

English translation of "CONCERTO PER UNA FABBRICA OCCUPATA"
"Concert in an occupied factory"

- Good evening. Then, I am the violinist...

- So, I would like to emphasize certain aspects which seem important to me and to the other employees of the Municipal theatre; I would like to let you know how we experienced this demonstration.

Yesterday, we have been able to prepare this concert, all by ourselves, without any intervention of the management. All of us participated, the orchestra musicians, the choir, the technicians, the office clerks. It has been a real participation and a lot of work, since we had two concerts, the official one which interests us less and this one...

- I say, these are the important things which should be underlined. Because we came into an occupied factory, which means that we have reached the following level of consciousness: that the initiatives of the working class have a universal appeal, that is, they are leading towards the improvement of the human condition.

I say, this concerns not only the workers and therefore they should not be alone in carrying it through.

- Well, my name is Pani, I am a member of the factory council, here at the Paragon. We have set a goal for our struggles, to join and be connected with the mass of the workers in order to avoid the dispersion due to the individual actions of each category.

Tonight, it was one such moment, a focal point for all workers, particularly because of the participation of the comrades from the Municipal theatre. But this participation, too, is only one of the many connections which we have been able to establish during the 72 days of the occupation, with hundreds of firms, with hundreds of working people.

- I am a metalworker at the Scarsenigaglia steel mill, I am a member of the factory council, I say this so... Truly, tonight I came not so much out of solidarity... but because it was the first time in my life that I attended a concert. I knew nothing about Beethoven, I mean, more or less so, I had never listened to his music and, to say the truth, it has really been a marvelous, exciting experience.

I was all excited at the pianist's concert. But, the point is... that we, the workers, you see, are never asked about what we want by the people who make the programs. They never bothered to listen to us. I do not know, for instance... when the Municipal theatre chooses the works to be programmed, when for instance they include Beethoven in their program, well... somebody like myself who did not even know whether it would bore me to tears or please me immensely, well, I say ... I could make the sacrifice, after an eight-hour working day and try and go; but then, you see that you do not have a proper suit, you feel you belong to the minority there and you decide not to go. That is why even if there something that you could be interested in, you just do not go.

- Well, I am a representative of the Municipal Opera theatre employees. We helped setting up this musical event without the official support of the Management or of the theatre as such. We participated as employees because we feel the importance of these problems. And since a long time. Our struggle is waged on both the political level and the Unions' level and tend to achieve the control of the public institutes by the people, the control of the theatres by the people.

- I believe that we should avoid, as much as possible, being sentimental or being struck just by the external form of the event. The fact being that this particular problem or rather the formulation of it has arisen in Italy essentially in the last three years.

Since 1969 the working classes have become aware that a whole lot of cultural instruments, which so far were not at their disposal, can become useful tools in their hands. This is the crux of the matter. Tonight's experience is striking not so much because an orchestra left the theatre and performed in a factory as in terms of the present situation which is one of actual struggling. There must be centers in which the working class does more than just listening passively to whatever is planned for it by God-knows-who, because the ones who choose, who formulate the choices are once again the old intelligentsia, who has always served the bourgeoisie, who cannot re-cycle itself, who in the best of cases leans toward the enlightenment position by claiming and actually believing that it can bring the workers a message of light, while in reality this intelligentsia can only bring a message full of bourgeois values since it cannot depart from the bourgeois world.

- I think it might be interesting to interview also the protagonists of our evening. Pellini, for example; I think it is important that he tells us how he has experienced this event.

- But, I don't...

- I work at the Carlo Felice theatre where I play the flute in the orchestra. Our need is to find a new, more exciting and larger audience because few people come to the concerts. Music disappears from society, it is a great pity since music is not something for the elite.

It used to be a product for the elite in the sense that a certain culture too is the privilege of a small group, but in fact the problem of music is a human event, therefore it is of general interest. Obviously the worker who spends eight, nine hours a day in a factory, or works on a shift-basis cannot think of it because he is so alienated from... from..., it is a tragic problem because music is useful to all. It is useful to me too, who perform it. I am the son of a working-class family... I studied music because I feel it. All I say is we all need above all to be understood, not to be cut off from society. We feel cut off, we really do. At least I feel cut off, I feel that I am alienated,... I need me too the solidarity which we offered the workers tonight.

- I don't know...I think that what is fundamental, politically and culturally speaking, is the fact that the two categories are fighting together, especially the artists who have recently begun their own struggle for reforms and for more general goals, as artists. This tie between the two has a great value because it allows the Unions' movement to go beyond the narrow limits of the struggle limited to factory workers while our country is ready for a serious clash of forces to obtain reforms, to shape a democratic society, to uphold civil rights. This new relationship between the Unions and the workers on one side and the intellectuals on the other should really be emphasized. In all steps of the social life our working class and our Unions must face in a new, fresh way the problems arising from wanting to relate to the technicians, to the scientists and to the artists.

- I say, well, in the music by Luigi Nono, I perceive the sounds which I have heard, haven't I? which I listen to almost every day, the hammering, the banging of sheet metal...