

# **International Summer School of Documentary Theatre Archa Theatre**

**25 August – 7 September 2023  
Archa Theatre, Prague, Czech Republic**





**Archa Theatre's International Summer School is a platform for experimentation and investigation in the field of documentary theatre. The summer school offers artists coming from all around the world a two-week period of free experimentation using the tools of documentary theatre. Language of the school is English.**

## We offer

- Creative international environment
- Archa Theatre premises for your work
- Technical equipment for creation
- Artistic direction & experience of internationally acclaimed artists
- Professional mentoring

## Who is the school intended for

- Everyone older than 18, professionally involved in theatre who use theatrical methods in their professional work
- Everyone who sees theatre as a combination of artistic and technical disciplines
- Everyone who is open to try new things
- Everyone who is interested in learning from each other
- Everyone who is interested in creation based on the reality of everyday life



## The principles of the education

- Instruction based on the principle of shared experience
- Respect for each participant as an independent creative personality

## Main ateliers

- **Jana Svobodová:** Textual sources and the Viewpoints technique in documentary theatre
- **Pavel Kotlík:** Light as a space for action
- **Ladislav Štěrba & Jan Sedláček:** Sound design for stage
- **Martin Krupa:** Moving image for stage

## Complementary atelier

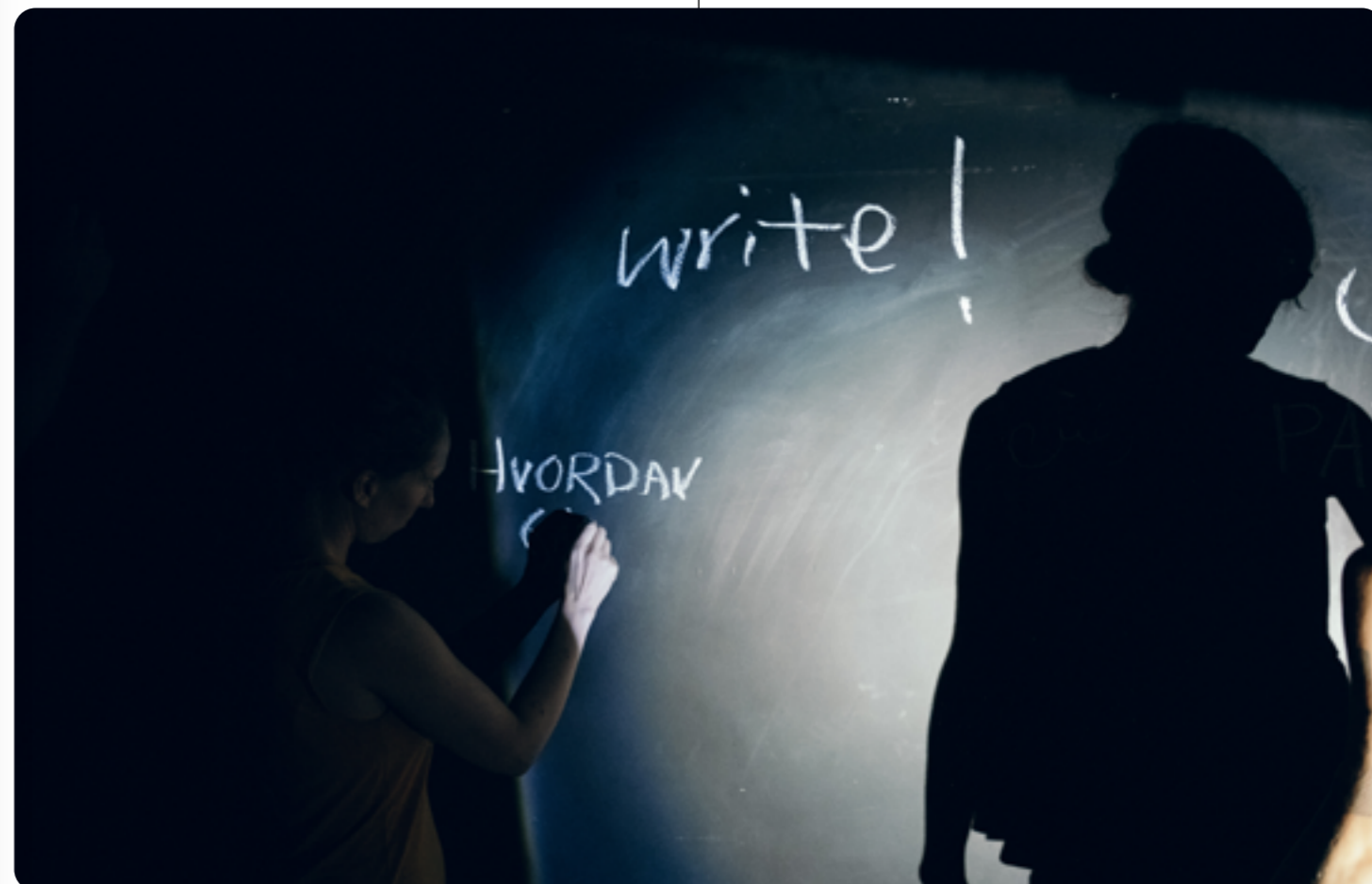
- **Lise Grimelund-Kjelsen:** Finding your textual material

## Roundtable

- **Merve Mutafoğlu:** Socially engaged theatre in Turkey

## Exclusive presentations by Ondřej Hrab

- Theatre and sociology
- Historical roots of social-specific theatre







## Screenings of unique theatre productions

Recordings of internationally acclaimed examples of documentary theatre will be shown, followed by a discussion led by Jana Svobodová and Ondřej Hrab.

## Structure and Timetable of the Summer School

Daily 9:30–18:00 with one day off & one day of outdoor excursion.

The first part of the school is devoted to work in ateliers. Each of the atelier has a special focus: Moving image, sound design, Viewpoints & the text and light design. Participants of the summer school will be divided into individual ateliers before arriving at the Archa Theatre.

The second part of the school is dedicated to independent creation.

The graduates of the ateliers will form creative groups in which they will continue to create with the equipment and in the premises of the Archa Theatre. The summer school will end with a unique premiere in which participants will present the short performances they create in this process to a general audience. During this process, the Archa Theatre will turn into a playground where the artists can freely create. Participants will have the unique opportunity to approach Archa in a non-traditional way using its advanced theatrical tools.

The atelier leaders will be available for artistic consultation in this process, providing a supportive net for free experimentation. Besides this main program, all participants will be able to attend the exclusive presentations, the complementary atelier, the roundtable, and the screenings.

## How to apply?

Please submit a motivation letter and a CV with a photo to the e-mail address stated below. You can also include visual materials showing your work to date.

Applications should be submitted to:  
[summerschool@archatheatre.cz](mailto:summerschool@archatheatre.cz)

**Tuition fee:** 700€

The fee includes daily practical exercises, ateliers, presentations, study materials, lunch, refreshments, and tickets to the accompanying program at the Archa Theatre.

In exceptional cases, participants can request a discount on the tuition.

**Note:**

There is a limited capacity for participation.





## Here are some feedbacks from our participants

*"To be able to talk about art, societal change, democracy, and our role in a global world on such a level, together with people from more than 10 different countries, from democracies, non-democracies, peaceful countries, torn countries, war zones and other over these past two weeks has touched me. It has given rise to processes and changes, which I know will make a big difference in my work onwards. Thank you everyone for creating this environment and being so special!"*

Lotta Karlsson, Sweden/Norway

*"Archa Theatre Summer School was an incredible experience for me as a theatre maker. I felt energised and valued during my time there and have come away with new contacts and ideas which I am so grateful for. Archa is a lighthouse in the dark for theatre makers, and I am so energised to use what I have learned about theatre and about myself. An absolute pleasure to meet you all."*

Amanda Doherty, Northern Ireland

*"At Archa I have met wonderful people who have given me a lot, on many different levels. I felt seen and listened to, and it gave me confidence in my own abilities. I have met people who have given me new perspectives about the world and who have inspired me, and with whom I share artistic affinities and plan to collaborate."*

Lara Well, Luxembourg

*"The whole experience influenced the way I think about the creative process. Not just that I had met impressive talents and real craftsmanship, often deeply dedicated to the job, but most importantly I had the opportunity to spend two beautiful weeks with a group full of beautiful characters. This, most importantly, had an impact on shifting the perspective within I am looking at things now. That I still have a lot to learn, how to work in group, how to express my feelings, simply how to get things done, differently."*

Ngo Xuan Thang, Czech Republic

*"It was really interesting to work with people with different knowledge and from different backgrounds [also political realities]. Also, to experiment in areas that were completely unknown to me, such as moving image. It gave me a wider perspective. It made me think why I do the work I do, why I write. I would like to talk about real stories and work with non-actors. It encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone."*

Rosa Molina, Norway

*"What I really liked about the summer school is the diversity of the materials we studied. I also really enjoyed being in contact with other artists during the talks. The amount we learned on very specific fields was very big and efficient."*

Elisabeth Woronoff, Belgium

*"The ateliers, the lectures and especially the people have brought me so much inspiration and spirit, that I'm now more confident and optimistic as before about my work. The way that Archa created a safe space for us to experiment and to take risks is something that I will always remember and treasure. The conversations that I had with all the people of different parts of the world is something that is so enriching and eye-opening, I didn't expect it would have such a big impact on me personally. Thank you so much for this wonderful experience!"*

Rosa Berman, Netherlands

*"In the summer school, I improved my argumentative, listening and teamwork skills while attending ateliers and creating a performance. I learned more about myself as an individual and as an artist. Also learning the technical stuff from the beginning helps me now see the bigger picture of the whole creative process and to find more ways to express myself in the environment I am in."*

Linda Šterna, Latvia

*"Coming here taught me an entirely different approach to devised theatre. It's a calm environment, with no pressure, and allows freedom of creativity."*

Millie Done, UK

*"Those magical two weeks in Prague was such a life-changer; I got to do what I love the most in a fully-equipped, professional theatre, devise a beautiful performance with some of the loveliest people and had the chance to learn from and befriend some of the most inspirational people I have ever encountered. It taught me that theatre has the power to change the world in small but powerful moments, and a step at a time, in time; it reaffirmed my belief in social-specific theatre and all its wonders. It gave me back my purpose and drive, which I will forever be thankful for!"*

Rebecca Goh, Singapore/UK

*"It was very intense, creative, and important two weeks! Full of reflection, discussions about theatre, disputes, cooperation, realising what suits me, and what is too far from me. Thank you all!"*

Karolina Pluta, Poland

*"I learned, I enjoyed myself, and I met awesome artists. What else can you ask for?"*

Cristina Cordero, Spain

*"The summer school at Archa conveys a lot of interesting information that led me to break down my mental barriers about what theatre is and what it could be. I now look at theatre in a completely different way. Working in such a diverse international group is a liberating challenge. Archa has shown me a kind of theatre that has the power to be socially and politically involved, and which should constantly cross its boundaries to achieve the desired liveliness. I started to perceive theatre as a driving force leading to human contact and change. A kind of theatre that inspires spectators to step out of their passivity and act."*

Magdalena Malinova, Czech Republic





# Main Ateliers

## Textual sources and the Viewpoints technique in documentary theatre / Jana Svobodová

This atelier will focus on fundamental reasons for stage action. This topic will be examined from two perspectives:

1. Perspective of physical presence on stage based on the Viewpoints technique
2. Perspective of deriving and using a text for an action

Through spatial improvisation and interviews, students will cultivate the ability of “extreme listening”. This work will steer students to see their presence on stage from the position of the performer, the author, the dramaturge, and the viewer.

## Light as a space for action / Pavel Kotlík

This atelier focusing on the specific use of light in theatre will complement the atelier “Textual sources and the Viewpoints technique in documentary theatre”. Pavel Kotlík introduces the principles of light design in the context of working with space, text, movement, and object. Each student will have the opportunity to get acquainted with the technical principles of light design, after which they will create their own lighting plan.

## Sound design for stage / Ladislav Štěrba & Jan Sedláček

The atelier is designed for both beginners and advanced learners who want to find a way to express their artistic statement on stage with the help of sound design. In this atelier we will cover various technical tools for recording and creating sound, innovative applications, and techniques. At the end of the atelier all students will be able to set up a mixing desk with microphones and PA system, record any sound to computer and manipulate the recorded or live sound for theatrical use. Some level of music and physics knowledge can be helpful, but it is not required.

## Moving image for stage / Martin Krupa

This atelier will focus on experimental methods of using moving image in live performance. We will proceed from recording to processing and presentation of video on stage. We will study

multiscreen projection, the materiality of analogue film, dia projection combined with the digital one; and try to find new ways to use these methods while working with space and movement. The atelier will start with “found footage material” to discover working with analogue media. We will enjoy our visual playground by working with vintage projection methods, besides more advanced video art techniques. Then we will proceed to experimenting with the interactivity between light and video. The aim of this atelier is to broaden students’ multimedia knowledge focusing on what they consider useful for their creative work.

## Complementary Atelier

### Finding your textual material / Lise Andrea Grimelund-Kjelsen

In this complementary atelier we will exercise expanding the idea of creating text for experimental theatre. We will use the space, each other, our own movements, and objects in combination with improvised text. By using the surroundings to get inspired, to seek for impulses to create your text, you will be able to devise material for later use. This is a physical atelier, so the participants must be prepared to move.

## Roundtable

### Socially engaged theatre in Turkey / Merve Mutafoğlu

In this roundtable, Merve Mutafoğlu will briefly talk about how Turkish theatre has been shaped in the historical and political context. She will discuss the traditional and modern influences on socially engaged theatre, presenting major examples from Turkish theatre scene. This short presentation is aimed to serve as a kick starter for an enriching and lively conversation about where social-specific theatre stands in the countries where the participants come from. The presentation is co-created with Çiğdem Erdöl, M.A. student in Theatre Criticism and Dramaturgy in Istanbul University.

# Instructors of the Ateliers



### Jana Svobodová

is a theatre director and lecturer, the artistic director of the Akcent – International Festival of Documentary Theatre, and the founder of the International Summer School of Documentary Theatre. In her work, she focuses on productions that interconnect professional artists and

representatives of specific social groups. Among others, she has collaborated with residents of South African townships, the hip hop community, recent immigrants to the Czech Republic, the Roma community, various communities in the USA, and others. Her productions have been presented at festivals in the Czech Republic and internationally. In 2019, the performance Ordinary People she codirected with Wen Hui was presented at the main program of Festival D’Avignon and Festival D’Automne in Paris. Besides her other collaborations, she recently worked with the NEST Theatre in Naples and created the performance Perché non lo?.



### Pavel Kotlík

is a light designer and light technician. He worked at Theatre Řeznická, Prague Chamber Ballet or Ponoc Theatre, and cooperated on projects of Min Tanaka, Jaro Viňarský, Farma v jeskyni, Teatr Novogo Fronta. Since 2011 he has collaborated with Archa

Theatre on several projects directed by VerTeDance and by Jana Svobodová. In 2012 he won the Award for Light Design for VerTeDance performance *Lost and Found*. He has been dedicated to lighting since his youth, he passed smoothly from school to theatre, first as a theatre technician, therefore he refers to himself as a theatre maker rather than a light designer. In the professional community, he is known as a tireless creator of visual compositions on stage – only few can paint surfaces and accentuate details as he does.



### Jan Sedláček

is a sound designer, audio engineer and musician. After completing BA (Hons) Music Technology at the University of Bedfordshire, and MA in Audio Production at the University of Westminster in London in 2014, Jan has returned to Prague to pursue his

career in audio engineering and sound design. Since then, Jan has been collaborating with numerous respectable Czech cultural institutions, including Archa Theatre, Czech National Theatre, Barrandov Film Studios, Forum Karlin, Jatka78, besides many independent theatres, as well as dance, audio-visual arts, and music groups. Since 2018, Jan is a co-owner of Studio Mr. Wombat, a recording studio located at the heart of Prague.



### Ladislav Štěrba

has started working in sound engineering in 2015 when he became part of the Café Potrvá sound crew. Since then, he has cooperated with many theatres and concert halls while taking care of live sound production for concerts and performances. At Villa Štvanice,

Prague’s significant cultural scene, Ladislav has worked as the head sound engineer and technical producer for two years. He has been cooperating with Archa Theater as a sound engineer responsible for foreign concerts and theatre performances since 2018. His music festival experience includes, for example, several years of sound engineering of the Mighty Sounds Festival main stage and at the International Jazz Goes to Town Festival. In 2016, together with his colleagues, Ladislav has founded Mr. Wombat sound recording studio. Since then he has recorded and mixed dozens of full-length and short music albums.

## Instructors of the Ateliers



### Martin Krupa

is a Prague-based video artist. In his work, he combines digital and 16 mm film moving images. He usually focuses on everyday situations in his videos and likes to play with perspective, speed, and loops. He likes to create an uncertainty of viewing and manipulates narratives

in his work. He uses visual materials, besides 16 mm film and slide film. He loves the interactivity of video and light and experiments with electronics. Martin is interested in video installations and site-specific moving images. He has collaborated with light designer Michal Hör Horáček at several theatre, dance, and light projects. He is a Ph.D. candidate in visual communication.

## Complementary Atelier & Roundtable



### Lise Andrea Grimelund-Kjelsen

is a performance artist and playwright based in Oslo, Norway. She is inspired by the dramaturgy of the space she is working with. She aims to create a poetic and playful theatre that invites audience to join the experience. Since 2015

she has been working with her company Teater Leikhus. The company has produced ten performances touring mainly in Norway, but also in Prague. As a previous participant of the International Summer School of Documentary Theatre, she had the chance to experience Jana Svobodová's working method first-hand, which she has frequently applied in her late practice.



### Merve Mutafoğlu

is a psychologist and performing arts coordinator based in Istanbul, Turkey. She completed her B.A. in Psychology and M.A. in Psychological Sciences at Boğaziçi University, during which she specialized in autobiographical memory and its

relation to culture, self, gender identity, language, and sightedness. She is currently pursuing a second master's degree in Clinical Psychology at Yeditepe University. She is also involved in contemporary and social-specific theatre and has worked in various theatre companies, festivals, and cultural institutes. She is the coordinator of the International Summer School of Documentary Theatre and has been collaborating with the Archa Theatre since 2016 on various projects.

## Exclusive Presentations



### Ondřej Hrab

is the director of Archa Theatre. He graduated from the University of Economics in Prague, and in the following years he worked as a sociologist. Under the communist regime he was active in non-conformist cultural activities. He initiated and organised clandestine

performances by foreign artists, including The Living Theatre and the Japanese dancer Min Tanaka. In 1991, he became the director of the E. F. Burian Theatre in Prague, transforming this traditional repertory theatre into a contemporary cultural centre under the name "Archa Theatre". Since Archa Theatre's opening in 1994, he has continued to introduce contemporary performing arts to the Czech Republic, bringing renowned international artists to the country, and also developing Archa's own cross-genre artistic projects. He has also been an active member of various national and European councils and groups that work on the topic of cultural exchange and networks.





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[www.archatheatre.cz](http://www.archatheatre.cz)

Please contact [summerschool@archatheatre.cz](mailto:summerschool@archatheatre.cz)  
for more information.

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A practical handbook by **Jana Svobodová** –  
*Social-Specific Theatre in Practice: Involving  
“Real People” Into the Process of Theatre  
Creation* – is available online!

Visit the link to access the online handbook:  
[www.janasvobodova.art](http://www.janasvobodova.art)