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Vaclav Havel Library Foundation
Contact:
Jacquelyn de Villiers
917 371 5962
jacidevilliers@vhlf.org

Rehearsal for Truth

Theater Festival Honoring Vaclav Havel Presents:
CEZARY GOES TO WAR/ CEZARY IDZIE NA WOJNE

From Komuna Warszawa, Warsaw, Poland

Saturday, September 29, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Bohemian National Hall

312 E73rd Street, New York, NY 10021

“What matters is not whether a play is light-hearted or serious, but—be it comedic or otherwise—whether it speaks to people about their problems, how it speaks to them, what impact it has on them. . . We wish only to put on plays that meet certain standards of urgency, that are intellectually penetrating, complex, challenging, and powerful.”

--Vaclav Havel, “The Kind of Theater We Want to Do,” from a letter to Alfred Radok, August 4, 1963

The Vaclav Havel Library Foundation (VHLF), together with the Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association (BBLA), will partner with Czech, Hungarian, Polish, and Slovak performing arts and cultural institutions to host the second year of a unique festival presenting the best in contemporary Central European theater.

The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia have worked together consistently in the performing arts for almost thirty years. The result of their collaboration has been an outpouring of outstanding dramatic works that pose important questions about immigration, European identity, reconciliation with

fascist and communist pasts, and a host of other essential issues. The region's unusual creative energy deserves to be promoted and acknowledged internationally, especially as it has resulted in—to borrow Havel's words—theatrical productions that are at once urgent, intellectually penetrating, complex, challenging, and powerful.

The 2018 **REHEARSAL FOR TRUTH** festival will present four performances in the original languages with English supertitles, followed by talk-backs with the artists and after parties hosted by the countries cultural institutes and consulates general in NYC. There will also be two staged readings, one panel discussion and a Gala event in honor of **The Honorable Madeleine Albright**. These events will take place at The Bohemian National Hall (321 East 73rd Street). All **REHEARSAL FOR TRUTH** productions are **free to the public except the Gala Event**. The festival is supported by The Bohemian Benevolent & Literary Association, NYC Cultural Affairs and New York City Council Member Ben Kallos.

CEZARY GOES TO WAR/ CEZARY IDZIE NA WOJNE

Saturday, September 29, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Presented by: Komuna Warszawa, Warsaw, Poland

Conceived and directed by: Cezary Tomaszewski,

Playwright: Justyna Wąsik

Music by: Claude Debussy, Georg Friedrich Handel, Stanislaw Moniuszko, Dimitri Szostakowicz

Cast: Michael Dembinski, Oskar Malinowski, Szymon Dobosik, Lukasz Stawarczyk, Weronkina Krowka (pianist)

Supported by Theatre Institute in Warsaw, Culture.pl and Polish Cultural Institute New York

The play deconstructs military ethos and pride to make the audience aware of their toxic dimensions and oppressiveness. The play draws on the author's personal experience of having to appear before an army conscription committee. This memory serves as the vehicle for a funny, witty, and spot-on critique of nationalistic war discourses, which resonates with particular force in modern-day Poland. Using elements of Moniuszko's and Szostakiewicz's musical compositions and Nijinsky's ballet *Afternoon of a Faun*, the director engages the audience in a series of subversive identity games that not only undermine gender norms but also turn the military ethos on its head.

Komuna Warszawa explores key issues of the contemporary world, ceaselessly seeking new forms and means of expression. Since 2007 Komuna has been an important venue for theatre performances, as well as performance art pieces, lectures, film and video-art screenings, concerts and discussions. Komuna Warszawa has taken part in some of the most prestigious festivals in Poland and the world, performing at such venues as La MaMa in New York City, HAU in Berlin or 104Centquatre in Paris.

"...combining elements of cabaret-style performance with the buffo opera, produces an original style of social choreography, in which the director creatively uses the historical heritage of the avant-garde." **Krystyna Duniecdwutygodnik.com**

"Tomaszewski combines archaic forms with avant-garde courage, contemporary choreography with a dusted farce, Moniuszko with an absurd sense of humor. He's making theatre which is approachable for everyone, though based on forms perceived as sophisticated; a theatre either ironic or affectionate." **Witold Mrozek Gazeta Wyborcza online**

“The oppressive and suppressing power of the nineteenth-century knightly virtues, cultivated by the education system and polish rhetoric, the identification of masculinity with warfare and patriotism with struggle and death in defense of the homeland is contrasted with contemporary masculinity: non-heteronormative, metrosexual, pacifist, auto ironic, categorized as E, not A.” An hour and a half of great, hard actors' work, which results in a light but important performance.
Aneta Kyzioł Polityka no. 39 2017-09-26

Book free tickets on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rehearsal-for-truth-cezary-goes-to-war-cezary-idzie-na-wojne-free-tickets-47700067185>

Link to Photographs

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mmcgxd07pkl6qb4/AAArgV1CponLh1FfWRCLhM5za?dl=0>

Cezary Tomaszewski –Director

Nominated for prestigious Paszporty Polityki Prize 2018 in the category - theatre, Polish director and choreographer. He directed Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow*, in which he cast four Polish cleaners in Brut Wien Theater. The production was among the critics' picks in the magazines *Theater Heute* and *Falter* (Best Young Director and the Best Off Production in 2009 in Vienna). He directed musical productions by Capella Cracoviensis, period instruments orchestra and choir: the stage production of Monteverdi's madrigals *Baroque feast* in a milk bar in Kraków, the piece *The Nature Lovers*, composed of Mendelssohn's songs in Wolski Forest, Mozart's *Requiem* as *Sacred Karaoke*, staging of Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem / Liebeslieder Walzer* in *Songs of love and death* and operas: Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Handel's *Amadigi di Gaula* and Moniuszko's *Halka*. In Polish dramatical theatres he directed Wyspiański's *Wedding Based on Wedding*, (Jan Kochanowski Theatre in Opole), awarded at the festival of Polish Classics with special mention for “uncompromising anti-theatre and an act of theatrical disobedience” as well as for costumes and set design; Tuwim's *Soldier of the Queen of Madagascar* (Wojciech Bogusławski Theatre in Kalisz), that won the awards at the Kalisz Theatre Showcase. His

version of Sawin's boulevard play *Who will visit us* is widely popular with the theatre-goers as well as a jubilee play *Double Solo* by Jan Peszek. This year Tomaszewski directed *Had It Not Been For Smoking, Pina Would Have Been Alive* at Jerzy Szaniawski Drama Theatre in Wałbrzych and *Cezary Goes to War* at Komuna Warszawa. Two of his early projects, *Last Temptation of Saint Bernardette* and *Dance Tetralogy*, were presented at theatres in Austria and Switzerland.

As a choreographer he worked with Maria Peszek on her music video *Rosol*, nominated for Fryderyk Award. As a performer, actor and dancer he worked with Toxic Dreams, Joachim Robbrecht, Andrea Bold, Willi Dorner, Anna Tenta, cie, sans filtre, Catherine Guerin.

About Vaclav Havel Library Foundation

The Vaclav Havel Library Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in the United States to honor, preserve, and build upon the legacy of playwright, dissident, and former President of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic, Vaclav Havel.

The Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association (BBLA)

The mission of the Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association (BBLA), established in 1891, is to preserve the Czech and Slovak culture in New York City as well as to build a cultural and social dialogue between the Czech and Slovak communities and the American public.

Vaclav Havel (1936-2011) was a playwright, essayist, political dissident, and, after 1990, president of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic. In the 1960s Havel's plays *The Garden Party* and *The Memorandum* were widely performed around the world. But in the climate of political orthodoxy that followed the 1968 uprising in Czechoslovakia, Communist authorities forbade the publication and

performance of Havel's works. Havel refused to be silenced and continued to write on behalf of the unjustly oppressed. He became an outspoken human rights advocate and in the 1970s was an author of Charter 77, the manifesto of the Czechoslovak dissident movement, which called on the government to honor its human rights commitments under the Helsinki Accords. During the next two decades Havel was arrested many times for alleged anti-state activities and was sentenced to more than four years in prison. Havel's seminal essay, "The Power of the Powerless," written in 1978, had a profound impact on dissident and human rights movements in Eastern Europe and around the world.

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