

Wednesday, May 28th

19:00 : (in the theatre) Theatre Abtenau, AUSTRIA

„I am Medea“ Drama by Alex Linse based on Euripides in German

At the beginning of the play, Medea's in dire straits. For one, her husband, Jason, has married another woman, Glauke, daughter of Creon the King of Corinth. On top of that, Creon banishes Medea and her two sons from Corinth. Medea, however, is not the kind of woman to take such mistreatment lying down. She swears bloody revenge and swiftly sets about finding a way to kill them all.

First, she convinces Creon to let her stay one more day in Corinth. It goes against his better judgment, but he allows it out of pity for Medea's two sons. This gives Medea enough time to put her plot into action. Next Medea has to secure a safe place to retreat to once she's committed the murders. By an incredibly lucky coincidence, Aegeus, King of Athens, happens by. Medea promises to cure his sterility if he swears to give her safe harbour. Of course, she neglects to mention she's about to kill a bunch of people.

Now that Medea has the time and a safe place to retreat to, she can really get to work. She snookers Jason into believing that she's now cool with his new marriage. Medea begs her husband to ask Glauke if their two sons can stay in Corinth. Jason is moved and agrees. Medea gives Jason a gossamer gown and a golden crown to sweeten the deal for Glauke. Jason and the children trot off to the palace with hope in their hearts. Their hope is misplaced, however, for once again Medea neglects to mention a vital piece of information: the gifts are cursed.

A Messenger returns and tells Medea all about the horror she has wreaked. When the Princess put on the gown and crown, she received a rather nasty surprise. Her entire body caught fire and the flesh melted from her bones. When Creon saw his daughter's flaming corpse, he was so distraught that he threw his body onto hers and died as well. Medea thinks this is great. Now she only has one thing left to do, in order to leave Jason totally devastated – kill their sons.

The murder of her children isn't easy for Medea. She struggles with her motherly instincts, but in the end her revenge is more important. Medea drags the boys inside the house and kills them with a sword. Jason arrives too late to save his sons. Just as he's banging on the door to stop his wife, Medea erupts into the sky in a chariot drawn by dragons. Jason curses his wife, and she curses him back. He begs to have the children's bodies so that he can bury them. She refuses him even this, and takes their corpses away with her as she flies away triumphant.

20:30 (Town Square) Festival opening: „ Art, Culture and Gastronomy “

Havilah Dance Ensemble „Basket of colours“ Nnabo (Africa Warrior) NIGERIA

Folksong Choir, Church Choir, Music and Dance

Thursday, May 29th

11:00 - us!

15:00 (in the theatre) Kutaisi Youth Theatre GEORGIA

„Dom Juan“ a Mimodrama by Moliere (basically mime)

Dom Juan is essentially a Casanova. He exasperates his servant Sganarelle and must constantly be extricated from sticky situations by his disapproving father. He excels at trapping countless women because he engages in secret, mock marriages that appease the girls, but leave him with no strings attached when he tires of them. He has most recently lured the beautiful Elvire from a convent to "marry" her in this manner.

Despite Sganarelle's indignation and warnings of Heaven's wrath, Dom Juan has left Elvira and now plans to ensnare the fiancée of a friend. In order to do so, Dom Juan and Sganarelle get into a small boat on the same lake where his friend and the fiancée are going to go sailing. Suddenly, the boat is capsized and both master and servant face danger until they are rescued by a peasant. In no time at all, Dom Juan is proposing marriage to two peasant girls who argue with each other about which one of them he will choose. The disillusioned Sganarelle then informs the girls that Dom Juan will not actually marry either of them.

At this point, Dom Juan learns that Elvira's brothers intend to kill him in revenge for abandoning their sister. Sganarelle and his master disguise themselves to make their way back to the city. On the way, Dom Juan saves a stranger from bandits. This stranger turns out to be one of Elvire's brothers. This man now owes Dom Juan his life; even after he finds out his saviour's identity, he decides to have mercy on Dom Juan instead of avenging his sister.

Starting out for the city again, Dom Juan and Sganarelle come across the tomb of the Commandant that Dom Juan killed. Dom Juan jokingly tells Sganarelle to invite the statue to dinner, but is surprised when the statue actually nods its acceptance. Even more frightening for Sganarelle is the fact that the statue actually appears at dinner time. The servant attributes the incident with the statue to Heaven's due wrath.

Dom Juan is not concerned by "Heaven's wrath," though, and decides to pretend to become religious. Heaven's wrath cannot tolerate this insincerity, however, and swallows Dom Juan up in a flaming abyss after his hypocritical rants.

17:30 Theatre Rott am Inn, GERMANY in the Muhlrain Church

„The Contract with the devil – Theophilus in distress“
Mystery play by Gerhard Berger

20:30 (in the theatre) Theatre Mandegar , AFGANISTAN

“The Last Lantern”. Musical by Hadi Mojtabie, Morteza Ahmadzadeh in Dari

Friday, May 30th

14:00 (in the Arelhof Museum) Chamber Theatre Zhuki, UKRAINE

“On the Harmful Effects of Tobacco” by Chekhov in Russian and English

The action takes place in a town hall. The main character has been told by his wife to give a lecture about "the harmful effects of tobacco" even though he himself is a smoker. He emphasizes that this will be a dry and boring lecture, but always postpones the actual subject by talking about his problems with his dominant wife.

"I must tell you, by the way, that my wife runs a boarding school. Well, not exactly a boarding school, but something in the nature of one. Just between us, my wife likes to complain about hard times, but she has put away a little nest egg... some forty or fifty thousand roubles. As for me, I haven't a kopek to my name, not a penny . . . "

He wants to stand up against his wife, he wants to run away, to forget and to be alone. He throws off his old, shabby waistcoat (it being a metaphor for himself), but suddenly picks it back up, because "She is here. My wife is there in the wings waiting for me."

At the end of the monologue, he has hardly said anything relevant about the harmful effects of tobacco, but asks the audience not to betray him:

"If she asks you, please, I beg you, tell her that her scarecrow husband, I mean, the lecturer, me, behaved with dignity."

18:00 (in the theatre) Theatre Company Kruidmels, HOLLAND

„Daydreamers and sleepwalkers“ : Motion theatre (no words)

20:30 (in the town square) Paolo Avataneo, ITALY

Clown Show (no words)

Saturday, May 31st

11:00 (in the theatre) Commedia 2000, HUNGARY

„ Bastien & Bastienne “ Opera by W.A. Mozart in German.

Bastien und Bastienne was one of Mozart's earliest operas, written in 1768 when he was only twelve years old. Bastienne, a shepherdess, fears that her "dearest friend", Bastien, has forsaken her for another pretty face, and decides to go into the pasture to be comforted by her flock of lambs.

Before she can leave, however, she runs into Colas, the village soothsayer. Bastienne requests the help of his magical powers to help win back her Bastien. Colas (being a soothsayer) knows all about the problem, and comforts her with the knowledge that Bastien has not abandoned her, rather, he's merely been distracted lately by 'the lady of the manor'. His advice is to act coldly towards Bastien, which will make him come running back.

Bastien is heard approaching, so Bastienne hides herself. Bastien swaggers in, proclaiming how much he loves Bastienne. Colas informs him that Bastienne has a new lover. Bastien is shocked and asks the magician for help.

Colas opens his book of spells and recites a nonsense aria filled with random syllables and Latin quotations. Colas declares the spell a success and that Bastienne is in love with Bastien once more. Bastienne, however, decides to keep up the game a bit longer and spurns Bastien with great vehemence. Bastien threatens suicide, which Bastienne merely shrugs off.

Finally, the two decide that they have gone far enough and agree to reconcile. Colas joins them as they all sing a final trio in praise of the magician.

14:00 Theatre Papion, IRAN in Farsi

„The Chairs“ Tragedy - Comedy by Eugene Ionesco

The play concerns two characters, known as Old Man and Old Woman, frantically preparing chairs for a series of invisible guests who are coming to hear an orator reveal the Old Man's discovery. It is implied that this discovery is the meaning of life, but it is never actually said. The guests supposedly include "everyone", implying everyone in the world; there are other implications that this is a post-apocalyptic world. The Old Man, for example, speaks of the destruction of Paris. The invisibility of the guests implies that the Old Man and Old Woman are the last two people on the planet. As the "guests" arrive, the two characters speak to them and reminisce cryptically about their lives. A high point in the happiness of the couple is reached when the invisible emperor arrives. Finally, the orator arrives to deliver his speech to the assembled crowd. Played by a real actor, the orator's physical presence contradicts the expectations set up by the action earlier in the play.

The old couple then commit suicide by throwing themselves out of the window into the ocean. They claim that life couldn't get any better at this point because the whole world is about to hear the Old Man's astounding revelation. As the orator begins to speak, the invisible crowd assembled in the room and the real audience in the theatre discover that the orator is a deaf-mute.

At the end of the play, the sound of an audience fades in. Ionesco claimed that this sound was the most significant moment in the play, writing in a letter to the first director, "The last decisive moment of the play should be the expression of ... absence," He said that after the Orator leaves, "At this moment the audience would have in front of them ... empty chairs on an empty stage decorated with streamers, littered with useless confetti, which would give an impression of sadness, emptiness and disenchantment such as one finds in a ballroom after a dance; and it would be after this that the chairs, the scenery, the void, would inexplicably come to life (that is the effect, an effect beyond reason, true in its improbability, that we are looking for and that we must obtain), upsetting logic and raising fresh doubts."

17:00 (in the Sonnlein Restaurant) Theatre Salaspis, LATVIA

“Miss Julie” by August Strindberg in Latvian and French

The play opens with Jean walking onto the stage, the set being the kitchen of the manor. He drops the count's boots off to the side but still within view of the audience; his clothing shows that he is a valet. The playwright describes the set in detail in naturalistic style. Jean talks to Kristin about Miss Julie's peculiar behaviour. He considers her mad since she went to the barn dance, danced with the gamekeeper, and tried to waltz with Jean, a mere servant of the count. Kristin delves into the background of Miss Julie, stating how, unable to face her family after the humiliation of breaking her engagement, she stayed behind to mingle with the servants at the dance instead of going with her father to the Midsummer's Eve celebrations. Miss Julie got rid of her fiancé seemingly because he refused her demand that he jump over a riding whip she was holding. The incident, apparently witnessed by Jean, was similar to training a dog to jump through a hoop.

Jean takes out a bottle of fine wine, a wine with a "yellow seal," and reveals, by the way he flirts with her, that he and Kristin are engaged. Noticing a stench, Jean asks what Kristin is cooking so late on Midsummer's Eve. The pungent mixture turns out to be an abortifacient for Miss Julie's dog, which was impregnated by the gatekeeper's mongrel. Jean calls Miss Julie "too stuck-up in some ways and not proud enough in others," traits apparently inherited from her mother. Despite her character flaws, Jean finds Miss Julie beautiful or perhaps simply a stepping stone to achieve his lifelong goal of owning an inn. When Miss Julie enters and asks Kristin if the "meal" has finished cooking, Jean instantly shapes up, becoming charming and polite. Jokingly, he asks if the women are gossiping about secrets or making a witch's broth for seeing Miss Julie's future suitor. After more niceties, Miss Julie invites Jean once more to dance the waltz, at which point he hesitates, pointing out that he already promised Kristin a dance and that the gossip generated by such an act would be savage. Almost offended by this response, she justifies her request by pulling rank: she is the lady of the house and must have the best dancer as her partner. Then, insisting that rank does not matter, she convinces Jean to waltz with her. When they return, Miss Julie recounts a dream of climbing up a pillar and being unable to get down. Jean responds with a story of creeping into her walled garden as a child—he sees it as "the Garden of Eden, guarded by angry angels with flaming swords"—and gazing at her longingly from under a pile of stinking weeds. He says he was so distraught with this unrequitable love that he tried to die beautifully and pleasantly by sleeping in a bin of oats.

At this point Jean and Miss Julie notice some servants heading up to the house, singing a song that mocks the pair of them. They hide in Jean's room. Although Jean swears he won't take advantage of her there, when they emerge later it becomes apparent that the two have had sex. Now they are forced to figure out how to deal with it, as Jean theorizes that they can no longer live together anymore — he feels they will be tempted to continue their relationship until they are caught. Now he confesses that he was only pretending when he said he had tried to commit suicide for love of her. Furiously, Miss Julie tells him of how her mother raised her to be submissive to no man. They then decide to run away together to start a hotel, with Jean running it and Miss Julie providing the capital. Miss Julie agrees and steals some of her father's money, but angers Jean when she insists on bringing her little bird along—she insists that it is the only creature that loves her, after her dog Diana was "unfaithful" to her. When Miss Julie insists that she would rather kill the bird than see it in the hands of strangers, Jean cuts off its head. In the midst of this confusion, Kristen comes downstairs, prepared to go to church. She is shocked by Jean and Miss Julie's planning and unmoved when Miss Julie asks her to come along with them as head of

the kitchen of the hotel. Kristin explains to Miss Julie about God and forgiveness and heads off for church, telling them as she leaves that she will tell the stablemasters not to let them take out any horses so that they cannot run off. Shortly after, they receive word that Miss Julie's father, the Count, has returned. At this, both lose courage and find themselves unable to go through with their plans. Miss Julie realizes that she has nothing to her name, as her thoughts and emotions were taught to her by her mother and her father. She asks Jean if he knows of any way out for her. He takes a shaving razor and hands it to her and the play ends as she walks through the door with it, presumably to commit suicide.

20:30 (in the theatre) Theater Quartett, AUSTRIA

“Venice under the snow” by Gilles Dyrek, in German

Natalie and Luke, an engaged couple living together in France, are hosting a dinner party for their friends Christopher and Patricia. Patricia arrives at the party in a bad mood, having just had a quarrel with boyfriend Christopher. Too annoyed to talk, and desperate to just leave, Patricia hardly says anything, which leaves the slightly unworldly and naïve Natalie and Luke to conclude that she doesn't speak English.

Frustrated but amused at the couple's naivete and obliviousness, Patricia plays along, making up details about her life in fictitious “Sweetenia”, and speaking in “Sweetenia” about the capital “Sweetengrad”, to the point that Natalie and Luke decide to give some of their belongings to the poor people of “Sweetenia” by way of Patricia. It is then that Christopher decides to stop the charade.

The themes of misunderstanding and miscommunication in this play are strong as the story explores a couple so self-absorbed and naïve that they easily conclude that Patricia is a foreigner, despite her speaking some English at the start. Natalie and Luke are also extremely over the top in their lovey-dovey mannerisms and gestures with each other, down to calling each other “sweetie” (giving Patricia a name for her fictitious country) every minute. However, as with most couples who are overtly showy with their affection, the couple has communication and expectation issues that plague their relationship – many of which come to light during the course of dinner in this play.

Sunday, June 1st

11:00 (in the theatre) The Twenty 4 Stars, AUSTRIA

„Thick Air in Orange County“ Western / own production in German