

Theatrical Whisperer

Naše Divadlo Calgary

December 2025 • Winter edition, volume 4

CALGARY GETS A TASTE OF DENMARK – HAMLET V; OR, WHAT'S NEW AT ELSINORE? PREPARE FOR A PREMIERE FULL OF SURPRISES!

Calgary, AB – Get ready, Calgary — Hamlet V; or, What's New at Elsinore? is arriving in a form you've never seen before!

This tragicomedy, which playfully reimagines the classic text, blends humour, stage combat, suspense, and unexpected surprises. From hours spent in Swordplay 101 and Singing 101, to thousands of minutes poured into costumes and set construction, and hundreds of volunteer hours — this isn't just a play. It's a theatrical miracle crafted straight from the heart. Prepare for laughter, dramatic twists, and an energy that will fill all of Elsinore... and all of Calgary!

(Read more on page 2.)


In this issue, you'll find:

- How Hamlet V Was Created – A Tragicomedy for a New Era (pp. 2–3)
- 5 Reasons You Can't Miss Hamlet V (p. 4)
- Backstage with Our Technical Wizard Viktor Kulha
- Our Stars: Martina & Júlia

And so much more!
Discover all the winter highlights in this issue.

NAŠE DIVADLO CALGARY LTD.

presents a musical tragicomedy by František Vaněček,
inspired by the works of William Shakespeare (Hamlet) and Tom Stoppard
(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead).



HAMLET V.
or what's new at Elsinore?

Premiere: January 16, 2026
Pre-sale is officially open! Grab your tickets today at:
www.nasedivadlocalgary.com

Editor: Natália Vaněčková

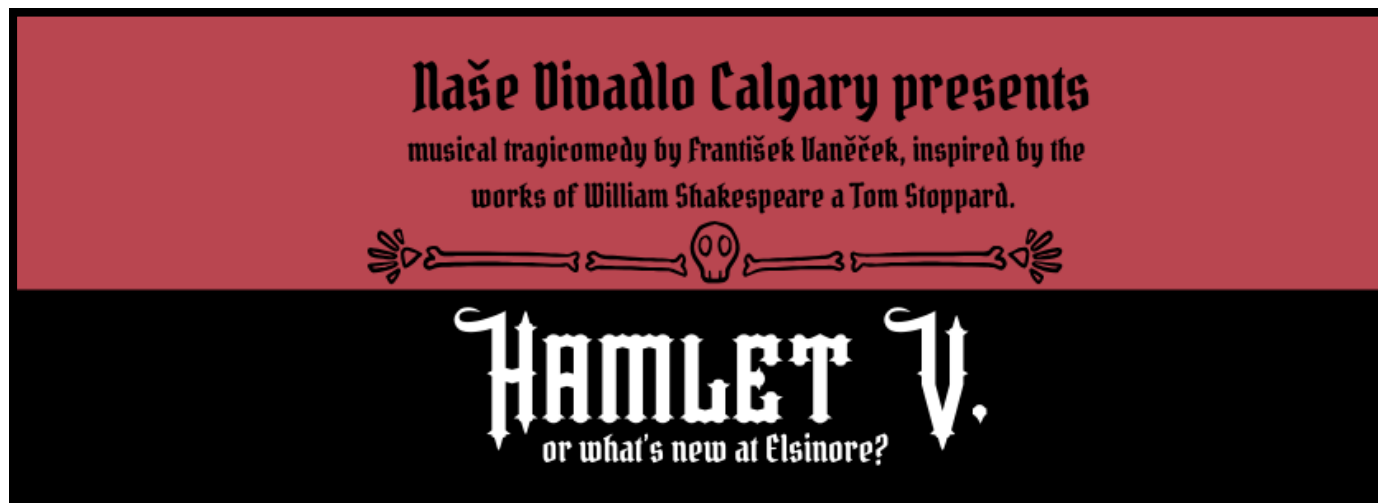
Graphics, translation, design, and all the priceless winter goodies — created by our team at Naše Divadlo Calgary

www.nasedivadlocalgary.com

Hamlet V: Humour, tension, and big energy — all in one

Get ready, Calgary — Hamlet V; or, What's New at Elsinore? arrives with a dynamic style that will pull audiences in from the very first moment.

From the very first moment the stage comes alive to the final curtain, audiences are swept into the heart of a living tragicomedy. Humor, suspense, and unexpected twists follow so fast you never know what's coming next. Swordplay, movement, and physical comedy meet the wit and charm that Naše Divadlo is known for. And yes — everything is staged with a modern touch and comfortable viewing, complete with English subtitles.



Behind the Scenes: Hard Work and Heart

Preparing Hamlet V wasn't just about on-stage rehearsals. Our actors took part in Swordplay 101, learning movement, rhythm, and safe techniques for dynamic duels. Singing 101 strengthened their voices and timing, ensuring that both comedic and dramatic moments came through perfectly — even in the most challenging passages. Every rehearsal combines discipline, improvisation, and creative energy. Costumes, lighting, sound, and props are carefully tested and refined — from the cup in a sword duel to the smallest scenic detail. Every team member, whether actor or technician, contributed hundreds of hours to make sure every moment on stage works exactly as intended.



Photo Credit: @Naše Divadlo Calgary

Set Construction and Technical Mastery

Hamlet V isn't just a play — it's an experience. The swordplay isn't merely performed; the audience feels the speed, precision, and physicality in every move. Each duel is choreographed so that excitement and fun go hand in hand, with humour often appearing when you least expect it.

And while the performance is full of tension, laughter is never far away. Naše Divadlo ensures that even serious moments can shift into natural, situational humour without ever feeling forced. The modern set design and creative technical solutions make the show comfortable to watch, with every detail — lighting, sound, movement — contributing to the overall experience.



Premiere

16. January 2026, 7:00PM

(Doors open at 6:00 PM — bar service available)

Dates of Reprise

17. January 2026 o 16:00

(Doors open at 3:00 PM — bar service available)

25 January 2026 o 18:00

(Doors open at 5:00 PM — bar service available)

31 January 2026 o 18:00

(Doors open at 5:00 PM — bar service available)

Venue

Hungarian Calvin Presbyterian Church
101 14 Ave SW, Calgary, AB T2R 0W3

Ticket Pricing

- Presale (online): \$35 – only until Jan 6
- Doors (only if there's vacancy): \$45

What can you expect

On stage, the timeless story meets a modern, energetic style that's accessible to all audiences. Every duel, fall, and unexpected moment is choreographed to make you laugh while keeping the tension high until the final scene. Humour, music, dramatic moments, and surprising twists come together in a seamless, visually stunning theatrical experience that will delight even those who usually watch theatre from afar.

Tickets & Presale – Reserve Your Seat Now!

Presale ends January 6, 2026 — don't miss your chance to experience the energy, humour, and dramatic twists of Hamlet V firsthand! Presale tickets are available through our website: www.nasedivadlocalgary.com

Action and Energy

Every movement on stage is choreographed so that humour, tension, and action flow together seamlessly. The swordplay isn't just practice — it's physical comedy that surprises and delights. Every duel, fall, or unexpected moment has its own rhythm and pace, fully immersing the audience. Backstage, it's a wonderfully organized chaos: costumes, props, lights, and sound are all prepared simultaneously, often with improvisation that ends up working even better than expected. Rehearsals are full of laughter, trial, and discovery, creating a truly unique theatrical experience.

English Subtitles — A First!

This year, we've taken a major step toward making our theatre more accessible — all performances of Hamlet V now feature English subtitles, so everyone can enjoy the energy, humour, and tension of the show. You don't need to understand Slovak or Czech — every detail, sword duel, and comedic moment is clear and entertaining for an international audience. This is a huge step forward for Naše Divadlo, allowing us to share the performance with a wider community.



Top 5 Reasons Not to Miss Hamlet V

You have a unique chance to peek into the mind of the director and dramaturg of our latest production. Here are their reasons why Hamlet V; or, What's New at Elsinore? is an absolute must-see:

1 A Fresh Take on a Classic

Hamlet V isn't pure Shakespeare — it's a lighthearted musical tragicomedy, drawing inspiration from Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* as well as the cabaret *Večerní Brno*. *"The original Hamlet is quite challenging and heavy, so I wanted to make it accessible to a wider audience,"* says the director. While the play features no supernatural beings aside from the ghost, the story is playful, clear, and easy to follow — even for those who haven't read Shakespeare.

2 Skilled & New - Energy and Surprises

The combination of seasoned actors and fresh faces brings a unique energy to the production. *"During rehearsals, I paid close attention to every character, because each one is unique, and our actors often surprise me with what they bring to the role,"* says the director. Audiences can look forward to unexpected moments and impressive performances.

3 Music, Swordplay, and Stage Magic

Hamlet V is a visually and musically rich production. The music enhances the emotions, rhythm, and energy of the performance, while the swordplay and action scenes create a theatrical experience that pulls the audience straight into the story. Every detail is carefully timed and crafted to make a show that is both entertaining and technically impressive.

4 Playfulness and Unexpected Humour

This version delivers unexpected comedic moments and clever references that keep the audience on their toes. The text is lightened and clear, allowing viewers to focus on the characters, humour, and action without getting lost in the complex language of the original. Every scene hides a surprise that can amuse — and even jolt — the audience.

5 Timeless Themes That Still Resonate

Hamlet V explores human desire for power, the choices that shape lives, and the complex nature of people — all presented in an accessible and entertaining way. *"I believe William Shakespeare would enjoy seeing how his themes still resonate, offering audiences an experience that is both fun and thought-provoking,"* says the director. This production shows that classics can be playful, understandable, and inspiring, appealing to every audience member regardless of their experience with theatre or literature.

Whatever your reason, Hamlet V promises an evening full of music, laughter, suspense, and surprises. Come see the classic come alive on stage in a fresh, playful new form — and let yourself be carried away by a story that entertains, enlightens, and inspires all at once.



Photo Credit: First rehearsal on stage (left: Janko, Martin, Peter), Hamlet V - Naše Divadlo Calgary

Backstage Pass: Viktor in action

Not every hero wears a cape — some work behind the lights, the curtain, and the soundboard. This month, we shine a spotlight on Viktor Kul'ha, the technician who ensures every performance runs smoothly — from the first beam of light to the final applause. If an actor is missing from rehearsal, Viktor steps in without hesitation and reads their role. While his work remains in the shadows, every audience member sees and hears the results.

Naše Divadlo wouldn't be the same without him — and we're thrilled he's part of the team!

Viktor in short

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear "Naše Divadlo"?

For me, this name represents a project dedicated to bringing a cultural experience to the Czech and Slovak community and their friends. As a member of this group of "slightly crazy" people, I'm happy to contribute my skills and qualities to the team.

How would you describe everything your role involves during a performance?

My workspace is in the areas where the audience usually can't see. As a member of the technical team, I'm responsible for lights, sound, effects, assisting with scene changes, and of course, the curtain :P. While I'm exempt from learning the lines of any specific character, it's important to master the precise timing of each technical cue.

What excites you most about Hamlet V — the lights, the sound, the effects... or something different?

I look forward to the moment when the theatre fills with an audience again and the chance to bring something unique to Calgary. I also enjoy the start of rehearsals on stage, watching the play gradually "take shape" into its final form, including all the technical elements.

What do you consider the biggest challenge in technical theatre work?

I think the biggest challenge will be coordinating with the actors and getting familiar with the technical equipment (especially since we're preparing new things for you).

Viktor is proof that art happens even behind the curtain — quietly, precisely, and indispensably. Thank you for helping keep the lights, rhythm, and spirit of Naše Divadlo perfectly in sync with your energy and reliability.



Naše Divadlo Celebrates Marika, Our Theatre Mom Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

A photograph of a band performing on a stage. The band consists of several members, including a man in the center playing an acoustic guitar and singing into a microphone. Other members are visible in the background, some wearing robes, suggesting a medieval or historical theme. The stage is lit with blue and green lights.

Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

The event wouldn't have been possible without our volunteers and company members, who contributed their energy, creativity, and team spirit — from preparing the stage, technical setup, and kitchen, to organising the raffle and the best costume contest.



Thank you to each and every attendee for your support, fun, and for creating an unforgettable atmosphere that united the community and our love of theatre. We look forward to seeing you again — on January 16 at our premiere, with presale tickets starting November 22.



Our Stars – Double Feature!



In this issue, we highlight two exceptional women who shine in Hamlet V in their own unique ways. Martina Vaněčková and Julia Aleksandrov are proof that talent comes in many forms — from children's stages to taking bold first steps in an entirely new artistic discipline.



Martina Vaněčková – Theatre Lover, World Explorer

Martina is one of those rare talents who seems born for the stage. She grew up in a family where art wasn't just talked about — it was lived. Later, she entered the world of amateur theatre in Púchov with the troupe A Dost', shining in productions such as Plné vrecká peňazí, Samovrah, and the original version of Hamlet V. Theatre is in her blood and under her skin — it's where she breathes fully.

In her private life, she studies psychology, giving her a subtle, intuitive understanding of emotions and human connections, which naturally informs her character work. When she's not on stage, she travels, exploring new countries, cultures, and stories that enrich her and find their way into her performances. Her Ophelia feels modern while remaining true to the essence — a teenager torn between love, expectations, and a world that doesn't coddle her. The result is a sensitive, present, and deeply human performance, making her one of the emotional centers of Hamlet V.

1) Ophelia is one of Shakespeare's most famous female characters. How does your Ophelia differ from the traditional version we know from classic productions of Hamlet??

I try not to think of Ophelia as one of Shakespeare's most famous characters — that would be too intimidating for me. My version of Ophelia is a teenager defined by her relationships with her father, brother, and first great love. I see her as innocent yet playful, surrounded by power-hungry people and shaped by the men closest to her. She brings a lightness that balances the intrigues of the royal court — though in the end, it all overwhelms her. This is what makes her a unique character; when she's on stage, she sets the energy and tone for the entire court.

2) Is there something you've learned about yourself while working on this character?

Not so much about myself, but about the work itself. The process has given me a deeper understanding of the importance of relationships, the dynamics between characters, and authenticity. I believe characters need to be "graspable" for both actors and audience members to create genuine connections. For example, with Ophelia, many women can recall what it was like to be a teenage girl in love. Characters come alive through relationships, which is why strong dynamics with fellow actors on stage are key. Personally, I've learned that I can't approach a role too mechanically — I have to express it through my own way of being. Only when I truly understand the character can I live it authentically, rather than merely imitating something foreign.

3) If you had just one sentence to invite the audience to the premiere, what would it be?

Persuasion doesn't work — but an invitation and encouragement do. So: come have fun! Hamlet V is unique in its storytelling, perfectly balancing on the edge between tragedy and comedy — but it's still a comedy! Bring a friend or someone close and enjoy an evening full of laughter, intrigue, music, and simply great company!

On scene brother and sister – Laertes (Lubomír Plaskoň) a Ophelia (Martina Vaněčková)

Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary



Our Stars – Double Feature!



Júlia Aleksandrov – Behind the Scenes to On Stage

Júlia is proof that an artistic adventure can begin at any time and still bring something extraordinary. Hamlet V is her first theatrical role, yet on stage she appears surprisingly natural, bold, and full of subtle charm that immediately captivates the audience. While she's a newcomer to acting, behind the scenes she is one of the most experienced members of the company. As president of Naše Divadlo, Júlia ensures the smooth running of all processes — from administration and planning, through team coordination, to oversight of every production detail. Her professional experience in HR allows her to intuitively lead, support, and create an environment where everyone can thrive.

On stage, she brings the same professionalism and energy that she brings to theatre management. She learns quickly, works precisely, and her character Kate comes alive through her effortless, humorous, and playful charisma. Júlia proves that the courage to try something new and openness to learning can create a bridge between leadership, teamwork, and art — and that theatre can be a place where everyone discovers new aspects of themselves.



1) This is your first theatrical role.

What was your journey toward Kate like, and what have you discovered through her?

This role represents several “firsts” for me! I had never acted on stage or sung before, so stepping into Kate’s world meant discovering entirely new parts of myself. It taught me to work with emotion on a much deeper level — or, in my character’s case, with her “fiery” side — and to convey these feelings authentically on stage. Working with a talented and experienced cast, especially those with opera or musical backgrounds, was incredibly inspiring. Their support helped me understand the musical aspects of the play and how profoundly they influence the entire story.

The whole transformation was enriching, challenging, and liberating. It showed me how much craft and dedication lies behind acting, while also encouraging me to be more vulnerable, bold, and creative. As both an actor and a member of the leadership team, I’ve gained a deeper appreciation for the importance of art, teamwork, and passion in our theatre. It’s beautiful to see how our productions connect the Czech and Slovak community while also opening doors to a wider audience.

2) Do you have a favorite “backstage moment” from rehearsals?

There are many moments, but recently my favorite was when some cast members pulled out microphones and ABBA costumes and surprised one of the actors with an improvised musical performance. It was funny, spontaneous, and genuinely touching — a perfect example of the spirit and closeness that define our theatre family.

3) Your invitation to Hamlet V?

Come experience the music, emotion, and humour of Hamlet V! It’s full of surprises, drama, and, of course, plenty of sword fights

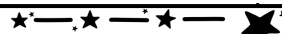
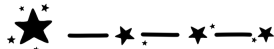


Júlia Aleksandrov a Dagmar Rakušan, (down) Cast and Crew of Hamlet V for the first time in costumes

Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary



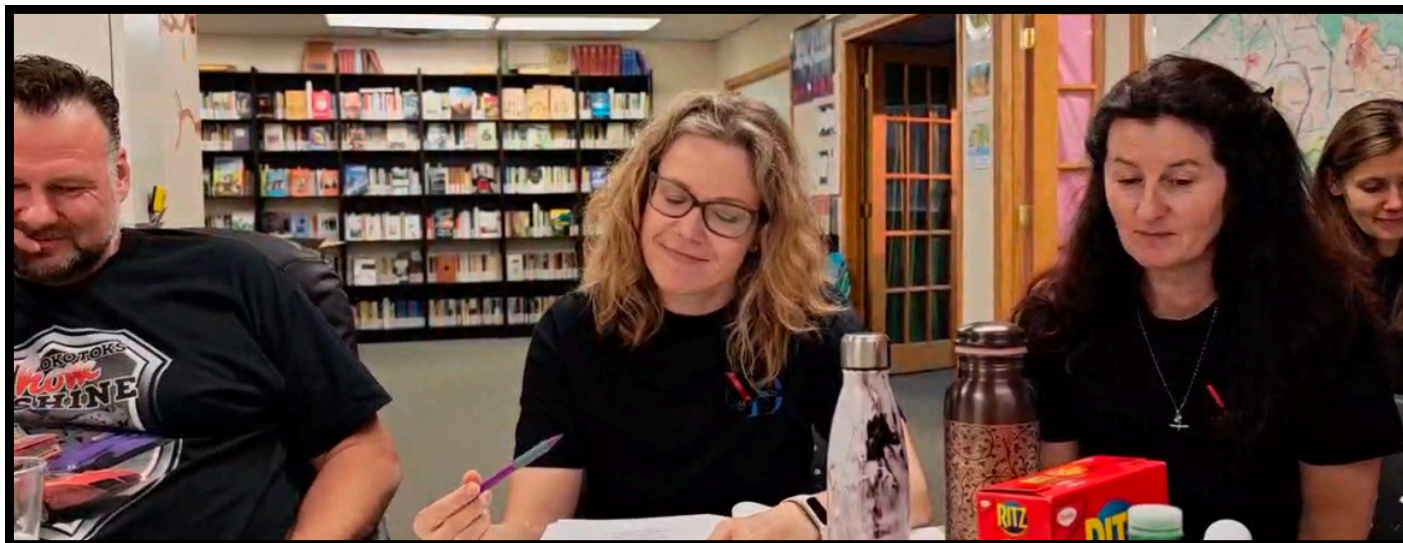
Our Stars – Double Feature!



Martina and Julia are true treasures of our company — each enriching both the stage and backstage in her own way. Martina brings gentleness, authenticity, and deep emotion to the play, while Julia adds courage, charm, and a surprising naturalness that fills every corner of the stage. Together, they not only bring the stories to life but, through their passion and dedication, create joy and inspiration for the entire Naše Divadlo team. As our assistant director and cast member Natália said:

"It's easy to sound biased when I talk about Martina, because she is my sister — but the truth is, she is one of the greatest gifts a family or a theatre company can have. She possesses an incredible combination of gentleness and strength, a quiet, steadfast courage that shows not in words but in actions. I've watched her grow, explore, learn, and rediscover both the world and herself. Every chapter of her life has moved her forward, and she has embraced it all with an open heart. She approaches her roles in the same way — fully, sincerely, with a dedication that is rare. Theatre runs in our family, and Martina's eyes light up when she's on stage. Her Ophelia fits her so perfectly, I feel like she has carried this character inside her for years.

And then there's Julia. When I see her at work, I see a woman who embodies courage and goodness. Her strength doesn't come from being the loudest or most conspicuous, but from being unwavering, kind, and always ready to support others. I've had the honor of collaborating with her on many projects, and honestly, I can't imagine our theatre without her. She gives everything one hundred percent, with passion and extraordinary discipline. And now, stepping onto the stage for the first time, there is something magical about her — as if she has discovered a new part of herself. It's her first role, yet she appears as if she has always belonged on stage. I firmly believe the audience will see exactly what we see — a woman who shines so brightly, you won't soon forget her."



We can't wait for you to see these two incredible actresses shine on stage, bringing their characters to life with humor, emotion, and sword fights — everything that makes Hamlet V. unforgettable. Theatre comes alive thanks to them, and we know the audience will be just as captivated as we are, working alongside them every day.

Júlia a Marcela in action, (down) First table read of Hamlet V - Left: Martin, Martina, Dagmar. Photo Credit: Naše Divadlo Calgary

Whispering about the Whisperer

The audience won't see her on stage... but trust us, she's there! This month, the Theatre Whisperer decided to whisper about its very own prompter – Janka, making her debut with Naše Divadlo. Janka is already present at rehearsals so the actors get used to having someone to turn to if they forget their lines. She's that quiet voice that delivers the right words at just the right moment, keeping the performance flowing smoothly. Without her, many lines might go unanswered – and now, she finally gets her own little moment in the spotlight!

How does it feel to have the Whisperer decide to whisper about you too?

I feel... surprised! The Prompter isn't visible on stage, which suits me perfectly, and I didn't expect to come to the audience's attention in a different way. But, as they say, the darkest place is under the lamp—and how could the theatre lights not shine into that darkness, letting the (Theatre) Prompter whisper even about the prompter!



What do you think is the most important secret of a good theatre prompter?

I'm not sure if a theatre prompter really has "secrets," but if there's a tried-and-true trick to being a good one, I'd love to know it too :-) This is my first time in the role, and maybe after the premiere and a few more performances, I'll have a definitive answer. For now, though, I think the most important thing is to keep pace with each actor, know the play really well, and quickly notice when someone needs a prompt—whether it's the original line or just a word or two to get them back on track with the scene. Sometimes an actor can get stuck, and just a little nudge helps them jump back into the story. You need to keep them in the game, even if they have to improvise a bit—and often, those moments turn out to be the best ones. :)

Theatre Fun Facts

Theatrical tidbits: historical facts, unusual theatre records, and amusing anecdotes from famous productions.

Did you know that the actor who first played Hamlet in the 17th century was likely Richard Burbage – the same actor who also portrayed Shakespeare's Othello and King Lear?

Burbage was a star of London's Globe Theatre, which still carries the legacy of his generation – the first to transform theatre into an art form for everyone

— according to the *British Theatre Archives*

—♦—
Did you know that the oldest surviving theatre in the world isn't in Athens, but in the ancient city of Thorikos?

The theatre in Thorikos (Θορικό) is over 2,500 years old, according to archaeologists, and its layout is truly unique. Instead of the traditional semicircle seen in most ancient amphitheatres, it has an elongated, almost oval shape. Experts believe this unusual design developed naturally—adapting to the slope of the hill on which it was built—and may also reflect older forms of communal gatherings that preceded classical Greek theatre.

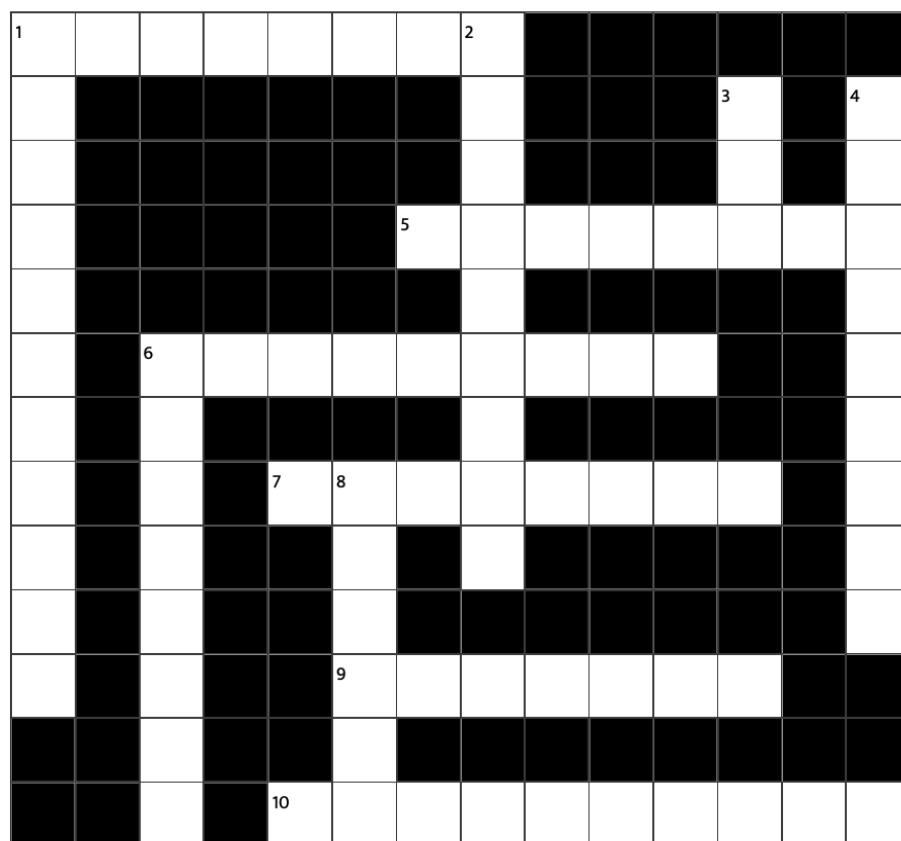
— according to the *Archaeological Atlas of Attica*

—♦—
Did you know that in the 18th century, Prague saw the emergence of the “Divadelní spolek Vlastenské hry”?

This society promoted Czech plays at a time when most theatres were predominantly German. The plays often included satire, music, and dance, and were intended for a wider audience—helping to shape modern Czech drama.

— according to the *Vlastenské Theatre Archives*

Whisperer's Puzzles



Down

- 1 A style of play that combines tragedy and comedy
- 2 A word for a scene in which actors speak their inner thoughts
- 3 a major section of a play
- 4 Type of comic character in Baroque plays
- 6 A word for a prepared script or text of play
- 8 City in England, home of the Globe Theatre

Across

- 1 Ancient Greek Theatre, more than 2,500 years old
5. The person who leads the ensemble and oversees the production
- 6 A word referring to a musical motif that accompanies a scene
- 7 The villain in Hamlet
- 9 The Kingdom where the story of Hamlet occurs
- 10 A word referring to a short scene between two main plot points

A S W O R D J B O N A R Y C U V Q
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CERVANTES
 HAMLET
 HAMARTIA
 TRAGICOMEDY
 SWORD
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 EL SINORE
 DON QUIJOTE
 FATE
 OPHELIA
 ASANO
 MACBETH
 TARTUFFE
 CYRANO
 JULIA



HUNTING CLUB HONEC
Invites you to our
THIRD ANNUAL
HUNTER'S BALL

FEBRUARY 7, 2026
FROM 6 PM TO 2 AM

Calgary Hellenic Banquet Hall
1 Tamarac Crescent, SW
\$115

Includes: welcome drink, dinner, midnight venison goulash, raffle, photo booth and more
Program: DJ Luki and Slovak Folk Group
Dress Code: Formal
Cash Bar

Contact:
Zuzana Ondrejкова at zondrejкова13@gmail.com
Pali Chalupa at palochalupa@yahoo.ca
(e-transfer only, deadline February 2, 2026)

We invite you to an evening full of fun, dance, and great company!

The Honec Hunting Club warmly invites you to an evening full of music, dance, and Slovak hospitality! Enjoy a welcome drink, a served dinner, midnight venison goulash, a raffle, a photo booth – and much more.

Program: DJ Luki & Slovak Folklore Ensemble

Dress code: Formal attire
Cash bar available

When: February 7, 2026, 6:00 PM – 2:00 AM

Where: Calgary Hellenic Banquet Hall, 1 Tamarac Crescent SW, Calgary, AB

Ticket Price: CAD 115 per person (reserve your spot early!)

Rezervations:

Zuzana Ondrejková –

zondrejкова13@gmail.com

Pali Chalupa – palochalupa@yahoo.ca

(e-transfer only, deadline 2. February 2026)



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Secure your tickets for Hamlet V today! Seating is limited – see you at Elsinore on January 16th.

Want to connect with us? Reach out through our website – it's your hub for everything that's happening! Looking for upcoming events? Check out our online calendar.
Don't miss any news or exclusive behind-the-scenes glimpses from our productions.

www.nasedivadlocalgary.com