
”Amatorzy” / Amateurs”. On Theatre of People With Intellectual Disabilities in a Feature Film

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Résumé

The proposal of my presentation somehow follow the research axe: ”various forms of artistic production located (...)at the crossroads of struggles, in an intersectional perspective”, highlighting the motion of emancipation by showing intellectually disabled artists as the performers. I will focus on the artistic work of Polish theatre company BRO (Biuro Rzeczy Osobistych/Personal Affairs Bureau), whose activity has been running for twenty years, evolving from art therapy projects to become recognized theatre company. Eventually, its spectacular progressing, perpetual development mode, performance skills, as well as subsequent performances/plays created over the years, (including one made together with professional actors), became the basis for award - wining feature film ”Amateurs”. It is a comedy-drama in which the main plot focusses on an exceptional acting ensemble, that faces a great opportunity to play on a real stage and start preparing to put on a Shakespeare production. I want to show BRO either in the context of professionally produced feature film, in which intellectually disabled actors collaborate with professional and famous Polish artists or highlight the transition process of the theatre company and its actors, evolving from art therapy activities and support, to become well skilled actors of creating and challenging theatre group. This also seems to reflect the well-progressing process of emancipation of people with intellectual disabilities, who from being supported by art therapy, become creators of art. Methodological context of the qualitative study included secondary data analyses (visual materials and film media reviews), as well as ethnographic interviews with the filmmakers and actors of the ”Amateurs”.

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