

Tibor GYURKOVICS: CONSULTANT'S ROUND

Tragicomedy in two parts

First performed at the Pesti Theatre Budapest on May 12th 1972

Directed by Dezső Kapás, sets designed by Miklós Fehér,  
costumes by Fanny Kemenes

9 male and 3 female parts.

The poet and dramatist Tibor Gyurkovics was born in Budapest in 1931. He is employed as a clinical psychologist. Last season the Pesti Theatre performed his The Old Man, a synopsis of which was published in our summer 1971 number.

A hospital ward, four sick men lie abed, Badari, the oldest and most gravely ill, is a colourless minor official. He is always grumbling and demanding something. He is sure that he will get better and that he will return to the weekday world a healthy man. The others know however that he is mortally ill and that his days are counted. That is why they are at his beck and call, the whole ward is his slave.

Cziegler is a middle-aged man, he cannot bear either bodily or mental suffering. Nothing can shake him out of his depression and pessimism, neither the whining of the others, nor the pretty nurse who occasionally puts in an appearance, nor the noisy relatives who appear in visiting hours.

Fazekas is Cziegler's dead opposite, he doesn't give a damn about being ill, he flirts, drinks and goes on french leave, and is an unshakeable optimist.

The fourth, Tóth, is a young driver. He is tormented by jealousy, his girl-wife has not been to see him for a fortnight. He is suspicious, he always takes offence and he suffers.

It seems that everyone is selfish in the ward. Everyone wants the others to pay notice to him and comfort him. The nurse

who pays hardly any attention to the sick is selfish, and so is the wardsmaid who barely does her work, telling coarse stories all the while, and so are the visitors who only turn up as an excuse to be away from work.

Coarse dialogue tells us of their sad existences. Everyone expects something, a cure, or merely hope. They are waiting for the consultant's round, expecting his few words will provide the necessary encouragement that will keep them going for a day or two. When the consultant arrives he turns out to be an ill man as well: he suffers a heart attack right there in the ward. Cziegler's nerves can't stand the strain, he tries to jump out of the window. The mortally ill Badari, the selfish grumbler summons his last strength, gets up, and pulls him back. The difficult moment awakens his humanity. His deed is an act of self-sacrifice, the effort leads to an attack and he drops dead.