



Prix Europe pour le Théâtre
Europe Theatre Prize
Europa-Preis für das Theater



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PRESS RELEASE

XV Europe Theatre Prize and XIII Europe Prize Theatrical Realities

The events of the XV edition of Europe Theatre Prize and of the XIII Europe Prize Theatrical Realities – the most prestigious European award in the field of drama - will take place in Romania, in Craiova from 23rd to 26th April 2016. The Prize events will take place under the Patronage and the financing of the City of Craiova ("Candidate City - Craiova Cultural Capital of Europe 2021") and in cooperation with the Shakespeare Foundation of Craiova and the "Marin Sorescu" National Theatre of Craiova, which also commit themselves to host and organize the events of Europe Theatre Prize in Craiova, with the contribution too of the Romanian Cultural Institute.

The Europe Theatre Prize was established in 1986 (its first edition took place in 1987) as a pilot project of the European Commission, under the presidency of Jacques Delors and with Carlo Ripa di Meana as the first Culture Commissioner. Further support for its creation was provided at that time by Melina Mercouri, patroness of the Prize, and by Jack Lang, French Minister of Culture at the time and current President of the Prize, who in their role of Greek and French Ministers of Culture, were the first project creators of European Capitals of Culture. Since 2002, the Europe Theatre Prize has been recognised by the European Parliament and Council as a "European cultural interest organisation", for its specific activities and its overall role. The Europe Theatre Prize also promotes interdisciplinarity, integration and co-operation between theatre and other arts. The ETP has also been acknowledged to foster the integration between different art forms (theatre, music, dance, cinema, visual arts) in the field of live performance and to present a vision of theatre which can cross artistic and "genre" boundaries but also geographical and linguistic ones. As a matter of fact the ETP has been giving importance – since its beginning – to those artists and theatres which could be considered as "distant" or "minority" because of the political structures and the limitations of past decades.

After nine editions in Taormina, the Europe Theatre Prize took to the road, giving even greater impetus to its international aspect. Thus the X edition was held in Turin (supported and hosted by the city of Turin in collaboration with the *Teatro Stabile*, and presented as part of the special cultural programme for the Winter Olympics). Next, the XI and XII editions were held in Thassaloniki, the XIII edition in Wroclaw, Poland (as part of the celebration of the year declared "Grotowski Year" by UNESCO) and the XIV edition in St. Petersburg, Russia under the support and patronage of the Russian Government with its Ministry of Culture and the Government of the City of St. Petersburg.

The XV edition of Europe Theatre Prize will be in line with its tradition, renewing a practice appraised by the whole international Theatre, in a historical period like this, in which Europe has lost the ideals of its founding fathers and in which the space for culture has been reduced. In the frame of the myopic European politics of these years – which have hindered many initiatives - this atmosphere too has affected the Europe Theatre Prize, as there has been the forfeiture of a five-year commitment (2012-2017) from the current Polish Capital of Culture. The Europe Theatre Prize in this edition will take place in Romania, in Craiova, which is a dynamic industrial town, capital of Oltenia district and an internationally known cultural centre. The City of Craiova in synergy with the Shakespeare Foundation of Craiova and the "Marin Sorescu" National Theatre of Craiova - which are hosting ETP - strongly wanted that the Prize events would take place at the end of the tenth edition of the International Shakespeare Festival. On 23rd April 2016, the final day of the Festival will coincide with the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

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Craiova International Shakespeare Festival
Marin Sorescu National Theatre
Shakespeare Foundation

The Union of European Theatres is an associate and supporting body, a union, which was sponsored by François Mitterrand and founded by Jack Lang and Giorgio Strehler, who strongly wanted to cooperate with ETP since the foundation of UTE. The International Association of Theatre Critics, the International Theatre Institute UNESCO, the European Festivals Association and Europe: Union of Theatre Schools and Academies (E:UTSA) are associate bodies.

The Jury of the XV edition of the Europe Theatre Prize and of the XIII edition of the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities decided the awarding of prizes.

The Europe Theatre Prize (ETP) is awarded to individuals or theatrical institutions (theatres, companies) that have contributed to the realisation of cultural events which have promoted understanding and the exchange of knowledge between peoples. The prize is awarded to the career and the winner is chosen for the whole of his artistic path among notable personalities of international theatre considered in all its different forms, articulations and expressions

The **XV Europe Theatre Prize** has been awarded to **Mats Ek**, the Swedish choreographer and director of worldwide renown.

Mats Ek is the son of a great actor and of a legendary choreographer and has been able to mix dance and theatre in his own personal and very original expression. Inspired by Martha Graham, Pina Bausch, Kurt Joos (it was from Joos' lessons that Ek's mother, Birgit Cullberg, developed the "dramatic dance"), Mats Ek stages – with great success – some rewritings of classic 19th century ballets, contaminating them with elements of modern dance, as well as with everyday facts because to him it is important to refer to one's own contemporary society and to the age, in which people live. Therefore, *Giselle* (1982), *The Swan Lake* (1987), *Carmen* (1992) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1996) have become "new classics" or "cult" plays, where the female figure, music, choreography and costumes are all central and essential elements for the (re)construction of the story. The fundamental characteristic of Mats Ek's style is communication through body language and dramatic dance, in which a strong expression is combined with technical perfection. Furthermore, the female is questioned for the role that contemporary society gives to women, who are not just the cornerstone of ballets for Mats Ek, but for the whole society.

In deciding the award of the XIII edition of the Europe Prize Theatrical Realities, the nominations put forward by the Council (made up of almost 300 experts on European theatre) and the members of the Jury in an exercise preceding the meeting were examined by the Jury.

The Jury's choice fell upon artists who fulfill perfectly the dictates of Art. 3 of the Prize Regulations: "[...]Since its second edition, the Jury of EPTR has indicated that the Prize should be an opportunity for meeting and confrontation between different modes of expression of European theatre. [...]".

The Europe Prize Theatrical Realities (EPTR) has been awarded alongside the Europe Theatre Prize since its third edition. The Europe Prize Theatrical Realities is aimed at encouraging trends and initiatives in European drama, considered in all its different forms, articulations and expressions. The choice should take account of the candidate's complete work, of its innovative character and originality. The Prize may be awarded to a company, an artistic ensemble, a theatre, or a single artist.

The **XIII Europe Prize Theatrical Realities** was awarded to the following artists (listed here in alphabetical order):

Viktor Bodó (Hungary), **Andreas Kriegenburg** (Germany), **Juan Mayorga** (Spain), **National Theatre of Scotland** (Scotland/United Kingdom) and **Joël Pommerat** (France).

This edition of Prize events will be the occasion – as usual – to pay homage to all winners, with a series of conferences, which will analyse in depth their work. These conferences will feature the testimonies of actors, set designers, costume designers, musicians, etc. who have collaborated with the awarded artists and the speeches of academicians, journalists and critics from the best international press. Furthermore, some guest performances of prize-winners will be presented: National Theatre of Scotland will stage *Last Dream on Earth*, a play dealing with highly current issues like the one of migrants; Juan Mayorga will stage *Reykjavik*, his latest play, which embodies the author's idea of Theatre as “the art of imagination” and two scenes from *The Yugoslavs*. Andreas Kriegenburg will stage an original version of *Nathan the Wise*, a classic play of German theatre from G.E. Lessing. Mats Ek will be the protagonist on stage in the double role of choreographer and dancer in *Romanian Memory*, a special creation for Europe Theatre Prize and as choreographer in *Axe*. These two ballets will close the XV edition of Prize events, on the evening of 26th April 2016 after the Prize-awarding Ceremony.

Regarding the section *Returns*, the Shakespeare International Festival will host the creations of some former prize winners of previous editions of Europe Prize Theatrical Realities: Thomas Ostermeier and Romeo Castellucci. The plays *Julius Caesar. Spared Parts* by Romeo Castellucci and *Richard III* by Thomas Ostermeier will be staged in Craiova on 23rd April 2016, at the end of the Shakespeare International Festival and in harmony with the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, to seal in an ideal way the synergy between the Craiova Shakespeare Foundation, the “Marin Sorescu” National Theatre and the Europe Theatre Prize.

Furthermore, according to Article 6 of the Prize Regulations: “ [...] *The President of Europe Theatre Prize, the President of ETP Jury, the Association Europe Theatre Prize, the ETP Advisory Board, the associate bodies and/or other international institutions, among which those ones of the hosting country, on the basis of their own evaluations, may award a Special Prize, giving a motivation for their choice, in those categories, which are not included in the foreseen prizes [...]*”

A Special Prize was awarded from the President of ETP Jury and from Romanian institutions to the stage director Silviu Purcărete, acclaimed representative of Art Theatre in his country and internationally.

An important contribution to the making of the XV edition of ETP has been given by Georges Banu, President of international Jury of ETP, Member of the Board of Directors of Union of European Theatres (UTE) and Honorary President International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) and by Ian Herbert, Honorary President International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) and member of the ETP international Jury.

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VIKTOR BODÓ (Hungary)

Born in 1978, Bodó is an actor and director. Candidate since 2009.

Viktor Bodó is one of those rare directors whose degree of knowledge and perspective is such that they can get to the heart of particularly complex and

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convoluted stories on stage. Skilled at condensing, at finding that one essential moment, Bodó manages to express the quintessential nature of a character or a situation in a gesture, a snapshot, or a sound effect. A feature of his directing style is the close attention he pays to the roles of the actors who are seen as participants in an ensemble work that nevertheless brings together many individual contributions. Bodó's exceptionally creative use of music is another feature of many of his pieces. His work is seen and performed in every part of Europe at the hands of different directors and in master classes in various countries.

ANDREAS KRIEGENBURG – GERMANY

Born in 1963, he is a stage director. Candidate since 2006.

Originally from the German Democratic Republic, Kriegenburg, after studying carpentry, decided to join the theatre of his native city before becoming assistant to the director in 1984 in Zittau, then in Frankfurt an der Oder. It was there that he staged his first play in 1988.

During all these years, he crossed Greek tragedy, the theatre of Shakespeare and Chekhov, as well as the contemporary German and European theatre, the German and Italian Opera theatre. His stage directions for Opera range from Mozart to Wagner, Alban Berg, Verdi and Puccini. His work expresses an aesthetic search of great quality, but also his curiosity for texts from other forms that he adapts for the theatre.

JUAN MAYORGA (Spain)

Born in 1965, Mayorga is a playwright. Candidate since 2007.

His work has crossed national boundaries to become established in major European theatres. A regular collaborator with theatre companies such as *Animalario*, he has also worked as an adaptor and dramatist for the *Centro Dramático Nacional* and the *Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico*. When Mayorga writes his plays he "hears" the reaction of the audience. His plays question the audience, inviting them to adopt a position. The reader/spectator is always asked to "re-create" the meaning (or a meaning) of what happens on stage. This is not a provocation by the author but the audience's judgement surfacing as the play unfolds. His plays have been shown in 18 countries and translated into 16 languages.

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND (Scotland/United Kingdom)

The company was founded in 2006. Candidate since 2011

The National Theatre of Scotland was created to appeal to a very wide audience and exists to work with it, with the particular feature, going beyond any sort of all-embracing populist approach, that it should manage to produce and take on tour first-class theatre.

Its ambitions are to create work that arouses a strong response, that entertains and stimulates the audience with the precise cultural and social objective of not acting conventionally and inviting discussion of the central idea of what can be achieved through theatre.

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JOËL POMMERAT (France) Candidate since 2008

Born in 1963, Pommerat is a playwright and director.

He was an actor at 19, and at 23 he decided to focus on writing. In 1990 he founded the Louis-Brouillard Company and staged his first works in Paris. After a few forays into cinema, he returned to the theatre and to his company, quickly becoming the most outstanding figure in French contemporary theatre.

For Pommerat and his collaborators the art of theatre is essentially a group work and the stage "a possible place for questions and human experience", including those to do with children. The sensory and visual elements of his productions are not an addition to the writing but are rather its constituent element from the outset. Sounds and music, bodies and movements as mere coincidences, all contribute to the creative process in parallel to the writing. At the centre of this exploration the actors, usually in empty spaces traversed by bands of light, have to free themselves of their own habitual selves in order to find the authenticity of a concrete and individual presence.

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Festival National
'Mama Sofia'
Craiova