

3 reviews of Xavier Albertí's production of *Els homes i els dies* at the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya in Barcelona (21.04.22-29.05.22), an adaptation of the posthumous autobiography by David Vilaseca entitled *Els homes i els dies* (*Men and Days*).

Isaias Fanlo in *Núvol*:

This is an important première which serves as a letter of introduction from David Vilaseca to the public who has not read his volume running to over 700 pages: colossal, furiously paced, sharpened like the edge of a knife, surgical in its dissection of exile, desire and identities. *Men and days* (the diaries) is, I think, one of the highest points in Catalan culture of the last fifty years. A first-class text embracing a lineage that links it with the analytical tradition of Josep Pla, Gaziell or Puig i Ferrer and gay literature of the self such as Joe Orton and André Gide, while also engaging with theories of psychoanalysis and queer thought.

<https://www.nuvol.com/teatre-i-dansa/david-vilaseca-al-tnc-subjectivitat-desig-maduresa-i-confianca-249888>

Pol Guasch in *El País*

If *Men and Days*, the autobiographical totem of David Vilaseca, was an image, it would be that of a dark room. Try to imagine its trail: moisture, smell, sweat on the walls. Dirt. The unknown body and the loss of senses. Love silenced, the desperate search. It could also be a London sky, leaden and grey, clouding any chance of a new life. Or a memory that weighs too much: the mother, the village, provincial Barcelona, the forgotten friends, that first love who betrayed him, trauma, psychoanalysis, pain. Another scene: a dim light and his fingers touching the diary, then the keyboard; and finally, the printed script in his hands.

Xavier Albertí, the director of the dramatisation currently playing in the main auditorium of the TNC, has chosen that first image. For its sobriety. For being absolutely clean. For being naked. Against stigma, too: so much life gathered in a dark room, so much energy, so much concealed will to pull its walls down. It is important to evoke this image. This is what emerges also from Vilaseca's writing: the desire to transcend the prison of language, to dispel thought, and to imagine another possible horizon. But there is the sky of London, leaden and grey, and the mother, and the village, and provincial Barcelona, and the forgotten friends, and that first love who betrayed him, and so many other things. How to escape, then?

Dark room aside, the adaptation of the work fills the stage of a national theatre with such delicate issues as intellectual exile which, in David Vilaseca's case, goes hand in hand with sexual exile; the account of queer loneliness; a dissident queer critique of the cultural system; and the absolute consciousness that, as Vilaseca wrote, 'somebody who masters language masters life'.

https://cat.elpais.com/cat/2022/05/06/cultura/1651826899_802232.html

Oriol Puig Taulé in *Núvol*

The staging of *Men and Days* flows calmly like a subterranean river. As has been said, it could almost be enjoyed in the same way with one's eyes closed. Theatrically, it contains very successfully achieved scenes, such as the dance in public toilets, the (collective) session of psychoanalysis, or the overpopulated bed. The figure of San Sebastian is by definition kitsch, since Pierre et Gilles and so many other artists extolled him as a gay icon: Alejandro Bordanove breathes body, life and words in him. Among the youth diary, the Bildungsroman and the public confession, Vilaseca died tragically at the age of forty-six (run over by a truck while riding his bicycle in London) and left *Men and Days* as his will. What would David think of this adaptation? We'll never know, of course. But this, in a way, is the living version of his narrative work. The word made flesh, which for (nearly) three hours is shared collectively between a stage and main auditorium. On the most important stage of the country. Many knew it before, and now everyone does: David is already immortal.

<https://www.nuvol.com/teatre-i-dansa/la-soledad-de-la-cambra-fosca-252334>

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