

Village to village <-> village to Village – notes.

Last year few guest of Godki visited evening screening of avantgarde movie, during Kinemo project. I don't remeber exactly which movie we were watching, but you can imagine spectators gathered on threshing floor staring at black and white pictures. Loads of people sitting on benches, silence, air filled with attention. After some time one of the local guests sitting next to me, already a bit tipsy well hefty man, sighed loudly and voiced his concern: 'Man, I don't see any point in this art'. There was no common reaction, but the question of existence of such local voice during the Festival remains.

Invisible borders were the main topic of Village 2016. We talked a lot about refugees, disabled, about freedom of speech in Belarussia, there was official opening of Bathroom without borders. Long discussions about invisible or unperceivedXXX borders. There were also voices claiming that one of them is the border between participants of the festival and inhabitants of Węgałty. For sure it's not an easy relation. Especially after 2006, when one of the actors from Morocco – a member of Migrator group was attacked during the dancing party at fireplace station. One of the local housewives spoke about it with remorse. At first police contacted by organisers didn't arrive. Then, after the festival was officially suspended, the investigation started with delay and without sensitivity. Police interrogated local youngsters, apparently they were kept at the policestation for long time and some of them claimed they were attacked by the officers. At the end it turned out that the incident was carried out by couple of men originally from a village 30 kilometers away. Węgałty inhabitants felt insulted in a way as well, the mutual trust got weakened.

This story made me think. There is not much discussion about the mutual relations. There is for example 'Summer in the Theatre' project, but do we see lo-

'Summer in the Theatre' project, but do we see locals at festival events? Do we know who they are? How do we treat each other? How do they relate to each other – with indifference, curiosity or indulgence? And then: is expectation of their participation not a form of colonial attitude? On the other hand: isn't it also colonializing in a way to come to Węgajty, use the space and infrastructure for art without establishing man to man relations with local people who are not engaged in theatrical culture.

The motif of this year - Zwrotnik Warmia, Tropic of Warmia and incoming 650th Anniversary of Węgajty inspired Performeria to dive into the village. They have been working with locals since long time, organizing together common actions – for instance establishing Anniversary Committee, planting flowers, preparing the postcards with kids. During the festival open ethnoanimation workshop also takes place. It's participants visit inhabitants and try to ask about their dreams. Both personal and those for common good. Performeria writes them down, hosts get receipt, which can be later used in the Dream Machine during Happy Jarmark on Saturday. The most common dream seems to be a community space for kids in the village. But the need of massage, holidays, riding a quad, opening the shop again, concert, and, money too appear.

It's a good way to get to know inhabitants of Węgajty, their everyday life, will and commitment to the community. For me it was also a good way of realising that maybe we shouldn't think of Węgajty as mythical village, collective entity, which participates or not and if not why. Maybe – as Wacek points – we could look at individual people, among whom some are engaged, some stays neutral. For some theater is interesting place to which they are connected and which they visit with different peculiarities, other have their own things to do. Like it happens between neighbours. Housewife we were talking to explains her rare presence during festival events by her home duties and the distance, but speaking about organisers she referred to them as 'our Sobaszkowie'.

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