



The Europe Theatre Prize Ceremony in St. Petersburg

On the 6th of September 2018 a press conference was held in St. Petersburg to announce the XVII edition of the Europe Theatre Prize and the XV edition of the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities. From the 13th to the 17th of November 2018, St. Petersburg will host the Prize events, a unique occasion to get to know the prizewinning artists and their approach to theatre. After the XVI edition of the Prize in Rome in December 2017, which coincided with the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, the Europe Theatre Prize returns again to St. Petersburg. It will be hosted and financed by the Baltic House Theatre Festival.

The Consultative Council for the Prize, in collaboration with the host country, has decided to award the XVII Europe Theatre Prize to Valery Fokin. It was also considered of particular importance to assign a Special Prize to Nuria Espert.

Thirty years after its birth, the Prize organisers pay tribute to these two outstanding artists and at the same time to the work carried out by the Jury during the first ten editions of the Prize, years in which the award quickly assumed its distinctive character, becoming since the first meetings in Taormina a cultural event of European and global importance.

The years in which Valery Fokin and Nuria Espert emerged were the years in which Renzo Tian, Permanent Secretary of the Jury since its first edition, was able to use his great balance, organizational skills and diplomacy, combined with a deep theatrical knowledge, to develop the Europe Theatre Prize into one of the most prestigious of European cultural events; they were also the years in which the famous scholar and critic Franco Quadri joined the Jury of the third edition, becoming its President for the thirteenth and fourteenth editions.

Tatiana Proskournikova - critic, historian, theatre scholar, vice president of the International Association of Theatre Critics, Jury member since the fourth edition - played a fundamental role in the spread of the Russian theatre beyond the iron curtain. She had for some time pointed to Valery Fokin as a possible future candidate for the Europe Theatre Prize, because of approach to the scene. We can also recall her determined support for Harold Pinter, another laureate of the Prize, and her disappointment at the non-recognition of Dario Fo.

José Monleon, founder of the journal Primer Acto and Director of the International Institute of Mediterranean Theatre, was another member of the Prize Jury since its third edition. His International Institute of Mediterranean Theatre has played a fundamental role in creating bridges of peace and union between the two shores of the Mediterranean. He was a long time supporter of the proposal to

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recognize Nuria Espert.

Nuria Espert is well known in the European scene as an actress and director, and also as an activist in civil and political battles. Likewise Valery Fokin is awarded with the XVII Europe Theatre Prize for his versatility, his eclecticism and his complete dedication to theatre life as director, actor and teacher. He has repeatedly underlined the great value of the actor's life and the importance of his enrichment from the cultural, interior and spiritual point of view.

Nowadays the awarding of the Prize allows us to emphasise artistic, cultural and political connections which are in danger of being overlooked. A glance at the past can remind us of the work of artists, scholars, organizers and critics who have contributed to a new European theatre that goes beyond any border or prejudice.

Today the artist laureate is a person who has helped draw new lines to establish the new Europe of Culture. The prizes of this edition are intended to be a sign of continuity and an open approach which does not cease to support new theatrical realities. Since its third edition, the Europe Theatre Prize, in adding the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities, has committed itself to giving space to the most creative productions and theatrical ferments of every part of Europe, produced with different working styles and expressed in many forms, without gender restrictions.

For its XV edition, the Jury of the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities has chosen **Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui** (candidate since 2007), **Cirkus Cirkör** (candidate since 2008), **Julien Gosselin** (candidate since 2017), **Jan Klata** (candidate since 2008), **Milo Rau** (candidate since 2017) and **Tiago Rodrigues** (candidate since 2017). A complete list of the candidates for selection of the XV edition is given at the end of this press release in the section "Notes of the Europe Theatre Prize".

The decision to award the Prize to Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui is motivated by his ability to give life to a new style of theatre-dance with universal characteristics and his never-ending commitment in new collaborations with artists from all over the world.

Cirkus Cirkör, together with its director Tilde Björfors, represent an innovative form of theatre that knows how to blend humour and circus elements, not forgetting the contact with the audience and attention to social topics.

Julien Gosselin is one of the most dynamic and eclectic French directors of our time who manages to give a more precise, modern and profound connotation to the concept of identity and who joyfully plays with his characters on stage.

Milo Rau is rewarded for having shown passionate interest in socio-political themes that are the bedrock of his theatrical performances.

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Tiago Rodrigues stands out for having given life to a new personal way of building bridges among cities and nations, creating both civil and artistic cooperation among different peoples.

The Europe Theatre Prize event is more than an artistic celebration. The awarded artists also take part in productions, previews, readings, demonstrations, conferences and meetings, in order to offer spectators and critics an approach to their way of making theatre. The meetings are an opportunity to collect the testimonies of those people who, in different ways, have taken part in the creative process in the productions of an actor or an actress, a group or a theatre company. Interventions and reports by critics are included in this section, as are those of scholars and journalists from the international press (a more detailed programme will follow)

The 'Returns' section of the Europe Theatre Prize, which hosts productions by artists who have won prizes in previous editions, will present *Hamlet* by Lev Dodin (winner of the VIII edition of the Europe Theatre Prize) and *Alice, The Governor* and *The Storm* by Andrey Moguchy (a winner of the XII Europe Prize Theatrical Realities).

As a side-event of the Prize Italy, an honoured guest of the VII Saint Petersburg International Cultural Forum, will present the show *Elvira* by and with Toni Servillo, produced by Piccolo Teatro di Milano – Teatro d'Europa and Teatri Uniti of Naples.

Europe Theatre Prize, notes

The Europe Theatre Prize, whose first edition took place in 1987, was launched in 1986 as a pilot programme in the field of theatre by the European Commission under Jacques Delors, whose first Commissioner of Culture was Carlo Ripa di Meana. In those years a significant contribution was made by Melina Mercouri, patroness of the first edition of the Prize, and by Jack Lang, then French Minister of Culture and today President of the Prize. Thanks to its major role and activity, the Prize has been recognised since 2002 by the European Cultural Parliament and the European Council as a “European cultural interest organisation”. In 2017 the Europe Theatre Prize was designated as the first initiative of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.

In a setting of live performances, the Europe Theatre Prize promotes interdisciplinarity, integration and co-operation between theatre and other arts. Its aims are to promote the knowledge and diffusion of drama throughout Europe, to advance the development of cultural relationships and to strengthen the European

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conscience. The Prize assigns, among others, two major awards: the Europe Theatre Prize and the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities.

The Europe Theatre Prize is awarded to individuals or theatrical institutions (theatres, theatrical groups) that have contributed in their career towards the realisation of cultural events which have promoted understanding and the exchange of knowledge between peoples. The winner is chosen for the whole of their artistic journey, among notable personalities of international theatre considered in all its different forms, articulations and expressions. Special Prizes are from time to time added in recognition of exceptional achievement in the field.

The Europe Theatre Prize has been awarded to: (I) *Ariane Mnouchkine* and the *Théâtre du Soleil* (France), Special Prize awarded to *Melina Mercouri* by the President of the Europe Theatre Prize, Carlo Ripa di Meana, first European commissioner of culture; (II) *Peter Brook* (Great Britain); (III) *Giorgio Strehler* (Italy); (IV) *Heiner Müller* (Germany); (V) *Robert Wilson* (USA); (VI) *Luca Ronconi* (Italy), Special Prize awarded to *Vaclav Havel* by the President of the Europe Theatre Prize, Jack Lang; (VII) *Pina Bausch* (Germany); (VIII) *Lev Dodin* (Russia), Special Prize awarded to *BITEF* (Serbia) and Special Mention awarded to *Ibrahim Spahić* (Bosnia-Herzegovina) by the Jury; (IX) *Michel Piccoli* (France); (X) *Harold Pinter* (Great Britain); (XI) *Robert Lepage* (Canada) and *Peter Zadek* (Germany); (XII) *Patrice Chéreau* (France); (XIII) *Krystian Lupa* (Poland); (XIV) *Peter Stein* (Germany), Special Prize awarded to *Yuri Lyubimov* by the Jury; (XV) *Mats Ek* (Sweden); Special Mention awarded to *Silvio Purcarete* by the President of the Jury; (XVI) *Isabel Huppert* (France) and *Jeremy Irons* (Great Britain), Special Prize awarded to *Wole Soyinka* (Nigeria) and Special Mention awarded to *Fadhel Jaïbi* (Tunisia).

Since its third edition the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities aims to encourage trends and initiatives in European drama, considered in all its different forms, articulations and expressions, also considering dance and music in their theatrical expressions.

In its selection of the candidates for the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities, the Jury is assisted and helped by a Council of 400 participants made up of the Prize's associate bodies (Union des Théâtres de l'Europe (et de la Méditerranée), International Association of Theatre Critics, International Theatre Institute, European Festivals Association, European Union of Theatre Schools and Academies, past prizewinners, critics, journalists, directors of theatre and festivals, and representatives of cultural institutions. After nine editions held in Taormina, the Prize became itinerant. The X edition was held in Turin, the following two in Thessaloniki, then in Wrocław, Saint Petersburg, Craiova and last year in Rome. This year the Prize has come back to Russia, in Saint Petersburg.

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List of candidates of the XV edition of Europe Prize Theatrical Realities: Jiří Adámek, Radu Afrim (*Candidate since 2007*), **Compagnia Anagoor**, Mattias Andersson, Artūras Areima, Paco Bezerra, Blitz **Theatre** Group, (*Candidate since 2011*) **Michał** Borczuch, Gianina Carbutariu (*Candidate since 2011*), Massimiliano Civica, El Conde de Torrefiel, Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota (*Candidate since 2009*), Paulina Feodoroff, Alexis Forestier, **Jarosław** Fret, Oliver Frljic (*Candidate since 2011*), Grzegorz Jarzyna (*Candidate since 2007*), Dimitris Karantzas, Maja Kleczewska, Timofey Kulyabin, Ari-Pekka Lahrti, Antonio Latella (*Candidate since 2007*), Angélica Liddell (*Candidate since 2011*), Vincent Macaigne, Anna-Sophie Mahler, Lea Maleni (*Candidate since 2011*), Alexander Mørk-Eidem, Wajdi Mouawad (*Candidate since 2007*), Kornél Mundruczó, Fabrice Murgia, **David Pařízek** (*Candidate since 2010*), Bobi Pricop, Philippe Quesne, (*Candidate since 2011*), Ricci/Forte (*Candidate since 2011*), Àlex Rigola (*Candidate since 2008*), Nuovo Teatro Sanità, Scena Verticale, **Agrupación Señor Serrano**, She She Pop, Karmina Šilec, Savvas Stroumbos, Teatr **Pieśń Kozła** (*Candidate since 2009*), Teatro Teatro Company, James Thierrée (*Candidate since 2006*), Dries Verhoeven.

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