

# portraittheater

**www.portraittheater.net**  
Gentzgasse 13/14, A-1180 Vienna  
office@portraittheater.net, +43 (0) 699/195 808 74

## *Diving into Math with Emmy Noether*

A play by portraittheater Vienna in co-operation with Freie Universität Berlin

**Director: Sandra Schüddekopf**

**Actress: Anita Zieher**

**Scientific board: Mechthild Koreuber and David E. Rowe**

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*"Sandra Schüddekopf and Anita Zieher, as Emmy Noether . . . have produced a grandiose success! They simply bring this great mathematician to life on stage, as she . . . gives us glimpses (indeed!) of the 'natural beauty' of mathematics. . . . A wonderful play about an amazing woman, bravo!" --Daniel Landau*



Emmy Noether (1882-1935) was one of the most influential mathematicians of the last century. Her works and teachings left a lasting mark on modern algebra, opening new avenues for a modern structural perspective in mathematics. The ensemble portraittheater Vienna (Austria) together with the Freie Universität Berlin (Germany) produced a biographical play about Emmy Noether, directed by Sandra Schüddekopf and starring Anita Zieher as Emmy. In September 2022, "Diving into Math with Emmy Noether" will tour for the first time in the USA, playing at 9 universities and colleges.

Based on historical documents and other sources, the script was written by Sandra Schüddekopf and Anita Zieher in cooperation with the historians Mechthild Koreuber and David E. Rowe. On stage and in videos, Emmy Noether's fascinating personality comes alive in her reflections and conversations with other leading mathematicians of her day. The original play in German has been performed with great success at several universities in Germany and in the Theater Drachengasse in Vienna. The English Version "Diving into Math with Emmy Noether" was on US-tour in September 2022 and will be on tour again in the USA in September 2023.

**Information & video: [www.portraittheater.net](http://www.portraittheater.net)**

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## **Emmy Noether (1882-1935)**

Emmy Noether began her studies at a time when women were only beginning to break through the barriers that prevented them from entering the doors of German universities. She eventually overcame even stronger resistance when she applied for the right to teach at a German university. It took her four years before she acquired that certification (Habilitation) in Göttingen on June 4, 1919, after submitting a thesis in which she solved one of the central problems in Einstein's general theory of relativity. Although she never received a professorship at a German university, Noether became one of the most influential mathematicians of her era. As the "Mother of Modern Algebra," she inspired many leading figures worldwide. Conversational mathematics played an essential part in her work, as recalled by Bartel van der Waerden, Pavel Alexandroff, Helmut Hasse and Olga Taussky-Todd. In 1933, after Hitler came to power, she was one of the first instructors to be dismissed by the Nazi government. After receiving an offer for a one-year appointment as a research professor at Bryn Mawr College, she moved to the USA, where she also lectured at Princeton University. In 1935, Emmy Noether died unexpectedly after an operation; her ashes are interred under the cloisters at Bryn Mawr College.

**Portraittheater** is a Viennese theatre ensemble that focuses on extraordinary persons, especially women, and brings their lives and work to the stage. The company has produced and performed a wide variety of plays since 2006, featuring such diverse personalities as Marie Curie, Lise Meitner, Hedy Lamarr, Hannah Arendt and Simone de Beauvoir. The ensemble has offered guest performances throughout Europe in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, but also in Australia as well as the United States. [www.portraittheater.net](http://www.portraittheater.net)

**Anita Zieher**, actress, born in Salzburg (Austria). After studying political science and communications in Salzburg, she began studying acting in Vienna. After graduating from an acting school there, she has had the opportunity to perform in many countries as the founder and chair of portraittheater. In addition to the roles named above, she has also played e.g. Bertha von Suttner, George Sand, Rosa Luxemburg, Caroline Herschel, Williamina Fleming and Sally Ride. She has also won prizes as an improv player and comedian. [www.anitazieher.at](http://www.anitazieher.at)

**Sandra Schüddekopf**, director and vice-chair of portraittheater, born in Hanover (Germany). Over the period from 2001-2005 she had a position as assistant director at the famous Burgtheater in Vienna. Since 2005 she has worked as a freelance director at Schauspielhaus Graz, Theater Drachengasse, Munich Kammerspiele, Schauspielhaus Vienna, and at the Mainz State Theater, where she won the director's prize in 2009. Since 2008, she has headed the renowned Retzhofer drama prize.

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**David Rowe**, mathematician and historian, born in Grand Rapids MI. From 1992 to 2015, he was Professor of History of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz (Germany). Together with Mechthild Koreuber from the Freie Universität Berlin, he served as scientific adviser in preparing the script for the German version of the play, which he also translated into English. They are co-authors of *Proving It Her Way*, a book that accompanies the play.

***Proving It Her Way - Emmy Noether, a Life in Mathematics***

Authors: David E. Rowe and Mechthild Koreuber

Publisher: Springer, 2020

This book serves as a companion to “Diving into Math with Emmy Noether” by supplementing information and photos from the brochure for the original play. It includes relevant facts about Noether’s life together with brief sketches of the four mathematicians who appear with her on screen, as well as a “Who’s Who” identifying others whose names are mentioned onstage. Readers are thereby afforded easy access to essential facts needed to appreciate the events alluded to in the script. In addition, the book also contains a brief overview of Noether’s life as well as separate chapters providing detailed accounts of the main phases in her unique career. Her brief years at Bryn Mawr College left a lasting mark on a number of leading mathematicians in the United States.

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## **Diving into Math with Emmy Noether**

**A coproduction by portraittheater with the Freie Universität Berlin**

**Director:** Sandra Schüddekopf

**Actress:** Anita Zieher

**Text:** Sandra Schüddekopf, Anita Zieher; original sources and quotes from Emmy Noether and her contemporaries

**Scientific board:** Mechthild Koreuber (Freie Universität Berlin), David Rowe (Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz)

**Videos:** Karl Boerner

**Actors on screen:** Alexander Fennon, Werner Landsgesell (Voice: Florian Troebinger), Karola Niederhuber (Voice: Anne Weiner), Helmut Schuster, Anita Zieher

**Music:** Rupert Derschmidt

**Costume:** Lejla Ganic

**Translation:** David Rowe

**Language Coach:** Bronwynn Mertz-Penzinger

**Photos:** Helena Wimmer, Sandra Schüddekopf

**Synchronisation:** Rupert Derschmidt, Karl Boerner



**Tour team:** Anita Zieher, actress  
Sandra Schüddekopf, director  
David Rowe, scientific adviser, tour assistant  
Rudi Hausmann, tour assistant

### **Further information & contact:**

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