

ORCHESTRA

(Yugoslavia)

annual publication, 2000



Eve in the garden of vulnerability

O tehnicima i suzama

Valerie Green,
gost *Erg-status* seminara

ERG - status, godišnji seminar savremenog plesa, koji se bazira na dvonedeljnim gostovanjima poznatih igračkih pedagoga iz sveta, omogućio nam je da, krajem avgusta 2000. godine, pratimo u Beogradu radionicu Valeri Grin, igračice i koreografa iz Amerike, četvrtog po redu pedagoga koji učestvuje na seminaru.

Valeri Grin je igračku karijeru započela u Klivlendu (Ohajo), učeci step i džez balet. Medison je prvo mesto gde je počela da se ozbiljno bavi raznim tehnikama modernog baleta, ali isto tako i kompjuterima i videom. Međutim, to što će u potpunosti obeležiti njen igrački razvoj je boravak u školi Erika Hokinsa u Njujorku.

Valeri Grin saraduje s Nancy Meehan, Dura Mater, *Dance/Theater Collective*, *Phyllis Rose Dance* kompanijom, *Erick Hawkins Dance* kompanijom i mnogim drugim. Ono što je interesantno, a vezano za tu mladu umetnicu je (osim zavidne igračke biografije) i njeno srpsko poreklo. Trenutno radi u Njujorku igrački projekat vezan za događaje koji su obeležili zadnjih deset godina života na našim prostorima.

Na radionici u Beogradu, Valeri je pokušala da našim igračima približi osnovne Hokins tehnike. O toj tehnici kaže:

"S Hokins tehnikom sam se prvi put susrela u Njujorku i odmah sam shvatila da je to ono čime želim da se bavim, da je interesantno i drugačije od onoga što sam do tada radila, da je tehnika nežna i lepa, i da zahteva da joj se igrač u potpunosti posveti.

Ona je fluidna, svi pokreti kreću iz predela karlice, veliki je akcenat na radu ruku, pokreti su sliveni i nema velike tenzije u mišićima. Naravno potrebna je velika energija, ali mišići nisu napregnuti. Erik Hokins je igrao s Martom Grejama, bio je i njen suprug, a kada su se razdvojili, on je oformio svoju kompaniju, radeći s igračima na sopstvenoj tehnici. Želeo je prirodni, prefinjeniji pokret. Verovao je da je samo ta tehnika igračima dovoljna. Ja ne mislim naravno da je to istina, mislim da igrači treba da rade dosta različitih stilova i tehnika, ali u njegovoj je sadržana zaista jedna univerzalna lepota i mnoštvo različitih igračkih sredstava koji olakšavaju igru, i koji se prepliću s elementima drugih tehnika. Hokins sistem se sastoji od puno kontrakcija, i osim rada ruku dosta se insistira na kružnom radu korpusa. To je fluidna tehnika koja se zasniva na prirodnom i prefinjenom pokretu.

Atmosfera u Hokinsovoj školi je bila drugačija, mirna i opuštena za razliku od ludila koje vlada svuda oko vas u Njujorku.

Radili smo četiri godine na raznim stvarima — repertoaru, kompoziciji, koreografiji ... Za mene je najdragoceniji bio rad na koreografiji, nakon što se pokreti već postavili — kako da ona bude čisti-ja, da dobije na intenzitetu i dinamici. Kad to jednom savladate, to ostaje u telu i više se o tome ne razmišlja. Takođe smo posebno radili na oblikovanju svakog pokreta, na njegovoj emociji i karakteru. To je bio jedan potpuno drugačiji pristup. Znači, ne kako da kreirate novi pokret, nego šta da radite da bi ga unapredili kad ste ga već kreirali. U mom radu se oseća veliki uticaj te metode. Ne kažem da moj rad liči na Hokinsove radove uopšte, ali njegov uticaj na mene je veliki."

Osim rada na Hokins i drugim tehnikama, vi ste razvili i jedan svoj originalni stil — Dens Entropi (Dance Entropy). O čemu se tu radi?
To je ono što ja pokušavam da radim sa mojim igračima. Entropija je nauka, stvari se kreću u haosu, ali ih on održava u pokretu. Tako i u igri — dešavaju se mnoge stvari, mnogo toga se u nama kreće, ali mi smo jedno biće, kao da se entropija dešava unutar nas — u svakom našem molekulu. Tako i ja koristim svoje kompletno životno iskustvo i pokušavam da sve to uklopim u celinu. Ponekad koristim gest kao inspiraciju za pokret, ponekad pronalazim emociju za igru u slikarstvu ... Volim izazove i pokušavam da nikada ne radim stvari na isti način.

Kada me je zainteresovao zapadno-afrički ples, otišla sam u Genu. Igrala sam s njihovim običnim svetom i učila od njih. Volim ritam bubnjeva, on mi daje osećaj slobode. To je za mene bila velika inspiracija.

Recite nam nešto o američkom modernom plesu danas.

Moj je utisak da se klasične tehnike poput Hokins, Grejama ili Kanningama u Americi više ne uče mnogo. Mislim da je to zato što je igračima postalo dosadno da rade istu stvar svakoga dana. To je možda i deo američke kulture. Ja mislim da radeći svaki čas nešto drugo, ne znači obavezno i naučiti više. Shvatila sam da volim Hokins tehniku tek nakon šest meseci svakodnevnog rada, i sada mislim da mogu još nešto novo tu da naučim. To je kao i u klasičnom baletu, igrači ga vežbaju godinama i uvek nešto novo saznaju. Mislija sam da je Hokins tehnika suptilna i laka, i da je besmisleno vežbati je svaki dan, ali sam tek vremenom shvatila koliko stvari radim nepravilno. Međutim, u Americi, u studijama, svaki čas gostuju različiti pedagozi s različitim tehnikama, nekada samo po tri dana, i ljudima je jednostavno interesantnije da rade tako.

Da li ste zadovoljni svojim boravkom u Beogradu i radom s našim igračima?

Ja se stvarno divno osećam ovdje. A što se tiče igrača, sećam se kada sam dolazila pre dve godine i gledala neke predstave, da sam konstatovala da vašim igračima nedostaje svakodnevni trening. Drugo je raditi klasičan čas svaki dan, to je u redu, ali ako želite da budete igrači modernog stila, morate raditi moderan klas takođe svakodnevno. Mislim da igrači rade stvari u pola snage od onoga što bi mogli. Zato mi je drago što sam u Beogradu mogla da radim Hokins tehniku kontinuirano, makar i samo dve nedelje. Mislim da se već može osetiti razlika. Igrači su prihvatili stil, pokreti su bili čistiji i fokus je bio jasan, brže su pamtili...

A što se tiče koreografije, mislija sam da je sebično da dođem i jednostavno im pokazem neku svoju kreaciju. Za mene je bilo interesantnije da im dam priliku da sami kreiraju ples, da im pokazem sredstva koja će im to olakšati. Radili smo na obliku, dinamičnim, gestovima...

Želela sam da govorimo o ovoj situaciji ovdje, o događajima iz prošlosti, o bombardovanju. Od toga smo pravili ples, ali ja nisam radila koreografiju, oni su kreirali pokrete, a ja sam ih usmeravala i na neki način režirala tu prezentaciju. Htela sam da igrači izbace iz sebe negativnu energiju i emocije koje vezuju za taj period, jer mislim da nije zdravo ako one ostanu u njima. Dešavalo se i da neko zaplače, a čovek ne može da zaplače tek tako, tu mora da postoji skriveni i potisnuti bol. Mislim da im je to dosta koristilo.

Jelena Kajgo



Anna Baesch

Two inside

(Translation on back)

ABOUT THE TECHNIQUE AND THE TEARS

Valerie Green, a guest of Erg-Status, a yearly seminar of modern dance, based on two week long guest appearances of prominent dance teachers of the world, has made it possible for us to watch here in Belgrade at the end of August of 2000, the Valerie Green workshop. This dancer, choreographer, and pedagogue from America, is fourth in succession taking part in the seminar.

Valerie Green began her dancing career in Cleveland, Ohio, learning step and jazz ballet. Madison, Wisconsin was the first place where she seriously started to learn various techniques of modern ballet, but also computers and video for dance. However what really marked her dance development was the time spent in the Erick Hawkins School of Dance in New York City.

Valerie Green has worked with Nancy Meehan, Dura Mater, Treehouse Shakers Dance/Theater Collective, Phyllis Rose, the Erick Hawkins Dance Company and many others. What is interesting in regards to this young artist (besides her remarkable dance biography) is her Serbian heritage. At the moment she is working in New York on a dance project in connection with the events which marked the last ten years of the life in our living environment.

At the Belgrade workshop Valerie attempted to enable our dancers to familiarize themselves with the basics of the Hawkins technique. "I first met with Hawkins technique in New York and immediately realized that this is what I wanted to do, that it was interesting and different from what I did before, that the technique was delicate and beautiful, and that it demanded from the dancer complete dedication. It is fluid, every movement originates from the pelvis area, there is also a big accent on arm movement. The movements are continuous and there is no great tension in the muscles. Naturally one needs to have a lot of energy, but the muscles are not tense. Erick used to dance with Martha Graham, he was her husband, and when they separated he formed his own company, developing his own technique with the dancers. He wanted a more natural, organic style of movement. He believed that only this technique could make a strong dancer. Although I don't think that to be true, I think that dancers need various training. In his technique there is a universal beauty and a variety of different dancing tools which make it easier, and which are interwoven with elements of other techniques. The Hawkins system consists of many contractions, and besides arm movements there is an emphasis on circular/spiral movement of the body. It is a fluid technique based on natural and refined movement."

"The atmosphere in the Hawkins' School was different, quiet and relaxed as compared to the craziness which surrounds one in New York. We worked on different things for four years- the repertoire, composition, choreography...For me the most rewarding was the work on choreography, after the movements are established, working to make it cleaner, to gain intensity and dynamics. Once mastered this remains in your body and you don't have to think about it as much anymore. We also worked specifically on forming every movement, it's emotion and character, that was one entirely different approach. Namely, we are talking about creating a new movement but what to do to improve it once created. In my work there is a great influence of that method. I am not saying that my work resembles Hawkins' work at all, but his influence on one is great."

Besides the work on Hawkins' and other techniques, you have also developed your own original style-Dance Entropy, what is that about? Entropy is a word in science, when things are moving in chaos, but are maintained in some form. In dance, many things are happening, many things are moving inside us, but we are a single being, as if entropy were to occur inside us, in our every molecule. I also utilize my life experiences and try to incorporate it into one whole. Sometime I use a gesture as an inspiration for movement sometimes, I find emotion for the dance in paintings... I like challenges and I am always trying to do things in a different way. When West African dance caught my interest I went to Ghana. I danced with their common folks and learned from them. I loved the rhythm of the drums, it gave me a feeling of freedom. It was a great inspiration for me.

Tell us something about American modern dance today? It is my impression that classical techniques such as those of Hawkins, Graham or Cunningham are not as popular anymore. I think the reason for that is the fact that dancers are bored of doing the same thing every day. Maybe that is a part of American Culture. I think that doing something different all the time does not necessarily mean learning more. I realized that I liked Hawkins' technique only after doing it every day for six months. I believed that there was really something there for me to learn. It is like in classic ballet, the dancers practice for years and always learn something new. I thought that the Hawkins' technique was subtle and easy, and that it was senseless to practice the same movements everyday, but with time I only realized how many things I was doing wrong. Meanwhile, in America, at studios, different teachers are guests very often, with various techniques, sometimes for only three days, some people simply find it more interesting to do it that way.

Are you satisfied with your stay in Belgrade and with the work with our dancers? "I really feel wonderful here and as for the dancers, I remember when I was here two years ago and watched some performances, I concluded that your dancers lacked everyday training. It's something else to do classical lessons everyday, that is ok, but if you want to become a dancer of modern style, you also have to do modern lessons everyday. I think that dancers do things halfheartedly, less than they are capable. That is why I am glad to be in Belgrade to do Hawkins's technique continuously, if only for a period of two weeks. I think that one can feel the difference already. The dancers accepted the style, the movements are cleaner, focus is clear, they comprehend faster. For choreography, I thought that it would be selfish on my part to come here and simply show them some of my new creations. For me it was more interesting to give them a chance to create dance themselves, to show them the means necessary to make it easier for them to be creative. We also worked on form, dynamics, gesture, etc. I wanted to talk about the situation here, about past events, about the bombings. Out of that we created a dance, but I did not do the choreography, I used their creative movement from the studies, directed them and put together a presentation. I wanted the dancers to rid themselves of negative energy and free some of the emotions which connected them to that period, I thought that it would be unhealthy if they remained buried inside of them. Occasionally someone would even cry, and a person does not cry just like that, there must exist a hidden, suppressed pain for that to happen. I believe that this was pretty useful for them.