

Difficulty of the Forum

I don't have much to say. I think some wires in my head burned after meeting with the Elektronowy Miś band. Because of that Wednesday was a challenge and I became uncommunicative. However, the rain did something good for us all. It refreshed our minds and drove us from the front of the theatre to the colloquium with Edwin Bendyk. From the conversation about the current social situation in Poland and in the world, I mostly remember the contrast between the worries and pessimism of those more experienced participants and the enthusiasm of young people. The latter seem to believe in dialogue, in doing theatre, in social work. On the other hand, today's teenagers are most susceptible to radical, nationalistic and hateful currents of thought. Who should we believe, then? The sociologists alarming about the fall of the so-called universal values, or to the creators of the forum theatre, who so clearly showed us that dialogue above social divisions is possible?

Maybe it's naïve of me, but - unlike several people from the audience - I do not consider the performance of the Drama Way foundation to be a closed experiment for the highly educated. The commitment and sensitivity with which our guests from Sztum reacted to Arek's story from *The First Day of Freedom* absolutely shocked me. The story of a prisoner who wanted to return to his family after 10 years of imprisonment strongly corresponded with their experience. They willingly shared this, proposing further solutions to the problems of the main character. They honestly

pointed out to the authors of the performance those elements of the story that did not fully adhere to the prison realities. It was an opening meeting, I hope for both sides.

However, not everything happens in words. As far as I can remember, through the unattractive and too unproductive form of the *Washing Dirty Laundry* performance, I remember the stories of Serat Bah and Yacoub Coulibaly rather than their presentations, I did not recognize them through the performance. As people, they gave me a minimal but at least learn through joint workshop activities and fun. Refugee or African - they're just words, unlike *someone* who can participate with me in some artistic event. Then I can agree with that person or not, act together and look for solutions.

The action beyond the words was also presented to us by the creators of the film *Visitor*: Wojciech Kostrzewa, Ivan Pantelić and Jan Sobaszek. The performer was let into the space of the Independence March without taking part in it or commenting on the event. He walked along with the demonstrators in a reflective vest with the inscription VISITOR. There was not even the slightest bit of provocation. He became in a sense an expression of the helplessness of a group; maybe artists, maybe intellectuals, maybe an entire generation, against such phenomena as the March, which is no longer a radical anomaly, an outburst of extreme environments, and a nationwide event, supported by the rulers. To be clear: I do not think at all that this helplessness is total and eternal, that it can not be overcome.

Several times during the Festival it turned out that dialogue was difficult despite the best intentions. Interactions with the audience members in the performance became a pretext to express their disapproval of the work. Long discussions caused some disagreements. Some of these hot spots in the Village may turn out to be the Solstices, as in the Festival's name. Let's look for stimulating Solstices in everyday situations, let's talk outside of the word, talk while acting, improvise in conflict.

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