

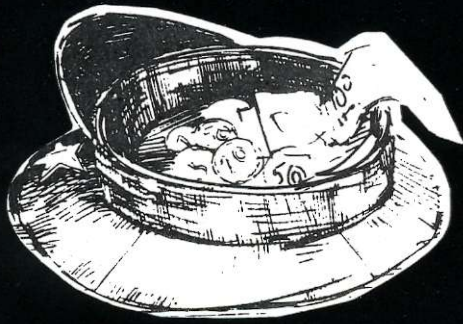
THE GUIDE  
THROUGH THE PERFORMANCE

# А СТОП ИВ ГИЗ ДЗСЗЯТ

TEATR GRUPA CHWILOWA

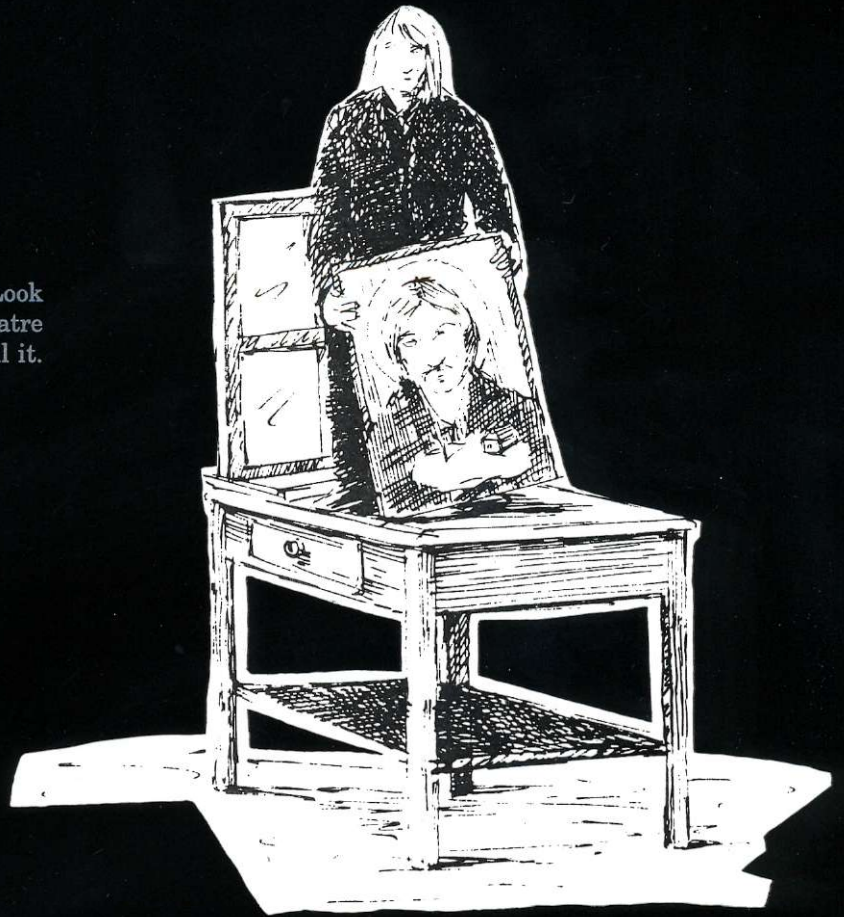


Do not worry if you do not know Russian. So far, the play has been performed to Polish audience, most of whom can hardly understand any Russian. Listen carefully to the performance, to the songs of the Old Believers written down in West Siberia, to the melody of the language - taste, smell, look. Yield to its sensual charm, and you are sure to understand everything, the performance will appeal to you in the universal language of theatre. We have prepared for you a kind of guide to the performance - although we do not think it necessary - maybe it will help you in the reception of the show.



It is a story of two people searching for a place for themselves. A story of an actor. A story of everyone who has made a stop on his way. We have made ours in Russia. We are visitors from the East. Can you see us? Can you hear? You may touch. A great sale is on. You can buy everything!

Now, go into the icon, enter our souls. Look at the way we live in theatre, and see how theatre lives in us. This is our hunch, we cannot sell it. Stay with us for a while.



Living the lives of other people is the cross he has to bear every day. Mad kings, rascals forgotten by God, abused write-offs - they all feed on him.

Every day he goes to the theatre to meet the crowd of people staring at him.

Aleksiey, put on your overcoat. It is cold!



Theatre again. From the heights of the stage a mad actor plays the part of a conscience-stricken king. The king pulls about the poor comedian. Shakespeare - Richard III. His victims have come to his tent; the abused and rejected, the army and secret police, informers, nurses, onlookers - they all roam his land. Bitterness for a sinner like me... A worm is crawling through the hell of his sick conscience, through the bleak, ice deserts of absurd - towards a new birth and a new death. Who has gone mad; King Richard III or his actor? Be careful, or you will end up in a nuthouse. Bitterness...

He has come back. What was it like out there? Just like everywhere - cold. He, she... and it. Take care of him.



What was it like? Half-dead people - "the hollow men, the stuffed men". He was cheating the doctors: he hid the pills under his tongue and spat them out, hid and spat, hid and spat... When they were discharging him from hospital, the head doctor said, "He will perform in the theatre for a while and he will come back. He is already ours". Don't go mad, my son! Don't go mad. Don't go there.



There is a letter from your father, from your village.

Dear son Aleksiey,

You can't go on living like that. Me and your mother, we can't see you go to the dogs. Why are you still in the strange marginal theatre? Can't you be like other actors?

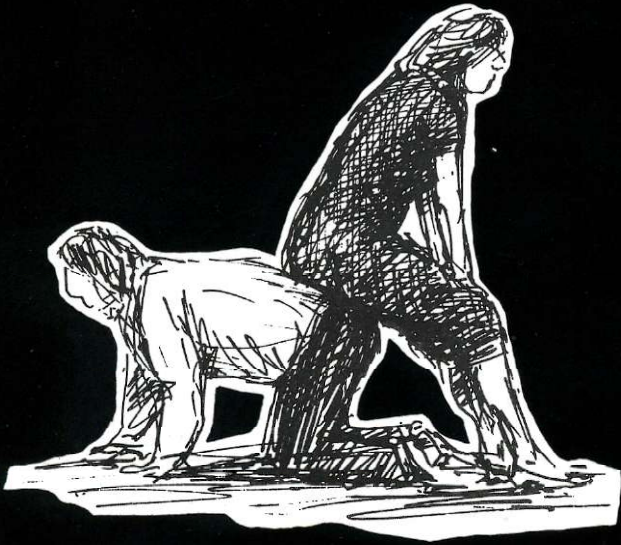
No fame, no talent, no money. The comedy is over. My teacher! What point have we reached, since the time when we, as the first in Russia, tried to live the theatre creeping out of a kitchen sink, out of the drab reality of the system gasping for breath. Moscow, tired of waiting for its Godot. The theatre of the absurd in a reality which is absurd. They were chasing us, arresting, releasing, banning, abusing, but kept going, our teeth chattering, because to be in a theatre is not to act, but to live. Where are we now?



Show us your theatre, you drunk "genius", do show us! Do you want to see it? Then look!

Nicolay Gogol - "The overcoat". Gong!

In St. Petersburg, there is a terrible enemy of all who earn 100 rubbles a month - the Russian, northern frost. A poor clerk, Akakiv Akakiyevitch has just noticed that his overcoat has worn a bit here and there. He must go to Petrovitch, a tailor. Maybe he will help. After all, he has the cloth to patch it... Well, he has some patches, but there is no place to attach them. A gust of wind will tear it into rags. The overcoat is completely rotten.



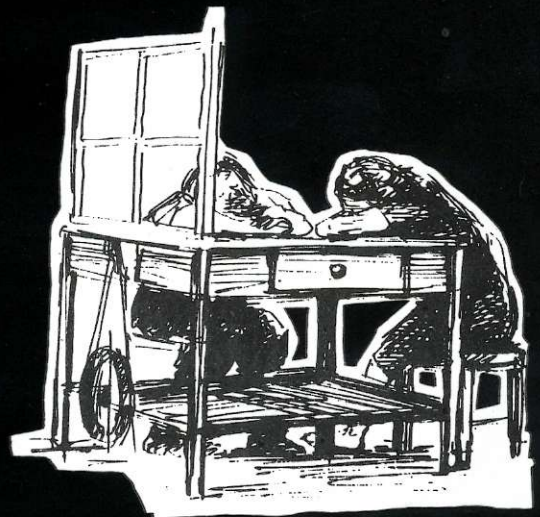
This overcoat cannot be mended. The clerk bought a new overcoat. A dream of a coat, his only one, his greatest treasure. He has the coat stolen. He died in the Russian snow. He died in the frost of Russian indifference. The soul leaves the body. Under bleak sky dreams come to nought, nations perish, people die. You can have your overcoat stolen, too.



The lost naivety of childhood. The lost paradise of family home. Letter. A letter from your parents.

Dear son Aleksiey,  
Alcohol is not a toy. Alcohol has done many in. We beg you son, don't drink vodka. If you can't quit drinking yourself, come to us, maybe we will help it together.

Do you know what justice is? No...? Sleep, sleep, sleep...





A nightmare. Spectres are waking up. Fate, why do you keep us on the chain like filthy dogs? You lay plentiful tables around, but you starve and freeze us to death. The strong oppress the weak, the well-fed fleece the pauper. There is no justice in this world. Oh, I would set you on fire, callous world, from one end to the other and I would gladly tread on your ashes. Snow, snow, snow...

Aleksiey! Today is your Birthday. Look how many people have remembered about it. They are all your friends and admirers of your stunning talent. Let's sing. Let's forgive our trespassers, and you "forgive me Svetlana Nikolayevna" - forgive me, my wife. Today is the feast of all people. Today is the feast of all creation.



They are alone again. But who are they? Fellow travellers have come, searchers for impossible worlds. The departed friends have come. Welcome drunk Vienya! Hello Vladimir! Let's have a drink together. And what about this one...? Silence, silence, silence...



Let's wash off our weariness. Let's wash off our sins and the dust of commonness. And do not pity him. The one will pity him who will have mercy on us all. When he has forgiven the good and the bad ones, the haughty and the humble. He will speak to us, too: "You too come! Come the drunk, come the weak, come the sinful, come the comedians. You are filthy swines, made in the image of Beast. But you may come, too". And He will hold out His hand, and we shall kneel down... and we shall cry... and we shall understand... and all will understand. Lord, Thou Kingdom come!



*Sometime, when we are not there,  
more precisely - after us, but on our place,  
something else will arise, that  
will make everybody who has known us horrified.  
But those, who have known us will be scarce.  
Similarly, adhering to old memory  
of the old place, it happens, that a dog  
lifts his leg... The fence obliterated long ago.  
But he still keeps imagining the fence.  
...I believe in them, who feel the smell  
...I believe in them, who feel the smell  
...I believe in them.*

Why did Poles create it? Why did they do it with Russians?

**PERFORMANCES:** "Where to Put a Coma", "The Notorious Songs of Witalis Romeyko - an Author's Evening", "The Script", "Demonstration", "A Better Form of Metabolism", "Still Life", "A Miraculous Story", "Stop in the Desert". **A SHORT HISTORY:** 1975 - Founders: Krzysztof Borowiec, Jan Bryłowski, Bolesław Wesołowski; The Student Song Festival (Cracow); The Festival of Theatre Debuts "Start 75" (Opole): "Where to Put a Coma"; The Student Festival of Arts "FAMA 75" (Świnoujście): "Where to Put a Coma". Winner of the Debut Prize; The Student Song Festival (Cracow); The Young Theatre Confrontations (Lublin): "The Script". 1977 - The Student Festival of Arts "FAMA 77" (Świnoujście): "The Script", "The Notorious Songs of Witalis Romeyko - an Author's Evening"; The National Theatre Workshop: "The Subject for Theatre: V. Mayakovsky" (Lublin): "Demonstration". 1978 - The Young Theatre Confrontations (Lublin): "The Script", "Demonstration", "A Better Form of Metabolism"; The International Theatre Workshop (Scheersberg, West Germany): "The Script". 1979 - The International Theatre Workshop (Scheersberg). Demonstration of theatre activities; The 4th International Festival of University Theatres (Lyon, France): "A Better Form of Metabolism", "The Script". 1980 - The Young Theatre Confrontations (Lublin): "Still Life"; The 2nd International Festival of University Theatres (Coimbra, Portugal); The French tour (Montpellier, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Nantes, Paris, Lyon): "The Script", "Still Life"; Student Theatres Perform for Workers (De-Frontiere del Teatro - The International 1984 - The 9th Cracow Theatre Festival: '84" (Palermo, Italy): "Still Life"; The semi-the alternative theatre in Poland (Lublin): Theatre Festival "FETA" (Łódź): "A Theatre Debuts "Start 85" (Lublin). The tival (Copen-hagen, Denmark): "Still tional Festival of University Theatres The group performed at l'Atelier du Paris; The 12th Festival of Puppet Theatres (Opole): "A Miraculous Story". 1986 - "Polsk Alternativ Teater" (Arhus, Denmark). 1987 - The National Festival of University Theatres (Brno, Czechoslovakia); The Festival of Theatre Debuts "Start 87" (Kielce). The guest of the Festival; The realization of the theatre project at the International Theatre Workshop "Dilna 87" (Sumperk, Czechoslovakia); The Norwegian and Swedish tour (Oslo, Trondheim, Bergen, Porsgrunn, Stockholm). 1988 - The Edinburgh Festival. 1989 - The Norway tournee - Oslo, Porsgrun, Trondheim, Tromse, Bodo; The London festival "A Week of East Europe Theatre". 1990 - Budva (July); Moscow (December) - workshops; 1991 - Lublin premiere "A Stop in The Desert" (February) with participation of two actors from the Stanislavsky's Theatre in Moscow: I. Nabatowa, A. Zajcew; The Kraków Theatre Festival "A stop in The Desert"; The Edinburgh Festival.



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