

“What is looking at us?” and “Who is watching whom?” are questions that seem to have insinuated themselves into my life. Before I left for Iran, I saw Castellucci’s The Minister’s Black Veil. (1)
It has haunted me ever since. The play is about a minister who decides to veil his face, day and night, for the rest of his life.
This personal act of resistance is perceived as so inhuman by everyone in his village that he is expelled from the community. He has become a threat because he can no longer be controlled: the terrible veil has made objectification impossible. This fascinating piece ends with a stage crowded with convulsive “looking machines”: looking at us, looking at each other, looking into the void. Veils and curtains challenge the transparency that makes everything consumable and controllable. They install a reversed panopticism. (2)
The eye and its power: who is mastering whom?

1.
Romeo Castellucci (Director)
– Societas Raffaello Sanzio
(Company), The Minister’s
Black Veil (free interpretator
of the short story of Nataniel
Hawthorne)

2.
Kristof van Baarle, Language:Impossible (Ghent University, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, 2011)