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WOYZECK

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Declaration

I declare that I have prepared my Master's Thesis independently on the following topic:

WOYZECK

under the expert guidance of my thesis advisor and with the use of the cited literature and sources.

Prague, date:

.....

Signature of the candidate

Warning

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Abstract

This master thesis of scenography is a study on the play *Woyzeck* written in 1836 by the German author Georg Büchner. My intention is to examine how the engaging story of a drama written in the 19th century, set into a military background, can be reinterpreted today in our society. The aim of my researches is the elaboration of a contemporary *mise en scène* of the play set into an ideological factory as the ideal scenario for the developing of the dramatic situations of *Woyzeck*.

My final scenography proposal for the drama is a site-specific project in the *Prada Foundation* of Milan; an ex-factory of an Italian distillery society, now turned in one of the main art centres of the city.

I am starting the thesis with a research about the historical background of the play through a short biography of the author. In this part, I am aiming to explain how the social context, the relationship with his family and a few of actual events happened at the time of Büchner, have inspired him to write, perhaps, his greatest work. I continue by writing an analysis of the dramaturgical structure of the text, of the main themes and situations within the play and the characters. I am highlighting the themes of the play that in the 21th century are extremely contemporary. In parallel, I analyse how the characters behave in different dramatic situations and precisely I try to reveal their real way of being instead of what appear only on the surfaces.

Moreover, I write about a few of the greatest reinterpretations of the play that supported my studies and researches. Here, I mainly focus on the directing and dramaturgical aspects of each production that enriched my vision of the play helping me to develop my final version.

The last part of my thesis is about my own reinterpretation of *Woyzeck*. I am explaining which are the aspects and the themes of the play that I find still very connected with our society. I write about my creative process and about how exactly my research led to the final proposal of the comparison between the military system, of two centuries ago, and the factory system of today. Afterward, I take in exam a few of the artworks that encouraged over my personal reinterpretation of directing and dramaturgical aspects. I write about how elements from these artworks inspired me concretely for the realization of my final work. Finally, I explain in details the directing and dramaturgical choices for the disposition of the storyboard as the final result of my personal research.

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Elisa Galluzzo, *Woyzeck*, 2017

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to bring the reader through the creative path that led me to my personal and contemporary reinterpretation of one of the most brilliant German plays ever written: *Woyzeck* by Georg Büchner.

The reasons why I focus my research on this play is because since the very first time I read it, I felt immediately involved in the story of the difficult life of the protagonist. In my opinion, the play introduces many brutal and underestimated typical customs of the contemporary society, for instance the exploitation of the lower classes or the murders of innocent women. For this reason, my research aims to make a contemporary reinterpretation of the play imagining an ideological factory as the ideal scenario where the events of the play could take place. In other words, I see the factory not only as a metaphor of the contemporary society but also as a pretext to reflect about the personal misadventures of *Woyzeck* in relation with nowadays.

My thesis is structured in a way to facilitate the reader to understand at first the historical context in which the play was written and then the creative process that led my personal reinterpretation.

The thesis can be divided in three main chapters: the first chapter consist of a brief description of the social-political context of the play, of the author's life and of how Büchner elaborates the play itself; the second chapter is a study of a few of the most original productions of play that inspired me and supported me to deeply understand the complex story of the life of *Woyzeck*. The third and last chapter introduces my personal revision of the play made from a contemporary perspective as well as a deeper analysis of the studied references.

Before starting with the explanation of my researches, I believe it is first necessary to mention a very interesting aspect that caught my attention which makes even more stimulating to work with the play; the play is written, because of the previous death of the author, the text has been posthumously completed and the final result appears with a very peculiar structure: there are in total thirty-one scenes, most of them not longer than a front page. This fragmented arrangement of the play make the plot dynamic and unpredictable, giving to the reader an illusionary perception of the story.

Chapter 1. Woyzeck by Georg Büchner

“What is in us the lies, murders, steal?”¹

Before proceeding with an accurate analysis of *Woyzeck*, I believe that a brief introduction to the author's life is necessary to help the reader understand better the context in which the play was written. The play was written in Germany during the 19th century. In this specific context the author developed an interest for the actual social-political situation, playing an active role in the revolutionary protests. The passion he had for politics surely influenced Büchner's poetry and prose, as he started writing his masterpieces during such an engaging and chaotic historical period.



Portrayed of Georg Büchner

¹ Georg Büchner, *Letters*, Florence, 2017

1.1. Life and works of Georg Büchner

Karl Georg Büchner was born on 17th October 1813 in Goddelau, a town near Darmstadt, which is the capital of the Grand Duchy of Hesse, and died at the age of 23, throughout his exile in Zurich. During his short but intense life, he spent most of his time fighting against social injustice, meanwhile devoting himself to scientific-philosophical studies and to the literary activity, even if only during his free time. His father Ernst, a doctor and military surgeon who was a fervent admirer of Napoleon, descended from an ancient family that professed the medical profession for over two centuries. His mother Caroline Reuss, daughter of a court chancellor, belonged to a family of public officials of Alsatian origins. In 1816, just after the nomination of his father as doctor of the government of Hesse, the Büchner family decided to move to Darmstadt. Besides Georg, firstborn of six siblings, other two of his brothers had a certain notoriety over their life: Ludwing, an author of a materialistic treaty, who also became the curator Georg works' and his sister Luise, who was one of the first German feminist writer who distinguished herself as a novelist.

At that time, the Büchner family lived in a big middle-class house, which represented for them a safe and strong point of reference both on an emotional and cultural level. The mother used to take care of his son's education making him studying in an elementary school, in which he cultivated the passion not only for the popular traditions, songs and fairy tales, but also for the great literature. Meanwhile, his father Ernest was transmitting to him the interest for sciences and a strong political passion. In particular, his sons appreciated the enlightened ideas and his spirit of tolerance, which was typical for an exponent of the illuminated bourgeoisie who used to practice a moderate opposition to the regime. In the library of his father Georg founds the vintage magazine "Zeitschrift für Staatsarzneikunde" – on which Ernest had published two essays and from which, presumably, Georg took, the first information about the case of Johan Christian Woyzeck.²

² Giuliano Corti, *Büchner - Woyzeck*, Garzanti, Milan, 1999, p. VII

1.2. Woyzeck

Woyzeck tells the story of an ex soldier unemployed that kills the mother of his son with a knife. It is a drama inspired by some facts of chronicle that at the time of Büchner assumed a wide notoriety. Those were the years of confrontation between positivism and idealism, and the themes of “incapacity of understand and want” and of the social value of violence stimulated a philosophical and psychological debate of the German society at that time.

Between disposition and structure

Büchner was inspired by at least three episodes of black news that, in the first quarter of the XIX century, triggered a wide-ranging medical-legal debate, focusing on the nature of some crimes of passion and so on the sentences to inflict.³ In 1836 the lawyer Bopp, from Darmstadt, published a study about the incapacity to understand and to want in relation to the crimes of passion, mentioning these three cases; Büchner, who between the end of 1836 and the spring of 1837 worked at *Woyzeck*, was surely aware of those cases and of the debates that followed.⁴ First of all, exactly the case of Johann Christian Woyzeck, barber hairdresser, who on August 27th 1824, when he was 44 years old, was hanged in Leipzig in front of 5000 people, after he had been sentenced to death for the murder of his wife because of jealousy. The sources of Büchner refer not only to the report on the mental faculties ordered by the tribunal and drafted by J.Ch.A. Clarus, but also from the scientific articles appeared on medical journals in 1825 and 1826 that testify an articulate discussion around the case of *Woyzeck*.

Even more decisive is the case of Johann Diess, weaver of linen, which in August 1830, when he was 37 years old, precisely at Darmstadt, the city of Büchner, kills his lover. In 1833 he is sentenced to 18 years of penitentiary after that the tribunal recognises him as unable of understanding and wanting: he dies in prison in May 1834. This case is tied to Büchner in a particular way: first of all because, the day after the death, Diess has been undergo to an autopsy at the anatomical theatre of the university of Giessen: Büchner was studying there as student of medicine and, according to a deposition, he has participated to the preparation of the body of Diess

³ Op. Cit.

⁴ Ibid.

for the lesson. Therefore, Ernest Büchner, as doctor in charge by the tribunal, is the author of the report of the mental faculties of Diess, which represent an additional source to the drama of Büchner.

Thirdly, the case of Schmolling. On September 25th 1817, the tobacco tanner Daniel Schmolling, when he was 38 years old, taken by a raptus of folly, stabbed a young woman with whom entertains a relationship from a few months in to the woods near Berlin: sentenced to death the year after, the defence presented a request of revision of the sentence based on the inability of understanding and wanting and, while the tribunal refuses it, the King of Prussia changes the sentenced to life imprisonment. Most likely, compared to this case, Büchner has at his disposal several documents: not only the legal reports, but also several procedural documents, from the defence requests, to the decision of the tribunal, public acts or published on law journals or of legal medicine.⁵

Curiously there are a few relations with these three cases. All of them belonged to a low and not educated social class, they learned and practiced handwork jobs and served as soldiers. They leaved a difficult and troubled life, in dehumanize conditions that marked physically their body. Although their recognisable professional abilities and their diligence at work, they were without any kind of professional and existential perspective. All of them have – out of the recognised law and the ethic religions – a relationship with women that they could not marry. Without a stable job, without a sure incoming, without a house, constantly moving from a public dorm to another, sharing often the bed with other guest. Moreover, all of the three cases are associated both from a long premeditation of the murder, and from the request of the defence of a valuation concerned the discretion of understanding and wanting. Again, on January 1828, at Darmstadt, at the military tribunal, the process against Christian Jünger, woodworker was taken. Unexpectedly, contradicting his reputation of hard worker and of extraordinary brave soldier, Jünger attacks his corporal with saber shots. Also in this case Ernest Büchner conducts the psychiatric evaluation that probably, referring to temporary folly, contributes to absolve Jünger. The injured corporal is investigated for having provoked his subordinate.⁶

⁵ S. Furlani, *Arte e Realtà. L'estetica di Georg Büchner*, 2013, pp. 143-145

⁶ *Op. Cit.*, pp. 145 -146

Probably Büchner starts writing *Woyzeck* in the summer of 1836, the year before his death. The drama of Büchner, other than being uncompleted, represents a thorny problem from the philological point of view. In fact, the manuscript has arrived into four fragmented and temporary versions, and also, with three possible endings. None of them offer a certain guarantee comparing to the beginning of the drama, of the number and the sequences of the scenes, and of the end. Usually the manuscript is divided in the following versions, indicated with the letter H (*Handscript*) followed by a letter in progressive order or by a number: the first manuscript is composed by five pages that contains a first group of twenty-one scenes (H₁) and a second one (H₂) composed by five scenes; H₃ consists in a single page that contains two scenes. H₄ consists in six pages and contains seventeen scenes. This last version is clearly presented as the attempt of summarizing H₁ and H₂, even if this one is left uncompleted as well. The combined version of *Woyzeck* obviously rotates around this last version for reasons of completeness compared to the first two. The combined version is the best possible to obtain from this state of the manuscript, but some spaces of approximation remain open and so, of interpretation, an incompleteness which often also takes advantage for especially cases of the staging of the drama in theatre. Published for the first time in 1879 inside the first *Gesamtausgabe*, curated by K. E. Franzos (edition full of many unsolved problems and that remains far from a real critical edition), *Woyzeck* is performed for the very first time on the 8 November 1913 at the *Residenztheater* in Munich as part of an actual rediscovery of the work of Büchner. *Woyzeck* has had an enormous influence on literature and on art in general, from music to cinema and, albeit in the way it is presented and with all the philological problems annexes, it can be effectively considered one of the greatest classic of the modern and contemporary art.⁷

In opposite position to the structure of the close drama, *Woyzeck* is an open drama because of the fragmentary shape created by the conditions of its manuscript. The scenes take place one after the other without division in acts; same structure that it will be recognisable in the theatre of Bertold Brecht.

⁷ Op. Cit., pp. 143-144

Combined version of the play:

SCENE	LOCATION	CHARACTERS	THEME
1 [H4,1]	Countryside	Woyzeck, Andres	Hallucinations
2 [H4,2]	Room	Marie, Margreth, Christian, Woyzeck	Infidelity, jealousy
3 [H2,3 +H1,1]	Circus	Old man, Woyzeck, Charlatan, Marie	Animal reason
4 [H2,5]	Circus	Sub-officer, Woyzeck, Drum-Major, Marie	Seduction
5 [H1,2]	Inside circus	Charlatan, Drum-Major, Marie	Double reason
6 [H1,3]	Room	Marie	Hierarchy
7 [H3,1]	Professor's yard	Professor, students, Woyzeck, Doctor	Science and nature
8 [H4,4]	Room	Marie, Woyzeck, Christian, Capitan	Suspet
9 [H4,5]	Capitan's room	Woyzeck, Capitan	Morality
10 [H4,6]	Outside	Marie, Drum-Major	Betrayal
11 [h4,8]	Doctor's studio	Doctor, Woyzeck	Science and madness
12 [H4,9; H2,7]	Street	Capitan, Doctor, Woyzeck	Crudelity
13 [H4,7]	Room	Woyzeck, Marie	Jealousy
14 [H4,10]	Guard house	Woyzeck, Andres	Jealousy

SCENE	LOCATION	CHARACTERS	THEME
15 [H4,11]	Tavern	Apprentices, Marie, Woyzeck	Life and death
16 [H4,12]	Countryside	Woyzeck	Voices
17 [H4,13]	Barraks	Woyzeck, Andres	Hallucinations
18 [H1,8]	Parade ground	Woyzeck, Andres	Betrayal
19 [H4,14]	Tavern	Woyzeck, people, Drum-Major	Fight
20 [H4,15]	Junk's shop	Woyzeck, Jew	Murder weapon
21 [H4,16]	Room	Marie, Christian, Karl	Marie's repentance
22 [H4,17]	Barraks	Andres, Woyzeck	Miserable Inheritance
23 [H1,14]	House's door	Marie, girls, Grandmother, Woyzeck	Loneliness
24 [H1,15]	Countryside	Marie, Woyzeck	Murder
25 [H1,16]	Countryside	People	Discovery of the crime
26 [H1,17]	Tavern	Woyzeck, Kathe, Landlord	Blood
27 [H1,19]	Countryside	Woyzeck	Crime scene
28 [H1,20]	Pond	Woyzeck	Concealment of the weapon
29 [H1, 18]	Countryside	Children	Discovery of the death body
30 [H3,2]	Room	Karl, Woyzeck, Christian	Goodbye
31 [H1,21]	Barber's shop	Doctor, Judge, Usher	Hypocrisy

The original story of Johan Christian Woyzeck

Johan Christian Woyzeck was born in Leipzig on January 3, 1780. His father is a hairdresser. When he was only eight years old he lost his mother and his father remarried but in 1793 he lost his father too. Afterwards Woyzeck finds a job as an apprentice in a hairdresser's shop: he continues his internship as a busboy at another hairdresser and meet his daughter-in-law, Johanna Christiane Woost, a few years older than him. In 1798 he started a series of job-seeking journeys: Dessau, Berlin, Hannover, Essen but he could not find a stable place. Returning to Leipzig, he finds employment as a hairdressing aide, but the commitment is short-lived and again he must move to find another job. These are the days of Napoleon, and the heads to be hired are above all those of the soldiers: he is therefore hired as a mercenary in the Dutch army. April 7, 1807 Woyzeck was captured by the Swedes in Strasbourg and framed in the ranks of the Swedish army. In these years he deserted several times from one army to another.

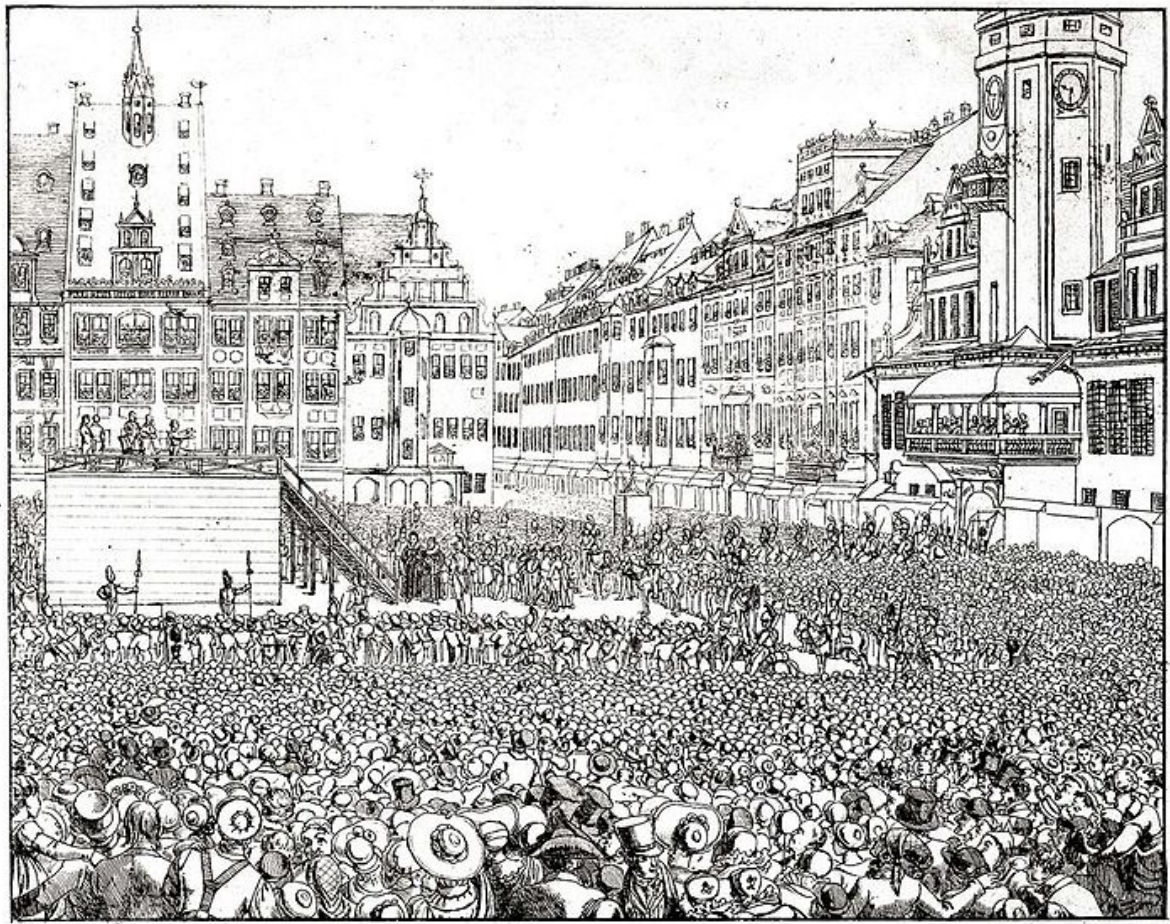
In 1810 he had a son from a non-married woman of Straslund, but because of his deserter position he cannot regularize the relationship and recognize his son, a fact that will provide him a lot of bitterness. In 1818, at the age of thirty-eight, he was dismissed from the Prussian army and returned to Leipzig, where he remains as a casual worker, a domestic handyman and finally a mendicant. Woyzeck will try to enter the citizen militia, but for lack of documents, he was not enlisted. In 1819 he found an accommodation at tinker that will introduce him to Johanna Woost, a woman with whom he had a relationship with dotted episodes of violence: in fact, she maintains other ties, especially with the soldiers of the garrison. In June 1820, as a result of divergence with the landlord, he must abandon this accommodation and since then he finds only temporary places to stay; again he makes a request for enlistment in the garrison of the city of Leipzig, and once again he is refused. On June 21, 1821, after a violent scene of jealousy, he kills by forty-two of stabbing Johanna Christina Woost; He is arrested while trying to get rid of the crime weapon.

In August, by the request of the defence attorney of Woyzeck, the judge order a medical report on his state of mental health. Doctor Johan Christian August Clarus is in charge, he is the adviser to the court of Saxony. After five interviews with the accused, on September 16 in 1821, the Doctor wrote a report in which he declares Woyzeck completely responsible for his own actions.

Moreover, in the report is written that: “The behaviour and the poise of his body are relaxed, but not sagging, his gait and the other movements are fast and energy. His language is clear and effective, well articulated and intonated, without affectation or screaming, his way of expression is coincided, precise, punctual, without divagations or repetitions... Instead, there are recognizable aspects of moral degradation, obfuscation of natural feelings and indifference of the present and future. Traces of religious feeling are too slim, cold and transitional to attribute to them an influence regarding his thoughts and actions. The physical and psychic conditions of the accused do not allow to assume a state of mental illness that annuls the free determination and ability to understand and to want.”

In October Woyzeck is sentenced to decapitation. The appeal of the defender is worth nothing, and the request of a new and objective report is also rejected. The execution is set for November 13, 1822; even grace is denied. Nevertheless, a few days before of the sentence the case reopens: an ex landlord of Woyzeck, after reading the news from a newspaper of Nuremberg, goes to the judge to testify, conjure up serious mental disorders of the accused. The execution is suspended; a second and accurate report of Doctor Clarus supports again the full capacities of understanding and wanting of the killer. By now the human matter of Woyzeck became an emblematic case, the government wants to give and example, and so he become the scapegoat. The new report ends with these words: “May the view of the bloody delinquent or the thought of his fate deeply inculcate in the youth of today the truth that rejection of work, for passion or for play, alcoholism, unlawful satisfaction of sexual desire and bad company can lead, unconsciously and slowly, to the crime and to the scaffold. From such a terrible show may everyone come back with firm decision of being better because everything become better.” The defender of Woyzeck does an appeal, asking to verify the credibility of the report of Doctor Clarus from the University of Leipzig: the appeal is accepted, but the Faculty of medicine confirm the validity of the report of Doctor Clarus. In the end, both the last appeal for reopen the case and the second question of grace are denied: the sentence is confirmed. Woyzeck is executed the 27 of August 1824, on the market square in Leipzig.⁸

⁸ Giuliano Corti, *Büchner - Woyzeck*, Garzanti, Milan, 1999, p. XIX – XX – XXI



I. C. Woyzeck.
Geht seinen Tode als reuevoller Christ entgegen, auf dem Marktplatze zu Leipzig, den 27 August 1824.

In the first edition of the play, published in Berlin in 1878 by Karl Emil Franzos, appear the wrong spelling of the name: *Wozzeck*. *Fragment of a tragedy*. Only after the edition of Georg Witkowski, published in Leipzig in 1920, the graphic of the name was edited and brought back to the correct version: this was possible thanks to the discoveries of Hugo Bieber, that in 1914 found the material that documents the relative case of Johan Christian Woyzeck, barber and ex-soldier, that on June 12 in 1821 killed for jealousy his lover, Christiane Woost, wife of a surgeon. The prosecution caused a considerable social shock: despite the act that the defence highlighted the particular psychic conditions of the accused at the time of the crime, the counterpart was best served by presenting philosophical and moral arguments. In that sense, decisive was the contribution of the doctor and chancellor of the Court August Clarus who, after a series of meetings with the defendant, concluded his report supporting the full capacity to understand and to want. A case of black chronicle had therefore turned into an extremely lively political and scientific dispute, which saw deployed those who has no doubt of his guiltiness against those who

believe his innocence from psychological and sociological motivations of the crime: who supported the full faculty and awareness of the accused and who complained the miserable life condition of the secondary classes as fertile ground for crimes and delinquency. Sentenced to death, Woyzeck has been decapitated on the market square in Leipzig in 1824.

1.3. Alban Berg and the drama of Büchner

The work of Alban Berg (Wien, 1885 -1935) is one of the most intense testimonies of the German expressionist music. The composer was a student, with Anton Webern, of Arnold Schonberg – he got in contact also with Mahler – and together with them, they initiate the so-called “school of Wien”. His compositions get away from the traditional compositional schemes and open up a new and extraordinary harmonic prospective.

The gestation of Wozzeck

Six months later, after the very first representation of Munich, precisely 14th may 1914, the opera was performed at the Kammerspiele of Wien. Alan Berg was very impressed by the meaningful of the subject and so impressed by the drama that came back several times to the theatre to assist it. In a letter to his friend Anton Webern (August 1918) he wrote: *“I received such a huge impression that I immediately decided to put it in music...What amazed me it is not only the destiny of this poor exploited and tormented man from the world inside, but also the outrageous contents of atmospheres that characterize each scene.”*

The desolating and terrible show of the war – in August 1915 Berg was called by the army and sent to the sedentary services at the ministry of the war – with its horrors and violence perpetrated on the skin of large masses of “poor people” sent to the massacre, convinced even more Berg to write an opera about Woyzeck. *“The poor soldiers – he wrote in a letter to his wife – can only choose to be ripped to shreds, to starve to death or to die of cold.”* His version of the drama of Büchner (an edition by Insel Verlag, 1913, curated by Paul Landau) brings the traces of a meticulous work of reduction of the text for the opera version: annotations, notes, add give the testimony of a work of elaboration extended for over three years. In the summer of 1917 Berg

established the final order of the fifteen scenes of which the libretto is composed and started writing the music version.

A few months before the end of the war, in August 1918, in a letter to his wife, he reveals a sort of identification with the Büchner's hero: "*I have to say that in his character there is something of me, ever since I am also experiencing these years of war left under the mercy of these hateful men, without freedom, resigned, rather humiliated.*" In April 1921 the orchestration is also terminated. The work of Berg around the opera of Büchner lasted for almost seven years.⁹

⁹ Op. Cit., pp. 89-91



Manifest of *Wozzeck* of Alban Berg by Jan Lenica

Libretto

Berg used fourteen of the twenty-six scenes of the edition of Landau and adds an end by his own hand. Focused on the heartbreaking game of the fellows that reveal to the son of Marie the death of his mother that the child does not understand and keep playing with the hobbyhorse. In the draft of the libretto Berg omits all the scenes that somehow anticipate or prepare the audience to the next scene and erases all the crowd situations or those that are not strictly necessary for the brevity of the story. The result is of an effective and immediate concision. The audience has indeed the impression of being constantly projected into the heart of the dramatic action, without preambles, without ramblings, with undoubted advantages for the intensity of the drama. Many scenes are missing: the charlatan; the Professor in his courtyard with the students and the Doctor; Marie with the children in the street while the grandmother is telling them a story; the purchase of the knife in the Jewish junkyard's shop (scene that afterwards Berg will regret of having eliminated); the murderous fantasies of Woyzeck and the end at the mortuary with the judge, the surgeon and the doorman.

The few modifications of the original text primarily concern the end of the second act that unifies two adjacent scenes with undoubted advantage of the whole rhythm of the dramatic action and, in the penultimate scene – the one about the murder written by K.E. Franzos and upswing by Landau – brilliantly re-arranged by Berg: in fact, while Woyzeck is drowning in the pond, the Doctor and the Capitan walk by, his torturers, the ones the violated his body for scientific purposes and humiliated his soul with purpose of morality. As Giacomo Manzoni wrote, on the brochure of the performance at Teatro alla Scala in 1979, *“The circle closes and the real authors of the madness of the soldier, and so of his murder, are also the unconscious witnesses of his death, of which they are the indirect cause.”* As far as the scenes that Berg uses are concerned, these are kept almost entirely: indeed he does suppress no more than hundred lines, and also the corrections of the text are limited and dictated mostly for rhythmic requirements.

The first performance goes on stage on December 14th in 1925 at the Staats Theatre of Berlin, after 137 rehearsals, under the direction of Erich Kleiber. Enormous the sensation, several cuts; but the dramaturgic innovation will have reason of the disagreements and of the preconceptions. Represented with controversial outcomes for the 20's, with the event of Hitler at the power, Wozzeck is censured from the

German scenes, but its notoriety slowly continued increasing: it has been performed for the first time in the USA in Philadelphia in 1931, in Italy in 1942 in Rome and in 1952 in Milan at the Teatro alla Scala, under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos: an edition that has been a scandal. Alberto Savino reviewed the opera on the 'Popolo d'Italia' with the following words: "*The dramatic fascination that comes from Wozzeck, in large part, it is because of his quality as soldier. The soldier is a close man: an impenetrable man. The soldier is not even a man: he does not belong to the species of men. The soldier is species itself and we cannot understand it. [...] Such is Wozzeck. He is not a man but a soldier; and so, his human cases, his sufferings as a man acquire a significance, a peculiarity, a dramatic force that certainly it would not have if he would not be a soldier.*"¹⁰

¹⁰ Op. Cit., pp. 91-96

Synopsis of *Wozzeck* by Alban Berg:

ACT	CONTENTS
ACT I	
Scene I [H4,5]	Morning. Wozzeck shaves the Captain while he takes advantage of him to do his the moral.
Scene II [H4,1]	Late afternoon, countryside, in distance the city; Wozzeck e Andres cuts wood in the brush. Hallucinations of Woyzeck.
Scene III [H4,2]	Evening. Marie from the window of her room sees the military band passing; She fights with her neighbour because of her way of looking at the Drum-Major; Wozzeck, come in, he is having hallucinations.
Scene IV [H4,8]	Afternoon. Wozzeck, forced to do human experiment, enters the studio and talk to the Doctor about his madness.
Scene V [H4,6]	In the alley in front of Marie's house, the Drum-Major pursue her.
ACT II	
Scene I [H4,4]	Morning, Wozzeck enters in Marie's room and notes the new earrings and suspect her loyalty; but softened by his son gives to Marie his salary.
Scene II [H2,7]	Day. The Doctor and the Capitan meet in the street and laugh about life and death and, with Wozzeck, about Marie's loyalty.

Scene III [H4,7]	Dark day. Wozzeck and Maria quarrel in front of Marie's house.
Scene IV [H4,11]	Late night. In the tavern's yard Wozzeck observes Marie dancing with the Drum-Major; soldiers, Andres and an idiot are also there.
Scene V [H4,13-14]	Night. Fight between Wozzeck and the Drum Major; Andres and other companions are there.
ACT III	
Scene I [H4,16]	Night. At the candlelight, Marie, in her room, with the son in her arms, searches for hope in the Bible.
Scene II [H1,15]	Nightfall, a path in the woods, next to a pond, Wozzeck kills Marie.
Scene III [H1,17]	Night. Dazzling light, at the tavern Wozzeck dance with Margret, who notices the blood on Wozzeck's arm; people run to reach them.
Scene IV [H1,20]	Night. Wozzeck drown in the pond. The Doctor and the Capitan pass by and then go away.
Scene V	Day light. Street in front of the house of Marie, the kids reveal to Marie's son the death of his mother; but the innocent keeps playing with his rocking pony.

1.4. Analysis of the play

In the following section a more specific analysis of the play will be presented. I will first introduce the main themes that are developed in the most relevant dramatic situations of the play, and in parallel, I will discuss how the characters protagonist of the scenes in exam behave.

Main themes, dramatic situations and characters

The play deals with themes such as precarious living conditions due to poverty, cruelty and abuses of the ruling classes, inhuman scientific experiments, alienation and hallucinations, strong feelings of jealousy, madness that leads to murder and hypocrisies of the entire society's system.

Woyzeck is the drama of a man, before of being a soldier, unemployed, Woyzeck is a man who is living in difficult life situations, coming from a difficult background and living in a State that does not support him or give to him any possibility to grow in society.

Hallucinations: Woyzeck and Andres. At my very first impression of the text I remembered being surprised by the way it starts, which later on I would have discover being one of the most vivid characteristic of the play; the first scene (the one with Woyzeck and Andres in the woods) brings the reader directly into the heart of the action without leaving time for the audience to understand what exactly it is happening and the context in which they are in. As first impression, the reader could believe at the words of Woyzeck, because there is no information in the text that inform about his mental health conditions; in fact, it is only in the end of the second scene that we possibly start to understand the situation of the protagonist by the comments of Marie about his behaviour.

Morality: Woyzeck and the Captain. Certainly one of the most acute scene of the play is the one of the *morality* in which the protagonists are Woyzeck and the Captain, and so the relation between two, contrast and differences of their characters.

Woyzeck's superstitious beliefs are not a sign of a limited intellect. They are rather constitutive characters, concretely constitutive of his culture, Franz's lack of education and the people of his class. Woyzeck is not an idiot. Indeed, in the first

scene, especially in the fifth scene, with the Captain, he proves intelligence, perhaps unsophisticated, but not contemptible. Indeed, here Büchner accomplishes real overturning relationships between the poor soldier and the Captain, who encamps philosophical claims. While Franz shaves him, the Captain reflects on “eternity” and on the “fear for the world” which as result assails him. Confesses to Woyzeck of having a melancholy soul, but even in front of this confession, Franz continues to respond in the same way: “Yes, Sir.” It is evident that the poor soldier’s intention was not to discuss any statement of the superior and to hurt his susceptibility, perhaps involuntarily. Woyzeck is not a soldier, it is a veteran of barrack that serves as barber and handyman. He would like to become a soldier in order to maintain more dignified Marie and their son Christian, who, when Woyzeck works and his mother is ‘busy’, Karl the idiot takes care of him for them. This is why he wants to please the Captain, by accepting mechanically, without answering his provocations, without reintroduce his philosophical analysis, without advancing any criticism, even propose a different perspective, “Yes, Sir Captain.” On the other hand, what did they teach to him in the army if not to comply with the orders, not refuse commands and just executed them. The Captain believes he is deceiving him “*I think it comes from south-north*” Woyzeck: “Yes, Sir Captain”; he laughed: “*Ha, ha, ha. Oh, you're stupid, horribly stupid.*”

Only for a moment the Captain seems to be moving: “*Woyzeck, you are a good man, a good man*”, but this apparent humanity disappears immediately: “*A good man, but (with dignity) Woyzeck you have no moral!*” Not only stupid but also devoid of virtue and morality. The Captain rules his own feeling and re-establish distances and hierarchies that must necessarily be distance and intellectual and moral hierarchies: he is the melancholy that reflects on time, Franz, the foolish man, and even immoral. The melancholy of the Captain assumes here the thickness of a mask, the tone of a justification of the lazy and indolent enthusiasm of a superior, rather than the intolerance of an intellectual. Indolent and even a bit vile, when he reminded to Woyzeck that he had “*a son without the blessing of the church*” (because of his immorality), he states that these are “*not my words*”, says “*our reverend, the chaplain of the garrison*”. But it is in front of this, provocation that Woyzeck, albeit cautiously, reacts, start to answer, with circumspection, with humility, but with intelligence, once again unsophisticated, surely recycling some wise popular comment, but certainly at an intellectual and rhetorically level considerably higher than the Captain: “*Sir*

Captain, the good God was not looking so much if above that poor little thing it has being said the amen before it has been done. The God said, 'Let the children come to me' ". Perfect, simple and perfect. The tone is cautious and not aggressive, the argument is concise and straightforward, Woyzeck plays it on the same ground (the moral-religious) chosen by the Captain to support the inverse. Woyzeck's quote, even if learned in church or suggested by the common sense of a few popular friends, it sounds like a brief and timely cultured quotation. The Captain suffers the blow; he subjugates, controls and derides Woyzeck when he is limited to the "Yes Sir Captain" or else, when Woyzeck replies, he even confuses: "What do you say? What kind of response is this? You make me confuse everything with your answer." And then Woyzeck explains, once again calm, once again with simplicity, but this time on a different level, the real "blood and flesh", which is dominated by the economy, "We poor people. See, Mr Captain, money, money. Who does not have the money try to give birth in the world to one of its kind with morality."

Here is important to note the attempt of Büchner to sketch Franz's simple but lucid wisdom, popular, naive, mediated by common sense, but far from the hallucinating superstitions of the early, distant scene, above all, from the idiocy the Captain would like to capture him. The Captain continues to not understand: "*Flesh and blood? When I'm at the window after that it stopped the rain, and I follow the white stock skipping through the alley – damn it, Woyzeck – I feel the love!*" Büchner here makes the Captain doing a double reduction, more than rough, logically gross: he first reduces 'flesh and blood' to the sexual impulse, then reduces love, ethical sentiment, par excellence according to the moral that previously he had excluded from Woyzeck's natural and stupid kindness. The Captain refutes himself, proclaims "with dignity" the superiority of morality over nature, but then he himself proves that the first is a projection that moves the second. He confessed to be slave, in reality, of the morality that apparently professes. The Captain's morality diminishes by spending the time repeating to him to be virtuous. Virtue is an empty word that reassures melancholic souls just because they project morale above nature. The pretentious reflection of the captain on eternity, the "moment" and the time of the world leads, passing through the reference to meteorological, false, grotesque, no ethical need to "spend the time". And, in the meantime, following a fault that is immanent to the oppositions made by the captain, Büchner has completed the reversal of roles that apparently remain unchanged: between the lines he showed that the stupid is the

Captain. His arguments are ridiculous. His arguments are grotesque, arguments that are manifested for what they are, which is, empty words, pretences, constructions that are confused by themselves. *"Moral it is when you are moral, you know. It is a good word!"*

When the Captain, believes that he governs a relationship that he finds enormously unbalanced in his favour, opens up to Woyzeck an emotion useful only to deride him to the bottom, he grants him a *"you are a good man."* It is the same expression that he repeats to himself, almost in an exercise of self-persuasion, thinking of a virtue of difficult definition. And he will repeats it again to Woyzeck to derides him, but ending involuntarily to derides himself: *"You are a good man, a good man. But you think too much, and that consumes you, [...]. This speech has exhausted me!"* As you can see, Woyzeck is the one who thinks, with simplicity, in a naive way, but with a will to understand that it is real, felt, naive, while the captain's melancholy is simply a pose, and in the end it turns out "exhausted." And so let the word to Woyzeck, to his naive intelligence, his honest lucidity: *"Yes, Sir Captain, the virtue! I did not understand much yet. You see, we people of the working-class do not have it, virtue, nature takes us, but if I was a lord and I had a hat and a clock and an 'anglaise' and I could speak distinctly, then I would be virtuous. It must be one beautiful virtue, Sir. Captain. But I am a poor man."*

Büchner succeeds perfectly in his intent: on one hand he restore Woyzeck's ingenuity and vagueness, on the other deconstruct the false projections on which morality holds. So he obtains the result of denying morality as a benefit of nature and, therefore, unveiling it as a mere power tool. Büchner's text proceeds following two directives, one explicit and one implicit: in this case, Woyzeck does not seem ironic when he states that if he would have been "a lord", if he had "a hat and a watch and an anglaise" and if he knew "to speak distinctly", then he would be virtuous. At the same time, however, Büchner's lines make it as an instrument of irony that anyway is on Woyzeck's side: Woyzeck regrets not being able to "speak distinctly" using a word "anglaise" which seems to confirm his hypothesis while he explicitly denies it. Woyzeck is lost when it comes to understanding and respect a doctrine, but he follows and lives a moral of love.

Woyzeck is not an idiot, but it is not even immoral. Büchner shows how in reality Woyzeck is the only one capable of love, of a completely disinterested and unconditioned feeling.¹¹

Marie and the play. Another scene in which the reader discovers the actual generosity or, again, the naiveté of Woyzeck, is when he realizes that the earrings of Marie are a present from one of his lover-client, the answer to the question of Marie is "*Am I a slut?*" Woyzeck: "*It does not matter, Marie.*" Perhaps, this represents the only ethically answer expectable, because implicitly denies the ethic, the value, what matter and what it does not.

Moreover, "*it does not matter*" it is an answer that demonstrates how a substantial difference between the two poor souls exists. Marie undergoes deeply the false differences the Captain claims. It is not just the charm of a young woman who feels to deserve more, "*and yet I have a red mouth like the great ladies.*" She want to participates to the show "this one I have to see", she says inside the circus climbing to the first row. She wants to escape from the "little corner of the world" which life preserve to her and, instead of that "little piece of mirror" that she has, she want a one as the lady, like the "great madams with their mirrors from top to bottom and with their beautiful gentlemen who kiss their hands". Her idea of virility is also tied to the imposed hierarchy by the power: "*One man gives him an order and he had to respect it. Ah! A man in front of another.*" Her feelings of guilty are honest only when her small induced aspirations are real "*but I am a slut*", she repeats, "just a slut, I would plant a knife in her chest." And in fact, these feelings of guilty soon disappear "*Ah! Who cares? Anyway everything goes to the devil, men and women*". In the sixth scene of H3 repentance, almost acted by Marie reading from the Bible some of the New Testament steps and mostly those of Christ's forgiveness or of the sinner's repentance will come terribly late: Woyzeck is not seen for two days and has already decided to execute the orders repeated by his voices that, hallucinated, he feels coming from the walls. But at the beginning of the drama the guilty feelings of the woman are weak and temporary. Compared to Woyzeck's "*it does not matter*", Marie's "what matters" are obviously justifiers, a somewhat frustrating gesture that attempts to erase remorse too weak, indeed deeply weakened. And it is notable that Büchner, recognizing these weaknesses, does not apply any moralism: Marie's

¹¹ S. Furlani, *Arte e Realtà. L'estetica di Georg Büchner*, 2013, pp. 152 - 157

weaknesses depend on induced desires. Büchner also take Marie's side, on her part, precisely and especially when, in one of the most dramatic scenes of the drama, in front of Woyzeck that brings to her a few coins of a day of work and humiliation, she is sincerely overwhelmed by the guilt of betrayal and for her desires that contemplates a soldier, an officer, certainly not Woyzeck.¹²

But for Büchner the meaning of life is never something ideological, absolute and perfect. Precisely because of that, almost none of his characters in his works are purely negative, and naturally none of them are purely positive, not even Woyzeck. Compare to the not only moral, but also and above all political-social criticism of Büchner on the roles in the play that contrast Woyzeck, it is important to remember part of a letter to his family on February 1834:

"It is true, I laugh often, but I do not laugh of how someone is a man, but rather then of the fact that he is a man, thing of which he has surely no guilt, and so I laugh about myself that I share this fate. People call it derision, they do not stand who exhibit as buffoon and talk "to you"; they are the disregarded, the mocking and the haughty, because they search for madness only outside of them. It is true that I feel another kind of derision, but it is not of the contempt but the one of hate. Hate is permitted as much as love, and I nourish it in sum to those who despise. There is a large number of them: those who possess a ridiculous exteriority called culture or a dead-trinket that is called erudition, sacrificing the great mass of their brothers to their disdainful selfishness. Aristocracy is the most shameful contempt of the sacred spirit of man; against it I turn his own weapons; arrogance against arrogance, mocking against mocking."

Büchner does not despise Marie's weaknesses, rather than he hates the Captain's contempt for Woyzeck, hates the "ridiculous exteriority" of his "culture." He hates the Captain because he is one of those "mockery", "haughty," or "disregarded" who "seek out madness only *outside himself*." Aristocratism and contempt are the product of an "exteriority," an abstraction that apparently takes advantage of "*how one is man*", while neglecting from the fact that "*one is a man*". The false morality of the captain "with dignity" takes out from being a man, from a *fate* that everyone shares, including Woyzeck. "*Ah! A man in front of another*" says Marie fascinated. On the

¹² Op. Cit., pp. 158 - 159

contrary, Franz's will - not a social redemption, but as simple improvement of his economic condition, especially in relation to the family - is entirely out of the concept of man's power over another man. It is possible to say that Woyzeck is naive but in compare of the Captain's morality (a mere construction and justification of power) Woyzeck appears as the unique characters morally virtuous.

Woyzeck it is a text constructively double, which from one side express and describe the structure of power, while on the other side indicates, in negative, the interstices that permits to not suffer them.

The Professor, The Doctor and Woyzeck. I believe a very crucial theme of the play is the pure abuse of power of the ruling classes against people like Woyzeck, Andres or Maire; characters such as the Captain or the Doctor or the Professor represent those figures that are meant to keep an 'order' (in their favour off course) in society, which in other words means to keep soldiers-workers at work. Without leaving the working class any possibility of dreaming in big, there must be distance between the soldiers in order to avoid any kind of coalition against the ruling classes.

We have seen that Woyzeck is not stupid, but rather, his popular ingenuity lets distinguish an intelligence (not only intuitive) superior to that of his superiors. However, to his debilitated lucidity is more and more space is stealing. His confusion progresses scene after scene. The collapse to hallucinations is gradual and progressive. The scenes centred on the charlatan prefigure the successive, which see Woyzeck in the hands of the professor, the captain and the doctor: on a formal level, the rhetoric of the charlatan dictates the times, structures and ways of the pseudo-scientific rhetoric of the erudite that abuse of the 'stupid' Franz. As the charlatan, even the professor uses words in Latin and French in a rather free way, more for exhibition than for didactic necessity.¹³

In the seventh scene, Woyzeck is in charges of bringing the cat to the professor. Woyzeck complains because the cat 'bites' and the professor scold him because he grabs that beast too gently. He grabs it "tenderly", and these are relevant particularly that makes the difference between the two. The cat escapes, and the professor and doctor, who scold the cat for not having "any scientific instinct", bend over Woyzeck: "*Gentlemen, in exchange you can see something else*", with the same tone and the

¹³ Op. Cit., p. 169

words of the charlatan. Franz replaces the cat, becomes the subject of a new experiment, which has actually been going on for some time. For three months, in exchange for the chance of keeping the money of the provisions, the professor forces him to feed only peas. Woyzeck's physical suffers, he is losing his hair and almost does not stand, but the doctor is indifferent and thinks only of his experiment. Woyzeck: "Sir. Doctor I have the shivers". Doctor: "Oh, oh, well Woyzeck" and again, Woyzeck: "Sir. Doctor I see dark". (He sits). Doctor: "Courage, Woyzeck, only a few more couple of days." From the Doctor, still the same tones of the charlatan's announcement: "Look at this man, look at the effect, touch a bit here [...] hear it, gentlemen, hear it!" He forces Woyzeck to move his ears to prove the "passages from the man to the donkey". The donkey-Woyzeck cannot move his ears because of his physical weakness, because he is not a donkey and above all because he is ashamed to be in the same identical place as the "astronomical horse" which he observed with Marie at the circus. The doctor yells calling him "beast" (the Drum Major, in the meantime, turns to Marie calling her "wild little beast") and threatens to make him "like the cat", to throw him out of the window. Even in the further scenes, in which Woyzeck must undergo the Doctor's sadism, the Büchner's parallelism continues with previous scenes. The parallel continues, between the astronomical horse and the poor barber, between the charlatan and the Doctor, actually the Doctor reveals worse than the charlatan. When Woyzeck cannot restrain himself and urinates in the street hidden from the Doctor, he blames him recalling to the "will" of man and his being "free". And when Woyzeck, with the usual lucidity, which however begins to waver, refers to nature: "See, Sir. Doctor, sometimes one has a certain character, some structure – but with nature it is different." Woyzeck is the only one who thinks, doubts, asks, while the Captain loses himself in an empty melancholy and the Doctor is all taken by the dream of revolutionizing science. Just like the Captain, the Doctor, with an exterior rhetoric that once again remembers the charlatan at the circus, brands the questions of Woyzeck as a "magnificent *aberratio mentalis partialis*".

Woyzeck's doubts are not just simply lunatic. The questions that he turns to the Doctor about the "double nature" are certainly a sign that the absurd talk of the charlatan has affected him. At the same time, nevertheless, are also a sign of intelligence of Woyzeck.¹⁴

¹⁴ Op. Cit., pp. 170 - 173

There are not many critics who have pointed out that Woyzeck's submission and exploitation is primarily about his knowledge and his intellectual faculties and through an unavoidable moment of falsification of the representation of reality.

Betrayal, exploitation, murder. Debilitated in the body and, above all, in the mind, Woyzeck sees from the window Marie flirting with the Drum Major. The captain's allusions are not invented. Woyzeck prays not to joke, but also the companions mock him. He moves away from the city, but now he is having hallucinations, continues to hear music, and then the voices: they tell him to kill Marie, to kill the "witch", "strike her, strike her!" In bed with Andres, in a public dorm, he cannot sleep: when he closes his eyes, he turns around, and again music, violins and that voice, "again, again". The advice of Andres is as touching as naive: "*you have to grab a grappa and put some dust in it, stings the fever*", but it is the only companion who supports it, the others are laughing at him. Woyzeck attempts to react by facing the Drum Major, attacking him by giving up to the logic of the Captain, "*A stubborn has courage!*" but obviously he succumbs. Too much work, he is tired, and also he is only feeding of peas for weeks. The Captain's hints about Marie's betrayal are not invented, but does Woyzeck not discover what he already knew? From the beginning of the drama, Woyzeck says, "*it does not matter*" that Marie is a "slut", and she continues to erase her guilty feelings: "*and even if so?*" she answers to Franz when first the first time he asks about it to her. What's changed? Woyzeck does really become jealous and mad?

Preparing himself to kill Marie, Woyzeck feels the need to say, almost to proclaim and remember, and perhaps above all to himself, to be an individual made of "blood and flesh" born on a specific day, who has lived a precise number of days. Before anything else, even before being the character that represents him, Woyzeck is a man, a person, better, an individual. Secondly, Woyzeck is a soldier, actually, is a veteran. It could be said that, at least more than a century before the cinema, Büchner looks at the veterans and at the impossibility of the society, not only of a recognition, but also more simply of an reabsorption within its dynamics. Büchner insinuates the doubt that sending them into war is the only way to include them in society, to recognize to them a social function. More: he insinuates the doubt that the inability to reintegrate soldiers who fought means that they were excluded from society through a their false inclusion. Their apparent inclusion through the army

hides their renewed exclusion. Excluded by society (from morality, church, politics), they were included as soldiers, but actually excluded again (sent to war or locked in barracks). Looking at the war from one of its outcomes (veterans unrecognized and unemployed), Büchner reveal the relationship between economics and war, between interests and false ideals of military structures.¹⁵

Woyzeck and Andres are excluded from society even before entering the army. To belong to society, for these excluded, it means above all to enter the army (which means, in reality, to be excluded from society). Once they are discharged, they desire to return there, believing they can rely on an inclusion actually that never happened. As a veteran, the excluded is confirmed as marginalized, used and exploited. Woyzeck, Andres, Marie do not have the intellectual tools to understand this deception, to understand how their exclusion is embedded in the establishment of the institutions they wish to be part of (army, politics, morals, culture, and 'good' society). Their reduction in slavery (labour-force, sinner, sexual object) necessarily goes through the limit of their education, a subtraction or oppression of their chances of knowing, the distortion of their desire, which is bent and turned to the institution that represses it.

Woyzeck is not a criminal. Woyzeck is a normal man, actually good and quite smart, rather brilliant in understanding his limits. He asks questions and does not escape from those that his superiors subordinate to deride his ignorance. There is a certain surprise from his superiors, and in particular by the Doctor, to see how Woyzeck's answer tends to be more complex than those provided by the highest common sense. His answers make 'turn the head' of the Captain. Woyzeck is not a criminal; he is a normal man under extreme pressure. He has a family to feed and he does not have a job. He has a family that he deeply loves, to which it not recognizes any social status. Woyzeck is part of society only when he is submitted to social structures that actually exclude him, only when he is subjected to a physical or biological control that reaches its apex in the dietetic absurdity imposed by the Doctor for scientific purposes that have nothing to do with science.¹⁶

In fact, the first and highest form of control, direct or indirect, on Woyzeck is not on his naked life, but on his intellectual faculties. Of being "naked" is first of all its

¹⁵ Op. Cit., pp. 176-177

¹⁶ Op. Cit., p. 179

intellect. We could say that he is subjected to his "bare life," just because he is stripped of his ability to understand and criticize, just because they are fiercely controlled, directed and subjugated with his mental faculties. Life does not let 'strip' itself, resist, and resist by knowledge. It is necessary to strip the intellect to strip life. We have seen that Woyzeck's collapse it is mainly at the level of his intellectual faculties. Woyzeck is the only one who really thinks, who doubts, trying to understand, exercising a genuine, disinterested knowledge, far from the narcissistic melancholy of the Captain or the fame of the Doctor. It is this force that needs to be disinherited, subtracted and alienated, to exploit its physical strength to control its existence to the biological level.¹⁷

Loneliness. In the scene before the murder, shortly before Woyzeck's arrival, at the doorstep of Marie's house some little girls want someone to tell them a fairy tale. Marie meets her and her grandmother tells a fair tale; the true meaning of the tale is obtained only in its relation to the text in which it is inserted.

The child of the fairy tales alludes to the child of Marie and Woyzeck. Introduced shortly just before that Woyzeck completes Marie's murder, the fairy tales anticipates and predicts the destiny of the little Christian, who will remain without his mother murdered by Franz, and without his father, who will commit suicide or be imprisoned or hanged after the death sentence. The child will be left alone with Karl, the idiot.

One of the most convincing thesis about this part of the play is the of Meier, who reads the relationship between the fairy tale and the drama as a "multiple" relationship that summarizes "metaphorically" the meaning of the whole representation, an "allegory" that involves all the characters in the impossibility of "a positive human relationship". Indeed, it is true that solitude, which the fairy tales talks about it, is the same kind of solitude of Woyzeck.

The parallelism created by the fairy tale, it can be seen also as the perspective that is waiting for Christian, repeats the one lived in the time by Woyzeck, bringing to light a deterministic cyclic nature that seems impossible to escape. Besides, the child's solitude of the fairy tale is also the solitude of Marie and of all the young women relegated outside of the society and of the official morality. In addition, all the characters of the play are alone: all of them assume an interpersonal dimension especially when it comes to exploiting Woyzeck or Marie. A different level and mostly

¹⁷ Ibid.

with different intensity, the story of the poor child who remains alone within a nihilistic and hopeless horizon invests every character in the drama.

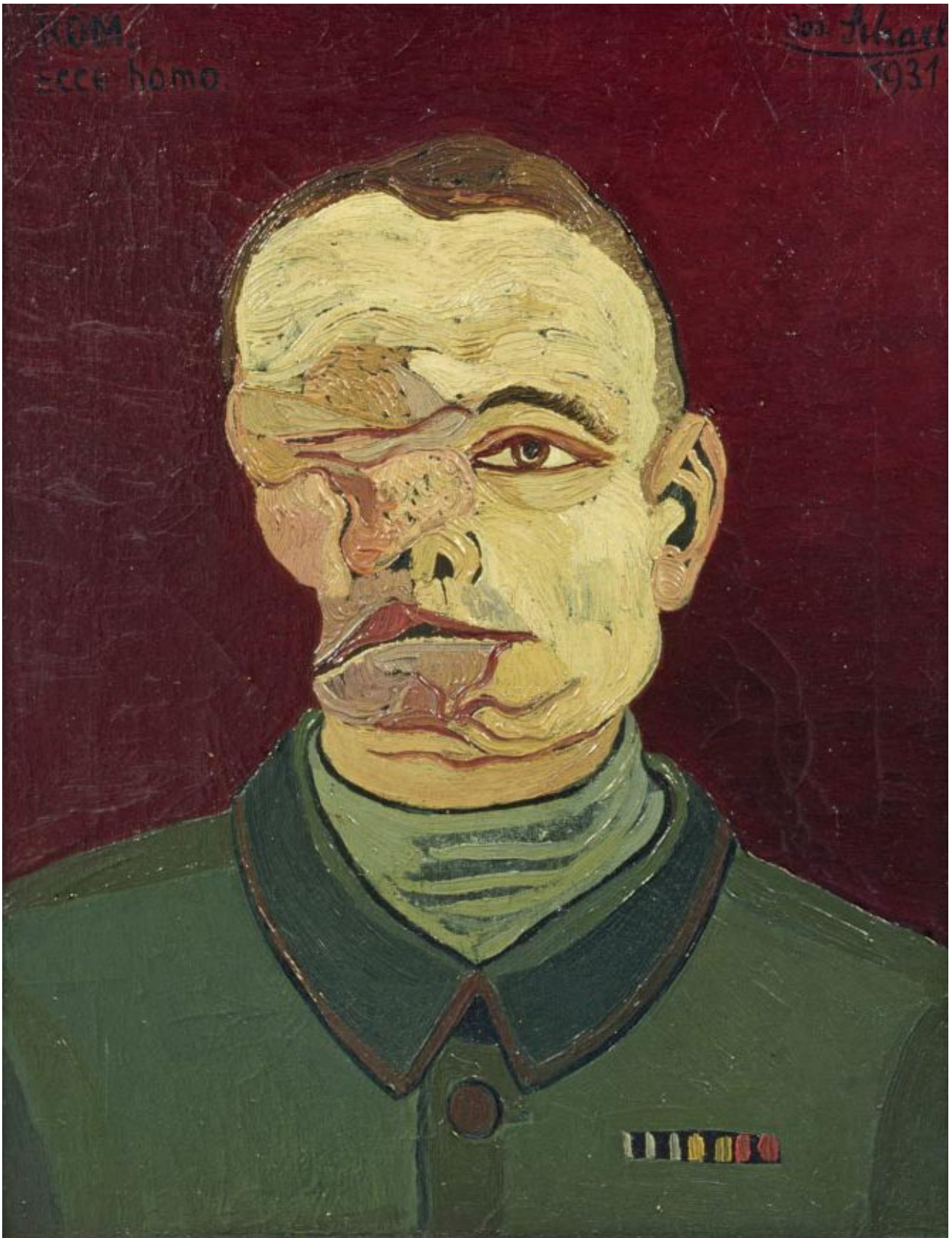


Elisa Galluzzo, 2017

Visual references



Josef Scharl, *Gefangener Soldat*



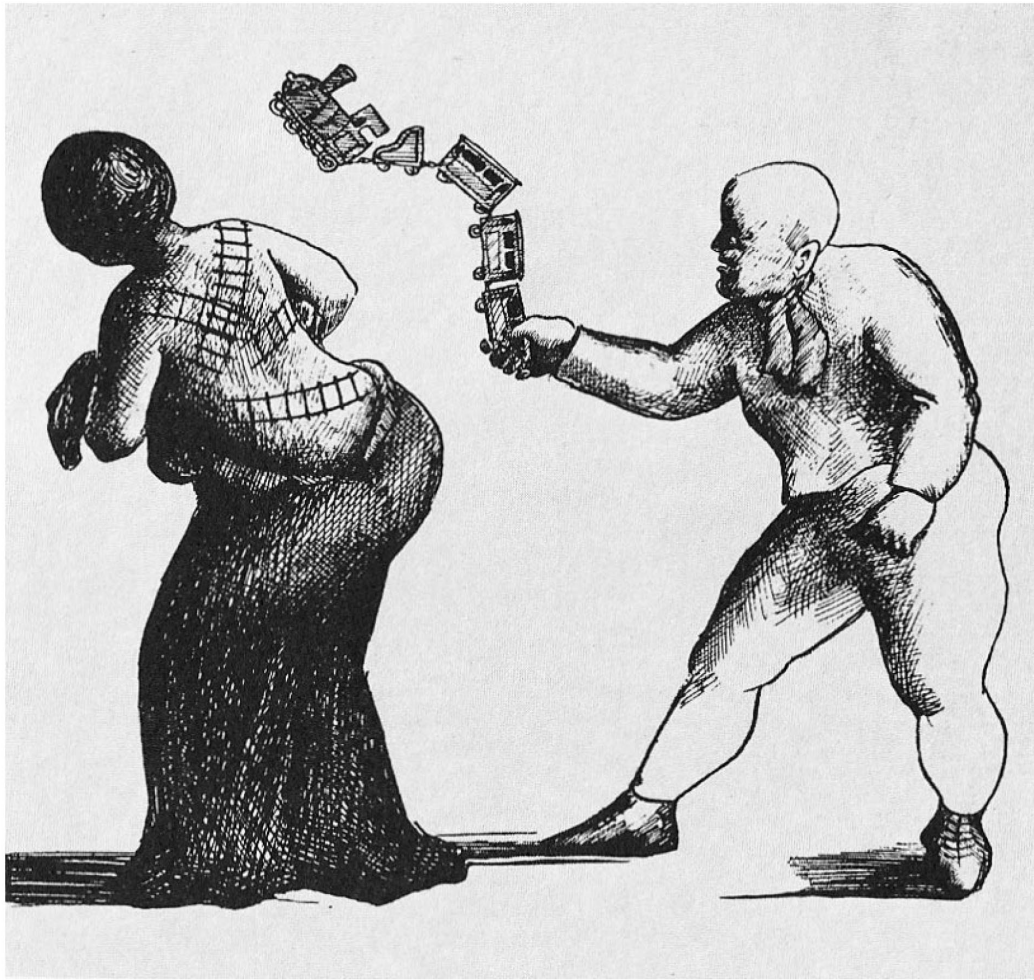
Josef Scharl, *Ecce homo*



Georg Grosz, *The grey day*, 1921



Georg Grosz



Tomas Topor

Chapter 2. Reinterpretation of Woyzeck

In this chapter I will present and analyse the work of some directors that proved themselves with the last opera written by Georg Büchner.

Between theatre, opera and film the following masterpieces are some of the most thrilling version of *Woyzeck*, ever realized, that, during my researches, have been a relevant source of inspiration over my creative process as that helped me to elaborate my personal interpretation of the play.

I start from a faithful but completely re-elaborated adaptation of *Wozzeck*, then, I write about two very different reinterpretations of the play in cinema: the first one, is perhaps the best interpretation of the work faithful to the historical context, the second, is probably one of the most brilliant adaptation of the play set in the end of the nineties.

2.1. Wozzeck, Robert Wilson and Tom Waits, 2000 (Opera)

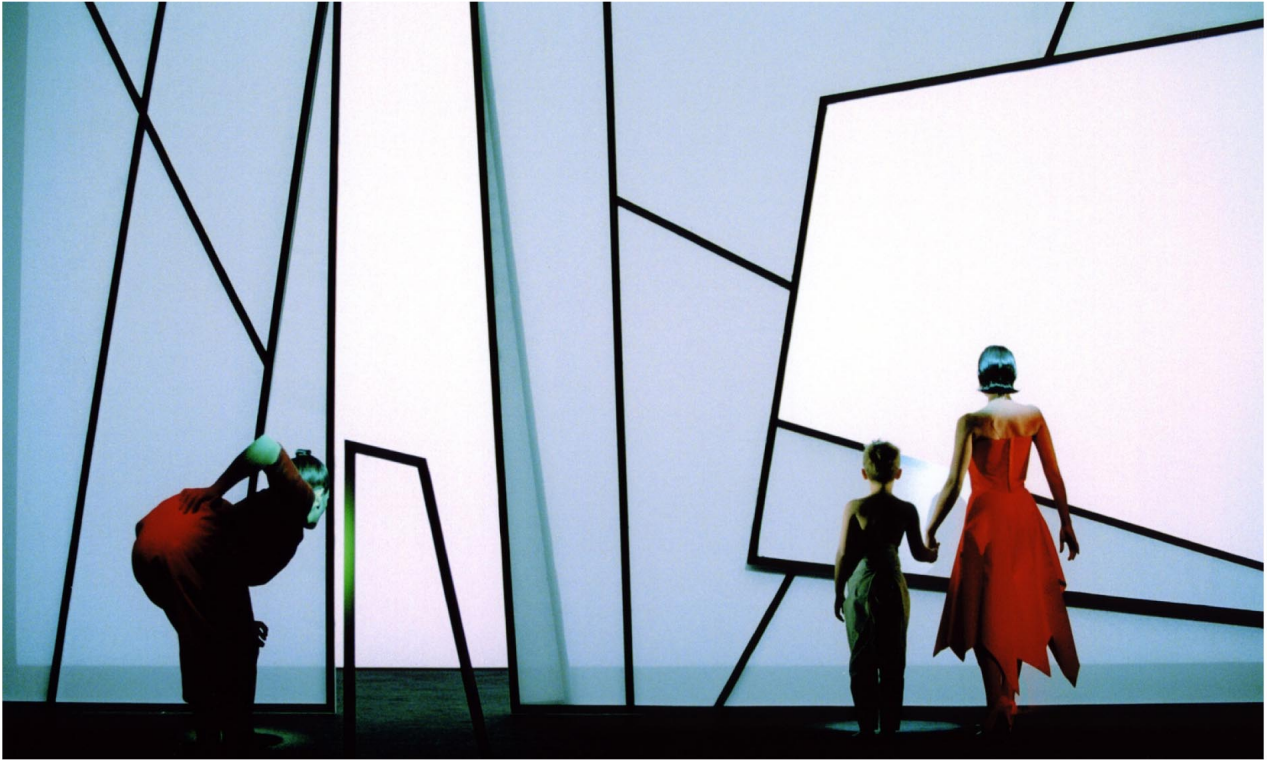
One of the most famous and original interpretations of *Wozzeck* by Alban Berg it is surely the one directed by the artist Robert Wilson with the songs of the musicians Tom Waits and Kathleen Brennan, premiered at the Betty Nansen Theatre of Copenhagen in Denmark on November 18, 2000.

Their adaptation of Georg Büchner's strange and fractured play is in some way a typical collection of Wilson's geometric stage tableaux and comic-grotesque performances. The philosophical debates and demented ravings that figure in more realistic productions of *Woyzeck* and in Berg's opera *Wozzeck* leaves space, in this adaptation, to a tale of jealous love. Indeed, between precise and calculated movements for each component of the geometric and extremely coloured elements of the stage design, combined by an intense rhythm of the music, a crucial ingredient appear to us into this particular interpretation of the play: Marie's character. Her role, it is often seen as a character of the background of the story, but in this adaptation she plays a crucial part. For the first time in the history of the representation of the play, Marie is here portrayed not only as the embodiment of the forbidden passions, but also as a queen, as a symbol of a woman that holds in her hands the all power of a brutal love. Even though her character it has been interpreted in several ways, from the version of a simply ingrate and unfaithful woman to the one that actually

holds in hand the economical condition of the family by earning money by becoming a prostitute, in Wilson's work she is somehow represented as a woman that, with her red and sharp costume, owns the stage and all the men on it. If these images of the performance would be shown to somebody that does not know the story of the play and the role of the characters in it, probably would think that she, somehow, represents a character of power, a character that – more important and interesting - has no connection with the loser guy, Woyzeck. This aspect can also be seen as a fake representation of the only eyes of the poor Woyzeck that, even if she is treating him horribly, he cannot stop to see her as the most beautiful and fascinating woman on heart.







2.2. Woyzeck, Werner Herzog, 1979 (Film)

The masterpiece *Woyzeck* directed by Werner Herzog in 1979, with a stunning Klaus Kinski, as the protagonist, and Eva Mattes, in the role of Marie, has been certainly one of my biggest references of study to deeply understand the drama of Georg Büchner.



The filming for *Woyzeck* began just five days after the work on Herzog's *Nosferatu the Vampire* had ended. Herzog used the same exhausted crew and actors; the scenes were accomplished mostly in a single take, which allowed the filming to be completed in only eighteen days and edited in just four. Herzog's *Woyzeck* is the ultimate interpretation of how best the scenes should be pieced together to portray it: acting, setting, set decorations, costumes and ethnography are extremely realistic and faithful to the time in which Büchner's drama is placed. The background of the story is an immaculate village of Telč that it is not a potential, not a changing surrounding that seduces: the village is a frame where nothing happens, a finished flat and one-dimensional set. Herzog's genius is actually also in this choice: the opening sequence scenes are glibly ironic and even sarcastic; indeed, these seemingly empty, peaceful spaces will be soon filled with violence. A shocking brutality incredibly well transmitted to the audience through an extraordinary

physicality of the actors; a secret element that makes possible the most authentic version of these characters. In fact, one of the central vertexes of the piece is the body: here the bodies are wounded and wound, threatened and threatening. Most of Kinski's performances are among the most memorable in cinema, but here, he surpasses himself in this *diptych*, playing the legendary bloodsucker with fragility and an unbearable erotic timidity; his Woyzeck, the *worm-that-turned*, may be marginalized in the world he lives in, but Kinski agitates his narrative with a restless throb.¹⁸

Peculiar and interesting it is the historical context of the film: we are in 1979, one year before in Italy, the fourth government Andreotti approves the *Legge Basaglia* while Europe is still digging the difficult criticisms that Michel Foucault, a decade earlier, had addressed to the psychic system with the publication of the *History of Madness in the Classical Age*. It is difficult to understand how Herzog was inspired by that debate when he realized *Woyzeck*; but the film in some way seems to be the cinematographic transposition of the criticism of Foucault; with the advent of Enlightenment, madness began to be treated as a fundamentally moral sin, because the fool had decided to abandon reason and as such had to be punished to correct its inclination. And just as Foucault has imagined, *Woyzeck* suffers the offenses of the Capitan who urge him to learn virtue and morality, and of the Doctor who try to treat him as mental disorders as if he had a physical defect.¹⁹ The man recited by Klaus Kinski is a soldier whom the military universe rejects as a system error, a man who for his visions is considered like a madman or perhaps, as his Capitan says, only "*a man who thinks too much*". But madness, in *Woyzeck*, does not serve only to add substance to the characterization of its protagonist; it also serves to highlight the cruelty of its superiors and those who claim to cure him for his folly.

Woyzeck's greatness is in knowing how to make the protagonist's madness an instrument to denounce the lack of humanity of the people around him. After 82 minutes, the spectator remains doubtful that the madman is not *Woyzeck*, but those who, under the pretext of morality and reason, seek to castigate and correct anyone who escapes from schemas and predefined paths.²⁰

¹⁸ <http://sensesofcinema.com/2016/cteq/woyzeck-werner-herzog-1979/>

¹⁹ <http://www.cinefile.biz/woyzeck-di-werner-herzog>

²⁰ <http://www.cinefile.biz/woyzeck-di-werner-herzog>





2.3. Woyzeck, Janos Szász, 1994 (Film)

The Hungarian film director Janos Szász, filmed in 1994 one of the most brilliant productions of Buchner's work. This version of *Woyzeck* it has been extremely important and inspiring for the development of my project; it helped me to support my vision of set *Woyzeck* out of its military context: if in the 19th century the army represented a secure and safe environment to work, in end of the 20th century in countryside of a little village in Hungary, it makes totally sense that this time, it is a rail station to unsure the people of the village, that works in the rail station and for the village itself that it most likely it is known in the rest of the country only because of it.

Szász's film is an impressive piece of work, dark and cold like a killing knife, updated not so much to the present rather as to an abstraction of an industrial time that might be the present in a backward stretch of Eastern Europe. The play, then, exists as a point of reference for the film. For example, the main character, *Woyzeck*, is no longer in the army and is no longer a barber, and yet one of his tormentors, his boss, is still someone he addresses as "Captain" and someone whose face he repeatedly shaves – an odd activity except as one references the play.

The characters in this film act as if possessing knowledge of the play into which their behaviour and actions are locked. *Locked or trapped* is an operative predicate to describe the place we see here: for although a central location is the railway yard where Szász's *Woyzeck* now works as low-wage janitor, the tracks do not evoke any sense of other places to go. Rather, Szász has imagined a dull autumnal and, later, dull wintry landscape at the end of the world, it's a terrific piece of work. This is a film of bleak days and nights so dark that they suggest the dark night of *Woyzeck*'s soul. Much of the film – most of it, perhaps – takes place at night.

Woyzeck is the low man on the totem pole, an outcast whom society is too apathetic and oblivious even to cast out. But *Woyzeck* does have his uses. "The Doctor" has him submit to experiments; these involve monitoring his body's responses during hard-driving push-up sessions and the seemingly endless analyses of his urine samples. *Woyzeck* is the dehumanized human, a wretched soul ill used by others. "The Captain" is constantly at him, using a loudspeaker to interrupt his work, his quiet, to summon him for "reports" and daily shaves. Lecturing *Woyzeck* about the

lowness of his morality – Woyzeck lives with his girlfriend, Marie, and their bastard infant son – while the poor devil holds a straight razor to his lathered neck, the Captain calls Woyzeck “abysmally stupid,” adding insult to all the Doctor’s inflicted injuries. We see Woyzeck seething, pushed and pulled and battered in all sorts of ways, the impoverished, oppressed Woyzeck is all bottled-up resentment and anger, a slave perpetually on the edge of revolt.

Woyzeck sees odd shapes in the billows of smoke from trains; but, captured in an overhead shot of the railway yard, the monolithic mass of smoke that *we* see suggests the clouding over, the pollution, of Woyzeck’s mind and sensibility. It is the consumption and extinction of possibility; the trains, presumably with some sort of destinations, are blotted from view. A prophet of violence, Woyzeck is insane; constantly reading his bible, he talks to God – even hears him. “Go on, go on,” God tells him, urging Woyzeck to kill again and again.

A man of solitude, Woyzeck is shown, solitary, walking down endless tracks. (He is also recurrently shown speeding down long outdoor stairways.) A figure of stasis, he is nonetheless often shown walking: a modern Sisyphus. An alienated creature, Woyzeck lives in one of the two high rises of workers’ tiny, cubicle-like apartments that we see in the background of a shot of the railway yard. However, Woyzeck spends most of his time in his second “home”: his railway yard booth, a tight-fitting shack. Standing up in it, he appears to be a corpse in its coffin. When he is shown lugging the booth on his back, we are returned to an image of Sisyphus.

Three characters ameliorate Woyzeck’s intense solitude and sense of alienation: Marie, their baby, and a mysterious small boy whom he periodically meets by chance and with whom he converses. Who is this child who gives him an amulet, which Szász visually links to the moon and to Woyzeck’s own eye when Woyzeck contemplates murder? He could be, a few years hence but involved here with his father in a time-warp, the infant whom Woyzeck orphans when he stabs to death Mari for infidelity. Possibly, however, the boy is not the baby but Woyzeck himself – as he *was* as a boy. An opening parable about Woyzeck, recited by the boy, visually links the two, and their recurrent encounter – Woyzeck returns the amulet to him before murdering Marie, suggesting either possibility – this convey Woyzeck’s self-alienation and his need (in his dehumanized state) to recover the continuity of his own humanity.

Woyzeck is bedevilled by the treatment he suffers at the Captain's and the Doctor's hands and, above all, by Marie's infidelity. (Like Herzog, Szász applies slow motion to Woyzeck's stabbing Marie, and he makes the moment additionally blood-curdling by recording her screams in real time.) "I want nothing but calm," he says, "so I can sleep." Woyzeck is an insomniac – the perfect condition to symbolize his "walking dead" – his joyless and hopeless – existence. Lajos Kovács is especially good at projecting this aspect of his role, but overall, unlike Klaus Kinski's great performance in Herzog's film, Kovács's acting gives us a view of Woyzeck's demeanor, not of his tormented soul. Kovács's Woyzeck seems past *having* a soul, which diminishes the tragedy of the character's outcome.

Szász has also purged Büchner's play of the influence of Shakespeare's *Othello*: Marie's infidelity is without question in his version. In this new harsh version of the play, where the Captain and the Doctor to test Woyzeck's response manufacture Marie's infidelity, Woyzeck himself walks in on Marie and her lover, a local police officer, while having sex in his and Marie's bed; Woyzeck is carrying the baby in after a walk. However, this alteration is not intended to describe Marie a whore or to reduce our sympathy for her. On the contrary, Marie's living arrangement with Woyzeck is shown as intolerable for her, as when she staves off his attempt to rape her, handing over to him the knife then and pleading for her own death.²¹

To conclude the analysis of this brilliant work, I believe it can be very enlightening to read the personal words of Szász in interview about this work:

"It was a Fringe theatre in Budapest in the 80's, I was very young, and there was a performance called Woyzeck. I didn't know anything about Woyzeck and there I saw the most beautiful performance, the most beautiful show in my whole life. I was very close to the actors, I was very close to the actions, and this gave me a very close feeling for the full drama; and I have never felt the kind of happiness that I have felt there to see Woyzeck. It was a very important adventure in my life and I remember that then I just forget it for years and years and after that, I finish my academy and I made my first film called Don't disturb, which was, I have to tell you, it was really a bad film and it was not so good because it was not about a life, it was not about a story, about drama. After that when I was thinking about my second film and I meet

²¹ <https://grunes.wordpress.com/2007/02/24/woyzeck-janos-szasz-1994/>

an actor called Lajos Kovacs. He was shooting with a college of mine and in that occasion I just met him and we have been talking for two whole nights together, drinking a lot, you know, drinking and exchanging ideas about life, about films and about art and somehow appeared the Woyzeck; and while I was just setting with this guy I realized that he is Woyzeck, that he is my Woyzeck! and oh God, I would be very happy to shoot a film with him. I knew that Werner Herzog made a Woyzeck which was one of my favourite films but I knew that I wanted something very different and that I wanted to make a film with the really 'extra' people, extra in the meaning of doing film: the no one person, the servant, the last in the queue. I wanted to make a film about this very simple people and Lajos Kovacs is an actor but he has also a very simple mind, he is a very instinct person. It came like a lightening to me and after many years that I have seen the performance about the play I just took the book and immediately, in a month I was ready with the script and it was a big fortune for us to shoot it because it was a very cheap film, we shoot in thirty days basically for no money and we just finish it. It is in black and white; with the cinematographer we decided that we would have liked to go back to the roots of old photography and old history of filmmaking. This shooting was my most beautiful experience in my life because we were shooting inside a gipsy quarter of Budapest and all the gipsy around us were very gentle with us and we asked them to come to visit the film, to play in the film. [...] Let me tell you about a story: we were at International Rotterdam Film Festival, it was an early morning screening and normally I am in the begging of the screening, I check the focus, the audience, what is the atmosphere in the auditorium and I leave – because I am very nervous. When I came back, for the last 10 minutes, I was not able to go through the gate because it was more then full. I wanted to go through the people standing and blocking the gate and there was a homeless who took me out from the cinema and told me – the simple man, last in the queue - that “you have to go out because you have to see this film for the first moment!” and he took me out from the auditorium. This was my main prize from the audience: I was very moved to hear a homeless, to whom I basically dedicated this film, to this kind of people and for me to see a homeless in the auditorium telling me that you have to go out, because you have to see this film from the first moment... you know I was very moved and you know, I was happy” .²²

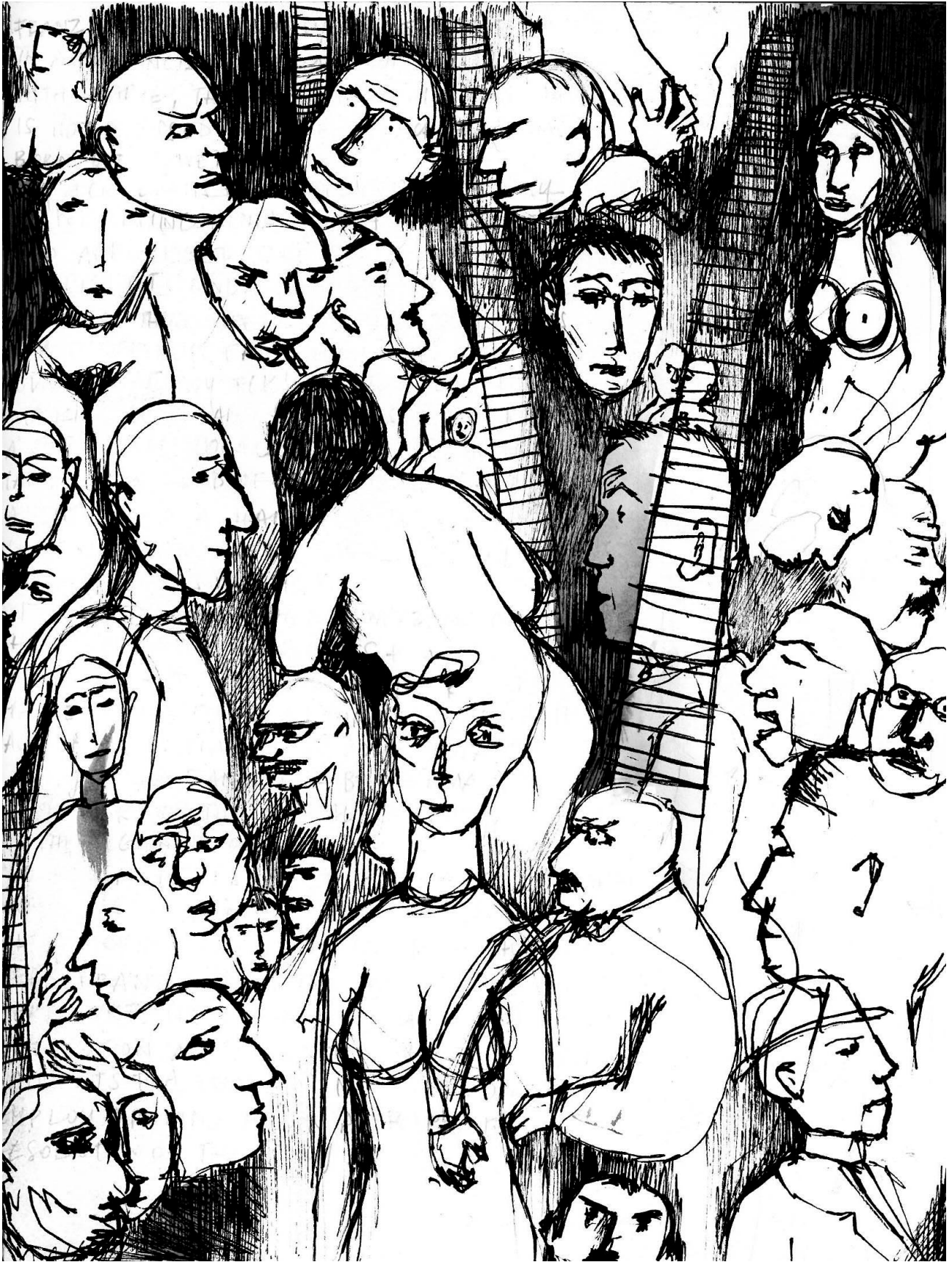
²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umagmUKHOQE>



Chapter 3. Personal reinterpretation of Woyzeck

In this final part of my thesis, I will explain which are the motivations that guided my creative process over my personal interpretation of *Woyzeck* and precisely what led me through an elaboration of themes, characters and dramatic situations within the play. In this context, I will also explain which are the reasons that brought me to find my personal and final scenic solution for the set design.

I will also introduce to the reader the origin why I have choose to work on this play with a brief foreword: as previously mentioned in the analysis of the play, considering its peculiar fragmentary state, the last work of Georg Büchner involves the reader into a personal decode of the whole story of *Woyzeck*. I believe that the real genius of the author, consciously or not, is to persuade the reader to take a personal position within the story: the reader is then led either to be emphatic or critical with the troubled life of people as Woyzeck and Marie, either to disapprove or justify the abuses of the Captain and the Doctor. Over my research, I have decided to focus my analysis on the difficult life conditions of the characters from the working-class. In particular, I have tried to understand why this horrible sequence of events happen to them, and especially how a person can lead himself to such a self-demolition.



Elisa Galluzzo, *Woyzeck*, 2017

3.1. The factory

In this part of my researches I will explain the personal motivations that led me over my final decision of choosing the Factory as the contemporary background for the play of *Woyzeck*.

I believe there could be many starting points within the play to be inspired by for the development of a personal interpretation of such a complex and dynamic text.

One aspect of my personal interpretation is related to my very first approach with the text, I remembered being very confuse and surprise by the way the story starts: the first scene bring the reader directly into the heart of the action without leaving time for to understand what exactly is going on and the context in which the characters are. This aspect, become a fundamental element for support the idea of my set design, which also aims to be a metaphor of the particular concision of the text: as fragments of the increasingly pale lucidity of *Woyzeck*, the scenes happen one after the other as the representation of the only few moments of clarity in *Woyzeck*'s mind, with out really know what happen right before or right after every scenes. As a defective light bulb that keeps turning on and off, the attention of the audience is caught straight from the heart of a situation into another. It is from this impression of the text that I developed my very first idea about the set design: because of its discontinuity but concise structure, I started to imagine a dark space in which the scene appears one after the other as light in the night impeding to the audience to have a complete visual of the entire space in which the performance is set.

Moreover, proceeding with the researches I arrive at a point in which I asked myself the decisive question about what time and which context would have been interesting for the proposal of my set design for the performance.

While analysing the dramaturgical aspects and themes of the play – as I previously explain in the first chapter – I realise that *Woyzeck*, under its military context and traditions of the 19th century, is rich of raw and still true costumes of our society. At that point of my research, I could not avoid to create some kind of parallelism between *Woyzeck*'s time and nowadays.

I started to focus my studies around the idea of a contemporary adaptation of the play. Besides I could not related my self, in these days, to the way of looking at the

military system as the only way out, as they only way to make meet ends for poor people. Indeed, I believe that nowadays the role of the army, it does not have the same meaning for people as much as it was at the time of Büchner, or at least it is not in the majority the world. For this reason I started to research about conditions and context that could possibly include all the Büchner's dramatic dynamics.

I asked my self *what in our society represent an economic source of salvation for the lower classes? In which conditions the too common murders of innocent women are happening?*

The first parallelism that I found in my researches was the one of an Italian family forced to work under the Mafia's will, as their only possibility to make ends meet; in a society where the State can no longer provides the right conditions to work for this classes. The motivations that led me to this initially solution, perhaps, are enclose in the fact that the cruelty in which the Captain or the Doctor abuse Woyzeck shameless and that, in a correct society, cannot come from who is suppose to direct it. But then, I realise that by choosing this solution I would have supported those personalities that have the power in their hands to govern, to help people coming from a difficult background but that instead exploit them. This choice would have minimalized the characters of the Captain or the Doctor; it would have been to easy declare them as two criminals that exploit other people. Because it is exactly with this crucial point that Büchner point out the issues of the ruling classes of his time.

Subsequently, I continued my researches about the social conditions of people of the lower classes of nowadays. Thanks to one of the result of this analysis I discover the book *Niente, più niente al mondo* which gave me a very interesting starting point. As I will better explain in the next chapter, *Niente, più niente al mondo* is the story of a poor family who belongs to the labour class, who sees the factory as the only way to earn some money and survive but that also do not hesitate to curse it because, after years and years of hard work, dismiss the husband from one day to another. This will cause a total collapse in the family and will them to a point of not return.

This action of refuse from one day to another immediately remind me of he same kind of refuse suffered by Woyzeck. From this point, I based my studies and researches on the theme of the system of the factory in relation with the lives of their worker as a metaphor of the military system. Surprising, I found several very interesting points of reflection to support my thesis project. Starting from the

comparison of the role of a soldier in the army and of a worker in the factory, or the one between the Captain and the owner of the factory, between the experiment of the Doctor and the, sometimes secrets, strange experiment happening in the factory of nowadays.

In the specific, the idea of an ideological factory instead of a one in particular, come from the tough that my aim is create a pretext of reflection on the themes of which the story of Woyzeck tells, opening more doors possible. The aim of this project is to let the audience imagine and decide which kind of factory it is, in order to recreate those feelings of uncertainty and instability characterizing of the play.

3.2. References

This following section of my dissertation consists of a study of works of reference that has had a concrete impact on the final result of my thesis research.

Once I decided to develop my researches about the main theme of the system of an hypothetical factory as a comparison with the military system, I have started concentrating my analysis by researching in several artistic fields works which, in different ways, present common topics with the play of Woyzeck: for instance, the precarious social condition of the labouring class and their relationship with the upper classes that governs them; the difficult conditions of life for people living in the suburbs with a state that cannot guarantee their rights; the exploitation of workers – *or soldiers* – as forgotten souls, relevant to the society only when are into the factory – *or in the military service* – and almost despised once they are out.

Moreover, at the end of this section, my aim is to introduce the work of some artists, which have been a relevant source of inspiration throughout my creative process.

***Metropolis*, Fritz Lang, 1927**

Metropolis is the absolute masterpiece of German expressionist cinema and science fiction drama, directed by the Austrian-German filmmaker and screenwriter Fritz Lang in 1927. The silent film has suffered innumerable mutilations over the years but now enjoys a philologically accurate restoration. Since it is part of the films that changed the cinema's history, thematic, aspects and arguments that I could analyse are many but here, after a brief description of the plot, my intention is to highlight those

elements of this masterpiece that supported and inspired me for developing ideas about my project.

The story is about the city of Metropolis, the megalopolis of the future that is divided into two parts. In the upper city live the rich people who enjoy all the comforts. While in the lower one, the workers, exploited as slaves, fundamental to maintain the glory of the city on top. Mary, who deals with children of the latter, one day, leads them up to the city above to see a marvellous garden. Here she meets for the first time Freder, son of the absolute master of Metropolis, Frederer. Shaken by her beauty, the young man goes to search for her and finds out the hard conditions of life of the workers. Maria is putting all her forces in the attempt to achieve a mediation between what she calls "arms and brain" but the scientist Rotwang kidnaps her and gives her the feature of a robot which then he will use to incite the workers into a rebellion.

My principal element of studies of the film it is the role of the workers, as parallelism of the role of the soldiers and ex-soldiers in Büchner's play. The movie opens by showing the workers and their city, situated deep below the earth's surface. They are shown dressed alike, walking in sync, holding their heads down in submission, resignation and desperation. Throughout the movie, the human cattle is depicted as being physically and mentally exhausted, highly impressionable. Like a flock of sheep, the workers move in crowds, are very impressionable and can easily be deceived. The workers labour in a monstrous machine, a hellish industrial complex where they must accomplish repetitive tasks that stripping them of their humanity. At one point, the machine is compared to Moloch, the ancient Semitic deity honoured by human sacrifices. The tasks assumed by the workers are purely mechanical, needing absolutely no brainpower, making them nothing more than an extension of the machine.

One of the aspect that fascinated me the most about these workers is the profound and devote behaviour that they have toward their labour, their "mission": no matter what, they will make the upper city sustainable. But what it is very interesting here is how the upper class manages to convince the workers to work so hard for something that they will never see or benefit; another aspect that stimulated my curiosity about the film is the presence in the worker's city of two kinds of clocks: one made of twelve numbers and another one made of twenty-four numbers. This is a brilliant and simple element that point out the extremely hard and insane status of the working class in the film.







Niente, più niente al mondo, Massimo Carlotto, 2011

One of the biggest inspirations for my interpretation of *Woyzeck* is certainly the book *Niente, più niente al mondo* (*Nothing, nothing more in the world*) by Massimo Carlotto published in 2004 in Italy.

As an agonizing delusion, ironic and never pathetic, the protagonist, a proletarian woman, recalls in a monologue her own story and the dramatic fate of her family; the relationship with her husband and her only daughter, between needs and obsessions, wasted lives, broken dreams, poverty and the fight to forget the adversity.

On the background of a poor and isolated working-class district in the city of Turin, where the workers are no longer workers and have left space to the immigrants community, it happens a “usual” family tragedy. It is the story of lives with a complete lack of perspective: unemployment and difficulties to make ends meet, concerns for the retirement and hard cohabitation with the new immigrant “competitors” arrivals. It’s a life, in which there is the need of being a consumer to feel alive, with the absence of cultural resources to oppose to the squalor of the existence. Where the stereotyped TV has seen as the unique way out to have a chance for success in life and as the only escape or distraction from a desolate surrounding. With a State that has no longer the possibility to guarantee rights and services to the low social classes, all the contradictions explode inside the family²³: one day the mother grabs the knife that she uses to cook and kills her daughter.

“Niente, più niente al mondo” is a verse based on the song *Il cielo in una stanza* (*The sky into a room*) of the Italian singer Gino Paoli: it was the soundtrack of the wedding of the protagonist, when a future full of promises and love seemed still possible, but that constantly comes back to the entire story to underline the inevitability of a fate already marked.

It is a tragedy told by a long and enthralling monologue of a woman that does not even have the time to introduce her self because of her desperately need of unloads. The reader only discovers the name of Arturo, her husband. In fact, it is much more than a monologue, it is an outlet of an exhausted woman that committed a horrible action in the grip of folly. Perhaps, the same folly that brings *Woyzeck* to kills Marie. A kid of folly on which Büchner has a clear opinion about and which he describe with these words: “*I do not disdain anyone, less than ever for his intellect or his culture,*

²³ Massimo Carlotto, *Niente più niente al mondo*, Edizione e/o, Roma, 2004

because it is not in the power of anyone to become a stupid or criminal – because in equal circumstances we would all be all equal, and because the circumstances are outside of us. The intellect then is only a very small part of our spiritual essence, and culture is only a very casual form.”²⁴



Crescenza Guarnieri in *Niente, più niente al mondo*, Eliseo Theatre, Rome, 2015

²⁴ S. Furlani, *Arte e Realtà. L'estetica di Georg Büchner*, 2013, p. 161

La classe operaia va in paradiso, Elio Petri, 1971

Eventually the source that perhaps gave the significant change to my work is the Italian political drama film directed by Elio Petri in 1971: *La classe operaia va in paradiso* (*The working class goes to heaven*). The film was shot in an actual factory in Novara, Piedmont, with many of its employees serving as extras in the film. Based on true events, it depicts a factory worker's representation of his own condition as a simple "tool" in the process of production and, implicitly, his struggle with the trade unions.

Ludovico Massa, called Lulù, is a 31-year-old worker with two families to be supported (one composed of ex-wife and their son, the other by his new partner and his son) and with 15 years of work at the BAN factory, with paint intoxication and an ulcer.

Supporter of piecework, whereby, working with infernal rhythms, he can earn enough to afford the car and other consumer goods; Lulù is loved by the bosses, who use him as a model to establish the optimum production rhythms, and hated by his fellow workers for his excessive servility. However, he does not manage to be happy of his situation, as the work rhythms are so exhausting that, once home, he barely can eat and get married in front of television; he has no social life, no dialogue with his loved ones and does not even have sex with his companion anymore. His life continues in this total alienation, which leads him to ignore the protest slogans screamed and written by the students outside the gates until one day has an accident at work and loses one finger (after trying to manually extract a piece that has remained unturned in the machinery). So, suddenly, Lulù wakes up from the sleep of alienation and realise the nightmare of his miserable life; he opposes the blackmail of the piecework and adheres to radical instances of students and some factory workers, as opposed to the more moderate positions of trade unions. In a short time the ferment in the factory increases and, after a general strike, comes the inevitable clash with the police. The result of this change is dramatic: Lulù is abandoned by his companion, immediately fired by the factory and simultaneously abandoned by both students, claiming that his is an individual case and not a 'class' one, and by the workers who initially do not take any action for his dismissal. During these events, unnecessarily, Lulù seeks comfort by visiting old man Militina, an ex companion forced to end his days into a madhouse; The only thing that Lulù gets from these visits is the discovery

that also for him this alienation is turning into madness. When everything seems to be lost, his companions, thanks to the trade union, are able to rehire him in the factory, to the assembly line, where Lulù, screaming to be heard over the deafening noise of the machines, again at the mercy of the frenetic rhythms of production, he tells to his colleagues of his dream: Militina trying, by force of headwinds, to break into a wall beyond which there is a dense fog where Militina himself, Massa and all the workers are immersed.

The film, on the one hand, enters the Italian factory in the 1970s to tell the alienated relationship of the workers with the machine and the production rhythms, and on the other hand it goes outside the factory to reach into the houses, pointing out how the alienation of man-machine continues even in everyday, contaminating the personal relationships of the workers. Alienation that I believe it is very similar to the one experienced by soldiers and then ex- soldiers in the military services as Woyzeck. Starting from this point I found several engaging elements in the life of Lulù that establish an interesting relation with the story of Woyzeck. In fact, the analysis of this film allowed me to do a better reflection of the social condition of people that nowadays lives on similar conditions to Woyzeck or Lulù.







Carsten Höller and Miroslaw Balka

This following part of the thesis is dedicated to the study of the artistic method of Carsten Höller and Miroslaw Balka and further more of an analysis of a few of their works that inspired me for the developing of my set design. This works are examples of the same kind of experience I want to bring my audience into. The aim of my final proposal of the set design for the performance is to lead the audience through the experience of the installation-set design. The audience is somehow invited and directed in crossing over the set, touching the props, be a significant part of the entire piece.

Miroslaw Balka. Active in the contemporary art scene since the 1980s, Miroslaw Balka investigates the most profound aspects of existence along a path leading to true discovery of human sensibilities. His work extends through connections between memory and oblivion, collectivity and the intimate, personal life.

The use of everyday elements and materials like iron, wood, salt and soap – powerfully evocative of personal rituals and memories – Balka realizes artworks that induce viewers to reflect on history, religion and mythology. At the heart of his practice stands the human figure, and regardless of the expressive form and languages he adopts, Balka's body is always directly or indirectly present in his works. Even the titles of his artworks—often constituted by long arithmetic sequences—are taken after the artist's body dimensions (for example 190 cm, the artist's height). Literature also plays a central role in his work and, together with influences such as the writings of James Joyce (1882–1941) and the poetry of Charles Bukowski (1920–1994), some of his major points of reference include the linguistic experimentation and minimalist syntax of the avant-garde poetry by Paul Celan (1920–1970) and Samuel Beckett (1906–1989).

Miroslaw Balka involves visitors in his work not only visually and intellectually, but also through the dimensions of their own body in every sense. Immersing the audience in an event that is equally experienced through the senses of touch, smell and hearing. His work brings together a plurality of narrations that connect the artist's individual life experience with reflections that involve collective memory, and concern dramatic events from the past century, in particular the Second World War and the Holocaust.

Balka investigates the expressive languages usually associated with the propaganda adopted by totalitarian regimes over the course of history, which appropriated abstract visual forms to communicate ideological messages.

One of his latest installations is a work that can only be experienced through an action: each visitor must open the curtains that separate the space in which is installed. The thereby experiencing a distinct sensation of heat since the handles set on each curtain are preheated to the average temperature of the human body (between 36° and 37° C). Balka uses heat to activate an exchange between each visitor and the artwork through a temperature that evokes a human presence.

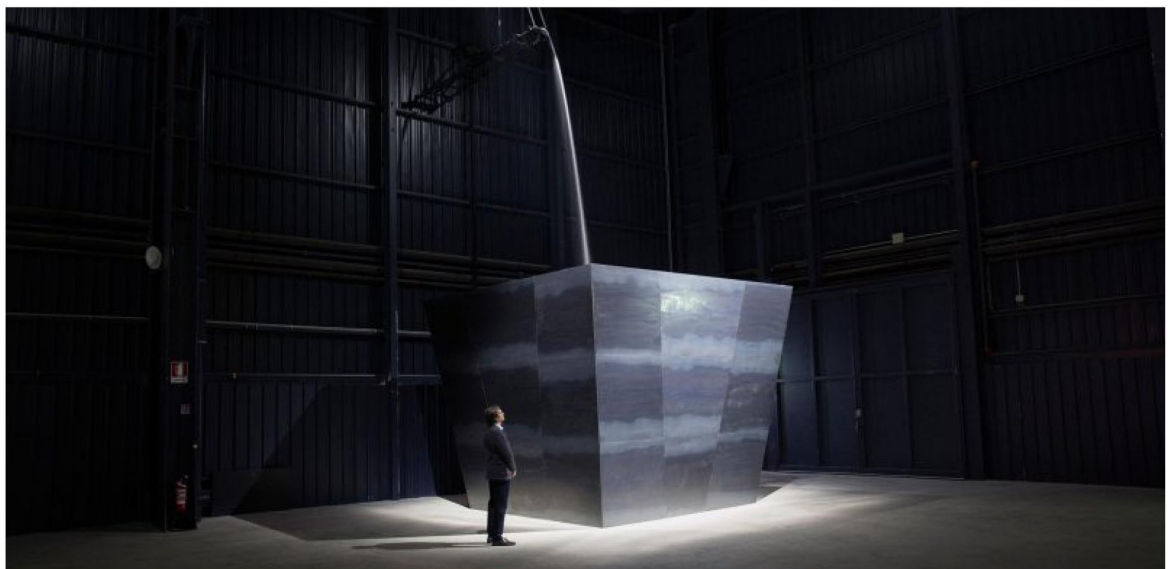
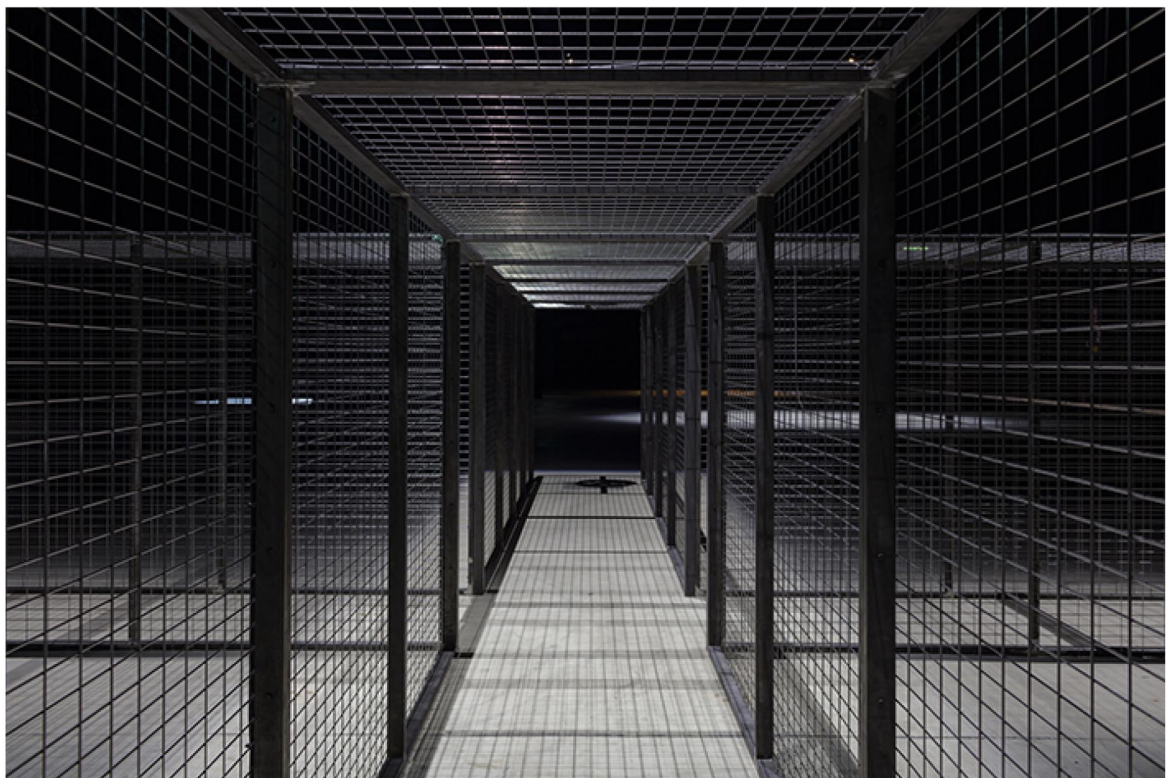
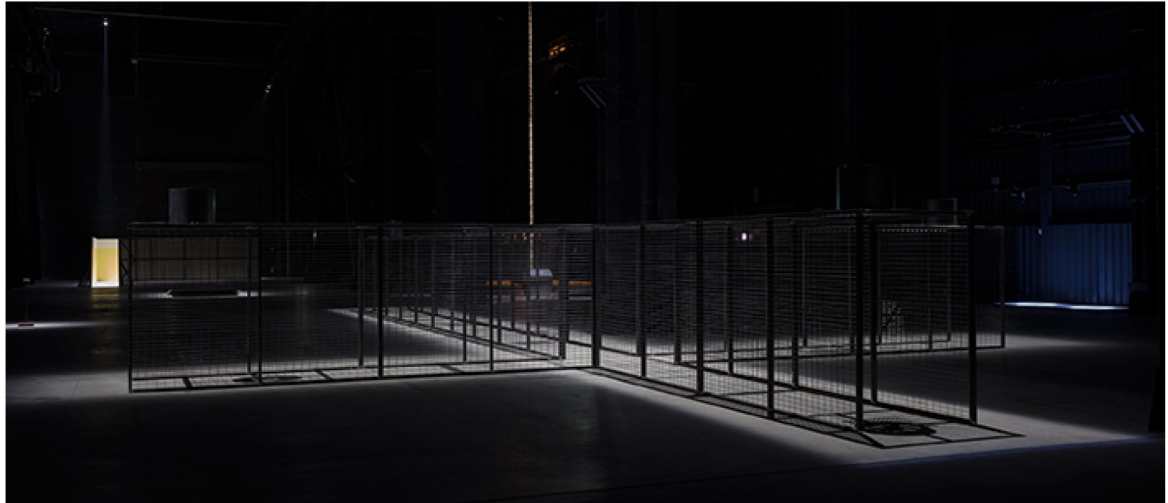
196 x 230 x 141, 2007. The work appears as a “luminous trap” that disorients visitors, almost refuting their presence. 196 x 230 x 141 consists of a blind corridor made of recycled sheets of wood. At the centre of the structure is a light bulb which, in addition to illuminating the inside, invites the visitor to enter into the structure. But once the visitor has entered, the light suddenly switches off, leaving him or her in darkness; it turns on again only once the visitor has moved away. When addressing the ways his works can be experienced, Balka notes: «For me eyes are not the only important part of the viewer—it’s the whole body.»

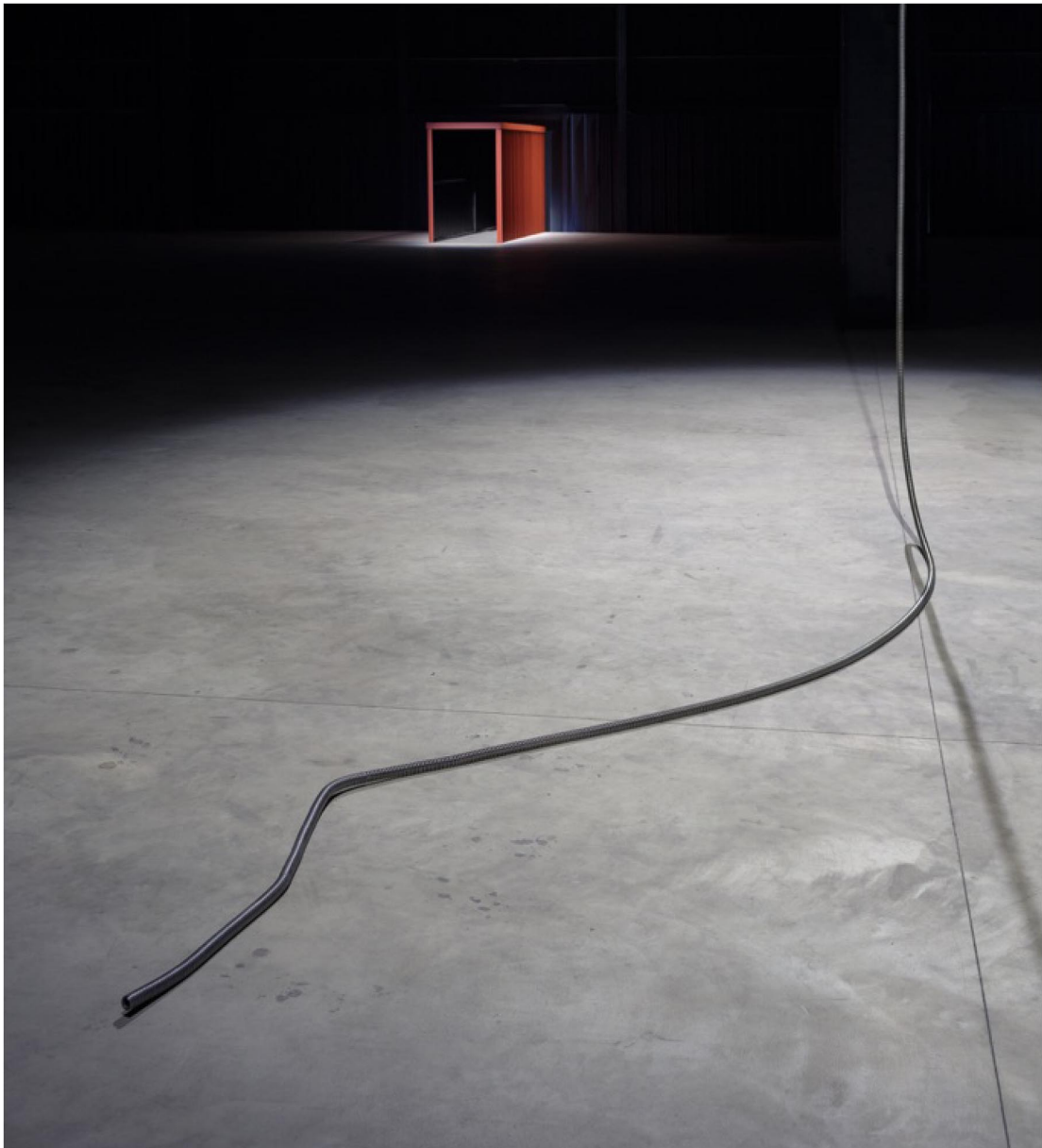
200 x 760 x 500/The Right Path, 2008/2015. A walk able structure, 200 x 760 x 550 /The Right Path invites visitors to exit the exhibition space through a dark, undefined corridor. The artist’s intention is that each single person be led to question his or her own senses and physical presence: in this case, since they cannot rely on sight, the senses of touch and hearing take on fundamental roles insofar as they allow the visitor to perceive the form of the structure and his or her own presence in the space. Darkness can also be understood as a throwback to the child - hood memories and to the sensations and feelings experienced in the past, which like the fear of darkness and the unknown, can resurface at any moment. Balka has investigated these themes in several artworks, and in particular in *How It Is*, an installation he conceived for Tate Modern in 2009: an enormous, dark environment stretching out for over 400 square meters, open to the public. When talking about this work, Polish philosopher Zygmunt Bauman (1925–2017) said: «Darkness is the epitome of that awesome and fearsome unknown lurking in the experience of the city. Dark space is the emptiness, the void, the naught incarnated: and you may suspect that it looks

empty only because your sight is poor, your power to pierce the darkness inadequate, your imagination failing... You suspect that in a dark place anything might happen.»

Cruzamento, 2007. Conceived in 2007 for the external spaces of the Museu de Arte Moderna in Rio de Janeiro, the work is made of two long corridors delimited by steel grills that intersect to form a cross – cruzamento in Portuguese. Starting from an urban context, the artist readapted this sculpture for the museum spaces of the Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe for his exhibition “Wir sehen dich” in 2010, creating a corridor that runs for over 100 meters and crosses through the eight gallery spaces dedicated to early German painting. Cruzamento modifies the way the paintings are viewed by visitors, who can only access the rooms through predefined entryways, or admire artworks through the metallic grills. The spatial layout within which visitors are forced to move highlights their physical presence in the exhibition space and opens up new relationships with the subjects portrayed in the paintings, primarily sacred and religious artworks. Crossing the threshold of the structure, visitors are struck by a strong gust of air produced by five industrial fans, an invisible “shower” that makes them aware of the transition they are undertaking. Talking about this specific moment, the artist says: «this is a bit like purification, you clean your body.» Starting in the 1990s, Balka realized passageways, corridors and walkways that lead visitors from one point to another in the exhibition space, functioning both as thresholds and as elements of suspension. Even Cruzamento gives shape to a sort of ritual of transition, underlining the act of walking and viewing and, as is the case with 250 x 700 x 455, ø 41 x 41/Zoo/T, visitors experience the artwork both from inside and from outside: they observe and are observed, thereby playing a dual role.

400 x 250 x 30, 2005. An assemblage of materials – metal and wood – forms this installation, similar to a large mobile platform set on the floor. Visitors are invited to walk on it but, as they cross through it, 400x 250x 30 reveals its inherent instability. Resting on a single hinge, each movement unbalances the structure, challenging the equilibrium of the people crossing it as well as producing a sonorous, rhythmic sequence. Balka creates an experience that highlights man’s fragility and vulnerability, involving the body, its movements and our senses. Visitors are induced «not only to look, but to pay attention to their own movements and their own body.»





Carsten Höller. Carsten Höller's art investigates the nature of human experience. After earning a degree in phytopathology with a specialisation in chemical ecology at Kiel University, Germany, from 1993 onwards he devoted himself exclusively to art. His installations unhinge not only the traditional concept of the artwork, but also the expectations of a visit to an exhibition or a museum. Höller's artworks often induce a state of disorientation or uncertainty in visitors, which he proposes is a productive state of the mind and which gave to one of his greatest exhibition its title, "Doubt".

At once playful and experimental, Höller generates specific, altered experiences than can only arise by exposing oneself to his works. Referring both to hallucinatory situations and to scientific studies, Höller turns architectural space into an estranging environment in which art becomes a tool for reflection on both human nature and the viewer's role in the exhibition. Höller often encourages active viewer participation in his projects. In doing so, he calls into question the very idea of the art object – static, immutable and declared by the artist to be "finished" – and investigates instead the possibility of "unsaturated" artworks that are unfinished and require the presence of the audience to approximate completion. Granting the viewer an active position in his work, Höller conceives the exhibition as a public place and reflects on what the cultural and sociological function of exhibition spaces may be for the XXI century. In this sense, he has proposed the term "radical entertainment": a form of entertainment that scrutinizes its own motives and functionalities while simultaneously asking about art as entertainment and about the very nature of entertainment as a governing force in our lives.

"Doubt" presents more than twenty artworks, among them some of the most iconic Höller has produced, including sculpture, video, photography and environments, along with installations that involve active participation and works that hark back to optical experiments that stimulate visitors' perceptions. The exhibition develops within the Navate space in Pirelli Hangar Bicocca along two symmetrical and parallel paths, accessible from two different entry points. Based on his or her personal choice, visitors start their walkthrough either in the right or left section of the show, and must rely on memory to reconstruct the experience as a whole. Visitors become an integral part of the exhibition both through their direct involvement in activating the artworks, and in their dual role as observers and those being observed by other visitors. Höller conceived the exhibition as an installation that develops through

different moments – division, multiplication, union, overturning – along a path with increasingly fleeting confines between beginning and end.

At the entrance, *Y* (2003) and *Decision Corridors* (2015) create twin routes that reunite in *Milan Swinging Corridor* (2016) only to later disperse in the space of the *Cubo with Two Roaming Beds (Grey)* (2015), – two mobile beds that, with their unpredictable movements, call into question the initial doubling of the show. The relationship between memory and reality constitutes a common thread running throughout the exhibition. As the artist has stated, «There's something unfolding in there, something that doesn't show its borders easily, something that could possibly extend further than what you are able to grasp, something automatic, self running and morphing.»

Y. Set at the beginning of the exhibition, with its intermittent lights the installation *Y* (2003) recalls an amusement park, which is a recurring theme throughout the artist's oeuvre. A forked corridor opens up before the visitor, forcing him or her to question which direction to take. A luminous spiral that attracts or repulses obliges visitors to make a choice, to follow the movement of the rings, or to oppose it. The artwork anticipates the doubling of the exhibition "Doubt" and how it may be experienced; it produces right from the beginning a sense of disorientation that is further emphasised by the presence of mirrors.

Decision Corridors. By walking along the dark path that passes through *Decision Corridors* (2015), visitors reach the Navate space, yet on the way they may feel a sensation of deranged time-space coordinates. With these two corridors, which lead to the two sections of the exhibition and to separate symmetrical experiences, Carsten Höller reflects once again on the individual's decision making processes. The darkness further affects visitors' perception: eyes, body and even the mind are inevitably led to search for new spatial and temporal reference points in order to adapt to the dark environment. Visitors find themselves forced to consider sounds as well, being led and at the same time disoriented by the estranging noises of the steps of other people moving along the path below or above them. Small peepholes at the highest points of the corridors allow visitors a glimpse to the other corridor, where they may perceive an eye in the corresponding peepholes. About his decision to set the corridors at the beginning of the exhibition: «When I do exhibitions, I put a lot of

effort into the first impression you have. When you come into a large space, for instance, you see everything more or less in front of you... This time I'm hoping to delay that process with the corridors, in the sense there's nothing to see, it just brings you somewhere else.» «The experience he invokes accepts that the human body is profoundly limited, fallible, easily manipulated.» Höller puts the visual and mnemonic capabilities of the observer to the test.

Aquarium. In *Aquarium* (1996), Höller deepens his interest in the relationship between human beings and animals. The artwork consists of an aquarium that has three openings that allow visitors to observe a school of *Balantiocheilos melanopterus* fish. Visitors can study their behaviour from an unusual perspective, as if those observing were under-water, while the continuous movement of the fish may create a psychedelic effect in the mind of the observer.

Double Neon Elevator. Similar to the work *Neon Elevator*, presented in 2005 at ShugoArts in Tokyo, *Double Neon Elevator* (2016) is made up of numerous green fluorescent light tubes which are forming luminous walls. The tubes are going on and off in a way that is configured to create a sensation of ascension on one side and descent on the other side, as if the person standing inside the artwork would be in an elevator. Thanks to its transparency and continuous changes in the intensity of the lights, the structure of *Double Neon Elevator* provokes the illusion that the very space in which it is located is what is moving, rather than the succession of tubes turning on and off.

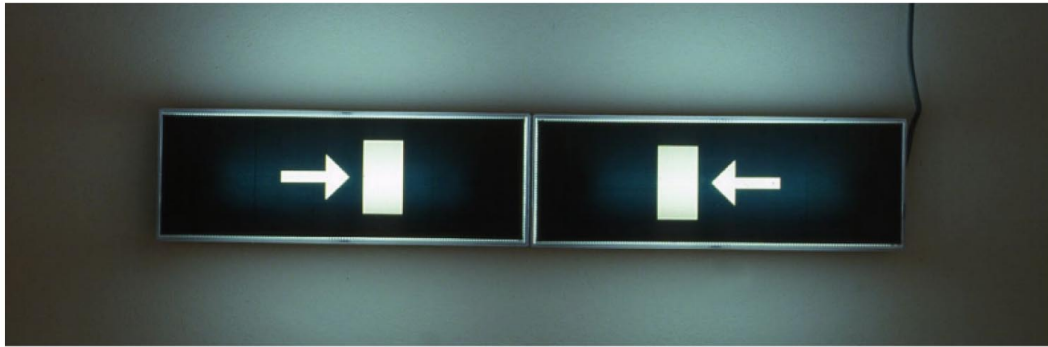
Revolving Doors. *Revolving Doors* (2004/2016) is made up of five mirrored, revolving doors, placed as a pentagon in equal distances to each other. The doors produce a continuous variety of reflections (and reflections of reflections) of visitors' bodies and the surrounding space. The mirroring effect of *Revolving Doors* creates a labyrinthine environment in which the visitor may lose his or her space-time coordinates, and may unknowingly enter the other side of the exhibition.

Two Flying Machines. Höller's *Two Flying Machines* (2015) provide visitors with the opportunity to simulate flight, soaring above the exhibition space. The two machines – which resemble a combination of carousel, paraglide and motorbike – are designed

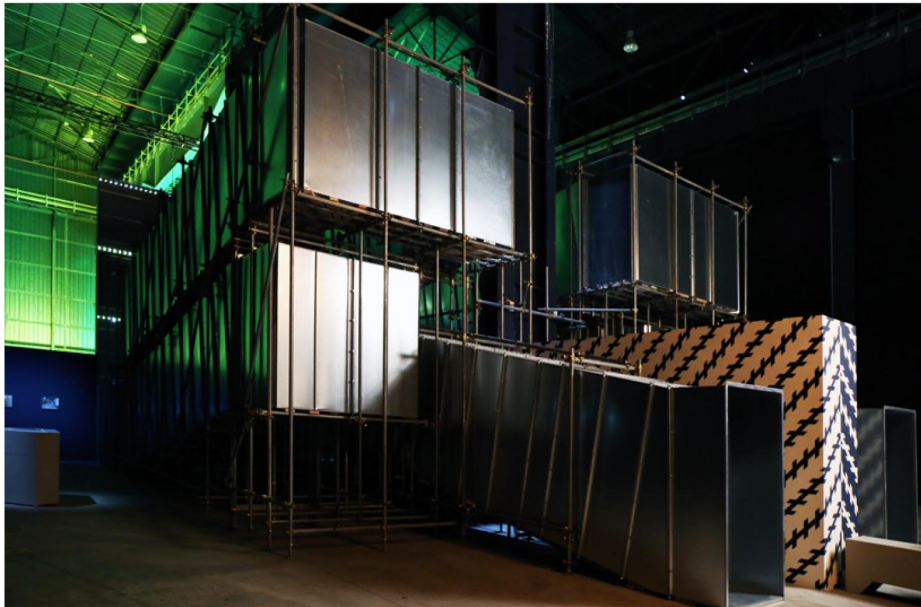
to enable contemplation. Two Flying Machines direct our attention to other people in the exhibition, not least the people using the machines, who Höller expects to experience embarrassment, suspended in the air «like a bag of potatoes.»

Upside-Down Goggles. While visitors are riding Double Carousel they can wear the Upside-Down Goggles (1994/2011), eyeglasses that provide an upside-down view of the surrounding environment. Höller's goggles refer to optical experiments conducted during the 1890s by American psychologist George Stratton (1865-1957), who used a lens in front of one eye to see upside-down with the other eye being closed. The scientist, after having worn the lens for eight consecutive days, reported that he adapted consecutively to his impairment, until his vision returned to upright, at least while he was moving.

The space of this inspiring exhibition is divided into two, half, in two parallel and symmetrical halves. The choice to cross one of the two corridors that on your arrival leads you to go back, walking in the other side of the installation. Like a circular path, a circle that closes. Accompanied by doubts, uncertainties, intuitions and sensations, the last element to be discovered is a series of photographs of investigators who, without knowing it, are following each other, creating a labyrinth and invisible spatial connections between them. Leaving an even greater sense of uncertainty of places and curiosity of identity, it comes almost natural turn back to see if someone is following you.







3.3. Directing and scenic aspects

The aim of this section of the thesis is to present to the reader how I imagine the final representation of the performance of *Woyzeck* set in the *Cistern* of the Prada Foundation of Milan.

My set design aims to bring the audience into a real experience while the developing of the performance itself. Throughout spatial solutions that lead the audience to “step on” or to “walk in” the set design I propose a 360 degrees experience of *Woyzeck*.

I choose to place my project in the Prada Foundation because I believe that thanks to its unique but simple architecture allow me to find several interesting ways for the disposition of my set design. The space consists in three large rooms – about 12 meters deep and 9 meters high; each room has a door to enter the space from outside and one that connect the three of them (more details about it will be presented during the discussion of the thesis). My intention is to use all the rooms. The developing of the performance, consist in each the rooms the beginning, the central part and the end of the performance. My proposal is to bring the audience through one scenic space into another.

In the next part of my researches I will explain how I structured the characters of the play in my reinterpretation comparing to the original one.

My idea about the Factory is very much related to the concept of old factories in which workers use to live in. For example the French *Le familistère de Guise*, built in the end of the 19th century. The reason why I focus on this specific aspect it is because to support my idea of a new adaptation I need to create a context which can contain all the prerequisite of a hypothetical society at once. This is why in my project, when I speak about factory, I imagine a place where there are residences for the workers and their families. I designing a space, in which an entire community lives and work in, provided of kindergarten for the children, divided in departments.

The working class is composed by four main departments; Department 1: Woyzeck, Andres and the other works; Department 2: Marie, Margret and other women; Department 3: Children; Department 4: Idiots – workers that lost their minds by working in the factory, now allocated to simple works like cleaning.

The other part of the members of the factory is composed by the ruling class. In my version correspond to the following characters: Manager (Drum-Major), Chief of the workers (Capitan), Engineer (Professor), Scientist (Doctor).

Visual references

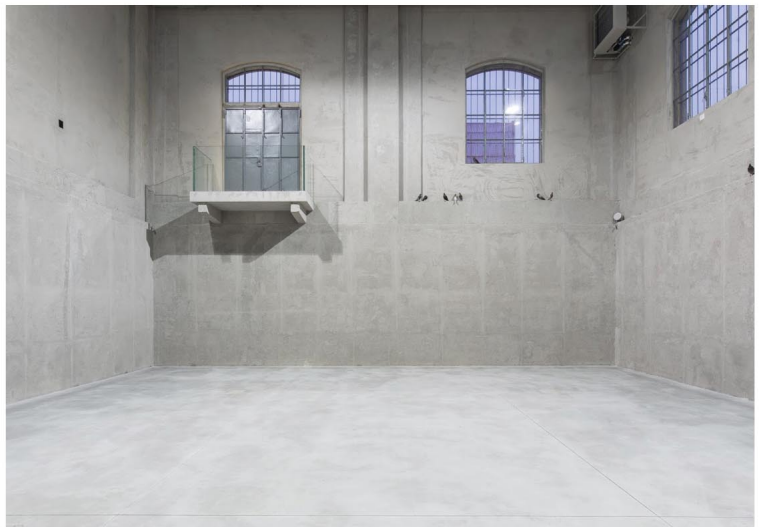
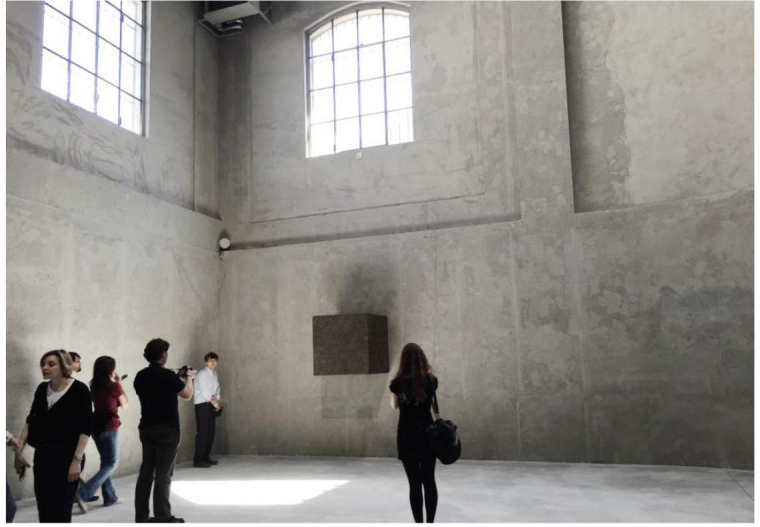




Costumes



Costumes



Cistern, Prada Fondazione, Milan, Italy

Storyboard

The following part of my thesis aims to explain in detail, scene by scene, how the play of Büchner can be eventually adapted to my scenic and directing proposal – considering that I choose to place the play nowadays, in the specific context of an ex-factory of spirits in Milan, Italy.

In particular, the following storyboard is meant to be both a reference and a case study for other directors and stage designers and for whoever could be interested in developing a personal interpretation of the studied play, starting from my revision. For this reason I built the storyboard in a way that could be easily reinterpreted without too many barriers and limits.

Scene 1 Introduction. Factory, early morning: one of the servants of the factory is wiping the floor while listening to the radio: the news reports are running and the radio host is announcing the news about a woman murdered by her husband.

Scene 2 Hallucinations. Factory, early morning: the workers enter in the factory; a voice from a speaker is pronouncing a motivational motto:

“Workers, good morning. Business management wishes you a good work. In your interest, treat the machine that was entrusted to you with love. Pay attention to its maintenance. The company's recommended safety measures guarantee your safety. Your health depends on your relationship with the machine. Respect its needs, and do not forget that machine plus attention equals production. Good work.”

Workers start to work, Woyzeck is not feeling good and breaks the systematic work of the entire assembly line: he is having hallucinations (Andres has to ignore him because he must keep working).

Scene 3 Infidelity and Jealousy. Factory, female department: Marie and the other women are working on their tasks, some of them are preparing food for the workers; the youngest children surround them. The managers of the factory came in to monitor their work, Marie notices in particular one of them and says: *“What a man, straight as a tree! And brave as lion, I'll bet!”*

Margret, one of her colleague, notice it and yell at her for her silly behaviour. Suddenly, Woyzeck arrives, gripped by hallucinations, and get close to Marie putting

in her pocket some coins that he earned from the extra work of the past few days, right after he goes runs back to his position in the factory.

Scene 4 Animal Reason / Seduction / Double Reason. Factory, common area, lunch break: women and children enter bringing food to the workers that are standing in line to get their portion. In the background managers are monitoring the situation. Suddenly a worker start to read out loud a newspaper: he is telling the story of a monkey that believes to be a human being and of an astronomic horse that believes to understand the language of humans. Everybody is laughing but soon both stories are turned against Woyzeck: the workers make fun of him because of his weird and inappropriate behaviour in the factory, comparing him to the beasts of the stories: “A man, a bestial man, but also a beast!” In the middle of the noise of the worker’s laugh, a couple of managers notice Marie and, in addition to the humiliations suffered by Woyzeck, one of them says great compliments about her body and she appreciates it.

Scene 5 Science and Nature. Factory, workers are working. The engineer of the factory comes in with his apprentices. The apprentices have to calculate the productivity of each machine, how fast each worker can be for the production of piecework and then give them feedbacks.

In the mean time the Scientist of the factory comes in and check the health of Woyzeck asking him some weird question while he is hardly trying to not loose focus on his hard work.

Scene 6 Suspect. Factory, female department: Marie is looking at her self into a reflecting part of a machine; she is admiring her new earrings. Woyzeck notices the earring and suddenly become jealous. He asks questions about how she gets them but Marie angry. In that moment Christian, their son, join them and Woyzeck has attention only for him, forgetting about Marie. He give to her the money earned by the extra work for his Chief and leaves.

Scene 7 Morality. Factory, Chief’s office. The exhausted Woyzeck, in hurry, is doing extra work for the chief of the workers; this last one does not miss the opportunity to do the moral to him for his conditions: “*What am I supposed to do with the ten*

minutes you save rushing that way? What use are they to me?" The Chief continues his thought about "eternity" and about the fact that Woyzeck is working too fast and so he is not enjoying the precious time of his life. Woyzeck, desperate, replies that he does not have time: "*We poor people do not have the money, we do not have the change, the time to live with morality*" (workers in the factory are paid by piecework).

Scene 8 Betrayal. Factory, female department: women with children at work. The manager of the factory goes to Marie and induces her to follow him. He tries to kiss her, at first she refuses and gets angry but then she gives up and lets him do what he has to do.

Scene 9 Science And Madness. Factory, Scientist's lab: Woyzeck comes in, immediately the scientist yells at him because he is coughing and this could alter the result of the scientist's experiments. They discuss the health of Woyzeck and the scientist interrogates him about his behaviour, asking him if he is following the indications that gave to him for his experiments. Besides he puts Woyzeck into a machine to measure the physical values of Woyzeck.

Scene 10 Cruelty. Factory. The Chief of the workers and the Scientist are discussing about some of the factory's issues. Woyzeck is working and passes by in a rush trying to avoid them, but they insist and stop him. The Chief continues to laugh at the fact that he does not have morality and alludes to Marie's betrayal. Woyzeck feels faint: "*Chief, I'm a poor man, I have nothing but her in the world. Please don't make jokes, sir.*" The Scientist occurs not missing the opportunity to measure his physical values.

11 Jealousy. Factory, Woyzeck and Marie are fighting. He is in the middle of a jealous rage, accusing her of betrayal. He is terribly upset and desperately trying to figure out if the Chief was telling the truth about her or not.

12 Jealousy. Factory, workers at work. Woyzeck is not feeling good; his colleague Andres tries to cover him while he is having hallucinations again. (Andres tries to protect him because, if the managers of the factory discover that he is going crazy,

they will fire him as worker and downgrading him in the department of the servants/idiots, who has a very little pay –too little for maintain his family).

13 Life and Death/Hallucinations. Factory, common area, evening it is dinnertime. Workers, managers, engineers, women, children, idiots are all present. While everybody is eating, Woyzeck is wandering around, completely lost and confused; he stops in front of window and sees his worst nightmare becoming true: Marie together with one of the managers – they do not see him. Woyzeck is completely shocked and goes away; he hears voices everywhere whispering him to kill Marie.

14 Murder's Dream. Factory, at night, men department: Woyzeck and Andres are in a single bed. Woyzeck cannot sleep, those voices are still with him and are torturing him. He shakes and woke up Andres: "*Andres! I can't sleep. Everything starts spinning when I shut my eyes and I hear the fiddles, on and on, round and round. Then it says it again, out of the wall. Can you hear it?*" Andres, exhausted as well, offers him a glass of grappa to keep away the fever. Woyzeck cannot stop: "*Always the same stab, stab! Between my eyes, like a knife!*"

15 Betrayal. Factory: Woyzeck and Andres. Woyzeck asks to Andres if he heard any rumours about Marie and the manager. Andres says: "*What's the difference? What do you want him to say? A red-hot piece, fantastic.*" Woyzeck reflects: "*What was I dream last night? A knife, was it? So that is what he said. Dreams, stupid thing... But you know, Andres, there was no one like her.*" Andres asks "*Who?*" and Woyzeck says that it does not matter anymore and goes away.

Scene 16 Fight. Factory, workers at work. Woyzeck and the manager get close. They fight, Woyzeck loose, he is worn-out. The other workers continue their work.

Scene 17 The Weapon. Factory, workers at work. Woyzeck reaches the edge and he goes searching for help from an ex-worker, a servant, an idiot. They talk, but their conversation brings to only a possible conclusion; the ex-worker gives to Woyzeck a tool of the factory, a piece of metal, which will become the murder weapon.

Scene 18 Repentance / Loneliness. Factory, female department: Marie and the other women with their children are working. Marie is secretly reading the Bible, searching for repentance; she goes closer to her son and hugs him, she is crying because she betrayed Woyzeck with the manager. Servants, idiots, are all around them. In the mean time a child says he wants to listen to a story, one of the oldest women start: *“Once upon a time there was a poor little boy who had no father and mother; everything was dead and there was no one left in the whole world. Everything was quite dead, so he went off, whimpering. All day and all night. And since there was no one left on earth he decided to go up to heaven where the moon shone down so kind. But when he got to the moon it was a lump of rotten wood. Then he went to the sun, but when he got there it was a withered-up sunflower. And when he got to the stars they were little spangled midges stuck there, like the ones shrieks stick on blackthorns. So he went back to the earth, but the earth was an overturned pot. He was completely alone, and he sat down and cried. He’s sitting there still, all alone.”* Woyzeck arrives and bring away Marie, telling to her *“they have to go.”*

Scene 19 Murder. Factory, basement: Woyzeck holds Marie hand; he is bringing her down to the basement. She is confused, there is no much light, she is scared and want to goes back. Woyzeck insists reassuring her. They finally reach the more desolated area of the factory. Woyzeck takes out the piece of iron to kills Marie, she fight for her life and accidentally they touch some cables of the electric system of the factor, the light goes off, Woyzeck kills her.

Scene 20 Discover of the Murder. Factory, basement: the entire factor has no electricity. A group of workers come down with flashlights to check and fix the electric problem: they found the death body of Marie.

Scene 21 The Blood. Factory, common area, lunch break: in the mean time Woyzeck, came back to the main floor. The electricity is back now and the factory’s community is having some fun with the music on the radio. One of the women takes Woyzeck to dance and suddenly discover blood on Woyzeck’s arm. She starts to scream and everybody is get worried.

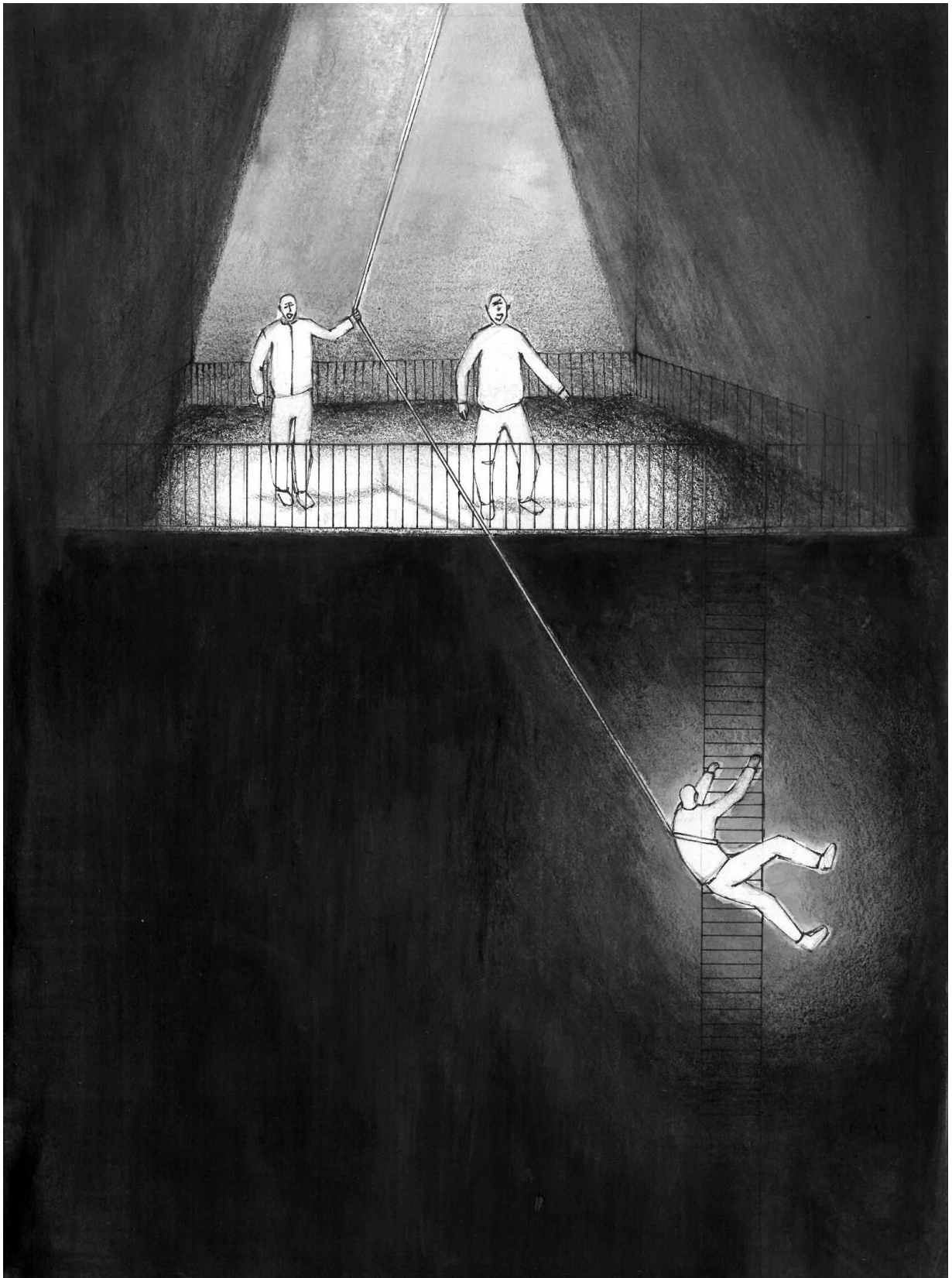
Scene 22 The Crime Scene / Hiding Of The Weapon. Factory, common area, lunch break: Woyzeck, panicking, runs back to the basement, he meets the other workers that are coming up to tell the horrible fact and worried, aware him of not going down. Woyzeck is having a panic attack and falls down while trying to reach the crime scene.

Scene 23 Discovering Of The Body. Factory, common area: children hear voices of the workers that just come back from the basement and are discussion how to inform the rest of the factory's people of this horrible news. Children shocked, confused and exited at the same time reveal what happen to the son of Woyzeck that does not understand and keep playing with his toys.

Scene 24 Goodbye. Factory, common area: Woyzeck comes back from the basement and runs to hug his son. While the entire factory's community is watching the scene really worried for the sort of both of them. Woyzeck will probably go in jail and the poor son will have to grow alone in the factory with no parents that take care of him.

Scene 25 Hypocrisies. Factory, common area: the Scientist and the Chief of the workers, together with managers and engineers are looking at the entire scene from above, judging the killer, Woyzeck, for his folly and in sarcastic remark congrats with him for "*such a murder! It has been too long that we haven't seen one like this one!*"

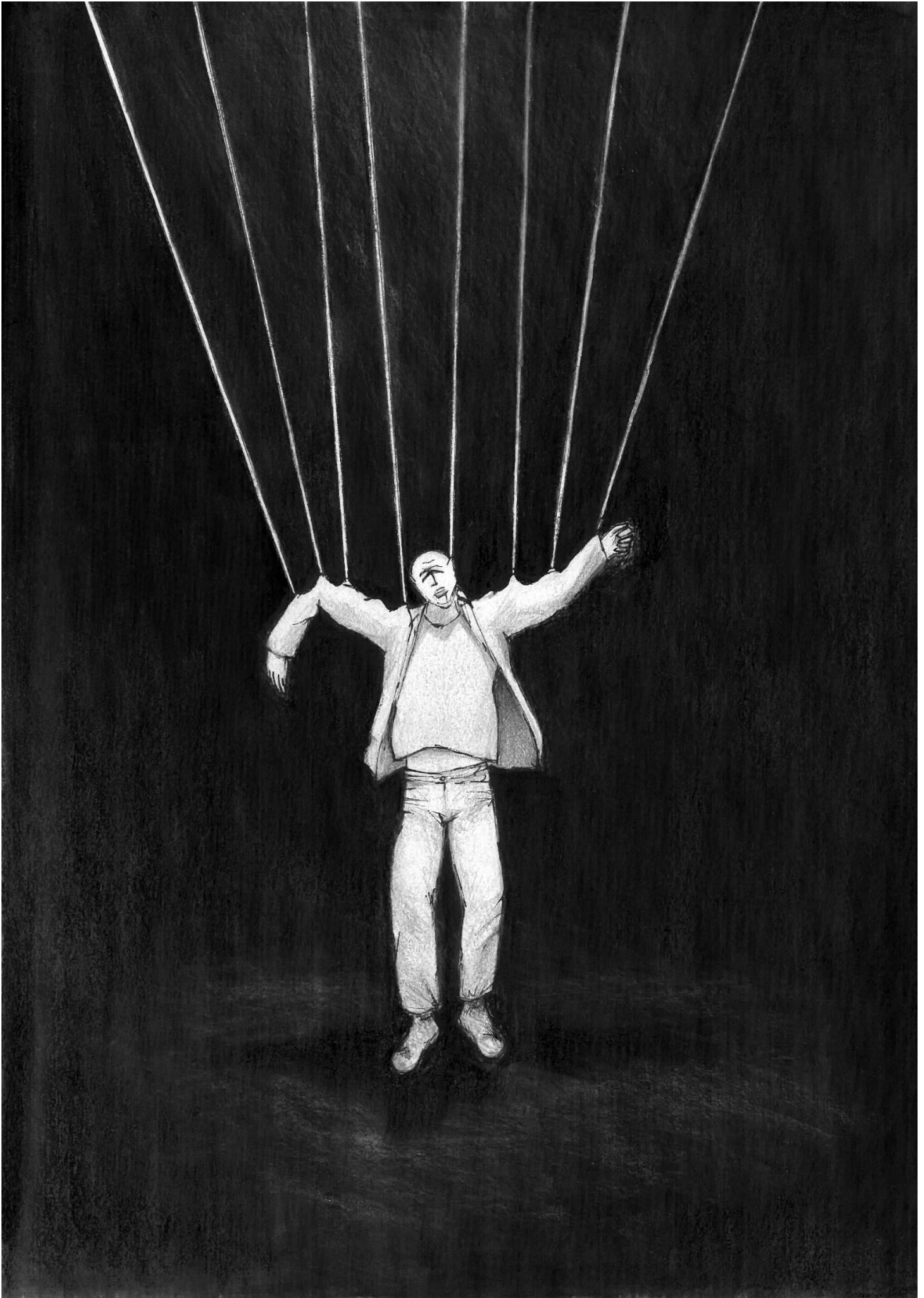
Personal sketches



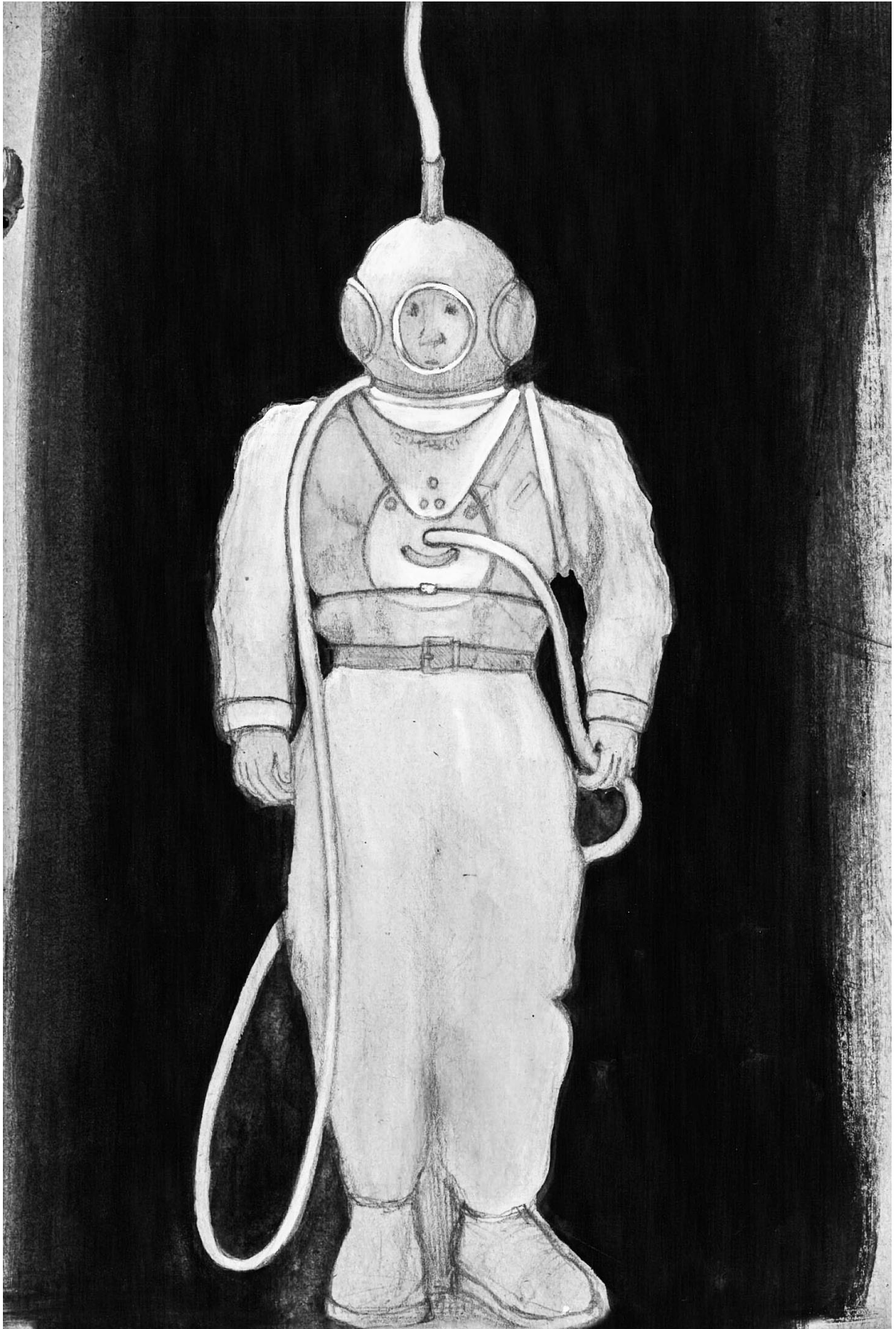
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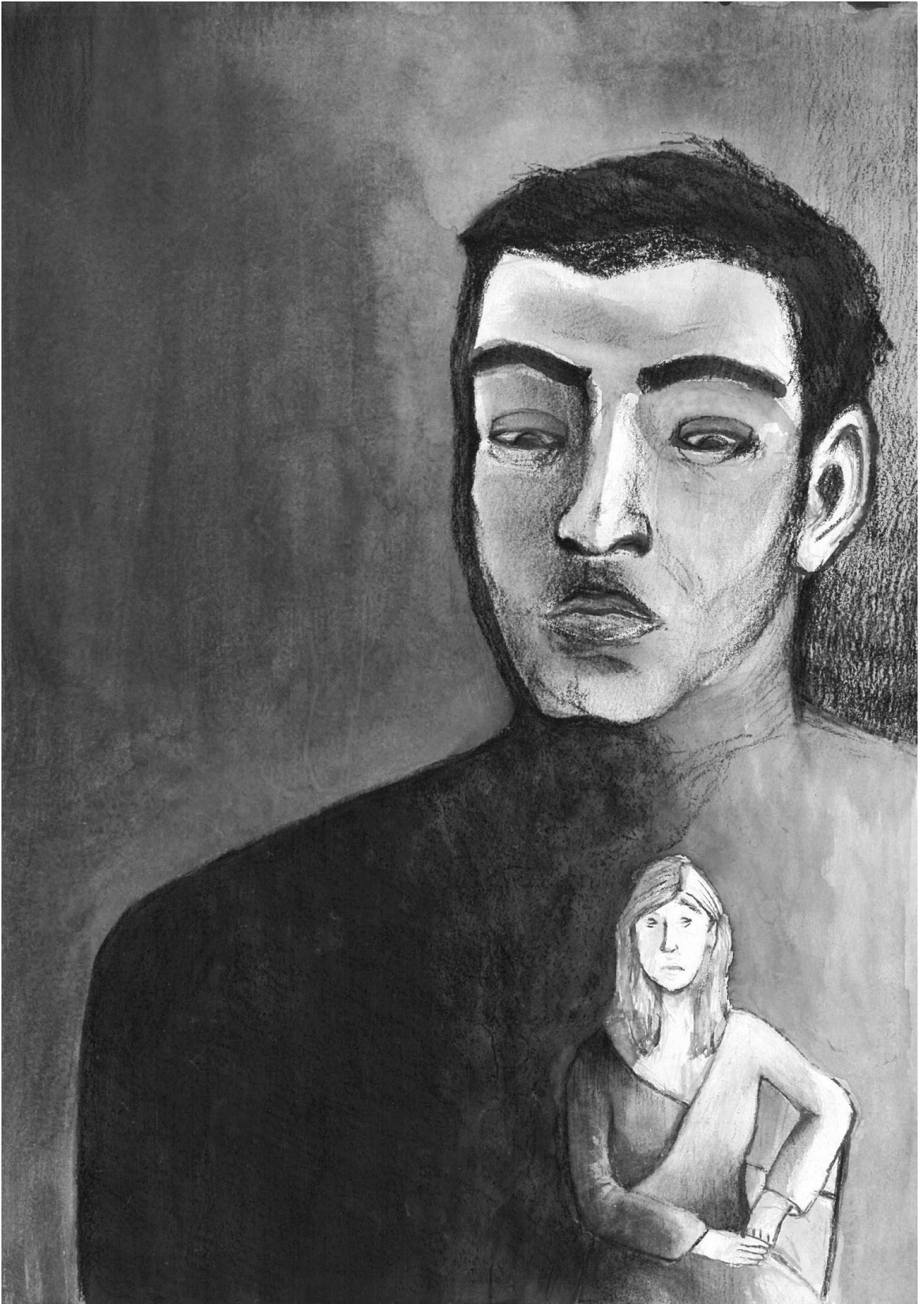
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Elisa Galluzzo, 2017

Conclusion

Arriving at the conclusion of my master thesis, and of the end of my studies at The Academy of Performing Arts of Prague, I would like to express a personal opinion regarding this project. Regardless of the achievements that only the reader or the possible viewers can judge, I can only say that this path, over my elaboration of a personal version of *Woyzeck* has been a decisive experience, a moment after which in my life and in my work, I have somehow enriched my personal luggage. Working on this play, rich of such raw topics, in certain occasions it has been hard, but now that I arrive at the conclusion of it I am really glad that I have the opportunity to research and study it. I believe that *Woyzeck*, tells alarming realities that still today subsist in our society; in my opinion, as an artist, as a set designer is my task – together with directors and dramaturges – to highlight and create the right pretext to discuss and reflect about them.

I started the thesis researches with a question: *In what way theatre can lead the audience to a self-reflection of the play?*

I believe that over my researches I developed one of the possible ways: choosing a play, originally from the 19th century, extrapolates from its context the main themes for a completely new adaptation set in a contemporary time. I believe that this method could open several doors, several keys of interpretation for the viewers and will help to maintain the incredibly story of Franz Woyzeck alive.

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