

The Hour of Fear

Some time ago I encountered a poem of a great poet Paul Eluard 'Dream from 21st of September 1943'. The poem astonished me. Since then I keep it always with me, I carry it around and incessantly repeat. Even though it brings strong emotions, touches sensitive spheres, strikes home - maybe even too much - it also reveals the truth so frightening that one would like to run as far away from it as possible. After 'Hour Zero' performance I was smoking a cigarette with a friend and we both claimed that we got hit in the face. The emotion is so strong that maybe it's even too early to write about it. I am not going to write about typically theatrical topics - I am a layman on this field. I can only share my subjective impressions about the performance. I personally have a need to torture myself with tough issues, to deal with art which keeps constantly pointing these points, and the more severely it's done - the more I admire it. But art for me is mostly a question of form and essence or maybe form adequate to particular essence. Form has to be strong enough to force me to deal with the difficulty of confronting the topic. And even stronger now due to the speeding pace of modern people's life (Witkacy called this form an 'artistic perversion'). I needed to examine the question that I asked myself after the spectacle: why I actually feel so knocked out? The answer was - the performance revealed that exact form.

Undoubtedly, the main force of the performance was constituted by clashes. There were less and more grotesque scenes coming one after the other, all very expressive, some of them brought strong feeling of anxiety. Is it a dance or a body shaking in convulsions? Is somebody desperately trying to swim or is stuck in hopeless consciousness of incoming drowning? I remember also singing, which wasn't really singing, it wasn't screaming neither, but it overwhelmed me with fear. It was beautiful as well. Was it something I really long for? Maybe just reflection of it or a paranoia? Am I, can I still be myself? There was somebody who was using the language, but was not speaking. I was terrified. Maybe this person tried to speak, but couldn't anymore. Or didn't want anymore. Was it a man, a human? All this scenes and their emotional tension and expressiveness made me look into deepest manifestation of my humanness. And I keep doing that whenever I recall the pictures and the sounds of this spectacle.

To knock somebody out is sometimes the only option. And there is a lot of questions to think about after the show: ecology, social diversity, love, family... war. It's obvious that current global situation reflects some schemas from the past century. I remembered a sentence from the postspectacle discussion: 'Our century is being dominated by feeling of fear'. And that's actually what I think, that only awareness is not enough. The time, the Hour has come.