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Kim Ju-yeon's Theatre Navigation

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The one overlapped point of its own difference: <In the Heart of Forest>

<The Scientifically Minded> series by Hirata Oriza is a little different, unfamiliar theater from any other theaters.

At the setting of Primate Research Institute breakroom, the researchers of different majors are shown with their different story and daily lives. The audience hears the scientific jargons from the stage and watches various perspectives about the Primate Research and experiments which they probably never think about before.

Not only about the setting and the subject, but also about the style of acting and staging, <The Scientifically Minded> shows somewhat different qualities. Before starting the performance, the actors on the fully lighted stage are playing the games, reading newspapers or chatting each other. Nothing differs after starting the performance. An actor disappeared by crossing the stage without words, several actors from their own places on the stage talk simultaneously. Even an empty stage is shown. With these things, there is a moment by overlapping several elements which looks totally different at first sight. The characters words which come from different majors like Biochemistry, animal ecology, agriculture, medicine, genetic engineering, psychology, linguistics and talk their own words added into the certain story to reveal all the sciences are closely related. Also the primates, especially the behaviors and habits of chimpanzees and bonobos overlaps with the behaviors and habits of the researchers. Those moments asks us the questions about the differences of human and animals and about human's superiority to them.

<In the Heart of Forest> by Hirata Oriza in Seoul Performing Arts Festival captures those kinds of features well and shows more sophisticated set ups and expanded awareness. On the setting of fictional French National Primate Research Center, there are French, Korean, and Japanese researchers who are played by French, Korean, and Japanese actors. They can understand the languages of others by automatic translators. The discussion among the people with different majors, different languages, and different viewpoints shows different attitudes for what they believe. Those differences made the audience wonder their co-habitation but somehow the theater make the audience understand their conversation regardless of their differences. Like the words in the theatre: we are one from the viewpoint of genom.

With these features, this play make us think about the different positions of the characters with their overlapping moments as like the psychologist who wants to do an experiment the primates for the child with autism and the researcher who thinks a primates as a human being, the business man who wants to link the research center to the entertainment business, the problem about the old French colony and Japanese colonial issues with Koreans. These things looks like a scientific issues but it is really philosophical, ethical or humanities. Therefore, this play, one of the ‘The scientifically minded’ series is overlapped with ‘the theatrically minded‘ by talking about human and society on the stage.