



FIRST CALL

Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb in cooperation with
Education and Teacher Training Agency, Croatian Centre for Drama
Education and *Tirena* Theatre from Zagreb

Invites you to the 4th International Art and Science Symposium on
Drama Education

KITSCH IN THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

(17 – 19 September, 2020, Faculty of Teacher Education, Zagreb, Croatia)

“Kitsch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see children running on the grass! The second tear says: How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children running on the grass!”

Milan Kundera

Kitsch is an elusive phenomenon. Definitions are often beautifully metaphorical. – It is seen as spiritual tautology (Miloš Ilić); sale of ideals at discounted prices (Ernst Fischer); the art of happiness (Abraham Moles), alternative to experience and a false sensation (Clement Greenberg), even as an evil in the art system (Ernst Broch). Writing about kitsch in visual arts, Tomas Kulka defines three criteria for identifying kitsch: the objects or themes are “highly charged” with simple emotions, the subject is “instantly and effortlessly identifiable” and the work does not enrich “our associations relating to the depicted objects or themes.” Kitsch works with simplicity, effects, sentimentality, lightness, repeating of the established forms and patterns.

Despite all postmodern relativisms and blurring the distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, the term ‘kitsch’ still holds the pejorative meaning. Artists usually get upset if their work in TYA is characterized as kitsch. The generally accepted view in the field is that kitsch is not good for art. Still, it does not seem that TYA in general moves away from kitsch. (Or, does it?) The topic can be considered in relation to commercialization of culture and the democratization of art (as kitsch is usually discussed), it can be discussed in relation to the specific type of audience, because TYA, unlike theatre for adults, aims for *all* children and / or in the context of particular expectations of the society when it comes to TYA.



“Kitsch TYA meets parental demands for maintaining childhood happiness“, Jeanne Klein and Shifra Schonmann explain, while it „fails to nurture other emotions that children experience in the daily conflicts of their lives“.

The aim of the Symposium is to open discussion about kitsch in TYA from different angles, introducing various aesthetic concepts, political, pedagogical and psychological standpoints towards theatre for the young and different cultural contexts.

THE SYMPOSIUM WILL ADDRESS QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

- What is wrong with kitsch? Why should it be avoided? – Or not?
- What particular forms and themes can be recognized as kitsch in theatre for young audiences (in visual aspect, in music, direction, acting, writing etc.)?
- Is the understanding and occurrence of kitsch TYA similar in different cultural contexts, and if not, how to explain the differences?
- Given the difference in experience and knowledge (in life and art) between children and adults, can the same procedures for analysis of kitsch be employed (when talking about theatre and theatre for young audiences)?
- How to explain enduring presence of kitsch in TYA?
- Etc.

The Symposium will take place during the 53rd International Puppet Theatre Festival (PIF - <https://www.pif.hr/en/>), (18 – 24 September, 2020), so the participants will be able to attend the performances as well.

Papers will be peer-reviewed and printed in the Symposium Proceedings and in a special issue of Libri et liberi: journal of research on children’s literature and culture (<https://hrcak.srce.hr/librietliberi?lang=en>)

The part of the Symposium dedicated to discussion about kitsch in TYA will last one and half days (17-18 September, 2020) and it will include workshops related to the performance analysis. The third day of the Symposium will present dealing with all kinds of topics related to drama education.



MODES OF PARTICIPATION:

1. Paper related to the subject of the Symposium
2. Workshop related the topic: How to analyse performance for young audiences
3. Workshop related to drama education in general
4. Participation without presenting your work

SYMPOSIUM FEES:

- Regular fee: 500 HRK / 70 €
- Student fee: 200 HRK / 30 €

The Symposium fee includes Symposium materials, two lunch breaks and refreshments during breaks.

PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAYMENTS FROM ABROAD:

- recipient: Faculty of Teacher Education, Zagreb, Savska 77, Zagreb, Croatia
- IBAN of the recipient: HR9124020061100639639
- SWIFT/BIC: ESBCHR22
- bank name: Erste i Steiermakische bank d. d., Jadranski trg 3 a, Rijeka, Republic of Croatia
- payment description: Symposium Kitsch in TYA, name and surname of the payer, address and tax or identification number (ID number)

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

All interested participants can apply by filling out the application form at this link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdEo957dbIZ0TqbdILFMZ-Vz4fTKFRGGNFJheh6n8ysDdt4jA/viewform?usp=sf_link

SYMPOSIUM LANGUAGES: Croatian and English



REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

- Abstract (professional or research paper) submission deadline: June 15, 2020
- Workshop application: June 15, 2020
- Notification of acceptance (professional or research paper and workshop): July 1, 2020
- Registration for attendance only (without professional or research paper or workshop): July 15, 2020
- Conference fee: July 15, 2020
- Submission of completed professional or research paper: September 30, 2020

PROVISIONAL SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME:

DAY 1: AFTERNOON (THURSDAY)

- Key note speakers
- Performance

DAY 2: WHOLE DAY (FRIDAY)

- Presentations of papers and discussions
- Panel discussion about kitsch
- Workshops: How to analyse performance for young audiences.
- Performance

DAY 3: WHOLE DAY (SATURDAY)

- 'Stock exchange' of workshops dedicated to all kinds of topics related to drama education
- Symposium closing
- Performance

SYMPOSIUM SECRETARY:

Maša Rimac Jurinović, Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb
For all additional information send inquiries to: simpozij@ufzg.hr