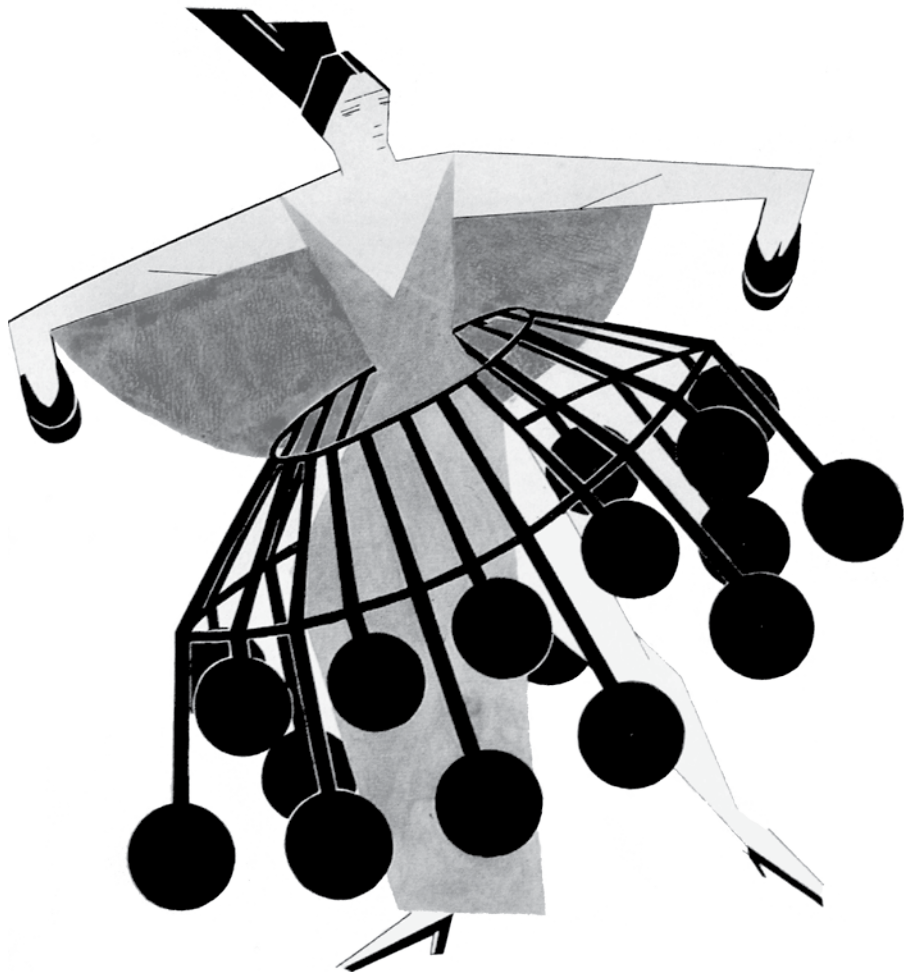


Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Present



**RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN ARTS
WORLD STAGE CONFERENCE MAY 17-19**

Conference Program



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

The Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Program at the University of Oregon would like to thank the following sponsors for their generous support of our conference:

College of Arts and Sciences
School of Music and Dance
Clark Honors College
Oregon Humanities Center
Knight Library
Theatre Arts
Comparative Literature Department
Department of German and Scandinavian
Cinema Studies Program
UNESCO Center for Intercultural Dialogue
Judaic Studies Program
English Department
History Department

Special Thanks

Katya Hokanson and Jenifer Presto would like to thank the following people for their help with, and support for, the conference: Lo Owens, Hope Marston, Heghine Hakobyan, John Schmor, Ariel Ogden, Dan Gorman, Brooke Cagno, Cynthia Stockwell, and Ryan Perkins.

All events are free and open to the public. For information or accommodation please contact Katya Hokanson at hokanson@uoregon.edu

About the design of the conference materials: they are based on a costume sketch by noted Ukrainian artist Alexandra Exter, 1882-1949. Designed by Ariel Ogden, marketing coordinator for Theatre Arts.

Library Exhibit in conjunction with Russian and East European Arts, World Stage

Please be sure to visit the beautiful display cases on the first floor of Knight Library (located on the corridors both to the right and the left of the circulation desk). These displays were curated by Knight Library Slavic Librarian Heghine Hakobyan, who describes the exhibit as follows:

In the exhibit's four sections, you'll see a small sample of the accomplishments of a number of Russian and East European artists:

BALLET

Diaghilev's legacy is built on the achievements of the *Ballets russes* and its rich collaborations, wielding influence on contemporary ballet throughout the world.

THEATER

Anyone studying drama and working in theater today owes a debt to Stanislavsky, Nemirovich-Danchenko, Meyerhold, and other Russian and East European dramatists who are regarded as being among the pillars of world theater.

LITERATURE AND CINEMA

Russian and East European literary figures represented in the exhibit include Solzhenitsyn, Čapek, Pelevin, and other contemporary writers. The exhibit celebrates practitioners of the cinematic arts in Russia and Eastern Europe such as Tarkovsky, Kusturica, and Mungiu.

An additional section of the exhibit honors the University of Oregon's United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Center for Intercultural Dialogue for its work in spreading the idea of cultural understanding and peace throughout the world. The Center provided support for our conference.

THURSDAY, MAY 17

Conference Kickoff Event:

7:00 p.m., Walnut Room, Erb Memorial Union
Balkan folk music by University of Oregon faculty members Mark Levy and Carol Silverman, and the Eugene-based band “Kef.”
Dance instruction will be provided! Reception to follow.

FRIDAY, MAY 18

In Gerlinger Lounge, located in Gerlinger Hall

9:45 a.m.: Welcome and introduction
Katya Hokanson and Jenifer Presto

Panel 1: Visualizing Culture

10:00 a.m. -12:00 noon

Chair: **Katya Hokanson**, University of Oregon

Galya Diment, University of Washington: “Identity Erasures: Leon Gaspard--the ‘non-Chagall’ of Vitebsk on the World Stage”

Evgenii Bershtein, Reed College: “Eisenstein and Decadence”

Jenifer Presto, University of Oregon: “Uncanny Archaeology: Khodasevich, Pompeii, and Russia’s Remains”

12:00-1:30 p.m. Lunch Break

Panel 2: Encountering the Other

1:30-3:30 p.m.

Chair: **Jenifer Presto**, University of Oregon

Gordana Crnkovic, University of Washington: “Literary Apocalypse: *Dervish* and *Death*”

Jamie Richards, University of Oregon: “Coincidence and Collage: Russians Exiled in Giovanni Orelli’s *Walaschek’s Dream*”

Steven Shankman, University of Oregon: “God, Maternity, and Responsibility in Levinas and Vasily Grossman’s *Life and Fate*”

Keynote Address

4:00 p.m., in the Browsing Room, Knight Library

“Two-Way Traffic: The East-West Cultural Exchange”

Helena Goscilo, The Ohio State University

Dinner Reception to follow, Browsing Room

Theater Presentation

7:30 p.m., Gerlinger Lounge

“To Hell with Meyerhold: History and Unforgetting”

Remarks by Julia Nemirovskaya and John Schmor, followed by excerpts of an original play *Meyerhold in Hell*

For a biography of Meyerhold and a synopsis of the play, see p.6.

Author: Julia Nemirovskaya, University of Oregon (REEES)

Director: John Schmor, University of Oregon (Theatre Arts)

Costumes: Jenny Kroik

Cast:

August: Tim Vergano

Meyerhold: Cameron Carlisle

Zero: Kyle Leibovitch

Administrator: Greg Faber

Angels: Jackie Lubbers, Abby Grewatz

Sim: Jessica Jones

Moskvina: Miriam Lipton

Tik: Andrew Polletto

Stanislavsky: Steve Wehmeier

SATURDAY, MAY 19

In Gerlinger Lounge, located in Gerlinger Hall

Panel 3: Cross-Cultural Russia and Eastern Europe

9:00 -10:30 a.m.

Chair: **Susanna Lim**, University of Oregon

Anindita Banerjee, Cornell University: “Translating Tagore: The Indian Poetics of Russian Literary Dissidence”

Norma Comrada, Literary Translator: “The Čapek Phenomenon in Japan”

Mark Conliffe, Willamette University: “The Christmas Story and National Cultures: Washington Irving, Charles Dickens, and Vladimir Korolenko”

Keynote Address

11:00 a.m., in the Browsing Room, Knight Library

“Catastrophe of the Week: Entertaining the Apocalypse in Postsocialist Russia”

Eliot Borenstein, New York University

Lunch Reception to follow, Browsing Room

Panel 4: Drama and Film on the World Stage

1:30-3:30 p.m., Gerlinger Lounge

Chair: **Julia Nemirovskaya**, University of Oregon

Tatiana Osipovich, Lewis and Clark College: “Symbolist and Realist Aesthetics in Zinaida Gippius’s Dramatic Works”

Sarah Bishop, Willamette University “Kama Ginkas and the New Drama Movement”

Greg Blake Miller, Managing Editor, Vegas Seven: “Reentering the Present: Nostalgia for the Passing Moment in Marlen Khutsiev’s *Ilich’s Gate*”

Panel 5: Empire and Global Engagements

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Chair: **Julie Hessler**, University of Oregon

Katya Hokanson, University of Oregon: “Russia’s Gift of Empire: The Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900”

Susanna Lim, Clark Honors College, University of Oregon: “Art and War: *Japonisme* in Russia, 1890-1910”

Carol Silverman, University of Oregon: “Balkan Gypsy Music: Issues of Globalization and Appropriation”

Daria Smirnova, University of Oregon: “Marusya Klimova and the Decadent Culture of Contemporary Saint Petersburg”

6:00 p.m. Closing comments
by Katya Hokanson and Jenifer Presto

Vsevolod Emilievich Meyerhold (1870-1940) was one of the most innovative and influential theater directors of the 20th century. He began his career as an actor and director at Konstantin Stanislavsky’s Moscow Art Theater. He considered Stanislavsky, father of the renowned “psychophysical” system of training actors, his teacher and friend -- although after 1917 he attacked the Moscow Art Theater as “bourgeois” and “outdated.”

Meyerhold embraced Symbolism and later the avant-garde as artistic trends that defied Stanislavsky’s realism. He became a proponent of intentional theatricality based on the principles of the circus and on traditional Russian, Italian, and Japanese forms of theater (Russian Fairground Theater, Commedia dell’arte, and Kabuki). From 1909-17 Meyerhold served as the Director of Imperial Theaters, but after the 1917 Revolution he became an enthusiastic supporter and member of the Communist government. Suspicious of Meyerhold’s popularity at home and abroad, Stalin ordered the director to be tortured and shot in 1940. Meyerhold’s wife and primary actress, Zinaida Reich, was also brutally murdered by the secret police.

The scenes from the play, *Meyerhold in Hell*, are the result of collaboration between Theatre Arts and Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies (REEES). The play is based on the facts of Meyerhold’s biography, his theater theories, and his ideas for a production of *Hamlet* that never came to be. It is about Meyerhold staging *Hamlet* in Hell.

The scenes are directed by John Schmor. The cast includes students from both Theatre Arts and REEES. Julia Nemirovskaya wrote *Meyerhold in Hell* after lengthy discussions with, and at the request of, John Schmor. Julia Nemirovskaya and John Schmor will open the Meyerhold presentation with a discussion of Meyerhold’s life and work.

For a synopsis of the play, see back of program.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

The dead Meyerhold is appointed the Director and Producer of all performances in Hell. He teaches devils to burn sinners in accordance with the principles of his innovative system of actor training, biomechanics. The Administration of Hell decides to reward Meyerhold with an opportunity to stage *Hamlet* -- something he always dreamed of but never had a chance to do while alive.

Meanwhile, three of Meyerhold's former actors deceive their guards, descend from Heaven to Hell, and begin acting like devils so that they can pull their beloved Master up to Paradise. Meyerhold offers them an opportunity to act in *Hamlet* before their escape. He casts them as Hamlet, Ophelia, and Polonius, but quickly changes the casting as soon as his wife arrives on the scene. Meyerhold suggests that she be the one to choose the parts of Hamlet and Ophelia. The actors who had initially been given the main parts are devastated. His wife asks him to create a *Hamlet*, where both Hamlet and Ophelia are played by the same actor (by her). However she leaves the cast after her first husband (and later her lover), the beautiful and rather effeminate Russian poet Sergei Esenin, invites her to a resort for suicides in Hell where he resides.

One devil, who was disappointed by the change in casting for *Hamlet*, decides to spy on Meyerhold. The spy informs the Administration of Hell that Meyerhold is preparing a political diversion by introducing angelic images and values to young devils in his cast. The identities of his actors are revealed – and they are now doomed to stay in Hell or be dissolved. The success of Meyerhold's *Hamlet* makes the Administration of Hell and the Administration of Heaven come to an agreement: they will place the souls of the famous Director and his actors where all art and artists reside: in a special location between Heaven and Hell sponsored by both Administrations.

-Julia Nemirovskaya