

## We Have a Rare Disease: We Are Losing Intuition

When the Theater of Cruelty goes in collaboration with Berlin-based free jazz Hopscotch-ensemble, it is because they want to show all the imagination our society lacks. And they call it Proud Cloud.

“It’s a mental disease”, states one of the characters in the play, the mother, “when you are losing your intuition and becoming too rational”.

The improvised play Proud Cloud is very much about that. It is a journey for the lost intuition, a journey of life and death. It is also the best word to describe what is happening on the stage when the lights go down and the utterly unusual performance commences. Firstly, the play looks like a badly directed musical circus, where everybody goes loose and wild, and getting insane each in their own way. Here and there people talk, sing, scream and dance. But, after a considerable amount of time - usual concentration gap for the physical theater of Lars Øyno - the audience starts to see some sort of clear structure and design. The Dutch performer Ciska Jansen seems no longer just preparing some Asian dish, but her every gesture makes a melody. And, together with the smell of food, creates the scenery for the following actions.

Very soon after the variegated orchestra starts the tune we are losing the sense of reality, every movement and sound made on the scene is intervening the audience, the interaction is enormously penetrating. Musicians are actors, actors are singers, and the audience also starts performing, improvising to the tune of the free jazz orchestra. The borders between real and imaginative are getting blurred. Even Lars Øyno is actively participating in the role of an “instant director”, walking freely among the actors and musicians as if we are present at the rehearsal. And a girl is crying on the second row. Is she also a part of this improvised concert? I don’t know. Maybe.

The story of the play is a metaphysical travel of the family of four: a father, a mother and their two teenage daughters. The younger one, played by fantastic Sara Fellman, asks the main question: “Is a cloud proud?” “That’s where you come from, and where you will go”, answers her father. Everyone looks in life for their own cloud, and they know immediately when they found one. Only intuition can assist the person in his travel. A butoh-dancer Hisako Horikawa plays in a way the role of this assistant, an irrational shadow, a warning, probably this is how “memento mori” can be visualized. Intuitive music, movements, acting, there is nothing settled in the play, still nothing unimportant. Since the task for the director is quite challenging, the play lacks its structure, which makes it difficult to follow. At certain points, there is too much movement, too many variations, too many different situations happening at the same time. And this smell, of some Asian dish which gets deeply into your lungs and rests there for the whole evening. The imaginative situations where an Asian immigrant cooking their traditional food becomes the candidate for presidency reminds us of a dream, where such metamorphoses are totally normal. Probably, the director also wanted to mock the current presidential election campaign in USA, where in the 21 century so many people support a

racist and xenophobic candidate? And here the Asian immigrant is participating in the election campaign.

There is no point guessing what the author (authors in this case) wanted to say with it. The main message of the play is the outcry of losing intuition and acquiring too rational thinking. Each person in the audience, I'm sure, brought their very own meaning and lesson from the play. The improvisation suits very much the concept of the physical theater which Lars tries to promote with his art at The Theater of Cruelty. Improvisation and intuition together give people freedom.

This utterly unusual and still quite raw play managed to convey its message and engage the viewers into their musical circus, which many plays at the conservative theaters lack nowadays. They are playing, leaving the audience passively consume their pieces of art. If you want to be engaged in the process of creation and to challenge your mind a bit, welcome to the Theater of Cruelty.

Grusomhetens Teater (The Theater of Cruelty) in partnership with Hopscotch-ensemble

Scenography: Jochem Hartz

Costumes: Gjøril Bjercke Sæther

Cast: Tristan Honsinger, Axel Dörner, Steve Heather, Hanne Dieserud, Kirsti Sørli Hansen and others.