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Ondřej Hrab  
Artistic and Executive Director



# Archa Theatre

*"THE ALTERNATIVE NATIONAL THEATRE"*  
**John O'Mahoney, The Guardian**

The joint performance of Min Tanaka and John Cale, which officially opened the Archa Theatre in 1994, was a clear hint about the future direction of the theatre's dramaturgy. The encounter of a Japanese dancer and an American musician symbolized the coming together of two cultures, two genres and two continents. The Archa Theatre strives to examine art's possibilities and to provide a space for innovative ideas.

The Archa Theatre has introduced many leading artistic personalities from around the world to Czech audiences, including director Robert Wilson, choreographers Wim Vandekeybus, Anna Teresa de Keersmaecker and Jan Fabre, musicians David Byrne, Randy Newman, Philip Glass, Meredith Monk, Einstürzende Neubauten, Tindersticks, Levellers, Morrissey, Diamanda Galás, Imogen Heap and many others. Ensembles such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, Cheek By Jowl, Ultima Vez, DV8, Handspring Puppet Company and Dogtroep have also performed here. Allen Ginsberg gave one of his last performances at the Archa Theatre.

With its unique dramaturgy, innovative projects that cross the boundaries of artistic genres and cutting-edge technical capabilities, Archa has established a solid reputation on the domestic and international progressive scenes. It operates as a production house that provides space to artists for their creative work. This enables the theatre to create its own projects as well as host ensembles and artists both from the Czech Republic and abroad. At least one original project is created at Archa each year, which is then presented in a series of performances. In this way, artists such as Peter Schumann, Min Tanaka and The Residents among many others have created original works under the production of the Archa Theatre. Home-grown projects by young artists are conceived and developed under the auspices of the Archa Lab.

Recent projects include the visual-musical performance *Dance Through the Fence*, which addresses the issue of refugees in the Czech Republic, as well as the acclaimed world premiere of the new play *Leaving* by former Czech president Václav Havel and directed by David Radok. In April 2010, Archa's production of *Leaving* was performed as part of the spring season at the LG Arts Center in Seoul, South Korea. Other recent projects include *Window of Opportunity*, a multimedia performance about the revolutionary year of 1989, the contemporary dance production *Emigrantes* by the VerTeDance Company, and the tragic operetta *Exit 89*.

Many of Archa's projects have met with international acclaim and have been presented at festivals in Bonn, Johannesburg, London, Kyoto, Tokyo, Belgrade, Brussels, and Berlin, Seoul, New York and other cities.

# Václav Havel

## – Leaving

In May 2008, the Archa Theatre presented the world premiere of the latest play by the author, playwright and former president of the Czech Republic. Havel began writing *Leaving* in 1988, but only returned to it in 2006. The play took its final shape during Havel's four-month stay in New York and Washington D.C. in 2007.

The story of the departure of one politician and the arrival of another was directed by David Radok, one of the most celebrated directors in the world operas directed by Radok have appeared in Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo, Helsinki, Berlin, Dresden, Tel Aviv and Tokyo. His interpretation of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* performed at the Czech National Theatre won him the prestigious Alfred Radok prize for the best production of 2002. In addition to opera, Radok also directs plays. His previous work includes Euripides' *Trojan Woman* and Bulgakov's *Moliere*.

The direction, acting and unique staging were all hailed by audiences as well as the international media. *Leaving*, which was considered the biggest event of the 2008 theatre season, was also the feature performance at the International Theatre Festival in Plzen.

In April 2010, the Archa Theatre's production of *Leaving* was performed as part of the spring season at the LG Arts Center in Seoul, South Korea featuring the original cast. It was the production's first ever foreign appearance.

WRITTEN BY: Václav Havel

DIRECTOR: David Radok

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Štěpán Pácl

STAGING: Jaromír Viček and David Radok

COSTUMES: Zuzana Ježková

LIGHT DESIGN: Pavla Beranová

SOUND: Petr Kaláb

FEATURING: Jan Triska (Rieger), Zuzana Stivínová (Irena), Vlasta Chramostová (Grandma), Ivan Řezáč (Klein), Marek Daniel (Viktor), Karel Beseda (Jack), Eva Hromníková (Vlasta), Dora Bouzková / Hana Vagnerová (Bea), Bořivoj Navrátil / Miloslav Maršálek (Hanuš), Ján Sedal (Knobloch), Zuzana Stavná (Zuzana), Petra Lustigová (Monika), Jan Skopeček, (Osvald), Philipp Schenker (Bob), Jan Březina (Albín), Eduard Čubr (Policeman), Jaroslav Synek (Policeman), Věra Vichová (Cleaner)

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PREMIERE: May 22, 2008

### From the press:

*"Leaving is not a utilitarian play: it does not serve this provincial requirement to everyone, it was not written in order to criticize anyone, to present an opinion about this or that living Czech or to advocate some correct idea. It's an existential play that deals with the human condition. It touches themes that are large, universal and eternal. It's not a comedy of manners or an absurdist play. No metaphors about life, but a metaphor for life."*

**Karel Steigerwald, MF DNES**

*"The production of Leaving is a paramount directorial work. Radok has found an ingenious structure and form for the statements which the author cleverly thinks up... A month before the end of the season one can say with confidence that the staging of Leaving is among its biggest events."*

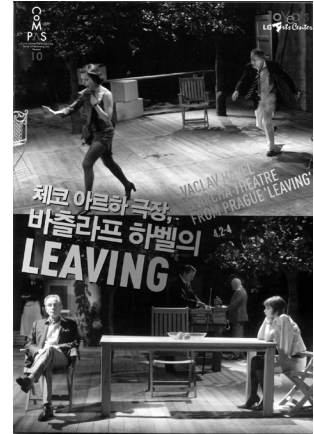
**Jana Machalická, Lidové noviny**

*"The overall impression of Radok's Leaving is practically perfect."*

**Kateřina Kolářová, MF DNES**

*"Leaving is a semiautobiographical "King Lear"-like meditation on the seductiveness of power."*

**Dan Bilefsky, The New York Times**





# VerteDance: Emigrantes

**A story about a little boy who had to abandon an intimately familiar place called HOME.**

*We are perhaps all running away from something. Where is HE running?  
Will he ever return HOME?  
...and where is it...?*

This story is half fairytale, half real. It tells of the fate of a young boy who together with others had to leave the familiar place called HOME. He was still quite small. His memories are splintered and slowly lose their sharp contours. But his feelings are surprisingly clear. His life has suddenly changed into a question, into the search for a safe haven, into a longing for acceptance without prejudice.

Emigrantes examines the phenomenon of refugees through the eyes of children. Choreographers Tereza Ondrová and Veronika Kotlíková were again inspired by how children see the world and the spontaneity of their movement. One of them is include Eda Manukjan, an Armenian boy, whose memories, dreams and wishes were one of the inspirations behind the performance. The live performance also features the music group DVA, whose style can be described as the "folklore of nonexistent nations".

VerTeDance has been active on the Czech contemporary dance scene since 2004. Their permanent members are dancers and choreographers Veronika Kotlíková, Tereza Ondrová and light designer and technical head of the Ponoc Theatre Pavel Kotlík. Markéta Faustová, who is among other things the editor of the magazine *Taneční zóna* (Dance Zone), works in production. Together they have created the following projects: *Průzor hrdlem* (2002), *Kruh II* (2004), *Tichomluva – Neočekávaný chod* (2005), *Beneath the Silence* (2005) in cooperation with the CobosMikaCompany, *The Brave* (2006), *Třiačtyřicet slunce západů* (2007), the site-specific café project *Tour du café au lait* (2008), *Jaja a Papus* (2008) *Dance of Canis Lupus* (2008) and *Případy doktora Toureta* (2009) directed by Anna Polívková. For *Tichomluva – Neočekávaný chod* VerTeDance received a prestigious Sazka Award for dance discovery of the year 2005.

Emigrantes was created during the group's two-year residence in the Archa.lab and is connected with the Archa Theatre's long-term dramaturgical focus on people in life crisis situations.

**CHOREOGRAPHY:** Veronika Kotlíková, Tereza Ondrová

**CO-DIRECTOR:** Štěpán Pácl

**INTERPRETED BY:** Andrea Opavská, Lucia Kašiarová, Petr Opavský, Ondřej Nosálek, Adam Chaloupka, Adam Pospíšil, Anna Kukátková, Jasmína Lustigová, Eda Manukjan

**MUSIC:** DVA

**SETS, COSTUMES:** Kristýna Täubelová

**LIGHT DESIGN:** Pavel Kotlík

**PRODUCTION:** Markéta Faustová

**FUNDRAISING:** Anna Dynková

**PHOTOS:** Srdjan Stanojevič

**SUPPORTED BY:** Prague City Council, Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the Foundation for the Lives of Artists, Archa Theatre

**CONTACT:** Markéta Faustová / mfaustova.vertedance@seznam.cz / t. +420 773 915 501

**PREMIERE:** January 7 and 8, 2010

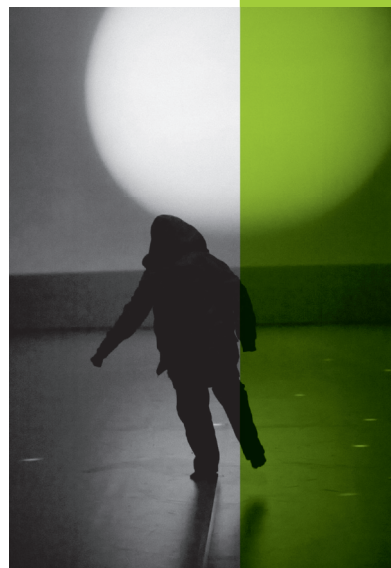
## **From the press:**

*"The atmosphere of the performance constantly straddles the border between nostalgia and the grotesque.... From this oscillation dramatic suspense arises, which the authors masterfully graduate up to the final catharsis."*

**Julie Kočí, Taneční zóna**

*"The performance is ruled by children; their spontaneity, temerity, illusions and playfulness creates a space for humour and dance... Through their own stories and the stories of their parents they transcend the shadows of their past and wake up in a happier morning... The journey takes us around the universe, the Moon and the planets."*

**Lucie Břínková, Taneční aktuality**



# EXIT 89

## – A Tragic Operetta

### Horror with a human face

A motorway service station somewhere between Berlin and Brno. A long August night: six people, six stories, all somehow connected to 1968.

*EXIT 89* premiered at the Archa Theatre on October 22, 2008. The musical production subtitled *Horror with a Human Face* was written specifically for the Archa Theatre by librettist Jaroslav Rudiš and German author Martin Becker, with music composed by Michal Nejtek. The production was directed by Jiří Havelka. *EXIT 89* was created as one of Archa's contributions to the Project 68/89 – Divadlo.Doba.Dějiny., part of the Zipp Czech-German cultural project, an initiative of the German cultural fund.

*EXIT 89*, which the authors have called a tragic operetta, takes place at a service station on the D1 motorway. In 1992 the politician Alexander Dubček suffered a tragic road accident. On the anniversary of the accident six people meet here. The protagonist is Karel, a government limousine driver and a great admirer of Dubček's. Karel has a bullet lodged in his head, and injury which he suffered during the demonstrations in front of the Czech Radio building in 1968. The bullet shifts around, causing hallucinations, blackouts and sudden recollections.

The co-author of the play is Jaroslav Rudiš: "EXIT 89 brings together six stories from 1968 to 2008. There are trucks, Czech-German love affairs, accidents, memory losses, the end of one and the birth of a new utopia in a memorial to Alexander Dubček."

Director Jiří Havelka: "For us it is mostly a play about memory, about how history is formed by human memory and that human memory creates human identity and indeed the identity of an entire nation. It's a kind of historical review in the colours of Ein Kessel Buntes."

The music composed by Michal Nejtek is played on stage by a live orchestra.

STORY: Martin Becker, Jaroslav Rudiš  
WRITTEN BY: Martin Becker, Jiří Havelka, Jaroslav Rudiš  
DIRECTOR: Jiří Havelka  
MUSIC: Michal Nejtek  
SETS: Dáda Němeček  
COSTUMES: Jana Smetanová  
FEATURING: Ján Sedal, Marie Ludvíková, Jiří Hána, Philipp Schenker, Jakub Žáček, Zuzana Stavná and Petr Reif  
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PREMIERE: October 22, 2008

**Performed in Czech and German**



# Allstar Refjúdži Company – Jesters, Spies and Presidents

**A politically incorrect cabaret**

Patriots against gooks and coons. A cabaret or a tragedy?

A political-satiric cabaret in which the ambitions, thoughts, longings and dreams of each of the characters alternate against the backdrop of contemporary political situations.

At a time when America is led by a black president, we asked ourselves at the beginning of the project: what would it be like if Abdulrahman wanted to be the Czech president? What would his election campaign be like? What would he promise and what would we expect from him? Would he be able to pull us out of the crisis?

In a crisis, those who offer simple solutions often come to the forefront. They manipulate us using our fear, which comes in many forms. The “others” are blamed for our problems. The Allstar Refjúdži Company has created a politically incorrect performance, which mixes cabaret music numbers with documentary reporting and with journeys into dreams.

The cabaret numbers feature original compositions, which were created under the leadership of the ASRB bandmaster Michael Romanyshyn. Each of the performers sings and plays several musical instruments. The music, unlike the group's successful project *Dance Through the Fence*, creates parallel planes for dance, song and dramatic action.

Who today sings Hussite hymns? Who are today's “God's warriors”? Who are the modern-day brigands and foot soldiers about whom we sing?

CONCEPT: Jana Svobodová, Hana Andronikova  
SCRIPT: Hana Andronikova  
DIRECTOR AND SET DESIGN: Jana Svobodová  
MUSIC: Michael Romanyshyn  
MUSIC AND SCENOGRAPHY COLLABORATION: Philipp Schenker  
CHOREOGRAPHY: Ivana Hessoová  
LIGHT DESIGN: Pavla Beranová  
LIGHTS: Michael Bláha  
COSTUMES AND PROPS: Štěpán Růžička  
PRODUCTION: Petra Čechová, Jindřich Krippner  
TECHNICIAN: Roland Berauer, Vladimír Hubička  
GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY: Jakub Hrab  
FEATURING: Petra Lustigová, Miran Kasem, Jíng Lu, Eva Hromníková, Philipp Schenker, Ivana Hessoová  
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PREMIERE: March 25, 2010

## From the press

*Jesters, Spies and Presidents transcends the conventional border of political theatre to engage in a fierce debate about current topics...*

**Eva Kyselová, Divadelní noviny**

*The audience can get to know, at least partly, not only the reasons why they decided to leave their country and to come here, but can also experience their own, subconscious xenophobic impulses and examine their feelings if one day a Kurd or a Chinese person were to occupy the Prague Castle. It's fun. Especially when you see how for many this idea is unwelcome or strange.*

**Roman Sikora, Referendum**

*The likeable purpose of the authors was to give freedom to disparate acting temperaments and talents, which created a chemical „supra-theatrical“ fusion, which at times crackles and sizzles in fascinating ways. Go see it for yourself.*

**Jiří Peňás, Lidové noviny**





# Allstar Refjúdží Band

## Ethno Punk

A multicultural union of artists and musicians from China, Kurdistan, Armenia, Slovakia, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and the USA.

The band energetically mixes brass, ska, rap, klezmer, Dixieland, Chinese opera, and Armenian and Kurdish melodies in one pot.

### ABOUT THE ASRB

The Allstar Refjúdží Band emerged as part of the Archa Theatre's *Dance Through the Fence*, in which refugees and foreigners living in the Czech Republic perform together with professional artists. The director, Jana Svobodová, invited American musician Michael Romanyshyn to assemble a band for the show and compose music that would reflect a variety of musical cultures. *Dance Through the Fence* premiered in March 2008 at the Archa Theatre. Soon after the premiere, the Allstar Refjúdží Band received numerous invitations to perform on its own. Today this multicultural band has many of successful concerts at music festivals under its belt and its repertoire has expanded. In 2009 the band released their first album *SPAS!*.

### HOW THE ASRB WORKS

Michael Romanyshyn created a completely unique method for the Allstar Refjúdží Band. Musical motifs from Kurdish, Armenian and Chinese songs form the basis of new compositions. The songs are created out of collective improvisation. The music isn't written down; it is born out of listening together. The compositions are combined with original lyrics and older lyrics are given new arrangements. The band's hit is a cover version of the Czech national anthem sung in Chinese, Kurdish and Swiss versions. The question "Where is my home?" thus receives new meanings.

### WORKSHOPS

The Allstar Refjúdží Band has organized a series of music workshops called "No voice! – No problem!" Lead by Michael Romanyshyn, Gugar Manukjan, Abdulrahman Kasem and Jing Lu. The workshop participants create rhythmic and melodic structures which are then used in public performances with the All Star Refjúdží Band.

### MEMBERS

Gugar Manukjan (accordion), Abdulrahman Kasem (oud, vocals), Jan Středa (trumpet), Adam Koller / David Bartošek (percussion), Michael Romanyshyn (clarinet), Jindřich Krippner (clarinet, saxophone), Eva Hromníková (accordion), Petra Lustigová (trombone), Krtek (tuba), Jana Svobodová (saxophone), Philipp Schenker (clarinet, vocals), Jing Lu (violin, vocals).

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# Dance Through the Fence

**Everyone has a different story**

*Dance Through the Fence* directed by Jana Svobodová was created as part of a long-term project by the Archa Theatre called *Dialogues on the Run* and is built on collaboration between professional artists and asylum seekers. The result was a theatrical mosaic which tells the authentic stories of refugees from Chechnya, Burma, Georgia and Kurdistan. Their life stories are confronted with everyday reality in their new country. Each of the stories is told by means of a close dialogue between the immigrant and a performer (actor or dancer). The actor becomes a messenger or instrument, while the foreigner stages his or her own story. The result is a very intimate testimony of people with stories of moving, which each actor or dancer tells in an original way.

A dynamic part of *Dance Through the Fence* is the music. Director Jana Svobodová invited American musician Michael Romanyshyn to assemble a band and compose music that reflects a diversity of musical cultures. The multicultural band made up of performers and musicians energetically mixes brass band, ska, rap, klezmer, Dixieland, Chinese opera, and Armenian and Kurdish melodies.

CONCEPT AND DIRECTION: Jana Svobodová

WRITTEN BY: Hana Andronikova

MUSIC: Michael Romanyshyn and the Allstar Refjúdží Band

FEATURING: Eva Hromníková, Daniel Raček, Petra Lustigová, Philipp Schenker, Jing Lu, Jana Svobodová, Gugar Manukjan, Abdulrahman Kasem

WITH: Jan Budař, Jan Kraus, Václav Moravec, Jiří František Potužník

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PREMIERE: March 11, 2008

## **From the press:**

*"The performance takes place throughout the entire space of the Archa Theatre. The audience follows a trail from one stage to the next, each with a different story. A major part of the show is the 'klezmer' orchestra led by the USA's Michael Romanyshyn. Jing Lu from China as a bizarre singer of shrill Chinese 'tango' is irresistible."*

**Nina Vangeli, Hospodářské noviny**

*"With this project, the Archa Theatre crosses the border of pure artistic theatre in the direction of social and documentary drama. It is a valuable and important theatrical journey."*

**Vladimír Hulec, Reflex/exonline**



# Šance 1989 – WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

**Documentary theatre on the theme of: Freedom! Freedom?**

*Window of opportunity* is a term used by NASA to describe the complex constellation of conditions during which a rocket can be launched into space. In everyday speech, it means a chance which ought to be used, because it may only occur again after a long time. Did we take advantage of our window of opportunity in 1989?

The thematic evening involves a form of documentary theatre that combines a theatrical form with an expert debate. The framework of the evening will be a fictitious live broadcast on RADIO 89 FM. The "broadcast" also incorporates the dramatic comics Kurt and Květa. This stylized performance deals with basic human questions: freedom, betrayal, the feeling of guilt and of being abandoned.

The story of the comics is made up of three parts which take place in 1975, 1989 and 2009. Each part is followed by a debate among the participating students and experts. The discussions will feature questions on the theme of real freedom, simulated freedom, escaping from the past, the connection between the private and political worlds, and the borders between what was "required" under totalitarianism and what was conscious collaboration. Beside experts, also participating in the project will be university students, who were born in 1989.

After the Prague premiere *Window of Opportunity* was presented at the International Theatre Festival in Nitra, Slovakia and on November 10, 2009 in New York. A shortened version of the project was successfully presented as part of the Czech-Slovak-German project *Svoboda! Svoboda? Sloboda! Sloboda? Freiheit! Freiheit?* in Hamburg, Berlin, Brno and Žilina. In April 2010, *Window of Opportunity* was also performed for the first time in English.

The project was created in cooperation with the Institute for Contemporary History in Prague, the Institute for Contemporary History in Potsdam, Germany, the Václav Havel Library and Czech Centres. This project was produced with the financial support of the European Union and Zipp a program of the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

**AUTHORS OF THE PROJECT:** Tomas Vrba, Ondrej Hrab, Jana Svobodova

**SCRIPT:** Jana Svobodova and Anna Gruskova

**TEXT OF THE KURT AND KVĚTA RADIO COMICS:** Anna Gruskova

**STAGING AND DIRECTOR:** Jana Svobodova

**DRAMATURGY:** Ondrej Hrab, Tomas Vrba

**ASSISTANT DRAMATURGY:** Marie Vojakova

**FEATURING:** Howie Lotker/Jaroslav Rudiš, Eva Hromníková, Philipp Schenker and students

**DEBATER ON –LINE:** Václav Havel, Jacques Rupnik

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**PREMIERE:** September 16, 2009



## **Upcoming Performance:**

### **Gargantua**

(working title)

a musical theatre with the Tiger Lillies

**MUSIC:** Martyn Jacques and the Tiger Lillies

**SCRIPT:** Jocelyn Clarke

**DIRECTED BY:** Jiří Havelka

**STAGE:** Vladimír Němeček

**PERFORMED BY:** Tiger Lillies and company

**PREMIERE:** September 2010

