

The master subject of this essay is pretty clear – the history of one of the most famous Czechoslovakian theatre phenomenon of the world – The Black Light Theatre of Jiří Srnec. Although many other ensembles play under the name of the original Black Light Theatre of Prague these days, the real founder of this new theatre form is Jiří Srnec. He used a very old trick, based on the principle of the “black cabinet” which technically means that the black-dressed actors holding the requisites are not seen by the spectators against black backdrop. Thanks to this technique the requisites, things and objects seem to move themselves. However, this trick is not the main purpose of the plays performed by Jiří Srnec and his. It’s a principle that evokes scenic and mimic metaphor which is realised by movements of graphic artefacts and actors and accompanied by music.

I have studied through the foreign and local critiques and reviews, short studies in theatre periodicals, several interviews with Jiří Srnec and some other witnesses, and my own experiences with this theatre.

The essay consists of two main parts: the first one theoretically describes the basic principles of the black theatre and the second part focuses on the history of the theatre of Jiří Srnec from the very beginning to the present.