SZFE Students and Faculty Declare their Republic of Learning

We, the students of the Hungarian University of Theatre and Film (SZFE) want to study. It is what we wanted before and it is what we will keep wanting. The structural change forced on us has deprived us of our basic rights. Nothing and no one guarantees autonomy for our university community — no one, but us. We are the ones who warrant this autonomy. We, the students and the strike committee refuse to budge from our demands: we do not acknowledge the new management forced on us, nor do we acknowledge the decisions made over our heads. We maintain our blockade.

Today, in agreement with our professors, we are stepping out of the traditional educational framework to found a republic at our occupied university.

The currency of our republic will be called “engagement” and each and every community member can decide how to use it. Classic teaching units, closed and open courses, creative performative actions reacting to the social situation and work related to organising and maintaining the blockade will all be counted as equally valuable activities.

It is our job to grab the tools we have and to re-interpret what stage, camera, lights, curtain, set, costumes, puppets, the applause from the auditorium and our own voices are for. For art, *per se*, holds a mirror to the powers that be and is therefore always relevant.

Our republic is an experiment for us to create together in the name of free education without being bound by institutions, majors or classes.

It is self-expression that we have been learning at this institution for 155 years: through our chosen professions, we learn to speak about what is happening to us and around us with nuance and honesty. *This* is what is happening to us and around us today, so *this* is what we can and what we want to talk about.

We thank you all for all your material and spiritual support: you are providing us with an inspiring and indispensable force. We are trying to give back as much as we can: in the name of democracy and creativity with the tools of democracy and creativity.

We are a creative community, so we do not need a schedule of classes.

We are present and in attendance, so we do not need records of attendance.