



**DECISIONS OF THE JURY OF NOVI SAD THEATRE FESTIVAL, THE  
THIRD INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF PROFESSIONAL THEATER FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Expert jury: associate professor and costume designer Zdenka Lacina Pitlik (president of the jury), actress Marija Radovanov and director Sonja Petrović, after watching ten performances, from May 8 to 15 at the Novi Sad Theater Festival, the third International Festival of Professional Theaters for Children and Youth, makes the following decisions:

**Award for the best overall performance**  
**GRAND PRIX**  
**LITTLE FRIDA**  
**City Theater "Žar ptica", Zagreb, Croatia**  
(Unanimously)

The play "Little Frida" stands out in every aspect of its production, and demonstrates excellence in the integration of all theatrical elements, creating an authentic and emotional theatrical experience. This prestigious recognition includes scenography, costumes, lighting design, music, dramaturgy, acting, direction and all other elements that together shape the text of the play and create a deep emotional and aesthetic connection with the audience. Complete, harmonious, exceptionally artistic, unobtrusively emotional and excellent in all its segments, the play "Mala Frida" responds to the topics of self-acceptance and the development of individuality. Warm, witty, playful... A performance that does not patronize the target group and carefully chooses its means is an example of quality and thorough artistic work for children.

**The award for the best director**  
**Pavel Staurac**  
**for the play HIC SUNT DRACONES**  
**Theatre Continuo Malovice, Czech Republic**  
(Unanimously)

The direction of the play stands out for its authenticity, precision and courage. The director uses a wide variety of means and materials through which he creates a coherent and unique poetics that talks about the female body as an unexplored area. By exploring materials such as mud, plaster, light and costumes, the director actually treats the female body in contemporary society. Although it is dominantly expressed through movement, it is also rich in the field of sound and visuals. This kind of direction invites dialogue, freeing itself from traditional constraints and encouraging viewers to open up to the breadth of possibilities in interpreting



female strength, insecurity and all the nuances in between. Using symbols and associative dramaturgy, and encouraging introspection and individual interpretations, Mr Staurac succeeds in creating an emotional, suggestive, at times humorous, bizarre and terrifying performance in a variety of genres that encourages reflection on the world we live in.

**Award acting bravura**  
**Amanda Prekaj**  
**for the role of Frida in MALA FRIDA**  
City Theatre "Zar ptica" Zagreb Unanimously

Amanda Prekaj stands out for her emotional strength and extraordinary interpretation. Through subtle play, she manages to show the spectrum of complex emotions and motivations of the character. Authentic, skillful, emotional and temperamental, the actress, with the support of her colleagues, stands out as the real gem of the show, discreetly being sympathetic and emotional with the audience. Having in mind the image of the well-known Frida Kahlo in her growing up period, Amanda does not fall into the traps of superficial likability and strict documentary nature of the character, but builds her own, authentic, free, playful little Frida.

**Award for Mastery of Animation**  
**to ensemble of performance HIC SUNT DRACONES**  
Theater "Continuo", Malovice, Czech Republic  
(By majority vote)

The actresses of the play with great precision and always in accordance with the idea of the director, skilfully use all materials, puppetry elements, and scenography elements in the play, including the animation of their own body parts, through which at the same time they send a message of female strength and insecurity. This play, due to the synergy between the direction and the inspiring team spirit of the performers, stands out as a play that transcends the boundaries of conventional theater both because of the suggestive play and because of the originality of the play's language, which is wonderfully executed. This ensemble reinforces the experimental spirit of puppetry, supporting innovative concepts and new ideas. With the detail of movements and technical skill, they succeed in pushing the boundaries of puppetry, challenging the audience to think, feel and experience performance art in new ways.

**Special award for versatile acting expression**  
**Lyubomir Zhelev**  
**for the performance HOTEL**



State Puppet Theatre Stara Zagora, Bulgaria  
(By majority of votes)

This unique award celebrates outstanding acting delivered through animation with a particular emphasis on conveying emotion, innovation in new theater and the magic of the artistic experience. Mr Zhelev gives a special stamp to the performance, skillfully handling all acting means, stage movement, skillful animation, humor and emotion. Creating a unique synergy between puppets, props, movement and sound; his specific, acting environment encourages the expansion of the idea of what acting expression can be.

**Special award for idea and concept**  
**Jelena Kovačić and Anica Tomić author of the play MALA FRIDA**  
City Theater "Žar ptica", Zagreb, Croatia  
(Unanimously)

Using an unpretentious story and sensitive means to manage to tell an emotional, strong, important and warning story about the little, but in fact the great Frida Kahlo, choosing only one situation from her childhood, speaks of the sensibility and deeply moral intention of this duo to adapt the story to the age for which it is intended. Covering topics such as peer violence, attitudes towards others and others, breaking stereotypes about gender roles, the importance of family support in growing up an authentic and fragile being, this play restores the hope we lost long ago and assures us, at least for a moment, that with by the way, be all right.

Novi Sad, May 15 2024.

**Žiri:**

Zdenka Lacina Pitlik, chairwoman

Marija Radovanov

Sonja Petrović