

Czech theater director Alfred Radok (1914-1976) was always tempted by confronting several layers of meaning in one single work of art. On theater he used different scenic spaces at once - in e.g. his production of Offenbach's opera Hoffman's Tales (Velka opera 5. kvetna IThe Great May 5th Opera/, 1946) he combined two spaces which symbolized the two worlds of Hoffman's fantasy. The true character of these worlds was not only formed by the stage design but also by acting. When transiting from one space to the other the actors changed their gestures, their body language, the way they walked, etc. A similar principle was applied in Verdi's Rigoletto (Velka opera 5. kvetna IThe Great May 5th Operal, 1947). In this production the singers were moving inbetween two different worlds - one being represented by a ceremonial opening night of this performance in Teatro La Fenice, while the second by the theater backstage which unveiled the reverse side of fame (scene-shifters were preparing the change of the upcoming scene, one singer was flirting around with the dancers, prop-woman was knitting etc.). This specific technique of totally diverse realities medley became the basis for Radok's film debut Daleka cesta IFar Away Journey/ (1949). A portrayal of a life story of a mixed marriage during the Second World War is combined with contemporary German documentary and film propaganda shots. One layer is alternated by the other, and for a certain amount of time they are also mutually penetrated.

These experiments soon influenced Radok as much that he used film on theater along with the traditional theatrical forms of art. A logical culmination of these attempts was Laterna Magika IThe Magic Lantern/ (first introduces on the EXPO 1958 World Exhibition in Brussels). During the time of its' origin Laterna Magika arouse favorable responses. ...