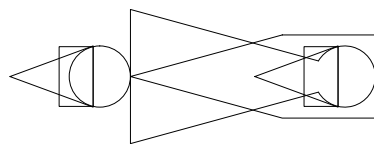


THIS DOCUMENT IS SPLIT IN TWO.

THE FIRST PART OF THE DOCUMENT IS AN ANTI-MANIFESTO MANIFESTO, WRITTEN TO CLARIFY THE PROJECT'S INTENTIONS THROUGH OBSCURITY. YOU'LL HAVE TO ROTATE THE PAGES FOR THE FIRST ONE.

THE SECOND PART OF THE DOCUMENT IS A CRITIQUE OF "THIS IS A PLAY - OF WHAT IS PAST, OR PASSING, OR TO COME", BY THE CRITIC. YOU'LL HAVE TO ROTATE THE PAGES BACK AGAIN FOR THE SECOND.

AN ANTI-MANIFESTO MANIFESTO



STAY ANGRY, I WAS TOLD.

STAY ANGRY AT THOSE WHO DID WRONG,
THEN YOU'LL KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR ANGER PROJECT.

SHOULD I BE ANGRY WITH A BUILDING?

WITH THE ARCHITECT BEHIND THE BUILDING?

WITH ARCHITECTURAL CRITIQUE?

THE LEGISLATORS & POLITICIANS & DEVELOPERS THAT MADE THE BUILDING TO BE?

ANGRY WITH THE CAPITAL THAT FINANCED BUILDING(S)?

CAPITALISM?

MODERNISM?

POST-MODERNISM?

PRE-MODERNISM?

DOGMATISM?

A

B

S

U

R

D

I

S

M

?

I THINK I COULD BE ANGRY WITH -ISMS.

-ISMS ARE STUPID SHITTY SEMI-RELIGIOUS DOGMATIC BLACK-AND-WHITE EXCUSES
TO EMBRACE IGNORANCE.
FUCKING

-ISMS, ANGRY WITH THOSE.

STAY ANGRY, I WAS TOLD, A FEW TIMES.

ANGRY WITH...

'COMMONERS'?

THOSE THAT CAN'T THINK IN ABSTRACT CONCEPTS OF SPATIALITY
& PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES?

'UN-COMMONERS'?

THOSE THAT CAN THINK IN ABSTRACT CONCEPTS OF SPATIALITY
& PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES?

MAYBE DEVELOPERS, AS THEY ARE NEITHER.

DEVELOPERS ARE ~~BA~~ EVIL, AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD IN SCHOOL,
THEY MUST BE EVIL. SOMEONE MUST BE.

ARE LEGISLATORS EVIL?

THEY DO ALLOW THINGS THAT ARE BAD TO HAPPEN. THEY PROBABLY DESERVE SOME
ANGER.

POLITICIANS TOO, THEY'RE ALL CAPITALISTS.

OR COMMUNISTS.

OR ANYTHING IN-BETWEEN THE TWO - CAPITALIST COMMUNISTS?

THEY MUST BE EVIL.

TO SOMEONE.

THE CITY COUNCILS & THE MUNICIPALITIES & THE CITIES AS WELL, WITH THEIR
POLITICIANS & LEGISLATORS & ARCHITECTS & NON-ARCHITECTS & DEVELOPERS.

THE NATION STATE MUST, BY ASSOCIATION, BE EVIL.

I MUST BE ANGRY WITH EVIL.

THE CONTINENT AS WELL,

MUST BE ANGRY WITH THE CONTINENT.

THE OLD CONTINENT ESPECIALLY.

& THE NEW CONTINENT.

& THE WEST,

& THE EAST,

& THE NORTH,

& THE SOUTH,

& THE LINE IN THE MIDDLE,

EQUATOR.

I SHOULD BE F*CKING FURIOUS ANGRY WITH EQUATOR, THAT WARM LYING UNSTABLE-
PIECE-OF-SHIT.

THE WORLD, SHOULD BE ANGRY WITH THE WORLD.

THE WORLD CREATED ~~OSLO~~ THE CONTINENTS, NEW & OLD.

THE CONTINENTS CREATED ~~OSLO HARBOUR~~ THE NATION STATES.

& THE FJORD CITY PLAN MUNICIPALITIES

& THE WILFULLY BLACK-AND-WHITE FORM OF COMMUNICATION THAT SEEMS TO
SIMPLIFY DEBATES INTO DUALITIES AND QUESTIONS OF GOOD & EVIL CITIES

& THEIR POLITICIANS,

& COUNCILS,

& LEGISLATORS,

& THEIR VOTERS,

& THEIR INTERESTS,

& GREED & NEEDS,

& THEIR EVERYTHING.



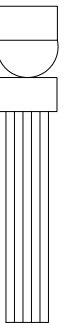
STAY ANGRY, I WAS TOLD, SEVERAL TIMES, SO MANY TIMES.
IF YOU'RE ANGRY WITH THOSE WHO DID WRONG, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CUT THROUGH,
CLARIFY WHY YOUR PROJECT IS LIKE THIS INTENTIONS.
GO FOR THE METAPHORICAL JUGULAR, WITH YOUR INTENTIONS.
SO MANY METAPHORICAL JUGULARS TO GO FOR, TO HIT.
IT'S DIFFICULT TO HIT JUGULARS OF MANY,
WITHOUT BECOMING A MASS MURDERER.

MAYBE MODERNISM WAS RIGHT,
WE NEED GREY

&
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ON 'This Is a Play - (Of What Is Past, or Passing, or to Come)'



It was puzzling that Alexander asked me to critique his play, and to do that before the play ever having been performed. It's a particularly strange request as I'm a character in the play myself, and that I don't know Alexander personally. I've chosen to only critique the play as a text, and to not focus on the architectural component that goes with it, nor to critique the play as a theatre performance as that isn't possible at this time.

First, the title in itself, 'This Is a Play', doesn't really say much about what one is to read, it merely indicates that the project has something to do with the word 'play'. From only reading the title one could draw several conclusions; one could be that it has something to do with a play for theatre; another could be that it's a play *on* something - a play on something conventional, a response to something one may know and then done in a playful, different kind of way; a third option could be that it's both. The title is quite foggy, and although the subtitle helps a bit, it doesn't clarify further what one is about to head into, except for hinting at something that has to do with something that *has* happened, *is* happening and/or is about to expire,

and *is going to* happen - it indicates some sort of change. The subtitle is also a half-subtle reference to the last line of *Sailing to Byzantium* by William Butler Yeats. However unclear the title may have been when first reading it, it was a welcome surprise that the last sentence of the play itself is a play on the title; where the writer ties the text together with a monologue from the character 'Me' ending in the words "Therefore, I chose to write 'This' as a play", emphasis on the *as*.

The characters, or *caricatures* as the writer calls them, and claims he didn't invent himself, but drew out of 'prejudices and observation', are in my taste a bit overexaggerated, most of them at least - although I must admit being somewhat biased as, again: I'm one myself. Creating characters as archetypes is a very Ibsen-esque element, which could be a coincidence, or a way of relating the play to a fellow Norwegian. Somehow, all the characters are antagonists *and* protagonists, I don't relate much to any of them (except for that of my own: which I'll get back to later), and to some extent 'The Merry Melancholic' who's described as a semi-protagonist. He speaks only in direct quotations from Søren Kierkegaard's works

- mainly from *Either/Or - A Fragment of Life* and *The Concept of Anxiety*, I believe. He's a manifestation of ambiguity, which seems intentional - relating again to the monologue from the character 'Me' ending Act III. This makes it a bit hard for me to know who to follow and who to like - the main character doesn't want anything; he seems to be just strolling along with what the other characters are up to. There are four other central figures worth mentioning: 'The Architect', 'The Starchitect', 'Me' and 'The Critic'. The Architect is probably the least exaggerated character, which I find paradoxical as the message the play tries to convey is nuancing; the other characters are extreme in their own ways, but The Architect seems to be an underexaggerated version of how architects really are. If one's to find a more exact image of an architect, how architects communicate and how the architectural cult operate I believe 'The Starchitect' and the meeting of the architectural cult in Act II to be quite accurate - and revealing the writer of the play to probably being an architect or student of architecture himself.

The character/caricature 'Me', leads me to the 'metafictional' aspect of the play. 'Me'

states that he's a student of architecture, but then again: 'Me' is a character, as the other characters, and his inclusion in the play makes the genre of the play shift from what I presume is to be meant as a satire, to a strange blend between the latter and meta-fiction. Making me think of Miguel de Unamuno who appears as a fictionalised version of himself in his work *Niebla*; where the fictionalised Unamuno interacts with his characters and controls their fates. As Unamuno was very much inspired by Kierkegaard, I find it hard to believe that the writer didn't draw any inspiration from Unamuno. On a general note, there seems to be an interest in existentialism. 'The Critic' as a character is based on myself, and even though I'm tempted to proclaim that 'imitation is the sincerest form of flattery' I'm not fully convinced. All my lines in Act I are taken from different interviews I've given on the development of Oslo and the oppression of the modernist hegemony, and as they're direct quotes from myself I can't argue with them. However, the rise of The Architectural Uprising is somewhat inaccurate, I understand that it's exaggerated to fit into the narrative where extremes meet extremes, but this exaggeration I believe to be unwarranted

and unnecessary.

I must address, in short, that all the characters/caricatures are male. Something that felt quite off when first reading the introduction to the play, especially given the current climate, and that we're in the year 2022. On the other hand, this might be an intended sting to men, and that it has mainly been men behind the decisions that created the mess discussed in the play. Moreover, I suspect that all the characters may be drawn out of the writer's personality and express his own personal ambiguity to topics put forward in the text.

The play is at times amusing, at other times frustrating, the characters are a bit too one-dimensional, and the narrative seems very easy to predict in the first two acts - especially if you're familiar with the architecture debate in Norway. At times the narrative seems to be standing still, almost making me think of *Waiting for Godot* (another 'existential' reference) - mainly the strange nature and absurdity of 'The Merry Melancholic'. Act III shifts completely, probably relating more to the task the writer was trying to solve as he wrote it. The shift from traditional play to a strange rant and/or monologue from a metafictional char-

acter trying to formulate his frustrations can for some be refreshing, it reminds me a bit of the final act in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Brecht, where the point of view suddenly shifts; the play is a 'reference-bonanza' when one begins to notice. If you agree with the message the writer is trying to convey, you'll probably enjoy the sudden shift. However, if you disagree with the message of ambiguity and need for nuances and believe that clear action is how to solve issues, you'll probably be as frustrated as the writer.

In short, I stand ambiguous to the play as a stand-alone text. I'm not sure if I like it or not, although I'm leaning more towards *not*. To me the underlying message of a want for nuancing and dislike for simplification - the want to stay in a somewhat opaque sphere, is a bit foggy and could be clarified further. However, I'll wait 'till I've seen the play performed, hopefully at 'The Place' / 'Sukkerbiten' / 'The Sugar Cube' before I'll write my final review.

The Critic