

The theatrical magic must go on!

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Abstract: *The present study highlights the existence of a problem that some theatrical productions face: the minimization of theatrical emotion as the essence of the artistic act. Triggering the stage emotion is the fundamental element of acting creation and certain directorial subtleties can provoke the desired emotion in public. This is one of the most important conditions for the theater to achieve its purpose: the play to be played inside the spectator and not in front of him. This is also the explanation why - the emotion - was personified and presented like an entity. In this context, the paper highlights some essential points of the theatrical act. The theatrical convention, the psychology of emotion in the act of creation, the - wonderful If - are the keys to unleashing the emotional reaction that mirrors both the artist's point of view towards reality and the spectator's attitude towards the same stimulus.*

Keywords: *theater; magic; the mask; emotion;*

1. Introduction

It happens in life to have moments of high energy intensity that we often call - miracles -. Extrapolating (extending) these phenomena of life in the stage space, we find them in the expression "theatrical magic". And yet, this expression could be considered pleonastic, it depends on each of us how much or how little we accept to believe, when we talk about magic, dreams, how much we let ourselves be carried away by what we find beyond thought and soul, or beyond immediate reason. The playwright's work becomes a magical challenge for the actor, he accepts it and turns it into reality for the audience that begins to vibrate.

2. Theatrical convention - a pact of souls

The theatrical convention is the gateway through which the one who entered (director, actor, spectator) wraps himself in mystery and feeds on magic. The new reality becomes life through the complicity of those involved in the theatrical act - both those in the light and those in the shadow of the ramp. There is no trick or treating, everything is authentic and true. You will tell, then, where the magic is? Well, this magic is the process of transforming reality first into illusion and then, back, into reality, because " what the eyes and ears see, the mind will believe."²

In fact, the theater seeks its balance between reality and invention, being concerned to always evaluate its connections with the public, because the theater shelters an unequal audience, whether we are talking about education, faith or empathy, and the play must be played inside them, not outside them. "... theater is endowed with the power to stimulate collective participation, to a greater extent than any other art. Unlike literature, music, painting or sculpture, the theatrical image acquires in front of the spectator a living embodiment, determines an immediate reaction, of

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² Robert Houdin, pseudonym of Jean-Eugène Robert, considered the father of modern magic

adhesion or disapproval manifested publicly"³

3. The psychological profile of emotion in the act of creation

The Creator elevates to the rank of metaphor the existential problem which he approaches and which he feels at high intensity. It is the moment when he organizes his scripts and knows the tensions of his psychic feelings, creating a state of inner incitement. The energy triggers an increasingly intense imaginative process helping the creative process. "In modern psychology it has been established that each aptitude has specific loads of operations, algorithms, suppleness and spontaneity to use the available stylistic, suppleness and loads constituted on these planes (of skills)"⁴

The actor is a creator of energy. It creates and then gives up this energy. The energy flow goes to the spectator who, in turn, sends the energy to the ramp. This exchange is defining for catharsis. The artistic emotion is the seed of the final fruit. Speaking about emotion, director Tompa Gabor said: "... it is important in this network of emotions that strong emotions are on the receiver's side, rather. All the more so in an art such as theater, in which emotion plays a very important role, in which both creators and recipients share the same space.

Theater is a visceral emotional art because it involves both physical and spiritual contact. The most important factor in the art of theater is the common experience in which a transformation takes place."⁵ This transformation has a starting point called the actor. The character's emotions are applied to the emotions of his creative personality. The actor does not give up, but uses a system of means by which he becomes his own instrument. Instrument and instrumentalist at the same time, the actor uses his technique and his art to become the bridge between the playwright and the audience.

The playwright, esthetician and university professor, Ion Toboşaru, was talking about spectators, calling them - audiences - referring to the fact that a theater show is perceived from different points of view. Many publics many opinions. "Even in *Romeo and Juliet*, in the reply *I love you*, everyone reacts from his own filter of the book - he was disappointed, or he was happy ..." ⁶ explained the reaction of those in the room the actor George Ivaşcu, the director of the Metropolis theater.

Therefore, the psychological profile of acting emotion has an aesthetic character. We are not talking about the common emotion we experience in real life and in the practical relationships we consume, but about the stage emotion determined by artistic fiction.

For the creation and development of this emotion, the theater school prepares the actor to make a certain conscious analysis of the role, to discover the working tools that the actor can use to increase his expressiveness. Self-giving and merging with the role are important paths in the existence of theatrical magic.

³ Andrei Băleanu, 1969. *Teatrul modern la răscruce?*, Bucureşti: Editura Meridiane. p. 108

⁴ Ursula Şchiopu, 1999. *Psihologia Artelor*, Bucureşti: Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică. R.A. p.189

⁵ <https://admin.revistasinteza.ro/regizorul-gabor-tompa-despre-emozia-artistica-si-efectul-purificator-al-teatrului/>

⁶ https://adevarul.ro/news/societate/george-ivascu-traim-inconjurati-personalitati-1_50abab377c42d5a6637e11d9/index.html

4. The actor and his magical masks

The actor has a double function in making his magic mask, in developing his artistic creation: the unktion of creator and the function of performer. In fact, the actor is the only performer whose instrument it's him. This is also the reason why the actor's work with himself is extremely important to keep him always trained and connected to his work. The preparation of the actor is done in several ways, because he must be a cultured man, able to communicate, to create. The actor must also remain open and adopt the proposals of the director, of the stage partners, but apply his personal imprint to them. The actor must have physical, vocal qualities (a special timbre of the voice) and be gifted with talent, by God. The actor is both a creator and a performer at the same time.

The place and the time in which the real meets the imaginary in order to - draw - the magical and conventional illusion, the illusion of reality on stage, are also the author's meeting place with the director and the actor.

The latter can rightly be considered the main link between the opera and the spectator because the destiny of the show depends largely on him. Without being a copy of the literary work, the actor, through the energy he unleashes and transmits to the spectator, becomes the force by which the literary work can reach its peak.

"Theater is lived, not read ... offers in the deepest sense of the term those unique moments that become our allies for a lifetime, that allow us to continue and survive thanks to love - which, as a passenger, surpasses - unlove - theatrically , always on guard, always on the side of Mephistopheles - the one who says no - Inside us there is the faustian expectation - the fulfilled moment - which fixes time and is constituted in memory..."⁷ Certainly the theater can be a special place or a small world. Life is reflected on the stage and this can only be possible if there is a system with real values and judgments that supports the imaginary truth in which the actor comes to believe more than the concrete truth. Going back to childhood is important so that we can always go on the right path when we have a role to play. The magic that would be if we were, we discover in the game of children, of mother and father, of the doctor, in which the joy and faith of being what you want to be, in which the joy of the game and spontaneity they are dimensions of artistic creation, now consciously realized. "If, given the scenic situations, the inner and outer action are very important factors in our work. But they are not alone. We still need a lot of creative, artistic skills, special qualities and talents (imagination, attention, sense of truth, themes, stage data, etc.)."⁸

The actor's magic masks build the actor, form his generosity and the experiences lived by him during the process of creating magic masks lead to special stage achievements. These masks that we call stage roles, with their imprints more or less deep in the actor's life but certainly unforgettable in the viewer's memory (when they are tailored to the chatarsis), have no value if they are devoid of emotion, feelings affective, magic. Not infrequently the performing arts have been tested in contemporary society and the pandemic context has been traumatic. What the hashtag #resist meant to the theater is faith. The artists' faith in their mission. "... the actor's art comes from time immemorial, in fact it comes from the depths of the human being. The desire to

⁷ Lucian Pintillie, 2017. *Bricabrac. De la coșmarul real la realismul magic*, București: Nemira. p.7

⁸ Konstantin Sergheevici Stanislavski, *Munca actorului cu sine însuși*, vol. I, București:Nemira. p. 126

settle down thus remains foreign to the actor and with it the possibility of integrating into any of the cohesive classes of society. "⁹

5. In front of the public

Many artistic and technical factors, extremely important, contribute to the creation of the theater show. The author, the director, the set designer, the choreographer, the composer, the light designer, the creators of the show as well will remain in the spotlight because only the actor appears in front of the audience in front of the audience. Once the creative process is over, the result (the show) is sustained, carefully preserved so as not to be damaged, by the actors, by those who, every night, when raising the curtain, bring emotion, strength, bring an energy that they release to the spectators. . Everyone's creation makes sense only in the presence of the actor and his audience. It is said that when these two coordinates - the actor and the audience - come to feel and vibrate together, the energy flow formed is like the energy that is felt in the church during the service of the Holy Mass.

The actor is obliged to protect the life of his character with professionalism and talent and to keep the work of those in the team he worked with so that the show reaches the audience unaltered. Of course, the actor's work does not end here. In fact, she is the only one who is always on the move. It does not take on a finite shape. Contact with the public is another stage in creating the role. The actor's worries will clear up, in time, together with his stage partners and the audience, melting into a specific emotion.

6. Conclusions

Theatrical art is in constant search. From the beginning it did not contain questions about its own substance. Going beyond the sacred perimeter in which he was born and feeling much better in the profane world, the theatrical turmoil was about how theater is actually defined and what its true connection to reality is.

What about the actor? The actor? Is he still under the mask of the character? And if so, what percentage?

What about the scene? Theatrical space ... unconventional? Although it is a sequence usually made of plank, it still turns into an enclosed space (a room) or an open space (a forest).

All these - mysteries - can happen because the theater moves in the space of two coordinates that define it: convention and illusion.

The theatrical convention is agreed upon by the audience when they enter the theater. It is an agreement that the director proposes to those around him and they accept it. Basically, the director will seek to make a representation, an image that does not exist in reality, but claims to exist. This is when the illusion comes into play. The need to live in the illusion that what is happening, is really happening, is not just the spectator. From the mass readings of the play that is intended to become a show, the actors will set their faith in such a way that the mechanism of accepting the illusion as reality works. Theatrical theories about illusion also include the emotion of the actor who has to convey it. In this context, it is known that the Russian director and theorist Konstantin Sergheevich Stanislavsky demands that the emotion on stage be authentic (in fact, it

⁹ Florin Zamfirescu, 2022. *Actorie sau magie*, București: Ideea Europeană. pp. 27-28

refers to the illusion of this emotion). On the other hand, the German director Bertolt Brecht, who promoted the idea of theater based on the effect of epic distancing, considers that even at the level of emotion, theater remains a convention. In this context, another important name appears, Robert Wilson, American director and playwright of experimental theater. He constantly rejects the idea of the authenticity of the stage emotion: "I hate naturalistic theater. Being a naturalist on stage is a lie. An actor who thinks he is a naturalist on stage seems invariably artificial. If we accept that theater is something artificial, we can be more honest in what we do, instead of pretending to be natural. Makeup helps me hear better because I see better. And if I see the actor's face better, if I see his mouth moving, it's easier for me to hear him speak. Silence on stage develops hearing differently."¹⁰ So, 160 years ago, the theater, for K.S. Stanislavsky meant illusion, and today, for Robert Wilson, it means convention. What exactly is theater?

For that to happen, the theatrical act needs both convention and illusion. These coordinates live simultaneously in the design of theater performances. It is important that the illusion of emotion in the stage is genuine, even if this happens under the protection of the stage convention and that the theatrical magic always finds its way to our souls and contributes to the knowledge of the truth in the theatrical performance.

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¹⁰ <https://yorick.ro/robert-wilson-trebuie-sa-gasesti-lumina-in-tot-ce-faci/>