

просто хората да помислят. Може и да е героизъм да си Сократ в днешна Турция, но уверявам ви, има много хора в нашата страна, които с поведението си са истински сократовци, които не се страхуват да изричат на висок глас истината и се опитват да се противопоставят.

Имате ли си любими фрази от своите роли?

Халюк Юдже. „Аз знам, че нищо не знам“. И „дошли сме на тази земя, само за да работим“. Тази реплика е много конкретна за мен, защото аз действително много работя и смятам, че този, който иска да върви напред, трябва много да работи, но трябва да намира време и за други неща. Време за размисъл, например.

Марина Юдже. Не знам дали имам само една любима реплика в този спектакъл. Те са толкова много и хубави, и интересни. Последния монолог на Ксантипа ми се струва много важен. Затова, че „ние заради мира воюваме, заради живота убиваме, и заради свободата потискаме хората“. Мисля, че тези думи са знакови, те се отнасят не само за Турция. Всичко, което се случва днес по света, е много страшно и мисля, че тези думи се отнасят за целия свят днес.

Петър Тодоров. Пиесата се събира в две изречения. „Последната нощ на Сократ“ е пиеса за това дали да умреш и да останеш верен на идеите си или да живееш, но да се откажеш от тях. Толкова е просто да го изречеш и толкова е сложно, и трудно да го направиш.



The Last Night of Socrates

Boryana Georgieva talks with **Petar Todorov, Marina Yuge and Haljuk Yuge**

How did Stefan Tsanev’s play “The Last Night of Socrates” arrive at the Tempo Theater in Ankara and become a puppet performance for the first time?

Petar Todorov. The story is a bit long, but I think it’s interesting. My friends from Tempo Theater, Haljuk and Marina Yuge had watched a few of our children’s performances, and then, “I, The Soul“, which is a performance for adults. They contacted me and said they wanted to do a performance for adults together, something that I should suggest. I thought about it for a long time, and suddenly I came to this mildly crazy idea to make “The Last Night of Socrates“ by Stefan Tsanev. This is a total risk, an absolutely philosophical text in which there is almost no action. How do we turn it into puppetry? I got excited about this risky idea, and I felt that the topic of the play sounds absolutely contemporary for today’s Turkey. And I thought it was something right for them, that is something that would engage them, all the more that Haljuk is a real Socrates to me. Haljuk is a philosopher, an artist, an intellectual of an international scale, and I linked both images. Haljuk is Socrates, Haljuk is ready to die for his ideas, I am absolutely convinced of this.

The puppet made by Hanna Schwarz looks like the actor. Socrates looks very much like Haljuk.

Petar Todorov. It was my requirement for Hanna, for the puppets to resemble the characters, and the characters to resemble the artists. The guard and Xanthippe resemble Marina, and Socrates looks like Haljuk.

How does a dramatic text turn into a text for puppet theatre?

Petar Todorov. I wanted to find the key to turning this dramatic and deeply philosophical play into puppetry. The puppet theater relies heavily on the visual. The visual side of the puppet theater is very important. And it was an absolute challenge for us to find the key to these puppets, which look the actors alike, but they can not just sit on the stage or two hours and only open their mouths. I had to find a way to transform the objects on the stage. This is one of my techniques that I love so much - having just a few things on the stage that I transform and they turn from one thing into something completely else. The prison was first a hole, then it became the door of the prison, then the prison became the cell, then we destroyed the cell, and from the wreckage, we built a column that is the column of the human

pursuit of freedom, a staircase to the sky. We wanted to achieve such visual images and not just to leave the play to the text. I think it worked well we had to shorten the text because there was enough material in the play for at least an extra hour, which a puppet performance could not endure. There is a lot of text, but the text is so important, it is so poetic, so very loud. I think the performance in Turkey affects the audience.

(To the actors) When did you read the play for the first time what were your thoughts?

Marina Yuge. I love the good literature, I read a lot from an early age and I appreciate the good texts. I liked this text very much. But the Turkish reality made me think that maybe it would be a little dangerous to stage it, I was a little frightened and told Petar: "What do you want, for us to be closed down soon?" There are people going out to protest on the squares, we do not walk along with them, but we talk to the people through different words. So we want very much to articulate these words from the stage because it is such a text that, I do not know how Tsanev wrote it, but the plot is relevant at all times and epochs, it always sounds contemporary, and it just reflects our current reality, and we thought that no matter what it would cost us, we want to stage it, and besides, we wanted very much to work with Petar. He skillfully selected and gathered the important moments of the text and it turned out very nice. The words flowed into one another. A new powerful text was born and, of course, a powerful performance. We love it very much.

Haljuk Yuge. This play has been staged in Turkey before, but in a drama theater as it originally was written for. So we knew about it. But when I first read it with the intention of playing it, I realized it was a very clever text. Extremely cleverly written. And I thought that what is happening in the times of Socrates now coincides with the situation in modern Turkey. Ancient Greece and what is happening now in today's Turkey - everything is the same, the dialogues, the words. And that's what really excites me about the play. For us, this is the reality, and besides, it was very interesting to me how could we turn it into puppetry. Petar made a wonderful dramaturgy based on the play and very well gathered everything, highlighted the most important parts of the text and adapted it for the puppet theater.

How did the audience react to it?

Marina Yuge. Let's start with the fact that in Turkey the audience is afraid of the puppet theater. They do not really understand what this is, it is not similar to Bulgaria, unfortunately, but the people who come to us, who already know us, those who have seen the performance once, they watched it five more times. There were people who watched it three times and said they would come back and watch it again and after every performance, after the final words of the final scene, people don't want to leave. They continue to sit, think, and say they have to come again because they have a lot to think about

and want to hear once more, everything we say with this play.

Tell me honestly, were you afraid when you started playing it?

Marina Yuge. We are afraid even now. Really. Every night when people enter the venue, I meet them as a guard and look at their faces because I'm trying to figure out if someone after the show will make a call somewhere. They can just knock on our door. The situation in Turkey nowadays is very serious, they can take us away and lock us somewhere. I am always very nervous when girls with hijabs walk in. But we keep playing it. We have to do this, we have to play this.

Haljuk Yuge. I don't think it is very dangerous, we just want people to think. It may be heroic to be Socrates in today's Turkey, but I assure you there are many people in our country who, with their actions, are true Socrates, who are not afraid to speak aloud the truth and try to resist.

Do you have favorite phrases from your roles?

Haljuk Yuge. "I know that I know nothing". And "we have come to this world only to work." This phrase is very specific to me because I really do a lot of work and I think the one who wants to go ahead has to work a lot, but he has to find time for other things too. Time for reflection, for example.

Marina Yuge. I do not know if I have only one favorite phrase in this performance. They are so many and so interesting. The latest Xanthippe monologue seems very important to me. Because "we fight for the peace, we kill for life, and for the sake of freedom we suppress people." I think these words are key, they are not valid only for Turkey. Everything that is happening today in the world is very scary, and I think these words relate to the whole world today.

Petar Todorov. The play can be summarized in two sentences. "The Last Night of Socrates" is a play about whether to die and stay true to your ideas or to live, but to give up on them. It's so simple to say it and it's so complicated to do it. ■

Translation by **Plamen Harmandjiev**

