

ралелно с това се учат да се наслаждават на класическа музика и грижовно и внимателно решават съдбата на героите. Т.е., питам се аз, кое е онова важно, ценно нещо, което търсим и искаме да покажем на децата? Налага ли се всъщност още да им показваме? И не е ли много по-истинско да ги предизвикваме, а не да им предлагаме единствено и само готови формули за това що е любов, приятелство, добро, зло? Не бих предложила кардинално да се изкорени рисуването на ценности в спектаклите за деца, но ми се струва, че едно преразглеждане на това как те

могат да изглеждат и как бихме могли да ги „предоставим“ на децата по интересен и нетрадиционен начин, би било възможно и ефективно. За да довърши мисълта си, изгубена между редовете и „приказките за приказки“, не бих искала да оставя впечатлението, че разделението на спектаклите за деца е някакво крайно или радикално решение за по-адекватно цялостно излъчване на фестивали, посветени на изграждането на детската култура. Нито пък, че е единствено.

В тъмното се появява светлина, а мъглата се вдига бавно - разнасят се странни гласове. Ние не

ги различаваме. А ни се иска. За да можем после да прехвърлим знанието и любовта към изкуството и на/към децата. Да се пробуди фантазията им – не е ли тя онова ценно скрито кътче на Земята, което трябва да пазим? Да съхраним. А не е ли театърът магьосник с пръчка? Вълшебна.

Пръчката на фестивала „Вълшебната завеса“ погали рошаби, къдравци, руси, рижи коси. В нея се впериха безброй очички - учудени, засмени, изненадани, отегчени, притихнали. Нека чуем гласовете, вярвам, че те се носят от дълбините на сърцата им... ■

„The Magic Curtain“ – ...(mani) Fest (ival) of children

...Or how a drama specialist scrubs the magic lamp

Katerina Georgieva

Organizing festivals outside the capital is getting increasingly difficult. Our cultural life is consciously moving outside the real boundaries and concentrating around Sofia. Following our inner intuitions of what art is, an image from the recent past emerges in my mind. I am thinking of Alexis Zorbas, a person remote from our time, just as we are remote from his truthfulness and the impulse of his existence. The last scenes of Michalis Cacoyannis' unforgettable film with Anthony Queen as Zorbas are dying down in my head. How in his last dance he looked as if tearing his soul out and throwing it at the departed and deluded look of the spectator. What does this have to do with an international theatre festival for children, you will probably ask... It does. Kilometers away from the hustle and bustle of the big city some important is going: in the silence of the hushed northern town many child hearts frolicked. And I hope they also fled where we no longer dare put our feet, or at least we only do it timidly. „The Magic Curtain“ in Targovishte confronted us with the reality of a complicated cultural situation and directly asked the question, „How is this culture preserved in an isolated and separated structure as a small town is?“, „How can love for art be educated and nurtured when the far easier communication and entertainment internet-television-internet acts as its unworthy replacement; and not least „Is it not important to preserve the tradition of a festival in spite of the saturation of cultural production focused mostly on Sofia despite the responsibility and difficulties of finding financing and the support of partners, despite the complexity of making the proper selection of performances. Such questions do not seem to look for a

concrete answer because it is always risky. They are solved naturally and by necessity and the audience is their great arbiter.

With this introduction I am trying to point out and understand even for myself the most significant event of the Χαάαθ International Theatre for Children Festival held 7 to 11 May 2012 in Targovishte. The situation of a meeting, a meeting of several generations, radically different in the cultural, personal and moral aspect. The moment when those „pulsating planets“ managed to come to a frank communication with all its deficiencies, emotions, mistakes and hints. With its „white“ and its „black“. The link that could open the doors of imagination to the immature and still imponderable mind of a child. On the slim border where it is still possible for surreal things to happen, where the magic of theatre can „plant“ a tree and it will spread and turn into a large blooming garden. I am using metaphors because I strongly believe that when talking about events of this type we could allow ourselves to think and feel symbolically and imaginary for a while about the world, the people and art. Even about criticism.

"My objectivity was broken" or rather started hopping joyfully around the drama expert's vocation, while he gave it a wink and ran. It followed. And the frantic chase began. Speaking with the words of children would mean bravely facing the world and shouting at it or singing (in the nicer version) what you dislike about it. And to admit your love for it when it is there. Between the bubbling euphoria from the meeting with the numerous child audience and the seriousness of watching each individual performance as if someone's life depends on it, I was „float-

ing“ over the festival program. This year its motto is „You are with me and I am beside you“, disclosing the poetical disposition of the selection person Mihail Baykov who has seemingly unconsciously and intuitively felt and forecast the dominant mood in town during the period.

This mood oscillates between the hesitation of whether to tell some story to the children after all, and in a good and clear and precise way that for a moment risks missing the attention of the most important. In these seconds of hushing, waiting and proceeding it is ready to go as fast as it appeared. In this sense the most interesting and valuable in this festival for me was exactly this happening on two levels. When the audience breathes and is afraid together with the actors, when it is ready to jump on the stage and save Aladdin, in such moments it seems the most difficult „ascent“ is to affirm your own responsibility and engagement to the quality of the product and not its impact on the child's soul. This task and its difficult mastering confronted me with the necessity to separate the levels and explore the one where the response springs straight out of the energy source. The assessment was frank and unadvised. What was wonderful in this case – it was neither spoken, nor written, it was shouted out breathlessly and restlessly. Just the way I see it...

In the shout of a child I see one specific concern: I suspect the radical change has occurred and children no longer need to be told and illustrated stories; the children now need a new language on the stage, perhaps a little accelerated, a little more expressive, more energetic and provocative. The feeling resembled a meeting of old friends. The conversation continued where it stopped the last time. One of them is however no longer the same. The vocabulary and words they are using have somehow changed, the directions are different. And the two old friends no longer understand each other. Their communication is getting dry, simplified and deprived of curiosity and challenges. Then the moment comes when one stops listening to the other. When the language is changed, the means needs to change accordingly. So the same child audience – I am talking about a child audience indeed – showed the desire to communicate in a different and richer language. I discovered the resistance and the desire for novelties (innovation) in the refusal to listen, watch and simply follow the story line and the successive events. This probably necessitates the objective separation of the performances as bearing their own language. Perhaps one such „classification“ is needed; it looks unattractive from the a distance, but is useful. I will give an example: if the „Ugly Duckling“ of the Razgrad puppet theatre has the traditional narrative aesthetics that will take the children to the idea beauty is inside us at the end, the performance „On the Edge“ of the ATOM theatre challenges them not to think and create links but communicate with their imagination and hold their breaths in moments of being shown untypical and unknown pictures. The „Aladdin“ music show of the Ruse puppet theatre transferred them to a melodious exotic place where love was the bombastic winner and they cried out rapturously together with the actors. „Flight, Spring and Window“ of the Targovishte puppet theatre gave them a chance to touch the art of acting, join the action live and parallel with that enjoy the

classical music and carefully and attentively decide the fate of the characters. In other words I am asking myself what is that important and valuable thing we are searching and wishing to show to the children? Is it still necessary for us to show it to them? Will it not be more genuine to challenge them and not just offer them ready-made formulae for what love, friendship, good and bad are? I am not suggesting to drastically eradicate the illustrating of values in the performances for children but it seems to me that reconsidering their design and the way they are presented and making it more interesting and less traditional is possible and will be effective. To finish my idea, lost between the lines and the „tales and tales“, I do not want to leave behind the impression that the separation of performances for children is an extreme or radical solution for more adequate overall shaping of festivals dedicated to child education. Nor that it is the only one.

There is a light in the dark and the fog is slowly dispersing; we can hear strange voices. We cannot recognize them and we want to, so that we could transfer our knowledge and love for art to the children and evoke their fantasy. Is it not that precious hidden spot on Earth we must protect? And preserve. Is the theatre not a wizard with a wand? Magic.

The wand of the „Magic Curtain“ festival caressed bushy, curly, blond and ginger heads. It focused the looks of numerous little eyes – amazed, smiling, surprised, bored and hushed. Let us hear the voices, I believe they come from the depth of their hearts... ■

„Подем, пролет и прозорец“

„Spring flying through the window“

Translation by **Tihomira Trifonova**

