

HYPERMAREMMA

Rachel Monosov

Impossible meeting point

critic essay by Massimo Mininni

There are losses which communicate a sublimity to the soul which makes it refrain from lamentation and go about in silence as though among tall black cypress-trees.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

A large pink glass sculpture of a door is hanging between two wooden staircases and overlooks the evocative landscape of the Orbetello lagoon, providing the setting for the moving performance *Impossible Meeting Point* by Rachel Monosov, born in 1987 in St.Petersburg but currently living in Berlin.

The five mourning discomforts that the artist wants to communicate to us through this work (denial, anger, deprivation, depression and eventually acceptance) are quite evident, as mourning is almost always linked to dramatic and painful events. Mourning is often experienced with suffering also in moments of daily routine.

The dancer, Camilla Broogard, and the singer, Juliia Shelkovskaia, with whom the artist has worked for some times now, are the two female performers of this performance. They intend to show us that they "know how to hope", that they are able to wait actively. Hope is thus experienced by the two performers within a process of impenetrability. Hope can either block people and deprive them of their vital energy, or it can stimulate their desire and attraction towards the unknown, leading the way to change.

Yet hope has a value of its own. Hope implies a *tension towards something*. Hope is linked to time. Time has always been a highly valuable resource.

With hope we rest our eyes. We are stimulated to reflect and question ourselves, to reveal ourselves: hope allows us to live in a unique space/time, "hanging" between what *is already there* and what *is not there yet*. To hope is to listen to oneself. With patience, time, and self-love. Hope is recognising that we are capable of finding alternative solutions to what we lack, at least temporarily, because hoping implies a tension towards something; usually what we desire is what we do not possess.

Hope is about taking time: a necessary time, sometimes a physiological one, to allow something to happen.

It is about learning to wish: hoping and wishing are two strongly connected actions.

The gestures of the two figures seem to be surrounded not only by hope but also by a certain lack of understanding, as they appear shrouded in melancholy and solitude. The starting point is incommunicability, but this increasingly tends to clear up in the orchestration of glances between the two.

The script of Rachel Monosov's play, in its three parts, tells us about the human adventure marked by the spiritual disorientation of mourning and the struggle for its sincere communication. We do not know if it is strongly autobiographical, but it is most certainly an expression of the restless loneliness of a soul that withdraws into itself, unable to make any real effort to connect.

The hope and love that the two protagonists want to convey overcome the sense of inner emptiness, loneliness, and apprehension; the artist emphasises and conceptualises this through the Berlin opera soprano's voice, which sings and even shouts painful notes.

A drama that materialises in a state of uncertainty and interior tear from which the two women cannot release themselves.

In other words, Rachel expresses the existential emptiness of modern society and its complex of loneliness and abandonment, lacking any spiritual form of communication.

A bitter, yet conclusive consideration that reveals the dissolution of childhood myths, now deemed useless; the awareness of the failed recovery of the past, which no longer exists apart from our memories; the sense of nothingness that can only be ended by death, seen as the only opportunity for rebellion and revenge.

The artist asks us to reflect on the essence of contemporary lack of communication: the relationship with the other cannot be achieved as under a gaze of violence the other becomes the subject's denial, the limit of their own freedom, the threat of their own possession. Therefore, every relationship with others is a matter of conflict and incommunicability, the inability to overcome the nothingness that dwells in both sides, and which appears in misunderstandings, mutual denials, and antagonisms.

The dancer also expresses this through a dance that is simply a refined communicative relationship that is established between body, space, form, energy, and time parameters.

A gestural language form, in which gesture is turned into a structural and narrative element, with its own expressive value.

The gesture, in this dance, is conceived and 'constructed' as a means to an intention and Rachel employs the body to recount something that goes beyond it. In other words, the dancer has the precious possibility of allowing the body to narrate the "non-body", to tell an idea, a thought, a certain form. The gestures are words and, in this case, the actual words are not speeches, but rather facts, because rather than narrating, the dance allows itself to be narrated through the selection of precise gestures distinguished by a precise internal organisation and logic.

The gesture, through which the dancer expresses herself, is a dynamic movement independent of any vocal or sound elements, and stems from the need of our innermost being to release an energetic force that goes beyond words. Indeed, the dancer uses the most powerful agent of communication, which is her body, and exploits bodily energy to express something intimate, pervasive, and vibrant, a kinesthesia that enlivens the perception of our very existence.