

Presenting the series
Readings from a Sider

Tanner

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ప్రాచీన మాటల విషయంలో దుర్దాటాడు. కానీ ఇప్పటికే సాధారణ సాంఘిక విషయాలలో నీటి ప్రాచీనమైనదిగా ఉపయోగించబడుతుంది.

On November 6th Russian soldiers on the border of the occupied South Ossetia killed a Georgian man, Tamaz Ginturi. Previously they had locked up a small church in the village, named Lomisa church. Tamaz and a couple of others unlocked it.

ლოკომიტის შენის ძაღლის კენაცხადი, შენი ამჟერის დეტალური შეჯერება*

On November 7th I screened the documentary *Taming the Garden* in the main auditorium at EKA. I had seen the movie once before, two years ago. Since then life in Georgia has become even more unbearable.

I watched the movie with my fist clenched and crying. The film was the same two years ago, it is my awareness that has changed, it is mine and every Georgian's patience that has filled.

A few years ago Bidzina Ivanishvili, a billionaire, whose playground the country has become for a decade now, was transplanting century old trees from the people's gardens to the park that he was building. Film director Salome Jashi documents the uprooting and transportation of these trees and the people that this absurd event affects.

In one scene man smokes his first cigarette in 30 years, saying good-bye to a tree his grandparents had planted. Old woman watches how the trees she had planted for the whole neighbourhood get cut down to make way for the one tree that the oligarch wants. People wonder what their dead relatives would say if they saw this.

"It was the beauty of the district" one woman says. Trees are places, trees are events, gatherings. People seem to be confused with what's happening. They are given money in return for the shade in the garden. They are compensated for the memories. They cry when the trees leave, but they're not completely sure why.

Taming of the garden by a powerful man is not only man playing god with nature, it is also a taming of people's lives, it is a denial of beauty in life. Even if the people were not afraid of this man's power, which they are, they are manipulated, reduced to their basic needs, reduced to the subjects who need only to survive. He declares hegemony on trees, masquerades as a cultural man, spokesperson for all that's beautiful and through this denies humanity to the people he himself keeps poor. Is there an emotional need, a desire of poetry in life more basic than to hear the leaves of the tree you grew up with, rustling in the wind?

I have a clear memory of the news broadcasting an image of a tree sailing away on the water. We all laughed at it back then, the absurdity that is to live in Georgia hadn't yet become painful, the cognitive dissonance of living under the loudly unjust system, while trying to make the best of your life hadn't invaded our every thought. That is for the majority, however people have been paying the price for this illusion of peace, this absurdity, that is in reality villains making fun of people, for years. People on the border have lived in this horror, denied even survival. The death of Tamaz Ginturi is a consequence of years of spiritual depriving and dissevering of Georgian people.

What are we doing? This question has been up in the air for years now. And I will live it up there still, because that is a question that needs a collective answer. I have my theories, but I suggest now that maybe those who can, should fight against the silencing and rejection of our humanity, our empathy, pleasure and rage.

ବେଳାରୁ କାହିଁବିଦ୍ୱାରା ଲାଗୁ ହେବାରୁ ପାଇଁ ଏହାରୁ ବେଳାରୁ କାହିଁବିଦ୍ୱାରା ଲାଗୁ ହେବାରୁ ପାଇଁ ଏହାରୁ

Tamaz is heard saying these words in the video.

Lomisa, praise be to your power. Fuck whoever locked you up!

Word to word translation:

Lomisa, praise be to your power (I take its place in all hardships), I fuck the mother of whoever locked you up.