

CZECH REPUBLIC

Chamber Theatre Aréna, Ostrava

Tomáš Vůjtek:

THE HEARING

direction: Ivan Krejčí

Kamila Łapicka (Poland)

The theatre is the most important

Kamila Łapicka talks with Marek Cisovský, who plays Adolf Eichmann in the 2015 Best Czech Production „The Hearing” from The Chamber Theatre Aréna in Ostrava.

Kamila Łapicka: A few years ago, when you were preparing for a role in Tabori`s play „Goldberg variations” you visited Auschwitz and you said that it was a horrifying experience. So I want to ask you how did you prepare to play Eichmann and what feelings did you have?

Marek Cisovský: I knew I was playing Eichmann long before the trials. When I got the text of the play from Tomáš Vůjtek I went to the director Ivan Krejci and asked: what can I do with this? These are just the raw facts. To this Ivan replied: we will manage, somehow! Then we talked a lot about the text, I also relied on what is written there. I sought out various things about Eichmann by myself. I found documents, also a feature film. Even though this is the second season that has been performing the play, I have not yet viewed the film because it certainly would have influenced me in some way. I also watched an American film about the capture of Eichmann.

Kamala Łapicka: Thanks to make up and your acting you achieved a remarkable resemblance to Eichmann. How did you manage to do this?

Marek Cisovský: Of course, the most important are the inner emotions of the actor, but I knew that I also had to work on the external appearance. I watched Eichmann's entire trial on YouTube and tried to absorb his gestures and behaviour. I noticed that in photographs from the time of his youth he always had a slightly raised chin – a gesture of superiority.

Kamila Łapicka: When you thought about Eichmann's personality, did you find any common

points with your own?

Marek Cisovský: No (*laughs*).

Kamila Ľapicka: I know that you play guitar in a klezmer band Mamalör. In your repertoire are Yiddish and Hebrew songs. What is the meaning of Jewish culture for you?

Marek Cisovský: I do not have a deep knowledge of Jewish culture, but we visit synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in Czech Republic, we are interested in these topics. In our band we play klezmer music, but do not quite know how to do it (*laughs*), so we have original klezmer melodies and Czech lyrics.

Kamila Ľapicka: During the meeting with the audience one could see that you are on very friendly terms with the director (Ivan Krejčí) and you share a similar sense of humour. How was it when you worked on the play? Did he turn into a dictator, or did he let you improvise?

Marek Cisovský: Ivan is the kind of director who leaves a lot of space for the actors' creativity. We have worked together for 12 years, so we know each other well enough for the actors to know what to do once he makes a suggestion. He inspires the actor, but is never a dictator. He explains situations and relationships between the characters, but then he lets the actors work.

Kamila Ľapicka: Your father, Paul Cisovský, was the Chamber Theatre Aréna founder and you are familiar with every aspect of theatrical production. Do you think that being a part of a theatre company, of a theatre troupe, is still important for its members? Or are movies, commercials, TV series more important these days?

Marek Cisovský: The situation in Ostrava is a little different than the situation in Prague. I and many of my colleagues concentrate on work in the theatre. Other activities – film, television – happen sporadically. Sometimes we find additional work that way. That is the difference between Ostrava and Prague, where the film industry is concentrated. Since I have been in this theatre it is the most important for me.

Kamila Ľapicka: And how long have you worked there?

Marek Cisovský: From the beginning, since 1993.