

This diploma thesis is focused on the research in the area of the new and the contemporary circus. The essential object of the thesis is the characteristics of the contemporary circus phenomenon, which should demonstrate its artistic independence. The analysis of typical contemporary circus aspects is implemented in nine self-contained chapters. These chapters are dedicated to the development process from the modern circus to the contemporary circus, the minute analysis of different circus arts and their particularities, the contemporary circus architecture, the circus artists' physical and acting improvement and last but not least to the human body as the cardinal instrument of contemporary circus expression. An important part of the thesis is based on the description of contemporary circus performance elements, which are practically presented on the companies' creative processes. Especially the last chapter contains the description of four different contemporary circus performances made by four different contemporary circus companies which come from France or francophone territories.

The primary research method was searching and studying theoretical literature dedicated to the circus, interviewing circus pedagogues, artists and theorists and analysing the contemporary circus performances.