

цифика. Лошата ѝ част е, че се повтаря до втръсване, че върви по лесните отъпкани пътища, че понякога не се интересува не само от ценностите, които е призвана да възпитава, но дори и от печалбите – материални и морални. Тази умора и тежкоподвижност на навиците да се прави разнообразен детски театър лично аз смятам за убийствена. Спомняте ли си какво беше написал Мигел де Унамуно: „Придобиването на навик е

началото на края на съществуването“. Разбирайте го метафорично и така да успокоим нещата – българският детски театър ще продължава да съществува, малките му зрители ще продължават да го харесват такъв, какъвто е. Е, изводът е ясен – трябва да покажем своята отговорност към тях, като им покажем алтернативни форми. Скоро ще изготвим театрален речник, от който с изненада ще научите колко различни

и въздействащи форми има т.нар. образователен театър. Докато чакаме обаче теоретичните идентификации, можем да започнем с една нова практическа форма, която вече набира размах в Европа и САЩ. Да видим какво става с тези божествени и загадъчни зрители, които се обгръщат с любов и внимание в театралните програми „От 0 до 3“.

Дано да ви е интересно, макар че, отначало звучи шокиращо! ■

Текстът е четен по време на дискусиата „Театърът от 6 до 16 и съществуването му между ценностите и печалбите“, проведена по време на Международния фестивал на спектаклите за деца „Вълашебната“ в Търговище 7-11 май 2012 г.

Theater for children or the admissible capacity of dealing in the temple

Dimitar Chernev



We have not had an issue with such a burning relevance to all previous work conferences, round tables, etc. that were an integral part of the festival „Magic Curtain“ in its attempt to form an authentic and modern art event. In the past years we have debated on the artistic issues of children's theater, on the adequate development of the messages and its language, on its practice to display mythological and fairy plots into determinate stage stories. We have tried to deliberate on theoretical and practical models for the efficient and quick development of new audiences, to deny cliches, lacking fantasy and to think of new formats, that with most relevance engage the thoughts and especially the emotions, of our basic viewer's core – children and teenagers. In short – we have tried to raise ourselves at least slightly above the dominant daily round of children's theater, to expand its registry of possibilities that will enable it to become more attractive and effective in its educational, aesthetic and adaptive-behavioral dimensions. As far as our hope that this will happen is utopian, is another matter. Because it concerns a process that meets conscious and unconscious resistance, enough powerfully cultivated in our national psychology and our routine theater practice. My great fellow-citizen, the Nobel Prize Winner from Rouse Elias Canetti said: „We must not get tired of repeating things that we consider important, even if we think that our efforts for them are a waste of time.“

In this sense, all that was discussed at different forums of the festival has its metaphysical meaning and particular benefits. Perhaps tiny, but still benefits. Whatever the topics of our annual meetings have been, as a discreet background or as a second center, has always been present the topic of how the theater is spread, of the legitimacy and honesty of those who create it and provide its public presentation in front of an innocent, imposing and trusting audience – the children.

I do not want to bore you with extensive descriptions of persistent negative trends. It is more than obvious that most of children's theater production is spread semicriminally in a way that one of the indisputable leading figures in the field of puppet theater art defines as a „grey children's economy.“ A number of unlicensed and unidentified groups, mostly duets attend kindergartens and primary schools intensively, giving them a „cultural product“. Naturally, this generates incomes that remain hidden and untouchable in any way by the otherwise strict tax rules. They are really in the field of „the grey economy“, in the mutually beneficial „cooperation between „creative individuals“ and plenipotentiary agents of their production – officials or closely involved with the respective children's schools. It would look like a true envy on part of the state, municipal and non-governmental theatric troupes, if the problem was only in the financial enrichment of the unidentified theatrical talents and their admirers – distributors. But the problem is far more complex and it has at least three negative aspects:

1. Lack of any control over the quality of the performances of these troupes and therefore a real risk that they transmit wrong messages, incarnated in quickly patched-up, kitschy forms;

2. Due to the small financial resources, invested in these shows and the demand for fast, not subjected to taxation profit, the concerned troupes make a dumping of more valuable theater performances and, of course, become more sympathetic and preferred partner of directors and teachers. Do not forget as well the totally obvious satisfaction from „the shared profit“ on both parts;

3. The third problem is perhaps the hardest of all. The theater performance is a magic, a beautiful ritual, a unique experience, a synthesis of different arts. This generally can be accomplished in a specially adapted hall with artistic lighting, regular acoustics and a stage with scenery. With the „flying“ troupes that cannot be achieved – children are in their usual daily environment, probably in the canteen or at best, in the gymnasium. If there is scenery, it is rather scarce and simulative – a piece of cloth or something similar, there is no colored lighting, which is an important element of the visual magic of the show. As you can imagine, no matter how cheap is the cost of such a production, the money for it is always wasted, because children do not see real theater, but its bad image. If this happens regularly, the result cannot be other but sad – children will not feel the need to go on a real theater in its natural building space or will have lower requirements for its artistic qualities. However, try to watch a performance of a professional theater in front of student, i.e. „elite“ audience, observe their reactions and you will see that the danger is not imminent. It is already threatening us, cultivated by commercially orientated children's theater and „unique“ shows like „The Comedians“, programs on the national channel and SlaviTrifonov's jokes with the low, yellow voyeuristic unlit areas of the human psyche.

Traders in the temple of the theater are a more dangerous phenomenon than we think. Especially when it comes to children's theater, because the theater itself is a powerful tool for education and propagation of behavioral reactions. Television, by definition, is considered on the mass and low taste, the vast majority of it is commercial and to it does not apply basic moral, biblical, if you are so minded, val-

ues. There fetish is the rating achieved by all means. Only if you skip through the channels with the remote control and you will see how overwhelming dominant are the psychopathological plots, bloody and hard sexual topics, the vulgar language. For English-speaking social anthropologists there is no doubt about it – TV is consumed mostly by the uneducated circles of society. The middle class listens to the radio, and business and intellectual elite is informed by serious newspapers and analytical magazines.

The problem of „the commercial“ children's theater is that, in search of success among viewers and because of strong deficit in creativity, it is comparable and looking for conscious associations with the bad TV characters and ads. This actually makes it „an anti-theater“ because it has removed what matters most – the humanity, the self-confident talking about moral values in a live communication. The conclusion is clear – the struggle with the merchants in the Temple (the theater) should be successive and uncompromising. The question is how to do it – expelling them by whips, as Christ has done in Jerusalem, or using „soft“ and versatile approaches.

The whip is already lost. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of culture does not provide modes for registration and license of theatrical troupes. That is – everyone of us, alone, in a duet, trio, or group can create theater and in the above mentioned semi-criminal way survive through it. Formally, if he does not sell regular tickets, he violates only tax laws. However, while the tax inspectors reach him, if they reach him at all, he will be a happy retiree and violations won't be considered due to prescription. So the threat of the whip is symbolic, moreover that in the field of culture the European Union does not encourage the excessive application of licensing and prohibition regimes. They pledge and advise us to encourage the good practices. This means that there should be support of the quality theater and those who contribute to its distribution. In this respect, it means for example: instead of accusing directors and teachers of „consuming“ unlicensed troupes with artistically low product, we should encourage them also financially for having chosen the opposite – to bring their pupils where they can see a theater of better quality and acceptable public messages. Off course, theater is work and industry. There should be profit from this activity for both professional theater experts and persons

„На ръба“
„On the Edge“



engaged in distribution – teachers, organizers, etc. The legitimate way is by developing profitable cultural and educational projects, that are willingly financed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, as well as by several other public institutions. Of course, this requires striving. This is the decent, moral path, but it obviously looks too long and hard. Otherwise there is no explanation why for so many years, there is no a program and contract of interaction between the education and culture ministry in this regard. It is a question of oriental laziness, of lack of prospective thinking and responsibility to future intellectual potential. While this does not happen, while the perfectly understandable desire of everyone to be rewarded for his/her labor is reflected in cash, under the table, the majority of theater for children will exist because of the financial gain and not because of the enduring values.

Moreover, a huge problem of those who make theater for children is the lack of knowledge of the various forms of educational theater. In our lands, it is perceived too literally, and it is part of two or three working, but now outdated models. We've been talking on other conferences about the modern incarnations of children's theater, we have discussed good practices. Words, as is well known, are flown and forgotten, if they are not followed quickly by deeds. The right of every person is to choose how to work and live – with a talent or with mediocrity. A subject of the audience is whether they like it or not what they are seeing. Children in general like everything, Bulgarian the-

ater activists do not aspire eagerly to change their habits and assume creative risks. Since the theater is by definition a regional art, Bulgarian theater for children has its own features. The negatives of it is that it repeats till one is sick and tired of it, that it goes easily on the established pathways, that sometimes it is not interested only in the values, that is summoned to educate, but even in the profits – material and moral. I personally consider that this fatigue and hard mobility of the habits to make a variety of children's theater is overwhelming. Do you remember what Miguel de Unamuno wrote:

„To fall into a habit is to begin to cease to be.“ Understand it metaphorically, and thus calm things down – Bulgarian children's theater will continue to exist, its small viewers will still like it the way it is. So, the conclusion is clear – we need to show our commitment to them and show them alternative forms. Soon we will prepare theater vocabulary, through which you will be surprised to learn how many different and effective forms has the so called educational theater. However, while waiting for the theoretical identifications, we can start a new practical form, which has already gained impact in Europe and the U.S.A. Let's see what happens to these divine and mysterious viewers who embrace with love and care the theater programs „From 0 to 3“.

I hope you find it interesting though it sounds shocking at first!

Translation by Nadia Zhereva

The text is read during the discussion on „Theatre from 6 to 16 and its existence between values and profits“, held during the International Festival of Children's Performances „Magic curtain“ in Targoviste 7-11 May 2012.

„Вълшебната завеса“ – ...(мани) Фест (ивал) на децата

...Или за това как един театровед разтърка вълшебната лампа

Катерина Георгиева

Все по-трудно се случват фестивалите извън столицата. Все повече съзнателно културният ни живот се измества извън реалните граници и се съсредоточава около град София. Следвайки вътрешните си интуиции за това що е изкуство, в главата ми се върти един образ от близкото ни минало. Мисля си за образа на Алексис Зорбас. Човек отдалечен от времето ни, но и ние отдалечени от истинността и импулса на съществуването му. В главата ми отзвучават и последните кадри от незабравящия се филм на Михаил Кокоянис, в ролята на Зорбас – Антъни Куин. Там, в последният си танц, той сякаш изтръгва душата си и я зарежда към отклонения и заблуден

поглед на зрителя-човек. Ще кажеме какво общо има това с Международен фестивал на спектакли за деца... Има. На километри от шумотевицата и хаоса на големия град се случва нещо важно – в тишината и мълчанието на притихналия северен град много детски сърчица подскочиха. И, надявам се, са полетели. Там, където ние вече не си позволяваме да стъпим. Или поне го правим плахо. „Вълшебната завеса“ в Търговище ни изправи пред реалността на сложната културна ситуация в момента и зададе пряко въпроса: как се поддържа същата тази култура в една изолирана и отделна структура, каквато е един по-малък град; как се възпитава и отглежда любов към изку-

ството, когато негов недостоен заместник се оказва далеч по-лесната комуникация и забавление интернет-телевизия-интернет; и, не на последно място, не е ли важно да се запази традицията на един такъв фестивал, въпреки насищането на културна продукция конкретно насочена към София, въпреки отговорността и проблемите с финансирането и намирането на подкрепа и партньори, въпреки сложността на селекцията за включването на подходящи спектакли. Като че ли такива въпроси никога не търсят конкретен отговор, той крие опасност сам по себе си. Те се решават естествено и по необходимост – публиката е техния най-голям „съдник“.