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Press Release of the Salzburg Festival



Marina Davydova appointed Director of Drama of the Salzburg Festival as of 2024



Marina Davydova © SF/Neumayr/Leo

The contract with the native Russian starts on 1 October 2023 and runs for three years, through 30 September 2026.

Markus Hinterhäuser, Artistic Director of the Salzburg Festival:

“Both as the artistic director of the Festival NET (New European Theatre) and director of drama at the Wiener Festwochen and as an author and stage director, Marina Davydova has gained an excellent reputation. The focus of the Salzburg Festival’s drama productions remains on German-language repertoire, but under her leadership, we will take into account our high percentage of visitors from a total of 76 countries by broadening our international orientation. I am convinced that Marina Davydova will bring strong new impulses to the Salzburg Festival’s drama department, given her outstanding expertise and human qualities.”

Marina Davydova, designated Director of Drama of the Salzburg Festival:

„What artists are supposed to do during the war and what is the purpose of art itself during the war - I have been asked these two questions since February 2022 a great many times. And for me, these are two fundamentally different issues.

In moments of political and social cataclysms, an artist can use his resource as a public person in order to shape public opinion. And I personally prefer to take advantage of this opportunity. But art should not become a hostage of the momentary political circumstances, changing public opinion or current trends. The purpose and meaning of art at all times remain, in my view, the same - to explore life in its ontological, existential and social aspects.

And as Director of Drama of the Salzburg Festival, I will be interested first of all in the depth and persuasiveness of theatrical research.“



Marina Davydova (born in Baku in 1966) is a theatre-maker, journalist, playwright and producer.

Academic:

She graduated cum laude from the department of theatre criticism of the Russian Academy of Theater Art (GITIS/ RATI) in 1988, subsequently defending her PhD dissertation *The Theatrical Nature of English Post-Renaissance Tragedy* and working as a senior researcher at the Institute of Art Studies. Davydova also taught a number of courses on the history of West European theatre at different institutes and gave a master class on theatre criticism at The Russian State University for the Humanities.

Author:

Marina Davydova is the author of the monographs *The End of the Theatre Epoch* (2005) and *Culture ZERO* (2017), analysing the last twenty years of the history of Russian theatre. She is also the editor and co-author of the book *The History of Western European Theatre since the Renaissance until the End of the 19th Century*.

Theatre Critic:

For many years she was the theatre reviewer for *Izvestia*, one of the oldest Russian newspapers.

Until March 2022 she was the editor-in-chief of the journal *TEATR* and a columnist for Colta.ru. Marina Davydova regularly publishes articles in the German theatre magazine *Theater heute*.

Awards:

She received numerous awards for theatre criticism, including the 2007 Prize of the Union of Journalists of Russia as the best theatre reviewer. In 2005 she won the Stanislavsky Award for the best book of the year.

Festival Founder / Theatre-Maker:

She is also among the initiators of the festival NET (New European Theatre) in Moscow, founded in 1998, serving as its artistic director for 23 years, through March

2022. The annual autumn festival assembled the most cutting-edge theatre companies, introducing Moscow's theatre audiences to contemporary European and innovative Russian theatre.

In 2016 Markus Hinterhäuser engaged her as a curator for the drama programme of the festival Wiener Festwochen. In her programme, for which she did not choose a geographic focus – theatre is not a question of nationalities to Marina Davydova – she made a concerted effort to transcend genre boundaries. Under her leadership, the Wiener Festwochen drama programme featured circus and performance art, figure and object theatre as well as installations, dance, text and pantomime.

Playwright and Stage Director:

In January 2017, *Eternal Russia*, conceived, written and directed by Marina Davydova, was premiered in Berlin at the Hebbel am Ufer. The production toured Europe, receiving acclaim in the German, Russian and Lithuanian media and was included in the main programme of the Belgrade International Theatre Festival (BITEF-2018), where it received a Special Prize of the international jury.

In April 2019, *Checkpoint Woodstock*, the second production written and directed by Marina Davydova, premiered at the Thalia Theater in Hamburg.

Marina Davydova's play *Trance* was part of an international project entitled *Die neuen Todsünden*, which premiered at the Karlsruhe State Theatre in October 2020. In November 2020, she conceived and staged her first performance in Russia, *Diminishing the World*.

Escape:

On 24 February 2022, the day Russia launched its war of aggression against Ukraine, Marina Davydova published a petition against this war. As a consequence, she received threats by letter and telephone, surveillance cameras were installed on her house, and the door to her apartment was branded with a large letter "Z". Therefore, on 5 March she was forced to leave Russia. She has been living in Berlin ever since.

Marina Davydova is presently working on a play entitled *Land of No Return* for the Residenztheater in Munich and on a project called *The Museum of Uncounted Voices*, a co-production of HAU in Berlin and the Wiener Festwochen.

Photographs free of charge can be found here:

<https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/photos/marina-davydova-designated-director-drama>

Kind regards,
Press Office of the Salzburg Festival
www.salzburgerfestspiele.at

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