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## Editorial

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# Editorial

In June 2011, the Department of Theatre Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, hosted the first introductory edition of an international symposium “Prague Semiotic Stage Revisited” as a part of the Research Grant “Czech Structuralist Thought on Theatre: context and potency”.<sup>1</sup> Presenting and discussing their take on the Prague School and its legacy, the diverse group of international experts sparked a conversation whose written traces were collected in the special issue of *Theatralia* (2012/2). Two years later, the research team organized a second symposium, “Prague Semiotic Stage Revisited II”. It took place in Brno between May 20–22, 2013. This encounter brought some of the party from the first symposium together with new participants to ponder elementary questions: what do we know about the Prague School and its affiliates and how can we use their ideas in today’s thought on arts? As before, the programme of the symposium is enclosed in this issue.

This collection opens with a special introduction by Christian Billing. It offers a reflection upon most of the papers presented during the three-day symposium. As in the previous issue, the authors were asked to keep the spoken quality of their presentations where they considered it useful; thus, the reader is welcome to experience the creative co-working atmosphere of the Brno meeting. In the true spirit of collaboration, a discussion of equal length to the presentation given followed each presentation. The subsequent feedback the authors received on their presentations means that most authors have reworked their papers based on the feedback. This allowed for a stronger interconnectedness of individual papers in the context of the contemporary perspective of new findings about the Prague School, as well as the developments in its reception over the past decades and at present. For this reason, this issue brings a collection of fully mature papers, which underwent their baptism of academic fire in Brno. On the macro level, the editors of the issue have also decided to change the order of the presentations, because the final papers showed this step would enable a more logical arrangement.

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For the purpose of this issue, the order of the papers is determined by a division into the following four categories: (i) The Prague School in the Contemporary Context (Yana Meerzon, Eva Šlaisová, Andrés Pérez-Simón), (ii) The Prague School in a Semiotic Perspective (Freddie Rokem, Martin Pšenička), (iii) Personalities and Methodologies of the Prague School (Pavel Drábek, Herta Schmid, Šárka Havlíčková Kysová and Barbora Příhodová, Ondřej Sládek, Martina Musilová), and (iv) International Reception of the Prague School (Veronika Ambros, Elizabeth Sakellaridou).

Since there is no theory without practice, the symposium hosted an honorary guest speaker, the internationally known scenographer Jaroslav Malina to present his work in the context of Prague School thought. Even though the crucial principle of his designs is their functionality, their position in the structure of the performance and especially their relation to the performer, they are equally beautiful artifacts in themselves. They show that Malina is also a painter and his painting indeed pervades his stage work. These connections, together with the inspiring interdependence between artistic practice and its theoretical frameworks, so present in the tradition of the Prague School, inform the section Spectrum of this journal that presents a brief reflection upon Malina's work and reproduces a selection of Malina's paintings and stage designs.

The section Archive offers an insight into the period reception of the Prague School in the German-language Prague newspaper the *Prager Presse*. The issue also brings a traditional section titled Orientation. There are six reviews discussing books published in Czech, English and Croatian. In the section Events, there are two reports, one from a conference in Kraków and the other from a scenographic exhibition in Prague.

We believe that the symposium "Prague Semiotic Stage Revisited" will be held for a third time. While the first symposium was partly organised to invite scholars adhering to the legacy of the Prague School (*Theatralia* 2012/2) and the second meeting allowed for development of further research of the Prague School, the third meeting should aim at a continued endeavour into studying the Prague School and a search for the answer to the question of how fruitful the Prague School heritage is for the future of thought on theatre. A workshop on a re-edition of translations of the Prague School writings on theatre was the closing event of the last symposium, which showed that there are still a number of texts on theatre by Prague School Structuralists to be translated into English and thus introduced to the international community. In addition, as the case studies presented at the workshop showed, some of the existing translations have opted for rather misleading uses of terminology or suffer from inconsistencies. With an anthology of newly translated papers and re-edited versions of the Prague School writings on theatre, which the investigating team of the grant project "Czech Structuralist Thought on Theatre: context and potency" are preparing for publication in 2016, the "Prague Semiotic Stage Revisited" will get a new impetus for yet another fruitful meeting, such as the one whose results are presented in this journal issue.

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