

Lada Hubatová-Vacková (ed.)

**Divadlo ulice: Reklama a aranžérství výkladních skříní
v kontextu modernismu, 1918–1938 / Theatre of the Street: Advertising
and Window Display within the Context of Modernism, 1918–1938**

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372 pages + 20 pages of drawings

The metaphor “theatre of the street” was conceived by theoretician Karel Teige to describe the vibrant and dynamic audio-visual hustle and bustle typical for city centres in 1920’s. He did not mean only the omnipresent traffic, but also the urban iconography, composed of shop signs and portals, illuminated window displays, façade advertisements, and flashing neon signs. Window displays presenting artfully arranged goods caught the attention of the Surrealists, who admired their sophisticated and absurd compositions; light illuminations resembled the Constructivists’ experiments; advertisements and signs applied modern typography and processes to attract by-passers and *‘flâneurs’*. The fleeting “theatre of the street” is a key theme for understanding the Modernist style of the Interwar period, yet it has rarely been explored in expert studies. This book searches for common aspects of commerce and art; the “low” and the “high”; the pop-culture, commercial advertisement, and independent artistic creation. The publication contains five expert studies, which present advertisement practices in the context of fine art, architecture, photography, film, and new technologies appearing with the electrification of towns and cities. In terms of place and time, the studies focus on the situation in Czechoslovakia in the period between 1918 and 1938, with selected references to European relations. The narrative part is accompanied with an extensive set of documentary materials and pictures found through research in the contemporary journals, archives, public and private collections. A set of twenty drawings of Eva Koťátková – on translucent paper – is inserted in the book as an anachronic element. The artist’s drawings elaborate on the explored theme, balancing on the edge between the commercial pragmatism and the “convulsive beauty” of Surrealism. The book is published with the support of the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic.

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