

A Directing Diary on the Process of Creating a Performance

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Reader's Review

In my opinion the writer's work is very inspirational. It offers an interesting insight into the process of completing the English study programme at DAMU, where the student is confronted with a foreign cultural environment – not just in the area of the perception of theatre but also in the perception of a human in a society.

The writer's „discovery” of the level of language as an unaware utterance of thinking and the relation to the reality is remarkable. The discovery was made during the writer's work on staging of the segment of Havel's play *The Memorandum*. In relation to the writer's personal experiences from her homeland (People's Republic of China), she describes her own point of view on the stereotypical use of language as a tool of unaware propaganda, as it is described in Viktor Klemper's book *The Language of the Third Reich* in a very similar way.

The use of language as a tool of propaganda and especially as an utterance of the depersonalised or levelled thinking became the main topic of her following work, above all in the graduate project *Serve the people*.

In this production, the writer successfully adapted the Chinese author Yan Lianke's novel to the not closely specified environment of the eastern military totalitarian regime, where people are getting trapped not only in the language but also in the level of emotions. The lines between the real emotion and emotional manipulation, the human dignity and loyalty to the regime are blurred.

I consider the stage adaptation to be successful both in terms of authorial and directing. It's not just about retelling the story, but about actually staging it.

In the production the writer showed her talent for scenic and dramatic solution of space. What is more, the writer is looking for the solution in her thesis (e.g. in the chapter dedicated to the scene between the soldier and general's wife).

On the paper the writer mainly describes her experience of the process of preparation and rehearsals of her school projects, when she actually touches on the issue of the creative process and its assumptions. Although the writer built just on her personal experiences, in some places there are interesting observations, which are unfortunately not more precisely organised.

In the thesis I lack stronger and more pronounced structure, from which could be clearer to what the writer came up during her studies and the time she was writing the thesis. The conclusion of the thesis is also not very pronounced. The thesis is written more like a diary notes which point to the conclusion that every observation or knowledge have the same value and are on the same level of importance. Some observations are so marginal (or banal in the context of the thesis) that it would be better to cite them as footnotes. The thesis also misses more thorough work with the literature – there are just quotations of theatre authorities, respectively only their own personal experiences from the process of making various productions.

Generally I rate this thesis as successful and I recommend it for the defence.

There is only one question related to the defence: What do you think is the main task in the work of director in the process of creating a show?

The recommended grade for the practical graduation project and written thesis: B

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