

Oponent's notes on Nirav Prajapati's bachelor thesis 'Anecdotal body transformation'

Nirav's presented text in its very introduction already sets out many different content goals, which determine the overall feeling of whether or not he didn't want or could not decide in which direction and to what goal he wants to lead us to. This feeling during further reading is amplified by the fact that Nirav jumps (un)consciously through his diary, memoir, sometimes pure analysis with his need to describe in details, and sometimes we witness even the sermon itself. The main connecting element of the whole text is Nirav's personal relationship and experience in discovering himself through his own authorial or interpretive work in a theatrical environment. This personal dynamics, passion and fascination is sometimes so vast that it overwhelms the topics of the chapters themselves. In these moments, more distance, humor and general formal navigation in how to perceive these sections would help me as a reader.

The main thematic motif is Nirav's transformation in different theatrical cultural and social environment, which he has had the opportunity to experience in his life so far and which, as he describes at the end, made him a better person. How and when such a fundamental transformation took place remains a mystery to me.

In the first chapter, we are guided by Nirav's early experiences during his childhood and adolescence in India. We learn what Nirav has encountered and what influenced him in his artistic work and personal life. Despite his work as an electrician, passionate marathon runner, dancer, versatile actor, or enthusiastic painter, Nirav himself admits a kind of personal instability that forces him to constantly try something new (which he describes as „flicker nature“) and constantly look for inspiration in something else. He suggests that, despite all these experiences, he found an internal dialogue in himself, which from today's perspective resonates with Dialogical Acting by I. Vyskocil and that this form of expression was liberating for him.

Further Nirav introduces us to Indian Folk Dance and Kalaripayatta; we are acquainted with the cultural context and content of selected traditional Indian dances; it is an unusual topic for our cultural context therefore the text creates certain analytical and content expectations to learn more. However, Nirav soon passes to the personal level of non-fulfillment he experienced, and by the end leaves us with a feeling of a certain generality. The same happens with Kalari's description, from which we learn more about Nirav's relationship to the discipline as such than to the specific content of a particular subject and why it is so crucial to him in his further artistic development.

The third final part is the last chapter. It is divided into five subchapters; first two shares his certain personal contradiction in understanding of two completely different approaches to stage practice. The first is Stanislavsky's Acting Method and the second is the Dialogical Acting by I. Vyskocil. We witness a certain disillusionment with „what works or not“ in these two different approaches and how this affects him in his acting development. As this topic seems to be fundamental for Nirav in some respects, it is gradually disappearing in generalities and does not form a clear view of why this thematic contradiction is so important for Nirav and why these two directions are even mentioned here.

In the three parts of the last chapter, Nirav describes his experience with pedagogical activities and its obstacles. The chapters are full of concrete examples from practice,

including some specific exercises. Because this description is interspersed with personal experiences, difficulty, including description of relationships to this or that teacher, we again face a certain textual chaos, which does not allow us to navigate even in a simple description of a particular exercise.

Even for these relatively clear inconsistencies, I recommend this work to be defended, mainly due to Nirav's great passion for theater and his desire for personal development. I wish him to find some calmness and the necessary distance and thus gain greater access to the subject matter.

I suggest grade C-D

Questions –

1. In the third chapter there is a comparison between Stanislavsky's Acting method and Dialogical acting by I. Vyskocil. Can you explain what inspired you to make that choice?
2. At the end of the whole work you mention the term "inner artist" several times. It sounds like something important to you. Can you explain this concept in more detail and put it into context?

Bc. Jan Bárta
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