

becomes the hut onto which Katrin climbs. Similarly, in a production of *War and Peace* (1986), the tall backs of chairs were painted to represent soldiers; knocked over in the battle scenes, they became casualties of the war.

Like Malina, Dusek also feels that the time may be ripe for scenography to become more visually expressive again, to play a greater role in a performance. Particularly in light of the prevailing literalness of television scenography, Dusek feels, theatre should be more imaginative and bold. By the same token, although much of his work stresses the virtues of minimalism, Dusek enjoys working with productions demanding a larger scale. For the surrealist opera by Martinu, *Julietta* (1982), he created a large ship's profile out of latex stretch cloth and attached it by ropes to other objects on stage, again creating a setting that could readily change during the flow of the action.

Even in his more minimalist vein, Dusek often seizes on a stage image that is not only functional but richly metaphoric and thereby visually striking. For *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1983), Dusek constructed a simple framed background

of panels and a doorway. But each panel consisted of transparent plastic with several layers of irregularly torn, soaked paper lightly pasted to the back of the plastic. Testing revealed that the paper would gradually dry and peel away from the plastic, with one panel being bare by the end of the first act and the rest by the end of the play, thus graphically reinforcing the progressive stripping of the souls and defenses of the characters. An added dramatic touch was the mirror effect created by the bared panels as well as the ability to see the characters before they entered the main acting area.

The designs of both Malina and Dusek reflect new directions in Czechoslovakian scenography, as well as hint toward future tendencies. While much of the recent scenography in Czechoslovakia serves as a mainly functional element, its distinctive identity subordinated in order to facilitate the work of directors and actors, these designers appear to be moving toward reaffirming a stronger, more expressive role for scenography in the theatre production process.

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Dusek occasionally uses back-grounds to augment dramatic tension on stage, as in designing opaque surfaces that slowly clear as the drama unfolds. (left, *The Duck Hunt*, 1985)

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*Dusek utilise de temps en temps des arrieres plans afin d'augmenter la tension sur scène, comme dans les surfaces opaques qui s'éclaircissent lentement lors du déroulement de la pièce (à gauche, The Duck Hunt, 1985).*

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Dusek benutzt gelegentlich den Hintergrund, um die dramatische Spannung auf der Bühne zu erhöhen. Dazu entwirft er undurchsichtige Flächen, die allmählich durchsichtig werden, während sich das Drama entwickelt. (links, *The Duck Hunt*, 1985)

