

# Dance Script

Laboratory of Dance Criticism is meant to be a professional workshop for a group of young journalists, dance critics and theorists, and also for dancers interested in writing, organized with the aim of re-defining the role of dance criticism in today's socio-cultural context and the role of the recipient in the process of understanding.

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## On The Road\_Echoes\_ Debris Company: CLEAR by Zita Sándor

### Speak without tongue

During the KioSK – Festival of new Slovak theatre and dance in 2015, I was lucky to experience and see that sometimes movements and dance, the “body language” can express ideas and connections in a more understandable (and maybe more complex) way than any spoken language.



*photo: Lucia Kotrhová*

I have really clear and strong memories about the street performance Othello is Black performed by Divadlo koňa a motora – however I do not speak or understand at all Czech or Slovakian language. I've heard the names of the protagonists from the Shakespeare drama, and it was really obvious that I've seen a performance which treated the text pretty freely. The scenes were strongly stylized, the characters and the actors' gestures were energetic and clean-cut, using the toolbar of commedia dell'arte. They were surely interesting and entertaining, numerous passers-by stopped to watch the performers. In the middle of the show a sudden rainstorm arrived to the Mariánska square, but this did not bother the actors: they continued their work, later on moved next to cloisters where the populous audience was watching them. I consider that their success depended a lot on their body language, on their lively presence, their energetic gestures. I stayed there in order to watch their movements, their jumps and punches; however I did not understand the story at all. On the same day, I've seen something quite similar, but a different genre work in Stanica.

Debris Company's Clear was an English-friendly monodrama with three performers. René is a man, who is deeply interested in the big questions of life: What is existence? What is real and what is illusion? What is time? He tries to build a line between perception and thoughts: this line is drawn on the floor of the theatre. Since he is thinking mostly in dichotomies, his bipolar doubts and scruples – according to the text, Clear and Distinct – are represented by Clara and Distincta, two dancers. René is occupied with memories of a woman who is now in a hospital – therefore the dancers have some kind of connection to that person as well.

The genre designation of the work is existential mystery – which is really true, the whole performance-long monologue of René does not make things clear. It evokes Descartes, Shakespeare, the theme of theatre itself, but does not lead to any place or exact conclusion.

Marián Prevendarčík surely worked a lot with the enormous and philosophical text, his concentration and endurance is extremely intense, it is much to be regretted that he was only declaiming, sitting and taking some steps in a dark, elegant velvet suit.

The two dancers, Stanislava Vlčeková and Nikoleta Rafaelisová are showing us a very creditable performance. Their technique is excellent, they are moving in a mirror position for a very long time with true ease. Their movements are precise and well timed, the composition and the decomposition of the structures are accomplished with breeziness. Their gestures and the construction of their movements evoke the essence of the text, or even more: the time, the infinite, the continuous restart, the memories and the questions of body, identity, soul (choreography: Stanislava Vlčeková). The glass of the "mirror" is the white line on the floor, the two sides sometimes disconnect for a while, at one point the dancers' legs and arms gently cross the line, they whisper something to each other and later they suddenly change sides. The playfulness can be perceived in other points as well: Clara and Distincta play a coffee drinking episode, with two halved coffee cups – excellent moment, it connects among others the story of Alice in Wonderland to the show.

The duo is really eye-catching: the two women have the same height, they are wearing similar, lightly striped white clothes, they have the same long red hair. Their facial expressions are also similar, it is hard to make any distinction between them. The performance is precisely and sensibly arranged, the stage design and the lights are wisely set. The drawing on the floor, the diagonal placement and the smoke are creating a mysterious ambience, we have the impression that even the wind, the movements of air are also planned. Ján Ptačin's and Jozef Vlček's stage and light work become the "fourth performer" of the show, the smoke and the steady hand guided lights are acting like an invisible force which is watching, enclosing and guiding everything – bodies, thoughts and its representations – from the background. The selected music records – disco, noise and roar of machines, piano pieces, patter of rain – and the silences also contribute to the framing of the atmosphere and correspond to the scenes.

The text, the verbal part (René) and the physicality (the two dancers) are separated. The monologue of René was projected in English on the wall. I could read it, I've been listening to it, but the long text did not have an effect on me – however it is an important basic material of the show. Nevertheless, the physical signs and representations, the movements and the stage setting were expressive enough. Clear is an example of a physical theatre in which the physicality, bodies in movement became palpably stronger and overpowered the spoken words.

*Zita Sándor – member of KÖM by L1 Association*

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### **L1 association**

Contemporary has to be discovered, has to be in a friendly relation with Classical and Traditional styles, has to be educated and because of all this, has to be supported as part of the whole! This is a huge work to get this message across to all the curators and supporters!

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