

## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis provides a qualitative analysis of an autobiographical play based on journals written by a mentally challenged woman. The analysis is founded on authentic personal experience, the script of the play and a video recording of its performance. The empirical section is preceded by a theoretical introduction focused on mental disability in relation to theatre. The empirical section begins with the question: *What can we learn about a mentally disabled person through theatre?* The analytical process consists of three levels: a content analysis of the performance, an analysis of the author's perspective and the viewpoint of an implied spectator. The analysis shows that the story contains common autobiographical topics and the author barely reflects her disability. The creative perspective consists of the process of adapting the story into a play. Theatre also plays a therapeutic role and raises awareness. There is an imaginary window on the boundary between the stage and the audience, one that the author opens from within and the viewer from without. During the course of the play, the implied spectator becomes confronted with their prejudice and an accumulation of ambivalent feelings. This process ends in a catharsis and a genuine encounter with the actor's world and her spontaneity.

## **KEY WORDS**

mental disability, theatre, autobiography, creator, implied spectator, catharsis