

## Alexej Strelnikov

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### The premiere of the play “About the Boat of Love”

The premiere of the play “EinLeben“, created by a well-known Belarusian director Katsiaryna Averkova and musician Matsvey Saburov under the guise of international independent theater NiMú, took place on March, 10 on the stage of Belarusian Drama Theater. I am happy to share with you my first impressions of it.

There's an opinion that the art of dance comes from copying everyday moves of people. And all those waltzes and ballets are all the same: this is how they used to work and relax, court and suffer long time ago.

It was particularly emphasized by those who paid attention to the social nature of art and dance. We are paying more and more attention to the rich inner world and trying to feel it through the way a person moves, or, to be more precise, what motivates this person. But people have stopped to move. They are sitting in front of the TV and computer, they are making their beds, they are moving dishes from fridge to dishwasher, taking a bath and having a rest on their sofas.

The play by Katsiaryna Averkova “EinLeben“ has become some kind of this routine. The table and tablecloth are the only props. The remaining space is filled by the dancers Irene Fas Fita and Johannes Stubenvoll.

Perhaps, I'm taking too much responsibility calling the work of these young European artists a dance, and the experts will correct me. But I'm insisting. It seems to me, that there are the borders where athleticism and physicality of performance acquire the abstractness necessary for the artistic image, but corporeality still doesn't possess that post-dance meaning that we don't yet have a proper name for.

The plot can be reduced to the classical “the boat of love has crashed against the everyday”. A guy and a girl get to know each other, become closer, and here she is, running with white veil (the tablecloth) on her head. Here he is, carrying her on his hands into their own house. They will be settling in this house together, pulling away from each other with each passing day... This is how the plot of the play can be described in short, flashforwards and flashbacks partially, or maybe even completely, overturn history. But I don't want to spoil the pleasure of the audience to understand what is really going on on stage.

At the same time the play has another dimension. It comes from the way the artists are interacting. Irene Fas Fita and Johannes Stubenvoll control their bodies perfectly well, performing complicated movements as if they were the easiest ones. A simple image, when the girl entwines the guy's head. His head is in her, she is in his head – it's all clear, but this is what I like about it: the performer is moving so easily, as if there was nothing special about it, as if he wasn't carrying any additional weight.

It's not often that we think of the continuity of human beings. Isn't that true that each action we perform significantly affects the other person, let us say, when a man had a drink, a woman is already writhing on the floor in agony. One of the strongest moments of the play is the one when two of them are holding the tablecloth. If the one lets it go, the other one falls down.

The characters are standing still in this interdependent position for a certain time. At this very moment it seems that this attitude concerns all of our social relations. If you say a bad word, aim a blow or start being too sarcastic, the connection will break, you will lose a partner, a friend, a compatriot.

This easy plot with a twist makes the play a potential hit for the audience. The general public normally takes such avant-garde plays with some caution. But it seems, that in Minsk there are enough viewers who will like this romantic story, which, performed by young and lovely artists, sounds even more emotional and shrilly. And it is not least because the play itself is a try to treat the complex problem of the relationship in an adult way. «The habit... Sich einleben...» — this is how the creators of the play explain its name. Lofty sentiments are becoming ordinary, people are getting used to them.

The director Katsiaryna Averkova and Matsvey Saburov who samples the music of the play live, are all the time by the stage watching closely what's going there (and this is also some kind of a dance, which is interesting to watch as well). There's a well-known theatrical motto "Always LIVE, always 3D", but this is that very play when you start to think about the phenomenon of live performance. The sound coming from the stage, that is being born here and now, is a way more interesting and rich, than the one which is reproduced by the phonogram. The rhythm of the play becomes so unusual, from stringy and slow to rapid, that it seems like you keep straying from the rhythm of your perception.

The play starts and finishes with an interactive bar situated on the stage, where you can come and order the drinks at. By means of it we are becoming more tightly attached to the act. By the way, we are sorely lacking those open bars after the plays, as the play is still not over until we discuss our emotions related to it.

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