

SKETCHES OF THE PLAY «TURKISTON TABIBI»

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Annotation: The article discusses not only the successes achieved through research conducted during the Independence Years at the Kattakurgan Theatre, but also some shortcomings that occurred. In particular, the play Turkiston Tabibi by Mannon Uygur, staged by the young director Feruzbek Roziyev, is one such work.

Keywords: Kattakurgan, youth, theatre, doctor, play, character, actor, performer.

During the years of independence, as a result of the Kattakurgan Theatre's efforts to discover young talents, Feruzbek Roziyev staged Mannon Uygur's comedy Turkiston Tabibi. This was because there was a growing need for works addressing certain vices encountered in life. Indeed, as art scholar Sarvinoz Kadirova noted, “Laughter is the main weapon of comedy. While tragedy reflects grand inner emotions and passions, and drama combines both comedic and tragic elements, comedy exposes the negative and unpleasant aspects of life.”

Taking this work into his hands, Feruzbek Roziyev applied these ideas to the stage using the buffoonery genre. This indicated his ambitious artistic goals. In fact, this in itself can be considered his main success, as the director did not blindly follow the author but attempted to create his own unique production. To achieve this, he worked on the play, sought innovation, and even rewrote the prologue.

However, Roziyev did not stop there. To more accurately express the genre of the play and emphasize its essence, he incorporated elements of Uzbek folk performances. As a result, the performance began with an unusual dialogue: the actors appeared on stage, deciding to perform a new play. Initially, actors Utkirjon Ochilov and Naghmatilla Salimov entered the stage performing a rhythmic, playful movement in sync with light yet intriguing musical tones. This further reinforced the fact that the play was staged in the buffoonery genre. The next two actors, Mamaniyoz Roziyev and Shohjahon Egamberdiyev, appeared directly as the characters Eshimqul and Abdurahmon. As they discussed the new play they were about to perform, a newly added character by the director, Gulnora Rizaeva, entered, asking for a role. At first, the others rejected her. Then, after some deliberation, they suggested she play someone's wife. Essentially, the actors were performing a play within a play. Eventually, Rizaeva agreed to portray Abdurahmon's wife. Now, the only missing element was the doctor himself. This issue was quickly resolved when Umrzok Tillaev suddenly entered the stage in the role of the doctor, bringing the discussion to a conclusion.

Thus, as the director's chosen method unfolded—with roles being assigned and rehearsals taking place within the play itself—fifteen minutes passed. However, this extended introduction caused some distraction, leading the audience to experience slight boredom.

Of course, innovation and taking risks are commendable, especially when aligned with the principle articulated by Mahmudhoja Behbudi: “Theater is a means of preaching and admonition, exposing harmful customs, traditions, and practices.” However, maintaining balance is equally crucial for a production’s success.

From this perspective, some shortcomings in the performance became evident, primarily due to the director’s excessive enthusiasm for innovation. When referring to the “director’s excessive enthusiasm for innovation,” the aforementioned fifteen-minute segment is meant. That is, the director became so engrossed in his chosen method that he forgot to maintain a reasonable limit. No matter how engaging a technique is, it should not exceed its natural scope, lest it lose its effectiveness.

Ultimately, the main show only began after fifteen minutes, and as the events unfolded, the performance turned into a grotesque display. This was particularly noticeable in Umrzok Tillaev’s portrayal of the doctor and Mamaniyoz Roziyev’s Eshimqul. However, while these characters leaned towards grotesque, the characters played by Shohjahon Egamberdiyev and Gulnora Rizaeva shifted towards domestic comedy. As a result, multiple genres became intertwined within the performance.

It is often said that properly defining a play’s genre accounts for half of its success. However, Turkiston Tabibi at the Kattakurgan Theatre lacked a clearly defined style and genre, resulting in occasional chaotic scenes, excessive noise, and unnecessary on-stage conflicts. Consequently, the audience’s attention wavered, leading to disengagement.

Yet, when examined individually, none of the character portrayals could be deemed poor—each was well-executed in its own right. So where was the issue? The problem was that the characters seemed as if they belonged to different productions directed by different people.

Another shortcoming was that some actors did not fully sustain their character portrayals until the end. For example, in his initial appearance, Nagmatilla Salimov’s To’raqulboyvachcha exuded great authority. When greeting the doctor, he extended just the tip of his hand while holding his large belly with the other, exaggerating the action to the point where it left no doubt that To’raqulboyvachcha was a true buffoonery character. If this portrayal had been maintained throughout, it would not only have matched the play’s conclusion but would have significantly contributed to the performance’s success. Unfortunately, in later scenes, he transformed into a squeaky-voiced, petty figure resembling a weak-willed, gossiping person, thus losing his original significance. Perhaps the actor aimed to garner more laughs with exaggerated clownishness? If so, it backfired, as it distanced the audience from his character.

This highlights an essential lesson: when exploring a play, maintaining balance is crucial. Otherwise, unexpected failures, like those seen in this production, become inevitable.

References:

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