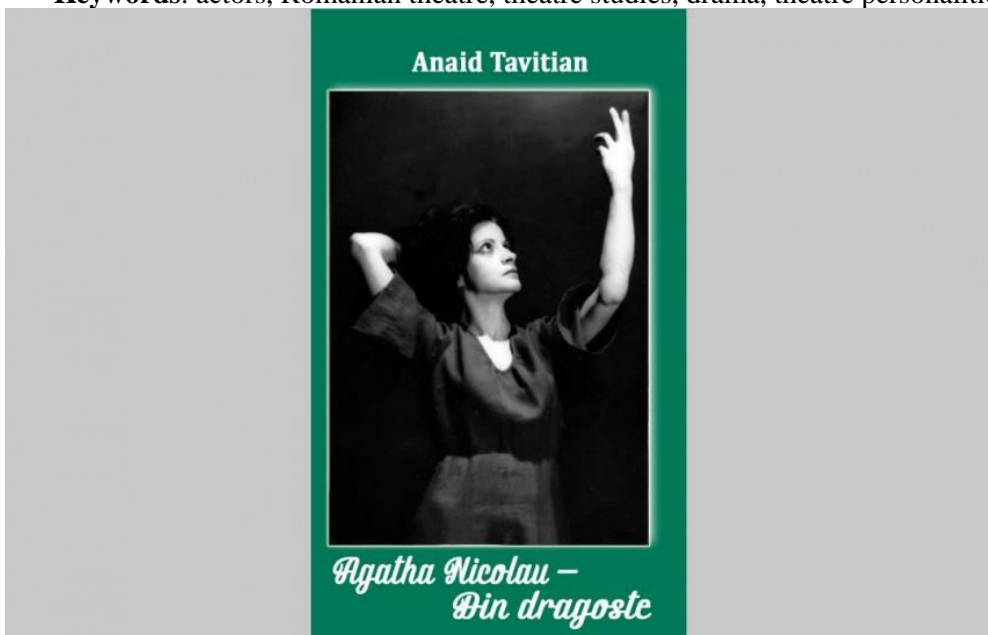


About theatre with love

Clara GHIUVELICHIAN •

Abstract: Anaid Tavitian, a well-known theatre critic and literary secretary dedicated her book `Agatha Nicolau – Din dragoste. Antologie teatrologică` to an actress whose long career in various Romanian theatres has become an example of devotion for the words recited on a stage and emotional involvement of an artist for each part. Agatha Nicolau played in theatres in Timișoara, Arad, Constanța and Bucharest and received numerous prizes and distinctions for her interpretation. She had recitals of highly professional levels and they have been appreciated by critics and public. The confessions of her colleagues showed their esteem for her entire career. The world of theatre, with actors, directors, scriptwriters and playwrights is brought in front of readers by Agatha Nicolau who was interviewed by Anaid Tavitian, who has, at her turn, a very good knowledge of this field. The portraits of the stage colleagues complete an approach of high intellectual level, focused on the Romanian theatre and its personalities.

Keywords: actors, Romanian theatre, theatre studies, drama, theatre personalities.



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THEATRICAL COLLOQUIA

Anaid Tavitian, the author of the book `Agatha Nicolau – Din dragoste. Antologie teatrală`¹ is a well-known theatre critic and literary secretary at Constanța State Theatre and whose activity marked cultural life in Dobruja, for some decades. Her attachment for drama and puppet theatre has been materialized both in her every day activity and the books she wrote and that was received very well by specialists and public. It is about the following titles: `Thalia Ex Ponto la cumpănă de milenii: O istorie sentimentală a Teatrului Dramatic Constanța`. Constanța: Muntenia & Leda, 2001 (co-author Georgeta Mărtoiu); `Leac pentru drac: perle din umorul culiselor`. Constanța, Muntenia, 2004 (co-author Georgeta Mărtoiu); `Metamorfoza unui vis: Teatrul de Păpuși din Constanța`. Constanța, Ex Ponto, 2011; `Eugenia Tărășescu-Jianu: Scenograf`. Constanța, Ex Ponto, 2018; Aneta Forna Christu. `Păpușarul cu suflet de copil`. Volume coordinated by Anaid Tavitian. Constanța, Ex Ponto, 2020; `Amintiri dintr-o poveste. Viață și teatru. Scrisori pentru Toma`. Iași, Sedcom Libris, 2022 (colab.). The personalities known by Anaid Tavitian and to whom she dedicated portraits in numerous articles in media, at the radio or tv programmes, or in the her books cover a large area of fields, starting with actors and continuing with literary secretaries, scriptwriters, writers, playwrights and all of them gave Anaid Tavitian the feeling of being connected with the Romanian and world cultural life. Present book is dedicated to an actress highly appreciated by Anaid Tavitian, therefore the author needed to write a monograph about Agatha Nicolau. The book includes also many portraits of the actors who played in Constanța, for a better knowledge of the public interested in the history of the cultural institution. The *motto*-ul from the lines written by the famous Romanian poet Nichita Stănescu defines the sensitivity of the author of the monograph and completes the message to readers: No people can keep in mind/the second of their birth.../Maybe that is why we have a past/maybe that is why the shadow beside us/brings us sadness/sometimes².

Agatha Nicolau was born in Făgăraș, Brașov county, she graduated from Central School for Girls in Bucharest and the Institute of Theatre and Cinema in Bucharest. She used to play in National Theatre in Timișoara (1960-1963), Arad State Theatre (1963-1966), Constanța Drama Theatre (1966-1976), `Odeon` Theatre in Bucharest (1976-1997). The book structure follows the phases of Agatha Nicolau's career, starting from an interview taken by the author, Anaid Tavitian, where the actress confessed about her family, parents, place of birth, school, faculty and theatre colleagues. Agatha Nicolau looks to the past with the nostalgia of her age (she is octogenarian in present), but also with enough humour to change every page in a reading pleasure. `The theatre walk` proposed by Anaid Tavitian covers all stages where Agatha Nicolau used to play and where she gained numerous prizes and distinctions, among which we mention: `Prize to the Gala of Drama Recitals and

¹ București, Ararat Publishing House, 2021.

² Translation of the author of the review.

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Colloqui of Theatre Critics` (Bacău, 1972, 1973, 1975), `Prize for interpretation at the National Gala Women – heroes in Contemporary Drama (Brăila, 1987), The National Order for Merit in rank of Knight, 2005, Diploma of Honour for special merits in serving theatre in Constanța received from `Ovidius` Theatre in Constanța and Constanța Municipality on the occasion of the semi-centenary of the Theatre, 2001, etc.

The energy she invested in all the parts she played, the manner of integrating in all actor groups she met, place Agatha Nicolau among the actors who consider theatre existence itself. Regarding the period when she played in Constanța, Agatha Nicolau confessed she understood from the first moments that `something happened in the town` and rich cultural life she met there determined her to continue, saying in 2001 at the Gala of the Theatre: `In Timișoara it was my start, in Arad, they sewed me wings and Constanța I began to fly`. Agatha Nicolau's artistical maturity was proved in all her parts on this stage and it is maybe unjust to mention them without telling them all. Her colleagues, actors, directors, stage designers, all the team from Constanța represented a whole that permitted the emergence of memorable performances.

A special part in present monograph is given to recitals that have received prizes and have been highly appreciated by public. She confessed with sensitivity and somehow proud that she gave herself to Poetry. Certainly we can find in each manner of expression *something* that comes from Agatha Nicolau's thoughts. However she was victorious after that challenge, so what can we understand of that? Is this not belief and a certain manner of discovering Beauty, Words' music and everything behind them, when they bring us joy or sadness? The manner chosen by Agatha Nicolau to confess to her former colleague from the theatre, Anaid Tavitian, and to readers prove the existence of a belief and some elements that were meant to take from the life of an artist who serves theatre: *the art of saying lines*, which is not easy to be learnt and that changes every time actors's presence in an unique performance. Contemporary world is dominated by dramatic changes, by events that seize public interest in a very pragmatic manner and it is very difficult for poetry to find a way to people, under these circumstances. Agatha Nicolau dared to bring poetry close to the theatre and art lovers, therefore honouring on actors behalf the genies who marked world literature: Homer, Eschil, Dante, Raciner or Romanian literature, Eminescu, Coșbuc and many others who expressed their joys or suffering in lines. These are also motives for actors who learn and say poetry to remind us there is Love, Beauty, Music and Words Sound and Dance are in the world. Actors are those individuals who `officiating` on the sacred stage would prove passion for saying words. Future actors can see in this approach one of the difficult journeys of their careers, but they will also understand that brings a special professional and personal fulfillment .

The volume is completed by the chapter `Letters to Agatha`, signed by important Romanian actors with whom she played along her career: Virgil Andriescu,

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Rodica Popescu Bitănescu, Dorina Lazăr, Alexandru Lazăr, Lucian Iancu, Ileana Ploscaru, etc.

The rich illustration in photos with the parts played by Agatha Nicolau completes the image of the actress known by critics and public and whose activity covers a multitude of different roles.

Performance reviews bring, at their turn, specialists' opinions, together with numerous appreciations of journalists.

It is the merit of the author of present theatre anthology, Anaid Tavitian, that she completed a portrait of an artist, in all its elements, therefore, book readers can picture in their mind the complexity of a long career in the Romanian theatres.

Properly we express our appreciation to `Ararat` Publishing House and the Romanian Union of Armenians for publishing this volume, in adequate editorial conditions, as a gesture of present and future cultural importance.