

Joint Work On People!

Interview with Martins Rubenis



Zanda Malniece, Project “Pēdas”

Are you a Rigan?

Yes and no. Still I can't deny that I was born here.

Do you have any particular place in the world, which you feel as yours?

The house of my grandfather, where I was brought up in childhood. It was built by my grandfather after the First World War. When I was a small boy its garden was my world. (Laughs) The destiny deigned to show me the world wider, but every time I come back with warmth in my heart.

Haven't you had any thought to stay somewhere else?

This feeling that there is a place in the world, which is really yours, which is definitely waiting for you, is such a thing that keeps you on the earth. But this might be my point of view. It may happen that you have already been to such place, but still look for something else. Sooner or later you come back home, having found nothing, and understand that this is your place. The place, where your first percept was formed on what is the world at all. Perchance, all other impressions have been patterned later solely through a way of comparison – you compare everything to your first home, with the place from which you got sight of the world.

Has the fact that you represent a small country helped in your sportive carrier or has it been an impediment in any manner?

There are no small and large countries, there are people with small and large hearts. Of course, countries and traditions are such factors that in different ways impact on people's perception of the world. But still, largely you perceive this world through your consciousness, your heart depending on what kind of a person you are.

What sport has given to you, which you could not get in any other field?

I think that everyone has a particular place and mission in this world, and if we are in this situation, it's no accident. Even if we'd most like to believe this is a grand matter of chance, I understand that it is not. This is the course of nature, which shapes our life and everything depends on how well we realize it.

Are you a dreamer?

Probably I am.

The main objective of sport is to be the first one – this is *uncanny* individualism. How important is it for a person to feel as „one of”?

Probably such a view of sport has been formed among people. This is a materialism ideology learned from childhood that one should struggle to be the first. But people are spiritual creatures and everything has its bright side, this is our heart (soul) and wherewith the process of body perfection and competitions are merely points of reference to what has been done. Of course, I have also learned a lot from contacts with people. I have experienced both great disappointments and also moments of joy. Still, they are merely points of reference to what is what.

What are core values in your life?

Actuality as truth, goodness as sympathy and understanding, patience as peace in the heart in order to implement everything aforementioned.

How has your environmental awareness been formed?

Nobody and never hindered my links with nature. I was brought up in the garden of my grandfather's house in the most proper sense of the word. When I was in my first form of school we used to bicycle with my friend to fish in various directions from Riga. Those were real journeys. Thanks to my grandparents that they didn't deny me such things.

Have you acquired your experience and understanding more through yourself?

In childhood, of course, we used to go with mum also to pick mushrooms. But nobody stays away from that. (Laughs) But largely I have acquired my cognition of nature through myself. I've always liked to talk with nature in solitude.

You have agreed to participate in joint work organized by the "Pēdas" – both to gather waste and as a DJ.

Of course, not for the first time...(Laughs) If I see that people do something right and if I can help to do something good why shouldn't I do that?!



Is participation in joint work also your attempt to change the world and neighbors or to gain anything for yourself – a clean conscience?

Of course, it is important. If a small boy or just a person, who has come to joint work, sees that a well-known person can bend and pick up a plastic bottle or dropped garbage, if to tell people that one day they can find this litter on their plates then they would think more thoroughly. Still everyone has own approach and own understanding, that's why you can't say that there might be one recipe according to which everyone would do everything right. I think that the world nowadays is on its one of the greatest crossroads, when spiritual and moral values have fallen behind the shadow of material wellbeing. There are people, who are ready, polluting nature, wade through slaughter and to gain some temporary benefits. Still, nothing happens just so. Both good and evil has resonance. The main thing is that eventually you can

say, without asserting someone as an excuse for what has been done or hasn't, what is what in reality.

Which of them does in a greater degree – either environment shape a person or a person shape environment?

We are a whole entity. There is a mechanism that turns (illustrates with hands) and the fact who is on which side is not important. For all that we are a part of this world! We have shaped in a greater degree it such as it is. At the same time we have shaped it solely under such rules of game as offered to us by this world.

Haven't people at the moment started to define the rules of game too much?

Of course, they have. That's why the nature shows that such things are not allowed. Don't all these nature disasters and diseases throughout the world serve as evidence?

How harmful or harmless are you yourself as a habitant of the planet? Do you follow that, what way of life do you have?

More and more day after day. But my daily routine determines, for instance, that mainly I need to go by car, but not by bicycle.

Are you one of those people who are always short of time?

I have as much time as I need. Time is such a thing that is beyond our control. It in its own way governs us, but this happens only then when we try to govern time.

Isn't waste in urban environment a "symbol of freedom" of an individual? Those, who bring waste to woods, have big complexes ...

... that, however, there are street sweepers in the city! (Laughs)

Yes, people think that „we pay taxes, let somebody gather waste after us”.

I think that this is a very narrow view. At the end of the day, we are those, who shape this world in which we'd like to live. Microcosm is basically clean, then why do we litter ourselves?! There should be equilibrium in everything, that's why the nature fights us as we fight the nature.

Whether nowadays, when opportunities of people to get information are boundless, an interest to cognize nature and self-actualize won't decline?

It is impossible to answer unequivocally, but there is such a trend. People have started to use own heads less and less. This is, probably, what we call a scientific progress and a regress of human as a spiritual being.

Joint work is also largely a symbolic event. If you had a possibility to arrange joint work for a very particular idea, what that might be?

That might be called as „Joint Work on People”. On those, who are human beings deep in heart, but not only robots, who chase around and earn money. Such „dirty things” cannot be eradicated in one generation, but that doesn't deny us a try to do so. For example, in Japan I saw a part assigned to child-rearing and formation of understanding on how an individual is connected with nature. When walking I didn't see any litter on the ground even if there was no any dustbin in a couple of quarters. These people have preserved their traditional values and this is in the most obvious way reflected in environment wherein they live.

Is that in some degree determined by the fact that togetherness might be tightly developed amid them?

I don't believe that it is a question of togetherness. For example, hieroglyphs – if someone has written that this is a tree, but this doesn't mean only a tree as a material. This is a matter on which he can talk for a couple of minutes. For us a table is just a table and a wall is just a wall, as children are not taught meanings of things. If a child were told that a tree is a sacred thing that produces for us oxygen and therefore we can breath, then the child would think before breaking even a shortest branch. Of course, we can't reproach people, in whose upbringing model the attention to such

things, obviously, was insufficient, but we can give them a lead to look at that direction.

Who should today assume the main role in solution of the situation, considering this „lost generation”?

It is difficult to say whether introduction as a secondary education compulsory subject to schools would unequivocally solve all problems. A child in the beginning most of all listens to its parents – this is the first authority. But in further life there should be also a form of manifestation of general education. And one small particle of the whole picture is the *Project “Pēdas”*. It might be your first talk with nature.