

On November 29th
I conducted an interview
with Lyudmila Anulova,
who teaches kids drawing
in a fashion theatre
called ‘Vasilisa’.



Could you introduce yourself and tell what your job is.



My name is Anulova Ludmila Vyacheslavovna, I work as a teacher in the fashion theatre for kids 'Vasilisa', which, well, is located in the Hall of Pioneers, so called GBPOU Vorobievi Gory . Very happy with it , that's me and that's my job, working place and my title.

mocking it laughing



It was a miracle. Pure miracle. I've been looking for a job for some time now, I mean, I worked with kids before, but they were individual sessions 'so could you help my baby to pass the exam' and so on 'okay then, baby, lets study for the exam', so everything was really individual. And then I thought to myself 'I guess I need to move on somewhere...' and fashion is my thing and education and all that...what's in constant change always interests me. And when I was passing one place I kept loosing track of, and the show and wind were blowing into my face, here were the lights from the House of Art and I was like 'oh! I haven't been here yet!' Anyway, here is me like the princess and the pea all wet and soaky, and then I meet Olga Victorovna and I say 'you know, maybe you have any open vacancies for the drawing teacher... maybe...'

impersonates a desperate



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person



. She examined me 'Yeah!', took me by my hand and sent me to Natalia Vasilyevna, said 'Here!'

laughing



. Nataliya Vasilyevna looked at me with such crazy eyes and said ‘alright, I don’t really know what to do, but okay, we’ll try’. She gave me some tasks, it was the end of the student year at that time, there was a final show and we had to decorate the space somehow... so I started to get into it little by little. To be honest I felt this energy like ‘hoooooooooooo’.

That's pretty much how laughing



'To be honest I felt this energy like
'*xxxxxxxxxxxxxx*' grimacing and

it all started and still going in the same condition.

So you had experience working with kids before?

impersonates other people

I worked with kids a bit like 'make us this, help with this please' and everything was so not serious...

You know, when one person achieves something 'yeah, I guess I that's because of my effort' but when the group is starting to get it, I'm happier for them more than I am for myself 'finally a real breakthrough, dear god what a joy!' That's the drive which keeps it all going, I think.

So you like the common endeavour and the feeling of responsibility?

impersonates a child

Yes and the ongoing drive. Because you are never bored. It is really hard for me to imagine being bored actually, even in childhood I couldn't stand 'im bored...'

'phew what is that?!" The only thing is multitasking...It is really interesting, but still it is really tiring... But there can't be only cookies. For example the first question we ask is 'do you know how to make bombs?"

, and I say to them 'out of paper!' 'aaaah!'

So you gotta buy them somehow. Motivating kids is one thing, but having enough energy for their extracurricular education... I mean, when I go on leave I just lie on the bed for two weeks straight .

So, with this course we are really trying to simultaneously push in historical costume, some sort of technology and drawing of course, we do collages for sure, but the course is called 'Drawing fashion' so let's draw something.

impersonates kids' joy

shows exhaustion

So you think this kind of combination of disciplines is a good thing and the more the better?

Yeah, so in school, for example, you have history as a separate thing,





geography – separate, and here, you know, design is something which sums up everything you've been taught at school. We've now looked at some history, and a bit of technology and how it's done, we can also look at chemistry and get to know the material we need to use, and geometry, because, you know, it's needed in cutting. The only thing is that it's hard for me to focus and get inspired by one thing.

So, what do you think is the goal for the theatre: the common cause and competitions with other theatres or to develop kids' imagination and creative abilities?

That's a big question. When I was studying at the pedagogical university to become an arts and craft teacher, there were a lot of amazing tutors teaching there.

One of them once said 'the big question of design is *why*?' I think it [the course] is to learn to compare yourself to yourself, not to others, and to learn to be in a group, have an understanding of your own level and abilities. 'I was like this when I came here, I studied here with a group and now I'm like this, after the competition I'm like this.' I mean, obviously these competitions are important, they are like control points we go through. They are needed as a result of everything we do here. These competitions make you an adult, adulthood is not only cookies, but also fails and falls. They discipline kids a lot.

So you think it is important to put children under such pressure and make them feel as a part of something big?

Yes, definitely. They need to learn to be responsible for their words. Giving promises is easy, but sticking to your words... To come up and tell that you can't do something you said you would is, really, an adult thing to do. It's better if you tell me you can't do something beforehand rather than we will be sure the work is being done, but in reality it is not. We are a part

of an extracurricular education programme, so there is pretty much nothing which bounds a child in here. These [takes out the document of child's participation in the course] these are just nothing, these are not like the documents in school, you can come and go as you wish.

You enrich the kids, foster a sense of responsibility in them, don't you feel a great responsibility on your shoulders for it?

Yes, I feel great pressure. I think what you put in them, they would give back eventually. I'm not their mom in any way, you come here to study, so you do what I think you need to do, and only then you could do it as your mom said.

So there is a certain level of trust with the kids you are trying to achieve here?

like it is strangling her

shows Yes, you know, trust is like...

I get really scared sometimes, because you can't step back, there won't be a second chance to make the first impression.

And it is really hard to meet the expectations, and not other people's expectations, but mine. Kids come and go, but I'm always here and the smallest mistake could become like a thorn in my side...

Do you think you are giving your students advantage in comparison to others, for example, as entrants in art schools?

lightbulb above her head
impersonates a
kid

shows

We are not giving any privileges to children, but sometimes it happens that the person is in the 10th grade and 'bu33333!!!'

'i wanna

be a designer!'

as it is usually. So it is better if these kids come to us when they are 12, understand that it is not for them, save their parents a lot of money and go work for the bank. With us, the student is already in the profession, they have clear understanding that to sew something you need this amount of time, for example. You have a better





directed, organised and motivated understanding of the profession.

So you help the student by introducing them to the profession beforehand?

Yes, again, nothing is useless in the end. Even if the person is not going to devote their life to design, the way they look at the problem would change. Design is not math, it's a problem, because for math you usually have the algorithm, but for design you don't. There are methods of problem solving, so if you don't know what to do you can always start with the rules you already know and 'bum!'

it could

lead you to something. As my father used to say 'higher education is where you learn where to look for the answer and it is what shortens your search time.' To know something you gotta learn something. It sounds stupid, but you gotta have the desire, not the attitude that you can buy knowledge 'bought a car, bought a license, haven't bought the driving'. You gotta put your effort in and with the right methodology you could solve the problems you face, I hope any kind of problems.'

shows explosion

with her hands

Going back to what you are doing right now (stamping the documents). As I see, there is a great administrative pressure you feel in here?

Yeah, and it's like snow and rain, you know, it's going and there is no point in fighting here. I understand that the person (in the face of administration) could do only one thing and that's their whole life. I'm far from this righteousness... We waste great amounts of paper, how could we even speak of proper ecological education. Right now it is way harder to enrol your child into the programme than it was back then. If a person comes to me, that means their parent had all the documents done, enrolled the child into the portal and got all the papers, you really can build a monument for the parent! I don't

know why this is happening and I don't really want to know, to be honest. I have other stuff to think about rather than this. It is better to leave it as some of the poison in the honey and don't pay attention to it. Life is short, you can't afford spending your time on that.

What do you think, why do they want to keep such control over you?

They have nothing else to do. I treat it like rainfalls, I think it's the best I could do. Well, now I for sure know how to write a memo .

laughing

I think Russian extracurricular education system is such a helpful platform for kids, but at the same time it is under such control by higher authorities, so one process makes the other work slower.

I can say one absolutely seditious thing...No one stops me from creating a group chat with kids' parents and agree on meeting at one place together without writing memos and signing any papers. And no one said we couldn't meet with kids and their parents in Suzdal for the competition by sheer accident.

So you are to find your ways around it?

laughing

Yes, we are creative people in the end . I heard somewhere that the severity of the law only provokes people to find the ways around it. That's the core problem of them, if the laws were understandable and worked for everybody, then everybody would follow them. It means, there is a bigger issue, and it is not my story to tell, it is their problems. I deal with it, it bothers me, but even if I go out on the streets with a red flag in my hand, they would still sit there as they were before. It is just easier to shout. In this case I let them spoil their own karma. It's not that it makes me feel better, really, it's all inevitable, but if there is a change in this country, it is not our country anymore.



Anulova Ludmila
Kuranova Lesya

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