sense of belonging and homelessness, her recently published first novel, her current theatre work, and doctoral research.

DRAMA

Ildikó Lanstyák: Point of You

Ildikó Lanstyák's performance, entitled *Point of You* premiered in 2025 in Dunajská Streda, a Slovakian town with a Hungarian majority. In our present issue, we publish the script of this performance. Lanstyák's performance and its script are based on a preceding artistic research project linked to the town, which explored the relationship of the local community with migration. Thus, the text is closely tied to the specific original setting; however, as the author considers it important for the performance to engage with its changing venues, and to take into account the specific context from the perspective of the main topic, she has incorporated open-ended and adaptable elements into the text (such as a questionnaire scene exploring the question of stereotypes). In the play, Matild Láng, a local beautician, recounts her own life, her relationship with a shawarma vendor of Egyptian origin, and her love for a Palestinian man. Weaving in the stories of the female clients who visit her salon, she reflects on migration, xenophobia, cultural differences, the position of women in Western and Eastern cultures, and, more generally, on the relationship between women and men.