



Theatre Conference JAMU 2025

ART OF EXPERIENCE

27–28 FEBRUARY 2025

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



Venue: Kino Cit and bookshop ArtMap (Radnická 4, Brno)

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Theatre Conference JAMU 2025:

Shared Time, Shared Being, Shared Creation



Art does not only begin with experience—it also results in experience. It is a never-ending loop, where what we live through transforms into art, and in turn, art shapes how we experience the world. The Theatre Conference JAMU 2025 invites you to step into this cycle—to explore how deeply personal moments find their way onto the stage, how they resonate beyond the individual, and how they weave us into a shared reality. Over two days, we will gather to exchange, compare, reflect, and create.

This gathering isn't just about theatre in the traditional sense; it's about performance in all its forms. It's about how we tell stories, how we see experiences, and how we live through narratives—whether through movement, image, voice, or even silence. What can we really expect from this time together? Will we sit in the dark, watching stories unfold before us, or will we dive into them—feeling their weight, texture, and pulse? In truth, anything is possible. Nothing is certain. So, let's embrace the flow of conversation and be open to the surprises that reality has in store. Through performances, lectures, and workshops, we will explore the personal and the universal, the intimate and the collective. Together, we'll ask: How does making art allow us to exist together in time? What does it mean to witness, remember, and transform?

We will begin with an immersive journey into history, uncovering how theatre can revive forgotten voices and draw us into ancient stories. We will listen to the hidden music of language, exploring how words resonate in our bodies—carrying rhythm, melody, and echoes of time. Along the way, we will meet artists who have transformed personal struggles into creative forces: those

who refused to let limitations silence them, those who shape identity through masks - not to hide but to reveal. Through the lens of experimental cinema, VR documentaries, Cinéma Vérité, photography, and performance art, we will push the boundaries of storytelling and perception. We will explore how language is rewritten and transformed - how artists reinvent themselves through resilience and struggle, choosing unexpected paths. And in this search we will find what truly matters: the act of creation as a space of belonging, where challenges become art, and personal experience unfolds into something universal.

These deeply personal narratives remind us that art is a way of being, a way of making sense of ourselves and the world. Over the course of two days, we will explore how language moves through our bodies, how immersive theatre revives forgotten histories, and how masks can be tools of visibility rather than concealment. Whether you join as a presenter, a listener, or a fellow traveller, we invite you to become part of this shared exploration. More than just a conference, this is a space where experiences turn into art—and art turns back into experiences.

Let's step into time together. Let's create something that persists.

We are looking forward to meeting you.

Lucia Repašská
The Conference Board

SPEAKERS



CHI JANG YIN

Excerpt of the lecture/film screenings

Associate Professor Chi Jang Yin's research and teaching over the past decade have provided a compelling understanding of the complex historical and social causes of warfare and violence, as well as their significant impacts on humanity. Her inquiries explore critical topics such as the Cultural Revolution, environmental contamination, and American gun culture, offering insightful analyses that encourage a deeper understanding of these issues.

The upcoming lecture and film screenings will showcase Yin's captivating experimental documentary films and innovative research methodology while engaging participants in meaningful conversations. These interactive sessions will emphasize the vital role that unique and authentic experiences play in shaping our collective history, making them an essential opportunity for all who seek to understand these pressing issues.

BIO

An award-winning experimental filmmaker with expertise in media and cinema studies, Chi Jang Yin's work investigates the missing gaps in history that are invisible to others. Yin's expertise in experimental cinema, VR documentaries, Cinéma Vérité, photography and performance art forms a diverse body of work recognized internationally in galleries, exhibitions, and film festivals. Her films have been shown at Academy Award-qualifying Film Festivals such as the Uppsala International Short Film Festival, Sweden, International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Germany, Los Angeles Film Festival, Chicago International Film Festival, Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival, Czech Republic, and The International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), The Netherlands. Her work was invited to the professional film market of Visions du Réel, in Nyon, Switzerland. She received her BFA and MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Yin is an Associate Professor at the School of Cinematic Arts at DePaul University in Chicago, USA.



PAVEL DRÁBEK

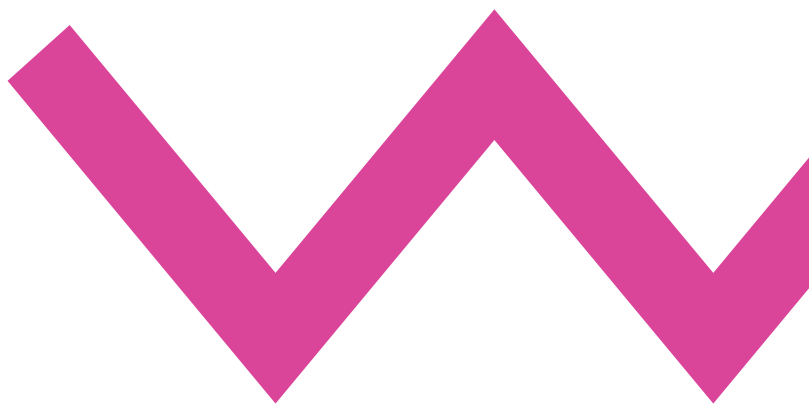
Theatrical Mentalisation: Experiencing Performance with Others

In his 2022 book *How Religion Evolved: And Why It Endures*, the evolutionary psychologist Robin Dunbar published the findings of his team's research on humans' ability to work with several sets of intentions („I think that A believes that C is wrong about D's offense towards E"). In so doing, Dunbar develops the concept of mentalisation as previously formulated by social linguists and philosophers. The ability to think with others at a certain level of complexity is, for Dunbar, the necessary mental capacity for the evolution of religion. In a previous essay, I have speculatively applied this concept to the experiencing of performance and analysed selected works from Prague Quadrennial

2023. In my paper, I would like to develop the theory of theatrical mentalisation even further and align it with Otakar Zich's proto-phenomenology of the theatre and Jan Mukařovský's aesthetic function, norm and value as social facts. The resulting combination, I argue, is a very practical analytical tool that may allow us to understand what is going on while we are watching as part of an audience – experiencing performance with others: we watch while we are aware that there are others watching as well. The phenomenological reality of performance results from this interplay of minds that watch other minds watch others on stage make decisions and take action.

BIO

Pavel Drábek is Professor of Drama and Theatre Practice at the University of Hull, UK, and is currently a visiting professor at the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, Brno, CZ. He publishes on theatre theory, early modern theatre history, and drama translation and adaptation. He is also a playwright, librettist and translator in spoken drama, radio, and opera. He has collaborated with Prague Quadrennial as a member of the International Team since 2017, co-curating PQ Talks and PQ Best Publication Award. His co-edition (with David Drozd) of Otakar Zich's seminal theatre theory work Aesthetics of the Dramatic Art: Theoretical Dramaturgy (1931), co-translated with Tomáš P. Kačer, came out with Karolinum UP in late 2024. His and Josh Overton's one-woman play La Pícara: The Incredible Story of the Lieutenant Nun is opening in Mikro-Teatro in Brno in March 2025 (dir. Jan Cimr, performed by Kateřina Jebavá).



PEDRO GRAMEGNA ARDILES

Máscara. More than the face, more than the surface.

In this lecture performance, Pedro shares his personal obsession with masks, going beyond shapes, colors, and materials, beyond the joy of carnival. In here, masks become biography, relationships, and a queering of everyday life; a desire for reclaiming the right to our identity. From Latin American masking experiences to attending an international conference in a rabbit balaclava, „Máscara“ explores the mask as a queer tool for seeking and finding our place in the world.

After the lecture performance, you will receive a mask and be invited to a one-hour party to dance and explore what it feels like to have a new face.

Masks are not a shield, something that hides.

They are a microscope, a telescope... a magnifying glass!

BIO

Director and Scenographer, born in Copiapó, Chile. Based in Prague, Czech Republic. Currently, he is finishing his studies of Direction of Devised and Object Theatre at DAMU and holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in Theater Design from the University of Chile. His performances playfully explore his obsession with making, costume design, materials and masking as queer strategies that temporarily alter our relationship with the everyday.

He currently collaborates with an international team of artists as the Director of his own stage creations, including the projects „Máscara“, „Memento Mori“, and „Home is the Place Where Our Memory Is“, while also actively working as a Dramaturg and Lighting Designer in several international projects („Is Joy“, „150 BPM“, „July 3, 1998, nothing ever truly dies“, amongst others). Since 2011, he has led Complejo Conejo, a Chilean collective focused on public space, which has actively participated in the last three editions of the Prague Quadrennial, most notably in his role as National Curator of the Chilean pavilion (2023).



CONFLICTUAL BALANCE

ZUZANA BROŽEK HOLBEINOVÁ

Confessions - staged confessions of actors with specific needs.

Confession was created as a practical outcome of specific research that dealt with the sensory and invisible specific needs of professional actors. In the production, actors with inborn and acquired specific needs tell their stories about their journey to theatre, the obstacles and struggles they had to and wanted to face in order to succeed. The aim was not only to bring the individual experiences of each actor into focus, but also to create a theatrical format that combines documentary accounts, original acting and performative elements.

The production Confession was a short account of four different stories and approaches to coping with (or no longer wanting to cope with) the work of a professional actor alongside (or despite) specific needs. Each of the protagonists brings a unique perspective on the acting profession and explores the boundaries between individual self-reflection and social criticism.

The process of creation has been both a challenge and a personal exploration of the boundaries between documentary and

theatrical stylization. I contribute to the production both as a writer and actor.

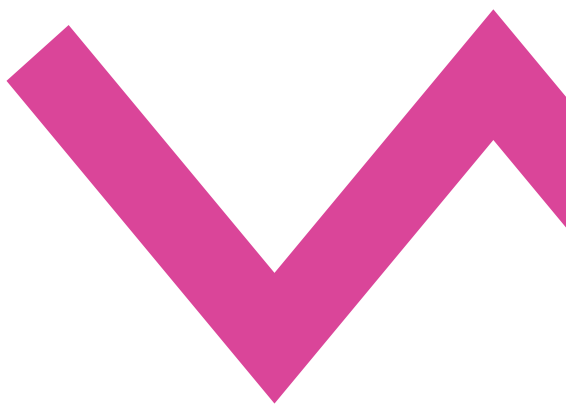
My conference paper will be a reflection on production-making and the possibilities and limits of self-reflection on one's own story in an aesthetic form. How are personal accounts transformed when they become a theatrical work? And can theatre contribute to change in more than just aesthetic terms?

BIO

*Zuzana Brožek Holbeinová (*1992) is an actress and PhD student at the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno. Her professional career includes engagements at the Městské divadlo Brno, Moravské divadlo Olomouc, SeMaFOR, DJKT Plzeň, National Theatre Moravian-Silesian and National Theatre Brno. She has been involved in such productions as Ray Bradbury 2116, Doctor Ox, The Years of the Jackal, Elizabeth, West Side Story, The Wonder Pot, The Merry Widow, and many others.*

She is a graduate of the Jaroslav Ježek Conservatory in Prague in musical acting (2018) and has a Master's degree in theatre theory and history from Charles University (2017). She is currently pursuing her PhD studies at JAMU, where she is working on the specific needs of professional actors in theatre. In her academic and artistic practice, she combines personal experience with academic research and seeks ways to convey the topic sensitively and authentically through theatre production.

She believes that theatre can be not only an art but also a means to understand and reflect on diverse life experiences.



IVO KRISTIÁN KUBÁK

(New) methods of immersive theatre – gamebook strategy project In Queer Street

Immersive theatre is a genre in which the viewer, according to given rules but as freely as possible, moves in a defined space and time, observes staged situations or visits staged spaces, and is encouraged by various means to enter them through his actions and reactions (following the characters, interacting with the space, remaining in the atmosphere). His presence is crucial, his role is most important: he connects, animates and involves the individual elements of the fiction into a functional world of alternative reality. Immersion puts the viewer in the unusual position of the dramaturg of his own unique version of the story.

An immersive gamebook is a subgenre of the above-mentioned one. Similar to the book form of a gamebook, the viewer-detective is guided through the spaces (pages) using narrative elements, through which he can learn about various circumstances and motives of the fictional world and subsequently move through the story/space according to his decisions.

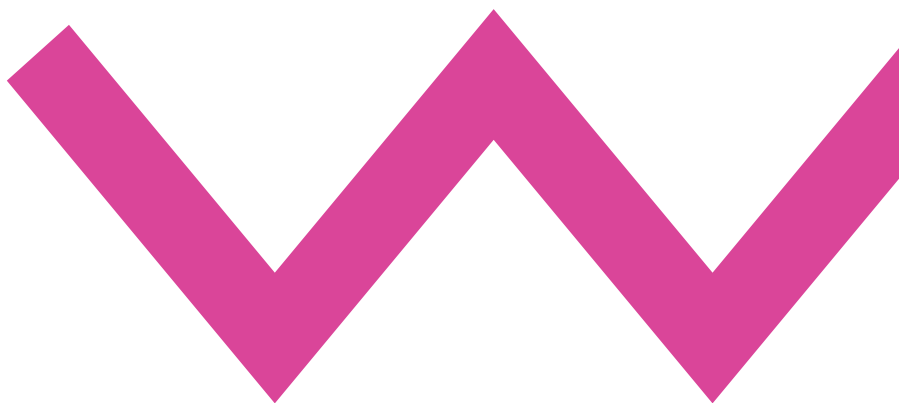
Presentation of work in developing a project for a high school audience

Na Mizině (In Queer Street) in the industrial space of the Pilsen Paper Mill. The project deals with the theme of childhood in times of global crises. The initial inspiration was two local events from the First World War: the story of the first civilian victim, a nineteen-year-old girl, Marie Schwartzová, who died in 1917, shot by a stray bullet while looking out of the window during a large-scale looting in the city centre. The second event concerns an unplanned clash between military units and hungry civilians in June 1918, when, due to a coincidence of several unfortunate circumstances, a shooting occurred in which six boys were killed and others seriously injuring.

The events were the culmination of wartime hardships, when overpopulated Pilsen, serving as a large-scale weapons factory, was plagued by hunger, epidemics, a housing crisis, a shortage of teachers and floods of wounded soldiers coming from the war front. The project maps the life of a child in times of hunger, deprivation and crisis with the creative help of students from Pilsen high schools.

BIO

Ivo Kristián Kubák graduated from the Department of Dramatic Theatre at DAMU and the Department of Theory and Criticism at DAMU. Currently, he is a student of the doctoral study program at DAMU and an external teacher at the KČD DAMU. Together with dramaturg Marie Nováková, he is the founder of the independent theatre company Tygr v tísni and the independent theatre Divadlo VILA Štvanice, and the artistic director of the Antická Štvanice Festival. He was the curator of the Prague Quadrennial 2015 (GOLEM Cube project) and 2019 (CAMPQ project), the dramaturg and director of the series Kontexty (Český rozhlas Vltava, 2019), and the creative producer of Czech Television (2020-2025). He is the editor and co-author of the book Immersive Theatre and Media (Pražská scéna, 2015). In his directing work and research, he deals with theatre and performance in non-traditional forms and in non-traditional spaces, but also with ancient drama and its outdoor performances.



JAN MOTAL

Material Encounters on the Collective Journey of Authorship

Camera, film stock, videotape, computer, projector—these are usually the tools an artist uses to achieve creative goals. She learns to master them, to control them, in order to tame the reality she records with them. The subject uses these objects to express himself. And so does the urban space in which we work. At best, it is a backdrop for our lives; at worst, a malleable mass for reshaping our environment according to our will. But how can the vibrant matter around us speak and participate in the message of who we are and where we are?

This workshop will offer a collective filmmaking project that will serve as an imprint of a shared journey through the city to the park and back. We will invite artifacts, both plant and non-plant materials to contribute to the work. Following Jane Bennett's ideas, we will dilute the subjectivity of decision-making process and will allow uncontrollable factors to enter into it: the effects of the „urban minestrone“ we will develop the film with, old technology, expired material. Following the current movement in alternative photography and filmmaking that

emphasizes upcycling, recycling, and the use of plant materials, we will expand the creative collective to include non-human artists with whom we will create an experimental film accompanied by automated music. This will be screened in the evening.

The workshop includes a journey through the city to the park and back, recruiting non-human co-authors, filming with half-century-old Super 8 cameras on expired negative material, and developing the footage. A discussion and other hand-made film inspired workshop activities will be included.

The workshop will be facilitated by Jan Motal, a member of the art group Dilo (<https://www.casopisdilo.cz/the-dilo-group/>)

BIO

Jan Motal is an experimental artist, author, and philosopher. In his work and theory, he focuses on the relationship between radicality and dialogue. He teaches students of media, theatre, and ethics in culture at universities in Brno and Olomouc. He is involved in advocating for the social responsibility of the media, working as an expert at the Foundation for Independent Journalism, and serving on the editorial board of the independent newspaper Deník N. He heads the Centre for Media Ethics and Dialogue at Masaryk University and is a co-founder of the annual conference on ethics in documentary film at the IDFF Jihlava. He is a member of the artistic group Dílo, which publishes a magazine of the same name (www.casopisdilo.cz).

*He has published numerous books on theatre, film, and religion, most recently **Radical Dramaturgy** and **Radical Theology**. In his work he elaborates on the ideas of anarchism, the environmental movement, and radical social critique aimed at creating autonomous democratic spheres of self-sufficiency and cooperation. This includes a critique of the contemporary art world and the principles associated with the prevailing notions of authorship and elitist approaches to artistic self-expression.*



KAROLINA RAIMUND

Quadrupedal Runner

The contribution is the author's commentary on the exhibition Quadrupedal Runner, which takes place at the time of the conference at the Gallery U Dobrého pastýře in TIC in Brno. The exhibition consists of three parts, each being in one room.

Karolina Raimund takes an arable land of 3,566m² as an artistic experiment, where she expresses both natural and also unnatural processes and individual possibilities.

She explores the limits of humanity, questioning what is human. In the last room, she searches for unexpected connections between man and nature.

The forms achieved in the exhibition were obtained on the basis of observation and developed from a chain reaction which was initiated by the planting a necklace of daffodils around a baroque chapel near the field.

BIO

Karolina Raimund has long been devoted to the medium of photography and the possibilities of its representation. Now she likes to work with textile printing. In her work, she deals with post-humanist themes which follow on from the practice and study of feminist art. She does not get into things that others can do, staying on the edges and exploring the entropy of multiple fields. In her work, she applies knowledge from anthropology and sociology. She works as a teacher at FFA BUT in Brno in the Body Design Studio, from which she was also one of the first graduates.

ELIŠKA VAVŘÍKOVÁ, EVA DVOŘÁKOVÁ, KATEŘINA VERNEROVÁ

Physical Experience of Language

In the creative theatrical process, through physical experience, words become an explosive material that brings an intense physical response in the form of a cocktail of associations that can resonate over a long period in our memory or be used in the creative process of making physical scores. Our shared experience is based on an artistic project conducted at Prague HAMU in 2023. The project was guided by the idea that the meaning and power of a word lies not only in its linguistic content but also in its sound, rhythm, melody, and, most of all, in its potential for association.

The masterclass aims to restore sensitivity to language by harnessing the body's perception, which acts as a physical filter, imbuing the language with a kinetic quality. This quality is shaped by the onomatopoeic properties of the language, the sonority of words, and their meanings. By exploring words, sentences, and the language in their intrinsic essence—unencumbered by direct informative meanings—

we reveal how they function as imaginative elements that influence physical expression. Through this process, we physically experience the language with an emphasis on understanding its power and impact on the body.

It seems that words themselves carry dynamics and physicality which attract us and confirm that *language is a corporeal phenomenon*.

BIO

Eliška Vavříková

Performer, choreographer, director, and teacher. She graduated in acting from DAMU in Prague and also completed her doctoral studies there. She was a long-time member of the international physical theatre ensemble Farm in the Cave, which received numerous Czech and international awards, and she contributed to most of its projects as a performer, assistant director, choreographer, or researcher. At the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (AMU), in the Department of Nonverbal Theatre, she teaches authorial creation and the prerequisites of acting creation. She collaborates with various theatrical organizations, including institutions and theatres that actively contribute to the development of performing arts. She is a member of the academic board of the doctoral study program in Stage Creation and Theory of Stage at AMU. She is engaged in her own artistic activities connected with artistic research and publishing. Her scientific and artistic projects have been presented both in academic settings and at theatre festivals.

Eva Dvořáková

Voice coach, therapist, and lecturer in the fields of verbal and nonverbal communication, specializing in the psychology of expression. She currently works at the Department of Nonverbal Theatre at the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, where she focuses on verbal and nonverbal communication as well as the psychology of facial expressions and gestures in the context of artistic expression. In the field of voice training for performers, she specializes in the specific needs of artists, particularly in the combination of voice and gesture as equal means of expression. As a voice therapist with two certifications from the Ministry of Health, she is dedicated to the re-education and therapy of vocal professionals, collaborating with phoniatic, ENT, and speech therapy clinics focused on the treatment of both functional and organic voice disorders. In 2018, she received an award for a pilot study of voice resonance techniques in students of HAMU and DAMU.

Kateřina Vernerová

Performer in the field of mime performance and physical theatre. She is a co-founder of the theatre company Invisible Children and is currently a student in the Master's programme at the Department of Nonverbal Theatre at the Academy of Music and Dance in Prague. She graduated from the Bachelor's programme with the performance Milá. In 2021, she graduated from the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen with a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy, and in 2019-2021 she studied at the Budil Theatre School in Prague.

As part of her BA studies at the Department of Nonverbal Theatre at HAMU in 2022-2023, she was part of the artistic research Being Elsewhere than Here - Trigger Point.



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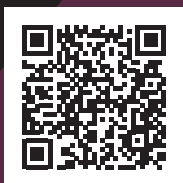
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