

Shakespeare's Plays in the Zlin City Theatre

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**Provedte soupis Shakespearových her uvedených v Městském divadle Zlín.
Vyberte vhodné inscenace pro podrobnější analýzu, výběr zdůvodněte.
Zhodnoťte interpretaci Shakespearových děl.
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ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce analyzuje provedení vybraných her Williama Shakespeara v Městském divadle Zlín. Shakespearovy hry jsou na repertoáru Městského divadla Zlín více než 60 let, a tak se některé více či méně zaktualizovaly. Výsledky ukážou jak se interpretace shodují s původní hrou.

Tahle práce shrne život Williama Shakespeara a alžbětínské divadlo, charakterizuje Městské divadlo Zlín a rozebere *Sen noci svatojánské*, *Romeo a Julie*, *Večer Tříkrálový* a *Hamleta* především z hlediska ztvárnění ve zlínském divadle. To vše díky příslušné literatuře a materiálům dostupných v archívu Městského divadla Zlín. Důvodem ke zpracování této bakalářské práce je, že ještě žádná práce podobného typu nebyla napsána a může oslovit nejen filology, ale i divadelníky.

Klíčová slova: divadlo, Městské divadlo Zlín, William Shakespeare, *Sen noci svatojánské*, *Večer Tříkrálový*, *Romeo a Julie*, *Hamlet*

ABSTRACT

The bachelor thesis analyses interpretations of chosen plays of William Shakespeare in the Zlin City Theatre. Shakespeare's plays are on repertoire of the Zlin City Theatre over 60 years and some of them get more or less updated. The results show how interpretations agree with the original play.

This work sums up William Shakespeare's life and Elizabethan theatre, characterize the Zlin City Theatre and analyses *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet* as for renditions of these plays in the Zlin theatre. It all owing to relevant literature and sources available in the Zlin City Theatre archive. The reason to write this bachelor thesis is that no similar thesis was written yet moreover it can appeal to philologists as well as theatre artists.

Keywords: theatre, Zlin City Theatre, William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*

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INTRODUCTION

There are no doubts that William Shakespeare, an English playwright of the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, belongs among the most successful playwrights all around the world. There exist many works written about William Shakespeare and his plays, following connections between them or even between plays of the other authors, but this thesis is dealing with the connection of Shakespeare's plays and a local Czech institution.

The Zlin City Theatre was established in 1946 and Shakespeare's plays are in its common repertoire since 1950. Talking about Shakespeare may bring people to recall his famous plays such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet* or even *The Twelfth Night*. William Shakespeare really seems to be an icon of theatre. His creation of world in sixteenth century in the sense of human behavior is so similar to the twenty-first century that people still can understand his sense of humor and the sense of tragedy thus nowadays theatres are most likely successful if they set Shakespeare's play in its repertoire with a right director. People may be very sensitive about dealing with Shakespeare's plays as they include a certain heritage which should not be ruined. Working with word-play, characters' status and emotions work well in his works. Plots are turning around concepts of love and revenge because for the common audience these are the interesting topics which could not be a mistake to see. People usually do not stall on particular symbols to think about their meaning or wider deal – in Shakespeare's plays there is a characteristic thing that people do not have to think too hard to understand the plot but if they will do so, they can reveal some hidden ideas which enrich the play. The point is to find out how the Zlin City Theatre copes with this heritage.

1 WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

In today's world William Shakespeare is considered probably the greatest playwright thanks to whom English drama was spread around the world. An English playwright, poet and actor was baptized on 26 April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon and died on 23 April 1616 which many scholars believe it was his birthday too. At 18 he married Anne Hathaway and raised three children together. He was a successful actor and playwright and a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men company (later the King's Men). Although there are some uncertainties about his personality and the authorship of some of his plays, he is believed to have written 38 plays, 154 sonnets and other works. Plays of the popular Lord Chamberlain's Men company were mostly performed in the Globe theatre build in 1599 from their own effort. As Jonathan Law noted, on 29 June 1613 the Globe caught fire because of a cannon used during a performance of *Henry VIII* but it was rebuilt in the following year.¹ Because of his career he was not in Stratford most of the time as the long way from London to Stratford took four-day ride by horse. During his early period of writing he wrote mostly histories and comedies and just after 1600 under pessimism he wrote the tragedies considered the top of his works. In his final period of writing he wrote tragicomedies known as romances, that is when he became reconciled to life.

Talking about him must bring the question why his plays are so well-known amongst other English playwrights. Martin Hilský, who is considered to belong among best experts on Shakespeare today, claims that when English become lingua franca helped a lot. Furthermore Shakespeare and his contemporaries created first dramatic lines of modern English and even created new words. Until Shakespeare's time people knew mostly plays related to morality and God whereas he started to write plays about people's emotions and conflicts of which quality one can hardly compete with. Shakespeare's playing company had to attract as many people as possible to survive so their plays dealt with various social classes.²

1.1 Works

Martin Hilský notes that Shakespeare usually based his plays on stories already existed but he gave speech and attractiveness to those stories. He experimented with rhetoric, emotions

¹ See Jonathan Law, *The Methuen Drama Dictionary of the Theatre* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 185.

² Martin Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět* (Praha: Academia, 2010), 27-28.

and poetics which has created a new concept of plays.³ Hilský also clarifies that unlike other countries, in Great Britain directors mostly do not dare to modernize Shakespeare's plays since these plays remain a part of English cultural heritage.⁴ The most important matter for Shakespeare was to make a good first impression thus at the beginning of a story was usually written a main message that the play carries.⁵

Shakespeare used several literary devices that feature in his plays. One of them is blank verse which is unrhymed iambic pentametre. Another element which is characteristic for Shakespeare is a play-within-a-play in some of his plays. It creates double-performance structure where real audience usually perceive inside performance by on-stage audience. According to Hilský, such play-within-a-play usually mirrors the play itself.⁶ Speaking of plot complexity, a plot can sometimes be complex therefore made up of more subplotlines. Characters of side plotlines are usually wittier and in lower social class than nobility of a main plotline.

1.2 Elizabethan theatre

The reign of Queen Elizabeth I. (1558-1603) is related to the English Renaissance which came late to England. Erika Fischer-Lichte describes it as a return to individuality, ancient theatre spirit and dealing with a man's identity because the age turned to human's needs.⁷ Other scholars suggest that England became a successful drama productive country just during Elizabethan England as this period of time brought in not only William Shakespeare but also playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson.⁸ They also state this period of time can be determined as the second of greatest dramatic production with regard to ancient Greek drama which is considered as the first one.⁹

Apart from the other London theatres, the well-known Globe Theatre built on 21 September 1599 is the result of an effort of William Shakespeare among the others. It was built on the ruins of The Theatre. Martin Hilský notes that most of Shakespeare's plays

³ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 29.

⁴ "Česká hlava pro Hilskeho. Překladatel a znalec Shakespeara získá nejvyšší vědecké ocenění," Aktuálně.cz, accessed March 15, 2016, <http://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/ceska-hlava-pro-hilskeho-prekladatel-a-znalec-shakespeara-zi/r~2bc74eaa71111e599c80025900fea04/>

⁵ Klevetivá středa at the Zlín City Theatre, 25.2. 2015.

⁶ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 25.

⁷ Erika Fischer-Lichte, *History of European Drama and Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2002), 54.

⁸ Stephen M. Archer, Cynthia M. Gendrich, and Woodrow B. Hood, *Theatre Its Art and Craft* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 263.

⁹ Archer, Gendrich and Hood, *Theatre Its Art and Craft*, 198.

were performed there until it was burned down. For those times the structure of the theatre building was smartly designed. Public theatres were usually based on an amphitheatre ground plan. Considering the Globe Theatre's features, its stage and galleries, used to be covered so audience and actors did not get wet when it was raining. Spectators at galleries had seats thus this comfort reflects the price of these seats. On the other hand a standing spectator, paying one penny for the place to stay, could be much closer to actors therefore he/she could savour the performance more intensively. This intensity between the audience and stage was set by no boundaries as public theatres had no curtain and no props. Consuming food and drinks during the performance was allowed which meant a larger informality of the institution. All this information summed up by Martin Hilský can be topped up by very precise data, for example people of Elizabethan England could buy one pint of beer for one penny which is the same price as standing place at the Globe Theatre. Although the competition was broad even in that time, the Globe Theatre performed successfully with regard to the capacity of up to three thousands spectators.¹⁰ Theatre in Elizabethan England was strongly focused on the art of speech as actors could not hide themselves behind props. Actors simply played on the empty stage and, as Martin Hilský claims, theatre of that time was theatre of imagination due to the fact an audience had to imagine what they hear. All notes about the space where a story took its place were presented in the actors' speech. However there was a visual clue for the audience: costumes which were usually rich and could be seen easily even from a far distance. Wardrobe masters of Elizabethan England had to be concerned with female costumes a lot to make them identify well among the male ones since female roles were played by young males.

¹⁰ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 25.

2 THE ZLIN CITY THEATRE

Culture in Zlín plays an important role in lives of its citizens and that is why a theatre establishment was considered by Tomáš Baťa in 1937. From the almanac¹¹ which reflects fifty years of the Zlin City Theatre¹² one can learn that to establish a theatre was another step to make Zlín the cultural centre in Moravia. A long process of establishing a theatre has been finished in 1946 and the Workers' Theatre came into existence. On 1 January 1949 the city was renamed to Gottwaldov for political reasons of the Communist party. The theatre repertoire consisted mainly of comedies to entertain people. Although the theatre had its own separated building of adapted Chamber cinema (Komorní kino), it was not located in the city centre and spaces of the functionalist building were incommodious. Moreover the stage was so small that not many other theatres could give guest performances there. Theatre reviewers Marcel Sladkowski and Iva Mikulová described all problems in detail when writing about storage conditions, inadequate technology and outside influences on the theatre hall which were firstly summed up in *Divadlo* magazine by Ludmila Vaňková as far back as in 1955.¹³ As a result, in 1959 an architectural competition was organized to choose the best project for a new theatre building located in the city centre. The construction began in 1960 and finished in 1967 accompanied by an opening ceremony with *Jánošík* play on 11 November. Mikulová and Sladkowski also state that despite political conditions of the Soviet occupation, when some theatre employees such as actor Otakar Roubínek and managing director Alois Lhotský were forced to leave, the theatre achieved artistic successes mainly thanks to director Alois Hajda.¹⁴ Yet during seventies and eighties some actors and actresses of contemporary ensemble come to the theatre: Pavel Leicman, Jana Tomečková, Helena Čermáková, Milena Marcilisová, Rostislav Marek, Luděk Randár and Radoslav Šopík.

After the revolution on 1 January 1990 Zlín gained back its name and consequently the theatre was renamed to the Zlin City Theatre as the city of Zlín became the owner. In addition the annual *A get together Meeting* (Setkání/Stretnutie) festival was founded in 1991. Only a few years later, a period of managing director Antonín Sobek started in 1998 to 2010. Under his direction several artistic directors exchanged. As Mikulová and

¹¹ Městské divadlo Zlín, *Městské divadlo Zlín 1946-1996* (Zlín: Městské divadlo Zlín, 1997), 3-79.

¹² An official name for the theatre used also at foreign tours.

¹³ Iva Mikulová and Marcel Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon* (Zlín: Městské divadlo Zlín, 2015), 29.

¹⁴ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 94.

Sladkowski note, a period of stabilization and new marketing strategies came in 2010 when Petr Michálek becomes managing director. Together with artistic director Hana Mikolášková they focus on regional scene mainly.¹⁵ Unfortunately the Zlín City Theatre today faces small opportunities to make tours as its props are adjusted to a stage of which size another one can be hardly found in the Czech republic. Besides the main theatre hall with the capacity of 687 seats there have been established two more smaller scenes called *Workroom 9472* (Dílna 9472) - formerly *Small Theatre in Club* (Divadélko v klubu), and *Studio Z* (formerly Studio G). After 1990 more actors and actresses of contemporary ensemble have come to the theatre: Marta Bačíková, Eva Daňková, Tomáš David, Jana Drgová, Zdeněk Julina, Romana Julinová, Markéta Kalužíková, Josef Koller, Tamara Kotrbová, Radovan Král, Petra Králová, Zdeněk Lambor, Jan Leflík, Kateřina Lidáková, Marek Příkazký, Gustav Řezníček, Pavel Vacek and Marie Vančurová. The very recent backup of the ensemble are Vojtěch Johaník and Jan Řezníček. Among the best achievements of this theatre belong three Thalia Awards. For the best female dramatic performances of Helena Čermáková in 1999, Petra Hřebíčková in 2008 and for the lifelong drama mastery of Lubor Tokoš in 2001.

The theatre's repertoire is varied and includes many interpretations of Shakespeare's plays. In all interpretations various actors and actresses were rotating through the Zlín City Theatre for seventy years including many well-known ones. Shakespeare's plays in the Zlín City Theatre 1946 – 2016 in alphabetical order:

Antony and Cleopatra (1974, 2001)

As You Like It (1963)

Cymbeline (1996)

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (1959, 1976, 1998)

The Comedy of Errors (1988)

King Lear (1979, 2007)

The Merchant of Venice (1992)

Macbeth (1967)

Much Ado About Nothing (1956)

The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice (1961, 1980, 2000)

Romeo and Juliet (1961, 1990, 2007)

¹⁵Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 243.

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1959, 2012)
Twelfth Night; or, What You Will (1952, 1975, 2015)
The Merry Wives of Windsor (1950, 1962, 1981)
The Winter's Tale (1964, 1984, 2001)
The Taming of the Shrew (1957, 1972, 2006)
Measure for Measure (2004)

Thanks to the Zlin City Theatre archive, analyses in the next chapters could be based on various sources such as photos, video records (since 1988) and scripts of these plays. Because the list of performed plays is too long to analyze each interpretation, only four plays including all their interpretations have been chosen to analyze. Those are comedies *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, and tragedies *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*. They are chosen because these are those with the latest interpretations apart from *Hamlet* which could not be omitted as the supposed top of Shakespeare's works. Each analyzed performance is assigned one photo shown in the appendix at the end of this thesis.

2.1 Modernization and other ideas

Modernization of plays is one of features that must be considered thoroughly in the process of setting up a performance. It is quite a common thing today but sometimes this creativity is not such a good idea as theatre directors might think. Making Shakespeare's plays in a modern style should be thought over very carefully and local audience should also be taken into consideration since Shakespeare is an author whose plays are expected to be performed flawlessly. To bring the theatre closer to its spectators there take place *Gossipy Wednesday*¹⁶ events with discussions about the certain performance which is going to debut in following days. This is one of the ways how the theatre management wants to ascertain what people are interested in. However most of people visiting this event are elderly so opinions of spectators acquired from the event only would be distorted as majority of people is from the same age group. A contact with spectators may be also the reason why public dress rehearsals were set up in 2007 even though most of people now prefer calling it "pre-opening night" rather.

¹⁶ *Klevetivá středa* is an informal meeting for supporters of the Zlin City Theatre which the theatre organizes on Wednesday before a Saturday's opening night.

Nowadays theatres most likely want to impress young spectators to make them regular visitors and sometimes it leads to the exclusion of regular audience who like classical plays to be performed classically. The Zlin City Theatre is a good example of a theatre which quite a long period of time did not perform classical Shakespeare's plays. However what people usually imagine under the term "classical" may differ in one's mind. A play in a classical way can be described as a performance where costumes, props and speech are pictured to the proper period as originally intended to be played so.

2.2 Translators

Certainly there have been many great Czech translators of Shakespeare. Pavel Drábek has made a research of Czech Shakespeare translators and states there are sixty four Czech translators since the second half of eighteenth century.¹⁷ Translators can be understood as co-authors as they explain a play in their own way and usually add their own perception of a story. In the text below are described translators whose translations were used in the Zlin City Theatre performances of Shakespeare's plays.

In the late forties and the whole fifties and sixties translations of Erich Adolf Saudek (1904-1963) had a great success while he was the first Czech translator of Shakespeare who gets a text closer to a common speech as Hilský insists in his book. This closeness includes mainly not keeping so precisely on the original text structure but create the new structure of verses if needed.¹⁸ But there is a negative thing to be said about Saudek's translation since he does not respect the formal/informal unity of *you*. This differentiation is easily noticed mainly in accessed scripts in a speech of lovers where they once use the informal form of you and then the polite one for the same person.

Zdeněk Urbánek (1917-2008) added his own ideas to Shakespeare's plays. He tried to help reader's imagination by description of scene and what actors should act like. Basically he expanded Shakespeare's brief instructions which may be very helpful mainly for directors for whom Urbánek's texts are meant primarily. He is ranked as modern translator by Drábek,¹⁹ and lines he translated are clear proofs of it since the syntax is very similar to common Czech language even though some expressions can give archaic sense to readers.

¹⁷ Pavel Drábek, *České pokusy o Shakespeara* (Praha: Větrné mlýny, 2012), 1085-1101.

¹⁸ Martin Hilský, conclusion to *A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare* (2nd ed. Brno: Atlantis, 2003), 279.

¹⁹ Drábek, *České pokusy o Shakespeara*, 17.

Another translator, Josef Topol (1935-2015), tried to express a poetic side of the play. Although his translation sounds pleasantly, Topol's translation is mostly based on Saudek's work so he also deals with some mistakes regarding the unity of *you*. But generally, Drábek categorizes Josef Topol among translators with sense for modern translation too for example for dealing with sentence structure.²⁰

English literature professor Martin Hilský (*1943) is considered to belong among the best experts in Shakespeare today. He has been awarded several times for merits he brought in, including Order of the British Empire. Today his translations are used the most as they precisely follow the trace of the original work and the exact intention given by William Shakespeare by the use of archaic expressions, archaic syntax and melodic lines but also by the understanding of then semantics converted into today perception. Because he is not a fan of modernization, his translations appear old but understandable and therefore Drábek ranks him among classic translators.²¹

Plays speaking by the translation of Jiří Josek (*1950) make the story easy accessible for common audience as his expressions match well to vocabulary of nowadays spectator which is also why Drábek categorizes him to modern translators.²² For example monologues of Romeo and Juliet are based on their feelings which Josek is aware of but he must adapt lines on the fact that Romeo and Juliet are just children and they apparently talk to each other with certain vocabulary and style for example a frequent formation of diminutives. Concerning the comprehension of meanings, Josek applied the present-day habits instead of the old ones therefore the language is sometimes too ordinary with regard to speech of functionary characters.

²⁰ Drábek, *České pokusy o Shakespeara*, 17.

²¹ Drábek, *České pokusy o Shakespeara*, 17.

²² Drábek, *České pokusy o Shakespeara*, 17.

3 A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

One of the most successful comedies *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is full of mystery. In the Zlín City Theatre the play was performed only twice: in 1959 and 2012. The comedy is believed to have been written around 1595 and it is one of the most successful plays of William Shakespeare. Hilský suggests that Shakespeare probably composed the play for the wedding party of an Elizabethan nobleman but this is not the only reason for a festive spirit of the play since the play is connected to celebration of the summer solstice. Even spring celebrations in May might be another argument for the revelry and frolicsome mood of characters.²³

The story begins at the palace of Theseus, where a father demands to marry his daughter Hermia to Demetrius. Nonetheless, Hermia is in love with Lysander who is not considered to be a suitable husband for Hermia. She is given time to think over her choice for the sake of Demetrius otherwise she will be strictly punished. So she runs away with Lysander; in the woods they meet Helena, Hermia's friend, who feels miserable about her unrequited love to Demetrius who loved her before but now he loves Hermia. Helena finds out where Hermia is going so she tells it to Demetrius, hoping he will be grateful to her. In the meantime a group of craftsmen comes to the woods to rehearse a tragedy for the duke's marriage with the Amazon queen Hippolyta. In a parallel plotline the king and the queen of Fairyland, Oberon and Titania, have an argument in the same woodland. When Titania leaves, Oberon seeks to punish her so he sends out Puck, his minion pixie, for the magical flower whose extract affects one's eyes. After application, an affected person falls in love with the first seen living creature. His intention is to make Titania love an animal. Suddenly Oberon encounters Demetrius and Helena, having a discussion. Oberon sees how heartlessly Demetrius treats Helena and decides to charm his eyes. He instructs Puck to find the young Athenian man and apply the extract upon him and Oberon himself uses the flower upon sleeping Titania. But Puck mistakes sleeping Lysander for Demetrius and applies the extract upon him, who wakes up and sees Helena – he immediately falls in love with her. Puck tries to correct his mistake, so he charms the right person – Demetrius. But now both men pursue Helena who thinks they make fun of her. Finally Demetrius and Lysander fight for Helena who quarrels with Hermia over Lysander's behaviour. Puck makes the exhausted men fall asleep as well as the women and corrects what he spoiled.

²³ Hilský, introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 13.

Rehearsal of the craftsmen resulted in a failure when one of them, Bottom, appears with donkey head conjured up by Puck. His fellow players run away and Bottom stays alone near Titania's bower. She wakes up and then spots him as the first living creature thus she falls in love with him. As she seduced Bottom to make love, Oberon – having achieved his goal, removes the magic from all of them. Their experiences appear as a dream and Bottom with friends continue in their effort to perform the play for the wedding which becomes broader of two more weddings – Lysander and Hermia, Demetrius and Helena. Couples watch the performance of the craftsmen which obviously lacks the preparation thus the tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe turns into a comedy. Afterwards everyone retires to bed and Oberon with Titania blesses them with good fortune.

Hilský declares couplets create 52 % of the play²⁴ which makes it pleasure to hear. This play consists of five acts; where introduction, plot and denouement appear in acts I to IV, the fifth act can be comprehended as conclusion. Marcel Sladkowski, play reviewer of *Mladá Fronta Dnes* newspaper, points out that the combination of three plotlines was a challenge for the theatre of such calibre as Zlín represents.²⁵

There are two translations used in the theatre: the translation of Saudek and the translation of Hilský. Since the Zlín performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* face to a great distance, these translations are different yet at the first sight. Hilský's translation is certainly affected by the modern age but he owes to Saudek for his previous work on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Most of characters' proper names are usually problem-free in the sense of translation but that does not relates to the craftsmen's names. These names change with various translators. Quince means also a fruit based on which the first Czech translators were working with and came up with "Kdoule". According to Hilský, Saudek debuted with the term "Poříz" with regard to a detection of Quince's craft tool and Hilský stuck with this name as well. Also the Czech translation of Snout is based on the thing he works with because as a tinker he mostly repairs spouts therefore "Hubička" came into existence. Flute does not stand for any translation's difficulties but Hilský does not follow Saudek's term "Štěbenec" because it is old and more likely a synonym for clarinet which is different from more correct term "Píšťala" used by Hilský. The translation of Snug was solved by his qualities used in his jobs which should be precise and firm – thus translated

²⁴ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 91.

²⁵ Marcel Sladkowski, "Nadmíru ztřeštěná noc," *Divadelní noviny*, November 13, 2012. Accessed November 24, 2014. <http://http://www.divadelni-noviny.cz/sen-noci-svatojanske-zlin-recenze>.

as “Pevný”. As for Starveling, Saudek created the term occupying a meaning of starvation – “Hladolet”. Hilský has come up with “Střízlík” which carries similar meaning. Finally Bottom is the only craftsman whose name is not changing since 1855 when translator František Doucha introduced him as “Klubko” (a wool ball). The semantics of words “bottom”, “ass” remains ignored in the Czech name but well-represented in the play. Unfortunately some Czech spectators may not suspect the real meaning of word during the donkey scene.²⁶

3.1 A Midsummer Night’s Dream 1959

Based on records, the first interpretation of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in Zlín took place in the Workers’ Theatre on 31 December 1959. The play debuted on the New Year’s Eve which fits into the festivity spirit of the play therefore the audience could enjoy the delight brought up by the real atmosphere and even by the performance itself. The translation which was used had been processed by Erich A. Saudek whose translations rank among the high-quality ones of its time.

The interval occurred after the fifth scene; in the middle of third act which is the exact middle of the play. The cast was wide as seen below where is shown the cast list of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* of 1959 for understanding of further dealing with names.

THESEUS, DUKE OF ATHENS	Jiří Letenský
HIPPOLYTA, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS	Eva Matalová
LYSANDER, IN LOVE WITH HERMIA	Jan Gross
HERMIA, IN LOVE WITH LYSANDER	Miluše Hradská
DEMETRIUS, IN LOVE WITH HERMIA	Stanislav Ebens
HELENA, IN LOVE WITH DEMETRIUS	Vlasta Kalendová
EGEUS, FATHER OF HERMIA	Arnošt Kotouč
PHILOSTRATE, MASTER OF REVELS	Antonín Ženčák
OBERON, KING OF THE FAIRIES	Vladimír Mílek
TITANIA, QUEEN OF THE FAIRIES	Helena Šedivková
PUCK, SERVANT TO OBERON	Dana Klášterecká
FAIRY	Jana Tomečková

²⁶ Hilský, conclusion to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, 276.

PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MUSTARDSEED	others
PETER QUINCE, CARPENTER	Jan Libíček
NICK BOTTOM, WEAVER	Václav Babka
FRANCIS FLUTE, BELLOWS-MENDER	Zdeněk Vašek
TOM SNOUT, TINKER	Miloš Vosmanský
ROBIN STARVELING, TAILOR	Otakar Moučka

The director Svatopluk Skopal made modifications in the script as not all the characters were involved in the play. One of the craftsmen, Snug, was left out so the only possibility to play Lion was to give a chance to Quince. In fact, Snug did not have much text to say and maybe it was the reason why the director considered him easy replaceable. The performance showed the effort of keeping Shakespeare's heritage untouched apart from the Snug omission. As for the characters, interesting point is that Puck was played by a female actress, Dana Klášterecká, which was an interesting choice because Puck rather seems to be a male. In that time also young Jan Libíček appeared in the theatre ensemble and played Quince here. Entertainment should be guaranteed by his corpulent figure as well as by his talent with which he went to Prague where he became famous.

The stage structure gave the sense of a majestic palace but a poor forest even though not many props were used due to stage space. Josef Jochman's scene included chairs, historical columns and something similar to wall in the background. In this performance actors dominated on the scene so this performance approaches to the Elizabethan theatre structure quite close because there were just a limited number of props.

According to internal files the musical accompaniment was provided by the music of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The music is classical and fits into the performance well with regard to its purpose even though it does not add any special fairy undertones.

Concerning the costumes of Josef Jochman, every piece of their appearance caused the impression of ancient times. Clothes of the characters evoke purity and decency. Demetrius and Lysander were differentiated only by the color of their overcoats: Lysander – light whereas Demetrius – dark. Hermia and Helena differed mainly by the hair color since their dresses were nearly the same – light and baggy as ancient dresses used to be. Theseus and Hippolyta's clothing had the very royal appearance and the costumes of Oberon and Titania were obviously impressive as such fairy characters require. Craftsmen in the play-within-a-play were easily recognized according to several layers of ancient clothing which looked ridiculous as it should be. Egeus appeared very commonly regarding to his clothes

and maybe too old to represent Hermia's father. Finally, female Puck had forest clothing and short hair which makes her pixie in a very woman way. Now it does not seem to be a bad idea of female Puck since women can be naturally naughty even more than men.

Although there is no exact differentiation between Lysander and Demetrius, Saudek believes that Hermia and Helena's characteristics are described quite well during arguments between young Athenians.²⁷ Hermia is mentioned to be short by Helena who is said to be tall (III.2); furthermore Lysander gives another argument which describes Hermia well. In II.2 Lysander says "Who will not change a raven for a dove?" By this he compares Hermia to a raven and Helena to a dove. And Lysander again refers to Hermia in III.2: "Away, you Ethiop!" Such a term is an archaic word for Black. From these arguments one can gain an appearance characteristic for Hermia as short, dark-haired person whereas Helena is taller and fair-haired, probably she also has a fairer skin. These principles were adapted on the actresses.

3.1.1 Play-within-a-play

A poorly prepared performance *The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe* by the craftsmen for Theseus and Hippolyta was played nearly at the end of the play. Pyramus and Thisbe are two lovers from feuding families therefore their love is meant to be forbidden. Thisbe comes first at their secretly arranged meeting but she is frightened by bloody-jawed Lion and runs away, leaving her scarf behind. A while later Pyramus discovers the bloody scarf, assuming Thisbe to be dead he kills himself by a sword. Afterwards, Thisbe returns and sees Pyramus dead, she stabs herself with his sword too.

In the dialogue of Pyramus and Thisbe they refer to the love of Shafalus and Procrus, which is incorrect in fact. Based on Jennifer R. March's argument these are just garbled names of Cephalus and Procris, ancient Greek lovers.²⁸ In this translation, Saudek argues that Czech spectators might be unfamiliar with these names which are referred to in the play and made it garbled into Romulus and Rema instead.²⁹

The omission of Snug did not stand for a big difficulty because he tells only two replicas. Still it is necessary to perform Lion somehow because Thisbe has to run away

²⁷ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 135.

²⁸ Jennifer R. March, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 119.

²⁹ E. A. Saudek, comment to *Sen noci svatojánské by William Shakespeare* (Praha: Evropský literární klub, 1938), 122.

from the place of meeting with Pyramus. Consequently there comes a conclusion that Lion in *The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe* may be performed by Quince. The most noticeable character at first sight is Moonshine owing to his costume crowned by his moon hat. Craftsmen are recognized to be a lower social class by their appearance and the way of speaking. The social gap here is discerned by the comments of Demetrius, Lysander, Theseus and Hippolyta on craftsmen's address which are more or less satirical.

3.2 A Midsummer Night's Dream 2012

The latest interpretation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was presented in the Zlin City Theatre in 2012. The performance was kept in the Zlin City Theatre's repertoire a little over one year which means it had the average success because most of plays of the Zlin City Theatre are being played for one year. The 2012 version in a translation of Martin Hilský was constructed in a modern way in the sense of a scene, costumes and acting. Also the script was adjusted for the Zlín theatre by dramaturge (Vladimír Fekar) and director (Pavel Khek) who made some changes in the text to suit to director's needs and still follow the original trace of the play: the most notable change is limiting the number of actors to eight.

The cast below gives primary information about the recent interpretation of the play. At the first sight one can notice characters' reduction to eight players only. Not even characters' division cannot be used according to their area of activity.

PUCK/ PHILOSTRATE/FAIRY	Radovan Král
THESEUS/ OBERON	Luděk Randár
HIPPOLYTA/ TITANIA	Eva Daňková
EGEUS/BOTTOM/PYRAMUS	Radoslav Šopík
LYSANDER/ QUINCE	Marek Příkazký
HERMIA/ STARVELING/WALL	Marie Vančurová
DEMETRIUS/ FLUTE/THISBE	Zdeněk Lambor
HELENA/SNUG/LION	Hana T. Briešťanská

Characters of Oberon and Titania were played by the same actors as Theseus and Hippolyta, and actors of the Athenians (four lovers and Egeus) played also the craftsmen. Then there is the eighth actor who played Puck, Philostrate and Fairy. When Fairy talks to

Puck, Radovan Král talked to himself in that scene. In fact, Puck as the creator of the plot was in the spotlight most of the time. Minor characters (Fairies) were omitted and the speech of certain characters had to be changed or skipped not to meet the character played by the same actor. The fact of just eight actors playing twenty characters not only emphasizes a comic segment of the play but also, as Sladkowski highlighted, it gives actors an opportunity to present themselves in a different sort of character.³⁰ The performance ran quite quickly because of the constant costume-changing. Moreover director Pavel Khek himself said he had got the idea that Shakespeare had thought it should be played that way.³¹ This beautiful craziness when the characters could be even different characters may belong to the style of Shakespeare's comedies. The second part was taking place only at the duke's palace, so the emotions could slow down and people could enjoy the performance for the duke's wedding.

During the performance the scene is not changing. The whole scene by Michal Syrový looked gloomy natural but open at the same time. There were neither complex constructions nor large ones but still the performance can hardly resemble the Elizabethan theatre structure. Most of the play took place at the forest made of branches, rubber crumblings represented a soil and a small lake which was filled by real water where characters were frolicking during fighting. Scenes taking place at Theseus's palace were worked out just by two thrones being lowered when needed.

Several strange objects were situated around the scene, later one can identify them as musical instruments. The play has no strict rules about music so the play producers made up their own original musical instruments of elemental sounds such as a chime, a horn or a drum which were played by the actors during the performance. These instruments and music by Václav Kořínek made the scene a magical place. Actually based on the comments of Hilský, the Zlin City Theatre is not the first theatre presented *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in such playful way considering frolics in the small lake, false soil, no fixed palace scene and natural music of elemental origin. The director was probably inspired by

³⁰ Sladkowski, "Nadmíru ztřeštěná noc."

³¹ "Sen noci svatojánské promění jeviště v magickou džungli, v malírně vzniká obří buben a další originální nástroje," Městské divadlo Zlín, accessed January 31, 2015, <http://www.divadlozlin.cz/cs/novinky/sen-noci-svatojanske-promeni-jeviste-v-magickou-dzungli-v-malirne-vznika-obri-buben-a-dalsi-originalni-nastroje.html>

Robert Lepage's interpretation of the play in the nineties where he had gone even further as his Puck was a half-naked woman.³²

The modern elements are also costumes and language. The Queen of the Amazons, Hippolyta, was wearing leather clothes and boots to give an idea of woman from the wild with an obvious intention to provoke not only Theseus and Oberon but also the audience. Theseus, the duke of Athens, although being the duke did not wear anything what makes him noble but the way he speaks. His language is what made him aristocratic and suddenly his heavy coat seems to be a symbol for bravery and intransigence. Actually the man who looked noble at the first sight was Egeus, father of Hermia, whose dark outfit with sash and cane appeared strict but elegant. As for Oberon and Titania they are fairy characters and based on this fact their costumes were made so: one can perceive Titania in the ethereal way since her light fairy dress waves in the process of walking. Oberon's costume, however, is not very different from Theseus', he just wore a fur coat instead of the leather one. But the interesting task dealing the costumes comes at the very beginning of the play when Athenians appear at Theseus palace. Demetrius and Lysander are described as equally noble men (in I.1.) but the audience definitely sees that they differ. While Demetrius certainly did his best to look noble with his light suit and adjusted hair, Lysander seems to belong to a lower social class as he wore plain clothing complemented by a scarf. The director probably wanted to stress the difference between those two because the real look of the actors may be similar on the stage. Moreover Hermia is said to be more beautiful which resulted in the task for wardrobe mistress and make-up artist to make Hana T. Briešťanská, who played Helena, not pretty. So she was given red handbag, plain white clothes and sweater not to look thin and her hair was ruffled. On the other hand Hermia played by Marie Vančurová was given clothes highlighted her thin figure and hair coiffures well. Besides that the indirect description of these female characters remains uninfluenced in contradistinction to the previous interpretation. Finally, Puck was given a light hat. It was effective for the audience especially when the lights in the hall switched off and his hat switched on.

Sladkowski states that this staging partially relies on erotic features: it is obvious that most characters try to evoke sexual power not only by the costumes. In fact, the fairy couple Titania and Oberon are playing a love game that ends up with the love-making of

³² Hilský, introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 81.

Bottom and Titania. This is a metaphor for social class mixing. As for Oberon, his sceptre shaped as phallus spoke for itself.³³ Speaking of Athenian lovers, the director made use of the small lake during the climax of arguments. Demetrius and Lysander were fighting half-naked in the lake, Helena and Hermia as well but dressed. The scenes should attract the audience's attention at the highest peak, especially the first row had to feel involved as they got splashed.

3.2.1 Play-within-a-play

Unlike the previous interpretation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, here was an interval after the third act; therefore the first part of the performance was longer than the second one. Nearly the whole second part of the play pays attention to the performance of the craftsmen so this part was intentionally separated from the main plotline. *A Midsummer Night's Dream's* play-within-a-play was set as the most modernized part of the play. Among the most obvious modern elements could be considered the costumes of the craftsmen as they were wearing Czech Railways vest, a helmet and OBI cap. They were also talking in a strong Bohemian dialect. Snug is easily recognized among the other craftsmen because he stammers all the time. Also drinking beer a lot and the usage of beer crates as chairs associate nowadays vision of such workers. As for the acting itself, although they were overacting a lot, they just intentionally emphasized comic scenes.

In 1959 character of Snug was omitted but in 2012 Tom Snout was omitted so the Wall in *The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe* was represented by Starveling who usually performs Moonshine therefore Moonshine had to be excluded from the whole 2012 play. Nevertheless, Athenians who should be watching the craftsmen performance were excluded from this act as well because the actors actually played the craftsmen. Yet from the title *The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe* as Quince introduced at the beginning, the audience should not expect a true tragedy. Some reviewers found Quince an interesting character because of Marek Příkazký's rendition of Jan Antonín Pitínský's directorial style,³⁴ accompanied by a Brno accent.³⁵

³³ Sladkowski, "Nadmíru ztřeštěná noc."

³⁴ Jiří P. Kříž, "Shakespeare vysekl poklonu Pitínskému." *Právo*, October 24, 2012. Accessed November 24, 2014. <http://www.divadlozlin.cz/uploads/jpg/recenze-sen-pravo.jpg>

³⁵ Sladkowski, "Nadmíru ztřeštěná noc."

Speaking of Pyramus and Thisbe's reference to the love of Shafalus and Procrus, Hilský transferred the names into Romeo and Juliet. However the transfer into Shakespeare's own *Romeo and Juliet* is smart as the story of Romeo and Juliet actually mirrors the story of Pyramus and Thisbe – the story of two lovers from feuding families who finally commit a suicide. The craftsmen did not seem to perform well but their loyalty to the lord removes all scruples so they do not realize their performance is ridiculous. What Hilský points out is that the real audience perceive the craftsmen performance via the nobility audience although they do not realize it.³⁶

³⁶ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 129.

4 ROMEO AND JULIET

Probably the most famous play of Shakespeare is *Romeo and Juliet*. It is considered to be well known tragic love story all over the world considering also the large number of various adaptations. The Zlin City Theatre performed the play three times since the theatre was established: in 1961, 1990 and 2007. Hilský suggests that the play has been written between 1595 and 1596. He also claims Shakespeare was most likely inspired by Arthur Brooke, a poet who could get incentive from not only Ovid's story of Pyramus and Thisbe but many others.³⁷ It is not surprising that *Romeo and Juliet* has its poetic traces inside the work because before the date of *Romeo and Juliet's* origin Shakespeare was engaged in poetry production while all England's theatres were closed due to bubonic plague. Hilský also presents the connection of *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* since the plays in many cases mirror each other.³⁸

The story begins with a fight between people of two feuding families Montagues and Capulets whose dispute lasts for a long time. Prince Escalus discontinues this fight with a warning that any breach of the peace is punishable by death. Anyway, the Capulets prepare a masquerade in which Count Paris is invited to court the favour of Juliet, Capulet's only daughter. Meanwhile Romeo's friends Benvolio and Mercutio persuade him to attend Capulet's masquerade because Romeo would like to meet beautiful Rosaline, Capulet's niece. However at the ball Romeo falls in love with Juliet. Although Romeo is identified at the ball by Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, Capulet forbids him to kill Romeo since they would break Escalus's ban. After the ball Romeo passes by Juliet's balcony and overhears her soliloquy about her love to Romeo even though he is from Montague family. Romeo expresses his feelings too and makes a proposal. They are secretly married next day. When Tybalt demands a duel, Romeo refuses because he becomes his family even though Tybalt does not know that. Suddenly, offended Mercutio starts to fight instead of Romeo and Tybalt kills him. Angry Romeo kills Tybalt. As a result Romeo is exiled from Verona but before he leaves, he secretly spends the night with Juliet. Then, Capulets agree to marry Juliet to Count Paris and ignore her objections. Desperate Juliet visits Friar Laurence who offers her a potion causing deathlike coma. After the consumption, Juliet appears to be dead. Her funeral is heard about by Romeo who believes Juliet is dead because no

³⁷ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 425.

³⁸ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 426.

clarification letter came from Friar Laurence so he buys a poison. By Capulet's crypt, Romeo encounters sad Paris and kills him in a duel. Then Romeo drinks the poison. Suddenly Juliet awakens, sees her Romeo dead so she stabs herself with his dagger. Afterwards Friar Laurence finds out he comes late and sadly recounts the story to the families and Prince Escalus. Finally their children's death reconciles both families.

The play consists of five acts where an introduction, a plot and a denouement appear in acts I to IV, the fifth act can be comprehended as a finale and conclusion. In the play there are used a lot of notes to actors, Shakespeare gave exact instructions how the play should look like.

There are no difficulties with translation of proper names as they have been acquired a long time ago and there was no need to change them. Some of them are just slightly changed to be more Czech. What is worth noticing is that in Josek's interpretation he has translated the names with foreign traces. Friar Laurence is presented here as "otec Lorenzo" unlike the most other translations where he is translated as "bratr Vavřinec" which is probably derived from the word *laurel*. By his translation Josek marked Laurence to be superior to Friar John because Josek has left him remained "bratr Jan". As a result it can be claimed that the rest of translators treat both friars equally. And even such a minor character as Gregory has two ways of translation – Josek in his effort to refer to foreign names has left Gregory the same but some other translators have changed Gregory to "Řehoř".

4.1 Romeo and Juliet 1961

The first interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* took place in the then Workers' Theatre on 19 March 1961 under a direction of Svatopluk Skopal. As well as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* of 1959, even this interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* was staged in the translation of Erich A. Saudek. The performance portrays classical interpretation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* which may be evident yet from the cast list below where overwhelming majority of characters were employed apart from some very minor ones (servants). Nothing points out that the play was rendered in modern way of acting since costumes look old-fashioned and fighting was performed by swords.

ESCALUS, PRINCE OF VERONA	Stanislav Ebens
MERCUTIO, RELATED TO ESCALUS	Jiří Maršálek
COUNT PARIS, RELATED TO ESCALUS	Miroslav Doležel

PAGE TO PARIS	Dana Klášterecká
CAPULET	Václav Jeřábek
COUSIN CAPULET/AN APOTHECARY	Zdeněk Vašek
LADY CAPULET	Vlasta Kalendová
TYBALT, NEPHEW TO LADY CAPULET	Evžen Kubíček
JULIET, DAUGHTER TO CAPULET	Miluše Hradská/Blažena Rýznarová
NURSE	Eva Matalová
PETER, SERVANT TO JULIET'S NURSE	Václav Kafka
MONTAGUE	Arnošt Kotouč
LADY MONTAGUE	Olga Šindelová
BENVOLIO, NEPHEW OF MONTAGUE	Josef Žáček
ROMEO, SON OF MONTAGUE	Rudolf Kokeš/Otakar Roubínek
FRIAR LAURENCE	Miloš Vosmanský
FRIAR JOHN	Václav Babka
THE FIRST WATCH	Otakar Roubínek, Rudolf Kokeš

As seen above a portrayal of a key couple was doubled. The first of alternated couples were novices Blažena Rýznarová and Otakar Roubínek, another couple was Miluše Hradská and Rudolf Kokeš. Anyway Karel Bundálek, reviewer of *Rovnost* magazine, noticed a lack of passion between both of couples. He claimed even though Rýznarová dealt with her role perfectly, her partner Roubínek is not very convincing. The same can be applied also to the second couple as for not convincing Kokeš as Romeo.³⁹ Another interesting mention about Romeo performers is that both of them also performed the first watch which may be understood as the characters of Samson and Gregory. Kokeš and Roubínek are not the only actors here who performed more characters. Zdeněk Vašek, a cousin to Capulet, represented also the apothecary who sells a poison to Romeo. So this double acting is not anything new for the Zlin City Theatre. However the theatre obviously did not mean to keep the general age accuracy when set 28-years-old Eva Matalová into the role of Juliet's nurse and 36-years-old Zdeněk Vašek into the role of Capulet's cousin who is described as an old man. Regarding the page to Count Paris, it is not the first time

³⁹ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 45.

for Dana Klášterecká when she performs a male role as for her rendition of Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 1959.

Although the files do not contain description of the stage, a scenographer responsible for the scene was Josef Vališ, long-time fellow-worker of director Svatopluk Skopal. His scene designs were usually complex and detailed thus it would not be a surprise if his stage plan for *Romeo and Juliet* was complex too and consequently not based on the Elizabethan theatre structure. The only available photo including props shows a balcony scene which is designed in a detailed way.

Music used in the performance came from Russian Sergei Prokofiev and Slovak Tibor Andrašovan. As much of theatre music from that time, even those two composers provided classical music full of calm passages of love but also unexpected twists.

As for the costumes of *Romeo and Juliet* from the sixties, the performance tried to catch the old age by imitations of costumes from the corresponding period of time. Young ethereal Juliet in a light baggy dress appeared as a symbol of purity as well as Romeo in light tights, overcoat and shirt. Actually all the characters had elaborately decorated costumes. The whole performance pays attention to feelings, morality and respect which is also recognizable on costumes even though Mercutio has very open view of this subject. But generally, a perception of sex is rather repressed in the play.

4.2 *Romeo and Juliet* 1990

The new year of 1990 was opened by Shakespeare's love tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*. The second interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* took place in the Workers' Theatre on 6 January 1990 in translation of Josef Topol. This year is significant for the Zlín theatre history because Zlín has freshly gained its name back from Gottwaldov. Paradoxically the theatre ensemble started such optimistic period of time, after the Velvet Revolution, by the tragedy. However this paradox might be clarified as a result of feelings of misery before the revolution when the performance was being prepared. The performance was majestic regarding an extent of cast and the scene arrangement even though it lasted just one hour.

The director of the performance, Jakub Korčák, tried hard to keep the most out of the story so the final script was nearly the same as the original piece of writing. Moreover some additional quips were added: e.g. a phonetic emphasis of the word "panna" of which Benvolio took advantage. Mercutio and Peter became a source of quips and jokes too. Additional jokes were usually an opportunity to put them into silent passages of play such as a situation when Mercutio offends Nurse – he lifts her wear up before he runs away. As

for leaving the text out, the second Chorus (beginning of II. act) and the scene with servants (in IV.5) was skipped entirely. Even though once in a while few lines are left out, nothing eliminates an original intention of feeling declarations which are dominant features of the play. Actually the much closer the end of the play comes, the more lines are skipped. Surprisingly, the performance was very short (just one hour with no interval) and that might be why also the opening text of Chorus was changed into the monologue of Friar Laurence from II.3: because originally Chorus opens the play with statement the performance takes two hours.

In this interpretation one can meet familiar members of the Zlin City Theatre of today, seeing the roles of Romeo, Lady Capulet or Count Paris in the following cast list of the performance acquired from the performance programme:

ESCALUS, PRINCE OF VERONA	Karel Semerád
MERCUTIO, RELATED TO ESCALUS	Ondřej Mikulášek
COUNT PARIS, RELATED TO ESCALUS	Rostislav Marek
CAPULET	Stanislav Tříška
COUSIN CAPULET, AN OLD MAN	Miloš Vosmanský
LADY CAPULET	Jana Tomečková
TYBALT, NEPHEW TO LADY CAPULET	Petr Franěk
JULIET, DAUGHTER TO CAPULET	Markéta Nováková
NURSE	Věra Nováková
PETER, SERVANT TO JULIET'S NURSE	Karel Hoffmann
MONTAGUE	Jiří Juřina
LADY MONTAGUE	Zdena Kružíková
BENVOLIO, NEPHEW OF MONTAGUE	Pavel Majkus
ROMEO, SON OF MONTAGUE	Luděk Randár
FRIAR LAURENCE	Roman Mecnarowski
FRIAR JOHN	František Šnábl
SAMSON	František Nedbal
GREGORY	Petr Jančařík
ABRAHAM	Jiří Pištek
BALTHASAR	Vladimír Hrabal
GUARDS COMMANDER	Dušan Sitek
GUARDS	Karel Štefl, Jiří Hrubý

LADIES

Jana Čížková, Hana Placandová

Supporters of the Zlín City Theatre can recognize some names of actors and actresses of today's theatre. Young Luděk Randár, the performer of Romeo, manages his role to play with grasp but the rendering of Juliet was sometimes confusing with reference to her senseless running around the scene. The role of Nurse was performed by woman of the appropriate age unlike the previous interpretation of the play. Nevertheless she expressed herself like not to feel involved in the troubles of families' enmity (in I.5: "The only son of your great enemy." translated as: "Jediný syn těch vašich nepřátel."). Furthermore her general rendition delivered the impression of garrulous and bothersome lady to audience. On the other hand Jana Tomečková's character of Lady Capulet appears to be noble and elegant lady with a pleasant personality although she should appear more strict as well as Capulet. The performer of Capulet deals with his manners with certain grasp. The performer of Capulet was Stanislav Tříška who freshly became the artistic director just in 1990.⁴⁰

The stage was not changed during the whole performance because its structure was too complex and too heavy to manipulate with it. On the other hand the large construction represented a manor from outside just surrounded the stage and the space in the middle was empty. This space stood for many places of actions: a square, Capulet's manor with its garden and finally burial chamber of Capulets. Minor places of actions such as Laurence's monastery and the city of Mantova (where Romeo was sent to exile) were held at the edge of the stage out of the construction. Here actors paid attention not to step in the area of the construction as it actually represented the city of Verona.

Musical accompaniment was being provided by a music of Hanuš Bartoň which mostly just emphasized given situations, such as an entry of Escalus (dramatic music which indicates someone significant enters the scene) and fighting of Mercutio and Tybalt (calm music in the background, did not reflect fighting mood on the stage).

Actually the costumes were not expressive of something as they were plain, not decorated which is opposite from the previous interpretation of the play. The only exceptions were the clothing of Cousin Capulet, Count Paris and Tybalt. Cousin Capulet, an old man, did not appear to be gentry family member with his strange combination of

⁴⁰ "Síň slávy," Městské divadlo Zlín, accessed March 15, 2016, <http://www.divadlozlin.cz/cs/divadlo/soubor/sin-slavy/>.

garments: plain white clothes reminded some kind of nightshirt and an animal skin around his neck. Paris wore a white shining costume and the hat with a feather. Such costume ensured him an upper class treatment at first sight. Speaking of Tybalt, he was the exact opposite of Romeo not only by their minds but also by their clothes since Romeo was dressed in white and Tybalt in black with some metal accessories attached to his clothes. The black costume might symbolize negative energy including hate which occupied him. Another interesting thing about their clothes is that before Romeo leaves into exile, he shows himself shirtless. Nevertheless today the Zlin City Theatre is not shy to perform even complete nudity on the stage).

4.3 Romeo and Juliet 2007

Those days, a beginning young director Katharina Schmitt tried to produce this well known story in her point of view and with no intervals. Unfortunately for her and whole Zlín theatre, the play did not succeed enough to be performed longer than four months. It seems that this two-hour-length performance was not right for conservative Zlín audience as it is usually so with classical plays performed atypically in Zlín. Based on the opinion of managing director of the Zlin City Theatre, Petr Michálek, Zlín audience forgives mistakes only with difficulty.⁴¹ By this he confirms general speculation that owing to this performance the theatre has lost some of subscribers. Despite the fact that Jiří Josek's translation is very poetic audience did not appreciate this interpretation as they could hardly link it with a tragical romantic story.

The cast is considerably narrower than the first and second interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Zlin City Theatre. See the cast below for understanding of further information.

ESCALUS, PRINCE OF VERONA	Radoslav Šopík
MERCUTIO, RELATED TO ESCALUS	Zdeněk Lambor
COUNT PARIS, RELATED TO ESCALUS	Radovan Král
FRIAR LAURENCE	Pavel Leicman
CAPULET	Zdeněk Julina

⁴¹ "Diváci ve Zlíně omyl neodpustí, říká ředitel městského divadla," idnes.cz, accessed March 16, 2016, http://zlin.idnes.cz/rozhovor-s-reditelem-mestskeho-divadla-ve-zline-petrem-michalkem-pyh-/zlin-zpravy.aspx?c=A140628_2077889_zlin-zpravy_ras.

LADY CAPULET	Eva Daňková
TYBALT, NEPHEW TO LADY CAPULET	Tomáš Slepánek
JULIET, DAUGHTER TO CAPULET	Kateřina Lidáková
NURSE	Jeanette Zapletalová
MONTAGUE	Gustav Řezníček
BENVOLIO, NEPHEW OF MONTAGUE	Pavel Vacek
ROMEO, SON OF MONTAGUE	Josef Koller

Nurse was played by Jeanette Zapletalová who was 32 back then. That does not correspond with intended performer of the character as Nurse is written to be an old woman with regard to her health complaints (II.5). Actually the same age problem with Nurse met also the very first interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Zlin City Theatre. Regarding the main characters, Sladkowski appreciates the way the lovers are dealing with their radical personality change on the stage – from children they become a man and a woman.⁴² But the famous balcony scene was done too sloppily as the text was notably shortened.

Director Schmitt and literary manager Jana Kafková abridged the play script considerably and the minor characters were crossed out mercilessly. As a result this interpretation gains just a basic plotline and lacks an intensive romance and comic scenes. Consequently the whole concept of the performance was highly functionalist corresponding to the structure of Zlin. One of the questions is also whether it was the director's own goal or just general effort to follow the information in Chorus's prologue that the performance will take two hours because the performance really takes exactly two hours. Besides that it is obvious that Mercutio got a lot of space to express himself in contrary with other characters in such abridged interpretation. His perception of love was certainly one of the play's messages.

A gloomy and dark scene would most likely correspond to Elizabethan theatre standards concerning the empty stage with the two props only – giant metallic tweezers and a bucket of water. Tweezers were changing its look alongside with locomotion of the revolving stage. It served as indication for a balcony, a bed, a hideaway and at the end as a burial chamber. With the only giant prop of metal, the scene appears to be cold and distant. As for the tool to kill people it is not the sword but the bucket of water. That is why the

⁴² Marcel Sladkowski, "Romeo a Julie bourají mýtus o romantické smrti," *Mladá fronta Dnes*, December 28, 2007, B/5.

scenes of death appear rather comical than serious because one just put his enemy's head into the bucket and that kills him. In fact, the audience laughed in inappropriate moments – for example when Juliet commits a suicide. Iva Mikulová pointed out that the bucket remains at the stage all the time like omnipresent death and meaningless hate which is between the two families.⁴³ In addition to that, Sladkowski claims such hate is easy to be involved in as seen in the first scene when Benvolio gets his trousers soaked.⁴⁴

The music was composed by Roman Zach, Czech actor. He tried to create the music that would fit into the concept of this interpretation but those strange noises rather disturbed the performance, especially the songs with lyrics. Although there were also non-lyrical songs, indigenous music at the ball is not very suitable even for this interpretation. But sounds which stressed dramatic scenes were used properly with regard to the given concept. Furthermore the sound of church bells was a good idea to set in the appropriate situations (e.g. when Friar Laurence appears and when Tybalt dies).

Certain coldness affects also the costumes which appear universal. Characters are not decked out by any dresses of the given era, just by suits and plain dresses even during the ball where masks are added to their outfits. However these carnival masks differ with the whole concept of this interpretation as the masks represent colored doggies, Indians and other children figures. Another obvious mismatch about the costumes is Friar Laurence's clothing. As a cleric he could be dressed in compliance with that (at least a clerical collar) instead of casual brown wear.

⁴³ Iva Mikulová, "Vášně utopené v kýblu," *i-divadlo.cz*, December 28, 2007. Accessed March 19, 2016, <http://www.i-divadlo.cz/recenze/vasne-utopene-v-kyblu>.

⁴⁴ Sladkowski, "Romeo a Julie bourají mýtus o romantické smrti."

5 TWELFTH NIGHT OR WHAT YOU WILL

This comedy play was firstly performed in the Zlin City Theatre in 1952 which makes the second play by Shakespeare in this theatre since its establishment. Later, *Twelfth Night* was performed twice more: in 1975 and 2015 which was the most recent performance of any Shakespeare's play in the theatre. According to Josek the play might debut just on Twelfth Night on 6 January 1602 at Middle Temple but that cannot be proven for sure. On the other hand there are evidences that one of first re-runs took place at the same place in less than a month.⁴⁵ Apparently this is the most musical Shakespeare's play with regard to the fact it starts and ends by music. The music is not only presented by the characters but the large part of it is even well preserved as sheet music to *Twelfth Night* which primarily mirrors a mood and inner feelings of characters. Such musical side of the play is also supported by usage of alliteration and assonance in text which translators try to keep in their translations.

Translator Martin Hilský lays stress on the first sentence of the play which also determines the main message of the play: "If music be the food of love, play on."⁴⁶ by which Shakespeare wants probably to say that love is all you need. Josek points out *Twelfth Night* is the last Shakespeare's play where love and amusement win over feelings of sadness and grudge.⁴⁷

Viola and Sebastian are look-alike twins shipwrecked in Illyria but each on a different coast so they do not know about each other's survival. Viola comes to a manor of Duke Orsino to serve him disguised as a young man named Cesario owing to a help of a captain who has rescued her. Duke Orsino is in love with lady Olivia who refuses any proposals because she is in mourning for death of her brother and father. Orsino although being sad for Olivia's constant refusing quickly gets to like young Cesario and makes him his close friend which also contains sending him with love messages to Olivia. But Viola suddenly starts falling in love with Orsino so it is difficult for her to deliver Orsino's love messages to Olivia. The plot is set when Olivia falls in love with young Cesario whom she considers to be a man. Everyone of this love triangle is miserable. Meanwhile other members of Olivia's mansion try to make fun of pompous steward Malvolio for spoiling all the fun and revelry. Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, Maria, Fabian and a jester Feste come up with a plan to

⁴⁵ Jirůí Josek, introduction to *Twelfth Night, or, What you will* by William Shakespeare (Praha: Romeo, 2008), 5.

⁴⁶ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviřtě svět*, 254.

⁴⁷ Josek, introduction to *Twelfth Night, or, What you will*.

make Malvolio believe lady Olivia loves him so they write a letter which appears to be written by Olivia full of love to Malvolio. In the letter there is a demand on Malvolio to wear yellow stockings cross gartered, to be rude to the rest of the servants and to smile on Olivia all the time. As Malvolio keeps acting so, Olivia thinks he gets crazy and he is locked in a small dark room. But then Sebastian appears in Illyria with his friend and rescuer Antonio whose presence is risky considering an animosity between him and Orsino. Because it not difficult to see Olivia's long-time attraction to Cesario Sebastian is challenged by Sir Andrew to a duel of Olivia's heart as he is mistaken for Cesario. In the middle of the duel Olivia interrupts a fight and ask muddled Sebastian to marry her. He accepts and they are secretly married. But meanwhile Antonio is arrested by Orsino's officers and begs Viola for help, disguised Viola who looks like her brother Sebastian denies knowing Antonio but starts to hope her brother is alive. Finally Sebastian and Viola meet each other and everyone sees their similarity. Viola reveals she is a woman which is the point when Orsino realizes he loves Viola and ask her to marry him. Apart from these two marriages related to both siblings also Sir Toby and Maria were married privately. The story is ended by Malvolio's promise of a revenge to all of them for such humiliation.

This play consists of five acts. The acts I. to IV. represent an introduction and a complex plot whereas the last V. act is a denouement and conclusion. Besides that the play obviously includes two plotlines. In the main one, the plot deals with Olivia-Viola-Orsino love triangle while the side plotline welcomes spectators to Olivia's manor to watch lives of its members.

Both translations of Saudek and Hilský are special when dealing with proper names. Saudek's translation attempts to look exotic with regard to endings of names Sebastiano, Valentino and Fabiano. On the other hand proper names translation of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew has made them more Czech when Sir Toby Belch became "Tobiáš Říhal" indicated by the word "belch" and Sir Andrew Aguecheek became "Ondřej Třasořitka" as his last name means some shivering illness. And clown Feste has become "Vejražka" in Saudek's translation. Hilský has stuck with Tobiáš Říhal and Ondřej Třasořitka but the rest of names remain unchanged from the original. In addition Jiří Josek dealt with the names of two men differently while he shifted Sir Toby's last name to "Brock" in meaning "drunk as brock" and Sir Andrew was renamed to "André Chabrus" where his last name indicates he is a sick person. Josek also played with Feste's name, consequently Feste a fool has become August a fool in Josek's translation to mark him as a comedian.

5.1 Twelfth Night 1952

The entry of *Twelfth Night* to the Zlín theatre took place right on 31 December 1952 which makes it very festive event. Actually the festivity spirit accompanied the performance every time it was playing which was also the main aim of the performance according to the message in the script of director Aleš Podhorský. The performance was successful most likely just because of guest director Podhorský who produced performances in socialist spirit.⁴⁸ By every rerun the ensemble tried to arouse cheerfulness mainly to audience sitting in the auditorium during this long performance which contained two intervals.

As most of translations of fifties, even this one was translated by E. A. Saudek which made the story kind of archaic but that is why the script was refined. Apart from some small word changes and a few crossed out lines, the script remained the same as Saudek translated it. Some lines could be crossed out just because the performance was too long. Speaking of those word changes, some words were too rude, some of them just needed adapt to the local speech. Besides that some lines were exchanged between Fabian and Sir Toby.

The cast of *Twelfth Night* is wide which is daring if we realize the stage was really small in the old theatre building. The cast list is acquired from the performance programme:

ORSINO, DUKE OF ILLYRIA	Jiří Mikota
SEBASTIAN, BROTHER TO VIOLA	Evžen Kubíček
ANTONIO, A SEA CAPTAIN	Antonín Ženčák
CAPTAIN, FRIEND TO VIOLA	Stanislav Holub
VALENTINE, GENTLEMAN ATTENDING ON THE DUKE	Josef Kozák
CURIO, GENTLEMAN ATTENDING ON THE DUKE	Přemysl Matoušek
SIR TOBY BELCH, UNCLE TO OLIVIA	Václav Babka
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK	Otto Šimánek
MALVOLIO, STEWARD TO OLIVIA	Miroslav Horák
FABIAN, SERVANT TO OLIVIA	Jan Cmíral
FESTE, A CLOWN TO OLIVIA	Karel Novák
OLIVIA, A RICH COUNTESS	Marie Mikotová

⁴⁸ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 30.

VIOLA, A SISTER TO SEBASTIAN	Ljuba Benešová
MARIA, OLIVIA'S CHAMBERMAID	Helena Bendová
	Šárka Miškovcová
FIRST OFFICER	Vilém Kyzlink
SECOND OFFICER	Jan Staněk

Concerning Olivia's manor, one of first things that comes to mind is two actresses in the role of Maria, they obviously alternated each other. Dark haired Helena Bendová as Maria seems to be resolute but cheery woman who fits well to Sir Toby played by vigorous Václav Babka and both of them in the same age group. Sir Andrew was played by very tall and talented Otto Šimánek, later familiar as Mr. Tau all around Europe. The last member of this group is Fabian who was played by Jan Cmíral. Evžen Kubíček playing Sebastian belonged among noticeable actors of the theatre for his comedy-based acting style. As a student of JAMU (Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts) he played Fabian in the National Theatre Brno so he was already experienced with *Twelfth Night*. Later he became also play director and left Zlín in 1963 for the sake of Pardubice theatre.⁴⁹

Unfortunately no photos can show the whole scene designed by Zdeněk Hybler. But from archival photos there are clear traces of wealth in Olivia's manor as for sumptuous curtains, tapestry and striking carpet laid over one stair stage. Therefore the floor and the background determined the appearance of the scene. Dimensions of the stage did not allow many props there and the whole period of fifties can be described as realistic stage design⁵⁰ which means limited number of props on the stage.

The music of the performance was composed by Metod Přikryl who is known as a composer of military and Socialist music. Therefore he either composed something new or the music was not really appropriate for the play. Another conclusion may be such kind of music was required in the then communist Gottwaldov city.

Costumes for this play were designed by Zdeněk Hybler too. They do not have modern traces at all and correspond to the scene design well. Most of these costumes have several layers of clothing so the whole setting does not look plain even though there is just a few props on the stage. The darkest member of Olivia's manor was Malvolio played by strictly-looked Miroslav Horák. His thin black coat mirrors his personality and spectators

⁴⁹ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 35.

⁵⁰ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 36.

understand that he is a bad character of the play together with bold eyebrows and evil moustache. Men characters wore shorts with tights which matches with the intended epoch of the performance. They also used swords to fight.

5.2 Twelfth Night 1975

The second launch of *Twelfth Night* in Gottwaldov started on 18 October 1975 at seven o'clock p.m. This performance in the concept of Popular theatre gained success by its emphasized romanticism, dynamic activity and thanks to director Alois Hajda. The whole theatre occurred in the so-called Era of Hajda which means plays performed in the Worker's Theatre belonged among the best in whole Czechoslovakia because of Hajda's artistic agenda. To manage such artistic agenda was a way more difficult as the management of the theatre had to follow socialist culture policy as Mikulová and Sladkowski claim.⁵¹

Hajda choosed the translation of E. A. Saudek but he did not mean to stuck with such archaic script. He wanted people to empathize with his performance so together with Antonín Přidal they made radical adjustment of the script and changed it into current language of people. The romantic sense of the performance was quite broken but saved poetics and added songs equalized it. Apart from language change, line cuts was quite radical too. The performance acquired fast flow of the plot and more activity space for actors - fencing scenes were not avoided. Yet the beginning of the performance was fast because it started by the scene II. where Viola shipwrecked in Illyria, then the story continued by the scene I. followed by scene III.

In the cast of the performance some present actors of the Zlín ensemble can be found already (Jana Tomečková, Pavel Leicman) but also more familiar actors appeared on stage.

ORSINO, DUKE OF ILLYRIA	Karel Semerád
SEBASTIAN, BROTHER TO VIOLA	Pavel Leicman
ANTONIO, A SEA CAPTAIN	Antonín Ženčák
CAPTAIN, FRIEND TO VIOLA	Jiří Maršálek
VALENTINE, GENTLEMAN ATTENDING ON THE DUKE	Jiří Juřina
CURIO, GENTLEMAN ATTENDING ON THE DUKE	Radomír Chabina

⁵¹ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 118-121.

SIR TOBY BELCH, UNCLE TO OLIVIA	Jan Honsa
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK	František Houdek
MALVOLIO, STEWARD TO OLIVIA	Stanislav Tříška
FABIAN, SERVANT TO OLIVIA	Ivan Kalina
FESTE, A CLOWN TO OLIVIA	Roman Mecnarowski
OLIVIA, A RICH COUNTESS	Marcela Chlupová
VIOLA, A SISTER TO SEBASTIAN	Zdena Kružíková
MARIA, OLIVIA'S CHAMBERMAID	Jana Tomečková
OFFICERS	Zdeněk Vašek
	Miloš Vosmanský
	Ondřej Mikulášek

Owing to the thesis of Dušan Zdráhal, individual characters can be described in detail also for his personal talks with performance's producers. Hajda's intention was to make Malvolio the key character of the performance. Famous Stanislav Tříška as Malvolio represented a typical evil character who is against the good ones. As Malvolio was the central character, the attention was focused on Maria, Sir Toby and Sir Andrew as well. The comic three were accentuated by emphasized accent and comic exaggeration. In fact this side plot became the centre of fun and achieved more spectators' attention than the main plot with love triangle which was the goal. Feste by ensemble mainstay Roman Mecnarowski was just kind of unintentional commentator whereas Chlupová as Olivia created classically perfect literary character of a lifeless lady who was the exact opposite to vital Viola of Zdena Kružíková. At the end of performance Malvolio walked the auditorium and threatened audience to take a revenge⁵² which might provoke spectators' emotions and intensified a final impression of the performance.

Great wooden construction designed by Ladislav Vychodil dominated on the scene behind which great piece of fabric served as background. This piece of fabric was clearly sewed of several more smaller pieces of fabrics which finally looked as Cesario's clothing. Actors could frolic over the scene owing to multi-floor constructions with ladders that could work multi-functionally as it was easy to rearrange individual parts of the construction to make another one (e.g. jail for Malvolio).

⁵² Dušan Zdráhal, "Režijní profil Aloise Hajdy (Inscenační tvorba z let 1972-1991)" (PhD diss., Janáčkova akademie múzických umění v Brně, 2016), 45.

The sheet of documents shows names of music composer (Pavel Blatný) and conductor (Josef Sedlář) which could mean the music was not only played but it could be played live (or at least composed especially for this performance). This idea supports the fact several new songs were created for this performance. These new songs were sung by Feste.

Costumes appeared very fussy but regarding the plain wooden scene characters in such costumes completed the stage to the optimal condition. For example Olivia's dress seems to shine over the whole theatre for all these glitters on it and even Maria does not look like chambermaid but Olivia's friend because of her classy dress. Curious thing may be Malvolio's white nightshirt with a cap when he comes to scold Maria, Toby, Andrew and Fabian for noise disturbance.

5.3 Twelfth Night 2015

Director Jakub Nvota has already produced a successful detective comedy *Shear Madness* in the Zlín City Theatre running since 2010 and he became also the director of the latest *Twelfth Night* in Zlín. Its opening night was 28 February 2015 and the performance lasted 2 hours 40 minutes including one interval. Although Josek claims this comedy is considered to belong among the best Shakespeare's comedies⁵³, local spectators did not appreciate the play well therefore the Zlín City Theatre performed the play for four months only.

The translation of Martin Hilský used in the performance suits to Zlín theatre ensemble well regarding his visits of rehearsals where he discussed in detail the whole concept of *Twelfth Night* with actors. And it was Hilský himself who applauded standing as the first one at the opening night. The script was not changed and textually was very accurate based on Hilský's translation but related to the hotel scene, the play got different undertone. All these characters' original categorizations were changed because the performance took place in a hotel and characters were somehow related to it thus description of characters below is not very accurate.

ORSINO, DUKE OF ILLYRIA

Zdeněk Lambor

SEBASTIAN, BROTHER TO VIOLA

Radovan Král

⁵³ Josek, introduction to *Twelfth Night, or, What you will*.

ANTONIO, A SEA CAPTAIN	Jan Řezníček
VALENTINE, GENTLEMAN ATTENDING ON THE DUKE	Pavel Vacek
SIR TOBY BELCH, UNCLE TO OLIVIA	Radoslav Šopík
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK	Josef Koller
MALVOLIO, STEWARD TO OLIVIA	Gustav Řezníček
FABIAN, SERVANT TO OLIVIA	Luděk Randár
FESTE, A CLOWN TO OLIVIA	Jan Leflík
OLIVIA, A RICH COUNTESS	Marie Vančurová
VIOLA, A SISTER TO SEBASTIAN	Hana Tomáš Briešťanská
MARIA, OLIVIA'S CHAMBERMAID	Vendula Svobodová
CAPTAIN, PRIEST	Rostislav Marek
OTHERS	

Orsino as proprietor of hotel Orsino was played by Zdeněk Lambor. After a quite long time he got big chance to star in a play, unfortunately he was not very happy to perform Orsino as this was his third interpretation of the same character.⁵⁴ For the first time he played Orsino during his studies, second Orsino role he performed in 2008 at Studio Marta in Brno. He is not the only character playing the same role several times as Gustav Řezníček performed Malvolio firstly twenty-six years ago in 1990 during his studies at JAMU. While Hanka Briešťanská performed Viola for the first time it must be very lucrative chance for her as she was willing to commute to Zlín - by that time she was no longer a member of the theatre ensemble for the sake of National theatre Brno. For Jan Řezníček, new backup of the ensemble, this was his first role in the Zlín City Theatre ever. His corpulent figure was utilized in his rendering of Antonio to make scenes in more comical way (e.g. when they try to arrest Antonio). Other characters not named in the cast list were Jakub Malovaný (stage manager) as luggage boy and a student of Zlín acting school Lucie Okonová as a hotel guest. It was clever idea to set another guest in because once the story takes place in the hotel it would be strange not to see another guests there.

Guest director Nvota obviously underestimated demands which common spectator place on Shakespeare's play because the scene was set as a hotel called Orsino and the whole stage was full of many props so it can be said the performance did not have anything

⁵⁴ personal talk with Zdeněk Lambor

in common with Elizabethan theatre. Hotel scene was not being changed during the performance. Unfortunately this scene designed by Tom Ciller completely ruined the original meaning of two separated manors. Hotel Orsino worked as one building of which Orsino was the proprietor, Valentine became barman, Maria was chambermaid, Feste became lift operator, Toby Belch worked at reception and Fabian worked as cook in a hotel kitchen. The rest of characters worked as hotel guests. For spectators seeing the play for the first time, the later discovery that Maria, Fabian, Feste should be servants to Olivia and Sir Toby is originally her uncle, must be confusing.

The four-stars hotel appeared quite modern with regard to a lift operated by Feste, a microphone on a reception desk and many gold lamps located over the whole hotel scene with wooden walls. Great stairs with red carpet dominated in the middle of the scene between reception space and lounge space (with a mobile bar). These stairs lead to the next floor where are hidden rooms of guests.

It must be noted that music selection does not relate to original sheet music. For example it includes song *Original Shuffle* by Django Reinhardt. Whole music concept is divided mostly between Orsino's scenes and staff's scenes. When staff members appear on the stage the music is mostly party-like while romantic Orsino listens to serious music.

Even though costumes (wigs included) of Hana Knotková are very striking, they create the right comic undertone. Gustav Řezníček as Malvolio attracts by noticeable appearance of Karl Lagerfeld marking his arrogance and superiority. Olivia's eccentric dresses with wig and Maria's doll-like appearance create interesting show of costumes. Clever idea was to make siblings' pinstriped suits the same. This way Briešťanská and Král were not easily recognized on the stage because of their moustaches and hair.

And even though long monologues of Viola and Orsino were breathtaking, the biggest applause got Malvolio for performing a dummy and Sebastian with Olivia for the amorous scene (IV.1). In view of the fact that the comedy was set into unusual environment actors tried to pull out the best out of the story but obviously it was not enough. However director was probably inspired by the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester by *Twelfth Night* from 2003 which performed this comedy at Heartbreak hotel with modern rock music.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Lyn Gardner, "Twelfth Night by Royal Exchange," *The Guardian*, September 19, 2003, accessed March 19, 2016. <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2003/sep/19/theatre2>.

6 HAMLET

Based on arguments of Martin Hilský, probably the greatest tragedy of all time *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* has been written between the end of 1599 and the beginning of 1601 and has been based on a story from the twelfth-century chronicle of Saxo Grammaticus about Danish royal family.⁵⁶ Hilský also indicates *Hamlet* was a successful play yet from its release with regard to a very early illegal copy. Evidences prove that the first illegal duplicate of this play was probably made by memory of an actor played Marcellus even though this copy was not accurate.⁵⁷ The play offers many themes to think about but the main themes of the play are probably regicide and insanity. Jiří Josek gave well-expressed description of the play's protagonists of whose acting style was changing over time. The first performer of Hamlet ever was Richard Burbage whose way of interpretation is unknown but the seventeenth century actor Thomas Betterton acted Hamlet as a kind of avenger and later David Garrick as well. On the other hand actors of the nineteenth century understood Hamlet as a torn character. At the beginning of the twentieth century John Gielgud represented nobility but just when he became director approximately thirty years later, instructed Richard Burton to perform like on a rehearsal of *Hamlet*. Since then *Hamlet* has met various interpretations from school rebel to Hamlet suffers from Oedipus complex.⁵⁸ The Zlín City Theatre has met three interpretations of this drama. The first in 1959, then in 1976 and 1998.

The story mostly takes place at Elsinore castle in Denmark where also two guards opens a play as they see a ghost of recently deceased King Hamlet walks ramparts. They speak to Hamlet's friend Horatio about the ghost. Horatio informs Hamlet and they both are soon convinced the ghost is real. The ghost of King Hamlet tells Hamlet he was murdered by his brother Claudius who is now a new king and ask Hamlet to take a revenge for the murder. Hamlet thinks of the revenge only and pretends a madness to find out the truth. His mother Gertrude and Claudius worry about his health so they hire Hamlet's friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to watch him. But a pompous Polonius comes up with an idea Hamlet is mad with love for Ophelia, Polonius's daughter. But Hamlet does not seem to love her as he sends her to a nunnery rather. Then, to make sure Claudius is the

⁵⁶ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 457-460.

⁵⁷ Hilský, *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*, 458.

⁵⁸ Jiří Josek, introduction to *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* by William Shakespeare, (Praha: Romeo, 1999), 5.

murderer, Hamlet orders a group of actors to perform a play called *The Murder of Gonzago* with a scene showing the exact King Hamlet's assassination as the ghost told him. Hamlet watches Claudius' reaction and when Claudius escapes Hamlet considers it as a proof. So he goes to confront his mother into her chamber but sees someone hidden behind a tapestry of whom Hamlet thinks it is Claudius spying, so Hamlet stabs that person finding out it is Polonius. As Ophelia hears her father's death she gets insane and Claudius starts to fear of his own life so he sends Hamlet to England accompanied by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with a letter to the English king to execute Hamlet immediately. During the way Hamlet learns why he is sent there and escapes from the ship back to Elsinore where Ophelia's brother Laertes just arrives angered by his father's death and sister's madness. He blames Hamlet and challenges him to a match. Anyway Claudius needs to be certain Hamlet will die so he prepares Laertes a poisoned sword. In a case Hamlet will win he prepares a poisoned wine for a winner. But Gertrude enters and reports Ophelia has drowned. Later on, her funeral is led by Laertes. Hamlet realizes he lost the loved one and admits his feelings to Ophelia. The sword-fighting begins and Hamlet scores first but refuses to drink from the offered goblet. Instead, Gertrude drinks from it and she is immediately dead. Then Hamlet and Laertes wound each other by the poisoned sword. Just before their death Hamlet takes all his power remained, kills Claudius and then all of them die. At this moment Norwegian prince enters and reports Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead. Later he also takes power of the kingdom. Horatio as the last survival fulfils Hamlet's last request and tells the tragic story.

Lives of all main characters are precisely lined up to death. Hamlet hesitates whether to follow his father's wish or not which also proves his famous monologue of "To be, or not to be; that is the question." (III.1). Finally he sees there is no other possibility than discover his father's murderer even though he must give up his relationship with Ophelia. As a result of this unfortunate love and her father's death Ophelia obtains a fate of insanity ends up by death. Because of her death also Laertes sees no other possibility than a match with Hamlet and both of them die. However Polonius, Gertrude and Claudius earn their death basically by corrupted manners. Focusing on Hamlet's former schoolfellows Rosencrantz and Guildenstern one can realize they appeared in their roles of betrayers accidentally. Both of them acted in their best faith for Hamlet and the king but still end up dead. A native of Zlín, playwright Tom Stoppard, noticed their unfortunate fate and in 1966 he decided to tell the story from their point of view by his play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead* where characters are permanently trapped in their role and cannot

escape because Stoppard keeps *Hamlet's* storyline. Stoppard gives both of them just a space to express themselves which makes it even more tragic because they must die.

The play consists of five acts. Introduction, plot and denouement appear in acts I to IV, the fifth act works as conclusion. This play is very complex work created of many storylines nonetheless it follows just Hamlet's story which is developed further but other characters' stories remain hidden.

The Zlin City Theatre used two translators for three interpretations of this play. Translations of the first and the second interpretations were made by E. A. Saudek, in that time the most used translator. The interpretation of 1998 was translated by less known Zdeněk Urbánek. Because nearly all the characters of *Hamlet* are known by their first name only, their translations do not differ significantly. The only contrast that worth to mention is the difference in understanding of transformation into Czech speaking of C/K letters in names. Unlike many of later translators (e.g. Urbánek, Hilský, Josek) Saudek keeps the play Czech when Claudius is written as "Klaudius" and Cornelius as "Kornelius". Concerning Hamlet's famous monologue traditionally accompanied by a skull differs as well. "To be, or not to be," (III.1) is generally translated to Czech as "Být či nebýt," but by the time of Saudek many people just knew it as "Žít nebo nežít," according to his translation.

6.1 Hamlet 1959

The Workers' Theatre has met *Hamlet* for the first time on 27 June 1959, just before summer holiday which usually ends a theatre season. Director Stanislav Holub must produce the complex performance at the small stage which might be interesting to see such a challenge. According to Sladkowski and Mikulová, *Hamlet* of 1959 was performed as contemporary interpretation of classic.⁵⁹ In other words this interpretation, including the text of E. A. Saudek, was adapted to modern audience.

The script of actor František Řehák gives precise information about dealing with text and characters. Extensive cuts were related not only to lines but to whole scenes. It seems only crucial text was kept and the speech around, probably not substantive to the main issue of the play, was cut. Besides that some monologues (e.g. "To be, or not to be; that is the question." III.1) were shifted into another scene. Justification for this is that such

⁵⁹ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 43.

complex play on the small stage of adapted Chamber cinema might need these cuts to appear active all the time. Because of crossing out many scenes, the performance acquired a new appearance: the third act becomes the second and the third act began in IV.5. Generally based on the accessed script it can be said the performance was shortened by 35%. Nevertheless number of characters was obviously not affected by these changes and nearly all original characters were on as shown on the cast list below:

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK	Jiří Maršálek
CLAUDIUS, KING OF DENMARK	Jiří Letenský
THE GHOST OF THE LATE KING, HAMLET'S FATHER	Bohumil Pastorek
GERTRUDE, THE QUEEN, HAMLET'S MOTHER	Zora Kolovratová
POLONIUS, COUNCILLOR OF STATE	Antonín Ženčák
LAERTES, POLONIUS'S SON	Stanislav Ebens
OPHELIA, POLONIUS'S DAUGHTER	Vlasta Kalendová/Dana Klášterecká
HORATIO, FRIEND OF HAMLET	Jaroslav Švehlík
ROSENCRANTZ, FORMER SCHOOLMATE OF HAMLET	Otakar Moučka
GUILDENSTERN, FORMER SCHOOLMATE OF HAMLET	Miloš Vosmanský
FORTINBRAS, PRINCE OF NORWAY	Václav Beránek
VOLTEMAND, AMBASSADOR TO NORWAY	Arnošt Kotouč
CORNELIUS, AMBASSADOR TO NORWAY	Antonín Soudek
MARCELLUS, KING'S GUARD	Evžen Kubíček
BARNARDO, KING'S GUARD	Václav Beránek
FRANCISCO, KING'S GUARD	Zdeněk Vašek
OSRIC, A FOPPISH COURTIER	Václav Babka
FIRST PLAYER	František Řehák/Josef Žáček
SECOND PLAYER	Leopold Běhan/Vladimír Mílek
PLAYER QUEEN	Míroslava Malecká
GRAVE-DIGGERS	Arnošt Kotouč, Zdeněk Vašek
SAILORS	Otakar Moučka, Miloš Vosmanský
A PRIEST	Bohumil Pastorek

The character of Reynaldo was erased together with his only dialog (II.1) and the performance continues as Ophelia enters. There also are no records that any extras (courtiers, soldiers, servants etc.) performed during this interpretation. Talking of the

protagonist, it was no surprise to appoint Jiří Maršálek Hamlet because as Sladkowski and Mikulová note, he gained many protagonist roles yet from the beginning of his career in the theatre and he was a crucial male member of the theatre ensemble until 1989.⁶⁰ Roles of Ophelia and both player were alternated as seen in the cast list. Pastorek, Moučka and Vosmanský, Beránek, Kotouč and Vašek stood for minor double roles in the performance.

Although the photos do not enable to see the whole scene created by Josef Jochman, obvious part of the scene was a great striped curtain in the background and several smaller props as chairs and table with decanter and chalices. In all probability these are the only props on the scene because as Mikulová and Sladkowski state, Zlín scenography of fifties (especially on such a small stage of former Chamber cinema) was created mostly of these elements only.⁶¹ Nothing indicates that music was used during performances, most likely there was not any.

Jochman designed costumes as well. Ethereal Ophelia wore light waving dress with long sleeves and blonde wig. As Maršálek's Hamlet had blonde hair too they created fair couple. It can be also assumed Hamlet wore most of the time black clothing which contrasted with the hair. All characters had precise costumes with detailed elements as necklaces and rings. Especially Claudius and Gertrude had really lot of shining things on including crowns and elements on their clothing.

6.2 Hamlet 1976

Just a few days before Christmas on 18 December 1976 was the opening night of the second interpretation of *Hamlet* in the Zlín City Theatre history. The play was expected as the top of the theatre season yet because of Alois Hajda's directorial agenda. As pointed out by Zdráhal, Hajda rearranged the translation of E. A. Saudek together with Antonín Přidal which resulted in a play of intrigue atmosphere.⁶² Mikulová and Sladkowski mentioned Hajda and Přidal also worked together to analyze whole *Hamlet* from the social point of view to create a performance of the real life. Obviously it worked as the performances gained reviewers' appreciation.⁶³

In the study of Zdráhal is stated that the text was modified to speech of current audience and significantly reduced to match with director's intentions. Even though

⁶⁰ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 35.

⁶¹ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 36.

⁶² Zdráhal, "Režijní profil Aloise Hajdy (Inscenační tvorba z let 1972-1991)," 49.

⁶³ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 122.

historical text reductions seems to be necessary sometimes, in this case the performances lost some expected extracts, such as monologue of Hamlet to the players (III.2). An order of individual scenes was changed or erased completely even though the basic plotline for story's original comprehension was saved because no one wanted to make audience confused. Hajda's hidden intention was also to input current criticism of the then Czechoslovakia's politics issues such as totalitarianism.⁶⁴

As the following cast list shows, despite many text reductions, the play maintained overwhelming majority of its characters and each played the only role given.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK	Jan Honsa
CLAUDIUS, KING OF DENMARK	Hynek Kubasta
THE GHOST OF THE LATE KING, HAMLET'S FATHER	Jaroslav Kovanda
GERTRUDE, THE QUEEN, HAMLET'S MOTHER	Jana Hliňáková
POLONIUS, COUNCILLOR OF STATE	Stanislav Tříška
LAERTES, POLONIUS'S SON	Pavel Leicman
OPHELIA, POLONIUS'S DAUGHTER	Zdena Kružíková
HORATIO, FRIEND OF HAMLET	Zdeněk Hradilák
ROSENCRANTZ, FORMER SCHOOLMATE OF HAMLET	Jiří Juřina
GUILDENSTERN, FORMER SCHOOLMATE OF HAMLET	Ondřej Mikulášek
FORTINBRAS, PRINCE OF NORWAY	František Houdek
VOLTEMAND, AMBASSADOR TO NORWAY	Jiří Maršálek
REYNALDO, SERVANT TO POLONIUS	Jiří Hrubý
MARCELLUS, KING'S GUARD	Rudolf Šimara
BARNARDO, KING'S GUARD	Ivan Kalina
FRANCISCO, KING'S GUARD	Ivo Kučera
OSRIC, A FOPPISH COURTIER	Karel Semerád
ENGLISH AMBASSADOR	Stanislav Vala
FIRST PLAYER	Roman Mecnarowski
SECOND PLAYER	Antonín Navrátil
THIRD PLAYER	Josef Jelínek
GRAVE-DIGGERS	Zdeněk Vašek, Otakar Moučka

⁶⁴ Zdráhal, "Režijní profil Aloise Hajdy (Inscenační tvorba z let 1972-1991)," 48-49.

SAILOR	Otakar Kvapil
A PRIEST	Miloš Vosmanský
NOBLEWOMEN	Marcela Hynčicová, Zdena Moučková
OTHERS	

The character of Cornelius is missing in the cast list, he was obviously left out nevertheless his lines are more likely the lines of Voltemand which might be why the character of Cornelius was erased. The rest of characters remain in the play. It is necessary to mention that Jaroslav Kovanda performed the ghost wordlessly, the recorded voice of the ghost belonged to Josef Karlík. Even though there are some actors performed in *Hamlet* for the second time, only Zdeněk Vašek plays the same role again. Among "others" can be categorized extras (maybe the theatre staff) performed nobles, soldiers or other players. Although young Jan Honsa was very talented protagonist not only of this play but even for other protagonist roles, he did not manage to succeed further. Unfortunately for the whole theatre, he passed away soon because of the car crash in summer of 1978 as stated by Mikulová and Sladkowski.⁶⁵

The scene of Ladislav Vychodil respected director's view of the play. In the sense of continuity for social relations and understanding of existence, a wooden throne hall was placed in the back of the stage. From this hall many ropes led above actors' heads interlaced one over another. In general, the scene could be compared to Elizabethan theatre structure because during the performance actors used only necessary props such as chairs, tables, chalices, dagger or swords. Swordplay as the climax of conflict was arranged with help of Roman Mecnarowski whose fencing skills were used to learn his colleagues Honsa and Leicman to manage the final swordplay.

Archive records determine Miloš Ištvan as composer for the play. In all probability he composed classical folk music and his music could be used for example to create effects of fighting, melancholy and other scenes.

Photos proves all costumes are clearly of the right period way. Especially the costumes of Claudius and Gertrude appear ostentatiously and quite heavy. Most of the other characters had just shirt and trousers. On the other hand Ophelia's waving white low-cut dress dominated the scene when she entered. This ethereal feeling might be caused by very

⁶⁵ Mikulová and Sladkowski, *Městské divadlo Zlín: 70 sezon*, 122.

broad sleeves mainly. Something similar one could feel of the players but it was probably the dark feeling of the beyond. During the performance of *The Murder of Gonzago*, the players wore dark coats which supported the sense of abstraction connected with the whole interpretation of this play.

Interestingly, a play-within-a-play was portrayed by three male actors which means the purpose of *The Murder of Gonzago* was to show a true Elizabethan performance because the queen was performed by a man. In fact a play-within-a-play in *Hamlet* does not reflect the play itself, it just mirrors an event which was not even portrayed.

6.3 Hamlet 1998

The first premiere of 1998/1999 season was *Hamlet*. Its opening night was on 3 October 1998 with director Petr Veselý who chose the translation of Zdeněk Urbánek to apply. The two-hour long play remained in the Zlín City Theatre's repertoire half a year therefore it does not appear as a great success, however according to some reviews, the performance surely had supporters.⁶⁶

Basically the play was interpreted in a classical way despite many cuts and characters' reduction but this way the play worked faster. Overall the play does not differ much from previous interpretations with regard to many cuts. The whole first scene is erased so the play was opened by the second scene with Claudius. However the text keeps the original plotline apart from a few scenes deleted or moved. For example: "To be, or not to be" monologue is shifted to the end of the scene (III.1) from its usual place. Some replicas are also completely new, made up by the director. The intentional purpose of this interpretation was probably to highlight family relationships of Polonius, Ophelia and Laertes therefore the story looks more tragic as it shows a broken family. The performance also stressed Hamlet's existential questionings: during his monologues Hamlet (and sometimes Claudius with his monologues as well) is always floodlit and surrounded by dark. His relationship with Ophelia is developed slightly more than it is originally described so they do not hesitate to kiss each other in various situations. The whole performance gained a new look and some situations changed too, for example when Polonius is killed, Hamlet does not see him because a curtain covered his body. He revealed Polonius's identity later (III.4).

⁶⁶ Městské divadlo Zlín. *Městské divadlo Zlín 1996-1999* (Zlín: Městské divadlo Zlín, 2000).

The interval was after the eighth scene which is the exact half of the play. As written above, the performance worked with necessary characters but the further discovery may reveal that there performed even such characters as Valtimond or grave-diggers etc. not mentioned in the cast list below:

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK	Luděk Randár
CLAUDIUS, KING OF DENMARK	Dušan Sitek
THE GHOST OF THE LATE KING, HAMLET'S FATHER	Ivan Kalina
GERTRUDE, THE QUEEN, HAMLET'S MOTHER	Jana Tomečková
POLONIUS, COUNCILLOR OF STATE	Pavel Leicman
LAERTES, POLONIUS'S SON	Rostislav Marek
OPHELIA, POLONIUS'S DAUGHTER	Klára Sochorová
HORATIO, FRIEND OF HAMLET	Pavel Majkus
ROSENCRANTZ, FORMER SCHOOLMATE OF HAMLET	Zdeněk Julina
GUILDENSTERN, FORMER SCHOOLMATE OF HAMLET	Radoslav Šopík
OSRIC, A FOPPISH COURTIER	Radovan Král
FIRST PLAYER	Michal Marek
SECOND PLAYER	Josef Kubáník
	Jaroslav Plesl
OTHERS	

The performance skillfully dealt with the low number of characters because two players (Marek, Kubáník - later Plesl performed instead of Kubáník) represented more than just one character. They stood for many minor characters (ambassadors, king's guards, grave-diggers, courtiers etc.) and actually they work in the play as comic inset. The same applies for Radovan Král as Osric who entertains Zlín audience till nowadays. Claudius of Dušan Sitek appeared very resolute and Gertrude of Jana Tomečková seems to be very passive in her role. Characters named as Others were individuals who just filled the scene not to appear empty. These characters did not speak, maximally clapped their hands. Finally, Hamlet of Luděk Randár is concentrated about his revenge to Claudius mainly. Randár frequently casts in Shakespeare's plays: as an actor he interpreted the greatest number of main roles in Shakespeare's plays in the Zlín City Theatre of his generation, for example Hamlet (in *Hamlet*), Romeo (in *Romeo and Juliet*), Othello (in *Othello*) or Antony (in *Antony and Cleopatre*) and minor roles in several others Shakespeare's plays.

Although according to the translation of Zdeněk Urbánek, the scene is written how to look like, it is clear that Tomáš Rusín came up with completely different scene image. Great wooden construction endowed by upper floor was used multi-purposely to show a royal hall or rampart and generally it worked universally for many other scenes. A revolving stage was utilized to change the scene without stage technicians because only two scenes were used by just turning over the construction. During the whole performance the lighting played the important role because it created audience's impressions to many scenes, e.g. monologues and fencing. In fact, fencing was not really performed. Although the actors held their swords, they just walked around and did not score except the last moment when they killed each other.

The music of Luboš Malinovský mostly mirrors mysterious atmosphere during various activities performed on the stage. Sometimes fanfares could be heard.

Costumes basically completed the whole performance as they created vivid elements of dark and universal scene. Some of the costumes were very striking in contrast with another ones e.g. the first scene where Claudius wore silver and white costume with silver disc above his head. He resembled "Měsíčník" from Czech fairy tale *Princ a Večernice*. In another scene (III.2) Hamlet called Claudius a peacock and Sitek really had a costume which resembled a peacock due to a coat with a great collar in colours of a peacock. Love couple Hamlet and Ophelia looked like two opposite characters from the purpose: Hamlet clothed in black with black thoughts and innocent Ophelia in white. Yet this appearance indicates they cannot be together.

Even in this interpretation a play-within-a-play was performed by male actors which got the performance closer to the Elizabethan theatre because the Queen is performed by man. Besides that, two actors only managed to perform the play-within-a-play, the one performed the Queen just changed clothes to a murderer Lucianus. *The Murder of Gonzago* is performed in a funny way, to entertain real audience by a piece of humour in this great tragedy.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this bachelor thesis was to find out how the Zlín City Theatre generally treats the plays of William Shakespeare via four of them. Two comedies and two tragedies were chosen for analysis. All analyses include the same parts: introduction, translation, script changes, cast list, characters, scene, music, costumes and the last part of the analysis is always devoted to specific features if there are any. This was applied to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet*.

Early interpretations resembled the structure of Elizabethan theatre mostly out of necessity as the stage of the old theatre building was very small and large constructions did not fit there. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the only play with two interpretations unlike the rest of the analyzed plays with three interpretations. The differences are clear yet from the first sight they are enabled also by a different theatre building with much greater stage and technical support where the great scene and technical conveniences were utilized. Talking of *Romeo and Juliet*, during the three interpretations, the shift to modern age is evident as well. The 1961 interpretation with a sense of romance was replaced in 1990 by realistic story of two lovers and then by short and cold story of love in 2007. On the other hand *Twelfth Night* has changed from universal environment full of revelry in the 1975 version to a hotel setting with characters not as active as they could be in 2015 performance. Although the latest 2015 interpretation took advantage of modern technology and tried to change the original concept of the play, audience did not appreciate it. *Hamlet* was portrayed three times too. All interpretations encountered extensive cuts because the play is indeed too long: all of the versions are more or less similar to each other despite the scene changes. Although the 1976 interpretation tried to focus on the whole story and makes it as a real life, the 1998 interpretation focused on existential questions and revenge.

The thesis shows that as time passed performances get more or less modernized. That is partially a natural phenomenon because the age is constantly changing but some of the features of the new performances are so radical that the conservative Zlín audience comes to terms with them only with difficulties. However, as Shakespeare's plays are a permanent part of the Zlín City Theatre's repertoire, it remains to see the rendering of future performances, whether they come to a more traditional approach or not.

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APPENDIX



A Midsummer Night's Dream 1959, from left: Jiří Letenský, Eva Matalová, Arnošt Kotouč, Miluše Hradská



A Midsummer Night's Dream 2012, from left: Marie Vančurová, Radoslav Šopík, Eva Daňková



Romeo and Juliet 1961, Miluše Hradská in the front



Romeo and Juliet 1990, from left: Markéta Nováková, Luděk Randár



Romeo and Juliet 2007, Kateřina Lidáková and Josef Koller



Twelfth Night 1952, from left: Otto Šimánek, Helena Bendová, Václav Babka, Jan Cmíral



Twelfth Night 1975, from left: -, Marcela Chlupová, Jana Tomečková, Zdena Kružíková, Karel Semerád



Twelfth Night 2015, from left: Vendula Nováková, Gustav Řezníček



Hamlet 1959, from left: Jiří Letenský, Antoním Ženčák, Zora Kolovratová



Hamlet 1976, from left: Jiří Juřina, Hynek Kubasta, Jana Hlišáková



Hamlet 1998, from left: Jana Tomečková, Dušan Sitek, Pavel Leicman