

Miklós Hubay:

I CARRY FIRE

A tragedy in two parts

First performed by the Thália Studio on November 4th 1972
Directed by Katalin Kőváry, designed by György Rajkay
4 male and 3 female parts

Miklós Hubay (Oradea, 1918-) dramatist and translator. The performance of his first play, The Rape of Europe, was stopped by the authorities in 1939. The National Theatre performed his Without Heroes in 1942. Travelled to Geneva the same year, where he edited an Hungarian anti-fascist paper. Returned to Hungary in 1949. Taught the history of the drama at the College of Dramatic Art, the dramaturge of the National Theatre for some years. Numerous plays of his were performed in Budapest and the provinces. Collected volumes of his plays appeared in 1964 (With and without heroes), 1968 (Life and Death Games) and 1971 (I carry fire). He is the author of the libretto of Emil Petrovics's opera C'est la guerre and of Three Nights of a Love, a musical (with György Ranki and Istvan Vass).

Two young people are led up to a studio flat by the concierge. Brothers. Máté, the elder, is an actor, he escaped from the clinic where he obtained the key to the flat from his old painter friend Valér. Their conversation makes it clear that they grew up in a village and that there were ten in the family. Máté went up to Budapest and became a famous actor at one fell swoop. Máté phones the clinic, telling Éva, the beautiful woman doctor, that he loves her, he asks her to follow him. She puts down the receiver, but she comes nevertheless. She wants to keep the man away from herself. They tell their childhood memories to each other. Máté remembers that his mother stole some straw and the baillif lit it on her back, and Éva when she last saw her mother in the concentration camp, before she was taken to the gas-chamber. Ákos, Éva's doctor-fiance turns up. He contemptuously makes fun of Máté and tells him that he is uneducated and lacks talent. He predicts that the relationship will be an adventure lasting a few weeks and then collapse since the educational and social differences between them are too big.

Éva and Máté accept each other and stay together.

The scene of the second part is the same, after the fire, after Éva and Máté's suicide. Ákos, Miklós, Valér and Margit (a fellow actress of Máté's also of village

origin) are brought there by pangs of conscience. They all want to find out why the lovers killed themselves. They wanted to get married. On the day of the wedding Margit, who did not get the part she craved, parted the two out of jealousy. Miklós started an affair with Éva. The months pass. Éva and Máté appear and act out the story of the last night. Máté did not turn up at the theatre. Éva, driven by some sort of restlessness went up to Valér's studio. They met there. They wanted to start life afresh. life and their love, but both of them knew that it was no go. Too many outside circumstances divided them. Everyone around them was opposed to their relationship. They accused Éva of having ruined the pure and talented Máté, and Máté that he had dragged down the educated and clever Éva to his own level. They lack the strength to confront the general opinion but, in order to prove that they belonged together all the same, they decided to die together, and they set fire to the roof above them.