

Júlia Rázusová's Production *Ota* as a Voice of Action: Elements of Epic Theatre and *Lehrstücke* in Contemporary Theatre

ELENA KNOPOVÁ

Institute of Theatre and Film Research, Art Research Centre of the Slovak Academy
of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia

ABSTRACT: The study focuses on Júlia Rázusová's staging of Michal Ditte's postdramatic text *Ota* (Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre, 2025). Taking this form of political theatre as its case study, it examines how the past is transposed into an active, instructive appeal to contemporary audiences. At its centre are the stories of two women journalists, each shaped by the socio-political conditions of her time. The first is Ota Plávková, a radio editor persecuted by the totalitarian regime during Normalisation, who seems at first to belong to the past. The second is Laura, an investigative journalist who faces pressure from oligarchic structures intertwined with political power and thereby comes to embody the democratic present. The author examines

how the creative team works with historical, documentary, and biographical material, and how its staging strategies generate meanings that extend beyond the original historical context. The analysis draws on Bertolt Brecht's concept of "historicisation" (*Historisierung*), as further elaborated by Hans-Thies Lehmann, as well as on the concept of the "erosion of the self-evident," which calls for the renewed performative testing of social values and, consequently, for action. The study also considers devices characteristic of epic theatre and the *Lehrstücke* tradition – including the *Verfremdungseffekt*, dialectical thinking, and *Einverständnis* – that establish a critical distance between stage and audience and thereby sharpen political consciousness.

KEYWORDS:

Ota Plávková, Júlia Rázusová, Michal Ditte, epic theatre, political theatre, historicisation, strategy of exposure, *Lehrstücke*

INTRODUCTION

The production *Ota* (Divadlo Jozefa Gregora Tajovského (DJGT), Zvolen — Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, 2025)¹ emerged from a creative collaboration between playwright Michal Ditte and director Júlia Rázusová. With this production, the theatre in 2025/2026 season committed itself to socially engaged theatre and to “authorial works that shape public discourse.”² The season’s thematic motto RED FLAGS/ČERVENÉ VLAJKY draws attention to “dangerous, undesirable, and unacceptable phenomena in both public and personal life” and metaphorically frames a theatrical programme aimed at safeguarding democratic values, highlighting milestones of freedom, and upholding ethical principles.³

Both theatre makers come from the independent culture sector, where they have established themselves as the leading figures of Pôtoň Theatre and Slzy Janka Borodáča (The Tears of Janko Borodáč). Both creative collectives work through authorial methods of theatre staging. Pôtoň Theatre focuses on documentary theatre with a deliberate social impact, as well as on various performative forms and inter-medial theatre that draws on the forms of visual installation and happening. The Tears of Janko Borodáč, by contrast, gravitates towards fragmented literary and film adaptations combined with personal — and at times civically inflected — performer commentaries, as well as theatre grounded in physical action and visual stylisation. Thanks to their distinctive artistic signatures, the work of both theatre makers has increasingly entered repertory theatres. Michal Ditte and Júlia Rázusová form an intriguing artistic duo, united by the premise that “the personal is political”⁴ — a premise closely related to the season’s motto concerning public and personal life. They are also connected by an interest in the tension between language, corporeality, physical action, and the performativity of social material in shaping social meanings.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The production *Ota* is inspired by the life and work of the radio journalist and editor Ota Plávková (1926–2022), whose story the theatre makers place in parallel with women journalists today. Through a collage-like overlap of past and present,

1 Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen. Adaptation and direction Júlia Rázusová; dramaturgy Ján Chalupka; set and costumes Katarína Holková; music Martin Husovský; expert collaboration Michal Várošík. Cast: Dana Karolová, Lucia Letková, Iveta Marcinek, Jana Pilzová, Barbora Špániková, Dominika Výrostek Misárová, Mária Tóčík Knoppová / Martina Chmelanová, Ondřej Daniš, Marek Rozkoš, Richard Sanitra, and Juraj Smutný. Premiered on 10 October 2025.

2 GRUSKOVÁ, A. Šesť tvárí jednej odvahy: Prečo je zvolenská Ota kľúčovou inscenáciou pre dnešné Slovensko [Six Faces of Courage: Why Zvolen’s Ota is a Crucial Production for Today’s Slovakia]. In *Monitoring divadiel na Slovensku*, 9 March 2026. [online]. [cit. 15 June 2026]. Available at: <https://monitoringdivadiel.sk/sest-tvari-jednej-odvahy-preco-je-zvolenska-ota-klucovou-inscenaciou-pre-dnesne-slovensko/>.

3 Compare: <https://djgt.sk/55286-2/>.

4 See LINDOVSKÁ, N. Sila a krehkosť ženských spovedí (Slzy Janka Borodáča Outcast) [The Strength and Fragility of Women’s Confessions (Outcast by the Slzy Janka Borodáča)]. In *Blízkosť – osamelosť – reziliencia: zborník vedeckých príspevkov z medzinárodnej Banskobystrickej teatrologickej konferencie*. (Ed. E. Knopová). Bratislava: Centrum vied o umení SAV, Ústav divadelnej a filmovej vedy; Akadémia umení v Banskej Bystrici, Fakulta dramatických umení, 2025, p. 163.

and through sharp cuts, they foreground questions of power, freedom, truth, and ideological persecution. Although the script draws on extensive biographical and documentary material, the resulting theatrical form deliberately exceeds the framework of biographical or documentary theatre. The period of Normalisation, which provides the ideological backdrop to the production, is not theatrically reconstructed; rather, it functions as a model situation through which lived reality is tested on stage. Historical material thus loses its original temporal framing and is transformed into a recognisable, transhistorical pattern of social behaviour. One of the key staging principles lies in the production's engagement with devices associated with the (post-)Brechtian tradition of epic theatre. The present study therefore employs Brecht's concept of historicisation (*Historisierung*)⁵ to analyse this transformation in synergy with the concept of the erosion of the self-evident and with selected principles and devices of the *Lehrstücke* tradition (didactic play).

Historicisation means revealing, through theatre, social phenomena as historically conditioned and therefore changeable.⁶ The effect of this strategy, however, does not lie in reconfiguring the past, but in exposing the present as an equally constructed social material. By presenting a historical phenomenon from a critical perspective, historicisation enables audiences to recognise analogous processes and mechanisms within their own time.

The concept of the erosion of the self-evident operates according to a similar principle.⁷ It may be understood as a framework for examining a particular mode of value-based action within a transformed cultural climate – that is, action that requires renewed affirmation or rejection. Both strategies of exposure – historicisation and the erosion of the self-evident – function in theatre as forms of dialectical meaning-making. Meaning is re-articulated through the decisions made by characters and spectators in mutual dialogue. This process of decision-making often entails a critical re-evaluation of a particular situation or historical moment in which the character – and, by extension, the spectator – are placed. Such theatre may consequently generate a call to social action, understood, for example, in the sense articulated by Max Weber⁸ or Hannah Arendt:⁹ as interaction with, and responsibility towards,

5 Brecht describes historicisation in his key text *Kleines Organon für das Theater* [A Short Organum for the Theatre] (§§ 36–40). In BRECHT, B. *O divadelnom umení* [Brecht on Theatre]. Translated by E. Marko. Bratislava: Slovenské vydavateľstvo krásnej literatúry, 1959, pp. 200–202. See also BARNETT, D. 'Brecht in Practice': Critical Reflections on Staging Drama Dialectically. In *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 2021, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 266–285. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2021.1928653>.

6 Brecht typically achieved this by relocating historical material into a different temporal or spatial context and by combining this strategy with other devices such as interruptions of the plot, anti-illusionistic scenography, direct address to the audience, songs, and comparable techniques.

7 For a more detailed discussion of the concept of the erosion of the self-evident see *Blížkosť – osamelosť – reziliencia: zborník vedeckých príspevkov z medzinárodnej Banskobystrickej teatrologickej konferencie*. (Ed. E. Knopová), pp. 171–187.

8 Max Weber defined social action in his work *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* [Economy and Society], 1922. In his typology, one finds "value-rational action" (a belief in the ethical or religious value of the action itself, regardless of its consequences).

9 Hannah Arendt defines "action" as the highest form of active life in *Vita activa oder Vom tätigen Leben* [The Human Condition], 1958. Action is an activity that takes place exclusively among human beings (in plurality) without mediation

others. The production therefore deliberately creates a situation in which meaning is constituted only in the tension between stage and audience.

OTA PLÁVKOVÁ AS THEATRICAL MATERIAL

The production *Ota* subtitled “A theatrical parallel to the present day on the unceasing power of free radio within an unfree ether,” is based on the life and public legacy of Ota Plávková, a journalist and radio editor at the Banská Bystrica studio of Czechoslovak Radio. Ota Plávková played a key role during the so-called reform process of the 1960s and, above all, during the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.¹⁰

Even then, she was producing investigative reports based on listeners’ suggestions, openly criticising the failures of the socialist economy and the politically fabricated trials of the 1950s. The writer and documentary filmmaker Michal Várošík notes: “She remained steadfastly committed to the Prague Spring under the leadership of Alexander Dubček. During the 1968 occupation, she helped coordinate radio broadcasting from the Banská Bystrica studio. A year later, she was removed from the radio on these grounds (...) and subsequently expelled from both Banská Bystrica and Central Slovakia. She took a job as an ordinary clerk at the state enterprise Priemstav in Bratislava. During Normalisation, she faced constant interrogations by the secret police (...), covert searches,¹¹ and social discrimination.”¹²

Because of her unwavering stance — above all, her refusal to reinterpret the occupation as fraternal assistance — Ota Plávková was designated as a person hostile to the communist regime. For years, she endured psychological pressure, economic hardship, family strain, and repression by state authorities and their agencies. Despite this, her voice continued to be heard clandestinely on Radio Free Europe and Voice of America, and in the 1970s, she collaborated with the Slovak dissident movement. She became an important symbol of moral resilience and of the steadfast defence of democratic principles. Yet she regained social and artistic recognition only at the very end of her life. Ota’s life story, and above all her firm civic worldview, inspired several journalistic, literary, radio, and documentary film works.¹³ The production *Ota* by the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, however, is the first theatrical staging of Ota Plávková’s legacy.

Reviewer Anna Grusková has noted affinities between the production and Jiří Mádl’s award-winning Czech feature film *Vlny* [Waves] (2024). In her view, the film

by material objects. It is inseparable from speech – through action and word, a human enters the world and responds to the question: “Who are you?”

¹⁰ Until 20 August 1968, the Banská Bystrica Radio Studio had been the longest-broadcasting workplace informing citizens about the entry of Warsaw Pact troops into the territory of the Slovak Republic. Even after its broadcasting had shifted into an illegal mode, it was Ota Plávková who sustained it with her commentaries.

¹¹ In Ota Plávková’s case, the secret services employed secret-police methods of intelligence gathering and surveillance, along with a range of disruptive measures intended to discredit her within her social environment.

¹² VÁROŠÍK, M. *Plávková, Ota*. (Biographical entry). [online]. [cit. 3 June 2026]. Available at: <https://pamatihodnosti.sk/pamatihodnost/plavkova-ota>.

¹³ For more see Literature.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. In the radio newsroom. Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

is a Czech counterpart to *Ota*'s story: "Playwright Michal Ditte and director Júlia Rázusová, however, do not chart only the first critical days of the occupation, but also the essential trajectory of the heroine's fate. (...) from her initial enthusiasm for the reform process of the Prague Spring, through persecution during Normalisation, to her disillusionment after 1989, when, in the supposedly de-ideologised radio institution, she encountered the very same figures who had played a part in her dismissal and persecution."¹⁴

Anna Grusková draws attention to the broader context foregrounded by the production. The historical figure of Ota Plávková becomes a bridge through which the present condition of journalistic work is articulated – a connection already suggested by the above-mentioned production's subtitle. The contemporary parallel within what Karol Mišovic calls the production's "play-theme"¹⁵ is formed by the storyline of the young journalist Laura. She faces intense threats and attacks because of her articles on corruption, property relations, and the links between oligarchic networks and government politicians. In this regard, Karol Mišovic underscores a directorial

¹⁴ GRUSKOVÁ, A. Šesť tvárí jednej odvahy: Prečo je zvolenská Ota kľúčovou inscenáciou pre dnešné Slovensko [Six Faces of Courage: Why Zvolen's *Ota* is a Crucial Production for Today's Slovakia].

¹⁵ MIŠOVIC, K. Červená vlajka Oty Plávkovej [The Red Flag of Ota Plávková]. In *MLOKí*, 11 October 2025. [online]. [cit. 6 January 2026]. Available at: <https://mloki.sk/cervena-vlajka-oty-plavkovej/>.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Mária Tóčík Knoppová (Laura), Juraj Smutný (Lukáš). Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

intention that does not focus solely on one historical figure, but also points to courageous women, mothers, and journalists today who actively struggle for a better society and for their nation, even though, “in Ota Plávková’s words, it is not easy to love it.”¹⁶

The documentary material for Laura’s narrative line came from interviews with contemporary women journalists who had experienced pressure, intimidation, and attacks as a result of their work in the media.¹⁷ Another significant source was the well-known “Gorilla” case, together with a related recording of a threatening phone call made by an oligarch to the journalist Ján Kuciak, who was murdered, together with his fiancée, in their home on 21 February 2018.

PARALLEL AND PARABLE

The parallel in the theatrical script and staging of *Ota* is established not only through its two temporal lines, but also through the two women journalists who find themselves in comparable situations. Because of their journalistic work, both women are subjected to pressure and intimidation by structures of power. Particularly

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ These were the journalists Zuzana Kovačič Hanzelová, Katarína Jánošová, Jana Krescanko Dibáková, and Monika Tódová.

revealing are the moments of decision-making in which the two women, placed in similarly constructed situations, choose decisive action. *Ota* remains firmly anchored in her original civic and ideological convictions and persistently resists the hardships imposed on her by historical circumstances and by the apparatus of power. She chooses to stand in opposition to the Normalisation regime under Gustáv Husák: she accepts repression, endures interrogations by the secret police, refuses to collaborate with them, becomes involved in the unorganised and largely dormant Slovak dissent movement, writes a critical analysis of its condition, formulates its tasks, transcribes and distributes the text of Charter 77, and circulates the obituary of her proscribed colleague — the journalist, translator, and psychologist Perla Karvašová.

Laura responds to the targeted and tactical victimisation directed against her¹⁸ by leaving her job in Bratislava and retreating to the Horehronie (Upper Hron) region, to the home of her fiancé's parents. After an initial period of passive withdrawal and the comfort of tranquility, she discovers that she is pregnant. Yet the verbal abuse, hateful threats, and cyberbullying catch up with her even in this rural backwater: all she has to do is switch on her mobile phone or laptop. Ultimately, she decides to return to the capital and continue her investigative work without compromise — for the sake of future generations.

The episodic and fragmented structure of the plot makes it possible to trace the decision-making processes of both women over time. At certain moments in the performance, the two figures come face to face in situations of testing. Although, at first glance, the position of the investigative journalist confronted with power may appear to repeat itself across the two narrative lines, it soon becomes clear that this is not the same situation, not the same historical moment, and not the same form of power. Both characters reveal how abusive power manifests itself, and what kinds of decisions and actions are required if change is to become possible.

The dramaturgical strategy of interweaving, or mirroring, temporal layers and characters need not function solely as a temporal or thematic parallel. It also introduces a parabolic dimension, understood as an instructive model. The result is a rigorously constructed model situation that, through the mirrored stories of women journalists, functions as an instrument for analysing complex social and political mechanisms and for examining the moral conflicts not only of the two women, but, more importantly, of two historical epochs — the past and the present.

While Bertolt Brecht often achieved a parabolic effect by relocating the original story into fictional or unfamiliar spatiotemporal settings, the production *Ota* employs a post-Brechtian form of parable: it reveals the present as a form of social material constructed in ways comparable to the past.¹⁹ The premise that “the personal

¹⁸ Laura is subjected to harassment through mobile-phone and e-mail communication, defamatory social-media posts, vandalism in the form of a painted female genital symbol on her car, excrement dumped in front of her house, and anonymous threats.

¹⁹ Historicisation does not merely reconstruct the past; it also transforms the spectator's perception of the relationship between past and present.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Interweaving of different time periods. Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

is political” is here reversed into “the political is personal,” though always within historically distinct lived realities. In this context, what matters most are not the personal fates of the characters, but the examples of their social and civic conduct within dialectically positioned historical contexts.

The question of historicisation therefore arises quite naturally here: “Can history repeat itself?” The answer is: “No, history cannot simply repeat itself.” Social phenomena are historically conditioned, and social circumstances are always the result of specific social relations or political forces. These may disappear, but they may also be – and sometimes must be – transformed. What may recur, however, are certain processes and mechanisms that demand vigilant exposure, as Bertolt Brecht suggests at the end of *Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui* [The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui], written in the critical year of 1941: “But don’t rejoice too soon at your escape. The womb he crawled from is still going strong.”²⁰ From this perspective, *Ota*’s historical narrative line articulates the possibility of transforming the social conditions of a given era, while also exposing the potential reactivation of earlier practices. Laura’s contemporary narrative line probes the extent of social change

²⁰ “Dass keiner uns zu früh da triumphierte. – Der Schoß ist fruchtbar noch, aus dem das kroch.” In BRECHT, B. *Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui*. Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp Verlag, 1965, p. 124; BRECHT, B. *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. Translated by R. Manheim. London : Bloomsbury Publishing PLC (Methuen Drama), 2017, lxxvii, p. 108.

within new historical and political circumstances. It shows that, although those circumstances have changed, earlier mechanisms of intimidation persist, merely assuming more sophisticated forms. The relationship between the two lines therefore operates less as a simple parallel than as a parable: a didactic model of power that does not serve society — a form of power that fears journalists.

In *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* [The Good Person of Szechwan], Brecht constructs a parable grounded in a socio-economic premise: “Do not search for a good person, because in an unjust system it is difficult to be one; if such a person exists, the system must first be changed.” In short: “Morality is impossible within an unjust system.”

In *Ota*, Michal Ditte and Júlia Rázusová construct a parable grounded in a politico-ethical premise: “Do not seek democracy where totalitarian methods remain unchanged; if a society is to be free and governed by the rule of law, the very modes through which power is exercised must be first transformed.” In short: “Where a system depends on unfree methods, totalitarianism merely assumes the mask of democracy.”

MICHAL DITTE'S SCRIPT AND JÚLIA RÁZUSOVÁ'S DIRECTION

The theatrical script *Ota* draws on a broad range of documentary materials through which, as Anna Grusková notes, the author “achieved a high degree of factual accuracy,”²¹ while also making use of authorial fabrication. The lines spoken by Ota and the other characters (forty-seven in total) consist largely of quotations and paraphrases from Ota Plávková's own texts (commentaries, correspondence, memoirs), as well as from period newspaper articles and official records. Most of these materials come from Ota Plávková's painstakingly compiled personal archive, which was secretly preserved for years by her radio colleague Helena Dzvoníková,²² and from Michal Várošík's book *Niž neodvolám! Novinárka Ota Plávková 1926 – 2002* [I Will Not Recant Anything! The Journalist Ota Plávková 1926–2002].²³ Laura's narrative line, by contrast, draws on quotations from publicly available transcripts of recordings related to the “Gorilla” case and the investigation into the murder of Ján Kuciak and his fiancé. Alongside these documentary sources, the text also contains, for example, the visit of the male figure personifying the River Hron to Ota in her Bratislava lodging house, or descriptions of the garden with its large walnut tree and the endless preserving of plums in Laura's refuge in the Horehronie region.

Although the script takes the form of a montage of excerpts from documentary

²¹ GRUSKOVÁ, A. Šesť tvárí jednej odvahy: Prečo je zvolenská Ota kľúčovou inscenáciou pre dnešné Slovensko [Six Faces of Courage: Why Zvolen's Ota is a Crucial Production for Today's Slovakia].

²² The documents in question were also published in the aforementioned books by Slavo Kalný and Michal Várošík. The fictionalised sections devoted to Ota Plávková arise from the necessity of this technique. The State Security (StS) interrogation records have not survived, since the file was shredded after the 1989 regime change; of the original 344-page dossier, only twelve pages remain.

²³ VÁROŠÍK, M. *Niž neodvolám. Novinárka Ota Plávková 1926 – 2002* [I Will Not Recant Anything! The Journalist Ota Plávková 1926–2002]. Banská Bystrica : Štátna vedecká knižnica v Banskej Bystrici, 2021.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Divadlo Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Ondřej Daniš (Hron), Dana Karolová (Ota). Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

materials,²⁴ at times linguistically adapted, it does not rely on the archival aesthetics or verbatim literalness typical of documentary theatre. Rather, the theatre makers aim to reveal the similarity between specific situations and then to test their validity.²⁵ The two narrative timelines centred on Ota and Laura, together with the Brechtian parable, transform the historical material into an active test for the characters, the performers, and the audience alike.

The theatre makers focus exclusively on the professional and ethical dimensions of Ota Plávková's life. Family circumstances serve primarily to affirm her moral orientation, which she did not abandon even after being dismissed from the radio and expelled from Central Slovakia, and left to raise two sons as a single mother, thereby exposing them to risk. The episodic structure of the plot traces the years 1968–1989 chronologically: from the occupation and the loss of her job, through forced relocation, interrogations by the Czechoslovak secret police, and illegal dissident activity, to the Velvet Revolution and the post-revolutionary demand for justice.

²⁴ Radio and newspaper commentaries, letters, diary and internal records, transcripts of telephone communication, and the like.

²⁵ For instance, it raises the question whether violence directed against an individual — justified by the alleged need to expose one particular act of wrongdoing that disrupts social order — may instead reveal a system whose structural foundations have themselves been eroded and must, therefore, be examined and transformed at the societal level.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Actresses portraying *Ota*. Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

Laura's storyline has a simpler structure and a more compressed temporal framework: the onset of her persecution in Bratislava, her withdrawal into voluntary isolation in the countryside, and her decision to return. This entire line unfolds over several weeks in the present. Laura's episodes introduce a degree of emotional engagement through her discovery that she is pregnant. Nevertheless, she is not a dramatic character defined primarily by relationships with others or by substantial development within the plot. Rather, she functions as a narrator-like figure: a recording medium for professional and personal events, whether already past or still unfolding, which she then reports on.

During the preparation process, the theatre makers removed the script's original, narrow association of Laura's story with one specific case of intimidation directed at an investigative journalist. They nevertheless retained the verbatim transcription of the threatening text messages exchanged between the oligarch and the journalist. This strategy suggests that the plot and characters should be understood as part of a developmental process in which neither the concrete individual nor their singular dramatic story constitutes the primary focus. What matters instead is the exposure of a mechanism of power — one that directs social processes and renders the individual its innocent victim. If the spectator subsequently refuses to identify with the role of a victim of the system, this refusal may prompt them to examine their own epoch from a social perspective and to undertake corresponding civic action.

THE ELEMENTS OF EPIC THEATRE

In line with the premise that theatre should enable an understanding, rather than merely an experience, of what is socially at stake — a fundamental assumption and intended effect of epic, or political, theatre — Júlia Rázusová develops an appropriate staging aesthetics. The role of Ota Plávková is distributed among six actresses, who take turns portraying the character while also assuming other roles: “(...) the pace of the performance requires swift transitions and maximum concentration within a brief acting scene. The stage is densely populated; the performers are present almost throughout. At such moments they become listeners, clerks, informers, agents, members of the Politburo, officers, customs officials, secretaries, as well as well-known public figures — or rather, their voices.²⁶

Multi-rolling is the primary means through which the director structures the actors' work. It prevents the spectator from identifying emotionally or visually with a single character. From the perspective of the erosion of the self-evident, this strategy functions as a chorus, dismantling both the authority of a single voice and the image of one woman. Truthfulness is not tied to psychological or psychophysical unity: although the contours of Ota's personality are continually blurred and reconstructed,²⁷ it is ultimately anchored in the consistency of her stance. This corresponds to the casting of Ota across six typologically distinct actresses (Dana Karolová, Lucia Letková, Iveta Marcineková, Jana Pilzová, Barbora Špániková, Dominika Výrostek Misárová). Their micro-performances do not represent the character's ageing; rather, they collectively articulate her position in relation to the problem being introduced. Laura, by contrast, is portrayed by a single actress (Mária Tóčík Knoppová, alternating with Martina Chmelanová), yet at several moments the role comes into direct contact with one of the Otas, momentarily rupturing the historical boundaries of time and space. Laura and the chorus of actresses respond to one another both implicitly and explicitly throughout the performance, even when the actresses portray episodic characters other than Ota. The male actors, who perform multiple roles across both narrative lines, function in a similar way. At times, the characters deliver lines assigned by the script; at others, the actors perform precise physical scores and use musical instruments to create a rhythmically composed sonic layer. The historicising costumes, through their colours and cuts, bear the markers of the period (and of social status); nevertheless, they do not semantically fix the actors, but allow them to shift instantly into further micro-roles. It is precisely this fluidity that unmasks the instruments through which power operates and reveals their destructive effects.

The director employs a wide range of Brechtian strategies in the staging: the estrangement effect, juxtapositions that expose social contradictions, the illuminated

²⁶ GRUSKOVÁ, A. *Šesť tvárí jednej odvahy: Prečo je zvolenská Ota kľúčovou inscenáciou pre dnešné Slovensko* [Six Faces of Courage: Why Zvolen's Ota is a Crucial Production for Today's Slovakia].

²⁷ Ibid.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. *Ota* is being blackmailed. Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

auditorium, face masks, songs, and the activation of audience engagement. These elements are supported by Katarína Holková's matter-of-fact scenography. The back wall of the stage consists of a sheet bearing a realistic photograph of a housing-estate block.²⁸ In front of it, on the revolving stage, stands a cube with open front and back walls. Inside the cube, an intimate space shared by *Ota* and *Laura* emerges, furnished only with a bathtub and a writing desk. The outer walls, with their window cut-outs, visually evoke unfamiliar, at times even hostile environments, such as the socialist-era tiling of an interrogation room. The stage arrangement remains in constant flux: both inside and outside the cube,²⁹ musical instruments and small props alternate with stone monuments that function, at different moments, as a news-room, a wall, or places to sit.

In the dynamic performance, rhythmically structured through music and sound, verbal action and dramatic situation are reconfigured into physical performance, at times even into physical exercises and actions. The musical component created by Martin Husovský, is built around the sound of the typewriter. The actors' fingering

²⁸ Housing-estate panel blocks function as an iconic marker of socialism and of the uniformity imposed on the working masses. The actors disrupt the realistic illusion from the very moment they enter the stage, passing beneath a lifted sheet printed with a photographic image.

²⁹ However, its ground plan may be read as hexagonal, as some of the walls of the original square are cut off.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Interrogation by the agent. Jana Pilzová (Ota), Juraj Smutný (Agent). Photo by Vanda Mesiarišková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

develops into a shifting rhythmic pattern; at times, the mechanical sound of the typewriters dominates the spoken word, while fragments of popular songs from the period erupt unexpectedly.³⁰

This technique is most apparent in the scenes centred on the occupation of the radio studio by soldiers of the invading armies, the interrogations conducted by the secret police, and the conversations with Perla Karvašová and members of the Slovak dissident movement.³¹

In the scene dealing with the occupation of the Banská Bystrica Radio Studio, the script includes the stage direction: “Weapons on one side. Microphones on the other.”³² Karol Mišovic describes the directorial approach to this situation as follows: “The director almost programmatically sought to avoid convention. (...) On stage, we see neither tanks, nor Soviet uniforms, nor the notorious military aggression. Instead, a soldier threatens the local staff with an ordinary breadstick

30 For example, the soundscape includes guitar fragments, alternating percussion, and a few words from the refrain of *Variace na renesanční téma* [A Variation on a Renaissance Theme] by the banned musician Vladimír Mišík.

31 In this sequence, the members of the illegal political dissent — Ota Plávková, Dominik Tatarka, Milan Šimečka, Ján Telúch, and Ivan Kusý — attempt to mobilise Slovak opposition forces, allocate tasks among themselves, and formulate a clear programme. Ota dictates a critical analysis of the state of the opposition into a typewriter, while tenderly reciting a homemade apple strudel recipe (for which the historical figure was well known).

32 DITTE, M. *Ota*. [Staging script]. Zvolen: Divadlo Jozefa Gregora Tajovského, 2025, p. 10.

– a salty snack. A dialogue tense in content unfolds as a jovial conversation, but one with fatal consequences.”³³

Júlia Rázusová employs similar directorial approach in the acting scenes centred on Ota's interrogations by secret police agents. These unfold as seemingly casual conversations in which the Agent repeatedly offers Ota a glass of water: “One of the most powerful scenes – the interrogation of Ota Plávková by the secret police (...) makes do with a table and a glass, later with a growing number of glasses of water.”³⁴ At first, Ota refuses the water; when the conversation turns to her sons, however, she drinks one glass after another, thereby defying the Agent. The situation escalates to the point where she is denied access to the toilet and wets herself.

These scenes are not realistic *mise-en-scènes*.³⁵ Instead, they offer a detailed analysis of the mechanisms through which power and violence operate. They show that what matters is not the weapon with which a person is threatened, but the circumstances that enable the act of intimidation – that is, the position of power that makes violence possible. In the case of the breadstick, the staging relies on the functional substitution of the object: the salty stick assumes the status of a weapon and becomes a gestic sign of power.

A similar recontextualisation of an everyday act occurs in the secret-police interrogations: the act of drinking water. The intake of liquid shifts from a vital biological need to an instrument of psychological coercion. The interrogation scenes do not show Ota actually wetting herself; rather, they demonstrate how a (political) system of power can, through repeated pressure disguised as an ordinary gesture, break and humiliate a person. When this interpretive lens is applied to Laura's narrative line, it becomes clear that power may have lost its formerly clear institutionalised form, yet it has preserved mechanisms that are no less effective. In Laura's case, the instrument used to break the individual is crude vandalism combined with intrusion into her private and professional cyberspace.

The Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*, achieved through a recontextualised visual sign, is also evident in the acting scenes featuring Ota and Perla Karvašová, who is embodied “through a photograph that Dominika Výrostek Misárová repeatedly places in front of her face. On closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that Perla Karvašová's likeness is only attached to the surface – behind it is Gustáv Husák.”³⁶ The depersonalisation of Perla through this layered mask allows her fate to be read paradigmatically. Composed of several layers that represent different life principles and ideological convictions (Gustáv Husák standing for communism, Perla

33 MIŠOVIC, K. Červená vlajka Oty Plávkovej [The Red Flag of Ota Plávková].

34 GRUSKOVÁ, A. Šesť tvárí jednej odvahy: Prečo je zvolenská Ota kľúčovou inscenáciou pre dnešné Slovensko [Six Faces of Courage: Why Zvolen's Ota is a Crucial Production for Today's Slovakia].

35 In the (post-)Brechtian tradition, the rejection of dramatic illusion is connected to a broader understanding of causal realism. Narratives no longer present events as determined by fate but instead reveal interconnected relations of power as products of historical forces. By interrupting identification, the performance enables the spectator to anticipate and understand how these consequences may be averted.

36 MIŠOVIC, K. Červená vlajka Oty Plávkovej [The Red Flag of Ota Plávková].



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. An example of depersonalization. Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

Karvašová for liberal-democratic values), the mask leads the spectator towards a semantic analysis of the face as an object. Within this visual sign, the photograph of President Gustáv Husák is not merely a portrait of a political figure; it becomes a symbol of the apparatus of power that deprives the individual of their face (elsewhere in the performance, too, figures merge into an anonymous, faceless mass). Perla Karvašová's likeness, attached to Gustáv Husák's official portrait, suggests that Perla is only a thin layer of truth attempting to displace the thick sediment of totalitarian power. Yet the structural foundation of power, revealed through the visual arrangement of the mask, ultimately points to the impossibility of achieving full individual, personal, and civic integrity.

BRECHTIAN STRATEGIES AND HISTORICISATION AS A MECHANISM OF CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

Among the discursive scenes designed to prompt audience reflection through dialectically constructed dialogue and to initiate a form of audience activism directed towards social issues are *Ota's* conversation with the character Július Gajdoš and the final scene of revolt entitled *Nežná zmena* [Velvet Change].

In the first of these scenes, the director positions the actors on opposite sides of the illuminated auditorium. The characters' lines are composed of transcriptions of *Ota Plávková's* authentic statements and a modified transcription of the article

Bohovia hrnce nelepia [Gods Do Not Mend Pots] by the communist functionary Július Gajdoš, published in the daily *Smer*.³⁷ The result is a dialogue between two principles, two systems of social organisation, and two visions of the future: freedom, or democracy, on the one hand, and socialism under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on the other. For clarity, the characters' dialogic lines may be arranged into two acting roles:

"Ota: There are two things I love above all: freedom and my nation. By freedom I also mean freedom in its most ordinary, everyday sense... (...) And freedom of opinion? May God protect us from that harmful — though once so loudly proclaimed — unity of opinion. It was never real. (...) I regard freedom of opinion, and tolerance of another person's opinion, as the foundation of all freedoms, including national freedom. Without it, a nation's freedom cannot truly be freedom. To me, freedom is like air: without it, one can hardly breathe."

"Gajdoš: The various architects and legalistic apologists of the new model of socialism with a human face would contribute more effectively to the consolidation of conditions in our country if they took the trouble to calculate, even approximately, the amounts that Western monopolies invested in building socialism with a human face in our republic — the very socialism so mournfully defended by Mrs Plávková, Radio Free Europe, and former factory owners and bankers. (...) They deliberately create difficulties in every sphere of social life and then present them as evidence that socialism is incapable of functioning and that capitalism is supposedly superior. (...) She wants factory owners and, gathered around their factories, crowds of the unemployed; large landowners with mansions and stables in which not only horses and cows would sleep, but also farmhands and maids; flocks of children of hired labourers and sharecroppers who, instead of going to school, would herd geese and cows for a slice of black bread. That is Mrs Plávková's role."³⁸

The principle of spatial and ideological juxtaposition is at work here. By positioning the actors on opposite sides of the illuminated auditorium, the director dissolves theatrical illusion and transforms the theatre space into a public forum. The tension between Ota's understanding of freedom as something as vital as air and Gajdoš's manipulative framing of capitalism as a threat becomes a clash between two ontological positions, rather than merely between two competing ideological narratives. Placed directly at the centre of this confrontation of opinions and attitudes, the spectator is compelled to consider which version of life, and which set of values, is more viable for the future. In this sense, this solution recalls Brecht's *Lehrstücke*: theatrical exercises in ideological confrontation aimed at cultivating forms of collective judgement essential to political practice.

In the second scene mentioned, *Kozmetická zmena* [Cosmetic change], the emphasis falls on a call for revolutionary social transformation, articulated as an engaged appeal. The actresses portraying Ota take turns delivering proclamations into

³⁷ DITTE, M. *Ota*. [Staging script], pp. 21–22.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 66–67.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Argument with the Radio scene. In the foreground, Jana Pilzová (*Ota*). Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

the microphone, accompanied by the mounting intensity of rock music. The microphone hangs in the air like a lamp, but also like the loop of a noose. In the staging script, several lines from this scene are highlighted in bold:

“(…)

before entering the polling station, (everyone should) think carefully about what they want: whether they want their children to be sent on potato-harvesting brigades, or to undertake internships at German, French, British, or American universities...

(…)

that, after so many proven crimes, after those hundreds of thousands who were robbed, wronged, and humiliated, one might have expected the Communist Party at least to enter the elections more quietly and more modestly.”

(…)

Our country is governed by turncoat communists.

(…)

The generation that comes after us will ask: ‘What have you done to us?’ And it will have every right to ask.”³⁹

The scene takes the form of a political appeal. The successive embodiment of *Ota* by multiple actresses turns her, at this moment, into the bearer of a collective

39 Ibid.



Michal Ditte: *Ota*. Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre in Zvolen, premiered on 10 October 2025. Direction Júlia Rázusová. Cosmetic change scene. Photo by Vanda Mesiariková. Archive of the Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre.

statement. At the same time, the lines also articulate the actresses' own value-based stance.⁴⁰ The focus shifts from representation to the performative activation of spectators, guiding them towards a conscious recognition of social reality as historically conditioned and therefore changeable.

Ota critically analyses the situation, naming the impacts of Normalisation and the persistence of old structures and figures in the post-1989 era. Taking the form of an alternating chorus, she urges spectators towards genuine revolutionary transformation and calls on them to participate in the free elections of 1990, as if they were still ahead of them. She appeals to the people to make amends on behalf of the generations for whom they bear responsibility. Across a historical distance of thirty-five years, the pregnant Laura likewise leaves her rural refuge and returns to active investigative journalism – in the name of truth and future generations. Laura exits through the illuminated auditorium, perhaps into real life, while the figures belonging to the past withdraw backstage beneath the cloth bearing the image of socialist

⁴⁰ Júlia Rázusová expects actors to enter the rehearsal process "always as themselves" and to approach their characters authorially; that is, to invest them with their own attitudes and personal details. This presupposes a polemical engagement with both the characters and the authorial text, and the construction of the performed character out of continual tensions. See RÁZUSOVÁ, J. – CVEČKOVÁ, K. *Baví ma hľadať situáciu v jej zvláštnej pravde* [I Enjoy Finding the Situation in its Strange Truth]. [Interview]. In *Kød – konkrétne o divadle*, 2024, Vol. 18, No. 9, 12 November 2024. [online]. [cit. 15 June 2026]. Available at: <https://www.casopiskod.sk/clanok/julia-razusova-bavi-ma-hladat-situaciu-v-jej-zvlastnej-pravde>.

housing blocks. The function of these two scenes can also be understood through Bertolt Brecht's concept of *Einverständnis* — a form of dialectical assent. In *Ota*, however, the individual does not blindly submit to collective needs proclaimed by power but instead thinks critically. The theatre makers grant the individual the space to recognise the validity of a new intention and only then to decide.⁴¹

CONCLUSION

Bertolt Brecht argued that good governance is a precondition for a good life. In this sense, the creative team's intention in *Ota* may be understood as a dual appeal to civic action, articulated through the theme of journalistic ethics. The staging clearly invokes the tradition of Brechtian epic theatre and the genre of instructive plays (*Lehrstücke*). Michal Ditte's text works with explicit historical and political premises, confronting them with the ethical dilemmas of two epochs and with questions concerning the individual's possible courses of action within a particular socio-political arrangement of the world. At certain moments, the author even allows the characters to comment ironically on their own, almost pathetically phrased declarations about the mission of building democracy through everyday determined work.

The parable linking *Ota* with the contemporary journalist Laura reveals the present as social material constructed in ways comparable to those of the Normalisation era. Democratic elections become a mechanism of social change: an act through which everyone — prompted by the performance itself — is invited to consider carefully to whom they give their vote. This brings *Ota* close to didactic agit-prop. Whereas Bertolt Brecht, at the level of form, retained the primacy of the text as a means of revealing truth and offering moral instruction, Júlia Rázusová deconstructs textual dominance in a post-Brechtian manner through performative physicality and materiality, creating tensions between words, corporeality, and matter. The political dimension of the performance shifts from the textual level into an autonomous register of visual and bodily gesture, while its didactic form is reconfigured as an active appeal to spectators — a hallmark of Júlia Rázusová's directorial work. A few years ago, such a targeted appeal to the audience would likely have been rejected in Slovakia. Contemporary theatre, however, seems to be responding to a deepening social (and political) crisis that demands action. Bertolt Brecht envisioned theatre as a platform for educating a broad public;⁴² Júlia Rázusová, by contrast, uses it more as an arena and laboratory. Within this space, the individual encounters various mechanisms of power and aggressive ideologies, responding to the stimuli of a toxic system constructed in this way. Rather than searching for a single culprit or assigning concrete political responsibility, the director transfers agency to the audience, who must define for themselves what civic

⁴¹ This recalls Bertolt Brecht's play and exercise *Der Neinsager* [He Said No], in which genuine assent cannot exist without the possibility of saying no. The character of the boy in this play teaches both actors and spectators that, in a new situation, one should not adhere to old traditions but must begin to think anew.

⁴² PARKER, S. *Bertolt Brecht*. Translated by L. Köppl. Praha : Nakladatelství Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2019, p. 247.

stance to take and what degree of responsibility they bear towards their own social reality.

Translated by Mária Švecová

The study is an output of the research grant project VEGA No. 2/0103/26 Theatre as a Programme.

LITERATURE

- ARENDT, Hannah. *Vita activa oder Vom tätigen Leben* [The Human Condition], 1958. *Vita activa neboli O činném životě*. Translated by Václav Němec. Praha : Oikoymenth, 2007. 431 p. ISBN 978-80-7298-185-4.
- BARNETT, David. 'Brecht in Practice': Critical Reflections on Staging Drama Dialectically. In *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 2021, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 266–285. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2021.1928653>. ISSN 1477-2264.
- BRECHT, Bertolt. *Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui*. Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp Verlag, 1965. 144 p. ISBN 978-3-518-10144-5.
- BRECHT, Bertolt. *Myšlenky* [Thoughts]. Edited by Jan Grossman. Translated by Ludvík Kundera a Marta Staňková. Praha : Československý spisovatel, 1958. 165 p.
- BRECHT, Bertolt. *O divadelnom umení* [Brecht on Theatre]. Bratislava : Slovenské vydavateľstvo krásnej literatúry, 1959. 331 p.
- BRECHT, Bertolt. *The Resistible Rise of Arturo U*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. London : Bloomsbury Publishing Plc (Methuen Drama), 2017, lxxvii. 92 p. ISBN 978-0413772633.
- DITTE, Michal. *Ota* [Staging script]. Zvolen : Divadlo Jozefa Gregora Tajovského, 2025. 69 p.
- Dovidenia v lepších časoch* [See you in Better Times]. [TV episode]. In ŠtB: Prísne tajné [StS: Top Secret]. [documentary series]. Episode 13. Directed by Jan Bártek. Production RTVS Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska [Radio and Television of Slovakia] — B Production, s. r. o. — Česká televize, 2022. 26 min. Available at: <https://online.sktorrent.eu/video/27234/%C5%A0tb-pr%C3%ADsne-tajn%C3%A9-dovidenia-v-lep%C5%A1%C3%ADch-%C4%8Dasoch-e13-36362e3234392e37372e3130362d>.
- DREYER, Mathias. *Theater der Zäsur. Antike Tragödie im Theater seit den 1960er Jahren*. Paderborn : Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2014. 327 p. ISBN 978-3-8467-5719-2.
- GODOVIČ, Marek. Neustály klepot slov ako stopy pre hľadanie pravdy. In *Kôd – konkrétne o divadle*, 2025, Vol. 19, No. 8. [online]. Available at: <https://www.casopiskod.sk/clanok/neustaly-klepot-slov-ako-stopy-pre-hladanie-pravdy>. ISSN 2989-3666.
- GRUSKOVÁ, Anna. Šesť tvárí jednej odvahy: Prečo je zvolenská Ota kľúčovou inscenáciou pre dnešné Slovensko [Six Faces of Courage: Why Zvolen's Ota is a Crucial Production for Today's Slovakia]. In *Monitoring divadiel na Slovensku*, 9 March 2026. [online]. Available at: <https://monitoringdivadiel.sk/sest-tvari-jednej-odvahy-preco-je-zvolenska-ota-klucovou-inscenaciou-pre-dnesne-slovensko/>. ISSN 2454-0129.
- KALNÝ, Slavo. *Svedkovia mojej doby*. Bratislava : Marenčin PT, 2011. 237 p. ISBN 978-80-8114-067-9.
- KNOPOVÁ, Elena. Ženské príbehy odporu v čase erózie samozrejmosti. In *Blízkosť – osamelosť – reziliencia: zborník vedeckých príspevkov z medzinárodnej Banskobystrickej teatrologickej*

- konferencie. (Ed. Elena Knopová). Bratislava : Centrum vied o umení SAV, Ústav divadelnej a filmovej vedy : Akadémia umení v Banskej Bystrici, Fakulta dramatických umení, 2025, pp. 171–187. ISBN 978-80-971155-8-6 (print), ISBN 978-80-971155-9-3. (online). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31577/2025.9788097115593>.
- LEHMANN, Hans-Thier. *Postdramatisches Theater*. [Postdramatic Theatre]. Translated by Anna Grusková, Elena Diamantová. Bratislava : Divadelný ústav, 2007. 365 p. ISBN 978-80-88987-81-9.
- LEHMANN, Hans-Thies. *Brecht lesen*. Berlin : Theater der Zeit, 2016. 320 p. ISBN 978-3-95749-079-7.
- LEHMANN, Hans-Thies. *Das Politische Schreiben*. Berlín : Theater der Zeit, 2012. 430 p. ISBN 978-3-943881-36-3.
- LINDOVSKÁ, Nadežda. Sila a krehkosť ženských spovedí (Slzy Janka Borodáča Outcast) [The Strength and Fragility of Women's Confessions (Outcast by the Slzy Janka Borodáča)]. In *Blízkosť – osamelosť – reziliencia: zborník vedeckých príspevkov z medzinárodnej Banskobystrickej teatrologickej konferencie*. (Ed. Elena Knopová). Bratislava : Centrum vied o umení SAV, Ústav divadelnej a filmovej vedy : Akadémia umení v Banskej Bystrici, Fakulta dramatických umení, 2025, pp. 158–170. ISBN 978-80-971155-8-6.
- LONDÁKOVÁ, Elena, et al. *Rok 1968. Novinári na Slovensku* [The Year 1968: Journalists in Slovakia]. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV, 2008. 214 p. ISBN 978-80-969782-9-8.
- MIŠOVIC, Karol. Červená vlajka Oty Plávkovej [The Red Flag of Ota Plávková]. In *MLOKi*, 11 October 2025. Available at: <https://mloki.sk/cervena-vlajka-oty-plavkovej/>. ISSN 1339-8113.
- MOUFFE, Chantal. *The Democratic Paradox*. London and New York : Verso, 2000. 143 p. ISBN 1-85984-758-7.
- MUMFORD, Meg. *Bertolt Brecht*. London — New York : Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2018. 191 p. ISBN 978-0-8153-9689-5.
- Nezlomená* [Unbroken]. [documentary film]. Directed by Michal Várošík. Production RTVS Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska [Radio and Television of Slovakia], 2020. 29 min. Available at: <https://www.stvr.sk/televizia/archiv/16155#1707>.
- PARKER, Stephen. *Bertolt Brecht*. Translated by Ladislav Köppl. Praha : Nakladatelství Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2019. 714 p. ISBN 978-80-7331-517-7.
- RÁZUSOVÁ, Júlia — CVEČKOVÁ, Katarína. Baví ma hľadať situáciu v jej zvláštnej pravde [I Enjoy Finding the Situation in its Strange Truth]. [Interview]. In *Kød – konkrétne o divadle*, 2024, Vol. 18, No. 9, 12 November 2024. [online]. Available at: <https://www.casopiskod.sk/clanok/julia-razusova-bavi-ma-hladat-situaci-u-v-jej-zvlastnej-pravde>. ISSN 2989-3666.
- Sliač v bratskom zovretí* [Sliač in a Brotherly Grasp] [documentary film]. Directed by Michal Várošík. Production RTVS BB Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska, Štúdio Banská Bystrica [Radio and Television of Slovakia, Banská Bystrica Studio], 2018. 28 min.
- Svedkovia mojej doby 3. časť (Prípado Ota Plávková)* [Witnesses of My Time, Episode 3, (Case Ota Plávková)] [radio episode]. In *Relácia Fokus* [radio series]. Written by Slavo Kalný. Radio station: Rádio Devín — RTVS Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska [Radio and Television of Slovakia], 30 January 2013. 30 min. Available at: <https://www.stvr.sk/radio/archiv/1275/116188>.
- VÁROŠÍK, Michal. *Nič neodvolám. Novinárka Ota Plávková 1926 – 2002* [I Will Not Recant Anything! The Journalist Ota Plávková 1926-2002]. Banská Bystrica : Štátna vedecká knižnica v Banskej Bystrici, 2021. 178 p. ISBN 978-80-8227-005-4.
- WEBER, Max. *Economy and Society*. Translated by Keith Tribe. Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 2019. 520 p. ISBN 978-0-674-91654-8.

Elena Knopová
Institute of Theatre and Film Research
Art Research Centre of the Slovak Academy of Sciences
Dúbravská cesta 9
841 01 Bratislava
Slovak Republic
E-mail: elena.knopova@savba.sk
ORCID: 0000-0001-8363-5906