



THEATRE OLYMPICS
WORLD AS A PLACE OF TRUTH
WROCLAW 2016

<http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=2811741>

Daria Ganieva

Artur Nurmukhametov

Olympic Games on Theatre Stage

At this time Poland hosts very unusual competition — Olympics on theatre stage. Russian troop (team) of the Alexandrinsky Theatre with its "Masquerade: Recollections of the Future" also takes part in the festival.

There are no medals or losses (fails) in this Olympics in Polish Wroclaw. Even if the only Russian team, the Alexandrinsky Theatre, is already a national winner — "Masquerade: Recollections of the Future" won two "Golden masks", — Valery Fokin, the theatre's artistic director makes the team keep practicing on foreign grounds round the clock. "Above all other things, you compete yourself, and you do your best to make the theatre go through it and pass the examination. Being abroad is always a test (assessment). The play is not as well-known as in Russia, so it is important to let the audience not only see, that the play is a melodrama, but to make them understand the tragic subject (sense).

Even 20 years ago, everybody would understand Lermontov without subtitles, but now Russian language is not studied in Poland anymore. The leading theatre of the country cancelled the guest performance in Saint-Petersburg because of sanctions in 2014. But The Theatre Olympics went without "doping scandal". Alexander Chepurov, the associate artistic director of the Alexandrinsky Theatre notices: "6 truck trailers were needed for 1 play, 6 big trucks to carry theatrical scenery, teasers, curtains, furniture. The furniture is also reconstructed from Aleksandr Golovin's sketches". "Masquerade" is going abroad for the first time. It is a reconstruction of the most expensive and the last theatre play in Tsarist Russia. Vsevolod Meyerhold held the performance in 1917. At the time when shooting was heard in Saint Petersburg, there was a performance going on with 360 costumes and 70 artists playing in tones as smooth as silk: an absolute know-how of Meyerhold.

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Diana Krasovskaya from Latvia became a volunteer at the festival, just to manage to witness the rehearsal of Fokin's play. For a young actress, it's the best kind of masterclass. "Being Russian who has never been to Russia before, seeing Valery Fokin's performance is a great opportunity for me", — Diana says.

The idea for the Theatre Olympics was proposed by Greek director Theodoros Terzopoulos. It is undertaken (carried out) since 1993 and takes place in different cities of the world, and the 7th festival is concurrent with the year, when Wroclaw is the European Capital of Culture. The city is not only chosen as a Capital of Culture for its merits, but to help in developing it. Festivals, educational events — there are around a thousand of them in Wroclaw — already attracted two millions of tourists, this is four times more, than the population of the city. All such financial facilities go for restoration and modernization of buildings. For example, this bar place from 70s is now transformed to the modern culture centre. Tourists can find any information and have access to the public library, different exhibitions and workshops are also taking place here. One of the workshops is planned with the participation of Valery Fokin.

The programme of The Theatre Olympics is filled with plays of celebrated Robert Wilson, Romeo Castellucci, Peter Brook, Jan Fabre — more than 80 plays in one month. The theatre researcher and coordinator of academic and educational projects, Małgorzata Jabłońska stresses the importance of the event: "You don't send ordinary sportsmen to Olympics — only champions. Here we go with the best directors also".

"Olympic venues" are all over the city, more than forty buildings — theatres, small art rooms and even an old bakery. The heart of the festival is the Grotowski Institute. The director, the reform figure alongside Stanislavski and Meyerhold, bore up a principle: theatre is a sacred action. And his phrase "The World as a Place for Truth" became the motto of The Theatre Olympics in Wroclaw. This way, Polish theatre "Formal agreement" (Układ Formalny) moved the setting of "Mother Courage" to the Liberian sands. The director, Grzegorz Grecas explains: "We came across another

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30-year war. It took place in Africa latterly. And Bertolt Brecht prompted to show it". The play is held in an abandoned railway station — industrial area of Wroclaw, where locomotives are manufactured, there is a lack of good stages. "Masquerade" of Valery Fokin could only be placed in Wroclaw Opera. The play attracted big audience, if not all citizens of the city. As a matter of fact, amused spectators are the real winners of the Theatre Olympics.

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