

Schmitt Katharina

Destroying icons

no paper

Iconoclasm is a rarely examined artistic strategy in the framework of theatre. In the course of the 20th century, the city of Prague was confronted with several waves of radical socio-political change linked to waves of iconoclasm in the public sphere. The most famous example of this phenomenon was Otakar Švec's gigantic Stalin statue, built in 1955 and destroyed in 1962. This statue and its destruction were the topical starting point for the opera NO MAN, which premiered in March 2017 at the Prague National Theatre. My experience as the librettist and director of the opera serves as the base for the investigative frame of the workshop. Is it possible to destroy an icon, to get rid of a symbol? What is the cathartic potential of iconoclastic strategies in theatre? The workshop aims at investigating these questions, whilst offering its participants the possibility to take part in the destruction of an icon.

Bio:

Katharina Schmitt, director and playwright, was born in 1979 in Bremen. Schmitt studied directing at DAMU in Prague and has been working professionally as a director and playwright since 2006. In recent years, her plays and shows have been performed at Thalia Theater Hamburg, Deutsches Theater Berlin, Schauspiel Leipzig, Schauspiel Stuttgart, Divadlo Komedie Prague, Watermill Center New York, Studio Hrdinů Prague, the NODO Festival for New Opera and the Prague National Theater. In her work, Schmitt focuses on formats that combine visual arts and theater. She is a PhD candidate at DAMU.

