

The Theatrical Whisperer

Naše Divadlo Calgary

September 2025 • Fall edition, number 3

Theatre Summer in Motion – New Stars, New Swords, and Backstage Discoveries!

Calgary, AB – The past three months have brought us countless unforgettable moments – from our very first Trivia Night, full of laughter and competitive spirit, to the Stage Combat 101 workshop, where swords flew and friendships were forged, and all the way to preparations for our new production – the tragicomedy Hamlet 5, or What's New at Elsinore? With the arrival of autumn, we officially dove into rehearsals and full-scale production and we can't wait to welcome you to the premiere on January 16!

What does it take to keep a nonprofit amateur theatre running?

A nonprofit amateur theatre isn't just about a love of art and passion for the stage. Behind every production lies a huge amount of unseen but essential work.

Our experience at Naše Divadlo Calgary shows that success comes from a combination of solid organization, tireless volunteer effort, and strong leadership. Read more in our exclusive article (page 3), where we reveal everything that happens behind the curtain – from the director's vision, to the invaluable work of volunteers, to the financial costs of renting spaces and the technical challenges that every production brings.

Also in this issue:

- First Trivia Night – So, what do you still remember from school?
- Editorial – Life on Stage: Meet our Assistant Director Natália Vaněčková
- A Word with... Interview with Erika Holderer – Backstage, Production, and Women's Power
- Stage Combat 101 Workshop – Learning the Art of Swordplay
- Our Star DOUBLE FEATURE – Alenka Slačková & Gwenduška Golušková

And all that—and so much more!

Don't miss the other exciting highlights in this summer edition.

Editor: Natália Vaněčková

Graphics, translation, design—and Kofola, wine, and treats that are priceless: our team from Naše Divadlo Calgary

Draft beer, tough questions, and a sweet reward: How we thoroughly enjoyed Trivia Night!

Calgary, AB – So, what do you still remember from school?

On Saturday, May 25, we held our very first CZ/SK Trivia Night & Meet-Up – an evening full of laughter, brain-teasing questions, draft beer, and, of course, sweet treats like tiramisu and spa wafers. From the very first question, it was clear this was no ordinary quiz. Teams with names like Trdelníci, Team Mexico, and All Stars faced questions that tested our knowledge of history, culture, and cuisine. Who knew that the Czech king nicknamed “Father of the Nation” was Karel IV? And what about the animals in the moats of Český Krumlov? Yes, bears still roam there, though perhaps a bit slower than in the past.

Between quiz rounds, social games and giant Jenga brought unexpected tumbles and bursts of laughter. The atmosphere was rounded out by a draft beer bar and the irresistible scent of homemade desserts, which disappeared faster than we could say “tiramisu.”



Photos by our talented photographers, Daša Ozániaková and Ján Špák, captured every moment – from the tension of the quiz questions to the joyful hugs after each round. The evening was not just about competition, but above all about shared experiences and building our community.

Congratulations to our top three winners! And even though not every question hit the mark, laughter and good vibes were always on point.

Best of all? We can't wait for the next round!



Photo Credit: @DašaOzaniaková a JánŠpák, Naše Divadlo Calgary

What does it take to run a nonprofit amateur theatre?

A nonprofit amateur theatre isn't just about a love for the arts or a passion for performance. Behind every production lies a tremendous amount of invisible—but absolutely essential—work that makes the performance possible in the first place. Our experience at Naše Divadlo Calgary shows that success is the result of a combination of strong organization, tireless volunteer effort, and effective leadership.

Vision and Leadership – The Heart of the Theatre

Regardless of whether it's professional or amateur theatre, it is always the director who leads the creative process. Their word is law – not out of authoritarianism, but to maintain the unity and quality of the production. In amateur theatre, where volunteers often lack the experience of professional actors, this role is even more crucial to ensure everyone is pulling together. Naše Divadlo Calgary is no exception – strong and clear leadership ensures that, despite limited resources, the quality and integrity of our performances remain high.

Volunteers – the driving force behind every production

Our strength lies in an amazing team of people who dedicate their time, energy, and skills without expecting any payment. From actors to technicians, costume designers, lighting operators, and administrative staff – each person is an indispensable part of the theatre. Their enthusiasm and willingness to go above and beyond regular duties make our productions possible. Without these people, it simply wouldn't work – hundreds of hours invested not only in the production itself but also in administration, marketing, and solving technical challenges form the foundation of our success.

The success of a production also depends on each team member fully committing and being able to manage their time so that rehearsals and preparations remain a priority. When even one person is missing, it can affect twenty others – which is why it's important to know from the start whether you can make that commitment. If not, it's better to be upfront at the very first rehearsal, while there's still time to find a replacement. Without these dedicated people, it simply wouldn't work – hundreds of hours invested not only in the production itself but also in administration, marketing, and solving technical challenges form the foundation of our success.

Organization, financing, and costs of the premises.

A nonprofit theatre requires careful planning and management, which takes care not only of the artistic content but also of finances, premises, and technical aspects. The costs of renting a theatre hall or rehearsal space can be significant – achieving a full-scale production often requires spending dozens to hundreds of hours on stage. The price for one hour of rental can range from \$50 to several hundred dollars, depending on the location and facilities. These costs are often covered by subsidies, grants, donations, and ticket sales revenue, which are reinvested into set construction, costumes, and other production-related expenses. Transparency and efficient management are therefore the foundation for the sustainability and long-term operation of the theatre.

Why do we do it?

Even though it is often demanding work, the result is an indescribable joy when the curtains close and the audience rewards our effort with applause. Naše Divadlo Calgary is not just a place for art, but also for gathering, creating, and spreading culture. It is a space where each of us can grow not only as an artist but also as a person, and that is the greatest reward.

Theatre Funfacts

Did you know that many significant Czech and Slovak theatres have their roots in 19th-century amateur theatre groups?

These amateur theatre ensembles played a key role not only in the development of theatrical art but also in shaping cultural and national identity during the national revival. Thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of ordinary people, traditions were born that continue to influence professional stages today.

— according to Ján Stehlík, Slovenské divadlo

Foto Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

Stage Combat 101 – From the First Steps to Graceful Fencers

This June, we concluded the Fencing 101 workshop, energetically led by our artistic director František Vaněček. Did you know that studying fencing is part of the acting curriculum at prestigious schools like VŠMU and DAMU? We now know why!

Even though Naše Divadlo is made up of volunteers, each of us approaches our work with maximum dedication and respect for the craft. During this workshop, you could see how our actors absorb every piece of advice and transform it into elegant duels.

We started with the basic steps and repeated them until they became a natural part of movement. Then we moved on to staging the duels themselves. Our version of Hamlet and Laertes will definitely shine on stage.

And of course, we can't forget our ladies – Gwendolína, Alenka, and Júlia dazzled spectacularly! Some of us joined simply because, when else do you get the chance to fence like elegant musketeers... or, as we like to say, *en garde*!

In the last two weeks, we moved the fencing outdoors to the parks, where you could watch the actors enthusiastically throw themselves into full-on training.

We won't reveal too much about the characters and their duels just yet, but we can promise a fantastic combination of action, comedy, and... well, Hamlet like you've never seen before.



In the first shots, you can see our artistic director, František Vaněček, patiently and meticulously guiding the actors as they master the basic fencing steps and techniques. The following photos capture full action – actors moving through duels with grace, dedication, and the humor you can expect to see on stage.

Want to see more photos from Stage Combat 101? Visit the Current Productions section on our website at www.nasedivadlocalgary.com and check out all the shots from Stage Combat 101!

Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

INTERVIEW with Erika Holderer

About logistics, organizational challenges, and the passion of running a nonprofit theatre that brings together community and art.

Erika is an indispensable part of our team, ensuring the smooth operation of the nonprofit organization and taking care of all the practical matters that allow the director and actors to fully focus on their creative work. In this interview, you'll learn how Erika sees her place in the theatre family and what it means to her to build an arts community in Calgary.

1) Erika, you are one of the founding members of Naše Divadlo Calgary.

Do you still remember the very beginnings? What was your vision, and how has the theatre evolved since then?

It all started completely spontaneously, completely “out of the blue.” When we realized that Czech or Slovak theatres existed everywhere – in Vancouver, Toronto – and Calgary still didn’t have its own stage, we said to ourselves: why not here? And when we found a professional director and artistic director, we jumped right in. Our vision was simple but strong: to bring joy to the Czech-Slovak community in Calgary and the surrounding area. We wanted to connect people so they could meet, create, and have fun together, while keeping it authentically Czech-Slovak. What makes us unique is that we are the very first Czechoslovak theatre to perform plays simultaneously in both languages. For me, the most important thing has always been and still is that the community is connected and that the theatre offers something for everyone.

2) As the executive producer, you have a lot on your plate – what does your role involve?

My work is very diverse, and each day brings something new. Natália and Júlia do most of the work, but my main responsibility comes with managing finances, preparing premieres and reruns, and handling everything that ensures the production runs smoothly.

I have to think of everything – from bar service for the audience before the show and during intermission, to refreshments (making sure there are enough sandwiches), tickets and programs, all the way to ensuring the actors have everything they need. Basically, making the whole process look like the simplest thing in the world, even though it involves months of preparation and coordination. The theatre never sleeps. My most important role is making decisions so that everything works for everyone – from logistics and finances to coordinating events and ensuring everything runs smoothly. Of course, engaging in community networking is one of my strengths, helping to make every event successful and enjoyable for all.

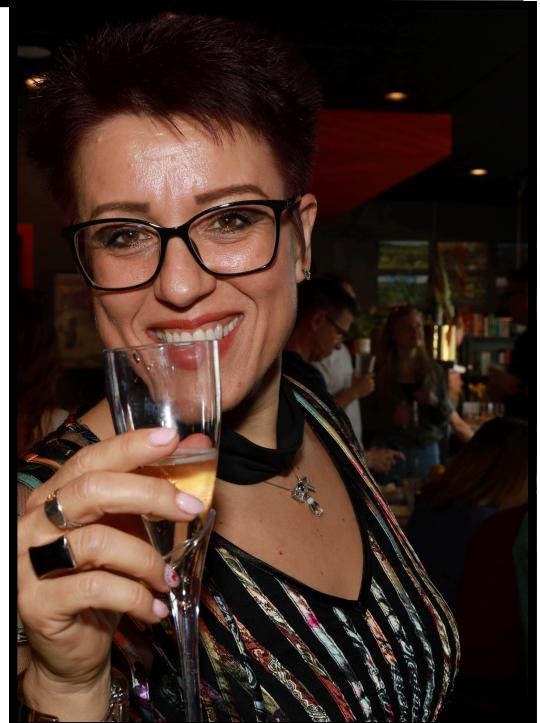
3) Hamlet 5 or What's New at Elsinore? is an unconventional tragicomedy full of fencing, music, and amazing takes on famous characters. What interested or amused you the most about this project?

“Hamlet 5 is an unconventional tragicomedy full of fencing, music, and intriguing interpretations of well-known characters. What fascinates me most about this project is the way we combine the classic text with contemporary humor – we bring Shakespeare closer to the audience so that it’s understandable and, at the same time, genuinely funny. I’m amazed that our director managed to create something so original – transforming classical elements into a modern, comedic form while preserving the depth and tension of the story. I’m excited that we can offer the audience a combination of humor, acting energy, and fencing that draws them into the story and lets them experience theatre in a different way. I believe that this unconventional mix, the courage to play with the text, and the professional approach of all the performers make Hamlet 5 a project that will entertain and delight our community.

4) A lot happens behind the scenes that the audience never sees. Do you have a favorite backstage memory?

I think the audience often has no idea how much effort goes into each production – hours and hours of learning, work from both actors and the backstage team, and fine-tuning everything down to the last minute to ensure the performance runs smoothly. Theatre is truly a team effort – no single person could manage it alone. And this sense of togetherness extends to collaboration with other organizations, which learn to communicate and plan things together – for example, the events calendar you can find on our website.

*But backstage is also a place full of fun. At every rehearsal, even during table reads, the actors are having fun and immediately step into their characters. And fencing? The way they handled it after the first fencing rehearsal was amazing – truly wow. The atmosphere is absolutely fantastic. When we did *Nebe na Zemi*, I didn’t have the chance to see the entire show at once – at the premiere I saw the first half, and at the rerun the second half, because we were looking after some of the actors’ children. Even so, it’s always an unforgettable experience, and it’s those backstage moments that make theatre so special.*



5) This issue also focuses on women in theatre. How do you perceive your role as a woman in a production position?

In my opinion, women are very capable of collaborating and leading projects in production. We have always appreciated when women have a strong and active role in theatre. On our board, there are four women and two men, and even though our director and artistic director, together with the technical director, are fully occupied with the productions and all the stage details, we women coordinate everything else – from logistics and finances to ensuring the smooth running of premieres and reruns.

This is my first experience in such a production role, but I've previously held a similar educational position, and it always felt natural to me. My mother even says I'm a "missed profession" – that I could have pursued production professionally, but theatre has always fascinated me. I'm fascinated by how everything works and how it creates joy for people and strengthens community bonds. This energy fulfills me, and I believe it will continue to grow – that people will attend our performances, participate in community events, meet those who came to Calgary thirty years ago as well as new members, and share their experiences.

6) What are the biggest challenges you've faced as a producer – and what have you learned from them?

As a producer, I face the reality that it's not always possible to satisfy everyone – and that's completely normal. The biggest challenge is maintaining a positive attitude despite all the

complications or disagreements within the team. Sometimes you try to accommodate everyone, but it's simply not possible to make everyone happy. You need to know when to step back, acknowledge that you can't meet someone's expectations, and move forward. Responsibility and decision-making are part of both professional work and volunteer work, and the key is to process it and keep moving ahead.

7) Theatre is a volunteer activity, yet it requires an immense amount of time and energy. What motivates you to keep going?

In the end, it's the smiles and joy at the end of a premiere or rerun, and also the moment when I see that volunteers have learned something new and achieved success. We were even briefly famous in the community, which was a very pleasant surprise. But the greatest motivation for me is bringing so much joy to the community. We've received amazing feedback and standing ovations – truly "wow" moments. People have come to our performances multiple times, and even called at the last minute to see if they could attend. The sets were fantastic, the actors performed wonderfully, and everything together created an unforgettable atmosphere. For me, that is the motivation – seeing people happy and looking forward to the next performances.

8) What would you say to someone who is considering joining a theatre group – perhaps not as an actor, but as a member of the backstage or organizational team?

Everyone is welcome here! We know that theatre requires a lot of time, energy, and willingness to get involved, but anyone who is interested is warmly invited – whether as an actor or as a member of the backstage or organizational team. You can apply through the contact form on our website. Age doesn't matter, nor does having perfect Slovak or Czech – what counts is the desire to be part of the community. There's no obligation to perform every season; even those who can't participate this season still support us and are an important part of our theatre family. Anyone willing to dedicate their time and energy is welcome, and we look forward to having them join our creative community.

Thank you to Erika for her time and candid answers during our interview!

Theatre Fact:

“Ban on Women Acting” – and Theatrical Rebellions in Skirts

Theatre Tidbits: historical facts, unusual theatre records, and amusing anecdotes from famous productions.

Did you know that in 16th-century Italy, women were banned from acting – even in commedia dell'arte? Despite this, brave actresses broke the rules, including Lucrezia Di Siena, considered Europe's first professional actress. Her name appeared in a theatre contract in 1564, at a time when men still played female roles. She not only performed on stage but also claimed her place in a previously male-dominated art world, paving the way for other pioneering women in European theatre.



Editorial: Life in Theatre – From Childhood to a New Beginning in Canada

When I created *The Theatrical Whisperer*, it was because I wanted to celebrate Naše Divadlo while also giving you, our audience and fans, a behind-the-scenes look and information about what we are currently working on. I wanted to enrich our community in this way. I never thought I would write an article about myself, but when other members of the theatre kindly encouraged me, I decided to give it a try – it's a nice way to introduce myself to all of you.

My name is Natália Vaněčková, and I am the younger daughter of František and Mária Vaněčková. Theatre runs in my blood – and I'm not alone in that. My older sister Martina found her life's calling in psychology, but theatre has always been a stage where she feels at home. We both share a love for art and acting, each in her own way.

First Encounters with Art and a Childhood in Theatre

My own journey into art began very early. People in my family and beyond often told me I had a gift from God, but as a child, I didn't understand it. When I was five, my parents enrolled me in the Elementary Art School in Púchov. My first steps were in singing and music theory, although as a small child I didn't understand why I needed notes and rhythm exercises. I remember my father sitting in the living room, taking an apple in his hands, and cutting it to explain whole and half notes to me. It was the moment he realized the lesson hadn't been explained to me properly.

I enjoyed singing, so I gradually added piano and choral singing. However, the piano never really captured my heart – some teachers had a habit of tapping fingers with a ruler, which instilled more fear than joy in me. On top of that, I didn't enjoy Russian pieces – Rachmaninov's works are known for requiring very long fingers due to challenging chords and wide stretches, and my fingers were too short to comfortably reach the octaves.

Still, I loved performing at concerts and events. When I was ten, I began singing outside of school with a local folk group. My first solo performance was at the Lachovce amphitheatre, where I sang "Jsi můj pán" from the musical Dracula. The audience was large, the reactions strong, and for me, it was the moment that confirmed singing was my passion. Even my teacher at the art school was surprised – she had never heard me sing like that before.

I spent my childhood in the theatre. My father's theatre troupe, "A Dost," was my second home. The costume rooms were my kingdom – I loved trying on beautiful princess dresses, even if they were too big for me.

From the First Songs to the Stage

At thirteen, a huge decision came – my family moved to Canada. A new language, a new system, a new world.

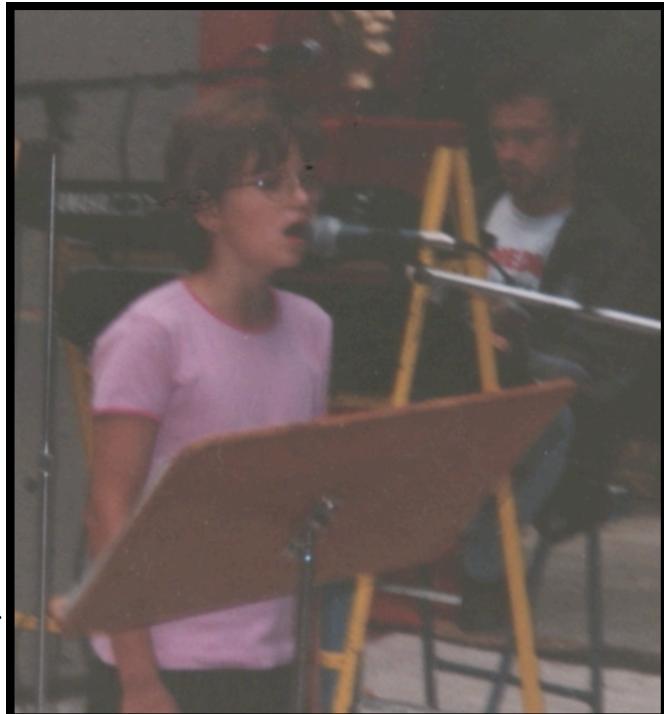
In the first few years, I focused on improving my English, but art found me again. During high school, my schedule was packed with extracurricular activities, so much so that my singing earned me an award for Outstanding Service to the School. At seventeen, I was already leading performances, and one of my greatest achievements was a solo Loch Lomond a cappella performance on the SAIT Jubilee stage. Singing in that large hall for three consecutive years was an indescribable experience for me.

While studying musical theatre, I performed pieces from Show Boat, Chicago, Fiddler on the Roof, My Fair Lady, Wicked, and Phantom of the Opera. Opera allowed me to train and perform arias by Mozart (Voi che sapete), Verdi (O Don Fatale), Bizet (Habanera), and Dvořák (Měsíčku na nebi hlubokém). When I turned twenty, I decided I needed a break.

After years of constant performing, I needed some time off. But I didn't leave art behind – I found a new passion: writing. My first inspiration came in Seoul, South Korea, in 2010, while walking through the historic palaces in the heart of the bustling city. I began jotting down my first stories and discovered a new creative world within myself. At twenty-five, I decided to return to school to study literature and creative writing. I had the honour of learning from writers and dramatists such as Natalie Meisner, Micheline Maylor, and David Hyttenrauch. Yet, my desire for the stage never disappeared.

That's why, in June 2024, our family, along with Erika Holderer and Martin Lacko, founded the first Czech-Slovak theatre in Canada. In our debut season, I worked as assistant director and dramaturge, stage manager, costume designer, sound operator, and even prompter. It was demanding – hands full of work, days packed with rehearsals – but it was worth it. Together, we created something extraordinary, and I am immensely proud of our entire company.

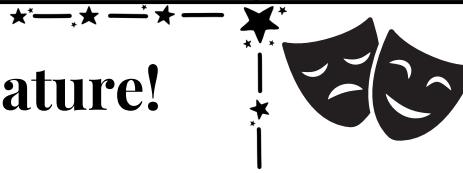
Now I know I am ready to take the next step – to return to the stage. In Hamlet 5, I will join the rest of our amazing cast, and I can't wait to see you in action at the premiere. I look forward to seeing you on January 16!



Natália sings "Jsi Můj Pán" from Czech musical Dracula, Lachovce Amphitheatre, Púchov 1998 Image Credit: Natália Vaněčková



Our Star- Double Feature!



We are thrilled to introduce two talented actresses who enrich Naše Divadlo with their energy and dedication – Alenka Slačková and Gwendolína Golušková. Alenka brings the experience of a folk dancer and a rich sense of movement, while Gwendolína, one of our youngest performers, is as athletic as a water sports competitor, giving her natural dynamism and determination on stage. Together, they create a vibrant and unforgettable artistic experience that brings every performance to life.



"Alenka and Gwendolína in action during Stage Combat 101, and Julka at the clapboard." Foto Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

Alenka Slačková – a dancer with her body, an actress with her heart



Our Alenka is a beautiful example of how a love for the arts can grow from childhood and blossom on stage in entirely new ways. Although she has extensive experience in folk dance, acting is still a new and fascinating journey for her. She steps onto the stage with natural grace, enthusiasm, and a willingness to learn, making her not only a talented actress but also a beloved member of our company.

In Hamlet 5, she plays the Marquise of Rosencrantz – a role that allows her to combine physical energy with acting conviction. Her performance is fresh, entertaining, and full of passion, and we already know that audiences will be captivated by her work.

About Alenka, in her own words

"I come from a beautiful part of Slovakia, Liptov, from the village of Liptovské Sliače. I was born into a family where folklore is practically part of our DNA, and traditional culture is a natural part of everyday life – at least in our family, a mix of the Jacko and Ondrejko families. Performing in the village folk group was just an added layer to what is present on every important day in the life of a resident of Sliače, at least in our case." (continues on the next page)



Our Star – Double Feature!

“The stage has always been an inseparable part of my Slovak identity. That it could also become part of my life in Calgary was never even a dream, let alone a reality. It all began with the folk ensemble Slnečnica. And when I learned about the idea of possibly founding a theatre in Calgary, there was no question about joining.

In the relatively short time I’ve been in Calgary, I’ve met quite a few people from the Slovak community. But I had no idea that we also had an important Slovak director here, František Vaněček. I was grateful that not only he, but also other members of the theatre, welcomed me into the group.”

1) Alenka, what intrigued you the most about the role of Rosencrantz during the first read-through?

When the director assigned me the role of Rosencrantz in Hamlet 5, I was surprised to learn it would be a female character. Originally, the role is male. And when I found out I would also be fencing in this role, that was just an extra bonus. Since the entire play is presented a bit differently by Naše Divadlo, it fits perfectly – figuratively speaking, like “a glove.” But I won’t reveal any more – the audience will have to see for themselves.

2) How are you managing the fight scenes? Do you feel that any of your folk dance experience helps with your movement or posture?

As I mentioned, this play also includes fencing. I’ve never actively done any sport, so this is completely new for me. And although fencing with a sword looks simple and elegant, the opposite is true – at least for me. Managing quick and agile lunges with a sword in one hand was challenging at first. My hand had to fully adjust to the new movements.

Even though I have a few dance steps trained, here it seems that sometimes it hinders me more than it helps. I still have a lot of training ahead before it’s polished down to the details and looks like real fencing.

3) Which moment from the first rehearsals has brought the biggest smile to your face so far?

Naše Divadlo recently held its first full read-through rehearsal, where all the actors came together. I have to say, the Slovak and Czech community is full of incredibly talented people, and I was blown away by how professional they are. Even without prior experience – not just in theatre – they are astonishingly gifted. While listening to them deliver their lines, I even forgot I was just in a rehearsal room. It already felt as if I were sitting in a polished theatre, watching from a balcony box. A true joy to hear.

Just as Hamlet 5 brought a smile to my face at the first read-through, I believe everyone who comes to see it in Calgary will have a similar experience. There’s no doubt it will be a powerful artistic experience, crafted by non-professional artists with big Slovak and Czech hearts, sharing their love of theatre far from home. And that’s a guaranteed success! See you at the premiere.





Our Star – Double Feature!

Gvenduška Golušková – unquestionably our little theatre sunshine



Our tireless action star! Gvenduška is one of the youngest members of the company and is already entering her second season with Naše Divadlo. When she's not on stage, you'll find her by the water – a true "daughter of the water" – collecting medals and chasing adrenaline in sports competitions. In *Hamlet 5*, she brings the character of Marquise Guildenstern to life with energy, courage, and youthful charm that is sure to win over the audience.

In her first production, *Nebe na Zemi*, she played Aurelia, Lady Catastrophe's maid, and since then her talent and determination have grown even more. She comes to every rehearsal prepared, willing to help, and always ready to jump into action. We are incredibly happy to have such a young, energetic, and determined actress on our team, whose enthusiasm brings every scene and project to life.

About Gvendolína in her own words

Since I was little, I've loved kayaking, singing, dancing, and reading. I've always dreamed of becoming an actress—elegant and unforgettable like Greta Garbo—while also having the charm and allure of Marilyn Monroe. My favorite Czech songs are Za 100 let and Když nemůžeš, tak přidej víc. I especially enjoy singing with my dad when he plays guitar and kayaking with my little brother, because he's simply the best brother in the world.

From Czech literature, I love Čtyřlístek the most—it always makes me laugh and draws me into adventures. My favorite Czech food is fruit-filled dumplings, ideally paired with a cold glass of Kofola. I love helping others and being in nature—it brings me peace, joy, and inspiration.

1) How are you enjoying working on the role of Guildenstern so far? What do you find most interesting about the character?

I admit that it's hard for me to answer these questions because I don't yet know how the character will fully develop. Right now, I feel her as a girl who loves fun and isn't afraid to speak her mind.

2) How are you experiencing the rehearsals for the fight scenes – is it more of a challenge, fun, or maybe both for you?

It's a lot of fun for me, and I enjoy figuring out how to make it entertaining so that the audience has fun too.

3) Which moment from the first rehearsals has brought the biggest smile to your face so far? Is there anything you'd like to share about yourself or what it means to you to be part of *Hamlet 5* and Naše Divadlo?

The first time we fenced and Alenka, as Rosenkranz, was nervous to touch me so she wouldn't hurt me—that moment made me smile the most. My dream is to become an actress, so I truly value the opportunity to be part of Naše Divadlo. And now, more than ever, I understand why I even learned Czech here in Canada.



Nebe na Zemi, January 2025 – Gvendolína as Aurélie with Dagmar Rakušan as Catastrofa Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary



Our Star – Double Feature!



Two shining stars of our stage through the eyes of our director

Alenka and Gvenduška are true treasures of our ensemble – each enriching the stage and backstage in her own way. Alenka brings delicacy, grace, and a sense of dance to the performance, while Gvendolína adds dynamism, courage, and energy that fills every corner of the stage. Together, they not only bring the stories to life but also inspire joy and passion in our entire team. As our artistic director and director František Vaněček said:

"After our brief crisis—which, fortunately, lasted only a short time—thanks in large part to our two rays of sunshine, Alenka and Gvendolína, who brought me immense joy when I cast them as Rozenkranz and Guildenstern... They embraced the fencing work beautifully during our four preliminary rehearsals, and the result was something amazing in terms of acting, humanity, and the joy they bring and share with those around them. Thank you, girls, what you've accomplished in such a short time is truly fantastic, and I firmly believe you will be full-fledged actresses even in Hamlet itself, a play directly inspired by Shakespeare, since it's still very unusual for Rozenkranz and Guildenstern to be played by women. I'm very happy that you accepted this opportunity, and I'm confident you will be fantastic."



Gvendolína a Alenka during Stage Combat 101, May 2025 Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

We can't wait for you to see these two amazing girls shine on stage and bring you an unforgettable theatre experience!

Backstage Pass: Through the Lens of Daša Ozaniaková

Our actors are extraordinary people, and we are incredibly proud of each one of them. But theatre isn't just the faces on stage – behind every performance is a team working quietly in the wings, away from the spotlight. Backstage Pass was created to honor those who remain behind the curtain – unseen, yet indispensable. Our first feature is Daša Ozaniaková, the person who captures the soul of Naše Divadlo through her lens. Whether through photos or videos, Daša is behind it all – quietly, with a smile, and absolute focus, ensuring every shot tells our shared story.

Daša in Brief

Is there anything that has surprised you in your work with Naše Divadlo?

I was really surprised by how strong the community around the theatre is. It's not just about the performances, but also about how people support each other, help one another, and meet up—even outside of the theatre. I've only been part of the theatre for a short time, but I already have countless wonderful memories.

What are you most looking forward to now that the production is in full swing?

I'm looking forward to all the fun! Once rehearsals get going, I know there will always be moments that make us laugh for weeks. I'm also excited to capture all those moments. Whenever I look back at the photos, I remember all the funny situations, little quarrels, and mishaps.

What would you say to someone who has never been “behind the scenes”?

Behind the scenes is a completely different world than what the audience sees from the seats. It's full of emotions, focus, small gestures, and moments that can be even more powerful than the performance itself. It's a place where people work with their hearts, but also where they can relax, take a break, and laugh. I'd wish everyone the incredible experience of being part of something so special. If you get the chance, don't hesitate to join!



“Backstage Pass reminds us that theatre isn't just about the performance, but above all about the people who make it – and Daša captures them with heart.”

The backstage of Naše Divadlo is full of inspiring people and stories, and we're already looking forward to introducing more of our team members in upcoming issues..

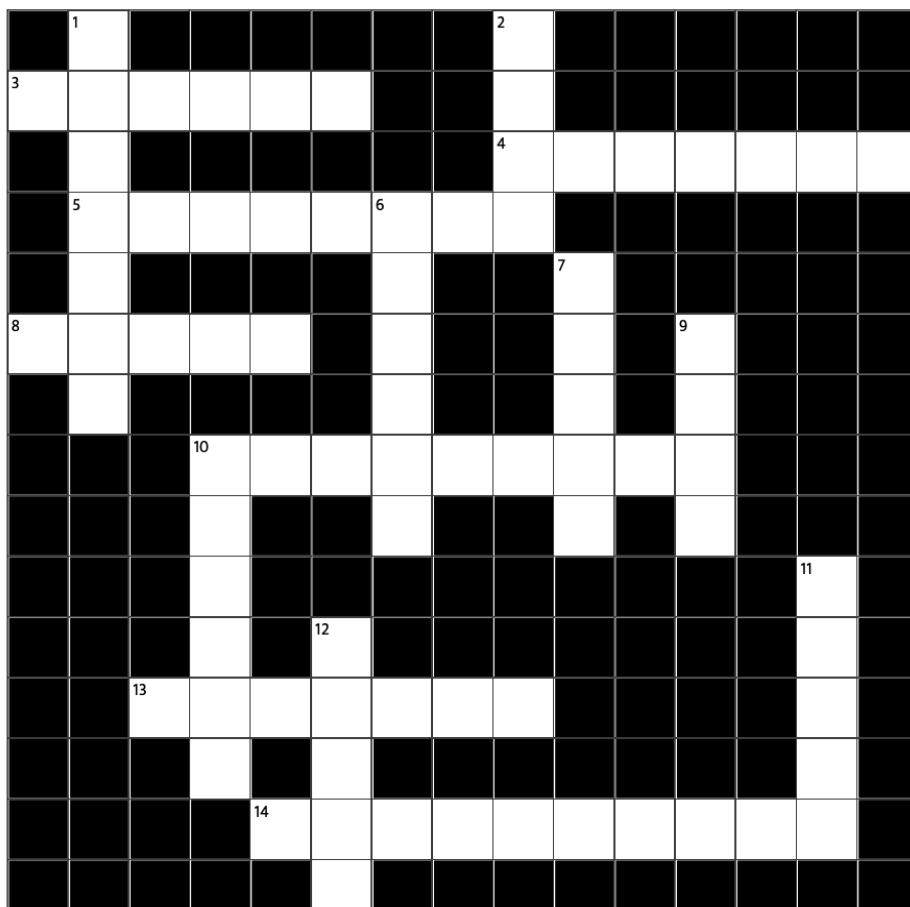


Our golden trio – Janík Špak (left), Daša Ozaniaková (center), and Jonathan Matey (right) Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

Theatre Bloopers

“Wait a sec... I understand it, it just hasn't sunk in!”

Whisperer's Puzzles



Theatre Play – Match the Correct Pairs!

Premiere

Final rehearsal before the premiere

Ensemble

an object used on stage

Prompter

the person responsible for sound

Prop

the first public performance of a play

Curtain

Person prompting actors with their lines

Dress Rehearsal

Main stage curtain

Sound technician

Cast and crew

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You may have already heard of Pepik Imports... and if not, it's definitely worth checking out their website! We're so excited that something this delicious and original is thriving in our community – bringing Czech and Slovak treats straight to Calgary. From Luhačovice spa wafers to Kofola, Vinea, and Korunní, Pepik Imports constantly surprises us with new delights.

And now, forgive my editor's weakness... it's time to open a pack of salted caramel wafers, because these have totally won me over right now!

Z	F	S	C	A	R	L	E	T	T	O	I	J	S	
J	C	O	M	M	E	D	I	A	W	Y	G	X	C	
S	D	A	A	A	E	U	E	N	A	O	X	U	O	
Z	Q	G	Z	G	V	D	Q	H	A	D	Y	A	V	
K	Q	U	I	F	I	O	A	O	W	E	N	I	I	
E	K	W	L	D	A	R	R	E	J	O	A	L	N	
F	G	A	E	N	P	R	S	E	G	N	C	E	O	
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O	B	L	S	N	N	O	N	E	M	B	B	R	O	A
W	E	E	D	C	A	H	G	I	E	L	W	K	D	
I	Z	D	E	S	D	E	M	O	N	A	G	D	Y	
G	C	M	L	K	R	A	V	O	K	S	U	K	A	
M	Y	O	L	Y	E	N	O	I	M	R	E	H	R	



StarCommedia dell'arte troupe, probably depicting Isabella Andreini and the Compagnia dei Gelosi, oil painting by unknown artist, c. 1580; in the Musée Carnavalet, Paris
CFL—Giraudon/Art Resource, New York

Theater around the world

Did you know that the earliest known professional actress in Europe was already performing in the 16th century?

Isabella Andreini was a star of commedia dell'arte and a member of the famous troupe I Gelosi. She was not only an actress but also an educated poet and writer, earning respect at a time when women on stage were uncommon. Her fame spread across Europe, inspiring future generations of actresses.

In December, we'll bring you an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at our upcoming production, Hamlet 5. Don't miss this unique glimpse into the preparations for our boldest performance yet!

Follow us!

Don't miss any news or exclusive behind-the-scenes glimpses of our productions. Follow us at:

🌐 www.nasedivadlocalgary.com

📸 Instagram: @nasedivadlocalgary

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