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# Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Mostaru – stogodišnja nastojanja i 25 godina igranja na svome jeziku i pod svojim imenom

## Croatian National Theatre in Mostar – centenary efforts and 25 years of playing in one's own language and under one's own name

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NAKON GOTOVO STOGODIŠNJIH NASTOJANJA, U MOSTARU je **22. rujna 1994. godine**, odlukom **Vlade Hrvatske Republike Herceg-Bosne**, utemeljeno **Hrvatsko narodno kazalište**, tada, kao i danas, jedino profesionalno kazalište hrvatskog naroda u Bosni i Hercegovini. Hrvati Mostara i Hercegovine su preko udruge *Bratimstvo svetoga Antuna* i zajedno s pjevačkim katoličkim društvom *Hrvoje* 1896. godine počeli graditi svoju prvu *zgradu za kazališne predstave, pjevanje i balove*. Zgradu je projektirao ing. **Miloš Komadina**, a njena gradnja, koja je financirana dobrovoljnim prilozima, završena je 1897. godine. Nažalost, tadašnja austrougarska vlast zbog političkih razloga nije dopustila da „Dom za društvene svrhe“, kako su ga oni zvali, i službeno dobije ime „Hrvatsko kazalište“. Od tada pa sve do 1994. godine razne vlasti i režimi zabranjivali su i osporavali pravo hrvatskom narodu u BiH da igra i pjeva na svome jeziku i pod svojim imenom.

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AFTER ALMOST A CENTURY OF EFFORTS, THE **Croatian National Theatre** was established in Mostar on **22<sup>nd</sup> September 1994** by the decision of the **Government of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia**, at the time, just as today, the only professional theatre of the Croat people in BiH. In 1896, through the *Brethren of Saint Anthony* and together with the *Hrvoje* Catholic singing society, the Croats of Mostar and Herzegovina began constructing their first *building for theatre performances, singing and balls*. The building was designed by engineer **Miloš Komadina**, and its construction, funded by voluntary contributions, was completed in 1897. Unfortunately, for political reasons, the then Austro-Hungarian authorities did not allow the *community centre*, as they called it, to officially be called the *Croat Theatre*. Until 1994, various authorities and regimes forbade and challenged the right of the Croat people in BiH to perform and sing in its own language and under its own name.

## Kratka povijest i zaslužni ljudi

Spletom povijesnih, društvenih i političkih okolnosti, Hrvati u BiH, prvi put u svojoj novijoj povijesti, početkom su devedesetih godina prošloga stoljeća imali mogućnost samostalno odlučivati o onome što su smatrali bitnim za vlastiti identitet i opstojnost. Institucionalno utemeljenje Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta u Mostaru zasigurno spada u red najvrjednijih i najznačajnijih postignuća spomenutog razdoblja. Poznato je i dokazano kako narod bez institucionalizirane nacionalne kulture ne može biti ni konstitutivan ni državotvoran narod.

Kao i uvijek u povijesti, društvene okolnosti samo stvaraju mogućnosti, a na narodima i pojedincima leži odgovornost njihova sagledavanja i ozbiljenja. Jer uzalud okolnosti ako nedostaje ljudi koji imaju viziju što bi trebalo napraviti i hrabrosti tu viziju pretvoriti u stvarnost. Stoga, prigodom 25. obljetnice osnutka pojedinci zaslužni za utemeljenje i djelovanje Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta u Mostaru zavrjeđuju biti spomenuti u ovome tekstu.

Podimo od onih koji su imali ne samo svijesti, znanja i hrabrosti, nego i ljubavi prema teatru. Da nije bilo te ljubavi, glumci i bivši djelatnici Narodnog pozorišta Mostar vjerojatno bi tih ratnih devedesetih odustali od teatra i prepustili se zovu nekih drugih sirena i muza. Usprkos ratu i stradanjima, ostali su u Mostaru i nastavili raditi jer teatar za njih nije bio samo posao, nego i poziv i strast i ljubav. Svi odreda, i glumci i tehnika i administracija, i svatko ponaosob, zaslužni su i spomenuti na više mjesta u ovoj monografiji, stoga ćemo ovdje posebno istaknuti samo **Ivana Ovčara**, dugogodišnjeg inspicijenta Narodnog pozorišta i prvoga intendanta Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta u Mostaru i zahvaliti mu što je u veoma teškim okolnostima imao hrabrosti i mudrosti voditi, čuvati i graditi ovako važnu i zahtjevnu instituciju.

Tih ratnih devedesetih godina igralo se da bi se živjelo i živjelo da bi se igralo. Igranje nije prestajalo, odustajanje se nije uzimalo u obzir, tražio se samo najprikladniji scenski i institucionalni okvir. Jedno kratko vrijeme taj okvir zvao se Narodno kazalište sve dok u suradnji s Vladom Hrvatske Republike Herceg-Bosne, odnosno njenim Ministarstvom prosvjete, znanosti, kulture i športa nije donesena odluka o utemeljenju Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta u Mostaru. **Jozo Marić**, tadašnji ministar kulture u Vladi HRHB, bio je ne samo veliki zagovornik utemeljenja nego i čovjek širokih obzora koji je razumio kazalište i uvažavao sve njegove specifičnosti.

## Brief history and deserving individuals

Combination of historical, social and political circumstances in early 1990s gave the Croats in BiH, for the first time in their recent history, the opportunity to make their own decisions on what they thought was essential to their own identity and existence. The institutional establishment of the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar certainly is one of the most valuable and significant achievements of this period. It is well known and has been proven that a nation without an institutionalised national culture can neither be a constituent nor a state-building nation.

As has always been the case in history, social circumstances only create opportunities, and it is the responsibility of the peoples and individuals to comprehend them and turn them into reality. It does not really matter what the circumstances are, if people lack the vision of what should be done and the courage to bring the vision to life. Therefore, on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding and operations of the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar, certain individuals deserve to be mentioned here.

Let us begin with those who had not only the awareness, knowledge and courage, but also a love of theatre. If it had not been for this love, the actors and former employees of the National Theatre Mostar would probably have abandoned the Theatre during the 1990s war and surrendered themselves to the call of some other sirens and muses. However, despite the war and suffering, they remained in Mostar and continued working, because theatre to them was not just a job, but a calling, passion and love.

All of them together, the actors, the technical staff and administration, and each individually, are deserving and have been mentioned several times in this monograph. That is why we will now specifically mention only **Ivan Ovčar**, stage manager of the National Theatre for a number of years, and the first manager of the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar, and thank him for having the courage and wisdom to lead, preserve and build such an important and demanding institution under very difficult circumstances.

During the 1990s war, plays were performed to live, and lives were lived to perform plays. Performing did not stop, quitting was out of the question, it was only a matter of finding the most appropriate stage and institutional framework. For a short time, this framework was called the National Theatre until, in cooperation with the Government of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, that is, its Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, a decision was made to establish the Croatian National

Kao velike prijatelje i zagovaratelje HNK iz toga razdoblja, svakako treba spomenuti i književnike **Krešimira Šegu** i **Vladimira Pavlovića**.

Nakon što je utemeljena institucija, sljedeći sud-bonosni korak bio je početak gradnje zgrade HNK. Mnogi su dali svoj obol i doprinos izgradnji, ali, bez ikakve sumnje, *spiritus movens* cijelog tog procesa bio je **Mijo Brajković**, tadašnji gradonačelnik Mostara, a nakon toga i direktor Aluminijske. Posebno smo ponosni na činjenicu kako je prvi predsjednik Republike Hrvatske dr. **Franjo Tuđman** bio i prvi donator sredstava za izgradnju Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta u Mostaru. U tu svrhu izdvojio je jednu svoju mjesečnu predsjedničku plaću. Kako tada, tako i danas, od materijalne vrijednosti, mnogo veća i značajnija je simbolička vrijednost te uplate.

Nakon završetka uređenja Male scene 2002. godine i preseljenja u novu, započetu ali nedovršenu zgradu, ansambl i djelatnici dobili su koliko-toliko normalne uvjete za rad, ali su nedugo nakon toga započeli problemi s pravnim statusom i financiranjem. Integriranjem HRHB u Federaciju BiH te kasnijim prijenosom ovlasti s Vlade HRHB na Vladu FBiH, otvorio se problem pravnoga titulara HNK Mostar. Osnivačka su prava jedno vrijeme bila na Hrvatskoj zajednici Herceg-Bosne, ali se ubrzo uvidjela neodrživost takve situacije. Od 2009. pa sve do 2013. godine HNK Mostar nalazio se u svojevrsnom pravnom i financijskom vakuumu te je tih godina faktički bio bez osnivača i redovitih financijskih sredstava. U isto vrijeme i Narodno pozorište u Mostaru je proživljavalo sličnu pravnu i financijsku agoniju. Situacija je bila toliko teška da su i Kazalište i Pozorište bili skoro pred gašenjem. Takva situacija potaknula je mnoge kazališne umjetnike i djelatnike u BiH i Hrvatskoj da upute više javnih prosvjeda i apela za rješavanjem statusa dvije mostarske kazališne kuće. S tom svrhom, 26. ožujka 2010. godine u 12 sati održani su i skupovi potpore u HNK u Zagrebu i NP u Sarajevu. Inicijatori zagrebačkog skupa bili su **Velibor Bobo Jelčić** i **Dragan Despot**, a onoga sarajevskog **Gradimir Gojer**. Hvala svima koji su svojim angažmanom ukazali na važnost opstanka HNK i NP u Mostaru te time doprinijeli rješavanju njihovog pravnog i financijskog statusa.

Iako je Vlada Hercegovačko-neretvanske županije/kantona (HNŽ/K) još u srpnju 2009. godine prihvatila inicijativu gradonačelnika Mostara **Ljube Bešlića** za rješenje pravnog statusa HNK i NP Mostar, pravna i financijska agonija trajala je sve do travnja 2013. godine.

U sklopu rješavanja pravnoga statusa, načelno je bilo dogovoreno da HNK i NP imaju isti status na

Theatre in Mostar. **Jozo Marić**, Minister of Culture in the Government of the HRHB at the time, was not only a great advocator of the Theatre's establishment, but also a broad-minded man who understood theatre and respected its specificities.

Writers **Krešimir Šego** and **Vladimir Pavlović** were great friends and advocates of the Croatian National Theatre during this period. Once the institution was established, the next crucial step was to begin the construction of the HNK building. Many contributed to the construction, but, without a shadow of a doubt, the driver of the whole process was **Mijo Brajković**, the then Mayor of Mostar, afterwards the director of Aluminijska Company. We are especially proud of the fact that the first President of the Republic of Croatia, **Franjo Tuđman**, was also the first donor of funds for the construction of the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar. To that end, he donated his monthly presidential salary. The symbolic value of that payment was, and continues to be much greater and more significant than its material value. After the completion of the Small stage in 2002 and the relocation to the new, unfinished building, the company and staff started working in relatively appropriate conditions, but shortly thereafter, problems with the legal status and funding emerged. Integration of the HRHB into the Federation of BiH and the subsequent transfer of powers from the Government of the HRHB to the Government of the FBiH opened up the problem of the HNK Mostar's legal founder. The founding rights were for a time held by the Croat Community of Herzeg-Bosnia, but it soon became apparent that such situation was unsustainable. Between 2009 and 2013, HNK Mostar was in a kind of legal and financial vacuum, and in those years it practically had no founder nor regular funding. At the same time, the National Theatre in Mostar was experiencing similar legal and financial agony. The situation was so difficult, that both theatres were on the verge of being closed down. This situation has prompted many theatre artists and staff in BiH and Croatia to increase the number of their public protests and appeals to resolve the status of two Mostar-based theatre companies. To this end, on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2010, at noon, support rallies were held at the HNK in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Sarajevo. The initiator of the Zagreb rally were **Velibor Bobo Jelčić** and **Dragan Despot**, and of the Sarajevo one **Gradimir Gojer**. Many thanks to all those who, through their engagement, pointed to the importance of the continued existence of the HNK and the National Theatre in Mostar and thus contributed to resolving their legal and financial status.

Although the Government of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNŽ/C) accepted the initiative of the Mayor of the City of Mostar, **Ljubo Bešlić**, to resolve the legal status of the HNK and the National Theatre Mostar back

razini grada i županije, odnosno da Grad Mostar i Skupština HNŽ/K preuzmu po 50 % osnivačkih prava i jedne i druge mostarske teatarske kuće. Tijekom operacionalizacije spomenutog dogovora određene stranke nisu to htjele prihvatiti, odnosno, svoj pristanak na preuzimanje osnivačkih prava od HNŽ/K uvjetovale su brisanjem naziva „hrvatsko“ iz imena kazališta. Premda su Hrvati i po Ustavu BiH konstitutivan narod, što podrazumijeva ne samo kulturnu nego i određenu političku autonomiju i samoupravu, ponovno su na djelu bile politike i snage koje su hrvatskom narodu osporavale *pravo da igra i pjeva na svom jeziku i pod svojim imenom*.

Iskreno i duboko se nadamo da je vrijeme takvih politika iza nas te da je svim objektivnim i dobronamjernim društvenim i političkim akterima u međuvremenu postalo jasno kako je HNK ne samo hrvatsko nego i mostarsko i bosanskohercegovačko kazalište koje aktivno sudjeluje u procesima integracije i Grada Mostara i bosanskohercegovačkog društva u cjelini. I ne samo da sudjeluje u navedenim procesima, nego mnoge i pokreće.

Osim spomenutog gradonačelnika Bešlića, nesebično su, u okvirima svojih mogućnosti, u rješavanju problema pomagali i **Željka Čule** iz Skupštine HNŽ/K te djelatnici Gradske uprave iz Odjela za društvene djelatnosti, odnosno kulturu **Božo Ćorić**, **Inga Dragoje Mikulić** i **Alma Fazil Obad**.

Proces rješavanja pravnoga i financijskog statusa aktivno je podržavao i **Dragan Čović**, predsjednik Hrvatskog narodnog sabora Bosne i Hercegovine.

Spomenutih godina dogodio se najprije moj neformalni, aktivistički, a zatim, na prijedlog i poticaj **Sande Krgo Soldo** i **Robert Pehara** te suglasnost Ivana Ovčara, i formalni ulazak u HNK Mostar.

Odmah nakon rješavanja pravnoga statusa i moga imenovanja za v. d. ravnatelja 2013. godine, počela je i suradnja sa Središnjim državnim uredom za Hrvate izvan RH. Uz naklonost premijera RH **Zorana Milanovića** i podršku predstojnice Ureda **Darije Krstičević**, HNK je dobio sredstva za izradu dokumentacije potrebne za nastavak izgradnje kazališne zgrade. Najprije je 2014. godine urađena Studija opravdanosti nastavka izgradnje objekta Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta u Mostaru. U okviru Studije bila su ponuđena četiri modela nastavka izgradnje: 1) stari projekt arhitekta **Vjenceslava Lončarića**, 2) ekonomski model, 3) kazališni model i 4) model kulturnog centra.

Upravno vijeće HNK Mostar tim povodom imenovalo je Povjerenstvo za odabir modela završetka izgradnje. Članovi Povjerenstva kroz dva saziva bili su:

in July 2009, the legal and financial agony continued through April 2013.

As part of the solution of the legal status, a principle agreement was reached that the HNK and the National Theatre have the same status at the city and cantonal levels, that is, that the City of Mostar and the HNŽ/C Assembly each take over 50% of the founding rights of both Mostar theatres. During the realisation of the agreement, some parties refused to accept it, that is, they put forward a condition that in turn for their consent to the acquisition of the founding rights by the HNŽ/C, the name Croatian should be deleted from the name of the theatre. Although Croats are a constituent ethnicity under the BiH Constitution, which implies not only cultural but also certain political autonomy and self-government, policies and forces that challenged the Croat people's *right to perform and sing in its own language and under its own name* were active again.

We sincerely hope that the time of such policies is behind us, and that in the meantime it has become clear to all objective and well-meaning social and political actors that the HNK is not only a Croat theatre, but also a Mostar and Bosnia and Herzegovina theatre actively involved in the integration processes of the City of Mostar and the society of Bosnia and Herzegovina in general. Not only is it involved in those processes, but drives many of them.

In addition to Mayor Bešlić, **Željka Čule** from the HNŽ/C Assembly and employees of the City Administration, Department of Social Affairs and Culture, namely **Božo Ćorić**, **Inga Dragoje Mikulić** and **Alma Fazil Obad**, selflessly helped in solving the problems to the best of their abilities.

The process of solving the legal and financial status was also actively supported by **Dragan Čović**, President of the Croatian National Assembly of BiH (HNS BiH).

Back in those years, I joined HNK Mostar, initially informally, as an activist, and then, at the suggestion and stimulus by **Sanda Krgo Soldo** and **Robert Pehar**, and with the consent of Ivan Ovčar, formally.

Immediately after settling the legal status and my appointment as the acting manager in 2013, the cooperation with the State Office for Croats Abroad began. With the sympathies of the Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, **Zoran Milanović**, and the support of the Head of the Office, **Darija Krstičević**, HNK received the funds to produce the documents needed to continue the construction of the theatre building. First, in 2014, a Study detailing justification for continuation of the construction of the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar was completed. The study offered four models of continuation of construction: 1) the old project by

Dragan Čović, predsjednik HNS BiH; **Denis Lasić / Nevenko Herceg**, predsjednik Vlade HNŽ/K; **Ljubo Bešlić**, gradonačelnik Mostara; **Zora Dujmović**, ministrica kulture u Vladi FBiH; **Ljerka Ostojić / Zoran Tomić**, rektor(ica) Sveučilišta u Mostaru (SUM); **Ivo Čolak**, prorektor SUM; **Jakov Pehar**, predsjednik Hrvatske akademije za znanost i umjetnost u BiH (HAZU BiH); **Snježana Zovko**, ravnateljica Simfonijskog orkestra Mostar; **Josip Muselimović**, počasni predsjednik MH Mostar; **Slaven Letica**, asistent GF SUM, **Dalibor Miloš**, predsjednik Gospodarske komore Mostar; **Borislav Puljić**, predstavnik konzorcija GF-GIC-Ecoplan; **Miroslav Palameta**, predsjednik Upravnog vijeća HNK; **Ivan Vukoja**, ravnatelj HNK i **Antonela Pehar**, tajnica povjerenstva.

Povjerenstvo je prihvatilo prošireni Model 4, takozvani *kulturno-akademski model*. Prihvaćenim modelom bilo je predviđeno da osim HNK u zgradi budu smještene i ostale institucije od značaja za Hrvate u BiH: Hrvatska akademija za znanost i umjetnost (HAZU) u BiH, Simfonijski orkestar Mostar i Matica hrvatska Mostar, ali i da se u okviru zgrade naprave prostorni i tehnički preduvjeti za rad buduće Umjetničke akademije, odnosno dva nova sveučilišna studija: glazbeni i dramski. Time bi se stvorile pretpostavke da HNK, u suradnji sa Simfonijskim orkestrom te nastavnicima i studentima studija glazbe i drame, u što skorijoj budućnosti može postati uistinu nacionalno kazalište koje osim dramske ima i opernu te baletnu produkciju. Za sve to potrebna je i velika dvorana koja svojim arhitektonskim rješenjima treba omogućiti polifunkcionalnost i zadovoljiti sve prostorno-tehničke uvjete za izvođenje dramskih, opernih i baletnih predstava te koncerata klasične i njoj srodne glazbe. Kako bi se postigla što veća iskorištenost kapaciteta, dvorana treba biti opremljena i za svečane i radne konferencijske događaje te kinoprojekcije.

Uz spomenute institucije te umjetničke, kulturne i obrazovne sadržaje, zgrada treba imati i dijelove koji imaju tržišnu namjenu – gradsku kavanu, tonski studio, plesni studio, garažu – koji bi trebali osigurati prihode za pokrivanje dijela troškova korištenja i održavanja zgrade.

Nakon donošenja Odluke o modelu nastavka gradnje, uslijedila je izrada novoga idejnoga rješenja, a zatim i Glavnog i izvedbenog projekta zgrade HNK Mostar. Izradu svih projekata financirao je Središnji državni ured za Hrvate izvan RH uz svesrdnu podršku predstojnika ureda **Zvonka Milasa**. Središnji državni ured već tri sezone financira i projekt „HNK za studente, studenti za HNK“ u okviru kojeg svi studenti Sveučilišta u Mostaru dobivaju jednu gratis

architect **Vjenceslav Lončarić**, 2) the economic model, 3) the theatre model and 4) the cultural centre model.

On that occasion, the Governing Council of the HNK Mostar appointed a Committee to select the model for completion of construction. The members of the Commission through two convocations were: Dragan Čović, President of the HNS BiH; Denis Lasić / Nevenko Herceg, Prime Minister of the HNŽ/C; **Ljubo Bešlić**, Mayor of Mostar; **Zora Dujmović**, Minister of Culture in the FBiH Government; **Ljerka Ostojić / Zoran Tomić**, Chancellor of the University of Mostar; **Ivo Čolak**, Vice-chancellor of the University of Mostar; **Jakov Pehar**, President of HAZU (Croatian Academy of Science and Arts) BiH; **Snježana Zovko**, Director of the Mostar Symphony Orchestra; **Josip Muselimović**, Honorary President of the Matica Hrvatska Mostar; **Slaven Letica**, assistant, FoCE, University of Mostar, **Dalibor Miloš**, president of Mostar Chamber of Commerce; **Borislav Puljić**, representative of the Consortium GF-GIC-Ecoplan; **Miroslav Palameta**, President of the HNK Supervisory Board, **Ivan Vukoja**, Director of the HNK, and **Antonela Pehar**, Secretary of the Committee.

The Committee adopted the expanded Model 4, the so-called *cultural-academic model*. The accepted model envisaged that in addition to the HNK, the building would house other institutions of importance for Croats in BiH: Croatian Academy of Science and Arts (HAZU) in BiH, the Mostar Symphony Orchestra and the Matica hrvatska Mostar, society for promotion of ethnic and cultural identity; but also provide space and create technical prerequisites for the work of the future Academy of Arts, that is, two new university study programmes: music and drama. This would create the prerequisites for the Croatian National Theatre to become, in the near future, in cooperation with the Symphony Orchestra and teachers and students of music and drama studies, a truly national theatre, with opera and ballet production in addition to drama. All this requires a Grand hall, which, by its architecture, offers multiple functions and meets the spatial and technical requirements for performing plays, opera and ballet, as well as concerts of classical and related music. In order to maximize capacity utilisation, the hall should also be equipped for festive events and conferences, and film screenings.

In addition to the aforementioned institutions, as well as artistic, cultural and educational content, the building should also have parts that have a marketable purpose – a coffee bar, a sound recording studio, a dance studio, a garage – which should provide revenue to cover part of the operational and maintenance costs.

After the Decision on the model of continued construction was passed, a new conceptual design was made,

ulaznicu za repertoarsku predstavu u HNK Mostar. Zahvaljujući dogovoru s rektorom Sveučilišta u Mostaru Zoranom Tomićem, navedeni oblik suradnje će u tekućoj sezoni biti proširen i na sve nastavnike i djelatnike SUM-a.

Posebno nas veseli činjenica da su uloga i značaj HNK Mostar prepoznati ne samo u Središnjem državnom uredu za Hrvate izvan RH, nego i u samoj Vladi RH i njenom Ministarstvu kulture. Ministrica **Nina Obuljen Koržinek** iskreni je podržavatelj HNK Mostar koji našoj institucionalnoj suradnji daje i dašak srdačnosti. Snažna i nedvosmislena podrška koju nam je predsjednik Vlade RH **Andrej Plenković** izrazio prigodom posjeta HNK, kao i prigodom kasnijih susreta, svjedoči nam o njegovoj spremnosti da se snažno zauzme za nastavak i dovršetak gradnje zgrade te institucionalno osnaživanje HNK Mostar. Iskreno se radujemo kada najviši dužnosnici Republike Hrvatske suradnju s Hrvatima u BiH vide ne samo kao ustavnu obvezu i obostrano koristan partnerski odnos, nego i kao izraz nacionalne solidarnosti i odgovornosti. Vodeći računa pri tome da ta suradnja ne bude na štetu bilo kome, ni Bosni i Hercegovini, odnosno njenim ostalim konstitutivnim narodima i građanima, niti građanima i interesima Republike Hrvatske. Želja nam je da ovaj primjer i u budućnosti snažno svjedoči kako je takva suradnja ne samo moguća nego i poželjna te višekratno korisna svim dionicima.

Podrška RH iznimno nam je važna i praktično i simbolično, ali je, ipak, presudna i temeljna pozicija koju HNK Mostar ima i treba imati u svojoj matičnoj državi Bosni i Hercegovini. Stoga, vrijedi i treba spomenuti premijera Vlade HNŽ/K **Nevenka Hercega** i već spominjanog gradonačelnika Mostara **Ljubu Bešlića** u kojima HNK ima ne samo formalne zastupnike osnivača nego i javne zagovaratelje i redovne posjetitelje. Posebno ističemo i ministricu kulture i sporta u Vladi FBiH **Zoru Dujmović** jer je u njenom mandatu HNK ušao u kategoriju „institucija kulture i obrazovanja od značaja za Federaciju BiH“.

Spomenimo ovdje i kontinuiranu koprodukcijску suradnju s Maticom hrvatskom Mostar, odnosno matičnim festivalom *Mostarsko proljeće* te dugogodišnjeg predsjednika MH Mostar **Josipa Muselimovića** koji je među ostalim doprinosima našem kazalištu bio i predsjednik prvoga Upravnog vijeća HNK Mostar.

Činjenica da sam ravnatelj HNK Mostar te već drugi mandat voditelj Odjela za kulturu, sport, medije i informiranje Glavnoga vijeća HNS BiH, zorno svjedoči o statusu koji HNK ima u GV i kod njegova predsjednika **Bože Ljubića**.

followed by the main and detailed design of the HNK Mostar building. All of the designs were funded by the State Office for Croats Abroad, with the wholehearted support of the Head of the Office, **Zvonko Milas**. For three seasons, the State Office has also funded the project *HNK for students, students for HNK*, within which all students of the University of Mostar receive one free ticket for a play on the HNK Mostar repertoire. Thanks to the agreement with the Chancellor of the University of Mostar, Zoran Tomić, this form of cooperation will be extended to all teachers and staff of the University of Mostar in the current season.

We are especially happy that the role and importance of HNK Mostar are recognized not only in the State Office for Croats Abroad, but also in the Government of the Republic of Croatia and its Ministry of Culture. Minister **Nina Obuljen Koržinek** is a sincere supporter of the HNK Mostar, which gives our institutional cooperation a touch of cordiality. Strong and unequivocal support expressed by the Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, **Andrej Plenković**, during his visit to HNK, as well as during his subsequent meetings, testifies to his readiness to take a strong stand on the continuation of construction and completion of the building and the institutional strengthening of HNK Mostar. We are truly happy when the highest officials of the Republic of Croatia see the cooperation with the Croats of BiH not only as a constitutional obligation and a mutually beneficial partnership, but also as an expression of national solidarity and responsibility, making sure that this cooperation is not detrimental to anyone, neither Bosnia and Herzegovina, its other constituent peoples and citizens, nor to the citizens and interests of the Republic of Croatia. It is our wish that this example in the future strongly testifies to the fact that such cooperation is not only possible but also desirable and beneficial to all stakeholders on several levels.

The support of the Republic of Croatia is extremely important to us both practically and symbolically, however, the position that HNK Mostar has and should have in its home country of Bosnia and Herzegovina is crucial and fundamental. Therefore, we have to mention the Prime Minister of the HNŽ/C, **Nevenko Herceg**, and the Mayor of Mostar, **Ljubu Bešlić**, who are not only the formal representatives of the founders, but also public advocates and regular visitors. We specially wish to mention the Minister of Culture and Sports in the Government of the FBiH, **Zora Dujmović**, because it is during her mandate that HNK was included in the category of “cultural and educational institutions of importance to the Federation of BiH.”

Let us mention here continuous co-production cooperation with Matica hrvatska Mostar, respectively with

S obzirom da je Vlada HRHB osnivač HNK Mostar, a HNS BiH simbolički institucionalni sljednik HRHB, odnosno, krovno nadstranačko društveno-političko tijelo Hrvata u BiH, najveća odgovornost za institucionalni status HNK leži upravo na Hrvatskom narodnom saboru BiH. Dosadašnji odnos predsjednika HNS BiH **Dragana Čovića** prema HNK, kao i aktivnosti koje poduzima s ciljem rješavanja statusnih i financijskih pitanja te nastavka i dovršetka gradnje kazališne zgrade, daju nam za pravo tvrditi kako je itekako svjestan važnosti i uloge HNK Mostar za opstojnost i boljitak Hrvata u BiH te vjerovati kako HNK ulazi u razdoblje ne samo institucionalne stabilnosti nego i svekolikog jačanja resursa, od financijskih i kadrovskih do prostornih i tehničkih.

## Estetsko i repertoarsko profiliranje

Povoljan i podržavajući društveni i politički okvir potreban je uvjet za izgradnju javne kulturne ustanove kao što je HNK, njen opstanak i boljitak, ali ni u kom slučaju nije dovoljan. Svako kazalište je onoliko vrijedno i uspješno koliko su kvalitetni njegovi glumački ansambl i produkcijski tim te osmišljen i referentan njegov repertoar. Estetska i produkcijska razina predstava glavni su kriteriji vrednovanja svakoga kazališta, pa tako i HNK. Za repertoarsko i estetsko profiliranje HNK ogromne zasluge ima aktualni umjetnički savjetnik i predsjednik Umjetničkog vijeća HNK **Dragan Komadina**. Pored toga, Komadina je i dramaturg u velikom broju naših predstava, stoga ga s pravom treba smatrati jednim od temeljnih kreativnih stupova HNK. Prigodno je ovdje spomenuti i **Marina Carića** i **Joška Juvančića**, njegove prethodnike na mjestu umjetničkog savjetnika. Njihov doprinos trajno je utkan u institucionalnu memoriju i repertoarsko profiliranje HNK.

Premda nema nikakav formalni status, **Bobo Jelčić** je u prethodnih pet-šest godina bio itekako bitan i prisutan u HNK. Njegovu ulogu mogli bi opisati kao *estetsku savjest*, kao *referentni okvir* svih naših repertoarskih i produkcijskih promišljanja. Posebno smo ponosni i na činjenicu da je upravo Bobo Jelčić bio redatelj prve službene kazališne predstave pod imenom HNK Mostar. Riječ je o predstavi *Tena* prema noveli **Josipa Kozarca** i u dramaturgiji **Borislava Vujčića**.

U nizu uistinu značajnih i nama dragih redatelja, spomenut ćemo i **Ivana Lea Lemu** jer je redatelj *Predstave Hamleta u selu Mrduša Donja*, naše

main festival *Mostar Spring* and longtime president of MH Mostar **Josip Muslimović**, who was the first president of the first Supervisory Board of HNK Mostar, among other contributions he gave to our theatre.

The fact that I am the manager of HNK Mostar and the Head of the Department of Culture, Sports, Media, and Information of the Main Council of the HNS BiH for the second term clearly testifies to the status that the HNK has in the Main Council and with its President, **Božo Ljubić**.

Since the Government of the HRHB is the founder of the HNK Mostar, and the HNS BiH is the symbolic institutional successor of the HRHB, that is, the umbrella socio-political body of the Croats in BiH regardless of their party affiliation, the responsibility for the institutional status of the HNK rests with the Croatian National Assembly. The current approach of the HNS BiH President, Dragan Čović to the HNK, as well as the activities he is undertaking in order to resolve the status and financial issues, and the continuation of construction and completion of the theatre building, give us the right to say that he is fully aware of the importance and role of HNK Mostar for the survival and well-being of Croats in BiH, and to believe that the HNK is entering a period of not only institutional stability, but also of an overall strengthening of resources, from financial and human resources to spatial and technical ones.

## Repertoire-related and aesthetic direction

Beneficial and supportive social and political framework is a necessary condition for building a public cultural institution such as the HNK, its survival and prosperity, but it is by no means sufficient. Every theatre is as valuable and successful as good is its company and the production team and as designed and referenced is its repertoire. The aesthetic and production levels of the staged plays are the main criteria for validation of any theatre, including the HNK. Current artistic advisor and Chairperson of the HNK Artistic Council, **Dragan Komadina**, deserves huge credit for the repertoire-related and aesthetic direction of the HNK. In addition, Komadina has been a playwright in many of our plays, so he should rightly be considered one of the fundamental creative pillars of the HNK. This is also the right moment to mention **Marin Carić** and **Joško Juvančić**, his predecessors on the position of artistic advisor. Their contribution is permanently embedded in the institutional memory and the repertoire-related direction of the HNK.

Although with no formal status, Bobo Jelčić has been very important and present in the HNK in the past five

predstave koja je dobila najviše festivalskih nagrada, ukupno osam na tri festivala. *Hamlet* je tako na poziciji uspješnice koju vole i publika i festivalska kritika naslijedio *Bljesak zlatnog zuba* **Mate Matišića** u režiji **Nine Kleflin**.

Posebno smo ponosni i na činjenicu da smo u prosincu 2018. godine u razdoblju od tjedan dana s dvije različite predstave – *Gnijezdo*, autorski projekt **Marine Petković Liker** inspiriran poezijom **Marka Tomaša** i *Preobražaj Franza Kafke* u adaptaciji i režiji **Segora Hadžagića** – osvojili dva Grand Prixa na festivalima u Sarajevu (3. Međunarodni teatarski festival *Dani Jurislava Korenića* u Kamernom teatru 55) i Istočnom Sarajevu (23. Međunarodni festival malih scena i monodrame).

Kada smo već kod nagrada, a i monografska je prigoda, nije preuzetno spomenuti kako smo na početku obilježnice 25. sezone 2019./2020. na repertoaru imali 13 živućih predstava, od toga devet festivalskih od kojih je sedam nagrađeno s ukupno 20 nagrada. I sve to s glumačkim ansamblom od devet članova. To nam daje za pravo nadati se i vjerovati kako će i Krležino *Kraljevo* u režiji Ivana Lea Leme, čiju smo premijeru imali 22. rujna 2019. godine, točno na 25. obljetnicu osnivanja, imati bogat i nagrađivan festivalski život. Za potrebe predstave, u betonskom podrumu HNK oformili smo i novu scenu kojoj smo dali i prigodno ime: **H-alter scena**.

## Misija i vizija, ili čemu i zašto težimo

Kao ravnatelj više puta sam javno naglašavao kako se program, misija i vizija HNK Mostar mogu iščitati iz samoga naziva. Ne računajući lutkare, kao jedino profesionalno hrvatsko kazalište u BiH dužni smo ne samo skrbiti o hrvatskoj književnosti, napose dramskoj, jeziku i kulturi, nego i potruditi se da nas svi Hrvati u cijeloj BiH doživljavaju kao svoje kazalište. Najbolji način za to je gostovanje u svim mjestima u BiH gdje Hrvati žive u značajnijem broju. Većinu njih, od Hercegovine preko središnje Bosne do Posavine, već smo i obišli. I doći ćemo ponovno, ali i tamo gdje još nismo bili. Spomenimo ovdje izrijekom samo sudjelovanje na manifestacijama *Šimićevi susreti* u Grudama, *Posuško lito*, *Hrvatsko proljeće Središnje Bosne* u Kiseljaku, Fojnici, Jajcu, Žepču, Novom Travniku, Travniku, Kreševu i Vitezu te *HNS plus* u Tuzli, Orašju i Travniku.

Kroz zajedničku kulturnu i nacionalnu baštinu trebali bi biti povezani i s Hrvatima razasutim po mno-

to six years. His role could be described as an aesthetic conscience, as a frame of reference for all our repertoire and production considerations. We are especially proud of the fact that it was Bobo Jelčić who was the director of the first official production under the name of HNK Mostar. It was the play *Tena*, based on the novelette by **Josip Kozarac** and dramatized by **Borislav Vujčić**.

In a string of truly prominent directors dear to us, we will also mention **Ivan Leo Lemo**, because he directed the *A Performance of Hamlet in the Village of Mrduša Donja*, our production with the highest number of festival awards, with eight awards received at three festivals. *Hamlet* thus took over the position of the most popular play loved by both audiences and festival critics from **Mate Matišić's** *A Flash of the Golden Tooth*, directed by **Nina Kleflin**.

We are especially proud of the fact that in December 2018, in one week we won two Grand Prix Awards at festivals in Sarajevo (3<sup>rd</sup> International Theatre Festival *Days of Jurislav Korenić* at the Kamerni teatar 55 Theatre) and in Istočno Sarajevo (23<sup>rd</sup> International Festival of Small Stages and Monodramas), with two different productions – *Nest*, an original project by **Marina Petković Liker**, inspired by the poetry of **Marko Tomaš** and *Metamorphosis* by **Franz Kafka**, directed by **Segor Hadžagić**.

Speaking of the awards, since after all, this is a monograph, it will not sound presumptuous to say that at the beginning of the commemorative 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in the 2019/2020 season, we have had 13 plays on the repertoire being performed. Nine were performed at festivals and seven of them were awarded a total of 20 awards. All of this was achieved with a nine-member company. This gives us the right to hope and believe that Krleža's *Kraljevo*, directed by Ivan Leo Lemo, which premiered on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, exactly on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Theatre's founding, will have a rich and awarded festival life. For the needs of this play, we have made a new stage in the concrete basement of the HNK, which we named **H-alter stage**.

## Mission and vision or towards what we aspire to and why

As the manager, I have publicly reiterated that the programme, mission and vision of HNK Mostar can be read from the name itself. As the only professional Croat theatre in BiH, puppet theatres not included, we have the duty to not only care for the Croat literature, especially drama, language and culture, but also make sure that all Croats throughout BiH perceive us as their own theatre. The best way to achieve this is to visit all the places in



gim državama i kontinentima, od Mađarske preko Kanade do Australije. Gostovanja bi ponovno mogla biti najbolji put za željena povezivanja, ali je i bilo kakav oblik komunikacije i suradnje vrijedan i dobrodošao. To je zasigurno jedno od područja na kojima u budućnosti trebamo i želimo više učiniti.

Za nas iznimno važna i korisna je naša suradnja s kazalištima u Hrvatskoj. Ovom prigodom posebno ističem Hrvatska narodna kazališta u Zagrebu, Osijeku i Zadru, zagrebačka kazališta Gavella i Komedija te dubrovačko Gradsko kazalište Marina Držića. Posebno se zahvaljujemo intendantici **Dubravki Vrgoč**, ne samo na otvorenosti za suradnju i prilici da igramo u HNK Zagreb, nego i na tekstu – *Talija se vratila u Mostar* – o našoj prvoj službenoj repertoarskoj predstavi, već spominjanoj *Teni* Bobe Jelčića.

Važan segment naše suradnje s hrvatskim glumištem su i igranja na festivalima. Uz sudjelovanje na Marulićevim danima u Splitu, Festivalu glumca u Vinkovcima, Danima satire u zagrebačkom Kerempuhu, Festivalu glumca u Zagvozdu, BOK festivalu u Bjelovaru, Osječkom i Makarskom kulturnom ljetu i Festivalu smijeha u Vukovaru, nadamo se kako ćemo uskoro moći pohvaliti se nastupom i na još nekim hrvatskim festivalima. Pored festivala, vrijedi spomenuti i gostovanja u Puli, Rijeci, Virovitici, Varaždinu, Dubrovniku, Zadru, Šibeniku, Iloku, Županji i Karlovcu.

To što smo narodno kazalište, obvezuje nas na širinu i raznolikost repertoara. Obvezuje nas igrati klasike, ali i suvremene mlade autore, kako hrvatske i bosanskohercegovačke tako i svjetske, izvoditi i dramski i postdramski tekst, težiti katarzičnom, ali i efektu očuđenja. Biti ne samo baštinici kulturnoga naslijeđa, nego i odraz i izraz društva i vremena u kojima živimo. Njihov aktivni, tvorbeni i kreativni element.

Pored toga što smo hrvatsko i narodno, mi smo i mostarsko, a samim time i bosanskohercegovačko kazalište. Stoga bi se suradnja s mostarskim i bosanskohercegovačkim kazalištima trebala podrazumijevati, ne bi trebalo biti nužno posebno je naglašavati. Ono što je u drugim sredinama normalno, u Mostaru i BiH, nažalost, često puta se čini kao iznimka i odstupanje od uobičajenog tijeka stvari. S obzirom da je BiH još uvijek u određenim segmentima podijeljeno društvo i nestabilna država, za svaki novi oblik suradnje potrebno je imati i hrabrosti i mudrosti. Potrebno je pronaći pravu mjeru između zaštite vlastitih posebnosti i afirmacije zajedničkih vrijednosti na način da se dijelovi međusobno ne sukobljavaju i ne remete cjelinu, niti da cjelina ugrožava dijelove od

BiH where significant number of Croats lives. We have already visited most of them, from Herzegovina through Central Bosnia to Posavina. And we will come again, but also visit places we did not visit before. Let us just mention here participation on manifestations *Šimićevi susreti* in Grude, *Posuško lito*, *Croatian summer of Central Bosnia* in Kiseljak, Fojnica, Jajce, Žepče, Novi Travnik, Travnik, Kreševo and Vitez as well as *HNS plus* in Tuzla, Orašje and Travnik.

Through common cultural and national heritage, we should also be connected with Croats scattered across many countries and continents, from Hungary, to Canada and Australia. Guest performances might be the best avenue to establish the connections we desire, but any form of communication and collaboration is worthwhile and welcome. This is certainly one of the areas where we need and want to do more in the future.

Our cooperation with theatres in Croatia is extremely important and useful to us. I would particularly highlight the Croatian National Theatres in Zagreb, Osijek and Zadar, the Zagreb-based theatres Gavella and Komedija and the Dubrovnik-based Marin Držić City Theatre. Special thank you goes to its manager **Dubravka Vrgoč**, not only for her openness for cooperation and the opportunity to play in HNK Zagreb, but also for the text – *Thalia is back to Mostar* – about our first official play on the repertoire, previously mentioned *Tena*, directed by Bobo Jelčić.

An important segment of our cooperation with the Croatian theatres is participation at festivals. We participated at Marulić Days in Split, the Vinkovci Actor's Festival, the Fadil Hadžić Days of Satire in the Zagreb Kerempuh Theatre, Festival of Actor in Zagvozd, BOK Festival in Bjelovar, Osijek and Makarska cultural summer and Festival of laughter in Vukovar and we hope to soon be able to add other Croatian festivals to the list. Besides festivals, it is notable to mention guest performances in Pula, Rijeka, Virovitica, Varaždin, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Šibenik, Ilok, Županja and Karlovac.

As a national theatre, we are obliged to have a broad and diverse repertoire. We are obliged to perform classics, as well as contemporary young authors, both from Croatia and BiH, but also the international ones, to perform both dramatic and post-dramatic texts, striving for a cathartic and wondrous effect. We need to be not only the heirs to the cultural heritage, but also a reflection and expression of the society and times we live in, its active, productive and creative element.

In addition to being a Croat and national theatre, we are also a Mostar theatre, and therefore a BiH theatre. Therefore, cooperation with the theatres of Mostar and Bosnia and Herzegovina should exist by default, there should be no need to emphasize it. Unfortunately, what

kojih je sastavljena. Jedino na takvim načelima moguća je suradnja koja stvara dodanu vrijednost za sve sudionike, na svim područjima. Jedino takva suradnja u stanju je integrirati bez hegemoniziranja, povezati bez nametanja i podčinjavanja. Za takvu suradnju, za razliku od rata, potrebne su dvije strane, potreban je obostrani pristanak. Suradnja između Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta i Narodnog pozorišta u Mostaru može poslužiti kao primjer onoga o čemu smo prethodno načelno govorili.

Svjestan okolnosti i odlučan mijenjati ih, na bolje, prva predstava koju sam kao ravnatelj HNK producirao stekla je epitet prve poslijeratne svemostarske predstave. U predstavi **Damira Šodana** *Chick lit* – prvi put nakon rata, u sezoni 2013./2014. – zajedno su igrali glumci iz HNK, NP, Lutkarskog pozorišta te tek svršeni glumci s Univerziteta „Džemal Bijedić” u Mostaru. Direktorica tadašnjeg Mostarskog teatra mladih (MTM) **Tanja Miletić Oručević** bila je redateljica predstave. Nakon *Chick lita*, suradnja je nastavljena sa svim sudionicima predstave, a osobito s Tanjom Miletić Oručević čija redateljska estetika postaje sve važnija odrednica našega repertoara.

Već u sljedećoj sezoni dogodila se i prva službena koprodukcija HNK i NP, predstava *Ajmo na fuka* autora i redatelja Dragana Komadine. Prva autentična i autoreferencijalna poslijeratna mostarska predstava. Dva Mostarca, **Robert Pehar**, bivši pripadnik HVO-a i sadašnji glumac HNK i **Saša Oručević**, bivši pripadnik Armije RBiH i sadašnji glumac NP, na daskama oba kazališta glumili su manje-više sami sebe u raznim dramaturški karikiranim i stiliziranim inačicama. Ideja i elementi predstave su nastali na njihovim zajedničkim fukama, vukama, kavama i kafama u *Coco-Locu* u koje je naknadno uključen i Dragan Komadina. Nakon ove teatarske fuke, ništa više, ne samo u našim kazalištima, nego i u gradu nije bilo isto. Osim Roberta i Saše, ključni doprinos ovoj suradnji dao je i direktor Narodnog pozorišta **Almir Mujkanović**. Čovjek ispravne mjere, mudrosti i hrabrosti s kojim je, u prvom redu, ugodno surađivati.

Ono što nam je NP u mostarskim, to nam je Bosansko narodno pozorište (BNP) Zenica u bosanskohercegovačkim okvirima. Zbilja nam je bilo zadovoljstvo, ali i čast surađivati s BNP-om. Nadamo se i nastavku. Glavna zahvala za ovu suradnju ide direktoru **Hazi-mu Begagiću**, a ne mogu ne spomenuti i **Nedžada Fejzića**. Svi koji ga poznaju znaju i zašto.

O našem bosanskohercegovačkom karakteru svjedoče i nastupi i nagrade na festivalima u Brčkom, Jajcu, Zenici, Sarajevu, Mostaru, Tuzli, Banjaluci i Istočnom Sarajevu.

goes without saying in other places, in Mostar and in BiH often seems like an exception and a departure from the usual course of things. Given that in some aspects, BiH is still a divided society and an unstable state, every new form of cooperation requires courage and wisdom. It is necessary to strike the right balance between protecting one's own specificities and the affirmation of common values in a way that parts do not conflict with each other and do not disturb the whole, or that the whole does not threaten the parts of which it is composed. Cooperation creating added value for all participants, in all areas, is possible only on such principles. Only such type of cooperation is able to integrate without hegemony, to connect without imposing and submission. Such cooperation, unlike the war, requires two parties and mutual consent. Cooperation between the Croatian National Theatre and the National Theatre in Mostar can serve as an example of what we previously talked about in principle.

Being aware of the circumstances and determined to change them for the better, the first play I produced as the manager of the HNK was described as the first post-war “all-Mostar production”. **Damir Šodan's** play *Chick lit* – gathered, for the first time since the war, in the 2013/2014 season, actors from the HNK, the National Theatre (NP) and the Puppet Theatre, while the manager of the then Mostar Youth Theatre (MTM), **Tanja Miletić Oručević**, directed it. After *Chick lit*, collaboration continued with all the participants in the production, particularly with Tanja Miletić Oručević, whose directing aesthetics became an increasingly important feature of our repertoire.

The next season already resulted in the first official co-production of the HNK and NP, the play *Let's Go for Coffee*, authored and directed by Dragan Komadina. This was the first authentic and self-referential post-war Mostar play. Two Mostarians, **Robert Pehar**, former HVO member and current member of the HNK company, and **Saša Oručević**, former member of the RBiH Army and current member of the NP company, essentially played themselves on the stages of both theatres in various versions, dramatized and styled to contain elements of parody. The idea and the elements of the play originate from their meetings for coffee at the *Coco-Loce* bar, for which Dragan Komadina joined them sometimes later. After this theatrical coffee, nothing was the same, neither in our theatres, nor in the city. In addition to Robert and Saša, the key contribution to this cooperation was made by the manager of the National Theatre, **Almir Mujkanović**, a steady man, wise and courageous, and primarily, pleasant to work with.

What NP is to us in Mostar, Bosnian National Theatre (BNP) Zenica is to us in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Working with the BNP has been a real pleasure, and an honour, and we hope that the cooperation will contin-

Ponoseći se svim spomenutim zemljopisnim i identitetskim odrednicama te cijeneći sve navedene festivale i nagrade, svjesni smo koliko je važno sve to promatrati i vrednovati u europskom teatarskom okviru i obzoru. Kako bismo iz razmišljanja u što većoj mjeri izbacili element provincijske samovažnosti nužno je pratiti što se događa na europskoj teatarskoj sceni i povremeno se usporediti s njenim vodećim teatrima i festivalima, autorima i predstavama. Činjenica da smo igrali komade, na primjer, **Edwarda Bonda**, **Martina McDonagha** i **Ivana Viripajeva** svjedoči da nismo samo promatrači suvremenog europskoga teatarskog okvira nego i njegovi, za sada doduše još uvijek rubni, ali ipak (su)dionici. Svjedoče o tome i naši nastupi na festivalima u Beču i Pragu, ali, na svoj način i nastup na festivalu u Rumi u Srbiji.

Stoga nam je veoma žao što kroz projekt Europske prijestolnice kulture (EPK) 2024. godine nismo dobili prigodu s toga ruba barem privremeno doći u središte europske kulturne pozornosti. HNK kao institucija te kolega **Josip Blažević** i ja kao pojedinci bili smo dio spomenutog projekta i tima Mostar EPK 2024. Sigurni smo kako u cijeloj Europi ne postoji grad kojemu je takva titula bila potrebnija i mogla biti korisnija. Uvjereni smo i kako je naša programska platforma bila najkompatibilnija onome što je osnovna ideja i svrha titule EPK te kako smo, uz malo više razumijevanja u Bruxellesu za okolnosti na koje mi kao Tim nismo mogli utjecati, ipak mogli i trebali dobiti EPK titulu.

Među stavke koje su nam u kandidaturi za titulu EPK nedostajale sigurno spada i prostorno-tehnička infrastruktura za izvođenje određenih kulturnih programa i sadržaja. Dovršetak izgradnje i opremanje zgrade HNK Mostar, stoga, nije interes samo ansambla i djelatnika HNK, nego i cjelokupne kulturne i umjetničke scene Mostara s jedne te svih građana i naroda koji žive u Mostaru s druge strane. Nažalost, u određenim društvenim i političkim krugovima ne gleda se blagonaklono na nastavak izgradnje. Ne želeći dublje ulaziti u društveni i politički sadržaj ovoga slučaja, kao ravnatelj odgovorno tvrdim da HNK Mostar posjeduje svu dokumentaciju za nastavak i dovršetak izgradnje objekta te da je ta dokumentacija važeća i pravno valjana.

S obzirom na aktualni društveni i politički kontekst te ratno i poslijeratno naslijeđe, donekle je razumljivo da postoje određeni politički prijepori i nedostatak povjerenja među društvenim i političkim predstavnicima konstitutivnih naroda, u ovom slučaju Hrvata i Bošnjaka. Proces izgradnje povjerenja i građenja zajedničke bolje budućnosti dugotrajan je i mukotran proces koji zahtijeva aktivno, dobronamjerno i

ue. Manager **Hazim Begagić** is to be thanked for this cooperation, but I also must mention **Nedžad Fejzić**, and whoever knows him, knows why.

Our BiH fibre is also evidenced by performances and awards at festivals in Brčko, Jajce, Zenica, Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Banja Luka, and Istočno Sarajevo.

Being proud of all the geographical and identity determinants mentioned above, and appreciating all the listed festivals, we are aware of the importance of viewing and validating all of that within the European theatrical framework and context. In order to eliminate the element of provincial self-importance from the way of thinking as much as possible, it is necessary to be up to date with what is happening on the European theatrical scene and to occasionally compare oneself with its leading theatres and festivals, authors and performances. The fact that we have performed plays by, for example, **Edward Bond**, **Martin McDonagh** and **Ivan Vyrypaev**, testifies to the fact that we are not only observers of the contemporary European theatrical framework, but also its participant, still marginal for the time being. Our performances on festivals in Vienna and Prague testify to that, but, in its own way, also our performance on festival in Ruma in Serbia.

Therefore, we are very sorry that through the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2024 action we have not been given the opportunity to move from the margins, at least temporarily, to the centre of European cultural attention. HNK as an institution, and my colleague **Josip Blažević** and I as individuals, were involved in this project and the Mostar ECoC 2024 team. We are certain that there is no city in Europe in greater need of such a title. We are also convinced that our programme platform was most compatible with the basic idea and purpose of the ECoC title, and that, with a little more understanding in Brussels for the circumstances that we as a team could not influence, we could have and should have won the ECoC title.

Some of the things in our application for the ECoC title that were missing are certainly the technical infrastructure for the performance of certain cultural programs and contents. Completion of the construction and equipping of the HNK Mostar building, therefore, is not only in the interest of the HNK company and staff, but also in the interest of the entire cultural and artistic scene of Mostar, on one hand, and in the interest of all citizens and peoples living in Mostar, on the other. Unfortunately, certain social and political circles do not favour the continuation of construction. Without going into the depths of the social and political content of this case, as the manager, I am adamant that HNK Mostar has all the documents required for the continuation of construction and completion of the building, and that this documentation is legally valid.

konstruktivno sudjelovanje svih glavnih aktera. Suradnja i sinergija koja se, usprkos raznim otporima i preprekama, dogodila kroz kandidaturu za titulu EPK 2024. godine pokazala je da se kroz kulturu može premostiti ono što politika još uvijek ne uspijeva izravno i sama napraviti.

Svjesni tog potencijala, ali i društvene odgovornosti koju kao nacionalna kazališna kuća imamo, u okviru projekta Mostar EPK 2024 predložili smo niz projekata koji bi osim visoke estetske i produkcijske razine trebali imati i dimenziju povezivanja i premošćivanja naše fragmentiranosti u cjelinu višega reda. U mozaik u kojem se naše društvene, kulturne i identitetske različitosti prožimaju i nadopunjavaju, a ne sukobljavaju. U cjelinu koja ne guši dijelove i ne potire razlike nego ih harmonično spaja u nove narative i sustave. Dvije predstave koje u velikoj mjeri sadrže navedene kriterije i razine, dva kazališna projekta osmišljena u okviru kandidature za titulu EPK 2024 koja ovom prigodom želimo istaknuti su *Mislim grad* i *Nathan Mudri*.

*Mislim grad* je zamišljen kao predstava koja se sinkronijski i dijakronijski događa na raznim lokacijama u gradu Mostaru. Predstava koja podrazumijeva ambijentalnost, kombinaciju vanjskih i unutarnjih gradskih prostora. Jedna vrsta suvremenog *mansion-skog kazališta – kazališta postaja* u kojima je glavni lik sam grad, dijelovi njegove prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti sagledani iz perspektiva različitih ljudi i prostora, tradicija i ideologija, svjetonazora i estetika. Multimedijalni performans koji cijeli grad pretvara u jednu veliku pozornicu na kojoj se prožimaju dokumentarizam i fikcija, izvođači i publika, prostor i vrijeme, privatno i javno.

*Nathan Mudri* je drama njemačkog prosvjetitelja iz 18. stoljeća **Gottholda Ephraima Lessinga** koja se zbiva u doba križarskih ratova. Radnja komada je smještena u Jeruzalemu, a sama priča problematizira život ljudi tri vjere i propituje na kojim se osnovama treba temeljiti suživot u nemirnim ratnim vremenima. Predstava je to o razumijevanju i nerazumijevanju, sličnostima i razlikama između kršćanstva, islama i judaizma. Izvorno je bilo zamišljeno da predstavu radimo u koprodukciji s teatrima iz Zagreba, Berlina i Tel Aviva te, naravno, Narodnog pozorišta iz Mostara.

Premda su još u idejnoj i fazi pripreme, obje navedene predstave sadrže svojevrsne smjerokaze za naše daljnje repertoarsko i estetsko profiliranje, ali i za društveno i svjetonazorsko pozicioniranje. Za našu viziju i misiju. Zbog toga ih i spominjemo te izražavamo namjeru realizirati obje predstave, u izvornom ili nekom produkcijski manje zahtjevnom obliku.

Given the current social and political context and the war and post-war legacy, it is somewhat understandable that certain political disputes and lack of trust exist among the social and political representatives of the constituent peoples, in this case, Croats and Bosniaks. The process of building trust and building a common better future is a time-consuming and painstaking process that requires active, benevolent and constructive involvement of all major participants. The cooperation and synergy that, despite various resistance and obstacles, emerged through the candidacy for the ECoC 2024 title, has shown that culture can bridge what politics still fails to do directly.

Being aware of this potential, and of the social responsibility we have as a national theatre company, within the Mostar ECoC 2024 action we proposed a series of projects that, in addition to a high aesthetic and production level, should have the dimension of connecting and bridging our fragmented reality into a unity of the higher level, into a mosaic in which our social, cultural and identity differences are permeating and complementing one another, rather than conflicting. Into a unity that does not suffocate its parts and does not suppress differences, but harmoniously integrates them into new narratives and systems. Two plays that largely contain these criteria and levels, two theatrical projects designed within the candidacy for the ECoC 2024 title that we wish to mention are *Thinking the City* and *Nathan the Wise*.

*Thinking the City* was conceived as a play that happens as a synchronous and diachronous event at various locations in Mostar. It is a play that involves ambience, a combination of outdoor and indoor urban spaces, a kind of contemporary *mansion theatre – the theatre of stations* where the main character is the City itself, parts of its past, present and future are viewed from the perspectives of various people and spaces, traditions and ideologies, worldviews and aesthetics. It is envisaged as a multimedia performance that turns the whole city into a big stage where documentary and fiction, performers and audiences, space and time, private and public, intersect.

*Nathan the Wise* is a drama by 18th-century German enlightener **Gotthold Ephraim Lessing** that takes place during the Crusades. The play is set in Jerusalem, and the story itself deals with the lives of people of three religions and examines the basis on which coexistence in troubled times of war should be based. It talks of understanding and misunderstanding, the similarities and differences between Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Our original intention was to coproduce the play with theatres from Zagreb, Berlin and Tel Aviv and, of course, the National Theatre in Mostar.

Obje predstave, također imaju i svoje repertoarske prethodnice. *Mislím grad* bi se mogla smatrati orkestralnom varijacijom pop uspješnice *Ajmo na fuka*, a *Nathan Mudri* višom oktavom *Logorilijade*.

U kontekstu identitetskih i ideoloških prijevora, kako unutar Hrvata kao zasebne društvene zajednice, tako i na razini BiH kao društva i države, iznimno značajnom i referentnom smatramo predstavu *Logorilijada* koja govori o životu i smrti **Ilije Jakovljevića**. Pored toga što je bio pravnik, novinar i pjesnik, ovaj rođeni Mostarac bio je izravna žrtva oba totalitarna režima koja su u prošleme stoljeću ugrožavala ne samo pojedince, narode, društvene klase i države nego i svijet u cjelini. Neslaganje s Pavelićevim endehazijskim režimom odvelo ga je u koncentracijski logor Stara Gradiška. Nakon izlaska iz logora, 1943. godine odlazi u partizane. Početno oduševljenje narodnooslobodilačkom i antifašističkom borbom biva ugašeno uvidom u funkcioniranje kasnijeg komunističkog režima. Zbog moralne nepotkupljivosti i slobodarskog duha, ponovno završava u zatvoru, ovaj put komunističkom u kojem 1948. godine, izravno ili neizravno, biva ubijen. Stoga su upravo lik i djelo Ilije Jakovljevića simbol i metafora onih moralnih i svjetonazorskih vrijednosti koje smatramo referentnim okvirom poželjnog pozicioniranja HNK kao društveno odgovorne javne ustanove, kao kulturne institucije od šireg društvenog značaja.

Ne želimo, pri tom, upasti u zamku relativiziranja niti izjednačavanja dva totalitarizma, ali, isto tako, ne želimo pristati ni na svojevrsnu moralnu ucjenu – bez obzira dolazi li s lijeve ili desne strane, je li obojena crno ili crveno – koja traži da protivljenje jednom totalitarizmu podrazumijeva prihvaćanje onoga drugog. Ili trećeg, četvrtog, svejedno. Teatar je za nas prostor društvene i umjetničke slobode, prostor istraživanja i propitivanja, a ne nekritičkog prihvaćanja zadanih ideoloških i estetskih formi, isključivosti i obračuna s neistomišljenicima i protivnicima.

Nesumnjivo je da suvremeni teatar može i treba biti društveno osviješten, referentan i odgovoran, da nas se može i treba ticati i kao pojedinaca i kao različitih kolektiviteta, ali kako bi mogao ispuniti bilo koju od dodanih, društvenih funkcija, on u prvome redu nužno treba biti dobar teatar. Dramaturški, stilski, izvedbeni i produkcijski kriteriji su primarni za svaku kazališnu kuću i svaku predstavu pa tako i za HNK i njegov repertoar.

Stoga i ovdje još jednom hvala svim djelatnicima, i sadašnjim i bivšim članovima glumačkog ansambla, produkcijskog i tehničkog osoblja, uprave i administracije, što su svoje znanje, trud, energiju, vrijeme i

Although they are still in the conceptual and preparatory stages, both plays contain specific guidelines for our further repertoire-based and aesthetic direction, as well as for the social and worldview positioning. They give directions for our vision and mission. That is why we speak of them to stage them both, in their original or a less demanding form in terms of production.

Both plays also have their repertoire predecessors. *Thinking the City* could be considered an orchestral variation of the pop hit *Let's Go for Coffee*, and *Nathan the Wise* a higher octave of the *Logorilijada*.

In the context of identity and ideological strife, both within the Croats as a separate social community, and at the level of BiH as a society and the state, we consider the play *Logorilijada*, which speaks about the life and death of **Ilija Jakovljević**, to be exceptionally important and referential. In addition to being a lawyer, journalist and poet, this native of Mostar was a direct victim of both totalitarian regimes that threatened not only individuals, peoples, social classes, and states over the last century, but the world in total. Disagreement with Pavelić's NDH (Independent State of Croatia) regime resulted in him being taken to the Stara Gradiška concentration camp. After leaving the camp, in 1943 he joined the partisans. The initial enthusiasm for the national liberation and anti-fascist fight was dampened by his insight into the functioning of the communist regime. Because of his moral integrity and libertarian spirit, he ended up in prison again, this time the communist one, where he was killed, directly or indirectly, in 1948. Therefore, Ilija Jakovljević and his work are a symbol and metaphor of those moral and worldview values that we consider to be the reference framework for the desirable positioning of the HNK as a socially responsible public institution, as a cultural institution of wider social importance.

We do not want to fall into the trap of diminishing or equalising the two totalitarian regimes, but we also do not want to agree to any kind of moral blackmail – whether it comes from the left or right, whether it is black or red – that requires the opposition to one regime to imply the acceptance of the other. Or a third, fourth, whatever. For us, theatre is a space of social and artistic freedom, a space of exploration and questioning, not the space for uncritical acceptance of the pre-set ideological and aesthetic forms, exclusivity and confrontation with opponents and those with different opinion.

Undoubtedly, contemporary theatre can and should be socially aware, referential and responsible, so it can and should concern us both as individuals and as different communities, but in order to fulfil any of the added social functions, it must, first and foremost, be a good theatre. The criteria of dramaturgy, style, performance, and pro-

ljubav unosili i ulagali u Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Mostaru. Predstava je kolektivna igra u kojoj ne sudjeluju samo glumci, a kazalište institucija o kojoj ne skrbi samo uprava. Svi smo mi dio jednoga sustava koji kreira kolektivnu igru i omogućava institucionalno pamćenje. Hvala svima, ma gdje u sustavu bili te što i kada radili.

## Umjesto zaključka

Prije 25 godina utemeljeni smo kao Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Mostaru. Kroz tih 25 godina prošli smo razne mijene i primarno se referirali na različite društvene i teatarske koncepte i kontekste. Ipak, u cjelini govoreći smatramo kako smo pokazali i dokazali da smo i hrvatsko i mostarsko i bosansko-hercegovačko te da se trudimo biti i europsko kazalište. Ali, kako bi sve te odrednice imale smisao i svrhu, nužno je da pri tom budemo, ili barem nastojimo biti, otvoreno, suvremeno, aktualno, zanimljivo, inovativno, potentno, jednom riječju kvalitetno kazalište. Kazalište koje ne samo čuva nego i nanovo promišlja i vrednuje dramsku tradiciju, koje ne samo razumije suvremeni teatarski izričaj nego ga i primjenjuje i nadograđuje, kazalište koje je ne samo dramski odraz i izraz aktualnih društvenih procesa nego i njihov aktivni sudionik.

duction are the primary criteria for any theatre and play, including the HNK and its repertoire.

Therefore, I will use this opportunity to once again express my thanks to all the staff, current and former members of the company, production and technical teams, management and administration, for investing their knowledge, efforts, energy, time, and love in the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar. A production is a collective play with not only actors as participants, while theatre is an institution that not only management cares about. We are all part of one system that creates a joint play and enables institutional memory. Thank you all, no matter where you are in the system, and what you do and when.

## Instead of a conclusion

Twenty five years ago, we were established as the Croatian National Theatre in Mostar. Those 25 years saw us through various changes during which we primarily referred to different social and theatrical concepts and contexts. However, on the whole, we believe that we have shown and proved that we are a Croat, a Mostar and a BiH theatre, and that we strive to be a European theatre as well. But in order for all these determinants to have a meaning and purpose, it is necessary for us to be, or at least try to be, open, contemporary, current, interesting, innovative, potent, in a word, a good theatre. A theatre that not only preserves but also rethinks and revalidates the drama tradition, not only understands contemporary theatrical expression but also applies and upgrades it, a theatre that is not only a theatrical reflection and expression of temporary social processes, but its active participant.