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Double Play to the Very End

Katarina Stegnar: **Dvojna igra/Double Play**. Bunker and the Imagine network
2020 - Arts and Climate Change. 23 May 2013, 60 min.

The Imagine 2020 - Arts and Climate Change encourages works of art that place the reasons for and the consequences of climate change into thematic focus. The current world of rapid changes – too rapid to be noticed, let alone kept track of or absorbed into our everyday lives – poses a difficult question, namely whether it just might not be too late for sustainable development as the concept that will save the world. Before the idea of sustainable development could become fully incorporated in our mental horizons, its basic premises were already behind time. We succeeded in surpassing (almost) all given and existing limits far too fast, living our lives in insufferable environmental and economic circumstances, which made many of us see this road for what it is: a dead end. And still we just sit and stare. We're headed straight for disaster as if under a spell, staring motionless in the consequences of our previous and current actions, just like an animal stares in the headlights of a rapidly approaching car without moving an inch. Having invented thousands of useful things to make everyday life easier or prettier, mankind simply exaggerates in producing all sorts of stuff and thus keeps on cutting the very branch it sits on.

The people of the 21st century write catastrophic scenarios, one day using social networks and blogs to passionately criticize society and politics, and yet the next day already sinking back into hopeless resignation only to find shelter, just like the beautiful souls, from the cruel world in ironic comments, sarcasm and cynicism. Perhaps we are nevertheless aware of how very futile our efforts are and how very little it takes for an idea to become ideology. Perhaps we simply lost hope and, let down by social action too many times, decided to adopt doubt instead. Experience teaches us to rely on nothing but reasonable doubt and the ability to form an alternative interpretation, which is why we might not always know what the truth is.

We see a duplicated Katarina Stegnar start out from a similar position in *Dvojna igra/Double Play* (in cooperation with the dramaturge Andreja Kopač). She sees cynicism for what it is, namely a poor defense mechanism that inhibits one from actually doing something. She has doubts concerning her own cynicism and activism. However, the plan on how to make the world a bearable place nevertheless exists: it is based on equality, stability and sustainability with a promise of a more just economy. Katarina Stegnar offers an alternative. She performs a lecture based on the publication titled *The Great Transition* by the independent British organization, The New Economics Foundation (NEF).

The engaged and active Katarina is being constantly interrupted in her lecture by the cynical and skeptical Katarina, the latter thus personifying perverted bad conscience of the former. A duplicated Katarina embodies the alienation effect and not just in the dramatic sense of the word: alienation from work, alienation from others, alienation from nature, alienation from

one's own self. In the state of constant conflict with herself, she may call off the truth she just uttered in any given moment. This is why one shouldn't believe everything she says. We see her talking and fighting with her own image on the video, which does come across as a well-chosen metaphor of the alienated world surrounding a contemporary man, who uses a screen to communicate with the environment, just as he might do in the future to enter into contact with himself.

NEF forms its suggestions for prosperity by the help of local inhabitants, whereas Stegnar the lecturer helps herself with the audience that she lures into the performance to serve as examples of precariousness, inequality and exploitation. Toward the end, four audience members help her form a model of a new and better society, albeit awkwardly out-of-tune. Stegnar plays with technique, with backstage, the swearwords she utters echo even from the Stara elektrarna's front foyer. The performance was accompanied by a conversation, conveniently titled *And What Do Others Have to Say?* Apart from the performer, the participating guests were the climatologist Lučka Kajfež Bogataj, a member of the Workers' Punk University Tibor Rutar and a lecturer at the Faculty for Social Sciences Andrej Lukšič, each of whom presented their own point of view regarding the themes, previously opened by Stegnar. However, just like her performance, the debating guests also failed to provide a unanimous conclusion. It's time for the audience to make its move.

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