

Brok is an hour
and a half
east of Warsaw,

located on the edge of the very unpredictable river named Bug that flows as it pleases. The house, where we spent a week together midsummer, is near the river, and in the spring the river overflows so much that the meadows in front of Anka's yard turn into a lake. The first day of my visit we walked beside the river and gathered mud and flowers. On the way I saw more horses and cows than people, and that was a relief. The ground was flat and so was the sky.

We would prepare breakfast, lunch, and dinner together, and we called ourselves scientists, for we felt the need to invent words and notions beyond the predictable.

On the second day we observed a newborn horse trying to stand on his feet and we discussed how you can overcome fear.

On the third day we visited the forest to look at the various birds: some small and colorful, others large and dignified by the length of their wings. And then there were those you wouldn't notice unless you heard their song.

There were moments when we just stared at the plants growing and glooming, given the heavy rain that daily crossed the land. We talked standing at the edge of the river and once and a while we would comment on its speed.

Look at this, Look at that,
Look there!

I gathered rocks with sparkling pigments of brown, grey, yellow, and deep red. Feathers and ornaments of that week, left in my jacket's pocket, will be unexpectedly discovered, and I am certain I will not remember where this dust is coming from.



First Scene

■ Do you know this bird?
■ Yes, in Greek we call it *koukos*.
■ This bird is very special.
■ Hmm, why?
■ It refuses to make a nest and instead lays eggs in the nests of other birds. *Koukos* leaves its child to be taken care of by other birds.
■ *Koukos* then is an artist. It perceives its children as creations that need to be shared and not possessed.
■ And what about the cuckoo clock?
■ (laugh) The cuckoo clock is capitalism. You take the sound of the bird who refuses to build the nest and you make it the bird of the house. It is imprisonment when a clock is made out of the sound of a bird who refuses to have a nest. And what if we talk about the artist as the *koukos*?
■ I think we hit upon something by calling the artist a *koukos*.
■ Is the artist a *koukos* or a cuckoo clock? And yes, I agree we hit something there. You said before that there is no difference between the nest and the home and that the difference is created by the subjects

involved. Can you elaborate on that?
■ Well, there are people who are in the nest, and then there are people who are not in the nest.
■ Do you think the two are connected?
■ Yes, they are.
■ I think so, too. The home is a normative space of dominant thinking. It is work as usual and the cuckoo of the cuckoo clock.
■ Is the *koukos* then a nomad?
■ Yes, though in the current moment it is prohibited for the nomad to exist. The migrant is thrown into camps. The movable subject is oppressed. There is no tolerance for any kind of movement. Mental and physical navigations to unpredictable, uncontrolled spaces and times are prohibited.
■ How do you see your role at this moment?
■ I guess this is a question that the three of us need to discuss. The delicate point of the question for me is not the notion of refusal. I would prefer to consider the *double gear act*. The double gear act is an act that it is not satisfied only from its presence but also from its many vanishing

points, references, attractions, and expansions. I am allergic to authority and I don't like control. The role I play is the way I behave. I behave not as oppositional but nor do I behave with full acceptance. *Queering* is a verb that we could bring into this discussion and choose, so as to not answer the question, what is my role?
■ In a way I think individually we assume that we are in the center of a situation but without having any control of it.
■ The debates of politics are based on the urgency of what is to be given and what is to be taken. But do we agree on that type of reactionary activity? Is this our motivation? I don't think so. I think our political motivation is based on what we sense, how we feel, what we need, how we live, and what we share with each other.
■ The majority of political decisions are based on the state of exception.
■ But you, the eldest here, you must have so much to say. I seek a connection between you and me that is based on sharing new tools, ideas, feelings, visions, and ways of cultivating them.



Second Scene

— I would like to understand your position.
— My position? I do my position, I don't say my position. But what do you mean?
— What do you want?
— I want to be part of something that is creating a momentum for more people than just myself, a force which shifts ideas and the ways we are thinking about how we live. I think that's my role. I think that's what I want. I want to be part of a momentum. I want to be part of a shift in terms of how we live. If we don't imagine different ways of living, in the micro and macro way, then it is impossible to shift art and politics.
— What does this mean?
— It doesn't need to mean something; I am doing it right now. I am in the process by having this discussion with you.
— What do you mean by shift?
— The shift is not a rupture, it is a constant engagement with a momentum. It is happening now.
— But what kind of shift?
— The shift is happening in the way we are thinking about simple things,

about our living conditions. This is how we bring ethics into our daily life, not from some kind of obligation or fear, but because we care for others and for ourselves. I think it is a belief system, a vision system, and it is what we believe about our lives.
— I don't understand.
— There are many belief systems. We often reduce our belief systems to the economy, for example, but there are many belief systems.
— This needs to be put in a very concrete way. Without a fight there is nothing.
— Yes, I agree, and that's what many do at the moment. This is the momentum. The fight is happening. There are many fights happening in the world. There are small-scale fights and large-scale fights. There are fights that are based in everyday struggles and also in bigger struggles, like against the privatization of water. Fight is a strange word.
— I agree with you on that. It doesn't need to be declared. What about the three of us, what possibility do we have here?
— Major possibilities. I think that everyone has many capacities. It has to

do with how expanded a person is. It is not a skill.
— But what do you mean by expansion?
— Expansion means an ability to be in different places and to sustain dignity. To be true to yourself and to seek truth, and to try to help others expand their dignity.

Poem

Maybe men liked me because I cooked well (ironically)
Yes exactly that's what I thought when I met you (laughing), she is so great because she cooks well
Really?
Cheers! To the best cooker!
Cheers!
Cheers!
But really do you have a recipe?
First of all to pick less handsome men, those who are monsters
Monsters?
Without teeth
To monsters without teeth then
Cheers!



Third Scene

— There used to be terrible manifestations of the right wing in Warsaw, but not as extreme as in Athens or New York.

— What do you mean?

— Of this intensity.

— If I knew what to do I wouldn't hesitate to protest. But I don't believe in the proposed solutions.

— They are not proposed solutions, they are just reactions.

— But when you talk about action, what do you have in mind?

— Well, I am not able to articulate it perfectly. But I have seen it happen. There are people who act, and I am not talking here about activism. I am talking about those who are shifting their lives and other peoples' lives. That, for me, is action.

— I think it can be tentative. For example, the Berlin Biennial organized by Artur Żmijewski, that was an attempt.

— I am not talking about attempts when I talk about action, but something that has impact.

— Artur lost it of course. He is an artist. He wanted to have a success and I told him this is not possible. What does it mean to have a success? Success occupies a place in capitalist society. Tentative actions change the opinions of people, but not of many people. When you make a performance, do you think that you change something?

— No, I don't think that I change something, in terms of impact, no I don't think so.

— Is there any difference for you between impact and success?

— Yes of course, a huge difference.

— What is the difference?

— Success always goes back to the one who did the act. It is a return. With impact, you can't control the "success" of the force. This kind of success doesn't have a return.

— Impact is a clean gift then?

— Impact is not even a gift. Impact is movement, rhythm that you don't control. If the rhythm is strong the continuum is strong, but it doesn't return to someone in particular. It doesn't have a particular end point, a conclusion.

— It changes something though.

— I don't make a performance to create an impact because with a performance I am targeting a small terrain in the context of art. So if there is impact, it is quite small. A performance or any work of art can be a very good place of training.

It can imply specific mechanics for other terrains, beyond art, and by that

I think that the impact of art can be very strong and important.

— And action? What is action?

— When we were talking about politics before, I was saying that there is reaction in politics, but there isn't much action. Because in order to have action you need to have a view of where you want to be, how you want to be, and what you want to do. Art is capable of bringing the urgency of those questions to many more terrains.

— This is not the case with politicians.

— When I am talking about politics I am not referring to politicians. When I am talking about politics I am talking about the base of politics, which is the relations and the social conditions of people. We often talk about politics and refer to politicians or ideologies.

— Because we think that politics don't belong to us.

— We also don't have the feeling of commonality or the feeling of a party. What then is politics?

— Politics is the movement from the personal to the public and from the public to the personal.

— What do you think when you say we? We don't have a common base and we don't have things that link us.

— I think we have many things that link us, but I don't need to describe them using the rhetoric of a particular "common" language, which is either an ideological one

or it is the channel of a party. This is the trap of politics as we understand it in terms of participation: in a party, in an ideology, and in a particular discourse. We are taken away from what we want and what we need and we adapt of course in particular forms of organizing. Our struggles refer to someone else that will give us something, meaning that our struggle always refers to the shift of power instead of focusing on how to eliminate power once and for all. By always waiting for someone to give to us, to regulate, to establish for us, we don't focus on our social conditions and the shifts in attitudes which we need to cultivate for ourselves and with others. As for the illusion of individual issues, individuality separates us from the things that we share with others, our similar problems, dreams, and efforts. We keep on adapting ourselves to this everyday separation of our needs, efforts, and dreams, in order to sustain this illusion of individuality. Limiting our efforts to symbolic actions for just a single goal brings us straight to nationalism, ideologism, and every other -ism.

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