

INTERVIEW WITH IRINIA DELINA, THEATRE MAGAZINE 4-6, 2012

Hi, you are Irinia, whom I have known for more than twenty years now, with whom we exchange hugs when we happen to meet in Slaveykov Square and swear that next time we will find more time to spend than a few minutes over a cup of coffee, because we have things to share. I thought you were abroad, but you are here, in pants and hiking shoes, with long hair falling down over your back like a rucksack. I read your book (bilingual: in Bulgarian and in English, in your own translation) with the two texts of unspecified genre: "I, Justine or the Misfortunes of Innocence" and "Gesualdo or the Misfortunes of Cruelty", and I perceived them as scenic. For example, "I, Justine..." is a furious soliloquy of a woman. No, they are blank-verse plays, high poetry. No, no, those are porcelain miniatures of prose. Not at all. This is poetic prose in the 1st person singular chopped into dazzling plot-connected bullions, while the plot is inside the words themselves, "pumped out of your flesh" – I almost quote you in the inverted commas. To put it in a nutshell, this is a brilliant text indignant with the theater, ready for theater. A text having crushed and thrown over the shoulder the rules in order to be deliberately free, bare, transparent, and, from the point of view of conventional morality, shameless, erotically impudent, probably written by an impudent shameless woman. Who is Irinia Delina?

Justine would say: a sensitive vehicle. We, women, are responsible for the transportation of the world from one place to another, from the past to the future and from the future to the past. We rotate time in a circle, close and open the doors of birth and death. Men cut it into pieces and imagine that it is linear and finite—they remain forever enclosed within old physics... Theater is a kind of CERN – an energy accelerator; nothing but great passion. Passion's plasma is alive in theater, while we are the trace it leaves in time. Present day theater conceals, diminishes and subdues; it is a voyeur, a gossip, an eclectic. Or it is preoccupied with the extinction of the theater itself, which is also theatric and is probably the most authentic of its preoccupations.

I don't know who I am – my social engagements and roles look like a contract murder. We

are all under fire because of everything in us that shows signs of life, but nobody has asked for it, i.e. our soul must be eliminated. Today it is shameful to have feelings, to be in love, it is absurd to be romantic. You may, but inside Shakespeare or Schiller, always in translation. Justine and I plough anatomically a great denial, centimeter by centimeter, organ by organ, word by word: we are especially suspicious of them and of the thoughts they dress us in. We are beyond morality because nothing sacral has remained of us. Our impudence springs out from some morbid shyness, from some deep emotionality. Whereas cynicism is desperate romanticism, we are exhibitionist doubles, a pair of mirrors, one opposite the other, that endlessly multiply what is hidden in the genitals of fear, the abyss covered with desires, the lust that pretends to be art. We articulate without interpreting; we traverse the infinity, the pain, the negation, the secret, but there is no way out—everything leads us into sanctity. The poet must name things in order to be sure that they exist. In an uprooted, disenchanting and inconsolable world, poets are modest – they are simply alert.

Those who have read "I, Justine..." and read our conversation in the magazine, will tell me: "And why didn't you ask her what the sexual orientation of her protagonist is?" Which is why. I ask you: "What is Justin's sexual orientation?" There is no naughtiness in the question.

She adores castrating men and is in love with her author who is heterosexual, and is not a feminist. Justine is not a character in the traditional meaning of the word. The more steadily you look at her, she disappears. The more steadily you look at yourself, you see her. In Sade Justin is also doomed to non-existence – her body is being desecrated, dismembered, plundered and finally enjoyed by God through the lightning he sends to her. It is a rubber body that erases from God's face his human names. Because God is a sadist, or has to prove that he is not, life is a tiresome exercise in blasphemy. Justin is an abyss, not a woman. She has no sex because she is the absolute femininity: she is a beacon, darkness, thought, an echo, a prophet, a ghost, dogma, pieta, a breath, a refrain, a rib, an ocean, a phantasm, measure and the instrument by which all is measured. She pleasures herself and desecrates herself because in the prairies of life the happiness to love is

cremated, whereas the explanations are washed with detergents and everything is disinfected. The measure of the soul is the beyond, its own beyond, the forbidden, everything she, the woman, is afraid to name, to overstep, to touch. Justin is the forbidden itself. Sex and death are synonymous to her. However, the radical waiver of sexuality is not a waiver of gender. Sex without Eros decorticates and devastates, cuts the eye as in that film of Bunuel and Dali and leaves us to look gropingly for our soul. The erotic is the ever-ripening enamoredness, while sex is the ever-perishing pleasure.

I read also 'the more normal play' "Gesualdo..." written somewhat closer to the modern style we are familiar with: action, cast, characters, remarks, end... The erotic sensuality here again is the engine, charged with the words and the word order of high literature. What did theater tempted you with to write a play for it?

With its polyphony. Very few things can be said from the 1st person singular. The way Justine helped me converse with myself, the persons surrounding Gesualdo helped me recognize him. The poet keeps quiet so the characters can speak – they see everything – from a close distance, from high up, and from afar. Dramaturgical poetry is most close to tragedy. And Gesualdo is classically tragic – some of the most beautiful music of the Renaissance was written as redemption, inside the suicidal darkness of guilt. Gesualdo kills his wife and begins a crackbrained climb towards the abyss: the beast-life and the fleshless harmony are in a deadly fight. And everything is being torn apart again and again so that the mechanics of passion rises. The passion that thinks gives birth and kills. I was transfixed and enchanted. And as if from a sprout, like an undoing of a knot, his image became personal, most cherished, enormous, and swarming out. I am especially proud of Maria d'Avalos – modern dramaturgy lacks strong female characters. And all that is an echo of music. I am an unrealized musician. At the beginning and the end are form and rhythm. Without them imagination is a fiction.

These two texts in your book that sound intoxicatingly in Bulgarian, as well as your global personal intellectuality in slowly developing Bulgaria may embarrass our theatrical managers and directors, and may remain just text for reading. What do you think? Are you

going to propose them for staging in this country?

I do not expect to be noticed, since there is no one to notice me. The only one I can think of is Stoyan Kambarev and a few young directors, who will hardly receive a subsidy from anywhere. Apart from making respectful reverences towards the past, our theater is still cowardly vanguard, full of socialist realism and kitsch. Like a character from Gogol – an apathetic, faceless upstart that has been placed on artificial respiration. I feel simultaneously compassion and indignation. While the totalitarian “democracy” is aiming at having no culture at all, inside culture itself fierce activity for taking away its individuality and devaluing it is underway. A well-known theater critic defined these texts as a theater of ecstasy. Wonderful! However, in the sterile interior of the deprived of any articulation and optimism, necrophilous and syphilitic puberty we are going through, this sounded to me like an obituary. Yet, from here on the book has its own fate, I am behind the scenes.

As the wife of Timen Timev (alias Johann Ge Moll), an original person of encyclopedic knowledge: a psychiatrist, psychologist, philosopher and writer, who reads lectures in US universities; whom we cannot fit into any regulated education, to make him easier and clearer to us, because he is in every one, what does this relationship give you and what does it take from you?

Our relationship is exceptionally strong although we have been separated for years. From this relationship I have learned everything: from the techniques of reincarnation/transformation which is at the basis of creativity, to the understanding that in order to grow we must have great teachers. We have common books, projects and a lovely daughter. Sometimes I feel as if I am married to his books and an editor of his life. I have not encountered a mind mightier and more unique than his: saturated, paradoxical, passionate and giving. However, life has its seasons. I need my own small path to walk by myself. The latest book we published in the United States is entitled “*Libido Significandi or the Lust for Meaning*”, biblical in volume, huge as a continent, over which we have led

all possible battles and have exhausted all of our ecstasies. We even survived. At the moment we are engaged in a global project having to do with the protection of the Earth against the enormous solar activity caused by the Earth's leveling off with the galactic axis, and the only protective mechanism turned out to be our consciousness. If the greater part of humankind directs its energy towards the center of the galaxy, that will produce a coherent ray similar to a laser that can even have an effect on the regulation of the Earth's magnetic axis.

Some time ago I saw you on one of our TV channels taking a stand on the latest experiment that scientists have made to date at the Large Hadron Collider. You were well prepared and convincing... First: I don't understand, explain to me once again who are you? Second: Can global annihilation really come from CERN? And third: Is December 21, 2012 going to be our final date?

Everything is related to everything. Quantum physics is a supreme form of poetry. I have long since been interested in models of the brain that carry out a quantum transition with the ultra-micro world. Consciousness is the border between the worlds, not the speed of light. And unless consciousness becomes part of the experiment itself, physics will be an encyclopedia of paradoxes. I was against the experiment at the collider because it has been inspired by the collective narcissism of several hundred young scientists to whom the next Nobel Prize is more important than the fate of mankind. Nobody knows what happened there, just as nobody knew what the nuclear bomb was while it was a secret scientific experiment. The God Particle cannot be discovered because its speed would be so unimaginably high to be everywhere at one and the same time, including in the experimenter's consciousness. The dramaturgy of the universe is poetic rather than rational. Physics today is alchemy and metaphysics. As far as the date 21.12.2012 is concerned, it is the end of a cycle of 25,900 years which is a full circle around the center of the galaxy. We have worked together with José Argüelles, who first, way back in the seventies, read the Maya calendar. This is not the end of time, but of an evolutionary cycle. And each beginning is preceded by the doom of the old. The Apocalypse is the sacred fire

which is not an answer, but a landmark, and it must be lived through and irradiate us through its lightning bolt like a long poem, like Bosch's fires on the urban fresco of our unprecedented presence. We have been appointed, therefore, we must be saved.

Keva Apostolova