

## *Summary*

In my thesis I examine the developing process of the Hungarian stage design in the 1970s and 80s. In these decades the Hungarian theatrical life was transformed significantly and those who played the dominant-role in this change was the designers, who joined the most progressive theatres and directors of the period.

These designers who had crucial part in the reform of theatre art came from different fields from art; from fine arts – painting and sculpture - and from architecture to the theatre. I examine this phenomenon by the help of the following artists: Ilona Keserü, Gyula Pauer, Péter Donáth, László Najmányi, László Rajk, El Kazovszkij. Though these authors are not skilled stage or costume designers, their theatrical activity play an essential role in their oeuvre.

The directors and designers of this era are making an effort together for finding ways for creating their own language for theatre making. The target is to relieve the Hungarian theatre of the burden of the conventions of naturalism, that has been influenced it for decades. This is a process determined by stage designers, who came from different fields of art, mainly from fine arts. This did not happen by chance. The Hungarian fine art has been through with naturalism and realism by this time; it has already find ways of abstract and stylized mode of expressions, so it has enriched theatre with a new and fresh approach.

The way of how the two fields – theatre and fine arts – influenced each other is completely different, considering the different directors and theatres. But the meeting point, what I focus on in my thesis, is the appreciation of the importance of the sight on stage, the emancipation of the designers' job and mutual developing and understanding of the two fields.

What connected these artists to each other, was the fact, that they all belonged to or had relationship with the circles of the Hungarian avantgarde art. This is important to clear the background of these authors, because besides the fact that none of them are skilled stage designers, the same artistic root is the connection between them. Their theatrical activity is not an „adventure” in an another artistic field, but is the significant part of their carrier; together with the directors, they became the protagonits in the developement of theatre of the era.

The structure of my thesis:

First I try to examine the main events and processes that lead to the changing and the reformation of the Hungarian theatre art in the end of 1960s and in the 70s.

Then I analyze the theatrical activity of the chosen artists from the point of view of their collaboration with different directors. I do not attempt to make a detailed list of all of their pieces. Instead, I try to find the tendencies and the stages of development within their oeuvre. I examine how the directors and the theatres influenced their work and how they changed the way of thinking of the directors, and form the profile the companies and theatres they belonged to.

The detailed elaboration and presentation of the designer-oeuvre of these artists has not been completed yet. Though many articles, and smaller essays are available on this subject, a serious summary is still missing. The articles and essays published so far deal with the designers as fine artists and interpret their theatrical activity from the point of view of fine art. My interpretation is a theatrical approach. I consider their stage-work an autonomous, independent unity and I attempt to analyze it within the context of theatre. I think they are real theatre makers, who benefit from the achievements of their original profession and develop it in theatre.

To understand and accept the rules of the theatre was a challenge for these artists. But their fresh and new aspects, that came from their original field, transformed the way of thinking of stage design.

Former writing on the subject:

The new-avantgard fine art and the Kaposvar Theatre in the 1970s.

Thesis, Eötvös Loránd University of Science – History of art, 1998