New, old, high or low, digital or analogue: The topic of Prague Quadrennial’s October symposium is *Technologies*

Prague, September 18, 2024 – **The Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space is hosting a symposium on** [***Technologies* in theatre, performance, and exhibition design**](https://pq.cz/symposium-technologies/) **between October 16 and 18, 2024. The programme of the 3-day event held in Prague’s Vzlet Cultural Centre will feature 80 speakers: performance designers, scenographers, makers, artists, and researchers who work with and on *technologies*. All of the five focused panels, seven flash talks series, two moderated roundtables and keynote talks by Rachel Hann and Tomáš Procházka will be accessible for free upon registration.**

The October PQ Symposium will explore the theme of *technologies* in a broader sense. Speakers will address the influence and use cases of tools such as AI, AR and XR, 3D body and space scanning, motion capture and interactive technologies, or kinetic and robotic tools in performance and exhibition design.

Several speakers, arriving in Prague from 30 countries across six continents in total, will also consider financial, material, environmental and access-related aspects of the use of such technologies, or the very question of understanding the notion of *technologies* in different socio-cultural and geographical contexts.

The symposium programme, comprising around 70 individual contributions, was compiled by the Artistic Director of the Prague Quadrennial Barbora Příhodová in cooperation with members of the PQ team following a February [open call for entries](https://pq.cz/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/PQ-Symposium-Technologies_open-call.pdf).

*“Whether ‘old’ or ‘new’, ‘high’ or ‘low’, ‘digital’ or ‘analogue’, technologies, or different tools and devices are potential resources in the scenographic process. The recent technological developments that require more specialized knowledge and expertise have brought on the need and the opportunity for scenographers and designers to collaborate with scientists, engineers, and industry partners,”* says PQ’s Artistic Director **Barbora Příhodová**, and argues: *“While pushing the boundaries of what is possible in performance, employing the most advanced ‘technologies’ is conditioned by access, stemming from material, institutional, and political conditions in which we produce art. Moreover, our ideas of ‘technologies’ are often reduced to Western notions of progress and innovation.”*

The symposium will be **accessible for free upon registration** at [**www.pq.cz/symposium-technologies**](https://pq.cz/symposium-technologies/). The programme will be **live-streamed online**, access to the stream will also be granted [after registration](https://pq.cz/symposium-technologies/). **The event will be held in English**.

Opening the event on **Wednesday, October 16**, the **keynote talk** by **Rachel Hann**, performance designer and an Associate Professor at Northumbria University, **Futuring Scenographics: Or how stage technologies speculate possible futures in an era of crisis** will adopt case studies from film and theatre production to investigate deep future mindsets and what their representation does to our politics today.

Presenters in the panel **Convergences of biological and digital interfaces** will present several case studies to outline possibilities of connecting digital technologies with natural systems or living organisms.

The last panel of the day **Rethinking the notion of technologies** delves into the evolving concept of *technologies* in art, and among other findings, proposes to reconsider their role not just as a tool, but as partners or co-creators contributing to the artistic process.

The **programme on Thursday, October 17,** will be dedicated to **two moderated roundtables** in addition to three flash talks series. In the discussion **Reimagining realities – Digital scenography** four internationally recognized authors Ivona Tau, Joris Weijdom, Lukáš Dřevjaný and Mikael Fock will take the floor.

The debate **Shaping creativity: Notable innovators** will host representatives of Czech tech companies and digital studios working also in the field of theatre and performance design (3dsense, H40 a Robe) who will discuss the practical side of the use of the latest technologies.

On **Friday, October 18**, **Tomáš Procházka** will give the second **keynote** talk **Vernacular Scenography of Handa Gote** subtitled ‘Two decades of speculative anthropology, applied media archaeology and other practices’.

The morning panel **Technologies in contexts of precarity** will offer three perspectives of artists and authors who question the role of modern technologies in the artistic process, but who also outline their potential of mitigating the impact of precariousness specific for the given region.

Speakers of the panel **Sustainability and traditional technologies in contemporary theatre** will contribute to the current broader debate on the sustainability of theatre and artistic production with the topics of (re)engagement of traditional tools and practices proven over time.

The final panel, **Researching embodied interactions**, will focus on the interaction of technologies with the human body and will discuss the role of physicality and sensory experience, which plays a significant role in contemporary performance design and scenography.

**50 individual flash talks** sorted into **7 series** across all three symposium days will offer a similarly broad range of topics.

The[**whole symposium programme**](https://pq.cz/symposium-technologies/)including an[**overview of all the presenters**](https://pq.cz/symposium-technologies/speakers/)is available on the[**www.pq.cz**](http://www.pq.cz)website.

The Symposium is organized by the team of the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space of the Arts and Theatre Institute and is supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and the NextGenerationEU – Czech Recovery Plan.

**Media partners of the symposium:**

A2 Cultural Biweekly, Artalk, Material Times, Culturenet, Kino Světozor,

Theatrer der Zeit, Divadlo.cz

**In cooperation with:**

Vzlet Cultural Centre, Kuchařky bez domova (Cooks without Homes)

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**Prague Quadrennial** (PQ) is the largest international event in scenography, performance design and space. PQ is initiated by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and organized by the Arts and Theatre Institute. PQ aims to create opportunities for the presentation of contemporary scenography and performance space, to map and support innovative work in this field and to provide an inclusive space for dialogue between professionals, students and the wider public.

The last 15th edition of the Prague Quadrennial took place in June 2023. Over eleven days, 2,000 artists presented their work in exhibitions, lectures, performances, workshops and other parts of the programme. Over 11,000 accredited visitors actively participated in the event, while performances and accompanying programmes in public spaces accessible free of charge reached over fifty thousand spectators.

**Arts and Theatre Institute** (ATI) is a state-funded contributory organisation established by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. Since 1959 our mission is to provide the Czech and international public with comprehensive services in the field of theatre and partially also in other areas of the arts. We operate as an open centre of information, scholarship, consultation, education, and publishing. Moreover, we organise and participate in international projects, engage in [research](https://www.idu.cz/en/about-us/theatre-institute/czech-theatre-studies-department), [documentation work,](https://www.idu.cz/en/about-us/theatre-institute/information-and-documentation-department) [collecting activities, and organising exhibitions](https://www.idu.cz/en/about-us/theatre-institute/collections-and-archive-department). ATI encourages a strategic approach to culture, and it supports and connects culture professionals and artists across different disciplines on the national and international scene.