

# DRAMATIC THEATRE

## The Pillars of World Drama

During the first years of existence of professional Slovak theatre the Slovak language was featured on the stages very gradually and randomly. The dramatic theatre usually spoke to its audiences in Czech. The first dramatic premiere in the Slovak National Theatre (2 March 1920) was a Czech play – tragedy *Maryša* by Alois and Vilém Mrštík, directed by a Czech director Václav Jiříkovský. However, without the help of Czech theatre professionals the Slovak Thalia would have had an even more difficult birth.

**Molière: TARTUFFE**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 25 May 1946  
Directed by Jozef Budský  
Wide-screen shot  
Photo Theatre Institute Archive



**Jean-Paul Sartre: THE DEVIL AND THE GOOD LORD**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 18 December 1965  
Directed by Jozef Palka  
From left Ctibor Filčík, Martin Gregor  
Photo Theatre Institute Archive



**Karel Čapek: THE WHITE DISEASE**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 18 May 1958  
Directed by Jozef Budský  
In the middle Jozef Kroner  
Photo Gejza Podhorský/Theatre Institute Archive



**Alois and Vilém Mrštík: MARIŠA**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 21 May 1983  
Directed by Vladimír Strniško  
From left Gustáv Valach, Anna Javorková  
Photo Kamil Vyskočil/Theatre Institute Archive



Slovak theatre was catching up quickly and regularly reached for international plays. As the Slovak dramatic theatre was becoming more European, modern and cultivated, French and Russian drama played a significant role. The creators successfully penetrated the inner world of the story, adopted the demanding poetry as well as melodic ease of the conversational style of French plays, and on the other hand, captured the psychologically complicated inner processes of the characters in Russian dramas.

**Anton Pavlovich Chekhov: THREE SISTERS**  
Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising Martin (today Slovak Chamber Theatre Martin) 21 January 1967  
Directed by Miloš Pietor  
From left Elena Zvaríková-Pappová, Alžbeta Barthová, Katarína Hrobárová-Vrzalová  
Theatre Institute Archive



**Alexander Nikolayevich Ostrovsky: A PROFITABLE POSITION**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 16 December 1984  
Directed by Lubomír Vajdička  
From left Lubomír Paulovič, Zdena Studenková, Zdena Gruberová, Magda Vášáryová, Emil Horváth  
Photo Kamil Vyskočil/Theatre Institute Archive

The Mount Parnassus of the world drama, works of William Shakespeare and the dramatic heritage of the classical culture, became the true test of progress of the Slovak dramatic art. Slovak theatre was embracing this heritage very late because of the lack of contemporary translations. Only from the time of World War II deliberate efforts were made to generate interest in Shakespeare and classical dramas.



**William Shakespeare: KING LEAR**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 25 October 1975  
Directed by Pavol Haspra  
From left Leopold Haverl, Karol Machata, Ctibor Filčík, Jozef Adamovič  
Photo Kamil Vyskočil/Theatre Institute Archive



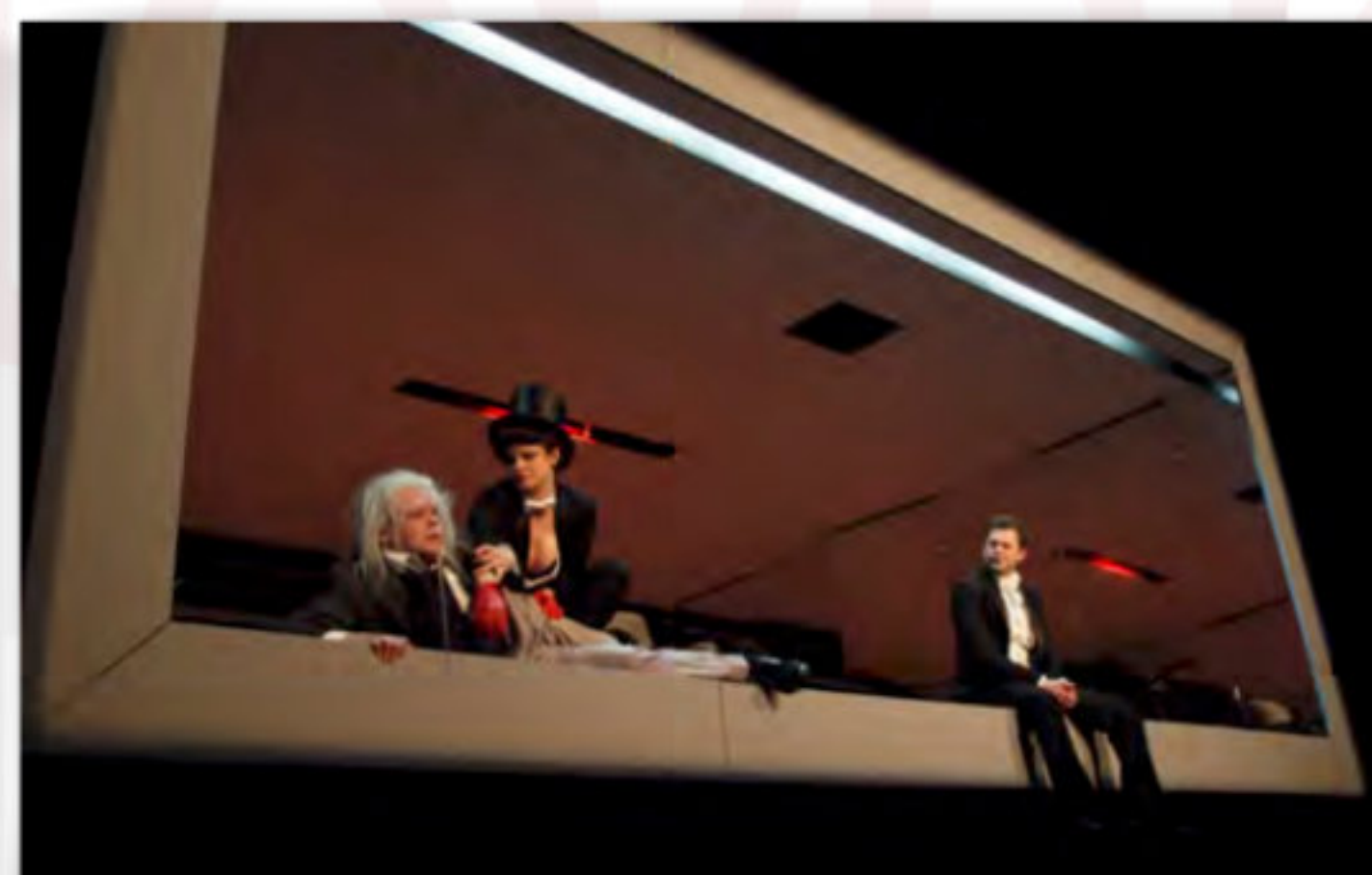
**William Shakespeare: CORIOLANUS**  
Jonáš Záborský Theatre in Prešov 10 March 1967  
Directed by Milan Bobula  
From left Brigita Bobulová, Želmíra Kačková, Peter Stražan Jr., Milan Drotár, Gabriela Rumanová, Gita Mišurová  
Photo Jozef Fecko/Theatre Institute Archive



**Sophocles: OEDIPUS**  
Slovak Chamber Theatre Martin 16 December 2011  
Directed by Roman Polák  
In the middle Marek Geißberg  
Photo Braňo Konečný/Theatre Institute Archive



**Christopher Marlowe: DOCTOR FAUSTUS**  
Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising Martin (today Slovak Chamber Theatre Martin) 25 June 1982  
Directed by Jozef Bednárík  
From left Ján Kožuch, Lubomír Paulovič, Ivan Romančík  
Photo Jaroslav Barák/Theatre Institute Archive



**Johann Wolfgang Goethe: FAUST I, II**  
Slovak National Theatre Bratislava 18 September 2010  
Directed by Martin Čičvák  
From left Robert Roth, Zuzana Fialová, Alexander Bárta  
Photo Oleg Vojtišek/Slovak National Theatre Archive

The monumental philosophical work of Johann Wolfgang Goethe *Faust* met with a similar fate. Demanding philosophical and staging requirements evoked awe and respect from the creators. The first part of Goethe's version premiered in the Slovak National Theatre in 1931, directed by Viktor Šulc in Czech, but the complete Slovak staging of both parts of Goethe's poetic drama had to wait until 2010. In the meantime, we encountered other Faustian plays, and in all cases these were bold and often times also successful dramatic and directorial efforts that proved the refinement and preparedness of the Slovak theatre professionals for this immortal topic of reason and temptation.