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Rating: The First Altruistic Performance

Theatre performance of Marko Bulc

Stara mesna elektrarna- Elektro Ljubljana

Written in Slovenian by Nika Arhar

How can we think of altruism, which as an emptied word, maybe a shadow of an ideal swirling in ideological manipulation of modern empty rhetoric in a disoriented coexistence of so called individualists and socially engaged, activist art emanation. Does this idea of "giving yourself to the other" confer power that also or above all is supposed to be given or shared?

A decade after the "Last Egoistic Performance", Marko Bulc created the "First Altruistic Performance (Bunker Institute) that shifts the focus from himself and words to the space and community of twenty spectators. Even though this is a solo project, for its full creation, it requires the visitors who with the help of Marko Bulc (author, stage director, choreographer, set designer and performer) are directed in the realization of the full performance.

Bulc continuously creates an unstable space in which it becomes clear that both *egoism* and *altruism* are not "pure" concepts, but nevertheless he doesn't enter into the contradiction of the concept and the personal dilemmas of the altruistic. On contrary, through a series of performance situations he exhibits much of what is adorned with the concept and practise of altruism which enables to become clear.

It seems that a simple event often gives the impression that it will only reach witty and meaningful derivations that emerge from unpredictable links between words and positions of elements in different scene layouts. But only in the openness of reading and interpreting, the performance hardly satisfies us; Bulc convinces us particularly with a perfect stage-thinking in organizing an otherwise scarce starting point of the stage situation.

The direction of the events is marked by the constant dribble of two lines- the basic insufficiency, that needs to be complemented or it needs the help of the others or the challenge of - and when doing so in an extremely serious way and factual in some kind of unobstructed working manner, the hidden absurdity of the whole activity is only sharper. Too small and wobbly kid's chairs with undercut legs and conjoint wedge that is too short to repair the chair work as a community binder and spread tension in depositing altruistic solution.

The chairs also become a mistake or a personal luggage of individuals as the bearers of individual roles (functions, positions) and autonomous objects of the roles, while gathered company as a whole takes on different roles through the eight act structuring of the event (from a movement performance, workshop or touristic tours to the installation, performance and lecture).

A variety of identity labels that arbitrarily but also temporarily given to visitors – also the author is in every scene "different Marko Bulc" - creates a network of layers and references that, by relocating

and depriving, reveal the second layer of human existence, in which also roots scheme of the performance's format in the simple fact of cooperation or only a common presence in the basic setting of clustered moves.

Bulc sets up constellations to the smallest detail, skilfully moving and varying them, establishes references to the elements that are related to his egoistic performance, as well as to social reality that is also connected with the performance reality. This is the reality that creates a compact and solid network that is gradually revealed to its links and merits.

In doing so, he avoids the traps of explicit communication and significance, and leads the spectator to a completely different path - as an element of a network, yet in a "secure" offset position of silent "contemplation". It is through the exchangeable material of the event that he leads to the tangibility of proximity, which, perhaps, with altruism, as we understand it today, has not much more in common, which in itself is also a matter of this very topic.

If the title of the play implies a continuation, the conclusion- altruistic or not –gives hope that this can be anything but next Bulc's project.