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Vaclav Havel Library Foundation
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Rehearsal for Truth
Theater Festival Honoring Vaclav Havel Presents:
PROTEST/DEBT
From Svanda Theater, Prague, Czech Republic
Wednesday September 26, 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.

PROTEST / DEBT

Wednesday, September 26, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Presented by: Svanda Theater, Prague, Czech Republic

Playwrights: Vaclav Havel and Marek Hejduk

PROTEST translated by Jan Novak DEBT: translated by Alex Zucker

Director: Daniel Hrbek

Cast: Robert Jaskow, Tomas Pavelka, Jacob Erfteimeijer, Tomas Korenek

Supported by City of Prague, Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, Consulate General of the Czech Republic in New York, Czech Center New York and the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN.

Thirty-three years separate two one-act plays that are connected by absurd humor and the characters of Vanek and Stanek. What happens when two writers

meet—one who is not allowed to write and the other who writes whatever he wants? What if the first one has a surprising proposal for the second one? And what if the two of them meet years later when they can write freely but it is not working? Vaclav Havel's dialogue confronts the dramatic attempts of a debuting author. To sign or not to sign? To act or just to talk? Did the elites fail or did we? Protest? Debt!

Svanda Theatre is one of the oldest drama theatres in Prague. It's focused on contemporary plays and also on the bold adaptation of classics. Besides its own repertoire Svanda Theatre also offers a wide range of supporting events such as concerts, talk shows, independent theatre group productions, stage readings and also the best of Czech regional theatre work. It was also awarded the prestigious Alfred Radok award for its dramaturgy.

“Anyone who loves intellectual theater based on dialogue that undergoes continuous absurd twists over and over, as if in a spiral, anyone who gives precedence to civil expression over theatricality, who considers it preferable to think about a performance rather than simply be entertained for a moment, should visit Švandovo divadlo for a performance of Protest/Rest. These two pieces by authors Václav Havel and Marek Hejduk, presented in the chamber environment of the Studio under the sensitive direction of Daniel Hrbek, represent intelligently entertaining theater in its purest form.”

ČT24 – 27 April 2015 - **Marie Třešňáková**

Book free tickets on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rehearsal-for-truth-protest-rest-free-tickets-47699743216>

Link to Publicity Photographs:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/csgw0gx1egg358k/AACVUwxIGEBIbk6QULJD_oVa?dl=0

Photo credit: Alena Hrbková

Daniel Hrbek - Director

Director and manager of Svandovo Theatre, pedagogue of acting and direction at DAMU Academy in Prague. From 1989–1994, actor in Severomoravske Theatre, Sumperk, Moravske Theatre Olomouc, Theatre Na Zabradli Prague, and Celetna Theatre Prague. In 1994, he established the highly regarded theatre company CD 94, which he ran as an Artistic Director for 8 years. Productions of CD 94 were shown not only in the Czech Republic but also in Spain, France, Germany, Denmark, and other European countries. In 1999, Daniel Hrbek became the Artistic Director of Svandovo Theatre, one of the oldest Prague theatres (established in 1881). His directing credits include classical plays such as Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, Moliere's *School for Wives*, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Ostrovskii's *The Forest*, Machiaveli's *The Mandrake*, and contemporary plays such as *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* by Martin McDonagh, Nikoline Werdelin's *Experts*, Line Knutzon's *The Builders*, and his own adaptation of movie scripts: *The Boss of it All* by Lars von Trier and *The Art of Negative Thinking* by Bard Breien (together with Martina Kinska and Lucie Kolouchova). Besides his directing work he also writes stage adaptations and his own plays (*Krakatit*, *In the Web*, *Three Musketeers*, *Born on October 28th*, *The Feast's End*, *The Good and The True*). *The Good And The True* had a successful 8 week run in NYC in 2014 (DR2 Theatre Off Broadway).

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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