

GEOGRAPHY AND LOVE

The search For the Role of the artist
A cronicle in five acts

Cast:

Characters:

LINN ULVIN: Fine art student with experience of acting and directing in the theatre as well as in the performance genre. She has had one novel published.

ANYA GALLACIO: English visual artist and guest lecturer at the National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo. In love with LINN ULVIN.

LIV BUGGE: Art student and LINN ULVIN`s ex partner.

SALESWOMAN

CHRISTIAN FALCH/mobil alias C: Art student. Linn Ulvin`s friend and lives in Copenhagen.

TWO security guards

Act one

(Early one morning on a wet late autumn day, a touch of winter in the air, as if the weather cannot decide what to do. LINN ULVIN and LIV BUGGE are in Oslo, walking towards the National Academy of Fine Art.)

LIV: Have you thought about it?

LINN: About what?

(She avoids looking at her. She looks down at her shoes and continues to shuffle along.)

LIV: You`re about to become a fucking circus artist. (She pats LINN`s shoulder and strides off again. You can tell by her voice that she is smiling.)

LINN: (catching up.) What do you mean?

(Aside) Last night I anxiously showed LIV an article printed in my local paper about the publication of my first book. The headline was "multi talented". There was even a photo of me getting on the train at Drammen station. (They reach the entrance, LIV BUGGE fumbles in her pocket looking for her keys.)

LINN: It doesn`t sound that stupid! (Talking to herself.) Circus Artist. It sounds totally shitty, but not as bad as all that. (They part and go their separate ways down the corridors.

LINN ULVIN stops by the cleaners`cupboard and shouts.) Yourè so clever, aren`t you? Fucking hell, you`re clever! (Way down the corridor LIV BUGGE turns around, smiles and disappears.)

LINN: (Aside) My first novel "The sky Behind is Tiresomely Blue" was published this autumn. I had some readings and gave some lectures here at the Academy and was reviewed. Suddenly the public regarded me as an author, and people related to me that way. In "The Sky Behind Is Tiresomely Blue" I talked about the transition into adulthood, loneliness and a search for identity that ends in the confrontation with a single identity or the conclusion of one identity. Instead of a singular identity, there are several that form the identity together.

Act 2

(LINN ULVIN and ANYA GALLACIO are in LINN ULVIN`s studio. The studio is bare. There is a bed along the longest wall and a large desk in the middle of the room. LINN ULVIN is sitting behind the the desk holding a pile of paper. ANYA GALLACIO is sitting on the bed.)

LINN: This hybrid of fiction and fact is a conceptual way of discussing working with several artistic expressions and its effects on different artistic forms.

ANYA: You have to get your nose into something to see what you are looking at! (She pulls a face as if sniffing something. Smiles.)

LINN: The concept of identity is fluid, which personally, suits me, as well as it being an interesting departure point artistically, especially if I look at it in relation to working with several expressions. It`s an exciting and difficult picture of reality. The world would rather have a singular expression. The world often reminds me of where I should feel at home. (Stands and walks around the room.) I am concerned with roles, the building of identity and the confusion of identity. How do I relate to the role of the artist, when I am an author in an art academy? And what possibilities does this give me? The author as a role! (She sits on the bed beside ANYA GALLACIO.) I`ve had performances and worked in the theatre. Being on stage trying to say something, relating to the public, is something completely different than sitting on your own, writing. There is a logical connection between these two forms of expressions. After a period of high profile visibility you just have to sit still. Your theme has different meanings and possibilities in different situations... Strategies! (LINN ULVIN gets up quickly. Walks around the room.) You can`t avoid seeing the relationships between the status of differing artistic expressions if you work within different genres. It can be exploited if you have insight enough. You can produce re-conceptions and make works of visual art without being taken seriously; but get a book published and you have secured yourself the reputation for being intelligent and hard working. (She sits down at the desk again.)

ANYA: (With an Italian accent.) As an artist you are in a unique educational situation. Within most educational institutions you are trained for a specific type of work. Within art education you can focus on your own ideas, and end up as anything, both in and outside the art world.
(She stares at LINN ULVIN for a long time, smiles and slides to the end of the bed.)

Act 3

(LINN ULVIN is hanging around a bookshop. She has been over to have a look at her book. Unlike many of the other books, its spine rather than its front cover is facing outwards. LINN ULVIN thinks about turning a copy round, so that it can be seen more easily, tentatively touches the book, but hurries away from the literature section instead. She looks around, to find herself standing by a pile of rolled up maps in the travel section. she realises that she needs a map of the world. She strokes the rolls with her hand. There are more maps on the wall than the rolls of maps are propped up on. They are pinned up like posters.)

LINN: (To herself.) They look like the maps we had at primary school. (She picks one out, pulling carefully, leans forward and gets hold of it with her other hand.)

SALESWOMAN: Do you need any help?

(LINN ULVIN jumps, lets go of the map and turns towards the voice. Just as she looks into the woman`s face, she loses her balance and falls backwards. She falls on her back, landing on top of the rolls, so that the pile splits and Europe and the World leap to either side of her.)

LINN: I`M just like Moses! (She laughs but not too long.)

SALESWOMAN: I haven`t a clue what you`re talking about. (She pulls LINN ULVIN to her feet).

LINN ULVIN: I`d like to buy a map of the world. (She attempts to tidy up the mess she has made). Is this the only one you have? (She picks out a map with "World" printed on it, but doesn`t attempt to pull it out this time.)

SALESWOMAN: Yes, erh, this is the world map. (She smiles).

LINN ULVIN: (Blushes. Her intuition tells her that there are more for her to choose from.) So this is the only world map in stock? (She is more assertive this time.)

SALESWOMAN: Yes, this is the world map! (She sort of wakes up and bends over the pile. You can see that she is looking.) Here it is! (She smiles) Here`s another world map.

LINN: Has that got flags on as well?

SALESWOMAN: Yes, it is very similar. (She is impatient). This is laminated, a bit stiffer. Butt he other one might look better on the wall.

LINN: I`ll take the unlaminated one please. (She picks it up and quickly walks to the till.)

Act 4

(LINN ULVIN and ANYA GALLACIO are standing, talking in LINN ULVIN`s studio. It is twilight outside.)

ANYA: There are lots of artists who express themselves in several medias, it`s been done for centuries, long before our time. You might have to work like that a long time before you gain respect as someone working seriously, making good art. It`s easy to believe that it`s luck if someone can manage to express themselves in several arenas, and your luck can suddenly change. There you are, left standing there, both you and your public, empty-handed.

LINN: Does our own general lack of impulsiveness short change our own judgement and feelings because we want some sort of security for the quality of the work? Categories and labels are needed to keep control of the whole mess. Artists shouldn`t necessarily be categorised. It can be destructive for freedom of choice and vitality for expression. Definitions are primarily a tool for others. It`s good enough to see an exhibition you like and feel its convincing. It`s more important to think about the content of the work rather than placing it in a genre!

ANYA: You can jump from one expression to the next, and be impervious to criticism. That is tiresome "multi-talet". (She makes apostrophe signs in the air for the world "tiresome".) There is something important that you need to take account of when calculating your audience. Different areas have different languages, as well as different audiences. Well to a certain degree. A book person can be interested in the book you published, might even buy it, but would never go to one of your performances or video showings, since he prefer books. Enter the fans. Fans eat everything.

LINN: Sometimes I think it is about what sort of world I would like to live in. The belief that I am capable of and have the possibility to choose who and where I am, is a social as well as a political point of view. (She moves towards the window.) I, a feminine woman, lesbian with a heterosexual heart, love

freedom but am controlling and so romantic that it would make you sick. And! I am no fucking hot-pot, I am pure meat!

(ANYA GALLACIO sits on the bed, but gets up again immediately and goes over to the window. She places an arm around LINN ULVIN`s shoulder.)

Act 5

(LINN ULVIN is sitting in her studio. She receives a text message on her mobile phone. It is from her friend CHRISTIAN FALCH in Copenhagen)

"RU? * C"

(LINN ULVIN rings C, and talks about her shopping trips, including the one where she bought the map of the world. C says that he has also been out shopping. He has bought a real meteorite. LINN ULVIN tries to start a conversation about where she should hang the map. She suggests the long wall but changes her mind thinking that it could just as well hang over the bed. After a while she jams the mobile phone between her shoulder and cheek, picks the map up and hangs it on the wall opposite the window.)

C: The meteorite is from Arizona. (He laughs.)

LINN: How much did it cost?

C: Ninety-nine crowns. (He laughs loudly.) Nine and ninety?

LINN: Nine and ninety isn`t bad for a meteorite.

(C hums in agreement. Distant whistling can be heard in the corridor and TWO SECURITY GUARDS enter.)

(It is night. The studio is lit only by the streetlight outside the window. It creates a yellow, diffuse stripe of light in the room that hits the map of the world. LINN ULVIN is sitting at the desk. TWO SECURITY GUARDS are sitting on the bed. One is playing a harmonica. All three are drinking beer.)