

## COLLECTED PRESS FOR SEMMELWEIS (AS OF JAN 25, 2019)

### Press from 2018-19 tour:

Gulyás Gábor, Papago, "[Clean hands](#)," January 13, 2019

"...a spectacular project...a non-typical opera...outside of musical genre here in a particularly compelling way, given the question of opera vs. operetta of the Operetta Theater, and that the female chorus and soloists give the overture and the main themes."

"The narrative is not lost in details (dramaturg: Diána Mátrai Eszter). The story is not the least ornate; we don't see much about how Semmelweis gets to his current renown; neither is the emphasis on the psychological analysis of his madness. The work focuses more on highlighting truths beyond the specific cases, and this gives the basis of the direction of Martin Boross."

"The world-class, beautiful video (Dávid Maruscsák) also serve the purpose"

### Press from the Budapest premiere of SEMMELWEIS, September 28, 2018:

[Noémi Herczog, \*Élet és Irodalom\*, "I wash my hands," October 19, 2018](#)

"the strength of *Semmelweis* as a written piece is its music: the choir singing in countless parts and the acoustic sections reminiscent of Philip Glass, opposing these the musical-like arias"

"The current director, Lőrinczy György, on the other hand is inviting and giving total freedom to a few makers who are not only not thinking within the operetta genre but not even within the constraints of pure genres."

"We have found that it is the rigid institution that devours the young director aspiring to renew it. Martin Boross's *Semmelweis* is possibly the first example in Hungary, where this happened the other way around."

"[articulated] through strong images and without pre-digested clichés turning the fable of hand-washing into a contemporary message"

"...tableaus, the gracefully proud movements of Julia Jakubowska. The choir appearing like Fates in a tragedy. "

"in the feminine reading of the director...we can be made to recall the recent #MeToo movement"

[Zsuzsanna Szekáry, \*Magyar Idők\*, "Soul-anatomy with Catharses," September 29, 2018](#)

"Even the next day I find it hard to find the words for this work, described as an 'oratorical diagnosis,' as it was such a gripping and unique experience."

"Beyond the storyline itself, the play transmits impressions, images, and feelings: we look inside the soul of the self-defeating Semmelweis, who burns from his inner turmoil and the desire to act, and crumbles under the

weight of guilt, shame, and self-accusation, conveyed onstage with profound empathy by Szilveszter P. Szabó."

"Similarly, towering was the performance of Veronika Nádasí who authentically brought to life the despair of the wife of a doctor balancing on the edge of insanity."

"The other protagonists of the production are the Bartók Béla Chamber Choir of Szolnok, who sang with astounding professionalism, often in eight parts, at times ethereal and other times dissonant and unpredictable, suitable to their haunting role, for which the Budapest Operetta Theater Chamber Orchestra provided live music using special instruments."

"spectacular...the choir, soloists, and contemporary dancers, all representing women who have died of childbed fever, come together to haunt Semmelweis"

"a performance that provoked multiple catharses for me...one of the best theatrical productions of recent years"

"...a spectacular project...a non-typical opera...outside of musical genre here in a particularly compelling way, given the question of opera vs. operetta of the Operetta Theater, and that the female chorus and soloists give the overture and the main themes."

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[John Theater, \*Theater of the Whole\*, "Semmelweis \(Budapest Operetta Theater, Warehouse Theater, 2018\)," October 4, 2018](#)

"[Music director] Dániel Dinyes, who is also the conductor of the performance, played a great role in the music's interpretation... he is always a guarantee for an emotional, fierce, quality performance."

"... the 16-member women's choir (Bartók Béla Chamber Choir of Szolnok), mostly represent the spirits of the dead mothers who constantly haunt Semmelweis. They are already present as the audience enters, singing, which also helps to set the appropriate atmosphere, their introduction well-conceived..."

"...the video running on the walls of the stage only adds to the visual world. As do the ghosts (Anna Biczók, Júlia Hadi, Julia Jakubowska, Lili Raubinek) who appear on scene at times as Semmelweis's doctor colleagues, and at times as mothers dying or giving birth, turning the work into a true movement-theatre piece, as if by magic.

"[in the] last third of the story... we gain an insight into their married life. In addition to Maria getting the most beautiful solo of the opera ... [Veronika] Nádasí once again proved that she is among the most powerful female actors within the Operetta Theater's company."

"[Semmelweis's] despair and struggle are particularly touching, as evidenced by the high number of [spectators'] handkerchiefs that appeared..."

"truly contemporary direction that is filled with great ideas."

"well worth seeing as it has so much to offer "

[Andrea Stub, stubandrea.hu "Napló," September 30, 2018](#)

"The visual world of the performance is almost astute, but still precisely poetic: three pulpits horizontally divided, and above them the actors: mourning women in black, their golden gloves tracing white and bloody stripes flooding the walls - this impressive view is the start."

"considering that both an autopsy and a birth happen on stage, every action is theatrical and beautifully stylized"

**Press from the Miskolc world premiere, June 9, 2018:**

[Federica Fanizza, Sipario, Italy, "In search of the new opera," June 17, 2018](#)

"the term 'operetta' must not mislead from the seriousness of the musical argument...solid dramatic construct"

[David Toschi, operaclick.com, Italy, "Miskolc - Teatro Nazionale: Semmelweis"](#)

"No sentimental story in the romantic style, no concession to mythologies or stories of the supernatural, nothing like a hero story"

"... an opera quite distinct from the genre of operetta or musical, allowing for an effective investigation of the dramatic features of the main character presented by Szilveszter P Szabó, who delivers excellently in both acting and vocal interpretation..."

"The 'oratorical diagnostic report' is transformed into a work of contemporary music with a great many folkloric elements...a score both refined and primigenial, where the dialogical and rich singing of Szabó merges with the conspicuous and precise sound of the Chamber Orchestra of the Budapest Operetta Theater, and of the Bartók Béla Chamber Choir of Szolnok, well directed by the calm Dániel Dinyés"

"...stunning performances that allowed the work to masterfully realize the universal sound world conceived for this work by a particularly inspired Ray Lustig."

"The success of the show is certainly a good omen for the scheduled performances throughout the summer at Budapest Operetta-Theater."

[Csaba Németh, Csillagpont Radio, Hungary, "Semmelweis Opera - Oratoric Disease, Hungary's premiere in Miskolc," June 11, 2018](#)

"ethereal... mysterious... a colorful and rich musical composition"

[Zsófia Hózsa, Fidelio, Hungary, "The surreal Semmelweis operated in Miskolc," June 10, 2018](#)

"unusual, convincing and imaginative work...floating...exciting and powerful"

**Additional press from the New York concert showing, September 11, 2017:**

- "powerfully resonant... gripping" – [New York Music Daily](#)

- "alternately austere and lustrous... otherworldly" – [Lucid Culture](#)
- "stunning continuous song cycle/opera from eight hauntingly beautiful female voices" – Kelly Troester, Worldwide Head of Editions, Phillips
- "On every level, last night's performance of Semmelweis was magnificent... I came away mesmerized. The music and singing was gorgeous and forgotten story an urgent one to tell" –Lawrence D. Poster, Asparagus Entertainment