



Inside and Outside of the House

Kata Kollo | April, 2018 | SZÍNHÁZ

It is extremely difficult to categorize *Fifteen Attempts at Acting* played by Hathazi Andras, but on the other hand, such an endeavor is not really necessary. The premiere in the theater of Satu Mare is the second one in row this season. It might be a little strange why this event takes place in Satu Mare, but it's not the first time that Hathazi Andras collaborates with the Harag Gyorgy Theatre. They have previously asked him to hold workshops, since he is a freelance actor who lives in Cluj, teaches at the acting school in Cluj, and consequently has trained quite a few members of the theatre's ensemble. And in the 2015/2016 season, Hathazi's play, *Manka*, premiered in Satu Mare.

"Hathazi Andras called me up at the end of last season with the idea of a performance. The text presented many opportunities, based on which a very interesting experiment could be launched. I was honored that the authors were willing to place their work in our capable hands," stated Bessenyei Gedo Istvan, director of the Satu Mare theatre, before the December premiere.

Before I start to write about the performance, I need to clarify a few things. Hathazi Andras has been a freelance actor since 2001. From 1992-2001, he was a full member of the company of the Hungarian Theater in Cluj. After departing the company, he had two or three gigs per season; later that decreased to one and then to none. In the meantime, he played in a few Romanian films and cooperated with the Varoterem ("waiting room") Projekt, which is an independent company in Cluj, taking part in two of their performances. He is not frequently seen on stage in Cluj, but truthfully, he doesn't mind. It seems like he couldn't find his place anymore in the brick and mortar theater, as he asserted many times during our talks that sincerity is lacking in those places, that those surroundings force the actor to lie.

Quite possibly, the performance in Satu Mare is the consequence of these thoughts. The script contains texts written by Hathazi Andras and Tom Dugdale alongside citations by Shakespeare, mostly scenes from *Hamlet*...

In short, *Fifteen Attempts at Acting* is an experiment where Hathazi tries to tell us about the questions that arose in him, about his doubts, fears, the schizophrenic mindset of the actor ("We tell lies all evening long, yet still we tell the truth"). The fifteen scenes all have their own title and own starting situation. Hathazi Andras, the man, tries to converse—sometimes seriously

and sometimes with humor—with Hathazi Andras, the actor, and to explain to some extent how his career has progressed. He even goes so far as to doubt his own acting.

“I entered this profession because I believed there was power in asking people to believe who I am, that I am someone else. I no longer believe that. You may believe that, but I don’t. Not anymore. It’s either a huge problem, or the opportunity to begin again.”

Those were the final words of the performance. Too bad we don’t know what kind of beginning it will be... or perhaps, Hathazi Andras, the actor, fooled us, played us like a fiddle.