

The Prince of Homburg

[Right there do you see it?]

[It's a lunar eclipse, and we really need to make noise... to make it go away.]

1.

The Prince is Sleep Walking

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

this play is called the prince of homburg. the setting is a royal military orthodoxy. the question at hand, is how a person can possibly be alive here tonight before you, and dead tomorrow morning.

the prince is merely a vessel for a protagonist.

borders, the imagined realm of monsters.

war, a never ending vehicle for capital.

the action begins just before midnight.

[we find him here, as dreamy as a sleep walker]

Conal Mcstravick, as Neil Bartlett:

no wonder his stories and plays are so haunted by sudden disaster, and no wonder colleagues and contemporaries still optimistically devoted to the weals of the enlightenment found the violent emotions, reversals and ironies of his work hard to take.

On publication, The Prince of Homburg was deemed unperformable. Its portrayal of a Prussian officer who collapses centre-stage into grovelling terror at the prospect of his own imminent death earned swift condemnation from the state censor.

In this play, the Prince's swift journey into and through the presence of Death is framed by a mirrored pair of tableaux: the first scene stages a dream sequence which is actually real; and the last scene a reality which is surely a nightmare.

These two scenes are an extraordinary trick of theatre; although the stage picture in both scenes – midnight, a stunned, solitary Prince more out of the world than in it, encircled by all the other characters of the play – is identical, the meaning of the image is utterly different at the end of the play, both for the characters and the audience.

Everything looks the same; everything is different. What, then, can be trusted? What can be known?

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

Sometimes the things we do at night feel like dreams when daytime comes; sometimes the things we do in the day time feel like dreams as nighttime falls.

And with every morning, arrives the cost of the night before.

Swooning, falling, fainting, kneeling. Where am I?

Macy Rodman:

Erm, I'm Macy Rodman, I'm a...

Oh this is like, this is really old. I use a program called Reason.

[don't wanna got out of bed, in the morning / i need somebody to get me high]

Need somebody to get me high... I don't smoke weed but... I didn't.

[don't wanna get out of bed / keep on snoring / got my fingers between my thighs]

Masturbation.

[they call me, they call me, lazy girl. uh oh. They call me, they call me.]

Back to this.

[they call me, they call me]

i found it really difficult to write wie my body was adjusting to the hormonal shift. because, i mean ,thats a big part of it. you become lethargic and... don't wanna get out of bed. that was the first thing.

[they call me, they call me]

Oh! also, the 'they call me lazy girl' thing was like.. i was cancelling on people all the time. i was like, fuck. i hate that so much. i hate that someone is calling me lazy, because i just feel so crazy.

[i don't wanna move, i just wanna keep sleeping. I don't wanna go outside.]

I don't wanna go outside. Like, I'm scared of what's gonna happen if I go outside.

[I don't wanna eat, talk shit, see people. i just wanna lay down and die.]

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

I am a ghost, I am a cripple, I am... elsewhere.

2.

The Prince is Imprisoned.

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

Who will protect us from our protectors?
Who shall judge our police?
Who will redirect our directors?
and who release our release?

Who will police our judges?
and who will will our will?
out of paradoxes man creates his world,
but he cannot clean his socks,
and says the world is soiled.

Debra Soshoux:

When I was an OCS, this is my great moment when I was in the Navy. And we had to take a class in navel justice. and the instructor, who I don't know, was very unhappy to be in the Navy. he opened up with the question, what is the law?

people raised their hands. one person said, the US constitution?
The ten commandments?
One person said the code of hamurabi.

I was thinking, I had never thought about it before. I got up, and I said:

the law is a reflection of the consensus of a body politic at any given point in time.

quiet descended upon the multitudes. he asked me, could you repeat that? yeah sure.

the law is a reflection of the consensus of a body politic at any given point in time.

he said, where'd you get that? I made it up.

Che Gossett:

Um, I think a lot about desire. Like how guilt and shame are weaponized and totally wielded by the prison system. And become these carceral emotions really that get instrumentalised to justify a lot of violence. From... well there's a lot. From the guilt and shame that is supposed to be associated with someone who has been criminalized or locked up. Or the way that some people h odd harm are seen as irrecoverable, unredeemable, exiled, alienation. how the prison system likes to always have a particular figure as the ultimate disposable category, really.

to want a world without prisons is to want gender liberation, sexual liberation ,to want cruising. That feedback loop. You can't have a world without prisons when you have extraction, and gender.. fucked up gender norms. these things go together.

Debra Soshoux:

We have feelings of hot and cold. Of pain and pleasure. these are all complex biological algorithms, of chemicals. Gender is the same thing. A person's sense of gender, even if you can't articulate what you're feeling, you *know* what you're feeling.

and it's not like Maurice Albert, feelings. [Singing] Feelings, woah woah, feelings. Everybody makes a joke of feelings, mere feeling. But these feelings are not a joke, they're not trivial, they're literally life and death.

The feelings that ordinary cis people have of being male or female is not because they have a penis or a vagina, and feelings that a trans person of being male and female is not because of some delusion. It really is all about sex, but we have to *redefine* sex, that feelings are not separate and distinct from the physical body. They are *integral* to the physical body.

A body without feelings is a corpse. Basically.

In fact, I have a picture in the presentation of Marilyn Monroe. The icon of female femininity. Physically. And psychologically. The next picture is where she's lying on a slab in the morgue, and I say, ok what's her sex now? She hasn't decomposed, so she still has a vagina, she has breasts. she's a woman. but what's her gender?

Does she have a gender anymore? She's dead.

Johanna Hedva as the prince:

Saliva is good. Embracing lovers radiate light. illumination. The same sort of light, the astronauts saw from space. What exactly is my crime? to have been bled dry?

It's a pity that these eyes must rot before they see such miraculous sights.

Do you believe I will be dead tomorrow? Well, do you?

[Nour Mobarak:

I'll start with the easiest...

Oh saint can't you see, by the dark's early light. what so proudly we... share. through the twilight's last gleaming. oh stripes and bright stars, through the perilous light. what so proudly we share... through the... twilight's last gleaming. oh say does that star spangled banner wave.]

3.

The Prince to be Executed

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

Blindfolded before the court, I have been entangled in the paperwork of war. From six feet above the earth down to six feet under, I want to stay here. Halfway.

Sarah Schulman:

Normal funerals are usually filled with lies, right? People do not tell the truth about the person who died. Often there are people who are absent from the funeral for very specific reasons, that are not discussed. And they are usually very frustrating experiences, at least for someone. So to take that and to turn it into a place of truth is to politicise it. Especially when the person's death is contested.

If you think that when the body ends there is still some kind of perception or recognition by the soul of the dead person, then you make a decision differently than I would, because when I think you're dead it's over and there's no more communication or consciousness.

you know during the AIDS crisis people would leave elaborate instructions for their funeral, and it's an incredible burden on the living. people have to run around and spend all their one and this stuff to fulfill the wishes of the person who doesn't even get the experience, so I kind of think death should be for the living.

There are two generations of people who have never been to a political funeral and don't even know that it exists. and they expect when they come to a funeral to get all the niceties. how wonderful this person was, how much we love them, all the funny things that they did. and they had no frame of reference for anything else. what isn't the catharsis around that, that's gonna make you feel better?

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

I can see a light though my eyes are blinded.

and it shines brighter than one thousand suns.

I feel myself rising into thin, calm air, like on a ship when the wind takes it.

I see the harbour lights slipping away. everything is sinking, down into sunset. everything below me is mist.

carnations? who planted them?

[ah! how fragrant! The violets are here. guinea flowers? How did they come to grow here? I don't know. It seems, a maiden planted them.

A vision of joy has killed him.

let the thunder of the royal canons wake him.

HAIL. HAIL THE PRINCE OF HOMBURG.

HAIL, ALL HAIL. ALL HAIL THE VICTOR OF BRANDENBURG

tell me, is this a dream?

A dream? What else!

To the field!

HAIL! HAIL THE PRINCE OF HOMBURG! TO VICTORY!]

Johanna Hedva as the Prince:

Is this it?

Is this the very end?

Am I dreaming? Tell me, is this a dream?

[Nour Mobarak:

I remember you. You're the one, who said I remember too. I do. Didn't you know?

When my life is through, and the angels ask me to recall, the thrill of it all.

I will tell them, I remember you.]