

Teatro Tatro, Nitra, Slovakia

Daniil Kharms, Ondrej Spišák: Circus Kharms

directed by Ondrej Spišák

Circus standing in between

A group of Teatro Tatro theatre is in Nitra like at home. Their circus tent has its own place to stand nearby Nitra in Cabaj-Čápor. For the festival, they moved close to the theatre, so much more people can come to see their performance. Two years ago we could see their performance of Master and Margarita during the festival, but this year they bring to the festival their new spectacle called Circus Kharms, which is a production for children.

Teatro Tatro has its own poetics, they are not creating classical spectacles, and most of them are being created by pictures, as if they painted them. Daniil Kharms is not very known writer in Slovakia, so the director Ondrej Spišák brought by staging of Circus Kharms something new to the Slovak stages. Unfortunately, I must say that we expected little bit more.

In the spectacle, there is no story, only two things that connect all the scenes. Those are character of Bertunov and then failed scenes. Whole performance is one evening in circus. We can see acrobats, trained animals and also a clown. Principle of this circus was a failure. Most of scenes finished bad or were absolutely unsuccessful. Failure was also a source of humour. Failure of acrobats, clown or obedience of animals. Children really enjoyed the show from the beginning when they could shout on ringmaster, that the voice which he hear is behind him till the end when they could see huge fish hanging under the ceiling of the tent.

An advantage of the spectacle was definitely the music. Musicians were sitting on the top of a stage and played the music live. Acting styles of actors and actresses was also adapted to a conception of whole performance. It tried to be grotesque in some way.

The director Ondrej Spišák said that this is the first version of Kharms, and in the future they want to make it as a classical evening spectacle. I hope, that it will be better prepared, because what we have seen in Nitra was good, but it was also somewhere between circus and cabaret, somewhere between a production for children and a production for adults. Maybe that was the problem with understanding, the way in which the director and his actors wanted to build this spectacle.

We had a funny time in Circus but we expected (also after a discussion with director) something more sophisticated for adults, but much more sophisticated for children, to educate them on a level of intellectual theatre.