
PQ 2020

PQ 2020

Call to Performance Design Educators and Students PQ STUDIO: Common Design Project Special Edition

TEXT: The White Plague (Czech: Bílá nemoc)

AUTHOR: renowned Czech writer, playwright, critic and originator of the word Robot, Karel Čapek.

In light of this unprecedented period of self-isolation in the wake of Covid-19, the Prague Quadrennial – www.pq.cz, in collaboration with Prague's Arts and Theatre Institute's (ATI) www.idu.cz launches the PQ STUDIO: Common Design Project Special Edition – The White Plague. The goal of this project is to offer students who may have found their summer creative projects cancelled, a chance to find artistic inspiration through a play that eerily anticipated – over eighty years ago – many of the dangers the world is facing today.

While we are confined to our homes, restricted from gathering in groups and our theatres and performance spaces remain dark, PQ Studio will never the less celebrate the real and imaginary spaces in which designers create. Our studios are both physical and mental spaces. In these spaces, our imagined ideas are incubated, assessed, selected or rejected and then re-imagined; a process repeated and repeated in search of the elusive and alchemical ingredients of theatricality. PQ Studio: Common Design Project will explore this process and its resulting products through a curated on-line exhibition of student designs that develop out of design-course work/assignment.

The diversity of presentation seen at the last few editions of PQ, with representation from traditional theatre, performative installation and immersive experience, demonstrates that performance design is an evolving art form – continually being redefined by its practitioners. With this in mind, PQ Studio launches this project by asking these questions: What is the relationship between traditional, text-based plays and performance design in 2020? How can performance designers engage with these texts to create immediately relevant theatrical experiences for modern audiences? How can we dynamically answer: Why this play? Why now? And how, as visual dramaturges, can performance designers assume creative leadership of a text-based production?

With these questions in mind, and in celebration of the practice, craft and artistry of design for text-based theatre, PQ Studio: Common Design Project Special Edition invites the international community of design for performance courses to set The White Plague as a studio design project (conceived for any type of theatre, whether traditional proscenium, small and immersive spaces, found space projects, etc.) that encourages students and emerging designers to explore the text through their lens, and to consider approaches meaningful to a contemporary audience. It is hoped that this project fits existing conceptual design project space in the course syllabi, with course leaders simply using The White Plague as the text. Participating design courses will then be able to submit one project for the PQ Studio Team to consider.

The 2020 Special Edition Common Design Project will catalyze a global discussion between students and educators as they explore and create designs for The White Plague (Czech: Bílá nemoc) by Karel Čapek. Design courses (whether undergraduate or graduate) will individually set the project within their existing teaching structures, creating local conversations not only about the text and approaches to its staging, but also the nature of art, performance design/scenography, and theatre. These conversations will then expand onto an international platform, generating an exciting opportunity to showcase the next generation of performance designers. The selected project will be invited to engage with other emerging artists and leading practitioners over three days of on-line moderated discussion examining the play and proposed designs. The project will also include, two webinars created by PQ/ATI specifically for this project, the opportunity to check-in with a member of the PQ Studio Team during the design process, and on-line organized critiques and discussion of the exhibited works led by leading performance designers and educators.

PQ 2020

In addition to the organized critiques in to be held in December 2020, in January 2021, Prague's Arts and Theatre Institute's will celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the world premiere of Čapek's science fiction play RUR, along with his other work, including The White Plague. The design submissions chosen by the PQ Studio Jury will also have their work featured by the Art and Theatre Institute's planned online celebration of Čapek's work. The on-line gallery emerging from the Common Design Project will become part of a series of international activities reflecting on current ethical issues connected with scientific and technological developments and ultimately, the sustainability of our civilization. Selected projects may also be featured in Extras, a special section of ArteActa; a peer-reviewed journal focused on the performing arts and artistic research, and published bi-annually by the [Academy of Performing Arts in Prague](#).

This project is one of several ongoing activities the [PQ team](#) initiates and coordinates in between main editions of the Exhibition and Festival.

VITAL INFORMATION

PQ STUDIO: Common Design Project Special Edition Timeline

The Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space now invites design course leaders from around the world to register their intention to participate in the 2020 Common Design Project Special Edition.

TEXT: *The White Plague* (Czech: *Bílá nemoc*) by Karel Čapek (1937)

CURATOR: Patrick Du Wors

DATES: For this Special Edition of the Common Design Project, we invite institutions to follow one of two timeline options ■ GREEN or ■ PURPLE.

The dual option timeline is designed to facilitate educators who are looking for an immediate project for their students during this period of self-isolation as well as those looking to insert this project into their regular course work for September 2020.

Call Published: 15 May

Deadline for Institutions to Register Intent:

15 June for the first timeline option,

1 October for the second timeline option

FIRST OPTION TO PARTICIPATE

■ GREEN TIMELINE

NOW – 15 JUNE	15 MAY – 30 AUG	15 JUNE – 30 JUNE	JULY	31 AUG	15 SEPT	MID- DEC
Register intent to participate	Project runs	PQ provides two on-line webinars related to the project	Students meet with a PQ Studio Team member for an on-line check-in	Deadline to Submit Projects	Selected projects announced	On-line Gallery Launch with Organized Critiques

NOW – 15 JUNE

Performance design course leaders submit the simple form below by 15 June indicating they intend to participate by setting *The White Plague* as a course assignment or independent study (for advanced students). A 10€ administrative processing fee is due at the time of registration. The registration form can be found [here](#).

15 MAY – 30 AUG

Individual courses set *The White Plague* as the text for studio-based design project (conceived for any type of theatre, whether traditional proscenium, small and immersive spaces, found space projects, etc.). Course leaders should then select one project per institution to submit for possible inclusion in the special on-line exhibition organized by PQ and the Arts and Theatre Institute marking the centenary celebration of Karel Čapek's work.

VITAL INFORMATION

15 JUNE – 30 JULY

PQ Studio will post exclusive access to two webinars related to the Common Design Project and check-in with the PQ Studio Team. Exact dates and topics may vary from the description below.

1) 23 June – Introduction to the project, Q&A led by the project Curator Patrick Du Wors and PQ Artistic Director Markéta Fantová. Exact time to be announced. We will offer more than one time slot to cover all participants' time zones.

2) 30 June – The Arts and Theatre Institute will present a seminar about The White Plague and the author Karel Čapek.

3) A member of the PQ Studio Team (curator Patrick Du Wors, PQ artistic director Markéta Fantová, PQ ambassador Sophie Jump) will check-in on-line with your students and offer advice and guidance as they move towards the final deadline. Check-ins will be scheduled at a mutually agreed time.

31 AUG

Deadline for course leaders to submit a selected entry (ONE per institution, whether by an individual designer or a team/group).

15 SEPT

Successful candidates notified.

MID-DEC

On-line gallery launches with selected designs from both GREEN and PURPLE lines. Three organized discussion and critique sessions will be held on-line with global leaders in performance design practice and education. The respondent panellists will be announced at a future date.

SECOND OPTION TO PARTICIPATE

■ PURPLE TIMELINE

NOW – 1 OCT	1 SEPT – 30 NOV	1 OCT – 31 OCT	NOV	1 DEC	7 DEC	MID-DEC
Register intent to participate	Project runs	PQ provides two on-line webinars related to the project	Students meet with a PQ Studio Team member for an on-line check-in	Deadline to Submit Projects	Selected projects announced	On-line Gallery Launch with Organized Critiques

NOW – 1 OCT

Performance design course leaders submit the simple form below by 1 October indicating they intend to participate by setting The White Plague as a course assignment or independent study (for advanced students). A 10€ administrative processing fee is due at the time of registration. The registration form can be found [here](#).

VITAL INFORMATION

1 SEPT – 30 NOV

Individual courses set *The White Plague* as the text for studio-based design project (conceived for any type of theatre, whether traditional proscenium, small and immersive spaces, found space projects, etc.). Course leaders should then select one project per institution to submit for possible inclusion in the special on-line exhibition organized by PQ and the Arts and Theatre Institute marking the centenary celebration of Karel Čapek's work.

1 OCT – 30 NOV

PQ Studio will post exclusive access to two webinars related to the Common Design Project and check-in with the PQ Studio Team. Exact dates and topics may vary from the description below.

1) 1 OCT–15 OCT–Introduction to the project, Q&A led by the project Curator Patrick Du Wors and PQ Artistic Director Markéta Fantová. Exact time to be announced. We will offer more than one time slot to cover all participants' time zones.

2) 15 OCT–31 OCT

The Arts and Theatre Institute will present a seminar about *The White Plague* and the author Karel Čapek.

3) A member of the PQ Studio Team (curator Patrick Du Wors, PQ artistic director Markéta Fantová, PQ ambassador Sophie Jump) will check-in on-line with your students and offer advice and guidance as they move towards the final deadline. Check-ins will be scheduled at a mutually agreed time.

1 DEC

Deadline for course leaders to submit selected entry (ONE per institution, whether by an individual designer or a team/group)

7 DEC

Successful candidates notified.

MID-DEC

On-line gallery launches with selected designs from both GREEN and PURPLE lines. Three organized discussion and critique sessions will be held on-line with global leaders in performance design practice and education. The respondent panellists will be announced at a future date.

PLEASE NOTE

All selected participants will also be expected to attend all scheduled critique and discussion sessions for the Common Design Project in December 2020. PQ can provide needed documentation and letters of participation in support of any grant applications undertaken by participants.

COPYRIGHT

By submitting to PQ Studio, you grant permission to The Prague Quadrennial to reproduce, edit, and display the imagery of the work in any way it desires, whether for promotion, retrospectives, or archives, etc. in perpetuity. All other rights reserved.

PROJECT GUIDELINES

A Total Performance Design for The White Plague by Karel Čapek

- Submissions should be a total performance design (sometimes referred to as production design). At a minimum, this will include set/space design and costume design. Submissions may also include puppet design, projected media design, lighting design, and sound design. While these latter disciplines are more challenging to communicate in a theoretical state, we are excited to see creative solutions that showcase students' ideas in these disciplines.
- To be as inclusive of diverse collaborative practices and approaches as possible, submissions from both individuals (single designer) and teams/groups (multiple designers) will be accepted.
- We will be looking for designs concerned with the creation of active performance environments, that are far beyond merely decorative or beautiful, but that are emotionally charged; where design can become a quest, a question, an argument, a threat, a resolution, or an agent of positive change.
- We encourage students and performance design educators to mix, fuse, and blur the lines between various disciplines to search for new approaches and new visions.
- In addition to artistic ideas, submitted projects will also be evaluated on the quality of craft of the visual communication tools for performance design, such as a model, storyboard, and costume drawings. Still, we are open to alternative forms of visual communication, such as 3D modelling, provided it can be exhibited effectively in our virtual gallery.
- Submissions from undergraduate and graduate students will be accepted.
- This project is focused on performance design for a text-based play: The White Plague by Karel Čapek. As we are asking students to examine the role between traditional, text-based work and performance design in 2019, will not be considering adaptations, such as dance pieces or other work "inspired" by the play.
- Submissions must demonstrate a complete design vision of the play and presented materials should be ready for a professional-level production.
- A short, written design concept will be permitted, but we strongly discourage verbose writing as a substitute for visual communication.
- A 10€ per institution administration fee is due at the time of registering interest to participate (see timeline for details and link to registration form)

PROJECT GUIDELINES

Submission Process and Criteria

As you dig into Čapek's fabulous script, *The White Plague*, you will notice that from a production design point of view, it is at once epic and pedestrian. It has been a challenge to determine the precise submission criteria without becoming prescriptive or, worse still, limiting the creative exploration of your students. The PQ team must also be mindful of the time it will take the initial selection jury to review the submissions. With these criteria in mind, the submission of your chosen project may include:

- Maximum 20 digital images showing the finished design proposal (each image may contain multiple costume plates or scenes in a storyboard, for example).
 - As a reminder, we are looking to see a complete design for a professional-level production. Your students will have to find a way to condense this information into 20 images.
- Maximum 5 digital images showing process.
- Maximum 5 minutes of projected media design content. Please include information such as a cue list, or a description of where and how this clip will be used in your production. If including projected media in the total design, this also should be reflected in the storyboard.
- Maximum 5 minutes of sound design. Please include information such as a cue list, or a description of where and how this clip will be used in your production.

The above items will be sent through email (WeTransfer) to viktorie.schmoranzova@pq.cz. Besides, the submission will also ask for:

- Design statement in English, written by the student designers – maximum 2000 characters (including spaces)
- A brief statement in English written by the course leader/instructor describing why this proposal was selected from those created at your institution - maximum 1000 characters (including spaces)

The initial selection jury and panel of international artists leading discussion and giving individual project feedback at PQ will be announced as soon as possible.

If you have any further questions about the application process and registration form, please contact viktorie.schmoranzova@pq.cz, for content questions, please contact the PQ STUDIO curator at patrickduwors@pq.cz.