

**THE REHEARSAL FOR TRUTH THEATER FESTIVAL TO PRESENT SPRING WEEKEND:  
A SELECTION OF EUROPEAN STAGE READINGS IN NYC, BOHEMIAN NATIONAL HALL, MAY 10-12, 2019.**

**ROMANIA: I HOPE I WOULDN'T MEET MYSELF TODAY**

**SATURDAY, MAY 11 at 8PM**

In spring 2019, the REHEARSAL FOR TRUTH theater festival, honoring Vaclav Havel, will add a weekend of contemporary European stage readings to their yearly program. The Vaclav Havel Library Foundation (VHLF) partners with the Bohemian Benevolent & Literary Association to create a showcase of young European playwrights. The selection process includes choosing Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian and Slovak plays that have been translated into English and reflect on current social and political issues of the region.

The Romanian full length production is entitled *I Hope I Wouldn't Meet Myself Today* by Herta Müller, Nobel Prize recipient, and is translated, performed, and directed by Simona Maicanescu.

**Synopsis**

The play is set in Eastern Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall where Lili works in a Romanian factory making fine men's overcoats for export to Italy. Her love life is a mess-she has a live-in male friend who spends all of his time and most of her money drinking, the day away. Lili also has a secret; she inserts notes which say "Marry me!" and include her name and address into the linings of the coats she sews. When her notes are discovered, Lili knows she could face unemployment or even imprisonment. She is summoned to the inspector's office to receive the verdict. But the inspector takes a personal interest in her case; that is, he takes a personal interest in her.

**Simona Maicanescu:**

As an actress, Simona Maicanescu has performed in diverse rolls, including Viola in *Twelfth Night* and Solange in *The Maids*. She has worked in both Romania and France under directors Sanda Manu, Cătălina Buzoianu, Silviu Purcărete, Lucian Pintilie, Andrei Serban, Tompa Gabor, Sandu Dabija. She has recently branched out into new realms as both playwright and translator with her adaptation of Herta Muller's book *I Hope I wouldn't Meet Myself Today*. She has a Masters degree from the Bucharest Academy of Arts.

**Herta Müller** is recipient of the Nobel Prize. The performance *I Hope I Wouldn't Meet Myself Today* is a dramatization of her book which was translated into English with the title *The Appointment*. Müller's story revolves around a Romanian worker who is terrorized by the Ceausescu's Securitate.

Herta Müller was born in Nițchidorf, Timiș County, Romania, the daughter of Swabian farmers. Her family was part of Romania's German minority and her mother was deported to a labour camp in the Soviet Union after World War II. She read German studies and Romanian literature at Timisoara University. In 1976, Müller began working as a translator for an engineering company, but in 1979 was dismissed for her refusal to cooperate with the Securitate, the Communist regime's secret police. Initially, she made a living by teaching kindergarten and giving private German lessons.

Her first book was published in Romania (in German) in 1982, and appeared only in a censored version, as with most publications of the time. In 1987, Müller left for Germany with her husband, novelist Richard Wagner. Over the following years she received many lectureships at universities in Germany and abroad.

In 1995 Müller was awarded membership to the German Academy for Writing and Poetry, and other positions followed. In 1997 she withdrew from the PEN Center of Germany in protest of its merge with the former German Democratic Republic branch.

The Swedish Academy awarded the 2009 Nobel Prize in Literature to Müller, "who, with the concentration of poetry and the frankness of prose, depicts the landscape of the dispossessed".

Her titles include *The Land of Green Plums*, *The Hunger Angel*, *The Passport*, *The Fox Was Ever the Hunger*, *Nadirs*, *Traveling on One Leg*.

FREE TICKETS AVAILABLE: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/spring-weekend-hoped-i-wouldnt-meet-myself-today-romania-tickets-59966704026>

## **ABOUT SPRING WEEKEND**

The Rehearsal for Truth theater festival, honoring Vaclav Havel presents Spring Weekend. It is a showcase of emerging Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, and Slovak playwrights whose work reflects on current social and political issues. The plays have been translated into English and feature local New York performers and directors who will have the opportunity to try out these works onstage as part of the European Month of Culture. The program will include a full Romanian production as well.

The cultural institutions of these five countries collaborate with VHLF to select the plays as well as arrange trips for some of the chosen playwrights to NYC to participate in the rehearsals, stage reading performances, and discussions with the audience after the shows.

The program is organized by the Vaclav Havel Library Foundation and the Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association, in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Czech Republic, Consulate General of Slovakia, the

Polish Cultural Institute, the Romanian Cultural Institute, and Untitled Theater Company #61.

The program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

**All productions for this Spring Weekend are held at the Bohemian National Hall, 321 E. 73rd St., New York, NY, 10021, and have been translated into English. The stage readings and full-length production are free events, and reservations can be made on Eventbrite. After every stage reading and production, there will be talk backs with the artists followed by a small reception hosted by the featured country's cultural institution.**

For more information visit: <https://www.vhlf.org/>