

**Silvia Soro**

**SPEAKING STONES**

*The play, consisting of 17 monologues, takes place on a small island with only five inhabitants: a fisherman, a retired schoolteacher, a former milkmaid, a former fighter, and a “stranger” in a wheelchair, who after getting back his estate when Estonia regained its independence has returned to his childhood home after many years in Siberia. In the first monologues, we find out how the people get by living in this village. How women are worried about the men’s alcoholism and the lack of educated, cultured people in their village; and how men cry for the younger generations uninterested in country life.*

*Suddenly, something new breaks into the still life of this community – expansion works of the causeway between the neighboring islands have started, and the state is buying stones from landowners. There are plenty of stones on that island, some might even say there’s nothing more, but the question is who actually owns the land underneath these stones...*

*The characters: Riste (Irina), Ruudu (Raissa), Kostya (Konstantin), Lembit (Neptun), Juhan (Ivan)*

**Extract from the play:**

JUHAN: Let’s do an experiment. Watch carefully now, I won’t do it a second time. I take a stone from my pocket. Imagine that I’m this island and this rock is a part of me. I throw it away. No more rock! And now I stick my hand into the same pocket and take out that very same stone. Such is our life. Not a single stone can run out, just like our island will never run out either!

When the German barons began building the causeway during Tsarist times, the men of our village transported stones onto the ice by sled. The land was stripped clean every fall. And when the ice melted, the stones slipped down into the sea and came out of our fields once again. Took ten

years before the seabed started carrying the weight and one could make it across somehow. Yet we nevertheless recognized our own knolls when the plow tilled them up. So it would have continued on to this very day, had the fields not been left to pasturage. The underground tunnels have become clogged up. But once we till up our fields again, everything will carry on in the same cycle. The stones will grow endlessly from the fields and the children will return home.

So it has been and so it will be again one day. That's why I'm here too. Just like a tough old boulder that surfaces from its home field anew soon after being cast down to the bottom of the sea. And life has shown that where there's one stone, more will multiply. And where there's even a single person – even one old crippled man – some day, more will multiply there.

Those deportations that happened here during the last war weren't the first, you know. Men have come here plundering and carrying people off to Siberia in droves before, too. Yet the children of our island have still made their way back home, and whoever has lived here has doggedly made more children. Every few hundred years or so there comes a time here, when it's almost as if the population is dying off and it looks as if there won't be life here any more in ten years. But just you wait and see! A hundred years later, the island's full of people.

After the Northern War when the Black Death crossed the island, there were only two people that survived. One man and one woman. They had hidden in the caves along the cliffs. Afterwards, they came together here amid the stones and the skulls and ... started to work tirelessly and make babies. And a hundred years later, there were more people here than ever before.

You see, right here is the kind of white stone that one shouldn't pick up. Father always said that this sort of white translucent rock is called flint,

and it means hunger and misfortune: your house might burn down and a dreadful accident might befall the person that picks it up... He'd say, "better let that unlucky stone keep lying in the field". Poppycock! People used to believe all sorts of crap long ago, and even my father still believed all kinds of things, although he was a highly educated man... And although he abided by all those superstitious rules so that things might go well in life, they went poorly for him all the same... (*picks up the stone, sticks it into his pocket*).

**Saistībā ar lugas izmantošanas iespējām aicinām sazināties ar Igaunijas Teātra aģentūru ([info@teater.ee](mailto:info@teater.ee)).**