

JTA

JOURNAL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

NUMBER 3-4 - THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGIES

2023/2024



Journal of Theatre Anthropology
Annual Journal founded by Eugenio Barba

In collaboration with
International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA)
Odin Teatret Archives (OTA)
Living Archive Floating Islands (LAFLIS)
Practice Research Cluster of the Centre for Communication, Cultural and Media Studies,
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

With the support of
Fondazione Barba Varley, Rome
The Grotowski Institute, Wrocław
Leszek Kolankiewicz and Monika Blige



© 2024 Journal of Theatre Anthropology and Author(s)
This is an open access journal
distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY 4.0)
JTA website: <https://jta.ista-online.org>

Editorial correspondence and contributions should be sent
to the associate editor Leonardo Mancini: jta@ista-online.org

MIMESIS EDIZIONI (Milano – Udine)
www.mimesisedizioni.it
mimesis@mimesisedizioni.it

Isbn: 9791222317946
Issn: 2784-8167 (print), Issn: 2724-623X (online)
Registered at Tribunale di Roma n. 92 2023
Direttrice responsabile Gisella Rotiroti

MIM EDIZIONI SRL
Via Monfalcone, 17/19
20099 - Sesto San Giovanni (MI), Italy
Phone: +39 02 24861657 / 24416383

Odin Teatret Archives, if not otherwise specified,
is the source of the photographs published in this issue of JTA

Cover: Rina Skeel - from a drawing by the Flemish anatomist Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564)
Layout concept and design: Rina Skeel

JTA

JOURNAL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

Founded by Eugenio Barba

NUMBER 3-4 - THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGIES
2023/2024

Editor

Eugenio Barba (Odin Teatret, Denmark)

Associate Editors

Leonardo Mancini (Turin University, Italy)
Julia Varley (Odin Teatret, Denmark)

Editorial Board

Simone Dragone (Salento University, Italy)
Leonardo Mancini (Turin University, Italy)
Francesca Romana Rietti (Roma Tre University, Italy)
Rina Skeel (Odin Teatret, Denmark)
Julia Varley (Odin Teatret, Denmark)

Scientific Committee

Monique Borie (Paris 3 University, France), Patrick Campbell (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK), Patricia Cardona (National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature, Mexico), Raquel Carrió (Instituto Superior de Artes, Cuba), Tatiana Chemi (Aalborg University, Denmark), Exe Christoffersen (Aarhus University, Denmark), Vicky Ann Cremona (Malta University, Malta), Fabrizio Cruciani (*in memoriam*), Marco De Marinis (Bologna University, Italy), Peter Elsass (*in memoriam*), Clelia Falletti (La Sapienza Rome University, Italy), Piergiorgio Giacchè (Perugia University, Italy), Ricardo Gomes (Ouro Preto Federal University, Brazil), Richard Gough (South Wales University, UK), Kirsten Hastrup (Copenhagen University, Denmark), Leszek Kolankiewicz (Warsaw University, Poland), Annelis Kuhlmann (Aarhus University, Denmark), Thomas Leabhart (Pomona College, USA), Adam Ledger (Birmingham University, UK), Luciana Martuchelli (actor/director, Brazil), Lluís Masgrau (Barcelona Theatre Institute, Spain), Patrice Pavis (National University of the Arts, Korea), Franco Perrelli (Bari University, Italy), Jean-Marie Pradier (Paris 8 University, France), Franco Ruffini (Roma Tre University, Italy), Nicola Savarese (*in memoriam*), Mirella Schino (Roma Tre University, Italy), Nando Taviani (*in memoriam*), Jane Turner (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK), Susanne Vill (Bayreuth University, Germany), Ian Watson (Rutgers University, USA), Ana Woolf (actor/director, Argentina)

FOREWORD

Eugenio Barba 9 A SPARK CALLED *JTA*

EDITORIAL

Julia Varley 15 BEYOND THE WORDS

THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGIES

20 E. BARBA'S THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

Marco De Marinis 21 BARBA, The Third Theatre and the Discovery of Theatre Anthropology

Aline Menassé 33 TRIBU POR AFINIDAD

Piergiorgio Giacchè 37 ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS THEATRE and Once Upon a Time There Was Anthropology

Leonardo Mancini 43 ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEATRE: An Introduction

Eugenio Barba 45 ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEATRE

Coral Aguirre 47 ENCUESTRO INTERNACIONAL DE TEATRO ANTROPOLÓGICO

Franco Ruffini 53 GROTOWSKI, BARBA AND THE ACTOR'S IDENTITY

57 J. GROTOWSKI'S THEATRICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Leszek Kolankiewicz 59 Gnostic Anointed as College Chair
Grotowski's Theatrical Anthropology at the Collège de FranceVirginie Magnat
Ed. by Leszek Kolankiewicz 71 JERZY GROTOWSKI'S 1997-1998
CONFERENCES AT COLLÈGE DE FRANCE

102 R. SCHECHNER'S ANTHROPOLOGY OF PERFORMANCE

Richard Schechner
Ed. by Leszek Kolankiewicz 103 FOREWORD: ANTHROPOLOGY'S MANY FACETS

107 ETHOLOGY AND THEATER

123 RESTORATION OF BEHAVIOR

141 THE FUTURE OF RITUAL

153 POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY
AND THEATER, AGAIN

FACTS AND TALES

Eugenio Barba 165

Barker, Hoff, Pradier, Ruffini, Yamaguchi 167

Julia Varley 177

Susanne Vill 185

200

Fiora Bemporad 201

213

Richard Gough 215

REFLECTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Fabrizio Cruciani 257

Jean-Marie Pradier 261

Julia Varley 283

RECURRING PRINCIPLES

Claire Heggen 299

NEWS

Marco De Marinis
Franco Perrelli 332Bianca Mastrominico,
Franco Ruffini 338

342

ISTA SESSIONS 6 - 7

ISTA 6, BOLOGNA, 1990 - PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES
AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

ISTA 6 REPORT

A CANDLE LIT AMONG THE PAGES OF BOOKS

FLOATING IN THE VOICE UNIVERSE
Power and the Variety of Vocal Expression

ISTA 6, SELECTION OF IMAGES

PHOTOGRAPHING ISTA

ISTA 7, BRECON, CARDIFF, 1992 - PERFORMANCES
EAST & WESTUNDERScores & SUBTEXTS
The Turbulence of Hidden Streams

THE PLACE OF THE POSSIBLE

FIELD OR HUMUS?
Between ISTA (1980) & LAF LIS (2023)IN THE KITCHEN
Franca Rame and Her Theatre Technique

OMBRE CLAIRE

Franco Perrelli, Francesca Romana Rietti, Gaia Diana Dalia
Gulizia, Francesco Ceraolo, Julia Varley

NICOLA SAVARESE (1945-2024)

LETTERS TO *JTA*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Theatre Anthropology or pre-expressivity

**The pre-expressive level is something evident, like a light.
You just need eyes trained to see.
The merit of Eugenio Barba lies
in having had this ability to see.**

**More than a new discipline, from the beginning,
theatre anthropology has stood as a call to arms
to the most diverse of scholars,
so that they might look afresh at their respective fields of research
in the light of the pre-expressive level.**

Franco Ruffini

El Greco, *La Trinidad* (The Holy Trinity). Museo del Prado.
Eugenio Barba: "It is interesting to note the principles of precarious balance and of opposition in the art of painting and in that of the actor/dancer. In both there is a search, through artificiality, for an 'intensified' life. Pierre Bonnard used to say: we must not paint life, we must make a painting live."

Foreword

Eugenio Barba

A Spark Called JTA

The Living Archive as a Dockyard of the Present

JTA - Journal of Theatre Anthropology was born in 2021 from the idea of bringing to life and sowing in the present the wealth of information and documents kept in the Odin Teatret archive in Holstebro, Denmark. The profusion of testimonies on the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA), on its development and research on pre-expressivity - that is, the level of stage presence at the basis of the study of theatre anthropology - made a deep impression on a young scholar, Leonardo Mancini, formed by a dear friend, the Italian Franco Perrelli, a specialist in Scandinavian theatre.

Julia Varley and I discussed with Leonardo possible ways of actively transposing this wealth of knowledge into the present. The immediate result was the creation of the site www.jta.ista-online.org with the purpose of collecting and arranging the countless information on theatre anthropology and the ISTA sessions. Another immediate consequence was the creation of *JTA, Journal of Theatre Anthropology*, conceived as an annual open access information source. The Fondazione Barba Varley took on the task and burden of creating an editorial team and publishing the first issue of *JTA* "Origins" which came out in 2021, followed in 2022 by *JTA* 2 "Learning to see".

We did not imagine that this initiative would trigger a vast process of resurrection of the documents from past experiences that we started calling the living archive: the effort to abolish the past and make it our contemporary. Thus *JTA*, unintentionally, was the spark that unleashed a complex and multifaceted project by the Fondazione Barba Varley entitled "Sharing Knowledge". Central to this project is LAFLIS, Living Archive Floating Islands (www.laflis.org) whose headquarters are in Lecce, in Salento, the region in Italy where I was born and spent my adolescence. In addition to my library of approximately 6,000 volumes, and a copy of the original documents representing the cognitive legacy of Odin Teatret, LAFLIS aims to be a performative visualisation of Odin Teatret's endeavours as a laboratory. In a succession of stagings visitors will be immersed in theatricalised spaces evoking the adventures of the performances, of the

Page 8, 10 and 12, Lecce, Italy. LAFLIS, Living Archive Floating Islands. A view of Eugenio Barba's library. Photos: Francesco Galli

Journal of Theatre Anthropology, 3-4, 2024: 9-13 • Mimesis Edizioni, Milan - Issn: 2784-8167 (print), Issn: 2724-623X (online)
Web: <https://jta.ista-online.org/> DOI: 10.7413/2724-623Xo50 - © 2024 Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution, Non Commercial, No Derivatives License (CC-BY-NC-ND).





barbers, of the ISTA sessions, of the University of Eurasian Theatre, of the Magdalena Project - network of women in theatre - and of the Third Theatre, the archipelago of the multifaceted parallel culture of theatre groups.

A question emerges: is theatre just a fleeting art?

A few general reflections

The nature of theatre is ephemeral. What conclusions can we draw from this trivially true statement? We can dive into the culture of the ephemeral. We can, on the contrary, resist the unavoidably transient character of the theatre in an attempt to dilate the theatre's boundaries and effects. We can refuse to accept the predetermined role which it assumes in our culture. This opposition leads to the discovery of a new meaning.

Ephemeral can be understood as 'lasting only a day'. But also 'that changes day by day'. The first meaning evokes the idea of death. The second, on the contrary, suggests the shifting flow that characterises being-in-life.

A performance does not last for long. On the contrary, theatre is made up of traditions, conventions, institutions, habits and techniques that remain over time. The weight of their permanence is so strong that they often prevent life from emerging and replace it with routine. Routine is another natural boundary of the theatre.

Fighting against the ephemeral nature of the theatre does not mean protecting what remains - the tradition - or recording performances. 'The electric shadows' (as the Chinese have called cinema) and the contemporary 'electronic shadows' do not threaten the theatre. They risk seducing it.

Cinema and electronics realise what was unthinkable until the beginning of the 20th century: performances that remain practically unchanged over time. Yet they disguise the understanding that the essential dimension of a theatre performance resists time not by becoming fixed in a recording, but by *transforming itself*.

The extreme limit of these transformations is the first stage of the *living archive*: the memories of the individual spectators. This transformation is enhanced by what complements it: the tacit knowledge of actors/dancers, their incorporated know-how, their ability to think with their feet and imagine with their head. The death of an actor/dancer corresponds to the axiom of the Malian anthropologist and writer Amadou Hampâté Bâ, who declared 'in Africa, when an elderly person dies, it is the burning of a library'. Amadou was a great defender of oral literature - *orature* as it was defined by the Ugandan linguist Pio Zirimu.

A living memory is a living library, a living museum is a place of metamorphosis.

The past as proof of the impossible that has become possible

We have become who we are because we have come across a book, a painting, a film, a melody. Or we have met a man or a woman who has guided us to open our eyes to another reality. Or because we have not experienced such an encounter. Sometimes the dead lead our way. We think of them as ancestors, not only for their creative power, but above all for their ability to escape their era's power of ideas. For them it was essential to persevere, distilling an ancient essence out of time. We need *the very ancient* to be able to be *amazed* again, but *better*. Being amazed means rediscovering a hidden childhood, starting anew, scrutinising the past with clean eyes.

The *very ancient* is at the roots of the actor/dancer's art. In the concreteness of silence and corporality, actors/dancers begin their creative journey by orienting themselves backwards in their memory. Thus, they escape the Present, which flees and has already become the past.

Actors/dancers embody life and society in rhythms and movements by visualising the passage of time and the two faces of reality: the visible and the invisible. Life in the Present is physical, mental, sensual and wild. A succession of inhalations and exhalations modulate gestures and words, lessening every noise inside us spectators and provoking a fever that is silence and amazement. And it is already a memory.

The past is not behind our backs. It is above us. It is what remains of the vertical dimension. History, the past we know, is the description of the *impossible that has become possible*. It gives us a glimpse of the world and the theatre as they could be. Our discontent with the Present is nurtured by this close dialogue with that which was different. It is this discontent that we call *spiritual life*. The real and different interlocutors are the dead, those who are invisibly present. The past is the only interculturalism that challenges us because it is vertical.

Why do we use the term 'past' only in the singular? Why doesn't the plural exist for this temporal dimension, which enlivens our awareness and influences our choices so much? We imagine possible futures. Can we also speak of possible pasts?

Theatre is a fleeting art that produces pasts. The theatres are dockyards of pasts. In these pasts the technical and transcendent essence of the *very ancient* is hidden, the invisible and intangible value of the craft. The pasts are underground streams in which each generation can quench its thirst in the process of building its Present.

All ages are *our* age. All theatres are *our* theatre in the Present.

'Before being Mona Lisa, a painting is a surface covered with colours distributed in a certain order', the French painter Maurice Denis wisely stated.

Before being a character, an actor is a living body that speaks and moves. This is the pre-expressive basis of the actor's creative process, the level of organisation of stage presence that determines the expressive efficacy that will strike the viewer's senses, memory and imagination. *How* to extract from the pasts of the theatres the multiple senses and the know-how that enabled them to achieve this expressive efficacy? *Where*



can this cognitive patrimony be exploited *today*, guaranteeing that everyone can pursue their own white whale, their own obsession?

Scholars and people of the craft cannot ignore the theatre's material culture: the ways in which actors, in a given period, live, think, produce and construct their creative and social relationships. For such a study, other cognitive, emotional and social premises are needed.

It is necessary to invent a refuge of practical inspiration that is also a springboard for the imagination. We could consider this refuge as a new incarnation of the two first libraries, that of Alexandria and Pergamum. Here, literati and experts in writing - a recent human technique which was also spreading throughout Europe - collaborated by copying and reproducing on papyrus and parchment manuscripts acquired with difficulty in various parts of the known world. It was the first attempt to transpose into the Present and the future a knowledge essentially linked to oral memory. The *living archive* is inspired by this type of environment. We could also say that it is the equivalent of the 'laboratory theatre', such as it was realised in the last century.

As a transformative environment, a sanctuary of an anachronistic Present and recycling dockyard of the past, the *living archive* protects documents and artefacts arousing the silence that is the MEMORY of the *very ancient*. It gives intensified expression to this legacy, and this TRANSMISSION develops relationships, collaborations, publications, films, theoretical meetings, exchanges of experiences, specialistic courses, training and learning. Finally, the *living archive* is TRANSFORMATION, the palingenesis of a cognitive patrimony, a metamorphosis into artistic forms and languages that triggers individual and collective associations and memories. It is a process that emanates as an unexpected sensorial existence from tacit and inert papers and objects.

The *living archive* is an operative space, social and emotional, where archivists, scholars, theatre/dance people and visual arts artists unite in the passion of freeing the past from its cage and letting it fly into the Present. All of them struggle doggedly with a question: can something else be made of the pasts other than what they are, that is, just pasts?

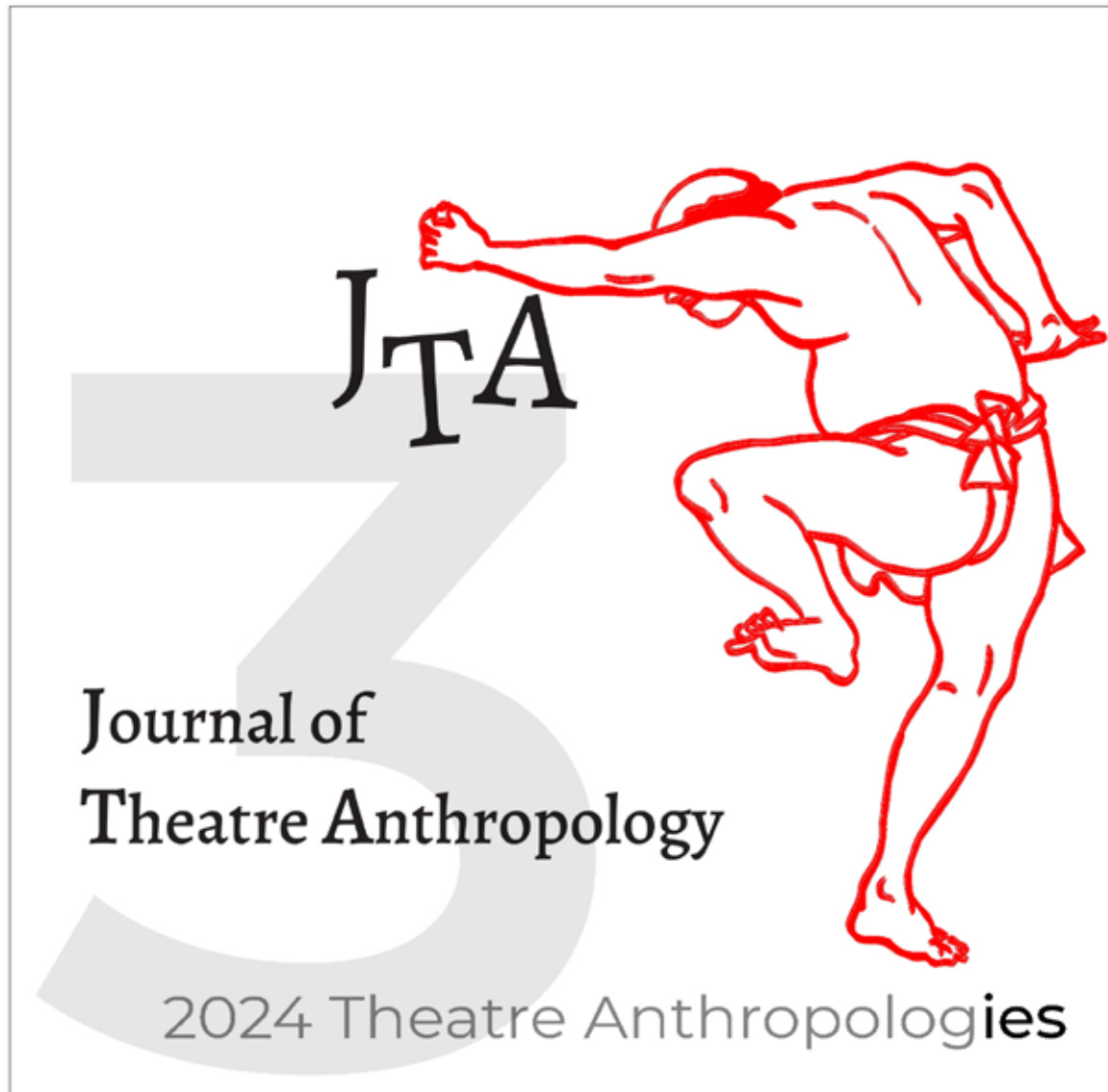
When memory fades, it is not the knowledge of the *very ancient* in the theatre that is eclipsed but the imagination of the future. Jules Michelet expressed it with a sentence whose density is reminiscent of a *haiku*: each epoch dreams of the next one and creates it by dreaming.

Translated by Judy Barba

Editorial

Julia Varley

Beyond the Words



Often on receiving submissions for *JTA-Journal of Theatre Anthropology* authors need to be reminded that *JTA* deals with theatre anthropology, and not with theatre and/or anthropology in general. Although the intention with this third and fourth issue of *JTA* was to underline the identity of the field of research which has been defined by Eugenio Barba as the study of the principles of stage technique from a multicultural perspective, the plural in the title - "Theatre anthropologies" - implies that there is more than one interpretation of what theatre anthropology may be. Reading the articles in *JTA* 3-4 has given me a clear image of how the two realities of theatre and anthropology have multiplied in innumerable combinations over the years.

The main division that guided the selection and order of the contributions in this issue of *JTA* was to look at theatre anthropology from Eugenio Barba's perspective, and then from Jerzy Grotowski's and Richard Schechner's. Leszek Kolankiewicz, with the help of Monika Blige of the Grotowski Institute (Wrocław, Poland), assumed the editorial task to work with articles from Jerzy Grotowski's and Richard Schechner's bibliography. The division is marked clearly in the **Contents**, but the separation is not so evident when reading the texts.

The understanding and interpretation of theatre anthropology, as of ritual, depends on the perspective, on who uses the words, on what the references are. In the articles, I notice how, even more than usual, the historical, geographical and cultural context determines a particular placing of the experiences and a different understanding of the terminology. I was not so struck by confrontations of Eurasian-centric or global, original populations or academic, exploited or empowered points of view, but more of a participation or distance to the social change introduced by the 1968 workers' and students' movements and the consequence this had on theatre. Theatre groups appeared all over the world in the 1960s and '70s and their way of combining life and stage practice changed the meaning of documentation and the writing of theatre history - also regarding the definition of theatre anthropology.



In the beginning of *JTA* 3-4, Eugenio Barba's foreword introduces LAFLIS - Living Archive Floating Islands as a laboratory for the transformation of the past into the present. LAFLIS opens a new field of research and Eugenio Barba questions how this relates to theatre anthropology, to practice and technique, but also to the values and meaning we give to the theatre craft. Jean-Marie Pradier joins this line of thought when he writes: "The spectacular return to the point of origin represented by LAFLIS's installation in Lecce is not the fruit of nostalgia in its original sense of 'homesickness', but of serendipity, as evoked at the 7th session of the ISTA, held in Brecon and Cardiff, Wales."

The references and the meaning of words are changing. If Jerzy Grotowski used 'organic' to indicate a search for truth in opposition to actors pursuing success and therefore overplaying, in theatre groups 'organic' often refers to a social engagement in the community through a theatrical action of interference. At the ISTA - International School of Theatre Anthropology session in Portugal in 1998, entitled "The organic effect", the word 'organic' was equivalent to theatrically alive thus having an effect on the senses of the spectators.

In the 1960s and '70s the terminology used for stage technique started to mix with motivation, and political or personal commitment. Anthropological theatre, born in Latin America, is one consequence of this combination, that for years was considered confusing the levels of organisation. In the past we have tried to differentiate between theatre anthropology, anthropological theatre and Third Theatre. In this issue of *JTA* the differences are intersecting, showing their intrinsic connections. It is as if we no longer need to be clear but are ready to enjoy the adventure of the unexplainable. The



Yalan Lin and Lorenzo Gleijeses in Theatrum Mundi's *Anastasis*, Theatre Olympics, National Theatre Budapest, May 2023. Photo: Francesco Galli

connections emerge clearly in the articles by Marco De Marinis, Piergiorgio Giacchè, Leonardo Mancini and Richard Gough.

In his letter to *JTA* 3-4, Franco Ruffini writes: "... we can legitimately - or rather, dutifully - speak of many theatre anthropologies: one for each body on which the fight against generic pretention is focused, through the fight against the specific pretention of that body. There is a theatre anthropology of the physical body, in the name of Meyerhold and his biomechanics; just as there is a theatre anthropology of the psychic body, under the banner of Stanislavsky and his revival; just as the same could be said for the mental body and the volitional body, always in the spirit of Stanislavsky with his various exercises."

Franco Ruffini's vision of a theatre anthropology for each body in theatre history is completed by Aline Menassé's contribution in recognising theatre anthropology as a field of 'belonging' that brings together the differences and offers a shared language of exchange for practitioners from different parts of the world. Aline Menassé writes. "... in what does this belonging consist? In theatre anthropology. Because we speak a common artistic language, we understand each other, and this is an invaluable oasis. It is a language with an alphabet, a grammar and many syntaxes, a language that Barba named as that of *the body's stage principles*."

In this issue, many articles speak unwittingly to each other. Jean-Marie Pradier states how in *The Paper Canoe*, Eugenio Barba remembers John Blacking's talk at the colloquium "Points of contact: Theatre, Anthropology, and Theatre Anthropology" organised by Richard Gough at the Centre for Performance Research in Leicester in the autumn of 1988, in which he distinguishes between performative or sensory-motor thinking - thinking in motion - and conceptual thinking - thinking in concepts. While "Thinking in actions" is the title of masterclasses Eugenio Barba gives today all over the world, again in Pradier's article we read how years ago Eugenio Barba asked himself "whether *thinking in motion* might not be the best way to define the teaching of 'physical actions' which Stanislavski tried to pass on to the actor, the teaching of which Grotowski is now the true master." The names of Blacking, Turner, Stanislavski and Grotowski return many times throughout the issue.

Richard Gough, speaking of the 1992 ISTA session in Brecon and Cardiff, points out its two opposing souls - pedagogy and research, and throughout the report the opposition transforms into contiguity through the pursuit of alternative ways of teaching and the application of an extremely pragmatic approach to research. Jean-Marie Pradier adds: "Between ISTA and LAFLIS, a soft terrain is emerging that is all the more fertile for academic research and artistic creation as it navigates between complementary poles whose common trait is the ceaselessly renewed achievement of the impossible. [...] The floating islands of theatre must stubbornly renew themselves in order to exist. Consequently, they cannot ensure their survival by relying on dogmatic, fixed, petrified doctrines. They need to find the nutrients they need to procreate. The stirring of memories that gives rise to invention. The field is both a revelation of the self and a driving force for the discovery of otherness."

The word 'subscore' was discussed in both ISTA sessions described in *JTA* 3-4: the 6th in Bologna (Italy) in 1990, and the 7th in Brecon and Cardiff (Wales) in 1992.

The theme of the relationship between form and information in an action, or between the performer's inner energy and stage behaviour is present also in Jerzy Grotowski's texts published here. But whereas not to work for the spectators can be interpreted as not indulging in their expectations, at ISTA sessions the 'subscore' was examined to understand the possible strategies for the performer's presence to move the spectators, not oneself. Richard Schechner questions the limited data backing the recognition of universal pre-expressive behaviours in performers. It is a fact that most of the artists involved in ISTA sessions are from Asian, European and North and Latin American genres. This is because ISTA needs to work with performers who are able to repeat in order to identify transcultural principles. Augusto Omolu, of African roots, was an exception. He could apply his formation as a classical dancer to the Afro-Brazilian Orixá dance that he represented. While explaining and repeating the dances belonging originally to a religious ritual, Augusto Omolu discovered the principles behind the movements, something he was not aware of when he learnt them as a child.

The question of whether a pre-expressive level exists in vocal actions was confronted through work demonstrations in Bologna and is exposed here by Susanne Vill. It is interesting how her analysis recalls some of Richard Schechner's reflections: "Ordinary speech everywhere is immersed in a sea of exclamatory sounds, stutterings, repetitions, ohs, ahs, and uhs; as well as variations in rhythm, pitch, and volume - a whole language of metaverbal communication giving to each utterance its unique and unrepeatable shape and significance. In any situation of strong feeling this infrastructure erupts into dominance: the cognitive value of words is submerged in a rising tide of phatic expression. The center of speaking actually shifts downward to where diaphragmatic breathing controls how sound is released automatically as sheer breath. Not enough is known about this transformational process, about how cognitive speech becomes metaverbal sounding."

This issue of *JTA* is divided in sections: **Theatre Anthropologies**, **Facts and tales**, **Reflections and discussions**, **Recurring principles**, **News**, and **Letters**.

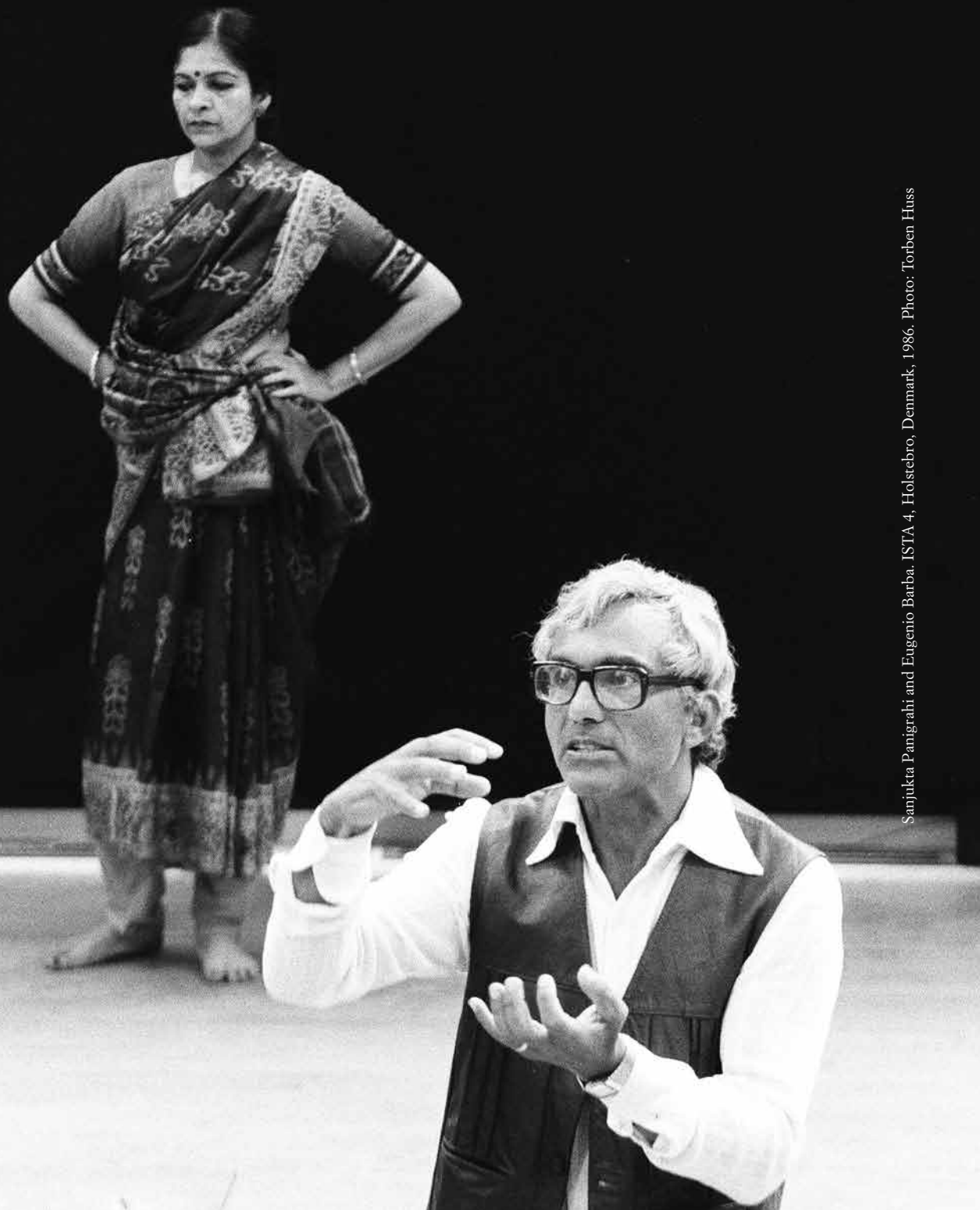
As already mentioned, the section called **Theatre Anthropologies** has a further subdivision into Eugenio Barba's Theatre Anthropology and Anthropological Theatre, Jerzy Grotowski's Theatre Anthropology, Richard Schechner's Anthropology of Performance. **Facts and tales** includes articles concerning the 6th ISTA session in Bologna (Italy) in 1990, and the 7th ISTA session in Brecon and Cardiff (Wales) in 1992. In **Reflections and discussions** Fabrizio Cruciani - one of the founders of ISTA - is represented with an already published article translated to English for the first time in following with one of *JTA*'s aims, and Franca Rame's embodied technique is exemplified with her politically motivated words. Claire Heggen's experience born within Etienne Decroux's Corporeal Mime and developed in her personal technique of puppet manipulation is placed in **Recurring principles** with many photographs. The **News** section is particularly abundant, partly because this issue is being published with a year and a half delay, and much has happened: the opening of LAFLIS-Living Archive Floating Islands, the 17th session of ISTA in Hungary, the multicultural Theatrum Mundi production *Anastasis*, and in 2024 the occurrence of Odin Teatret's 60th anniversary.

In this busy time, we have also suffered the loss of two important people for Theatre Anthropology, Nitis Jacon and Nicola Savarese. Both are remembered in the News section. Franco Ruffini and Bianca Mastrominico look backwards and forwards in their **Letters**.

Some articles have been published before, but we have chosen to include them because re-reading them helps give a historical perspective to the field of research of Theatre Anthropology. Some articles are translated, others are in their original language. The languages used are English, French and Spanish. Language has changed since some of the articles were written. For example, women are now formally included with s/he and her/his and herself/himself forms, and a less euro-centred geographical vision mostly uses Asian instead of oriental when differentiating from the western (European and North American) world. We have changed "masters" when used to designate teachers and artists, a habit coming from Spanish and Italian, but otherwise the language of the old articles has been maintained as written at the time. Although *JTA* chooses to use UK English, the US English spelling for Richard Schechner's and Virginie Magnat's articles has been maintained. In the articles referring to Jerzy Grotowski, Leszek Kolankiewicz opted to use the translation 'theatrical anthropology' while Virginie Magnat uses 'theatre anthropology'.

We look forward to hearing comments and suggestions from the readers and contributors while working on the fifth issue of *JTA*, partly curated by Richard Gough, with the title "Breaking the Rules".

Eugenio Barba's Theatre Anthropology



Sanjukta Panigrahi and Eugenio Barba. ISTA 4, Holstebro, Denmark, 1986. Photo: Torben Huss

Marco De Marinis

Barba, the Third Theatre and the Discovery of Theatre Anthropology

Abstract: This is the text of a lecture which was given by Marco De Marinis at the 3rd International Conference on Theatre Anthropology, "Odin Teatret and Theatre Anthropology in Greece", 17 and 18 March 2023. The conference was organised by: Theatre Laboratory of Drama and Speech Department of Theatre Studies; Co-organisers: Centre of Theatre Anthropology, Heraklion-Crete, Fondazione Barba Varley, University of Patras, Science and Technology Museum. De Marinis's speech highlights parallels and complementarities between the notion of Third Theatre, Theatre Anthropology and the genesis of ISTA, establishing that Barba's writings relating to Third Theatre address the issues of "why" and "for whom" theatre is done, while those relating to theatre anthropology question the "how", and therefore the techniques. Furthermore, the Italian scholar defines theatre anthropology as a discovery deriving from the work carried out by directors-pedagogues during the 20th century and from the work of actors who, at a pre-expressive level, do not learn to interpret or act but build their stage presence. Finally, after having defined the extra-daily techniques as those that the actor applies to put in practice the pre-expressive principles, De Marinis outlines three lessons that he learned by participating over twenty years in several ISTA sessions.

Keywords: Third Theatre, Theatre Anthropology, ISTA, Extra-daily technique, Pre-expressive principles

Foreword

What is the *object* of Theatre Anthropology (henceforth T.A.)? The study of the human being in a situation of organised representation. "In an organised performance, the performer's physical and mental presence is modelled according to principles which are different from those of daily life."¹

It is at one and the same time a field of study, a theory and a method of analysis. There are two key bibliographical references:

- *The Paper Canoe. A Guide to Theatre Anthropology* (1995), by Eugenio Barba;
- *The Secret Art of the Performer. A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (1991; last revised edition *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (2006), by Eugenio Barba and Nicola Savarese.

Of course, much has been written and published in over forty years all over the world. The main works have been produced by scholars gravitating around ISTA - International School of Theatre Anthropology, founded by Eugenio Barba in 1979. From 2021 the *Journal of Theatre Anthropology* has been published, animated by two young scholars, Leonardo Mancini and Simone Dragone, under the supervision of Barba and Julia Varley and of the Fondazione Barba Varley.

1. Barba 1993, 9.



First point to clarify: *the relationship between T.A. and ISTA*.

Barba's paper *Theatre Anthropology: First Hypothesis* is the transcript of a conference held in Warsaw in May 1980 published in his *Beyond the Floating Islands*.² Here he proposed for the first time the hypothesis that "transcultural principles are the basis of every performance technique".³ The first session of ISTA was held in Bonn in October 1980.

There is therefore an almost perfect contemporaneity, all the more so since, as we shall see, the inaugural event in Bonn represented the transformation of a proposal made to Barba from Germany more than a year earlier, in the spring of 1979.⁴

In any case it can be said with certainty that the fundamental theory of T.A. did not depend on ISTA but, on the contrary, that ISTA was created as a place, among other things, for testing those first hypotheses. However, the sessions of the 1980s and early 1990s (no fewer than seven) certainly contributed to changing or at least clarifying a theory already well outlined but not yet fully defined. The result of these influences is found in the 1993 book, *The Paper Canoe*, a text on which, not surprisingly, the author never felt he had to make substantial changes or additions. Somehow, a definitive text.

What ISTA is/what ISTA was

ISTA was founded on *two fundamental ideas*:

- to supply the conditions for *a concrete encounter between theory and practice of theatre*, through the challenge of an exchange of roles: pushing the "bookish people" (scholars, critics, operators) to confront the dimension of practical doing, from exercises to dramaturgy; and vice versa asking the actors, and more broadly the "stage people", to confront the dimension of theoretical discussion and analysis of their practical doing;
- the second idea, no less important than the first, was that of *getting East and West to meet*, inviting non-Western actors from various Asian traditions (Japan, China, India, Bali, Korea), to meet Western actors, mainly but not only those of Odin Teatret. This encounter culminated in the sessions' final performances, which soon assumed the generic title of *Theatrum Mundi*, performances created by Barba together with all the participating artists. It is worth noting that from 1994 (session in Londrina, Brazil) the fixed pedagogical ensembles of the School also began to include Afro-Brazilian dancer Augusto Omolu and a group of musicians linked, like Omolu himself, to the world of candomblé (unfortunately he died tragically in 2013).

Regarding the influence exerted by ISTA on the theory of T.A., one cannot help but notice how, in the latter, the East/West opposition on which it was based in the 1980s declined in *The Paper Canoe* in favour of a North Pole/South Pole diametric. Barba had noted that in the East, too, there are non-coded performance modes and that, conversely, the West also has codified performance traditions, such as classical dance and the mime of Decroux:

2. Barba 1986a.

3. Barba 1996, 24.

4. Barba 1996, 24.

Let's consider, to begin with, two different categories of actors, which are commonly identified as 'Oriental Theatre' and 'Western Theatre'. To avoid false associations with actual cultural and geographical areas we will overturn the compass and use it in an imaginary way, talking about a North Pole and a South Pole.

The North Pole actor is apparently the less free. He models his scenic behaviour according to a well-tested network of rules that define a coded style or genre. This code of physical or vocal action, fixed in a peculiar and detailed artificiality (be it ballet or one of the classical Asian theatres, modern dance, opera or mime), is susceptible to evolution and innovation.

The South Pole actor does not belong to a performance genre characterised by a detailed stylistic code. He has not been given a repertoire of mandatory rules to obey. He himself must construct the rules on which to rely.⁵

Another and perhaps even more certain influence of ISTA can be traced to the fact that the theory of T.A. quickly sheds its original hard-science dimension, referencing biologists, physiologists, neurophysiologists and experimental psychologists (invited to the first sessions of ISTA).⁶ These citations would vanish from *The Paper Canoe*, but in reality they disappeared much earlier, in the second version of the founding essay, *Theatre Anthropology*, 1981.⁷

On Barba's passion for science in the founding years of T.A. we have the authoritative testimony of, among others, Ferdinando Taviani, who recalled that, at the time of the foundation of ISTA, Barba "read a lot on Niels Bohr, immersed himself in books on biology and discussions with men of science".⁸

But, in this regard, above all see the recent contribution of Leonardo Mancini.⁹ Mancini has consulted the ISTA Archive and Barba's library to obtain a broad idea of the director's interdisciplinary scientific reading in the second half of the 1970s: texts by physiologists, neuroscientists, biologists, anthropologists such as Ernesto De Martino, concerning yoga, posturology, effort, balance, non-ordinary states of consciousness etc.¹⁰ In particular, the importance is confirmed by the dialogue with a scientist such as biologist Henry Laborit, facilitated by co-founder of ISTA Jean-Marie Pradier. Among other things, the latter organised the Karpasz symposium in Poland in September 1979, attended, as well as by Laborit and Barba, by Jerzy Grotowski. Mancini argues that a key notion for T.A. such as 'levels of organisation' was inspired by that of the 'three levels of bio-systemic theory' developed by Laborit.¹¹ More generally, he emphasises how T.A. confronted itself with "the study of the complexity of the development of life at different

5. Barba 1993, 13.

6. See Barba 1986b (on the second session of ISTA, in Volterra) and above all (on the Bonn session) Ruffini 1981.

7. De Marinis 2011, 44 and 46.

8. Taviani 1994.

9. Mancini 2021.

10. Mancini 2021, 26-35.

11. Mancini 2021, 37-38.

levels of behaviour", practiced by biology. The pilot discipline, as is well known, in the contemporary sciences of complex systems.¹²

Genesis of Theatre Anthropology

T.A. was created almost simultaneously with the theory of the Third Theatre and is complementary to it. The two founding texts of Third Theatre were produced by Barba between 1976 (the homonymous Belgrade manifesto) and 1979 (the essay *Theatre-culture*). But since then Barba has been ceaselessly attentive to the phenomenon valorised and defined by him (and therefore also, to some extent, by him *created*), as shown by the articles in a section of the volume *Theatre. Solitude, Craft, Revolt* (first published in 1996 and constantly expanded in subsequent editions).¹³ Throughout the 1980s the discussion on T.A. and that on Third Theatre took place in parallel, even if they eventually separated and were no longer published together, as they had been in the early years.

It happens for example that, in the inaugural volume of T.A. published by Feltrinelli in 1981, *La corsa dei contrari. Antropologia Teatrale* (The Way of Opposites. Theatre Anthropology), the essay *Antropologia Teatrale*, revision and development of the Polish conference of the previous year, coexists with two texts that do not yet refer to it explicitly, such as the above-mentioned *Teatro-cultura*, written between 1978 and 1979, and *La corsa dei contrari*, which was written as an answer to two questions posed by the CNRS in 1979 concerning the significance of the actor today and his training, and released in France for Ed. du CNRS in 1981.

Actually *La corsa dei contrari*, although not yet openly referring to T.A., anticipates many of its points. It already talks about *bios* of the actor and 'energy' is already a keyword. In reference to Asian actors, it speaks of 'general rules' that serve 'to model energy', according to a 'logic' which is that of 'oppositions', starting from the first one,

the basic opposition that regulates our biological presence: the opposition between our weight that brings us downwards and the backbone that pushes us upwards and keeps us erect.¹⁴

Immediately after, Barba observes how

as soon as [the actor] begins to shift his balance, to make it precarious, a whole series of other oppositions arises from the opposition between weight and spine: different oppositions between different parts of the body transform his mass of energy, and make the body alive.¹⁵

In short, the pre-expressive principles are already clearly stated, without having been given a name yet and without explicit reference to the natural sciences.

12. Mancini 2021, 38.

13. Barba 1999.

14. Barba 1986, 86.

15. Barba 1986, 99.

Conversely, at the beginning the early writings on T.A. were hosted in the volumes in which Barba gradually collected all his theoretical work, such as the above-mentioned *Beyond the Floating Islands*, without meriting a special section. This would no longer happen in the 1990s. And in fact they are missing from *Theatre. Solitude, Craft, Revolt*, eleven years later. By now T.A. had assumed a theoretical substance in its own right and, after *The Paper Canoe*, it was the *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* that hosted subsequent interventions by Barba and others on the subject.

There is not only theoretical but factual evidence of the quasi-osmotic *contiguity* existing at the origins between Third Theatre and T.A. The first session of ISTA, that of Bonn, was intended by German promoter and organiser, Hans-Jürgen Nagel, as a theatre event similar to encounters on Third Theatre directed by Barba, at the request of UNESCO, in Belgrade in 1976, in Bergamo, Italy, in 1977 and in Leiketio and Madrid in Spain in 1979. Nagel, head of the Bonn Kulturstadt, had read about them in the UNESCO magazine and made the suggestion to Barba, who in that year packed with negotiations and preparations transformed the event from a Third Theatre gathering into the first session of ISTA.¹⁶

Returning to the texts, beyond the substantial contemporaneity between those on Third Theatre and those on T.A., what is striking is also and above all - as I have already mentioned - their evident *complementarity*. The writings on Third Theatre address the question of *why* and *for whom* theatre is done, from a substantially socio-political perspective, while the writings on T.A. return to the question of *how*, that is, of *technique*. And I say 'return' because this issue was known to be at the origins of Barba and Odin Teatret's theatre journey.

Also, the recipient seems to change: there, the group, here, the individual actor, or rather "the actor as such". But the real interlocutor (though not the only one) in reality always remains the same: the young people of group theatre, those for whom Barba coined the name of Third Theatre.

The (double) knight's move

With the 1976 manifesto Barba had created a movement, or rather had organised into a movement a vast, heterogeneous theatrical reality that already existed or was emerging.

Now this movement expected from him an aesthetic, or in any case an imitable, reproducible theatre model. (Let's not forget that for many, in fact, Odin Teatret was the model.) Many perhaps expected an actual *school*, since almost all the actors of the groups were self-taught.

Barba surprised them with an authentic *knight's move* (already anticipated, as we have seen, in *The Way of Opposites*, which answered the question of actors' training). It was actually the second time he did this. In the 1976 manifesto on Third Theatre, too, he had not given an aesthetic guide but only, and quite differently, ethical-political indications: the group as a 'floating island', the value of 'asociality', the possibility of transforming one's own discontent and one's own needs into shared theatrical action.

But this time the surprise was even greater - indeed not everyone, inside and outside of the movement, understood. Barba addressed the question of *how*, that is, of

16. Barba 1996, 24.

technique, not to elaborate and put forward his (own) acting method but on the contrary to investigate *pre-acting*, the under-explored foundations of the actor's art.

In other words, he asked himself how to pass on experiences lived and fundamental knowledge acquired to young people in the groups without conditioning them too much artistically, that is - in his words -

how to convey to them an understanding of certain essential facts without dazzling them with our results, without them being tempted to repeat what we have had to do.

These words are from the Polish conference of 1980, at its conclusion. They were followed by this clarification:

It took me many years to solve this problem and one of the reasons for my interest in Theatre Anthropology was the need to find and make possible another way of transmitting one's own experiences. ISTA is the realisation of the dream of a different form of pedagogy. On the one hand, the challenge of using the instruments of the natural sciences, on the other, the search for a new pedagogical practice, especially for groups of the Third Theatre.¹⁷

The very term 'school' is used in a paradoxical and provocative way. Because ISTA is rather a *non-school*. As he explained in 1990:

ISTA was not and will not be organised into courses, lessons and subjects. Rather, it is the result of continuous changes of groups that join and divide, of programmes that are created almost day by day, week by week, and that can be overturned and passed over just as fast as they were conceived. There are no classes, but almost ephemeral families gathered round the experience of theatre masters from different countries of the East and the West.

Only because the dis-order is conscious and constant can one perceive how deep is the order: not the mechanical delivery of a study course, but organic development of the individual paths of each participant.¹⁸

Theatre Anthropology's new thinking

For almost three centuries theoretical studies of the actor have focussed on techniques of expression. Or rather, on the relationship between expression and reality and that between expression and feeling.

From the 18th century onwards the key question for this second relationship was: should the actor feel what he expresses (as a character, usually) or not? As is known, the answers were positioned along a very wide spectrum between opposite poles: feeling vs. not feeling, that is, identification vs. non-identification.

17. Barba 1986a, 122.

18. Barba 1981, 7.

With the hypotheses of T.A. Barba shifted the attention to what lies *before* and *below* expression, to *pre-expressivity*, and makes it the foundation, usually not visible, of the art of the actors and their stage performances. This has certain important consequences:

- He does not elaborate a method but rather a pre-method, i.e., going back to the etymology of the word, a *way* along which everyone can construct *their own* effective method, perhaps very different from others. In Barba's words, in T.A. the actor does not learn techniques but 'learns to learn':

In general, the profession of actor begins with the assimilation of a technical baggage that is then personalised. Knowledge of the principles governing the stage bios allows something more: learning to learn. This is of enormous importance to those who choose to push the boundaries of a specialised technique or who are forced to do so. Actually learning to learn is essential for everyone. It is the condition for dominating one's technical knowledge, and not being dominated by it.¹⁹

- T.A. does not provide a ready-made, turnkey acting technique, much less a method or system of acting. On the contrary, going deep into the pre-expression dimension, it indicates *conditions of efficacy* for various possible techniques, methods and aesthetics, often very different from each other.
- By defining comparatively the transcultural principles that govern the 'pre-expressive basis' of acting performance, T.A. not only identifies a possible unitary foundation of aesthetics, or of different acting styles (Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Copeau, Brecht...). It also highlights a foundation common to acting traditions from different theatrical and dancing cultures and civilisations, distant in space but also in time. These are the famous "principles-that-return", whose use has proved fruitful even in historical research, for example in the study of the actors of the Commedia dell'Arte.²⁰

The pre-expressive basis constitutes the elementary level of organisation of the theatre. The different levels of organisation of performance are inseparable and indistinguishable for spectators. They can be separated only by abstraction in a situation of analytical research, or by technical means, in the work of composition of the actor. The ability to concentrate on the pre-expressive level enables an expansion of knowledge with consequences both on a practical and on a critical and historical level.²¹

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the notion of "levels of organisation". Thanks to it, for the first time, acting performance is described as a complex organism, made up of a multiplicity of interconnected dimensions.

19. Barba 1993, 9.

20. I refer to my study De Marinis 2008. But, on the Commedia dell'Arte, see also Taviani 1986. And then see the collective volume Guccini-Valenti 1992.

21. Barba 1993, 23.

Archaeology of T.A. and of the pre-expressive

Was it an invention or a discovery? As in the case of Third Theatre, Barba invents the *name* (pre-expressive) but certainly not the *thing*, which already existed. At least for those, myself included, who believe in the objective validity of pre-expressivity. But it goes without saying that in this field, as in many others, the invention of the name, with the profound redefinition of the thing that it obviously entails, is almost everything. In short, it is an authentic scientific discovery. Of course theatre science functions differently from the so-called hard sciences, such as physics or biology, and therefore it cannot contain either refutations or demonstrations in the strict sense of the terms.

Appropriately, already at ISTA in Bonn, Grotowski spoke of 'pragmatic laws' and Taviani, in 1990, proposed the definition of 'empirical study of the comparisons between theatrical behaviours'.²² Barba himself had immediately moved in the same direction. In the above-mentioned preface to his book on ISTA Bonn, in February 1981, he wrote:

In October 1980, in Bonn, we sometimes had the impression that we were searching for acting laws as clear and definitive as the laws governing physics and biology. Today we know that the humility of science is not granted us, and that we must accept the ambition of identifying knowledge useful to the practice of the actor. This does not involve seeking laws, but studying rules of conduct.²³

A few months later, in the foundational essay of 1981, with the second session of ISTA behind him, he further clarified:

Theatre anthropology does not seek universally true principles, but useful indications. It has not the humility of a science, but the ambition to identify knowledge useful to the action of the actor. It does not want to discover 'laws', but to study rules of behaviour. [...] The 'principles-that-return' are not proof of the existence of a 'science of theatre', or of any universal laws; they are particularly good advice, indications that have a strong probability of being useful to theatrical practice.²⁴

Once confirmed that with T.A. we are facing a discovery and not an invention, we must immediately add that in reality even the discovery is not entirely attributable to Barba alone, because before him many had already worked on it, but without explicitly focussing on it, without adequately thematising it. To whom am I referring? Of course to the leading directors, and more precisely to the pedagogical directors, founders of studios and ateliers in the first half of the 20th century. And then of course to Grotowski, founder of the first theatre-laboratory and Barba's teacher.

The exercises, the training in the laboratory, even the improvisations under certain aspects, are nothing more than the work of the actor on a pre-expressive level: composition

work without content, that is, made of *pure forms*. A work through which the actor does not learn to express, to represent or act, but learns to build his own *presence*. Perhaps Etienne Decroux, creator of corporeal mime, came closest on a theoretical level, in his book *Paroles sur le mime* where he speaks of 'presences that do not represent'.

Pre-expressive principles and extra-daily techniques

The pre-expressive principles are basically three (although sometimes Barba has been discordant about numbering and naming):

- principle of *alteration of balance* (Decroux's *déséquilibre, imbalance*);
- principle of *opposition*: every movement must start on the opposite side to the one where it is directed (Decroux, Meyerhold's *otkaz*); but it also concerns the opposition between different types of energy: (hard/soft, *animus/anima, keras/manis*);
- principle of *simplification*: "omission of some elements to highlight others, which thus appear essential"²⁵ (*isolation* in modern dance, *diegetic ellipse-raccourci* in mime).

Actually from the start Barba has also spoken of another principle, that of 'coherent incoherence', which disappears at a certain point to re-emerge in his 1993 essay.²⁶ Personally, I prefer to consider this a *meta-principle*, superordinate to the other three and somehow a summary of them; like that of 'waste of energy', which constitutes their common foundation.

Too often, especially on the part of T.A.'s detractors, pre-expressive principles and extra-daily techniques have been confused. Instead, they are two completely different entities.

Extra-daily techniques are those techniques of the body and voice by which the actor, within different cultures and performance traditions, applies and puts into practice the *pre-expressive principles*:

Our body is used substantially differently in everyday life and in situations of representation. In the daily context, the technique of the body is conditioned by culture, social status and occupation. But in a situation of representation there is a different body technique. A daily technique can therefore be distinguished from an extra-daily technique.²⁷

Principles are not obviously visible, techniques are, although not always with the naked eye. And so we deduce the pre-expressive principles from the extra-daily techniques. This is a delicate point. In any case it must be clear that it is the pre-expressive principles, and only they, that are *transcultural*, not the extra-daily techniques. For example, the transcultural principle of alteration of balance translates into very different and culturally codified extra-daily techniques, in Asia as in the West: in *noh*, in *kathakali*, in Balinese dance-theatre, in Beijing opera; in classical dance and in corporeal mime.

This confusion has produced many misunderstandings and many unfair criticisms.

22. Taviani 1990, 180.

23. Barba 1981, 8.

24. Barba 1991, 8.

25. Barba 1991, 9.

26. Barba 1993, 25.

27. Barba 1993, 30.

Conclusion: the three lessons of ISTA

In the opening text of T.A., Barba clearly indicated the two *original objectives*:

- 1 - 'The challenge of using the tools of the natural sciences';
- 2 - 'The search for a new pedagogical practice'.²⁸

Although the initial focus on science quickly lessened, as we have seen, the theoretical ambition has never disappeared, although it has been redimensioned.

In reality, the coexistence between these two different instances has never been easy. The idea, developed immediately after Bonn, and perhaps also thanks to Bonn, that T.A. consisted 'only' of 'good advice' for actors has never completely annulled the other, much more ambitious idea that T.A. could enable one to point to authentic 'laws' of behaviour of the human being on stage, therefore of each actor as such, and that these laws could also exert their influence on other levels of theatre organisation.

The Paper Canoe, a very ambitious essay right from its subtitle, tried to bring together these two instances, one pragmatic and the other theoretical, in a fascinating unitary framework, strongly nourished by historical references. Nevertheless, the text gives the impression that two very different theatrical anthropologies coexist in it.²⁹ But this is not necessarily a bad thing. Perhaps that is why *The Paper Canoe* has never had a sequel, while *The Secret Art of the Performer*, which was quickly renamed *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, has been constantly updated.

I would like to close by briefly mentioning the *three great lessons* that I learned in twenty years of attending ISTA sessions:

- the lesson of *displacement* (or rather of *disorientation*), with the questioning of false safeguards and deceptive protections of role (as I mentioned at the beginning, at ISTA the theorists were urged to personally confront themselves with practical work, training and creation, and vice versa);
- the lesson of *direct practical experience*: experimenting directly with your own body and mind, or rather with your own *body-mind*, what happens when you try to perform an exercise or improvisation is fundamental to the work of a professional spectator (or, in my case, a scholar, a historian);
- last but certainly not least, the lesson of *indirect practical experience*. Indirect practical experience is that acquired at ISTA following for whole days, and often for several days without interruption, the demonstrations of actors or performance rehearsals. Very long and often very boring days, spent watching seated for hours and hours, struggling with the desire to go elsewhere or with the need to sleep. Yet, during these endless sessions, where it seems that nothing ever happens and everything repeats itself relentlessly, something *passes* of the actor's work and its technical details: it passes *through* your eyes (and ears), and without the spectator always being aware of it, *something*

28. Barba 1986a, 122.

29. For an in-depth analysis on this subject, please refer to De Marinis 2011. Initially this essay appeared as a postface to the collective volume De Marinis 1997, 225-93.

decisive, which profoundly changes your vision, your way of being a spectator, of being in the theatre, of talking about it and writing about it. Something that, in any case, cannot be acquired in any other way.

I am convinced that my way of studying theatre and writing about it was greatly influenced by the encounter with T.A. in the early 1980s, and by my long attendance at this anomalous, fascinating non-school that was, and still is, the International School of Theatre Anthropology, and the extraordinary 'tribe' of its participants.

Translated by Julia Campbell Hamilton

Bibliography

- Barba, Eugenio. 1981. "Prefazione." In *La scuola degli attori. Rapporti della prima sessione dell'ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology)*, edited by Franco Ruffini, 7-8. Firenze-Milano: La Casa Usher.
- . 1986. "The Way of Opposites." In *Beyond the Floating Islands*, 86-113. New York: PAJ Publications.
- . 1986a. "Theatre Anthropology: First Hypothesis." In *Beyond the Floating Islands*, 114-22. New York: PAJ Publications.
- . 1986b. "Theatre Anthropology." In *Beyond the Floating Islands*, 135-56. New York: PAJ Publications.
- . 1991. "Theatre Anthropology." In *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology. The Secret Art of the Performer*, edited by Eugenio Barba and Nicola Savarese, 8-22. London-New York-Cardiff: Centre for Theatre Research-Routledge.
- . 1993. *The Paper Canoe. A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. Translated by Richard Fowler. London-New York: Routledge.
- . 1996. "How ISTA Came into Being." In *The Performers' Village. Times, Techniques and Theories at ISTA*, edited by Kirsten Hastrup, 24-25. Graasten (Denmark): Drama.
- . 1999. *Theatre. Solitude, Craft, Revolt*. Aberystwyth (Wales): Black Mountain.
- De Marinis, Marco. 1997. *Drammaturgia dell'attore*. Porretta Terme (Bologna-Italy): I Quaderni del Battello Ebbro.
- . (1988) 2008. "La recitazione nella commedia dell'arte: appunti per un'indagine iconografica." In *Capire il teatro. Lineamenti di una nuova teatrologia*. 2^a edizione rivista e ampliata, 203-59. Roma: Bulzoni.
- . 2011. "Dal pre-espressivo alla drammaturgia dell'attore: saggio su La canoa di carta." In *Il teatro dell'altro. Interculturalismo e transculturalismo nella scena contemporanea*, 35-97. Florence: La Casa Usher.
- Guccini, Gerardo and Cristina Valenti, eds. 1992. *Tecniche della rappresentazione e storiografia. Materiali della sesta sessione dell'ISTA*. Milano: Synergon.
- Mancini, Leonardo. 2021. "Reading for the 'Flying House'. Barba's Early Research towards Theatre Anthropology." *Journal of Theatre Anthropology* 1: 21-39. <https://doi.org/10.7413/2724-623X003>.
- Ruffini, Franco, ed. 1981. *La scuola degli attori. Rapporti della prima sessione dell'ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology)*. Firenze: La Casa Usher.
- Taviani, Ferdinando. 1986. "Un vivo contrasto. Seminario su attrici e attori della Commedia dell'Arte." *Teatro e Storia* 1: 25-75.
- . 1990. "Lettera su una scienza dei teatri." *Teatro e Storia* 9: 171-97.
- . 1994. *Ricordi e altre allegrezze (cronache e digressioni dall'International School of Theatre Anthropology)*. Bergamo: Teatro tascabile di Bergamo.



Aline Menassé

Tribu por afinidad

Abstract: This is a talk given by Aline Menassé, one of the founders of Teatro Laboratorio La Rueda, at the meeting of the Secret People of Odin Teatret on occasion of the celebration of Odin Teatret's 60th anniversary organised by Jaime Soriano - LARTES. The reflection on Third Theatre and its resonances in Mexico, with Eugenio Barba and special guests, took place at the UNAM, Mexico City, 7 February 2024.

Keywords: Secret people, Latin American theatre, Group theatre, Odin Teatret

En definitiva, puedo afirmar que me considero parte del Pueblo Secreto del Odin Teatret. No porque nadie haya dicho que lo soy, sino por la gran afinidad y coincidencia que siento con ellos desde un inicio. Soy miembro de la tribu donde sin duda Eugenio Barba, el Odin Teatret, y el propio Jerzy Grotowski han sido faros esenciales de mi camino creativo y de vida. Los vínculos afectivos que hemos ido creciendo a lo largo de los años en diversas latitudes, diversos países, nos han hecho familia.

Conocí a Eugenio Barba incluso antes de conocerlo personalmente a través del entusiasmo de Susana Frank cuando asistió al Festival Ayacucho 1978 y regresó con un entusiasmo tal, una euforia tal, que nos abrió y nos brindó importantes respuestas a una trayectoria rebelde que habíamos iniciado desde 1974 y que nos impulsó a hacer lo imposible: un encuentro de teatro en Zacatecas. El V Coloquio de Teatro de Grupo Zacatecas 1981, fue realizado con nuestras propias fuerzas en contra de todas las instituciones nacionales después de dos años de trabajo. Nuestra intención y convicción, nuestro sueño era traer a México esta otra manera de mirar el quehacer teatral, otra manera de hacer teatro. Un lugar donde había una gran variedad de propuestas estéticas y de lenguajes, y además y sobre todo, eran grupos estables.

¿Pero en qué consiste esta pertenencia a esta tribu, esta ciudadanía al Pueblo Secreto? Lo resumo en dos conceptos que se han acuñado y se refieren a este Pueblo: el Teatro de Grupo y la Antropología Teatral. Estos dos modelos de relación y de creación se convirtieron para mí en guía y columna vertebral y junto con Susana Frank en Teatro Laboratorio La Rueda nos han dado camino durante ya 44 años al lado de muchos cómplices con quienes seguimos trabajando.

Universidad Autónoma de México: meeting of the Secret People of Odin Teatret, February 2024
Photo: Stefano Di Buduo

Journal of Theatre Anthropology, 3-4, 2024: 33-35 • Mimesis Edizioni, Milan - Issn: 2784-8167 (print), Issn: 2724-623X (online)
Web: <https://jta.ista-online.org/> DOI: 10.7413/2724-623X053 - © 2024 Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution, Non Commercial, No Derivatives License (CC-BY-NC-ND).



¿Por qué Teatro de Grupo? La certeza del deseo de un trabajo grupal, la certeza de trabajar en colectivo de manera sostenida y a largo plazo. Esta certeza la encontramos en muchos, aunque pocos en realidad, grupos en el mundo con los que nos hemos encontrado a través de más de cuatro décadas.

¿Y de nuevo, en qué consiste esta pertenencia? En la Antropología Teatral. Porque hablamos un idioma artístico común, nos entendemos, y esto es un oasis invaluable. Es un idioma con un alfabeto, una gramática y muchas sintaxis, un lenguaje al que Barba nombró "de los principios dramáticos del cuerpo".

Tanto a través primero de su libro *Las Islas Flotantes* como después a través de la relación con él en múltiples y variados y extraordinarios talleres en varios países, Eugenio Barba nos compartió, nos transmitió al Teatro Laboratorio la Rueda, y a mí en lo personal, una exploración con direcciones objetivas, precisas, variadas y libres, que funciona hasta la fecha como un continuo hilo de Ariadna. Un camino claro que se experimenta, que se escribe en presente en el espacio del entrenamiento del actor, una



Sarimé Alvarez, Susana Frank,
Aline Menassé, Julia Varley,
Eugenio Barba, Ruben Ortiz.



Entrance to the meeting.
Photos: Stefano Di Buduo

esfera que no se encamina aún al montaje, abierto a la investigación personal y de la colectividad, un camino hacia una poética grupal.

Frente a la pedagogía actoral tradicional en México, que pone en el centro la psicología y las emociones, Eugenio Barba junto con sus colegas del Odin Teatret proponían un entrenamiento que pone al cuerpo en el centro, como disparador de la memoria ancestral, del inconsciente, que despierta la imaginación corporal, vocal, mental y emocional. Un lenguaje que solo se escribe al ejercitarlo y que hay que perfeccionar, descubrir y reinventar continuamente.

Este es el idioma que me une al Odin Teatret y a todos los grupos afines con quienes hicimos Escuela. Porque también hay una pedagogía que subyace que es horizontal, que son los grupos en trueque compartiendo y exponiendo sus búsquedas, su experiencia, su manera de resolver esta gramática propia.

El Pueblo Secreto del Odin Teatret no es un movimiento artístico en el sentido de una estética, es más bien una confluencia de lenguaje en el que cada uno busca su manera de hablar, de expresarse y qué decir en un idioma común.

En un tiempo en el que el teatro político en Latinoamérica exigía hablar el lenguaje de la política directa, el Odin Teatret con su capitán Eugenio Barba, se pronunciaron terminantes por una política diferente, hacer política a través del arte, y como lo afirma hoy, hacer política a través de la belleza. Y esto, también, puedo afirmar, me hizo reconocermé siempre como parte de su tribu.

La revelación del entrenamiento como el terreno de la creación en 1978, trascendió en nosotras como una indagación metafísica que cumplía con la búsqueda nietzscheana originaria, de Susana Frank y mía -tan intensa que nos llevó al teatro- de experimentar la plenitud de la vida a través de la creación, de encontrar una poética, una personalidad creativa que contuviera y expresara con verdad y belleza nuestras búsquedas filosóficas. Hacer filosofía a través del lenguaje del arte, del teatro, de la tragedia.

Quiero mencionar a Mario Delgado, fundador y director del Grupo Cuatrotablas de Lima, Perú, quien fue el puente entre Teatro Laboratorio la Rueda y el Odin Teatret en una primera etapa. Porque para Eugenio, la Rueda *era* de Mario, en este modelo de adopciones que Eugenio acostumbraba y que proponía a sus 'parientes' antes de adoptarlos como propios. Fue Mario Delgado quien tendió un bendito puente que conectó a Latinoamérica con el Odin Teatret, pero también, e igualmente significativo, conectó al Odin con Latinoamérica. Quiero reconocerlo aquí, a Mario Delgado que tanto nos cobijó y enseñó. Que descansen en paz.

Celebro con gran emoción y admiración los fecundos, dedicados y generosos 60 años de vida del Odin Teatret. Admiro su fortaleza, su persistencia, su coherencia, disfruto su sencillez, su calidez como seres humanos. Comparto con ustedes como hermanos, como familia que nos hemos tejido.

Agradezco a Jaime Soriano y Lartes todo su esfuerzo para traer al Odin Teatret a México, un regalo invaluable que me ha permitido compartir trabajo, aprendizaje, y sobre todo una amistad intensa con todos ustedes, Eugenio, Julia, Else Marie, Rina, Ulrik, y Stefano un adepto adoptado de la tribu.



Piergiorgio Giacchè

Once Upon a Time

Once Upon a Time There Was Theatre and Once Upon a Time There Was Anthropology

Abstract: This is a lecture by Piergiorgio Giacchè at the 3rd International Conference on Theatre Anthropology, "Odin Teatret and Theatre Anthropology in Greece", 17 and 18 March 2023. The conference was organised by: Theatre Laboratory of Drama and Speech Department of Theatre Studies; Co-organisers: Centre of Theatre Anthropology, Heraklion-Crete, Fondazione Barba Varley, University of Patras, Science and Technology Museum. In his speech, Giacchè traces a history of the relationship between theatre and anthropology, calling into question, in addition to those of Barba, the theoretical contributions of important scholars such as Goffman, Turner and Schechner.

Keywords: Theatre, Anthropology, Sociology, Cultural studies, Actor

1.

Theatre Anthropology, an invention or a discovery? It can be said - in my opinion - that it was an invention of Theatre and a discovery for Anthropology.

At the end of the 1970s, even before theories of this new and at the same time ancient 'science of theatre' were published, Eugenio Barba had the merit of being the first to discern and propose a confluence between the two disciplines of Theatre and Anthropology¹ that went on for decades, in various ways, to fertilise each other.

It is often underestimated how important and enlightening the simple enunciation of this close relationship (between anthropology and theatre) was just for anthropological science. To others, however - Victor Turner and afterwards Richard Schechner² - was then left the task and merit of a socio-anthropological systematisation that gave us valuable concepts and schemes (from Social Drama to Performance Theory). Meanwhile, for theatre, Barba's theories and principles were jealously confined within the boundary of the acting profession and behind the dogma of theatre autonomy.

However, on closer inspection, the very centrality of the actor and the theatre's claim for autonomy were precisely the new factor that 'revolutionised' the relationship between the two disciplines and their research directions, producing a dialogue and interchange 'on an equal footing'. It highlighted and enhanced a constant exchange and overlapping

1. 'Theatre can be compared to an anthropological expedition. It leaves civilised territories to enter the heart of the virgin forest; it renounces the clearly defined values of reason to face the darkness of the collective imagination. [...] It is in this darkness that our culture, our language and our imagination sink their roots.' Barba 1965, 5.

2. Barba 1981.

Venezuelan Amazonia, 1976: barter between the Yanomani and Odin Teatret. Photo: Tony D'Urso



between the social sciences and theatre culture of an entire century.³ We certainly do not want to ignore the indisputable distance between the scopes and methods and aims of anthropology and theatre. But we must not neglect or underestimate (or worse 'excommunicate') the common and indeed 'confused' ground of research and reflection on art and performance. Since the 1980s, research and anthropological reflection on contemporary theatre has multiplied and intersected, while theatre has discovered a dimension and an anthropological direction for its studies and research, or even just curiosities or interests.

In reality, the relationship between theatre and anthropology has stimulated not only great theoretical ideas and logical practical methods, but also attitudes and orientations that are apparently more superficial. From the anthropological point of view, however, we cannot underestimate in particular a phenomenon and a theatre movement that called themselves Anthropological Theatre.⁴ It overlapped undoubtedly with many other better-known denominations (basic theatre, group theatre, research theatre, Third Theatre), but it expressed better its interest in anthropology, also as a simple but widespread cultural 'fashion'. *Once upon a time there was theatre, and once upon a time there was anthropology* might be said just for good luck, but above all to delimit that period and that world when cultural anthropology and the theatre of research were fashionable,⁵ that is, they had value and came to drive relations and exchanges between the two disciplinary areas, and even between the two professions of actor and anthropologist.

2.

"Theatre and Anthropology are the same thing, but we must be careful not to confuse them." I often quote this quip stolen from the Prologue of a theatre performance by Raúl Ruiz⁶. It inspired me and finally authorised me to formulate the hypothesis of a provocative 'Equation' between Anthropology and Theatre,⁷ listing the similarities or coincidences between an art of science (anthropology) and a science of art (theatrical studies).

In short: a) anthropology and theatre both study - or better, interpret - human beings and their culture; b) they are founded and function as a 'relationship between subjects' that divides the roles of the actor and the spectator, but in the same circle as a practice of 'participant observation'; c) they conduct *research* and produce *works* that are valid for the present time and yet constitute a 'repertoire' of knowledge and methods (both of theatre and anthropology); and finally they are 'practices awaiting theory' (and not vice versa) that are *very* different but *almost* parallel, to the extent of one becoming metaphor for the other (and vice versa).

These are 'recurring principles', but not always as clearly and effectively as in past decades, when theatre chose its own way and anthropology became fashionable.

3. It is indispensable to remember Turner 1982 and Schechner 1993.

4. 'Anthropological Theatre' is another indication and definition by Eugenio Barba, introduced during an encounter of theatre groups in Bahía Blanca (Encuentro Internacional de Teatro Antropológico, April 6-12, 1987). See Aguirre 2015, 195-223 and Barba 1987, 6.

5. Cultural anthropology adds to and contaminates all the humanities and social sciences (sociology, semiology, history, philosophy) which resume and reorient their studies and research on theatre and performance.

6. Chilean film director, see Ruiz 1990.

7. Giacchè 2004.

It was the era in which *theatre experimented using the means of fiction for the end of achieving more intense and intimate authenticity*.⁸ It challenged and ultimately opposed the obligatory 'acting of social roles' of *Everyday Life as a Play* which, after Goffmann,⁹ went from sociological theory to the social practice of all of us 'characters and interpreters' in the performance society.

It was also the time when '*Western science and anthropological research had exhausted its interest in the exotic and its ethnological motivation*'. After many trips to distant lands and other cultures, it had shifted its focus and horizon towards its own society and culture, inaugurating (in Italy before elsewhere) an anthropology of complex societies, beginning to consider the Anthropology of Ourselves, based on the close connection - almost a short circuit - between identity and otherness.

Thus, taking together the two directions and research ambitions, to a Theatre discovering the necessity and at the same time the possibility of 'its own' anthropology corresponded an Anthropology successful in imposing its correct definition of Culture, no longer limiting the field of research or the meaning of its reflections (even on itself). Small wonder, then, that these two parallel itineraries met in the study and appreciation of Otherness. They helped to liberate and relativise all the world's cultures, cancelling out the separation that emphasised High Culture and affirming that every culture - even one's own - is Other.

At that time, lastly, the concept of culture - 'the set of socially elaborated and shared mental representations'¹⁰ - came out from its academic and scientific limits. In some way cultural anthropology itself has functioned as 'replacement ideology', influencing both the historical moment and the political movement of younger generations within which the first groups of new theatre were also formed. A different theatre, a Third Theatre but, it was remarked (often by Eugenio Barba) an anthropological theatre.

3.

Thus it was possible and even common for the *Actor* of this new theatre to adopt the methods and sometimes even the *habitus* of the anthropologist, to explore all the theatres of the world but then also the world understood as theatre. It was not only a question of creating a 'market'¹¹ and 'treasure' out of the knowledge and techniques of the performing arts of all peoples and countries, but also of encountering and then sharing - in theatre - the problems of diversity and the valuable mine of otherness offered by society. And vice versa, the *Anthropologist* was minded to see himself or

8. *Intimate or essential otherness* is - according to Marc Augé - the deepest level of a scale of 'otherness' that includes the Exotic, the Ethnic, the Social: Augé 1993. 'This is the paradox of Third Theatre: to submerge oneself, as a group, in the universe of fiction in order to find the courage not to pretend': Barba 1999, 170.

9. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* is the title and subject of Erwin Goffmann's famous 1959 essay introducing the use of theatre as a metaphor in sociological research. See Goffmann 1959.

10. The anthropological definitions are much too numerous, however - not only for their assonance with theatre - we should note the set of mental representations, which in themselves include all the *cognitive, evaluative and behavioural* models.

11. Worth remembering is the 'barter', first tried in Italy by Odin Teatret, which later became a means of cultural encounter and exchange with the various spectator communities and was used by many other theatre groups, and even by some anthropologists. See Bovin 1988.

herself as an actor who has his part on stage (or 'in the field'), no longer a spectator of indigenous peoples - within the framework of anthropological research that becomes 'an encounter between two subjects' - no longer a confrontation of scientific objectivity with unconscious subjectivity.

So it may be said that Anthropological Theatre can claim 'common ground', albeit used by different individuals, by those who make theatre and those who do anthropology, if - for both - Eugenio Barba's early definition holds good: "Anthropological Theatre is where the actor addresses his or her own historical-biographical identity to address the encounter with otherness, with the diverse."¹² Whether there was a true confluence or simply a chance coincidence does not detract from the 'fortune' and 'fertility' of the relationship between Theatre and Anthropology. This encounter was part of a historical moment in which - for everyone involved in culture, not just in theatre - the need for an autonomous sense (of science or art) was not yet in contradiction with the usefulness of a Social or Political Function of their research and activities.

Yes, there was a historical (and even political) moment when the 'floating islands' moving on the sea of other cultures and then landing on the shores of their own society were not only the new groups of research theatre but also the latest explorers and interpreters of critical thinking and social criticism.

4.

Once upon a time can and must be said of many other phenomena and areas connected with a worldwide 'mutation' that has affected all societies and cultures (you could say: *it is the advance of history... as if it were destiny!*). However, if we remain within the limits of the theatre *stage* and in the *field* of anthropology, their mutation - and that of their relationship - has its own specificity and yet again they end by meeting.

One can in fact observe how it was precisely the success - indeed the extraordinary, decades-long 'state of health' of both Theatre and Anthropology - that caused openings and contaminations, derivations and specialisations of all kinds. There is no denying, for example, that the vast new fields of *performing arts* and *cultural studies* have been stimulated by the theatre culture and anthropological research that existed 'once upon a time'. This was perhaps the last concomitance in the history of meetings between Theatre and Anthropology, if it is true that - once relocated within the new, undefined boundaries of performative acts and studies of fashions - the traditions and crafts, the rigorous methods and the ambitious aims of research (both theatrical and anthropological) eventually risked loss of vigour and finally, once again, marginalisation.

Indeed, it is so, if we think so. The Theatre, having become part of the vast continent and the vague concept of *performance*, has certainly expanded its performance potential, but often by reducing its critical capacity and aspiration towards a High and Other Sense. In other words, the challenge of authenticity is no longer the soul of the art of fiction and, from Artaud's pairing of Art and Life, we have swiftly returned to a functional relationship between Theatre and Society.

Anthropology, on the other hand, has been immersed and partly submerged by that field of study - self-created - into all kinds of cultural fashions, while - on a more strictly

academic level - it has proliferated far too many sectors and specialisations, ending up by producing more critical literature than field research.

In this 'practice aim' the Theatre - it must be said - does not follow it or resemble it. An *actor* cannot refrain from the production of plays and the process of rehearsals. An *anthropologist*, on the other hand, can withdraw into teaching his or her discipline by recounting its history, or delving into its philosophy. So s/he no longer does research in any field that is not an archive - given that contracts and benefits push anthropologists to 'retire to the convent' (i.e. museum) and to occupy themselves with Cultural Heritage. In other words, to be converted to advertising, even to marketing Identity and to renounce the adventure towards Otherness.

5.

In short: the islands of theatre are still there, just as the Trobriand Islands of Malinowski are still in their place. No surprise or scandal if the passage of history has changed them; no scandal if many islands of theatre have been washed up and no longer float. Barba himself, at the foot of a short text entitled Anthropological Theatre, praises this disorientation and wishes for continued crisis "so that theatre, respecting the law of life, may flow and change continuously."¹³

The real *Once upon a time* is not about history, but somehow about geography: what is missing is the Archipelago, that circle bringing together the islands, that continuous journey of exchanges and gifts, of contacts and conflicts giving life and value to the islands.

This was the story of both theatre and anthropology. Once upon a time there was *kula* in the Trobriand Islands and maybe there still is. But it is no longer the rite or theatre of the 'meaning of life' or even that 'total social fact' anthropologists were looking for, when they were called Argonauts.

Translated by Julia Campbell Hamilton

Bibliography

- Aguirre, Coral. 2015. *Memorias del teatro combatiente*. Bahía Blanca: Editorial de la Universidad del Sur.
- Augé, Marc. 1993. *Non luoghi. Introduzione a una Antropologia della surmodernità*. Milano: Eleuthera.
- Barba, Eugenio. 1965. *Alla ricerca del teatro perduto. Una proposta dell'avanguardia polacca*. Padova: Marsilio Editore.
- . 1981. *La corsa dei contrari. Antropologia teatrale*. Milan: Feltrinelli.
- . 1987. "Teatro antropologico." *Hyphos* 1: 6.
- . 1999. *Theatre. Solitude, Craft, Revolt*. Aberystwyth: Black Mountain Press.
- Bovin, Mette. 1988. "Provocation Anthropology: Bartering Performance in Africa." *The Drama Review* 32(1): 21-41.
- Giacchè, Piergiorgio. 2004. *L'altra visione dell'altro. Una equazione tra antropologia e teatro*. Napoli: L'ancora del Mediterraneo.
- Goffmann, Erwin. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor.
- Ruiz, Raul. 1990. *I Maghi: il combattimento della Teoria e del Teatro*, performance produced by Centro di Pontedera.
- Schechner, Richard. 1993. *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*. New York: Routledge.
- Turner, Victor. 1982. *From Ritual to Theatre*. New York: Paj Publications.

12. Barba 1987, 6.

13. Barba 1987, 6.



Reencuentro Ayacucho 1988, international meeting of theatre groups, Huampani, Peru. Eugenio Barba leads the march in the desert for the performance in honour of Jerzy Grotowski at the archeological site of Cajamarca. Photo: Tony D'Urso

Leonardo Mancini

Anthropological Theatre: an Introduction

In a speech given in Bahía Blanca, Argentina, in April 1987, Eugenio Barba put forward the notion of 'anthropological theatre' within the context of professional identity and ethics. Within that framework, Odin Teatret's director thematised the relationship between the actor's craft and his/her cultural background as a dialectic dimension which heterogeneous theatre groups and individuals could share as a common ground of encounter. Therefore, rather than an artistic definition, 'anthropological theatre' had the value of an invitation to exchange and connect, a value that can still be recognised as valid today.

If theatre anthropology is based on the observation and on the active participation of performers and scholars, anthropological theatre thrives in the collective dimension of theatre groups. This connection almost reaches the value of an axiom in Marco De Marinis' essay (*Barba, The Third Theatre and the Discovery of Theatre Anthropology*), in which the movement preceding the *inventio* (discovery) of theatre anthropology is traced in its 'original' context of Third Theatre. If Barba's definition of 'anthropological theatre' dates to 1987, it appears to be the result of a sensibility 'which already existed'. It is not accidental that De Marinis remarks the emergence of an analytical observation of theatre groups' training as the base for the notion of *presence* in theatre anthropology: an experience that De Marinis also recognises as crucial in the development of his own perspective as a theatre scholar.

As Piergiorgio Giacchè observes, at that time, and still today, many theatre groups have adopted the term 'anthropological theatre' to define their way of working. Observing these composite realities, in his essay *Once Upon a Time There Was Theatre and Once Upon a Time There Was Anthropology*, Giacchè overcomes rigid divisions and offers a discipline rapprochement of cultural anthropology and theatre anthropology: in his perspective theatre anthropology was 'an invention for theatre and a discovery for anthropology'. Giacchè highlights convergent aspects and similarities in the two fields, culminating in what he summarises as the researcher's task: 'explore all the theatres of the world but then also the world understood as theatre'.



An exemplification of these processes and relationships among theory and practice was recently offered by Aline Menassé in a speech given during a round-table discussion on Third Theatre and its resonances in Mexico, which was held on 7 February 2024, at the Centro Cultural Universitario of Mexico City. In her article here entitled *Tribu por afinidad*, Menassé - co-founder with Susana Frank of the Teatro Laboratorio La Rueda in 1980 - retraces her relationship with Barba and the value of the dimension of group theatres in her cultural context since her participation in the Ayacucho Festival in 1978 in Peru. Menassé narrates the 'enthusiasm' and the 'euphoria' with which, upon returning from the Ayacucho Festival, a "*trayectoria rebelde*" arose: the desire to organise theatre meetings independently ("*un Encuentro de teatro in Zacatecas, el V Coloquio de Teatro de Grupo Zacatecas 81*"). Finding its terminology in the notions of theatre anthropology and anthropological theatre, these meetings had the intention of bringing to Mexico a new and different way of observing and conceiving the theatrical event, founded on the centrality of the body and on the possibilities of awakening the "ancestral subconscious memory which awakens the physical, vocal, mental and emotional imagination".



Alicio Amaral (Brazil) and Parvathy Baul (India) in *Theatrum Mundi Anastasis*. National Theatre Budapest, May 2023. Photo: Francesco Galli

Eugenio Barba

Anthropological Theatre

Abstract: *This text was written by Eugenio Barba on April 12th, 1987, in Bahía Blanca, Argentina, during the Encuentro Internacional de Teatro Antropológico (International Meeting of Anthropological Theatre) organised by Teatro Alianza with theatre groups from Latin America and Europe. Here Barba identifies the differences between theatre anthropology and anthropological theatre. Barba's text first appeared in English within an article by Ian Watson, Third Theatre in Latin America in The Drama Review: TDR, Winter 1987, 31 (4): 18-24.*

Keywords: *Cultural expression, Otherness, Exchange, Performance material presence, Organic transformation, Identity*

Theatre Anthropology is the study of human biological and sociocultural behaviour in performative circumstances.

Anthropological Theatre is a theatre in which the performer confronts her/his own identity.

The notion of identity stems from the Latin *Idem* which means that which does not change, that remains the same. Each human being has an axis, a centre, a kernel of values which orients her/him to life's circumstances, oppositions, and obstacles. In the case of the performer, this identity manifests itself through craft. The concretisation of this craft explores an historic and biographic horizon which determines the artistic results. As with any cultural expression, these results are relative to the performer's experience, heredity, and vision of the world. It is this relativity which gives to each individual uniqueness in front of others. In the same way, a theatre group should manifest its relativity in order to define itself in front of others.

The Anthropological Theatre underlines the uniqueness of the individual, of each actor, of each theatre group, of each historical-cultural horizon. It implies a travel through one's own history and culture, and provides the means of strengthening the individual's axis-identity, giving each of us a separate profile. But at the same time it supplies the tools for meeting in a territory where we are all equal. A territory that consists of the performer's material presence which is the same and unchangeable in any place. This presence is one's professional identity, which permits the performer to go behind her/his artistic temperament and the artistic results or style of a culture to discover the common principles of scenic presence which can be applied to personal exploration. This professional identity belongs to a transcultural theatrical history



built by masters and creators who came before. Therefore an actor from Polynesia can develop a professional identity by orienting her/himself to the values and experiences of masters from other cultures.

Anthropological Theatre only exists if it is based on a polarization. On the one hand, the question: Who am I as an individual in a determined time and space? And on the other, the capacity of professional exchange between individuals who may be far removed from one's own time or geographic location.

It is through exchange, rather than in isolation, that a culture can develop, that is, transform itself organically. The same process applies to individuals and theatre performers. Therefore, in professional exchange one's historical-biographic identity is fundamental when confronted with its opposite pole, the meeting with otherness, with what is different. Not to impose one's own horizon or way of seeing, but rather to provoke a displacement which makes it possible to discover a territory beyond the individual's known universe.

The Anthropological Theatre means protecting one's own axis, overcoming insecurities and self-defense in order to expose oneself to confrontation, disorientation, and crisis, so that the theatre can respect life's law of continual flow and change.

Coral Aguirre

Encuentro Internacional de Teatro Antropológico

Abstract: *The International Meeting of Anthropological Theatre took place in Bahía Blanca, Argentina 6-12 April 1987. This text was published in Memoria del teatro combatiente: Teatro Alianza, Teatro para el Hombre, Teatro Laboratorio. Bahía Blanca 1969-1989 by Coral Aguirre, 1st Edition Bahía Blanca: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional del Sur. EdiUNS 2015, pp. 213-219. The book was dedicated to the memory of Dardo Aguirre, Néstor Castelnuovo, Mónica Morán, Juan Carlos Torresi, Graciela Petersen, Alfredo Bellomi, Ernesto Malisia, Olga Vallasciani, José Crespo, Roberto Martínez, Víctor de Rosa, Horacio Rodríguez, Jorge Chiaradía, Eugenio Campos, Álvaro Andrenacci, Fortunato Jorge.*

Keywords: *Anthropological theatre, Group theatre, Bahía Blanca, Dardo Aguirre.*

*Todas las voces, todas
todas las manos, todas
toda la sangre puede ser canción en el viento*
Armando Tejada Gómez
César Isella

Cuando Eugenio Barba, el hombre de bastón y bufanda roja al cuello, acabó de recorrer los metros que lo separaban desde el avión y se fundió con Dardo Aguirre en un abrazo hombruno, sincero, se concretó por fin el pacto por el trabajo más intenso y más creíble para el teatro bahiense como hecho de gestión cultural, que no pasó inadvertido ni pudo ser superado hasta hoy: el Primer Encuentro Internacional de Teatro Antropológico (EITA), gestado por Dardo y Coral Aguirre junto con Eugenio Barba un año antes (cuando el director y autor teatral acompañó la presentación del grupo Farfa en Bahía Blanca), y gestionado por la Subsecretaría de Cultura de la ciudad de Bahía Blanca con el acompañamiento de organismos estatales, organizaciones barriales, instituciones académicas, escuelas, centros deportivos, actores y comunidad, involucrados todos en esta magna movida por solidaridad, por disposición, por compromiso cultural y social.

Fue así, entonces, que desde distintas partes del mundo y, especialmente, desde nuestro sur pampeano y patagónico fueron arribando actores, académicos y docentes que en esos siete días sorprendieron a nuestra sociedad con su trabajo, con sus paradas teatrales y su acercamiento en las calles y con la gente y con la vida misma de esa gente,



esa vida cotidiana, presente pero a la vez de gestos ancestrales que la antropología teatral y su creador rescataban como columna vertebral de dicha metodología.

Barba define la antropología teatral "como el estudio del comportamiento del hombre a nivel biológico y sociocultural en una situación de representación, es decir del hombre que utiliza su presencia física y mental según principios distintos a la vida cotidiana". Y al teatro antropológico como el "teatro cuyo actor se enfrenta a su propia identidad". Diría el director del Odin Teatret sobre este encuentro que "el teatro que se presenta en Bahía Blanca es un teatro que intenta con sus medios específicos reflexionar sobre la identidad cultural y la identidad profesional de pueblos y actores".

Según Julia Varley, actriz integrante del Odin Teatret, "una particularidad del encuentro de Bahía Blanca fue que allí Eugenio Barba trocó, modificó su concepto antropología teatral por teatro antropológico. Hasta Bahía Blanca siempre insistimos en usar antropología teatral para definir un campo de estudio comparativo de técnica actoral. Una vez allí y trabajando con Beatriz Iacoviello, Eugenio utilizó por vez primera esta definición para escribir un manifiesto del teatro antropológico como un teatro que busca su identidad".

El EITA tuvo, entonces, la finalidad de brindar un espacio de encuentro e intercambio teórico práctico, para el análisis de las distintas técnicas teatrales que sustentaran modos culturales en relación a la identidad cultural de cada grupo participante. En lo particular, consistió en realizar intercambios y análisis de los diferentes modos en que un grupo teatral puede insertarse en la comunidad, así como también de las diversas experiencias de comunicación teatral y de los métodos para la multiplicación de los medios de expresión y comunicación de los grupos en su comunidad.

La metodología de trabajo del EITA se basó en un intercambio intensivo con dedicación a tiempo completo donde se desarrollaron cinco áreas de trabajo que comprendieron talleres obligatorios, jornadas de discusión y reflexión, talleres optativos, charlas, debates y presentación de espectáculos, y una práctica final desarrollada en dos radios de la ciudad, una barrial, y otra en el centro de la ciudad.

Daniel Pereyra Canals sostiene que el haber conocido la metodología barbiana años antes a través de lo volcado por Coral en las clases, permitió a nuestros actores de Teatro Laboratorio un mayor y mejor acercamiento a las propuestas del Encuentro. También el haber tenido a Eugenio el año anterior junto a los actores del Farfa en nuestra sala de Teatro para el Hombre fue una ventaja comparativa en los resultados obtenidos al cierre del Encuentro.

Así como la primera experimentación de esos objetivos de trabajo con las herramientas del Teatro Antropológico, se dieron con la creación del primer grupo experimental (Teatro Experimental Alianza) y con la puesta de *La Mueca*, la coronación de este aprendizaje se dio, a mi entender, en el proceso de creación de la puesta en escena de Coral Aguirre, *Angelario*, sobre poemas de Mónica Morán, ese mismo año, de la manera más pura, más barbiana, con toda la codificación que el teatro de Barba exigía.

No obstante, Dardo sugirió, casi en los tramos finales de nuestra preparación, la integración del Método (Stanislavski) a este proceso estético, como dándole carnadura... Si tengo que decir qué me pasó, qué tomo de aquel Encuentro, Richard Fowler (The Canada Project) con su obra *Esperando el alba* es la síntesis de todo un enorme trabajo y

exposición del Teatro Antropológico. Lo que aprendimos con Coral estaba ahí, y yo dije, "eso es lo que quiero hacer, es lo que quiero ser".

Muchos fueron los grupos que intervinieron en el EITA Bahía Blanca; cabe mencionar entonces que por la Argentina lo hicieron cuarenta grupos teatrales provenientes de La Pampa, Buenos Aires, Río Negro, Neuquén, Santa Cruz, Chubut, Tierra del Fuego, y se admitió a cuatro grupos de la capital federal. Para actuar como observadores de estos grupos provenientes de nuestro interior, estuvieron, entre otros, Beatriz Iacoviello (periodista), Osvaldo Calatayud (entonces director del Instituto Nacional de Estudios de Teatro), Horacio del Prado (periodista), Osvaldo Quiroga (periodista), Beatriz Seibel (investigadora teatral), Ana Seoane (periodista) y Roberto Vega (investigador y docente teatral).

Dardo Aguirre, factótum del encuentro, había definido claramente que la intención era generar un encuentro "entre la Patagonia, vista como confín del mundo, el subdesarrollo, y los grupos que vienen de naciones altamente desarrolladas".

Llegaron entonces de aquel desarrollado mundo y se reconocieron y se mezclaron con los nacionales el Odin Teatret, The Canada Project y el Farfa, de Dinamarca; el Teatro de la Comuna de Uruguay; el Teatro Potlach de Fara Sabina y el Teatro tascabile de Bérgamo, ambos de Italia; el LUME Teatro Laboratorio de Movimento e Expressão de la Universidad de Campinas, Brasil; el Grupo Emanuel Freder, de Chile y el Grupo Campesino de Milpa Alta, México.

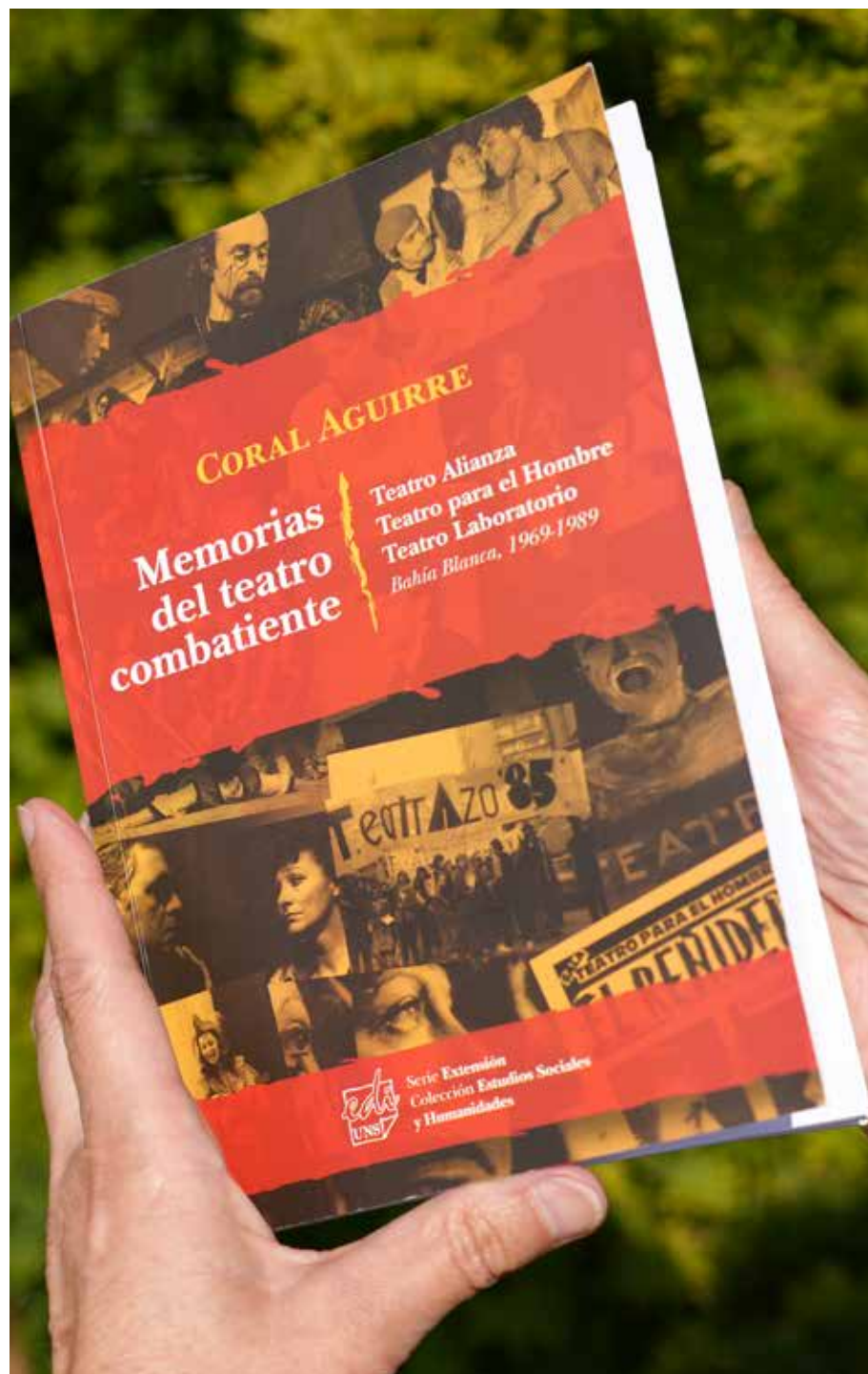
Sus observadores internacionales fueron: España Andrade, investigadora, de Uruguay; Mario Delgado, director de Cuatrotablas, Lima, Perú; Fernando de Toro, semiólogo teatral, por la Universidad de Carleton, Ottawa, Canadá; Susana Frank, Grupo La Rueca, DF México; Rosalba Marchese, Teatro La Máscara, Montevideo, Uruguay; Magalí Muguercia, directora de Teatro de la Casa de las Américas, La Habana, Cuba e Ian Watson, crítico e investigador de *Drama Review*, New York, EEUU.

En virtud de la naturaleza del encuentro, se dió lugar también a permanentes espacios de intercambio no formales donde actores, directores, autores, críticos e intelectuales tuvieron oportunidad de construir lazos de comunicación e intercambio.

La distinción en la organización del EITA se basaba en que este encuentro asumió un carácter intensivo hacia adentro del mismo y en paralelo fue una intervención teatral en la ciudad, con una propuesta destinada a los espectadores de la calle y de las salas, amplia, múltiple, diversa y continua que la ciudad de Bahía Blanca y su gente no tenía memoria de haber experimentado. En ello el EITA pudiera entonces inscribirse dentro de un suceso antropológico que ha dejado huella.

En el artículo *Más acá de las islas flotantes*, la investigadora Lucía Calla refiere que

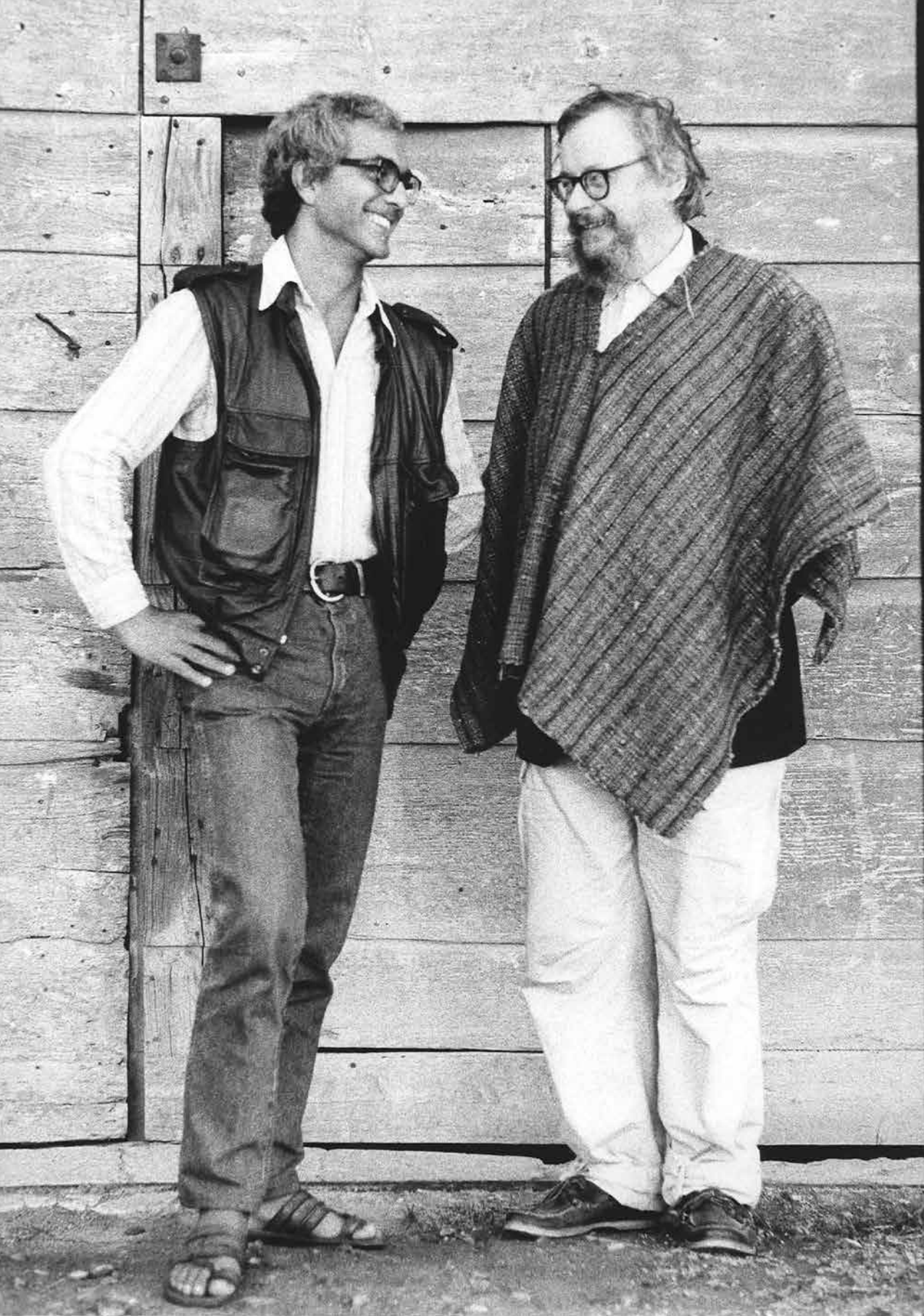
el EITA se enmarcó en el intenso florecimiento de la vida pública, en la efervescencia política de la recuperación democrática con efectos y consecuencias inmediatas en el campo de las políticas culturales. Bahía Blanca no estuvo exenta de la realidad nacional y esos nuevos aires fueron permitiendo la recuperación de los espacios públicos como necesidad de la ciudadanía y el reagrupamiento de artistas e intelectuales alrededor de eufóricos proyectos (Taviani, 1987:344).



Para Fernando de Toro "el teatro de los grupos intervinientes en el encuentro no queda recluso entre cuatro paredes, sino que también sale al exterior, se inserta en la ciudad, en el barrio. El teatro callejero presentó no solo una gran destreza y total dominio de este arte, sino también el punto más sensible del vínculo entre la comunidad bahiense y el encuentro con el teatro antropológico. Aquí se reunieron jóvenes y viejos, amigos y enemigos, pobres y ricos, en un acto que vino a reiterar la actividad esencial del teatro a través de todas las épocas: identidad y participación".

"Importante fue -sigue diciendo de Toro- el espacio que se concedió a voces 'marginales' como el grupo Emanuel, teatro campesino de Chile, y al teatro mapuche de Luisa Calcumil, o al Comuna de Uruguay, o el LUME de Brasil. Este intento de vincular teatros marginales con los grupos de teatro antropológico en un trueque permanente es de primera importancia. Nuestro teatro latinoamericano adolece, por lo general, de ese nivel artístico que es tan necesario para construir el arte dramático. Demasiado compromiso con el mensaje, poco compromiso en la elaboración artística de ese mensaje. Esto es algo que queda en el legado de este encuentro: el teatro, la práctica teatral no se constituye solamente de componentes ideológicos u objetivos políticos, sino también de una dimensión estética que es lo que finalmente queda en la historia".

A veintisiete años de aquel Encuentro Internacional de Teatro Antropológico, Nahuel, hoy un hombre de más de 30 años, cuenta que él, siendo un niño de 4 años, había quedado tan impactado por lo que había visto del teatro callejero, que todas las tardes buscaba unas latas, unos palitos, y llamaba a su abuela para que tocara el tambor, y él corría de un lado al otro y hacía cantos y la abuela debía hacerlos también, y eso era jugar al teatro de los payasos altos...



Franco Ruffini

Grotowski, Barba and the Actor's Identity

Abstract: This lecture on the identity of the actor was held on 27 September 2021 in Meetings on Third Theatre and Theatre Anthropology organised in Brazil by Ricardo Gomes (Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto), Gilberto Icle (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul) and Fernando Mencarelli (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais).

Keywords: Identity of the actor, Third Theatre, Performances, Body-essence, Art as vehicle, Inner man, Performer.

In this lecture I will discuss the 'identity of the actor' and the different perspectives in which Jerzy Grotowski and Eugenio Barba have carried out their research. With a necessary premise on identity and the search for identity in general.

*

The word 'identity' involves the same issue as does the word 'liberty'. 'Liberty' means nothing unless with respect to that from which it expresses liberation. Similarly, 'identity' means nothing except with respect to the context within which it expresses identification. Identity is always relative to a given context: sexual, professional, ethnic. That Miss or Mister XY seek their gender identity as a woman or man makes sense; that they seek their identity as Miss or Mister XY is nonsense, although it may be the first problem of their individual psycho-physical equilibrium.

The search for identity is carried out 'by means of taking away', by progressively excluding the distinctive elements until what remains of the individual is revealed, behind the sociological mask with which s/he presents and counters herself/himself against other individuals of the reference context. For example, in the search for gender identity, age, physical appearance, economic status, political ideas and other similar elements must be considered irrelevant. This does not mean that they do not exist and that they are not relevant. On the contrary, they exist and are relevant, but with respect to the practical exercise of identity, not with respect to its definition. A black graduate woman and a white woman with a low level of education are defined by the same gender identity, although the relative possibilities of exercising their use can be very different as they are both women.

Eugenio Barba and Jerzy Grotowski. 1988. Photo: Tony D'Urso

Journal of Theatre Anthropology, 3-4, 2024: 53-56 • Mimesis Edizioni, Milan - Issn: 2784-8167 (print), Issn: 2724-623X (online)
Web: <https://jta.ista-online.org/> DOI: 10.7413/2724-623Xo58 - © 2024 Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution, Non Commercial, No Derivatives License (CC-BY-NC-ND).



In the search for identity there are, in fact, two research perspectives. The one focuses on the person in oneself and for oneself searching ever more deeply in order to reveal the ultimate difference, in comparison and even beyond comparison with the set of 'similar opposites'. The other perspective focuses on the relationship of the person with other people who, within the same identity, nevertheless have different conditions of use, in order to prevent improper discrimination of a sociological nature.

Strictly speaking, the first is a kind of 'working on oneself': its outcome may be that the truly final point of gender identity does not lie in the opposition 'feminine vs. masculine' but in the coincidence 'feminine and masculine'. Equally strictly speaking, the second is a kind of 'political work'.

The two work perspectives are not mutually exclusive. They are compatibly active - and perhaps mutually indifferent - side by side. But only up to a certain point, beyond which they become incompatible. Like two currents that, after running in the same river, at a certain point each follow a separate diversion, destined to end in their own sea.

Having applied these general considerations to the particular case of the identity of the actor and the research carried out by Eugenio Barba and Jerzy Grotowski, my lecture might end here. With his Third Theatre and the premise - logical though not chronological - of Theatre Anthropology and the pre-expressive level, Eugenio Barba places himself in the perspective of political work; whereas Jerzy Grotowski, with his 'art as vehicle' and the premise - logical and chronological - of the 'total act' and the 'holy actor', places himself in the perspective of working on oneself. There is no point, here, in going over opinions from several quarters and from myself, expounded elsewhere.

*

The next part of my lecture will focus on the text *Performer*, in which Grotowski describes his work perspective in a precise way, and in an equally precise way identifies the point beyond which his perspective diverges from that of Barba. This second aspect in particular seems to me not to have received proper attention, yet.

A few facts for those who do not already know, and as a reminder for others: *Performer* was the official document of the so-called Pontedera Symposium (13-14 February 1987), with which Grotowski publicly inaugurated his Workcenter activities and the last phase of his research, known by the formula of 'art as vehicle'. The text follows, with some small variations, the version published in French by Georges Banu (in *Art Press*, 114, May 1987), with the addition ex novo of a short concluding paragraph titled *The inner man*.

Grotowski introduced it while revising the first edition in Italian (in *Teatro e Storia*, April 4, 1988), carrying out an 'author's montage' of excerpts taken - and partly rewritten - from sermons by the 14th-century mystic Meister Eckhart. In fact, the inner man - the expression is Eckhart's - is the key to reading the *Performer*, as if preceding pages had also rewritten concepts and words of the German mystic.

Almost at the opening of his text, Grotowski had declared that he was interested in 'essence' - in which

nothing is sociological. It is that which has not been received from others, which does not come from the outside, which has not been learned [...] As almost everything we possess is sociological, the essence seems a trifle, but it is ours.

The work of the Performer - actor or no longer actor - consists of a difficult 'personal transmutation', which leads to the 'body-essence'.¹

The word "body" may lead to confusion. Beyond its material dimension, the body is to be understood extensively as the outer covering - physical, psychic, cultural - of the essence. In short, like the 'ego': which manifests in the physical dimension, but does not have only a physical dimension. From a phase of separation between body and essence, the process of transmutation must end in complete absorption of the 'ego' by the essence. To describe this process, Eckhart uses the word 'detachment.' When detachment reaches perfection - says Eckhart - the 'outward man' reveals the 'inner man': what the person is, behind the sociological mask of the 'ego'.

Of Eckhart's 'inner man,' Grotowski spoke with the mediation of Theophilus of Antioch, a 2nd-century bishop later venerated as a saint. He wrote:

One day Theophilus of Antioch - to the request of a pagan: "Show me your God," - replied: "Show me your man and I will show you my God" ... Show me your man - you are, at the same time, you - "your man" - and not you, non-you as an image, as a mask for others. You are unrepeatable, individual, you in the totality of your nature [...] And at the same time, it is you who incarnate all others, all beings, all history.²

The quote comes from *Exercises*, transcription of a May 1969 encounter with foreign interns who had participated in work on *Apocalypsis cum figuris*, the last performance of the Teatr Laboratorium. Grotowski was to cite it again in *Response to Stanislavsky*, November 1969, saying that the 'total act' is not carried out by 'ego', but by

my man (the human being in me) [...] I and humankind, together. The entire human context - social and of every other kind - inscribed in me, in my memory, in my thoughts, in my experiences.³

It was, in both cases, a forewarning of the imminent abandonment of performance theatre, that is, of theatre as such.

The 'inner man' of Eckhart, 'your man' of Theophilus of Antioch, the 'body-essence' of Grotowski are, under different names, a single entity in the transition from theatre as theatre, and theatre as something different from theatre; from the performer as actor - a tiny performer, according to Grotowski's graphic representation - and the Performer with a capital P, as something different from the actor.

*

What is, ultimately, Theatre Anthropology? From a logical point of view, its internal dynamics can be seen as a process of research, conducted by the 'human being in a situation of representation' - the actor - and resulting in the recognition of identity of

1. Jerzy Grotowski, *Testi 1954-1998*, vol. 4, p.55, ed. by Carla Pollastrelli (in collaboration with Mario Biagini and Thomas Richards), La Casa Usher, Firenze 2014-2016.

2. Jerzy Grotowski, *Testi 1954-1998*, vol. 2, p. 158, *op. cit.*

3. Jerzy Grotowski, *Testi 1954-1998*, vol. 2, p. 239, *op. cit.*

the 'pre-expressive level'. In search of his own identity, the actor 'detaches' himself from the dramatic text, the acting style, the stage traditions and the poetics, and reaches the pre-expressive level of pure presence, which identifies him or her as an actor with regard to the 'similar opposites' of non-actors.

It should be noted that pure presence identifies all actors - even those who make use of text, refer to a given acting style, a certain stage tradition and/or to certain poetics. Just as female identity is shared by the black graduate woman and the white woman with a low level of education.

Up to the recognition of identity of the pre-expressive level, the paths of Barba and Grotowski developed side by side, two currents in the same river. It is beyond this point that the two currents divided. Because, when pure presence is achieved, the process of detachment is not yet perfect, as Meister Eckhart would have said. One last step is missing - detachment from that same pure presence. Grotowski decided to take this last step, to use performing as a vehicle to break out of theatre: and there, beyond the confines of the theatre, to bring to fruition his perspective of 'working on oneself'. Barba decided not to do this, but to use the performing arts as a weapon to remain in the theatre: and there, within the confines of the theatre, to bring to fruition his perspective of 'politics by other means', in defence of actors who had nothing else - no experience in the use of text, or connection with a tradition, poetics, style - other than pure presence.

Grotowski's 'total act' can manifest itself in the theatre, but it does not need spectators to bear witness to it: the Performer no longer has a theatrical identity. On the contrary, the pre-expressive presence of Barba needs the spectator to bear it witness, because it is thus that its origin and its very reason for existing are found. Regardless of from what he has detached himself or herself, the actor of pure presence still has a theatrical identity.

To separate the Performer and the actor from pure presence is the last detachment. Beyond any context - theatrical or otherwise - Eckhart calls this last detachment 'breaking through the boundary of temporality', that is, of outer reality. It implies 'breaking through' into space beyond that boundary, where there is no longer *only* 'outward man' or 'ego' or body distinct from essence but, together and beyond, 'inner man', 'your man' and 'body-essence'. Beyond any identity, of gender or ethnicity or age or profession, man and woman together, young and old together, white and coloured together, actor and non-actor together.

"In this breach - there - I am above all creatures, neither God nor creature; but I am what I was, what I must remain now and forever".⁴ They are the last words of *Performer* and, reworked, of *Beati pauperes spiritu*, which is the sermon of origin. Through the apparently abstract means of a mystic's words, Grotowski concretely, radically and definitively hands over the witness of Barba's actor of pure presence to his Performer with a capital P.

Translated by Julia Campbell Hamilton

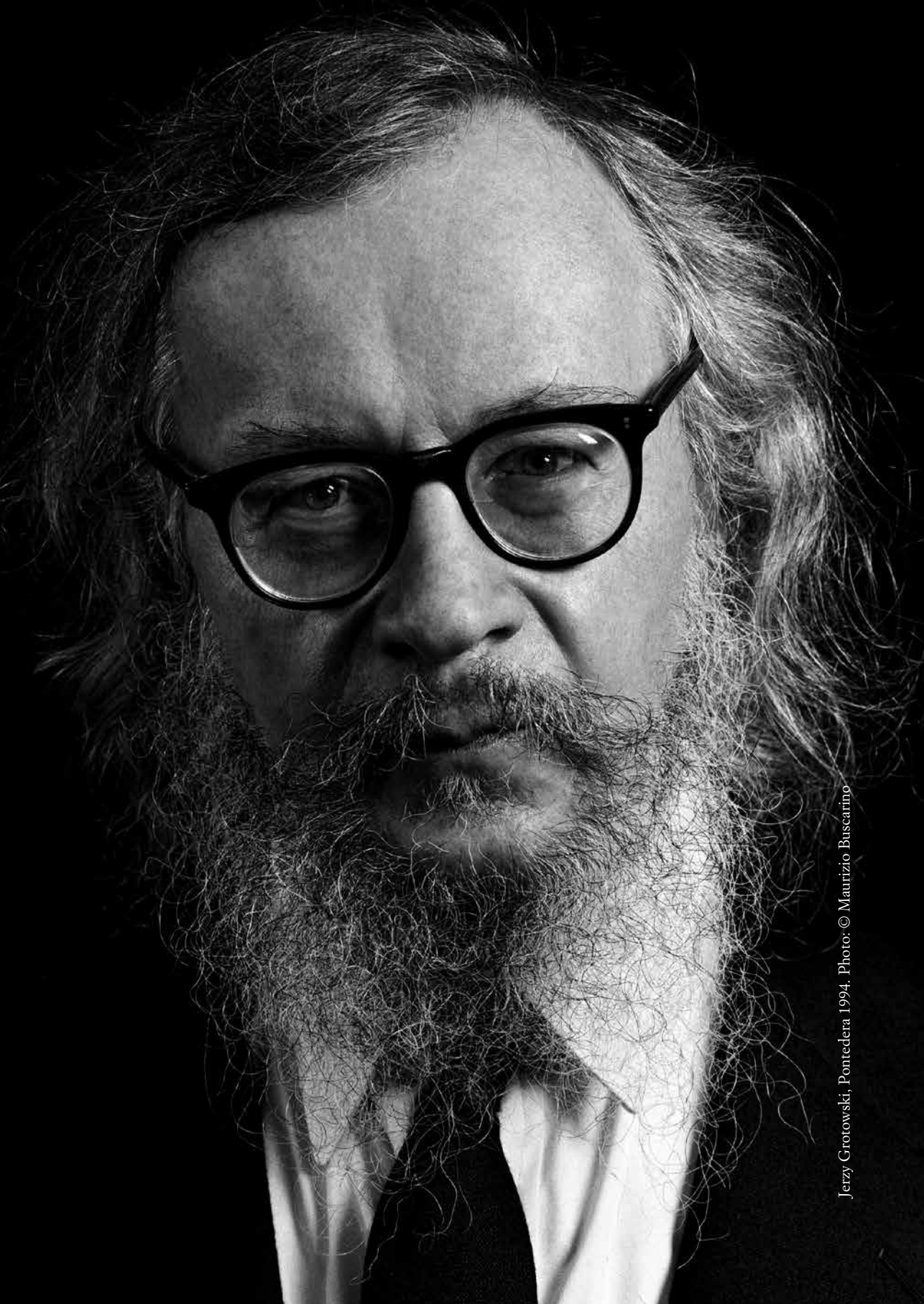
4. Jerzy Grotowski, *Testi 1954-1998*, vol. 4, p. 57, *op.cit.*

Jerzy Grotowski's Theatrical Anthropology

Edited by Leszek Kolankiewicz



The Constant Prince (1966), directed by Jerzy Grotowski. Photo: Teatr Laboratorium



Jerzy Grotowski, Pontedera 1994. Photo: © Maurizio Buscarino

Leszek Kolankiewicz

Gnostic Anointed as College Chair

Grotowski's Theatrical Anthropology* at the Collège de France

Abstract: This article reconstructs Jerzy Grotowski's theatrical anthropology based on a series of nine lectures, La "lignée organique" au théâtre et dans le rituel, that he gave at the Collège de France in Paris between 1997 and 1998. In these lectures, Grotowski reported on the discoveries he had made on his creative journey along the border of theatre and ritual. At the core of Grotowski's research, which can be described as "the science of doing", was the intention of inducing in the doer a flow of energy. As in alchemy, the inner process followed by the doer in the state of organicity is inextricably linked with his or her body. In this state, the doer is an ánthrōpos, a total being. This image lies at the centre of Grotowski's theatrical anthropology, an anthropology whose perspective is far removed from that of social or cultural anthropology; it is in fact the perspective of gnosis.

Keywords: *Organicity, Ritual, Gnosis*

Mention anthropology lectures at the Collège de France and one is instantly reminded of Claude Lévi-Strauss, whose lectures in social anthropology at France's most prestigious research establishment spanned nearly a quarter of a century from 1959 to 1982. Those who did not have a chance to witness them in person – admission to Collège de France seminars and lectures is free and open to all without registration – will find their "accounts", themed about myths and rituals, in *Anthropology and Myth* (Lévi-Strauss 1987a). Lévi-Strauss's successor at the Collège de France, Françoise Héritier, dedicated fifteen years, between 1983 and 1998, to comparative studies of African societies (her comparativism had a broad remit, typical for French humanities). She was followed by Philippe Descola, who lectured in anthropology of nature for almost two decades. The three consecutive departments (*chaires*), all of them statutory, existed for a total of sixty years, hosting lectures in the broad domain of Philosophy and Sociology.

Lévi-Strauss, who penned the programmatic *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss* (Lévi-Strauss 1987b), in a way took over from his great predecessor, Marcel Mauss, who had been Chair of Sociology in 1931-40, teaching the eponymous subject in the Durkheimian spirit, with anthropology included within its compass. It was Mauss,

* The form "theatre anthropology", familiar from the name "International School of Theatre Anthropology", has become widely accepted in English. However, we have opted for "theatrical anthropology" (the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines "theatrical" as "of or pertaining to the theatre or stage; of or pertaining to actors or acting") to differentiate it from Eugenio Barba's usage and to mirror Grotowski's use of the adjectives *théâtrale* and *teatralny* in, respectively, French and Polish. Incidentally, the term "theatrical anthropology" is analogous to the names of other branches of anthropology, such as cultural anthropology or social anthropology. For these reasons, we use "theatrical anthropology" throughout the block of texts focused on Grotowski's *anthropologie théâtrale*. For more on theatre/theatrical anthropology, see the footnote on page 67.



the father of French anthropology and author of *Sociologie et anthropologie*, who in 1934 put forth (admittedly, not in a lecture at the Collège de France but in a *communiqué* at the *Société de psychologie*) the concept of "body techniques" (Mauss 1950, 365-86), which would later become fundamental and essential to theatre anthropology, both for Eugenio Barba (Barba and Savarese 1991, 227-31) and for Jerzy Grotowski.

As Lévi-Strauss was being appointed Chair of Social Anthropology, the foremost scholars of his generation, Henri-Charles Puech (Chair of the History of Religions) among them, still taught the contiguous domain of Historical, Philological and Archaeological Studies. Having dedicated himself fully to gnosis at the Collège de France, Puech taught a course on its phenomenology in 1952-56 before spending sixteen years (!) researching and interpreting the 20-page text of the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*. In his first series of lectures (1956-60), he explicated it in conjunction with the Greek logoi of Jesus in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. In the second (1960-72), he presented an exhaustive discussion of its esoteric doctrines and gnostic themes (Puech 1978). A few years later, the *Gospel of Thomas* would become a pivotal text for Grotowski as he worked on his three final projects: Theatre of Sources, Objective Drama, and Art as Vehicle.

In his Collège de France lectures, Grotowski made no mention of Puech, co-editor of the standard edition of the *Gospel of Thomas*, nor did he acknowledge Mauss, even though he used the word "technique" in the sense borrowed from Mauss at least twenty times in his inaugural lecture. The reason for this may have been the fact that when he was taking up *Chaire d'anthropologie théâtrale*, a regular statutory *chaire*, situated where Mauss's Sociology Department and Lévi-Strauss's *Chaire d'anthropologie sociale* had been situated, i.e. in the domain of philosophical and sociological inquiry, he had no intention of engaging in theoretical scholarship or otherwise practising academic discourse.

Ever cautious or even distrustful of discursive thinking, Grotowski rejected theorising as bookish scholarship detached from experience, from real life trials and from creative abilities and powers. At the outset of his first lecture, he proclaimed that he was not a scholar, introducing himself as a craftsman, i.e. someone who has mastered the technique of an artistic practice, becoming at most a pro in his chosen field. He described his domain of expertise, somewhat cryptically, as meta-quotidian human behaviour. The term refers both to human behaviour in general – studied by social or cultural anthropology – and to particular extra-daily body techniques (Barba's term; *techniques extra-quotidiennes du corps*) – researched at Barba's International School of Theatre Anthropology as typical of organised theatre or dance performances (Barba 1995, 9-12, 15-6). It must be added here that Grotowski defined his area of interest as transcending theatre – or, more generally, *arts du spectacle*, the performing arts – and including ritual. The meta-quotidian human behaviour differs from everyday human behaviour in that it is methodically selected and more condensed. That said, Grotowski made a caveat that – as Ludwik Flaszen, the inseparable commentator of his work, once remarked – theory always stemmed from practice throughout Grotowski's life-long research, and if it proved helpful in any way, it served as a tool to sustain and support the spontaneous process of creative research. Grotowski also drew attention to the fact that scholarly theories are by nature not everlasting – their lifetimes are limited and they give way to other theories with newer concepts and solutions. Grotowski never cast any theory into a doctrine, using them, at most, as useful tools to help frame and resolve issues.

At the same time, Grotowski acknowledged that, in contrast to scholarly research, his explorations as part of his craft-focused work were less complex and not so difficult to comprehend. His approach to the relationship of theory and practice can be encapsulated in an epigram he liked to quote from memory:

*In words there is desire, in action, power;
To pen a tome is easy, to live one day well – harder.*

Adam Mickiewicz, *Thoughts and Remarks*

It is worth noting at this point that to Grotowski, who had been an émigré since August 1982 (he was formally recognised as a political refugee in July 1983 and became a citizen of the French Republic on 22 November 1990), a Collège de France *chaire* brought to mind different associations or rather, one association – with a fact every Polish child learns at school: the Parisian lectures of the Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz. Deemed by Poles as a national bard, Mickiewicz was active in the Polish émigré circles after the collapse of the Polish insurrection against Russian rule in 1831. In 1840-44 he gave four courses of inspired lectures at the Collège de France – as *chargé de cours* (lecturer) at the Department of Slavic Language and Literature (Mickiewicz 1849), in which he proffered a synthesis of Romantic historiosophy. Grotowski, who in 1961 was working on a staging of *Dziady* (Forefathers' Eve), Mickiewicz's national dramatic masterpiece, at the Theatre of 13 Rows in Opole, remained in thrall of the words and deeds of the Romantic poet throughout his life, not unlike the Nobel Prize-winning poet Czesław Miłosz. In 1979, at a congress in Milan, he summed up the first decade of his Laboratory Theatre as "practising Romanticism" (Grotowski 1980a). Taking up a chair at the Collège de France, Grotowski was following in Mickiewicz's footsteps, perhaps even emulating him – just as Miłosz, in a way, emulated Mickiewicz by accepting the post of Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley.

Like Grotowski, Miłosz had no badge of PhD, but unlike him, he gave his Berkeley courses on Dostoevsky and on the history of Polish literature such breadth that after a few years he was able to dictate *The History of Polish Literature*, covering the period from the Middle Ages to the present, a volume spanning nearly 600 pages. Likewise, Mickiewicz launched his courses at the Collège de France with a fairly systematic outline of a certain historical vision: the history of the Slavic world as a struggle between freedom and despotism, embodied in the Polish-Russian conflict, before moving on to a mysticism at the centre of which was the "inner human being" as the most revolutionary element of history. If his four courses constituted a whole, it was because of a historiosophical synthesis, but one that was Romantic, inspired, prophetic.

We do not know how Grotowski's lectures would further unfold or how he would finally structure them, because he did not even complete the first series due to declining health: of the ten lectures planned, he delivered nine between 24 March 1997 and 26 January 1998. Starting with the second lecture, he gave them in blocks of three: on 2, 16 and 23 June 1997 at the Théâtre de l'Odéon, on 6, 13 and 20 October 1997 at the Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique, and on 12 and 26 January 1998 at the Théâtre du Rond-Point – the third lecture planned in this block was cancelled. The series title, "*La 'lignée organique' au théâtre et dans le rite*" (The "Organic Lineage"

in Theatre and in Ritual), suggests a structured and segmented lecture and perhaps even an attempt at systematisation and classification, but this is somewhat misleading. Admittedly, Grotowski began by defining the two poles of performing arts: the pole of artificiality and the pole of organicity, but he soon moved to providing a more or less structured account of the discoveries he had made on his creative journey, one that led him through the territory situated at the boundary between theatre and ritual, from its start at the Theatre of 13 Rows in Opole, Poland, to its end at the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards in Pontedera, Italy.

Grotowski described the origins of the relationship between his craft and ritual at the conference "*Le théâtre d'aujourd'hui à la recherche du rite*" (Today's Theatre in Search of Ritual), held in Paris on 15 October 1968 at the Scientific Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Grotowski 1969). He traced the evolution of his chosen tactics, assessing them in terms of their influence on the audience: from drawing spectators directly into the action as quasi-participants (*Forefather's Eve*, 1961) to isolating them and positioning them as voyeurs (*The Constant Prince*, 1965). Paradoxically, only in the latter case did he succeed to achieve full – genuine and sincere – involvement. To put it in psychoanalytic terms: the spectator, unable to intervene or protest against the violence inflicted on the victim and limited to tacitly satisfying his scopophilic urge, identified himself with the tormented Prince – the spectator's voyeuristic sadism took the form of sadomasochism, enabling him to narcissistically appropriate the Prince's suffering: his surrender to the violence of the theatre could be viewed as equivalent to a religious conversion; the theatre's efficacy here was comparable to that of ritual. Referencing this effect, during the Paris conference, Grotowski formulated a thesis stating that the spectator was called forth as a witness, claiming that this calling was ancient and equating it with a Christian's vocation (*martyres* in the Greek original of Acts 1:8, *testes* in the Latin text of the Vulgate).

Towards the end of his artistic journey, when Grotowski no longer produced theatre work, during the periods of the Objective Drama Project (1983-86) and the research Peter Brook dubbed Art as Vehicle (1986-99), the spectator was no longer part of the equation: with the show erased, the spectator vanished from view and the question of semiotically conceived pragmatics was invalidated. All that mattered was the performer, or rather the Performer with a capital P, "a man of action" (Grotowski 1997, 374). If someone was allowed in as an observer of the Performer's actions, it was only as a witness, in whom, it was presumed, an induction occurred comparable to electromagnetic induction (the induction of a voltage in an electrical circuit, attesting to the appearance of energy in it): when an inner action (Thomas Richards' term) understood as a "qualitative transformation of energy", a "gradual transmutation of that which was vital into that which was subtle" (Magnat 1997b), was taking place in the Performer, then "something within the observer was witness to a process or an action similar to that which was being observed" (Magnat 1997c). Grotowski explored these questions in detail in the lectures he gave in October 1997 as part of his Paris course in theatrical anthropology at the Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique.

In his theatre work, Grotowski programmed the spectator's reactions with the same pedantic precision with which he honed the actor's action scores. When, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he abandoned the theatre understood as creating theatre work

for *communitas*, which he termed "the Holiday" (Grotowski 1973a), he transformed spectators into active participants whose involvement in the *sui generis* participatory theatre then known as paratheatrical meetings – such as the Special Project led by Ryszard Cieślak (1973-76) or the Mountain Project led by Jacek Zmysłowski (1976-77) – was designed to grant them access to experiences comparable to actors' creative acts; this is why Grotowski used the term "active culture" to describe his activities at the time (Kolankiewicz 1979). Importantly, this work was by no means any kind of *création collective*. Rather, he wanted the participants, both individually and collectively, to enter the state of flow (Csikszentmihalyi 2005), to attain peak experiences (Maslow 1970), to commune with one another, to create and experience I-Thou relationships (Buber 1958). When Aristotle, who was concerned not only with the pragmatics of tragedy but also with the specifics of the Eleusinian initiation, states that those who participated in the mysteries were not supposed to learn anything but "to experience something (or: to undergo something, feel an emotion or impulse) and to be put into a certain condition (or: state)" (*patheîn kai diatethénai*, Synesius, *Dio*, 10), his words can also be applied to the participants of the paratheatrical meetings.

The same, of course, can be said of the "tester" – Grotowski's term (Grotowski 1980b, 39) for the witness tasked with checking whether the so-called source techniques in the Theatre of Sources (1980-82) functioned as such; and, undoubtedly, of casual observers of *Action* (1986-2022), an opus in the domain of Art as Vehicle. The pragmatics of Grotowski's craft work outlined here – from his "poor theatre" productions to the opuses in the domain of Art as Vehicle – evolved along a similar line to Stanislavski's system: from affective memory (Théodule Ribot's *la mémoire affective*) to the method of physical actions. I speak here, respectively, of Stanislavski's pivotal interest: the actor's work on himself, and of Grotowski's pursuit of the most effective way of influencing the spectator, tester, or observer, which, over the years, he relegated to secondary importance. What comes to the fore, however, is the search for such a technique of an actor or such an influence on the perception of a witness that would be indisputable in terms of palpability, concreteness: privileging physical actions over feelings, and the induction of a stream of energy over the release of affects. In both cases, the creators' approach was akin to a scientific approach with its reliance on experience and on the verifiability of the results and their measurable and revelatory nature. Just as Stanislavski's system has been described as "the science of acting" (Tcherkasski 2016, 18), Grotowski's research can be described as the science of doing. Grotowski contended that "a man of knowledge has at his disposal the doing and not ideas or theories" (Grotowski 1997, 374) and that "knowledge is a matter of doing", except that the man of knowledge is neither a theoretician nor a researcher – not even the most avid one – but a consummate rebel who confronts knowledge as his human – perhaps even sacred – duty. I will come back to this further on.

The term "organicity" in the title of Grotowski's Paris lectures on "The 'Organic Lineage' in Theatre and in Ritual" was borrowed from Stanislavski, who positioned organicity at the core of his system, framing it as its objective and ideal. The noun *organichnost* and the adjective *organichnii* recur 50 times in Toporkov's book *Stanislavski in Rehearsal: The Final Years* (1998), which gives an account of the last period of Stanislavski's work, when his system took the final form of a method of physical actions that Stanislavski regarded as his artistic testament. Stanislavski uses the word "organic"

in the sense of "characteristic of or derived from living organisms" or "forming an indivisible unity" – "integral" and "natural". "My system is only needed to fully activate the creativity of the artist's organic nature", Stanislavski is quoted as saying, "to put to work our organic nature and its subconscious" (Toporkov 1949, 136, 186). The antonym of the adjective *organichnii* in Russian, *iskusstvennii*, means "artificial", i.e. "not made by nature, man-made", as well as "unnatural, ostensible, false", but it should be remembered that it is derived from the noun *iskusstvo* meaning "art". Thus, when Stanislavski speaks of practising *organicheskoe iskusstvo* ("organic art") (Toporkov 1949, 107) as deserving to be called veritably high art, he formulates an obvious paradox.

In contrast to dilettantism, with its characteristic traits of showing off and acting from the gut, Stanislavski distinguishes two contrasting types of acting as art: the art of representation and the art of emotional experiencing. The former draws on a well-established tradition, handed down from generation to generation, and consists in learning and mastering a box of tricks of the acting craft, in training the muscles of the body and face, the voice and intonation or, in short, in mastering the technique of acting. Through constant repetition, students of the craft develop a prodigious muscle and voice memory. They fashion spectacular forms that strongly excite the senses, are awe-inspiring and beautiful but lack power and depth – forms that delight but do not jolt, do not sink deep into the soul, do not enrich. Stanislavski had no appreciation for such acting. While he did not deny his students the chance to master the technical aspects of acting, he reproached them for their lack of creativity and invention and for getting stuck in clichés – traits that caused him to regard them as mere hacks. What are these few more or less stereotyped tricks in comparison to the immeasurable richness of nature that the art of emotional experiencing taps into? The actor arrives at creation that derives from his organic nature – which, for Stanislavski, is subconscious in character – via conscious technique, or rather psychotechnique – by emotionally experiencing a role. The emotional experiencing allows him to create the "life of the human spirit" of his character (Stanislavski 2017, *passim*) and convey that life on stage, which is the essential and loftiest objective of his art. The art of emotional experiencing requires the actor not only to cast away any stereotyped tricks, but also to work on himself unceasingly, persistently, to keep reinventing himself.

An actor must act (in the primary sense of the word: "do", "perform an action"). And his actions must be alive and authentic, filled with truth. He must find in his role an "unbroken organic line of actions", an "organic line of physical behaviour" (Toporkov 1949, 52, 65) – the truth of physical actions that leads to an alive and suggestive embodiment of his character, equivalent to the state of "I am" (Toporkov 1949, 139, 70): I am now and here, fully present. This embodiment, incarnation, or personation (*voploshcheniye*), just like transformation, transmutation, or transfiguration (*perevoploshcheniye*), and, above all, the state of "I am" – Stanislavski uses the biblical phrase *ya yesm* (from the Hebrew *ehyeh*, the Greek *egō eimi*, the Orthodox Church Slavonic *az yesm*) – are clear references to Orthodox Christianity, as Maria Shevtsova (Shevtsova 2020, 87-120) has recently sought to underscore and bring back to wider attention. As Jean Duvignaud noted, transfiguration and embodiment have their counterparts in possession cult rituals. Seeking to answer the question of the "meaning of possession of the actor by the character" (in Stanislavski's system, Jacques Copeau's school, and the practices of the

Cartel des Quatre), Duvignaud links theatre with "the phenomena of possession studied by ethnology in non-historical societies" (Duvignaud 1965, 244):

When, during a Vodou cult celebration in Haiti, the gods called loa descend upon dancers primed through a kind of collective hypnosis to receive them (thus satisfying the conditions of the "prepossession" and "expectation" that Marcel Mauss speaks of when describing the "common consent" required for a magical cult to be completed), the figures corresponding to these "spirits" take full possession of those they enter. (246)

Incidentally, in his Collège de France lectures, Grotowski also glosses over the name of Duvignaud – the sociologist and anthropologist who until 2000 was president of Maison des cultures du monde, an association dedicated to protecting and promoting intangible cultural heritage and to carrying out, together with the Université de Paris-VIII, research in the field of ethnosociology. The linking of theatre and possession is not the only point where Grotowski's and Duvignaud's views coincided: at more or less the same time that Duvignaud formulated his dramatic question "Is it [at all] desirable for theatre to continue to exist?" (Duvignaud 1971, 143), Grotowski orated: "the phenomenon called theatre is devoid of meaning. Everywhere", in his view, "one can see symptoms of its [final] agony" (Grotowski 1973b, 122).

Another thing Grotowski borrowed from Stanislavski, apart from the term "organicity", was the opposition of organicity-based theatre and artificiality-based theatre, the difference being that Grotowski's construal of the word "artificiality" was not far removed from its etymological meaning: he equated it with craftsmanship, i.e. the precision of execution attained through long-term exercise and practice. In the tradition that follows the convention of artifice, actors perform meticulously composed, or montaged (Grotowski's preferred phrase), performative formal structures in a masterful manner, often with technical virtuosity, without engaging in an inner process. Notably, Grotowski added the caveat that his usage of the term "artificial" did not carry any negative connotation. He gave two eminent examples of this tradition: the theatre of Bertolt Brecht and the so-called Peking Opera (*jīngjù* in Chinese, capital city theatre); he invokes the paradox of the actor, which, according to Denis Diderot, holds that to attain greatness an actor must act in cold blood rather than seeking to identify with his character. Grotowski situated his own artistic research at the opposite extreme – at the pole of organicity, in close proximity to Stanislavski's system, of which he proclaimed himself a continuator, with the proviso that what was paramount for him was not a particular (e.g. realistic) style of acting but a method of physical actions. This is corroborated by the title of a book by Thomas Richards, Grotowski's student and artistic heir, *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions* (1995). According to Grotowski, other than the craft-orientated work in the domain of Art as Vehicle at the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, the organic tradition was represented, in the field of theatre, by Ryszard Cieślak's work on his title role in *The Constant Prince* and, in the domain of ritual, by the Afro-Haitian Vodou cult and South Italian tarantism.

For Grotowski, the secret of organicity lies in the continuous flux of small impulses that stimulate action and attest to the flow of *énergie vitale* (vital energy), to the presence

and impact of *tonus* (vigour, vitality). This flux is uninterrupted, fluid, mutable, alive, whereas the actions of actors at the pole of artificiality are limited to gestures and facial expressions that are peripheral – accumulated in the muscles of the face, arms and legs, condensed into poses assumed in a staccato rhythm. In contrast, the flux of small impulses, constitutive of organicity, flows from within to encompass the entire body, stimulating small actions that add up to a process that, for Grotowski, is not solely physical. Grotowski came to describe this process in terms of verticality – as an attempt to take off, rise up, as the passage from an energy source that is vital, more biological, towards an energy source that is more subtle: luminous and joyous. Grotowski gives examples of this process at work in multiple religious traditions: the practice of Hindu Baul (itinerant mystical singers), the Orthodox tradition of *hesychasts* (combining inner prayer with breathing), Muslim Sufi mysticism (*dhikr* prayer), and "especially [practitioners] of certain ancient Afro-Caribbean traditions" (Magnat 1997a), meaning both Haitian Vodou and, probably, Cuban Santería, which resembles Afro-Brazilian Candomblé. While for some mystics, verticality has no horizontal references, horizontality in Baul performances or Vodou rituals, surrounds the doer with "a kind of huge magical conclave", to quote Mauss (Mauss 1950, 131), which buoys him in his vertical process. Stanislavski was already aware of this and he emphasised the vital importance of communing, or communication (*obshcheniye*). Unfolding in a theatre actor, and in a Performer in the Art as Vehicle, this process involves not only letting oneself be carried away by an ascending current, but also letting the luminous, joyous and subtler descend downwards towards the biological and vital – so that energy can circulate, enabling a *coniunctio* (union) of what is below and what is above.

This is an alchemical idea *par excellence*. Grotowski describes the inner action of the Performer as a process that is a form of transmutation (I have already referred to this). In relation to verticality, he also sketches a map of the body's energy centres, invoking not only the Hindu tantric tradition (*chakras*) or Taoist alchemy but also the figurines of pre-Columbian art and Johann Georg Gichtel's engravings. The caveat, however, is that the hypothetical link between these energetic centres and the endocrine glands would be difficult to prove. At this point, it is worth noting that alchemy has always gone hand in hand with various mystical traditions: Chinese alchemy was tied up with Taoism, Indian alchemy with Tantrism, Hellenistic alchemy with Gnosticism and with the mystery religion, Arab alchemy with Sufism, European medieval and Renaissance alchemy with Hermeticism and Kabbalistic mysticism. As these linkages demonstrate, alchemy was fundamentally a spiritual technique. For Grotowski, organicity was a spiritual technique likewise – he viewed it as full involvement in the actions of the doer who performs them integrally and as an undivided psycho-physical unity. The inner process followed by the actor or Performer in a state of organicity is inseparable from his body and his body offers no resistance. The inner process is the embodiment (*voploshcheniye*) of Stanislavski's "life of the human spirit" of the character or of a *loa* spirit "riding" a dancer in Vodou. At the core of the process, however, is what Grotowski, following Georges Bataille, named *expérience intérieure* (inner experience). When asked about how his research related to psychiatry, he answered that they both involved a technique of personal development enabling one to *grandir intérieurement* (grow internally; Magnat 1997b). Inevitably, this puts one in mind of the individuation process as described by Carl Gustav Jung, who

authored works such as *Psychology and Alchemy* (1968) and *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy* (1970), as well as smaller-scale studies of alchemy, including *Commentary on "The Secret of the Golden Flower"*, *The Spirit Mercurius* (1967) and *The Psychology of the Transference: An Account of the Transference Phenomena Based on the Illustrations to the "Rosarium philosophorum"* (1966). In his account of his work as director with Ryszard Cieślak on the latter's role in *The Constant Prince*, Grotowski said that a kind of *coniunctio* transpired between what could be considered "something very personal but absolutely not banal" and "something extra-individual", that is, something in which one can discern "a kind of archetypal image" and which he described as *ánthrōpos*: "when accomplishing an act that might be called a sacrifice, the actor crossed a boundary and became *ánthrōpos*, or a total human being (*l'être total*) in that moment" (Magnat 1997b). That image is at the centre of Grotowski's theatrical anthropology. That same image was central to the Romantic anthropology of Mickiewicz, who, in his inspired lectures at the Collège de France, spoke of the desire to become "a whole man", "a man conceived as a whole", that is, one that would at once participate in history as a warrior and engage in the life of his own being, or, in a word, "devote himself fully to what he does" (Grotowski 1980a, 113).

Grotowski's theatrical anthropology, therefore, is to Richard Schechner's and Victor Turner's anthropology of performance, or even to Eugenio Barba's theatre anthropology,¹ what alchemy is to chemistry. In his course at the Collège de France, Grotowski proffered no systematic comparison of theatre and ritual as cultural traditions (his own term) (Magnat 1997a). In fact, the cultural and social context(s) of these phenomena presented no interest to him, which is why his perspective was so far removed from the perspective of social or cultural anthropology. Grotowski did not address the question, vital for Turner (1982, *passim*), of the difference between liminality and the liminoid, which is crucial for distinguishing *rites de passage* from theatre, and even from his own theatre of participation (paratrete meetings). He even ignores the distinction between ecstasy and trance, probed by Schechner in the presentation of his ecstasy/trance wheel where he references Cieślak in *The Constant Prince* (1988: 175-9), the question that Gilbert Rouget (Rouget 1985, 11) sought to resolve and put to rest. Furthermore, when Grotowski mentioned the possibility of simulated trance in spirit possession cult rituals, he made no reference to Michel Leiris's classic work, in which Leiris distinguishes between *théâtre joué* (acted theatre) and *théâtre vécu* (lived theatre) in the Ethiopian cult of *zār* (Leiris 1980, 117-32). Thus, the location of Grotowski's *Chaire d'anthropologie théâtrale* in the same domain as Mauss's and Lévi-Strauss's *Chaires* stems from a misunderstanding – from an automatic association of anthropology with social sciences.

1. The distinction between Barba's theatre anthropology (1979) and Grotowski's theatrical anthropology (*anthropologie théâtrale*, 1997) is as arbitrary and artificial as the one between Freud's psychoanalysis (*die Psychoanalyse*, 1896) and Jung's analytical psychology (*die analytische Psychologie*, 1914). However, while with regard to the latter, it was the case of the successor (Jung) wishing to distinguish himself from his predecessor (Freud) by inventing a new name, in the former case, it was Grotowski who borrowed a name from Barba (changing its slightly in Polish and English; in French one form is used, *anthropologie théâtrale*), without referring to the substance that Barba had filled it with over the years of his work at the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ten sessions and two books by 1997) or articulating any differences between his approach and that of Barba.

In his final manifesto, Grotowski states emphatically that the "essence" of the human being that manifests itself in the Performer's doing interests him "because nothing in it is sociological" (Grotowski 1997, 375). Therefore, the right location of his *Chaire* seems to be where Puech conducted his investigations when he researched *thèmes gnostiques* within the framework of *phénoménologie de la gnose*.

It bears recalling an excerpt from Gilles Quispel's lecture on gnosis as an unknown universal religion, delivered at the C. G. Jung Institute:

In the final analysis gnosis is anthropology: man stands at the centre of gnostic interests. The myths and doctrines of gnosis describe man's origin and essence so that he knows what path he should follow, namely, the path leading to the Self, a path of salvation. The gnostic myth is intended to be but an anamnesis (Quispel 1951: 29).

Therefore, the Performer, defined by Grotowski as a man of knowledge, is a Gnostic journeying towards the Self through anamnesis. "The process [which the Performer is working on and which is linked to essence] is something like the destiny of each one [of us], his own destiny, which develops (or: which just unfolds) with time", contends Grotowski in his final manifesto, before adding, "Each time I discover something, I have the feeling it is what I recall." (Grotowski 1997, 375, 377) He asks, "Is essence the hidden background of the memory?" (Grotowski 1997, 377) This question is a paraphrase of the gnostic myth understood as an anamnesis leading man to the Self in accord with his destiny.

Translated by Mirosław Rusek

Bibliography

- Barba, Eugenio. 1995. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. Translated by Richard Fowler. London and New York: Routledge.
- Barba, Eugenio, and Nicola Savarese, eds. 1991. *The Secret Art of the Performer: A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*. Translated by Richard Fowler. London and New York: Published for the Centre for Performance Research by Routledge.
- Buber, Martin. 1958. *I and Thou*. Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith, 2nd ed. with a postscript by the author. New York: Scribner.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. 2005. "Flow experience." In *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd ed., Lindsay Jones, the editor-in-chief, vol. 5: *Eternity – God*, 3138-39. Detroit: Thomson Gale.
- Duvignaud, Jean. 1965. *L'Acteur. Esquisse d'une sociologie du comédien*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard.
- . 1971. *Le théâtre et après*. Tournai: Casterman.
- Grotowski, Jerzy. 1969. "Teatr a rytuał." *Dialog* 8: 64-74.
- . 1973a. "Holiday: The Day That Is Holy." Translated by Bolesław Taborski. *TDR: The Drama Review* 17 (2) (T58): 113-19.
- . 1973b. "Such As One Is – Whole." Translated by Bolesław Taborski. *TDR: The Drama Review* 17 (2) (T58): 119-25.
- . 1980a. "O praktykowaniu romantyzmu." Edited by Leszek Kolankiewicz. *Dialog* 3: 112-20.
- . 1980b. "The Laboratory Theatre, 20 Years After: A Working Hypothesis." S. n. of trans. *Polish Perspectives* 23 (5): 32-40.
- . 1997. "Performer." Translated by Thomas Richards. In *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, edited by Lisa Wolford and Richard Schechner. London and New York: Routledge, 374-78.

- Jung, Carl Gustav. 1966. "The Psychology of the Transference: An Account of the Transference Phenomena Based on the Illustrations to the *Rosarium philosophorum*." In *The Collected Works*, vol. 16: *Practice of Psychotherapy*, edited and translated by Gerhard Adler and Richard Francis Carrington Hull. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1967. "Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*"; "The Spirit Mercurius." In *The Collected Works*, vol. 13: *Alchemical Studies*. Translated by Richard Francis Carrington Hull.
- . 1968. *The Collected Works*, vol. 12: *Psychology and Alchemy*. Translated by Richard Francis Carrington Hull, 2d ed. completely rev.
- . 1970. *The Collected Works*, vol. 14: *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*. Translated by Richard Francis Carrington Hull.
- Kolankiewicz, Leszek, ed. 1978. *On the Road to Active Culture: The Activities of Grotowski's Theatre Laboratory Institute in the Years 1970-1977*. Foreword by Ludwik Flaszen. Translated by Bolesław Taborski. Wrocław: Instytut Aktora – Teatr Laboratorium.
- Leiris, Michel. 1980. *La possession et ses aspects théâtraux chez les Éthiopiens de Gondar*, précédé de *La croyance aux génies zâr en Éthiopie du Nord*, new ed. Paris: Le Sycomore.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1987a. *Anthropology and Myth: Lectures, 1951-1982*. Translated by Roy Willis. Oxford and New York: Blackwell.
- . 1987b. *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*. Translated by Felicity Baker. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Magnat, Virginie. 1997a. Grotowski's First Conference (Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris, March 24), MS.
- . 1997b. Grotowski's Fifth Conference (Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique, Paris, October 6), MS.
- . 1997c. Grotowski's Seventh Conference (Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique, Paris, October 20), MS.
- Maslow, Abraham H. 1970. "Religious Aspects of Peak-experiences." In *Personality and Religion: The Role of Religion in Personality Development*, edited by William A. Sadler, Jr. New York: Harper & Row, 168-79.
- Mauss, Marcel. 1950. *Sociologie et anthropologie*, précédé d'une introduction à l'œuvre de Marcel Mauss par Claude Lévi-Strauss. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.
- Mickiewicz, Adam. 1849. *Les slaves. Cours professé au Collège de France*, t. I: (1840-1841) *Les pays slaves et la Pologne. Histoire et littérature*, t. II: (1841-1842) *Les pays slaves et la Pologne. Histoire, littérature et politique*, t. III: (1842) *La Pologne et le messianisme. Histoire, littérature et philosophie*, t. IV: (1842-1843) *L'Église officielle et le messianisme. Philosophie et religion*, t. V: (1843-1844) *L'Église et le Messie*. Paris: au Comptoir des imprimeurs réunis.
- Puech, Henri-Charles. 1978. "Phénoménologie de la Gnose." In *En quête de la Gnose*, t. I: *La Gnose et le temps et autres essais*, Paris: Gallimard, 185-213. "Explication de l'Évangile selon Thomas et recherches sur les Paroles de Jésus qui y sont réunies (Collège de France, 1956-1960)", "Doctrines ésotériques et thèmes gnostiques dans l'Évangile selon Thomas (Collège de France, 1960-1972)." In *En quête de la Gnose*, t. II: *Sur l'Évangile selon Thomas. Esquisse d'une interprétation systématique*, 93-284.
- Quispel, Gilles. 1951. *Gnosis als Weltreligion*. Zürich: Origo Verlag.
- Richards, Thomas. 1995. *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions*. With a preface and the essay "From the Theatre Company to Art as Vehicle" by Jerzy Grotowski. London and New York: Routledge.
- Rouget, Gilbert. 1985. *Music and Trance: A Theory of the Relations Between Music and Possession*. Translation from the French revised by Brunhilde Biebuyck in collaboration with the author. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schechner, Richard. 1988. "Toward a Poetics of Performance." In *Performance Theory*, rev. and exp. ed. New York and London: Routledge, 153-86.
- Shevtsova, Maria. 2020. *Rediscovering Stanislavsky*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stanislavski, Konstantin. 2017. *An Actor's Work*. Translated and edited by Jean Benedetti, with a new foreword by Sir Richard Eyre. London and New York: Routledge.
- Tcherkasski, Sergei. 2016. *Stanislavsky and Yoga*. Translated by Vreneli Farber. Holstebro, Malta, Wrocław, London and New York: Icarus Publishing Enterprise and Routledge.
- Toporkov, Vasilij Osipovich. 1949. *K. S. Stanislavskiy na repetitsii. Vospominaniya*. Leningrad and Moskva: Iskustvo.
- . 1998. *Stanislavski in Rehearsal: The Final Years*. Translated by Christine Edwards. New York: Routledge. Theatre Arts Book.
- Turner, Victor. 1982. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.



Collège de France entrance. Photo: Le Blog Historique de Paris

Virginie Magnat

Jerzy Grotowski's 1997-1998 Conferences at Collège de France

Abstract: The original text by Virginie Magnat has been edited by Leszek Kolankiewicz into this condensed version specifically for this publication. Reported here are nine conferences that Jerzy Grotowski gave at the Collège de France in Paris on themes of organic art and artificial methods, physical actions, impulses and energy, inner search and trance.

Keywords: *Ritual, Organic, Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, The Constant Prince*

In 1997, Jerzy Grotowski, the founding director of the Polish Laboratory Theatre, was appointed by the Collège de France to the Chaire d'anthropologie théâtrale, a prestigious position specifically designed to suit his research. Yet, instead of giving formal lectures at the Collège de France, Grotowski chose to speak extemporaneously about his work (in French) in various Parisian theatres. He thus gave nine public conferences from March 1997 to January 1998 under the title "*La lignée organique au théâtre et dans le rituel*" [...]

1st Conference

Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris, 24 March 1997

[...] Having specified that he was neither a savant nor a scientist, Grotowski defined himself as an artisan working in a field which he identified as the realm of meta-quotidian human behaviour. Grotowski declared that his research may be named theatre anthropology, a vast field that included both theatrical and ritual phenomena. He added that it was precisely because the realms of theatre and ritual interpenetrated and overlapped that he had been able to envision the possibility of engaging in a practical way – since he was a practitioner – in the study of meta-quotidian human behaviour. He took this opportunity to thank the Collège de France for having enabled him, through the creation of the Chaire d'anthropologie théâtrale, to address in these conferences the overall arc of his life-long research, especially since the elements of this research were too often fragmented and separated from one another because of certain mental habits



which informed the distinction we made between theatre, ritual, and other cultural traditions.

Remembering a thirty-five-year-old conversation with Ludwik Flaszen, the Teatr Laboratorium dramaturg, Grotowski emphasized that practice always must precede theory, for if this order were to be reversed, the work would inevitably become dry (*sec*). According to him, theory was a tool designed to support practice as a kind of passage towards the next step; if a given theory was not a helpful tool, then one should discard it. The Polish director pointed out that scientific theories, which are always transitory, only serve to temporarily illuminate on-going research. However, Grotowski noted that his artisanal work was more simple or "primitive" than scientific research and might even be associated with a certain *naïveté*, for it hinged upon transitory instruments whose temporary function was to come into contact with (*capter*) a phenomenon.

He specified that the French language lacked an equivalent for the phrase "performing arts." Indeed, the closest translation, which was *arts spectaculaires* implied something that existed because it was seen or watched by someone, thereby emphasizing the role of the spectator rather than that of the actor. Grotowski objected that performance was about doing, about the human being in action. He therefore suggested that it might be necessary to coin a new phrase such as *art performatif* in order to describe an art involving everything that is human: body, mind (*esprit*), etc. He specified that it was very important to understand that there was a fundamental difference between approaching theatre and ritual practices either as *arts spectaculaires* or as *arts performatifs*. For, Grotowski expounded, the creative aspect of such practices was not necessarily predicated upon doing something for a viewer: indeed, there were certain types of processes whose primary function was not limited to creating some form of expression destined to be perceived by an audience, but hinged instead upon a kind of battle with oneself, a struggle for lucidity and transparency directly rooted in life itself. It was only later, through elements of composition and montage, that such processes could be understood by a viewer. He added that what he was evoking here might be associated with what Georges Bataille had called *l'expérience intérieure* in the secular sense of the term.

Grotowski then remarked that there was a kind of natural expression, that is to say, the expression of a natural process in real life, that appeared without being devised, such as the movement of a tree in the wind, or the movement of the ocean. Étienne Decroux, for instance, had explored through pantomime the laws of natural movement. However, the Polish director specified that what we usually consider to be "natural" behavior is merely the type of behavior that is understandable according to certain social codes within a given time and place. He provided the following example: if during the conference he were to sit in a lotus position on the table, this would certainly not be considered natural behaviour from the point of view of the dominant social code; on the other hand, if someone living in a hermitage in the Himalayas brought in a chair and sat in a Western manner, this behaviour might strike others as odd and unnatural. Grotowski, aware of the ambiguity of the term "natural," had therefore resorted to replace it with the term "organic," which he had borrowed from Konstantin Stanislavski.

Since Grotowski was not interested in quotidian or so-called natural behaviour, using the term enabled him to focus on that which preceded composition. Prior to the

montage, Grotowski stated, was the life of impulses. Yet in his view, impulses were not purely physical. He indicated that impulses preceded action and that they consisted in a movement starting from within and continuing its course through the action. He remarked that when a person was cut off from his/her impulses, that which dominated was peripheral gesture (hands, face, legs). The impulse was therefore prior to gesture, which was secondary. For Grotowski, organicity was about transition, whereas gesture was about position. Yet he reminded his audience that the word "art" was linked, through its etymology, to the word "artificial," and that the "artificial" aspect of art was the form or structure upon which artistic work depended. Grotowski thus pointed out that what characterized his approach, as with Stanislavski's, was the importance of organicity in the initial phase of the performer's work.

In order to provide an example of what he meant by this, Grotowski interrupted his talk to show two excerpts of a documentary film on the ritual process of Vodou spirit possession shot by Maya Deren in Haiti in the 1940s. He specified that the film material had been edited posthumously by her family [in 1985 entitled *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*]. He asked us to watch for the fluidity of the organic process that pertained to the Haitian phenomenon of spirit possession, and pointed to the flux of impulses that flowed through and from within the body. He observed that this process was neither illustrative nor dominated by will power, that it was delicate, smooth (*doux*), light, hinging upon a fluidity of movement, born from within the body. He stressed the importance of the spine and remarked that imitating the undulation of the spinal column was not sufficient to enter such a complex process since the latter was not solely physical.

He also insisted that ritual practices such as these were based on a codified structure, which ensured the efficacy of the ritual. Although not "rehearsed" as in theatrical practice, this fluid process led to the expected form pertaining to a ritual practice that had been transmitted across many generations: indeed, if spirit possession spun out of control, it became unproductive for its practitioners. Yet, while they were in control of the actions they performed, these were not executed in a spectacular manner, and they remained fluid, transparent, light, continuous. Grotowski contrasted this process with our modern notion of "spontaneity," and stated that we often equated physical freedom with rolling on the floor and screaming, a conception of spontaneity which he dismissed as mere balderdash (*n'importe quoi*).

Such considerations led the Polish director back to theatre per se, and he referred to Diderot's *Paradox of the Actor* in which the actor must avoid identification with the character since identification, according to Diderot, was to be the privilege of the spectator. Diderot's actor, according to Grotowski, must therefore be cold and disengaged in order to manipulate her/his own behaviour on stage along with the spectator's perception. The Polish director remarked that this type of approach was still extremely influential today, at least theoretically. He suggested that, in theory, it could be related to performance forms such as Peking Opera, since in this tradition the primary artistic goal was to affect the spectator's perception. The form itself had been inherited across generations of masters for hundreds of years, often within the same family, and it consisted in partitioning the performer's process into small bits that became signs. Moreover, the use of stops created staccato movement rather than a sense of fluidity. Grotowski specified, however, that the



Constantin Stanislavski

great masters of this tradition were appreciated for their personal engagement, that is to say their ability to improvise within the framework of this precise structure in a very subtle manner. There was something in their way of performing that distinguished masters from other performers, and for Grotowski it had to do with the mobilization of their vital energy (*tonus, énergie vitale*), as if an ever-changing, subterranean live current continuously flowed through the structure comprised of small signs. This process occurred, in theory, without any identification.

Grotowski observed that Stanislavski, on the other hand, did envision the actor's work as linked to some kind of identification, since the structure of the character was to be based on the actor's own experience of real life, as well as on her/his observation of real life behaviour. If a young man was to play a very old one, Grotowski noted, he should not tell himself: "I am playing an old man" – which, according to Stanislavski, would amount to killing the organic process – but, instead, he should ask himself how he might move, behave, accomplish certain actions, if his physical abilities were drastically limited by old age. [...] Grotowski remarked, however, that this aspect of Stanislavski's approach must not be equated with identification with the role since it actually had to do with searching for something rooted in one's own life experience rather than seeking to identify with the character's and acting as that character for the audience.

Similarly, while Peking Opera appeared to be confined to the perfect reproduction of a specific type of behaviour, there was an organic process at work within this traditional form. The Polish director took this comparison even further: while the importance of structure was obvious in Peking Opera, for Stanislavski, too, the physical score was essential. This, Grotowski pointed out, was the artificial aspect of Stanislavski's approach and was related to the notion of montage. He stated that the Russian director insisted upon the spectator's need to both *believe in* and *understand* an actor's performance. For Stanislavski, then, not only did the actor's behaviour have to be believable, that is to say, organic, but her/his physical score also had to be clear, logical, and understandable from the spectator's standpoint. Grotowski remarked that while approaches hinging solely upon artificiality were clear but not believable because they did not engage the spectators, approaches hinging solely upon organicity were believable yet not understandable because they lacked structure. In order to deal

with this double aspect of performance, Stanislavski used the "magic if" to engage actors and also relied on "affective memory." The Russian director thus assumed that it was sufficient to recall an emotional experience in order to bring it back to life, as it were, while performing on stage.

However, Grotowski emphasized the fact that at the end of his life, the Russian director renounced fifty years of research during which he had thought that emotions could be controlled by the actor. Grotowski explained that Stanislavski had come to the conclusion that since emotions could not be controlled by will power in real life, and since life was the main focus of his research on the actor's process, he needed to reconsider the way in which the actor could be fully alive while performing on stage. Grotowski declared that at this point of the Russian director's career, Stanislavski's research had taken a new direction, leading to the development of the Method of Physical Actions. According to Grotowski, Stanislavski had realized that it was impossible to directly summon emotions by hunting them down, for they were like wild animals always escaping from the hunter. However, if the actor was able to remember her/his bodily behaviour at a given moment of her/his life, then the emotions pertaining to such behaviour would naturally follow. Grotowski stated that he himself had started his research where Stanislavski's work on physical actions had ended when the Russian director died.

Hence, instead of asking the actor "How did you feel when this happened to you?", Grotowski asked "What did you do?". The Polish director acknowledged that he was conscious that Stanislavski was very much part of the Russian tradition of realist theatre, where one sought how to behave "naturally" according to a specific social code. However, he was convinced that Stanislavski was actually looking for something else, even though the Moscow Art Theatre productions were so tied into the realist convention (except for productions such as *The Dead Souls*, for instance) that Stanislavski's name remained associated with a certain notion of realistic theatre. What fascinated Grotowski was Stanislavski's wisdom at the end of his life, for he sensed that the Russian director's ultimate research had to do with human behaviour beyond the realist situation. Grotowski was particularly interested in Stanislavski's Method of Physical Actions because it implied that working on impulses preceding small actions revealed the secret of the organic performer. According to Grotowski, that secret lay in the continuous flow of small impulses which, as with the Haitian ritual practitioners filmed by Maya Deren, constituted the performer's process. If Stanislavski had chosen to focus on physical actions at the end of his life, Grotowski argued, it was not because he was no longer interested in emotions, but because emotions had been the main focus of his previous work and he felt that he now needed to discourage his actors from seeking emotions for emotions' sake, an approach that sometimes almost reached the point of hysteria. By physical actions, Stanislavski also meant personal associations, memories, reactions of love, hatred, fascination, and so forth, yet he chose to use the phrase "physical actions" in order to distinguish this new phase of his research from his earlier teachings.

For Grotowski, then, the challenge was to take Stanislavski's work on impulses and physical actions beyond the realm of realism. This is what he tried to achieve with Ryszard Cieślak and his colleagues of the Teatr Laboratorium when creating *The Constant Prince*,

a production which was rooted in the approach the Russian director did not have time to further develop. Grotowski stated that, whereas in the case of Vodou the process at work depended upon a system of inter-human associations, Cieślak's process in *The Constant Prince* hinged upon a system of personal associations. Grotowski noted that both were organic processes that had a comparable fluidity and belonged to the same performative reality. Grotowski then showed an excerpt of the filmed footage of *The Constant Prince*, along with a 1993 interview with Marianne Ahrne [entitled *Il Teatr Laboratorium di Jerzy Grotowski*].

At the end of the film excerpt, Grotowski remarked that his choice of approach was linked to his temperament as an artist, and his personal conditioning since childhood. [...] He provided the example of the Teatr Laboratorium's production of *Akropolis*, based on a text by Stanisław Wyspiański, which staged the resurrection of the figure of Christ/Apollo in the graveyard of European culture, that is to say, the concentration camp of Auschwitz. *Akropolis* made many references to the Bible and to the heroes of Antiquity, yet the context was that of Nazi concentration camps. Grotowski explained that the challenge was to avoid realism, and to *do* rather than *illustrate*. Grotowski noted that if one sought to illustrate a real life event, one truly ran the risk of profanation. This was the reason why Józef Szajna, who had designed the costumes and set for *Akropolis*, did not attempt to faithfully represent a concentration camp, even though he himself had been a prisoner in Auschwitz.

The same was true of *The Constant Prince*: the text evoking the martyrdom of a prisoner was thrown onto the river of Ryszard Cieślak's luminous, translucent physical score born from the recollection of a particularly joyful and ecstatic experience in his youth in which prayer and sensuality overlapped. Grotowski specified that one of the texts he and Cieślak had read together when working on this piece was the *Spiritual Canticle* by Saint John of the Cross.

[...] Following the film excerpt [of *Akropolis*], Grotowski spoke of the kind of vocal work developed by the Teatr Laboratorium actors, an approach which he linked to the research on ancient vibratory chants he was then leading with Thomas Richards at his Workcenter in Pontedera, Italy. The Polish director stated that he was interested in the fact that the sonorities of certain traditional chants were rooted in the body, so that the body could become a conduit, enabling a passage towards something delicate, translucent. If singing was connected to impulses and actions, if the body was not excluded, then singing could serve as a kind of yoga, in the larger meaning of this term.

This type of approach, Grotowski expounded, existed in different cultures, and was linked to human attempts to *do* something that enabled the doer to *take off* (*quelque chose qui fasse décoller*). Grotowski provided the example of the de-conditioning work of alchemists dealing with notions of time and space, of the Indian, Islamic, and Christian Orthodox traditions, and especially of certain ancient Afro-Caribbean traditions, whose ritual chants involved total participation of the body. Grotowski stated that his own temperament had induced him to search for organicity because he sensed that he himself was not organic enough. Singing had become a tool for his research since it appeared to him to be linked to certain qualities of energy. He

specified that when using the term energy he was not referring to tonus, endurance, or the vitality of youth. Even though that kind of youthful energy could be used as a vehicle for this type of vocal research, it diminished with age and one eventually needed to search for the more subtle qualities of the energy pertaining to meta-quotidian behaviour, such as that of rituals, for instance.

He explained that the research he was now conducting on ritual vibratory chants was obviously not a reconstruction of African rituals, but focused on a form of chanting that was rooted in the body, and investigated the organic impulses that extended into the very precise structure of these chants. Grotowski described this research as an approach to verticality, a passage to a more subtle quality of energy. [...]



Jerzy Grotowski and Marc Fumaroli before the inaugural lecture at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord. Photographer unknown, courtesy of the Grotowski Institute Archive.

2nd Conference

Théâtre de l'Odéon, Paris, 2 June 1997

[...] Grotowski opened the conference by referring to the subject of his inaugural talk at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord two months earlier, namely, the distinction he had made between organicity and artificiality. The Polish director stated that certain approaches, such as that of the Peking Opera or that of Bertolt Brecht, privileged structure and montage over the actor's engagement with his/her inner process, which might include identification with the role. In practices emphasizing artificiality, performers were expected to accomplish each action very precisely so as to present something with great

artistic competence yet without engaging in an inner process. What Grotowski named the "artificial" tradition – and the Polish director specified that his usage of this term did not carry any negative connotation – had to do with the predominance of structure, form, composition, and montage, which led him to assert that theatre relied on montage just as cinema did. He pointed out that in the old days of film-making, editing consisted in cutting off unwanted sections of film upon which both image and sound had been recorded simultaneously, and then recomposing new sequences. Similarly, in the theatre, the primary role of the director, according to Grotowski, was to edit out sections that were not developed or revealing enough, or that might distract the spectators' attention. The montage was thus aimed at directing the viewer's attention along a very precisely charted course, and this was even more crucial than in film-making since, in the theatre, there was no camera guiding the viewer's gaze. Grotowski pointed out that if a stage director constructed an interesting and creative action without directing the attention of the audience towards that action, the spectators might look over there when what was important was happening over here. He stated that rhythmic changes, for instance, were essential, so that when an overall rhythm of human behaviour was performed by all of the actors present on stage except for one, whose rhythm was different, the attention of the audience would immediately be drawn to that person. The technique of montage thus included rhythmic changes, as well as ordering sequences and giving shape to the overall structure.

The Polish director then declared that his own approach, which he associated with what he termed the *lignée organique* (the organic lineage/line), privileged organicity over structure, and focused on the impulses born within the body that preceded small actions. Grotowski specified that there was a kind of paradox embedded in this process, since one needed to surrender oneself to the active physical score, to accept it without pushing for results, as if flirting with it. Grotowski stressed the fact that within artistic practice there existed two opposite poles, and warned against dogmas prescribing one pole and proscribing the other. [...]

The Polish director emphasized that theatre anthropology, in his view, consisted in the observation, the practical study of meta-quotidian behaviour, which was much denser, much more concentrated, and much more selective than everyday life behaviour. He remarked, however, that such behaviour could not be said to truly lie outside that which was quotidian, since everything must always be accomplished *hic et nunc*, in the present time, because if everything had been prepared in advance, if all the problems had already been resolved and all the decisions had been made, then the performance itself would surely be dead. Instead, if the performance, in spite of having been carefully planned, constructed, and developed, was accomplished anew every time, in the here and now, then it would mysteriously recover its life, its presence. Grotowski explained that this had to do with a specific attitude making it possible for the quotidian, in the positive sense of the term, to be present, without being "quotidian," but as something more concentrated, denser, more developed – a quotidian bereft of the gratuitousness and randomness of ordinary life. The connection between the organic *lignée* and the Peking Opera, then, lay in the articulation of the élan and the composition/montage, or of the organic process and the structure. Grotowski thereby emphasized the fact that

organicity and artificiality were linked both in his approach and in approaches such as that of the Peking Opera.

Referring to Stanislavski's own approach, he observed that the Russian director had two typical reactions when he watched actors work. In the earlier stage of rehearsal, Stanislavski would use the simple formula "I believe / I don't believe". Belief, in this case, had to do with the sense that the actor's actions were guided by an inner process, as if emanating from her/him, not in order to produce gratuitous effects, but as a flowing current of life. In the later stages of rehearsal, Stanislavski would use the words "I understand / I don't understand" when speaking about the internal logic of the composition of the line of actions, a logic that anyone watching from the outside should be able to follow.

Grotowski then recounted his 1962 experience of Peking Opera [...] The Polish director said he spoke with a great Peking Opera master, who explained to him that mastery was linked to an attitude of independence towards the audience. Because younger actors were less experienced and confident, they were more concerned with the reactions and judgement of the spectators. Master-performers, on the other hand, no longer needed to gauge their work in that way, and the freedom they had gained enabled them to become open channels, to enjoy the process of doing something while simultaneously observing themselves in the process of doing.

By way of association, Grotowski referred to an ancient text that existed in several traditions. In this text, it was said that man was made of two birds: a bird that picked and a bird that looked on. Within man these two birds existed at the same time; the problem was that man usually became engrossed with the bird that picked, hence seeing nothing. Grotowski suggested that when man looked on as he picked, it is as if a vast space suddenly opened up. The Polish director associated this capacity to double up with the master-performer in Asian performance traditions who was able to make small changes at the level of extremely minute details and observe these changes unfold: he picked (performed his action) and looked on simultaneously. [...]

He specified that in the performance traditions pertaining to the artificial *lignée*, such as Peking Opera, the same elements always recurred, so that it was possible to achieve a high level of precision through rigorous training. With the process pertaining to the organic *lignée*, however, what emerged was, to a certain extent, always unpredictable, which meant that a different approach to training was required. [...]

This led Grotowski to address the question of how canonical performance traditions become constituted in various cultures. He noted that, while in France classical theatre was associated with the style of the Comédie Française, in China and India, for instance, ancient performance forms had been transmitted across generations and had been subtly reconstructed by each of them. In Africa, ritual forms were comprised of coded elements, a type of ethnodrama whose reality Grotowski said was very remote from what we call theatre. He then referred to story-telling as another traditional performance form, and provided the example of a story recounted by Adam Mickiewicz when he was a Collège de France professor in the 1840s. The great Polish poet evoked the life of a village, and the many festivities that took place during the winter season. He spoke of a story-teller who enthralled his young audience with the tale of a bird of fire. At some

point, the story-teller threw a piece of cotton in the fireplace, and as the cotton burst into flames a montage was created in the eyes of the children, who said afterwards that they had seen the bird of fire.

Grotowski noted that children's play itself was an important activity structured by rules in spite of its gratuitous aspect. Games thus often provided a form of training that was enjoyable. He provided the example of Bengal, where some forms of sport had evolved into artistic forms that involved a kind of *mise-en-scène*. [...]

After a short break, Grotowski took questions from the audience and reiterated that he had begun his research where Stanislavski's own research had ended, namely, with the Method of Physical Actions. He specified that at the end of his life, Stanislavski had re-examined the emphasis he had placed on affective memory and all his previous accomplishments hinging upon this approach. Based on the testimonies from people who had worked with the Moscow Art Theatre director, Grotowski felt that Stanislavski, at this stage of his investigation of the actor's process, was gradually albeit clearly moving towards the discovery that impulses preceded physical actions and constituted their vital source (*source vivante*). Grotowski noted that if artificiality dominated within a theatre tradition, signs would be emphasized and the score would not be completely fluid. In Peking Opera, this was exemplified by the performer's use of hand gestures. This articulation of abstract forms by the hands was a language in its own right that was extremely clear for the Chinese spectators who were familiar with the convention. Conversely, the organic *lignée* emphasized impulses as they were born from the body, although Grotowski specified that the process at work could not be said to be purely physical, adding that he himself was totally convinced that impulses were not a merely physical phenomenon, but that there definitely was a physical aspect to the birth of impulses. He observed that in the English language one might employ the verb "to push" to describe something that emerged from inside the body, as if the action or a small element of the action were present below the skin but not yet visible. This was how small actions appeared, creating a continuous flow within which gestures were secondary. This meant that the entire organism was engaged, conversely to the artificial *lignée*, in which the periphery of the body prevailed, especially the hands and face. In the organic *lignée*, facial expression was not determined in advance. Grotowski declared that he had focused his own work on the organic aspect of impulses, an aspect which was difficult to speak about but which became very clear in practice, although what became even clearer was how difficult such an impulse-based process was to achieve. When it occurred, however, one immediately sensed that an actor's work had become alive (*vivant*), that there was something emerging from below the skin. Grotowski stated that this was the only aspect of Stanislavski's work which he had been interested in further developing in his own work.

His own research was otherwise linked to other roots and sources, some of which he had been interested in long before he had begun his theatrical work, including some very ancient traditions. Within the research he had conducted on physical actions, he felt that he had taken a step forward. He observed, however, that research was not about finding definite answers, and art, unlike science, was not about making progress. Moreover, whether it be artistic or scientific research, whenever the process of searching

stopped, the research itself became dead and led to dogmatism. In Tibetan Buddhism, Grotowski remarked, it was believed that a tradition was alive only if each generation of practitioners took the technical aspects one fifth (or twenty per cent) further than its predecessors. He stressed that this was a very important point, and outlined two principles: the first one was that whenever one found an answer, this answer raised a new question; the second was that there was no single truth that might exclude all other approaches. Of course, it was possible to define something as a technical impediment, such as singing with a closed larynx, yet even this was a very general formula, since someone might perhaps be able to develop a vocal technique in which the larynx was closed. Grotowski concluded that the greatest danger was to become a guardian of the truth. All that could be said about following one approach over another was that it had to do with temptation. One was tempted to do something in a certain way, and this had to do with a personal disposition or need. [...]

Grotowski associated Yevgeny Vakhtangov's use of contradiction with an aspect of the Peking Opera that had always fascinated him: Chinese performers were trained to begin a movement in one direction in order to move in the opposite direction. He noted that these were small artisanal details which mattered to him since he was an artisan; indeed, he had introduced himself as such at the beginning of the inaugural lecture, and wanted to remind the audience once more that he had been an artisan throughout his life. He added that in the biographical information that was provided about him, he was often mistakenly said to hold a university Master's degree, which was not true since he had received his Master's from the Polish national theatre school. This, he declared, confirmed that his research was that of an artisan, not a savant. When trying something in practice, it was always possible to tell whether or not it worked, and, as a director, he had experimented with actors moving in one direction and at a certain point turning around and moving in another. He said that this worked well when staging a procession, for instance. As a result, a short distance on stage could become enormous for the spectators while the direction itself was sharply emphasized. Grotowski pointed out that if one simply moved in one single direction such an effect was impossible to create because it hinged upon contradiction. He specified that there were many techniques similar to this one in Asian performance traditions, and that their purpose was to frame a particular form by starting with another aspect of that form or another direction than that which needed to be emphasized. Vakhtangov could thus be said, metaphorically, to have walked in one direction and turned things around in his production of *Princess Turandot* when choosing to use ordinary objects associated with the very austere everyday life of 1920s Russia in order to create a joyful spectacle. [...]

Grotowski then addressed a question I had asked about the relationship between the organic and artificial *lignées* by stressing the necessary interdependence of artificiality and organicity: when things worked, both aspects were present, yet one was usually dominant while the other remained in the background, as if hidden. The Polish director specified that he did not intend to mix the two aspects as if they were the ingredients of a salad, but felt that, out of loyalty, he should address different approaches over the course of the Collège de France conferences, and not merely analyse the path he had followed

and that had led him onto an adventure, a great journey towards organicity. He felt that if he did not present at least one other possible point of departure for research, he would be making propaganda. [...]

Grotowski then answered another question from an audience member asking him to elaborate on the comparison he had made between the Tibetan monk and the Japanese samurai when speaking about the utility of form. The Polish director stated that one often looked at a form from the outside and assumed that if one were to imitate this form one would gain access to that which the form was designed to achieve. Yet, it was only the image of the form to which one gained access by means of imitation – as in the case of someone sitting cross-legged when imitating the outside shape of the lotus position. When all that was left was the image of the form, Grotowski argued, it was no longer alive (*vivante*), as if bereft of its *élan*, namely, something that existed inside the form but was never captured by an imitation of its outside shape. Conversely, if one were able to discern the form's function, as in the case of the cross-legged sitting position, then the purpose and nuances of this form would begin to emerge, and one would be able to distinguish between two different functions: remaining still in order to alleviate any mental and emotional agitation, as with Zen monks absorbed in contemplation, or remaining alert, vigilant, so as to be able to react to any danger by jumping to one's feet in an instant, as with the samurai. Both theatrical and ritual forms had a purpose, so that imitation of these forms only yielded an image, not the form as function. Grotowski stressed that it was very important to keep in mind that a form that was alive always had a function.

He provided an imaginary situation to illustrate this point: if he heard noise backstage during the conference, he might have to get up and walk towards the upstage door to ask people in the back to keep quiet. In Western forms of theatre, the justification for this action was called the character's motivation, and in Stanislavski's approach, the reason *why* the character walked towards the door was the primary concern, not the walk itself. In Noh theatre, on the other hand, the focus would first be on what Grotowski called *modus operandum*, namely, *how* the performer walked towards the door, so that the performance became a study of "walkness" leading to the discovery and application of all the laws and subtleties of walking, within the context of the situation and motivation pertaining to the scene.

This emphasis on *modus operandi* was also at work in Marcel Marceau's approach to pantomime, which he had derived from Decroux, his teacher. Grotowski recalled watching Decroux work at the end of his life, when he no longer performed publicly. His body was damaged by old age yet his actions had great sharpness, a sharpness which Grotowski suspected must have been lacking from Decroux's work when he was younger. The Polish director felt that something in the work of the old Decroux was luminous, and he said that it had to do with the purity of what Decroux was searching for as he organized these various *modus operandi*, these movements and images, these races and battles, completely free from the need to imitate ordinary life, yet at the same time always in touch, somehow, with something secret. Grotowski specified that the *modus operandi* was, indeed, a technical secret, as, for instance, the secret pertaining to walking. The Polish director observed that in our daily life we walked without knowing

the secret of walking. The walk of those who knew that secret, however, was transformed by that knowledge and became a super, meta-walk, Grotowski concluded, thanking the audience for their attention.

5th Conference

Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique, Paris, 6 October 1997

[...] The fifth lecture began with the screening of a documentary film [entitled *Art as Vehicle*] on the work directed by Thomas Richards at the Grotowski Workcenter in Pontedera, Italy. Grotowski made a few preliminary remarks to introduce and contextualize this film. He stated that the work carried out at the Workcenter was based on ancient traditional songs rooted in organic impulses, and specified that what we were going to see was the initial stage of that work since the film had been recorded seven years ago, in 1989, that is to say, a few years after the founding of the Workcenter. He foregrounded the precise nature of the structure recorded on film by pointing out that whereas it had been filmed eight times in its entirety for editing purposes, the sound itself had been recorded in one single take. The fact that the soundtrack was perfectly synchronized with the movements and small actions throughout the film hence clearly demonstrated how precise the structure really was.

The Polish director also observed that, in this initial phase of the work, the participants relied on what he called "vital energy," a term he associated with great joy and described as a powerful fuel. He specified that although there was nothing wrong with such an approach, the work on ancient traditional songs rooted in organic impulses that was now taking place at the Workcenter was much more focused on the passage towards "subtle energy". He qualified this term by stating that he used it for the sake of convenience in spite of the difficulties one inevitably encountered when attempting to define it. He remarked that today, when we speak about "energy," we refer exclusively to "vital energy" or what was once identified as "tonus" in medicine and biology, so that we associate energy with having a lot of strength. He insisted that this particular conception of energy was not what interested him and his collaborators, even in the early phase of the work shown in this film. What they focused on instead was the passage from an often violent current of life or vital fuel to some other type of ascending energy connected to much more subtle and delicate sources. Grotowski noted that although vitality, which he linked to the joyfulness of youth, was extremely valuable, it gradually diminished as one grew older. He suggested that there was, however, another kind of energy (and he stressed again the difficulty of defining that to which he was referring), a form of power or level of perception that actually became more accessible with age, although he said that it could be accessed when one was young as well. The documentary film entitled *Downstairs Action*, directed by Mercedes Gregory, was then shown on a large screen.

[...] Grotowski observed that in the performing arts, although one may appear to rely merely upon one's body, one actually worked with one's entire organism and there was something deep inside as well as around oneself that was mobilized by that work. Grotowski sensed that this aspect of the performing arts was linked to ancient

techniques, in the noble sense of the term, and associated this kind of experience with Yogic approaches – provided that Yoga was not understood as gymnastics but as an approach whose aim was a more subtle perception of reality.

Grotowski said that during the period of his most well-known directorial work, namely, when the Teatr Laboratorium created *Akropolis*, *Dr. Faustus*, *The Constant Prince*, and *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*, telling a story was necessary to prevent the spectators from panicking and getting so nervous that they would become completely cut off from a more essential way of perceiving these pieces. The Polish director stressed that this dimension of the work was entirely other and independent from the fiction of the plot and the narrative through-line. Paradoxically, for spectators to be truly receptive to that other dimension they had to have a story to focus on, even though the latter was not at all what Grotowski and his collaborators felt was essential in their work.

Grotowski contrasted this period of theatrical productions with the approach taken at the Workcenter in Pontedera. He explained that the work conducted in Italy focused on singing and explored what could be done with a form of singing that depended on the body and was linked to a tradition. Singing was used as a tool to alter energetic levels or possibly perception itself, as if to find the passage from a source of energy that was more biological, more vital, and, to a certain extent, more joyous, to a source that was higher, more subtle, more delicate, more luminous. In this type of work, no attempt was made to tell a story. The Polish director noted that there were several aspects of the process to which he was referring that needed to be further analysed to grasp the way in which these traditional songs enabled one to move up and down a ladder that may be compared to Jacob's ladder, as if one were ascending towards something luminous and subtle, and descending towards the density of the body. Grotowski stated that it might be useful to reflect about a phenomenon common to several civilizations. He specified that it was difficult to tell whether this phenomenon was real or imagined but that it certainly existed for people who experienced it. However, if one raised the question of whether this phenomenon had a physiological or psychological foundation, Grotowski said that there was no absolute answer.

The phenomenon to which he was referring was the mapping out of "energetic centres" within the human body, each centre being conceived as a locus of forces. He remarked that the perception of energetic centres had been important for a number of different cultures at different historical periods, such as the heretic branch of the *recherche intérieure* (inner search) conducted in Europe and reflected in Johann Georg Gichtel's sketches in the 18th century. These sketches provided a map of the body's energetic centres from the most dense, heaviest, and most vital energies to the highest and most subtle ones. In India, these energetic centres corresponded to the well-known system of the *chakras*; in China, for instance in Taoism, people also worked on the body's energetic centres, although Grotowski specified that this was due, to a certain extent, to the influence of the Hindu tradition. He then referred to the small figurines of pre-Columbian art, especially in Mexico, and noted that energetic centres had been inscribed upon these representations of the human body. The Polish director noted that from an experiential perspective, these energetic centres were perceived to be located simultaneously inside and outside the body. He added that researchers had

made various speculations, including an attempt in Europe to link these centres to the different plexuses and endocrine glands, yet he did not think that this kind of hypothesis could solve the problem at hand. Indeed, he suggested that it might be more productive to use Stanislavski's phrase "as if" to address this topic: one might thus state that it was "as if" there were different roots (*sources*) for our human capacities or resources, "as if" these different centres were both inside and outside or around the body. Having warned against the dangers of creating some doctrine about the nature and function of the body's energetic centres, Grotowski pointed to the concrete example of a driver's experience when a child unexpectedly ran across the road in front of the car. He said that the driver felt as if s/he had been hit in the stomach – a reaction which Grotowski attributed to what he called the centre of vital energy. He added that underneath was the very powerful sexual-biological centre, and above the centre that Christians, among others, associated with the heart, yet not in the sentimental meaning of the term. To clarify what he meant by that, Grotowski recounted that he used to go talk to his adoptive grandmother whenever he had a major problem to solve because, although she had no formal education, she would always give him the right advice. What astonished him was that his world was completely foreign to her yet she always understood him, and, at the time, this led him to conclude that she had a wisdom of the heart (*sagesse du cœur*). Grotowski explained that this was what he was referring to when using the word "heart". He added that there was something even higher than the heart, and if one were to use a mythological image of it one might say that it was "as if" we were linked to something vertical, some higher connection. He said that whenever one reached this area one was able to experience the connection he was referring to, but stressed that he did not intend to propose some objective doctrine about this phenomenon.

The Polish director then explained that these so-called resources and the quality of these forces could be represented in a number of different ways through a variety of diagrams. He gave the example of the three-dimensional and two-dimensional representations of the world that distinguished a globe from a map, which simply were two different forms of cartography representing the same thing. He said this also applied to the mapping out of the energetic centres of the human body, and that representations varied across traditions because different maps had been created to describe this phenomenon. The existence of different techniques also informed such representations, and Grotowski observed that in the sketches of Gichtel in Europe, for instance, energetic centres were located along a circular path that spiralled upward; in the Hindu tradition, the centres were aligned one above the other on a straight vertical line; in the Zen tradition, everything hinged upon a basis called *hara*, a word that signifies "belly" yet that referred to a locus of forces that could be sensed in various areas of the body and may be understood as the main point of concentration of all available resources (*disponibilités*). He noted that when the body was seated, *hara* was in a low position, but when the body was engaged in a fast-paced action, *hara* changed position, hence the phrase "*hara* has no homeland," that is to say, *hara*, which means "belly," does not necessarily dwell in the belly. He observed that these different ways of mapping out a human being were tied to different cultural perceptions as well as to the different techniques developed to work on the body's energetic centres. Whereas the notion of

a circular path might be more appropriate to a certain type of technique, the notion of a vertical line was favoured by Hindus and Orthodox Christians – Grotowski specified that in the tradition of the Philokalia pertaining to Orthodox Christianity, one found the image of a ladder along which travelled ascending and descending forces, an obvious reference to Jacob's ladder. He said that in this tradition, it was very clear that one could either start from the bottom with the forces travelling upwards or start from the top by becoming opened to the forces travelling downwards.

The Polish director explained that for the work on traditional songs that was now in a more advanced phase of its development at the Workcenter, the most obvious approach – although not the only possible one – entailed beginning within a zone that was vital and biological in order to sublimate it until one was able to reach something luminous that seemed to lie above oneself. [...] Beyond this was the ability to ascend the ladder and, when descending, to carry that subtle energy within one's corporeal frame, a phenomenon which Grotowski stated was very tangible in practice. He added that although the body's living organic impulses were very helpful throughout this process, there existed several other artistic approaches and inner techniques (*techniques intérieures*) – and he warned that using this phrase was not without risks – that were useful even though they did not rely on organicity but hinged instead upon some pre-structure, some form of training linked to artificiality. He suggested that since there was more than one path, the best thing to do was to choose the path that was the most appealing, the most interesting to us, and to let this path guide us. [...] He insisted that it was important to be aligned with such propensities, which he called one's temptations, because this was the only way of mobilizing all our resources. [...]

The Polish director remarked that if this other dimension was lacking, no amount of efforts could guarantee that one's work would not lead to a blind alley, a dead end. Irrespective of the recognition one's work may have garnered, it was crucial that some paths remain open, and one must still have expectations and aspire to something that was more valuable than mere success and victory. Grotowski thus raised the question of whether one's work, beyond fulfilling such necessities, could lead to some form of happiness. He stated that if it did not, one's achievements would only provide temporary satisfaction, and in the end something important would be lacking. He suggested that perhaps the yogic techniques or the techniques pertaining to a *recherche intérieure* (inner search) that he sensed were connected to performative approaches were simply useful tools in a search for something quite delicate, which Grotowski associated with a quest for happiness. The Polish director observed that in our modern society the notion of happiness had been replaced by the notion of pleasure, and he said these were two different things: while pleasure could be very intense and enjoyable it was a transient feeling, unlike happiness. Grotowski stated that whereas in ancient times, the Greeks, for example, highlighted this distinction, in our contemporary world such a distinction had been erased. He pointed out that this had been very clearly put by T. S. Eliot when he wrote that we had lost happiness in pleasure.

Speaking about finding analogies, Grotowski declared that he disagreed with the privileging of one single religion or philosophy over all others. [...] Hence, what he had referred to as something luminous that could be approached through a certain

type of work on ancient traditional songs, could also be encountered in very different circumstances. He recounted having read Jean Genet's *Journal du voleur* when he was a teenager, and that a particular passage had stuck in his memory: he remembered that Genet had been arrested and jailed in Katowice, Poland, and that he had been continuously humiliated by the Polish wardens who seemed to enjoy this opportunity to tyrannize a French prisoner. Grotowski said that the tactics employed by the guards included old tricks of the trade such as having the prisoner clean the toilet with his own toothbrush, and so on. Grotowski remembered that Genet wrote about being completely broken down, as if his ability to defend himself and resist had been vanquished, and being alone in his cell when he suddenly became aware of a fine thread of light (*fil de lumière*) streaming down upon him. Grotowski inferred that the experience of verticality could also take place in extremely negative circumstances, although he remarked that it would be pointless to seek out such circumstances and that this was but one among many possibilities since there was no "highway" leading to verticality. [...]

The Polish director then called for a one-hour break prior to the question-and-answer session [...] However, he excluded journalistic or biographic inquiries and requested that people only ask questions that were "important" to them.

[...] A woman [...] asked Grotowski in what way the practice of vibratory songs differed from a healing practice since it encompassed therapeutic elements as well as elements pertaining to certain forms of spiritual initiation, to which these traditional songs could actually be traced. She referred to Grotowski's acknowledgement that he once hesitated between studying psychiatry, theatre, and Hinduism, and remarked that these three areas had in common a goal that she identified as "dis-alienation." She said that it seemed to her that in the film these three areas were linked. Grotowski replied that when he was contemplating these three possibilities, he was interested in theatre not to direct productions but because rehearsals were beyond the control of the state-regulated system of censorship that was in place in Poland. He added that although the other alternative was psychiatry, his goal was not to heal people, but something else entirely. He specified that, at the time, people lived under Stalinism and, within such a context, it was impossible to speak about metaphysical matters. He felt that this possibility could enable him to pursue the type of work on oneself that interested him, namely, a process of inner growth (*grandir intérieurement*). He was not interested in psychiatry as a means to heal but as a pretext to be able to apply a technique of personal development without having to speak overtly about spiritual matters or anything related to such matters. Grotowski added that even once Stalinism was over, he continued to totally avoid a term such as "spiritual" because of its contemporary usage. He said that this didn't mean there wasn't a reality behind this term, especially in the ancient times, yet today using this term had become too facile. Consequently, he had always searched and was still searching for a terminology that would avoid the propensity towards facility and sentimentality that pertained to the term "spiritual." On the other hand, while he acknowledged that what interested him was what he referred to as *recherche intérieure* (inner search), he stressed that he had always avoided to turn it into a theory. He pointed to the existence of a long theatrical tradition, which began in ancient Greece, to which belonged the notion of catharsis, which he associated with the act of blaspheming a

mythical reality, and which also involved the blasphemy of this mythic reality within ourselves, an act through which something was purified, hence the term catharsis. He inferred that from this perspective, one could argue that in each creative act there was a cathartic aspect, although it could not really be equated with a therapy. Grotowski stressed that one had to take into account the evolution of the world in which we lived and of the terms we used. He pointed out that, in French, the meaning of the word "*Esprit*" (the Spirit) with a capital letter had disappeared and, today, "*esprit*" as a common noun referred to mental processes, which Grotowski remarked was not the same meaning at all. As a result of this evolution, facile usages now prevailed, as in New Age, which Grotowski compared to a kind of soup which he nonetheless viewed as having some positive aspects, in spite of its many shortcomings and its naivety. He argued that the New Age movement had the merit of having led students in American universities to become more open to alternative perspectives and to accept approaches beyond those regulated exclusively by mental processes. Grotowski stated that, on the other hand, with the disappearance of the word *Esprit* signifying *spiritus*, everything that was sacred also disappeared. Today, when speaking about something that is useful to the inner life (*intérieurement*) of human beings, one claims that it is therapeutic [*audience laughter*]. Denying that it was therapeutic, Grotowski argued instead that catharsis came and went, whereas a genuinely therapeutic action always had a lasting effect. For the one who works and for the one who was a witness to this work, reaching this very particular level of the work meant gaining access to a certain type of consciousness that was partly linked to technique, yet Grotowski declared that he never believed it when people, even during the period of the Teatr Laboratorium, came to him and said "You changed my life". The Polish director added that it was life itself that changed one's life, and although one could provide someone with a very powerful experience that might be a motivation in this person's life, it was not to be confused with a lasting, effective medical therapy. [...]

He acknowledged that several of the songs featured in the film originated from ritual practices, and only those endowed with extremely vital (*vivantes*) qualities had endured the passage of time. He remarked that the point of the work conducted in Pontedera was not the mere reconstruction of rituals, which he said would be absurd, but did focus on singing rather than on the actor's process per se. [...] These songs had survived a long filtration process through time not because they earned singers' applause but because they gave them access to a certain connection. Grotowski specified that he did not mean that these songs were all efficacious tools because they were ritual songs, but that, conversely, the reason they survived the passage of time, as though through a kind of natural selection, was precisely because their function was not to enable performers to earn the spectators' acceptance but to enable them to become connected to something higher or, in certain cultures, more earthly. [...]

A man asked whether Grotowski could explain how the relationship between verticality and horizontality in the songs differed from the phenomenon of trance. The Polish director replied that, historically, a number of these songs were linked with the phenomenon that Westerners called "trance." He noted that he himself used that term when he was a very young director, and this term appeared in *Towards a Poor Theatre*. The Polish director declared he immediately stopped using this term when he realized

that his contemporaries associated it with doing something that was easy and anarchical, such as flinging oneself on the ground, yelling, and behaving in an artificially hysterical manner. He said that this was always apparent in the work of theatre groups that searched for trance, and that it was appealing to them because it was easy to do. The assumption was that artists would benefit from doing this because it was a powerful psychological experience, and so on. Grotowski energetically objected that this type of approach had nothing in common whatsoever with trance in the ritual practices of traditional cultures, which he stressed was a completely different process. He humorously commented that in the film, the warning that the aim of this work is not to achieve a trance state was specifically addressed to Westerners, as if to announce something like: "Ladies and Gentlemen, first of all, please don't assume that this work is about yelling, flinging oneself on the floor, and behave disorderly." It was to avoid such an interpretation that this warning appeared. He remarked that although in traditional societies trance could be simulated (*truquée*), authentic trance also existed, and the phenomenon of trance was never identified as something banal and easy. The Polish director emphasized that avoiding the term trance and including a warning in the film about trance was a security system designed for Westerners. [...]

In the next question, posed by another woman, Grotowski was asked to expound on the relationship between verticality, horizontality, and consciousness. He replied that it was possible for verticality to be completely cut off from horizontality, and provided the example of the techniques developed by hermits and monks in the West or in certain types of Yoga. These techniques were applied by individuals working alone, and the context of that work was different since the goal was not to accomplish an act with others and there was no need for cooperation and solidarity in the moment of doing. Consequently, this act could be completely cut off from its surroundings in that moment. However, Grotowski noted that in the performative and ritual (in the historical sense of the term) contexts, there was always a need to be present and to perceive others, the space, the rhythm of partners. In this context, horizontality was the necessary condition for a vertical act to be possible. Without horizontality, this act and the vertical axis were blocked by a state of complete self-absorption in which one observed the inner workings of one's emotions, thoughts, and so on, and this hampered the work. In the performative and ritual contexts, one needed to be present and to face others in the space, and to walk with both legs, as it were, a vertical leg and a horizontal leg, otherwise one fell down.

A woman then asked Grotowski whether the circulation of energy to which he had referred was internal or external. He responded by stating that if it was internal and it worked, one was also able to perceive this circulation around the body, as if one were surrounded by a kind of cloud. He said this could be found in the ancient texts of Western culture, for example in ancient Greek or Coptic texts with the notion of "orbe" where when one reached what was real then one would receive "orbe", something around oneself, yet the most direct sensation was the first that came from within oneself. Grotowski added that this circulation of energy could also be external, for example if one was conducting this type of investigation and one's partner had begun to enter this ladder leading to the more subtle, it could help one become receptive (*capter*) to it. The

Polish director said that in this case, something was taking place externally. He specified that one may ask the same question differently, and wonder about higher or cosmic or divine or earthly forces (earthly in the sense of tellurian, as in African traditions), considered to be external to us and to exert an influence on us. Grotowski declared that he had nothing against any of these perspectives, and specified that in the ancient tradition of the Philokalia divine energies were said to descend yet he warned that starting too high could be confusing for others and especially for oneself in this kind of practical investigation. [...]

A man then asked whether, in this work, the actor searched for a state of non-identity, namely, a kind of archaic form of man that the actor was able to retrieve, or, conversely, whether the actor became entirely himself. Grotowski replied that it depended on the type of work the actor was doing. He said that what was sought at the Teatr Laboratorium was different than what was sought at the Workcenter. He declared that all the specialists who had seen the work of the Teatr Laboratorium were convinced that the actors were playing a character. He explained that this was not the case: the image of a character was created in the mind of the observer, but the actors themselves were concerned with something else. He provided the example of Ryszard Cieślak, who, in *The Constant Prince*, was perceived as playing the role of the Christ. His physical presence resembled that of a traditional sculpture of the Christ, he was almost naked as in representations of the Christ on the cross, and so on, so that it was purely external elements that created such an image. Indeed, Cieślak never worked on the character of the Christ, but focused instead on summoning forty minutes of a personal experience pertaining to his youth, an experience in between prayer and carnality that Grotowski called a carnal prayer, linked to a great love. Cieślak did not reconstruct this moment in all its details but each time entered this experience again. His partner remained invisible and no one associated this moment with a relationship to a woman. Hence, it was the conjunction of something extremely personal with the completely external image of the Christ and with the text that evoked martyrdom, that created a character. The actor himself did not create this character, and this was true for all the work of the Teatr Laboratorium. What was sought in this group was something that was linked to one's life and that wasn't banal, ordinary or quotidian, something that was so intimate that one had not even told anyone about it, and that, on the other hand, allowed one to enter a kind of archetypal image. Cieślak and Grotowski, for instance, prior to working on *The Constant Prince*, had been reading the writings of Saint John of the Cross without telling the other actors. Grotowski stated that there was a connection between something extra-individual, as it were, and something very personal but absolutely not banal, so personal that it cannot be told. [...]

A man, referring to what Grotowski had said about the work of Cieślak in *The Constant Prince*, said he didn't understand why it was paradoxical that in the actor's work a very intimate experience could become archetypal and be accessible to an audience. The Polish director acknowledged that it was perhaps his impression, but he noticed when reality was not banal, when reality was exceptional and as if a person's secret, when this reality was totally given, not once but each time, then it also became the reality of human beings, or what he called "anthropos," and that could be related to the concept of archetype, although he noted this was a more intellectual way of speaking

about this. He explained that there was an apparent contradiction, since what made the actor's personal experience comprehensible was not its similarity with the spectator's personal experience. Instead, when accomplishing an act that might be called a sacrifice, the actor crossed a boundary and became "anthropos," or a total human being (*l'être total*) in that moment. Grotowski stressed that it was very different from a good actor who used personal associations and was understood by the spectators and moved them because there was an analogy between his private life and theirs. In this case, it was much more than that, and Grotowski said from the perspective of the technology-driven world to which he belonged, this phenomenon might be called paradoxical, even though it might not be. He remarked that the fact that a phenomenon seemed paradoxical or contradictory was often the proof that it was real, since that which was real, alive, and creative was also paradoxical and full of contradictions. It was never logical in a superficial sense, it was not ruled by mentally constituted logic (*logique mentale*), it had its own logic. The mental function was also important since it served to clarify certain aspects, such as knowing where the shores of the river lie and how not to destroy these, and so on. It must help us remain alert in the work, but the creative aspect of artistic practice belonged to another reality that was contradictory. Grotowski noted that Heraclitus in ancient Greece had made it clear that opposite extremes converged, so that they were deeply contradictory yet were simultaneous unified. [...]

7th Conference

Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique, Paris, 20 October 1998

Grotowski opened this seventh public talk by announcing that he was going to show us an ethnomusicological documentary film focusing on a practice called "Taranta" that was still alive towards the end of the 1950s in southern Italy. The Taranta was about the struggle of a person faced with the danger of the tarantula spider's bite, and this struggle took place through a particular practice akin to dance. The Polish director specified that he was not going to address the therapeutic aspect of this practice since he did not have the competence to do so, but suggested that, when watching the documentary film, we observe this practice as something that one does, not as a work of art, although he noted that the music was very well made and the dance was performed by a person bit by the spider and struggling for survival through the medium of this dance. The woman dancing and those playing music did not do so to be liked by the spectators or those observing this practice; the performance had a specific function, namely, saving someone's life, whether it be saving the life of another person, from the perspective of the musicians, or saving one's own life, from the dancer's perspective. Grotowski related this practice to what he called "a second perspective" in the performing arts, not linked to a need for acceptance, but to a secondary yet crucial reason for doing something performative. He said he believed that this was an extremely important dimension. Grotowski noted that, paradoxically, the very absence of spectators in this practice raised once again the question of the importance of the audience and the way in which a meeting with the spectators could take place, and said he would return to this paradox later on.

He specified that there were three parts in this seventeen-minute long film [entitled *Meloterapia del tarantismo*], and explained that in the first section the camera recorded without any commentary the uneventful life of a very small town in southern Italy, giving us a sense of the warmth of the sun, the daily work patterns, and the rhythms of life. He remarked that although this part might seem boring and monotonous, it provided the necessary context to understand the life-saving dance that was the subject matter of this documentary film. The second part focused on a young woman dancing because she was bitten by the tarantula. Grotowski spoke about the different fragments of this second section, and observed that at the beginning, when the young woman was lying on the ground, she made the type of effort that could often be seen in the work of actors seeking to reach a psychological state, an automatism that the members of the Teatr Laboratorium had identified as an error which they called "pumping." He stated that this will to pump something up was visible in the movements the woman made with her head in her effort to achieve a drunken-like state. In this first fragment, the woman was to let the power of the tarantula enter her body so that the dance would be performed by the tarantula, not the woman. In the second fragment, the young woman was dancing in a standing position, and Grotowski noted that there was less effort, the movement became more precise, and she seemed more fully engaged in the dance. Grotowski asked us to pay particular attention to the musicians in this section. The third part featured an old woman, whom he said was the depository of the secrets of this practice, and who gave a kind of demonstration of the technical elements pertaining to this dance. He noted that although she was very old and her body was damaged, there was something amazing about the precision and élan with which she performed this demonstration.

The Polish director stated that he had discovered this exceptional documentary film seventeen years ago. It was filmed towards the end of the 1950s by Diego Carpitella, an ethnomusicologist who was part of the team of the great Italian anthropologist Ernesto de Martino, author of a book entitled *Il mondo magico. Prolegomeni a una storia del magismo*. Grotowski added that, when he compared de Martino's work with that of Mircea Eliade, he found that the former was informed not only by the kind of theoretical knowledge found in books, but also by a deeper knowledge of certain phenomena linked to a practical dimension. The Polish director added that, to him, although Eliade had become a very respected scholar of the history of religions, only the book he wrote on Yoga was outstanding, precisely because Eliade had practiced Yoga with a teacher in India – not Hatha Yoga but a broader and much more essential form of Yoga which Grotowski had associated with a kind of junction or *coniunctio* in his previous lecture. Consequently, when Eliade wrote his book on Yoga, which was a great scholarly accomplishment, he also touched upon something else that Grotowski called human vibration, and the Polish director sensed that what Eliade was discussing had been apprehended by doing. Grotowski noted that in his other writings, including his book on shamanism, Eliade demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of his subject matter but his analysis remained very cerebral (*très, très mentale*) as he attempted to draw comparisons between cultures; in Eliade's book on Yoga, on the other hand, Grotowski sensed that something was very much alive (*vivant*). As with Eliade, Ernesto de Martino

conducted research on shamanism, yet the Polish director noted that in a book such as *Il mondo magico*, de Martino's approach was not merely cerebral. The documentary film that he made in collaboration with Diego Carpitella in southern Italy in the late 1950s was striking in its honesty. Grotowski specified that a number of other films had been made to supposedly document the Taranta, yet there was some amount of *mise-en-scène*, some of the music was added afterwards when editing the film, and so on. The film made by de Martino's team, by contrast, recorded events as they happened with no attempt to improve upon them, hence preserving the authenticity of the practice. In the third part of the film, for example, there had been a technical problem and the music played by the musicians had not been recorded. This part hence featured the musicians playing their instruments without any music being heard. This was very important to Grotowski, and even though there were other films on the Taranta, the Polish director had sought out this older one precisely because it was an honest attempt at documenting this practice as authentically as possible. [...]

The Polish director drew our attention to the head movements of the young woman at the beginning of the dance, and remarked that she was trying to reach a state by artificial means or what he associated with psychological pumping (*pompage psychologique*). By contrast, the old woman did not begin in that way at all; she did so very briefly at the end of the dance, yet she was not pumping up emotions. Grotowski said that it was important to know that, in this dance, when the person was lying on the ground s/he was the tarantula, whereas when s/he was standing up s/he was her/himself and was fighting the tarantula. The young woman, when she danced in the vertical position, was doing so authentically. Having raised the question of the degree of mastery, Grotowski pointed out that the old woman, as depository of the tradition, included all the smaller details of the dance. These details were missing in the young woman's dance, even though she was trying to perform the physical score of the dance as she had learnt it from her elders, such as the old woman. From time to time, the old woman held onto a door or leaned against a wall but this was not part of the dance per se, she simply needed to do so because her old body was not strong enough to perform this movement without help, but she nonetheless performed all of the details in an extremely precise manner. The Polish director then stated that, during the young woman's dance, there was a short fragment showing the way in which the musicians, especially one of them, participated. Grotowski noted that the musicians genuinely focused their attention on the young woman, they played for her, not to get applause from the audience. This did not mean that it was always performed without witnesses, and Grotowski said that in certain circumstances there were many witnesses who participated in this life-saving action, and if that were the case, those witnesses might have been able to judge whether the musicians were helping the person bitten by the tarantula in the right way, which might have, in turn, influenced the musicians. Yet Grotowski said that it was clear to him that the musicians were genuinely focused on helping the one who was bitten and on performing a life-saving action, and this was why the music had to be played very well. For if it wasn't, the action of saving would fail.

This was what Grotowski called "the second perspective". Whether one agreed or not to the presence of spectators, witnesses, or visitors, whenever one accomplished

something from this "second perspective", for a purpose or reason lying beyond the aesthetic phenomenon, it could only work if it was accomplished perfectly from an aesthetic point of view. In the third fragment featuring the old woman the musicians were shown as well and while they no longer struggled to save the dancer's life they still were not trying to please an audience. They were now using their training and technical know-how to help the old woman show what the different elements of the dance were. Grotowski remarked that it was as if their attitude was honestly technical. He added that although this was a fundamental aspect it was very difficult for him to provide a clear explanation of what this "second perspective" was about. In this case, it was clear and not that sophisticated: it was necessary to make certain movements supported by music in order to save the life of a person who had been bitten by the tarantula. [...]

Grotowski then addressed the question of the audience by pointing out when the old woman demonstrated the Taranta, she usually didn't perform for spectators but for people from the village who wanted to learn the details from her as an instructor, although some people might simply come to watch her teach without participating. In the case of the young woman, there might be a number of people watching simply to see what was happening and how it worked. They were not witnesses in the sense of the Buddhist monks witnessing an immolation by fire as an act of protest [...], but in the sense of watching over (*veiller sur*) the situation to understand to what extent "the second perspective" or special objective of this practice had been achieved. [...]

Grotowski explained that to a large extent, the productions he directed were addressed to Polish people and dealt with notions of truth and blasphemy pertaining to this particular ethnic group. Grotowski remarked that the Teatr Laboratorium never attempted to please Polish audiences, which would have amounted to servitude and would most likely not have been artistically valuable. The goal was not to please or to be accepted but to touch upon what was painful or vulnerable or laughable within us, as if to blaspheme something very deeply rooted within us. Grotowski stressed that it was very important to distinguish between blasphemy and profanation. A profanation did not personally implicate an individual in this act. [...] The Teatr Laboratorium's attitude towards the myth of the Polish people or their sacred history (*sainte histoire*) was blasphemous because Grotowski and his colleagues trembled as if almost convinced that lightning was about to strike them as part of a cosmic reaction triggered by their actions or as a punishment from the gods. This revitalizing act of blasphemy operated both as a separation from, and a confirmation of, their cultural roots. It produced in the audience an even greater sense of shock and induced the spectators to experience a relationship with the actors described by Grotowski as a deep connection. The Polish director warned that if it didn't work, the outcome was total disaster. However, when it worked, it was as if the spectators dared to adopt this blasphemous perspective that was also a source of renewal. This defiant way of looking at something linked to one's roots, something archaic and essential, something linked to national destiny and the enslavement of the Polish people, was important to Grotowski and his colleagues, but they were also aware that it produced an inner vibration within the spectators who were able to follow this path and become more than mere spectators, they became [...] brothers and sisters [...]. It was something fraternal and deep that could be a source

of pain or laughter, as if changing one's attitude and enabling one to challenge aspects within one's ethnic group, people, or nation that one did not accept.

In 1963-64, the Teatr Laboratorium developed a production based on *Hamlet*, in which the primitivist character of the peasant typically envisioned in Polish culture as romantic and beautiful, and, at the same time, as passive and savage-like, was confronted with a Hamlet-like character who belonged to the intelligentsia and was Jewish, hence revealing the various ways in which anti-Semitism manifested itself in Poland. This confrontation of two different characters, a Jewish member of the intelligentsia and a fascinating peasant whose savagery remained hidden, treated as members of different species, was like a hall of mirrors that was extremely dramatic. This production, which was condemned by the censors, was performed illegally for invited guests only. It was nevertheless seen by a number of people and some of them were extremely shocked by this piece that confronted Polish resistance envisioned as heroic on the one hand, and as nationalist on the other, which was very painful for the members of the Teatr Laboratorium themselves but at the same time a source of fascination and laughter. This piece affected both those who had created it and those who came to see it in that it confronted the myths that comforted all of them in their beliefs, thereby creating a relationship between them beyond the relationship actor/spectator. It became a tribe's meditation about tribal connections. [...]

Similarly, *Apocalypsis cum Figuris* hinged upon an encounter between revellers and a primitive vagabond upon whom they bestowed the role of Christ, who gradually became Christ, and whom they eventually threw out because he was useless to them. Grotowski explained that powerful potentialities emerged from this piece for the members of the Teatr Laboratorium and for those who came to see this piece. It was not created for the audience but as a way of sharing a challenge, another perspective, a double truth. This constituted a sort of passage from a period in which there was a fundamental distinction between observers and agents (*actants*), towards a common field (*champ commun*) in which the notion of spectator became irrelevant since the latter was an observer who was present, an individual who began to vibrate as s/he was confronted with what the members of the Teatr Laboratorium themselves had confronted for months or for years in the case of *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*. It was as if this individual belonged to their familial field (*champ familial*) if s/he entered this process. Therefore, on the one hand, the Teatr Laboratorium never adhered to a doctrine defining the spectator as someone for whom productions are created, yet on the other hand, the relationship between the members of that theatre group and the people who came to see their productions was stronger and deeper than in many of the companies which create their work for the spectators. Grotowski recounted that people came from different Polish towns to see *Apocalypsis cum Figuris* yet what was striking was that the same people came ten or twenty times without knowing if they'd be able to get in and waited outside the theatre building, creating a sort of meeting place for those who arrived there. Grotowski noted that they were not spectators in the sense of finding satisfaction in having seen a good show, an interesting performance, but as individuals engaged in a much deeper relationship. Hence, while the Teatr Laboratorium [...] did not create its productions for the spectators, a deep and durable inter-human relationship could be created through their

work precisely because it did not depend upon an effort to please. It depended upon something that the members of the Teatr Laboratorium did between themselves and that was shared with those who came to meet them. What was shared was an operation of reality, as in a surgical operation, an exploration, the perspective of a living organism by which we were conditioned, and Grotowski specified that he did not use the French word *organisme* in the sense of physical organism, but in the figurative sense, to evoke an inter-human organism within which everyone remained an individual. [...]

Grotowski then compared this type of work with the research that was being carried out at his Italian Workcenter, and noted that although the orientation was different, in both cases organicity was the basis yet the approach differed. At the Workcenter, what was being sought was the junction or *coniunctio* between what was below and above. Below did not refer to something negative at all but to what was vital, alive, buoyant; as for what was above, it simply referred to something more subtle. Referring to the image of a ladder, Grotowski evoked an ascending journey that began with what was organic, vital, or even biological, and led towards that which was more luminous, lighter, more subtle. However, the action of descending was also important as it consisted in taking back to our vital and biological reality the quality of energy or of the source linked to what's more subtle, so that a kind of current (*courant*) could circulate in both directions. When working on traditional songs, it was as if this passage from what was extremely alive in the biological sense, to what was so delicate, so transparent, so subtle, turned everything into a hymn. When one descended along the ladder, it was necessary to keep the quality of this hymn alive within one's heart, even when one was no longer singing it. This opened up a very different relationship with an observer. If the observer was not impeded by the intellect, for example, by an effort to understand what story was being told, it was possible for this observer to accompany the process from within, and the phenomenon of induction could operate. Hence, during the passage or ascent from what was supposedly biological to what was supposedly subtle, the individual who was present as an observer could begin to feel something by induction, as in [...] induction in an electric circuit. This observer was not a witness in the sense of witnessing a real act as in the example of the Buddhist monks witnessing an immolation. Yet, the term observer was not appropriate either, because it did not imply an engagement and could remain focused on technical aspects, although this was possible as well. The term witness, in the case of the Workcenter, implied that something within the observer was witness to a process or an action similar to that which was being observed. Obviously, this work on ancient songs was not accomplished for the observer or witness, yet it was only fair, if an observer was present, to let the latter see, hear, follow the logic of what was taking place in his/her presence. When the phenomenon of induction occurred, the relationship with the witness could become durable and extremely deep. Grotowski outlined a series of contradictions: as with the Teatr Laboratorium, this work was not done for a spectator; what was essential and decisive for that work was the junction, the passage on the ladder from one source to another. However, when this was accomplished in someone's presence, it was necessary to create the necessary conditions for the phenomenon of induction to be possible, so as to give the witness the opportunity to experience induction, even if induction was not the objective of the work

itself. Even though the work was not done for the witness, it was necessary to ensure that the structure was designed so that such a phenomenon could take place. Grotowski concluded that all this was very complex and that when it was verbalized it became contradictory, yet he noted that what was real was always contradictory. Our ability to use language induced us to believe that things were either one way or the other, even though, in reality, things were both one way *and* the other. Theories and doctrines built by the intellect were not contradictory precisely because they were not real. Reality was deeply and intricately contradictory, and the ancient Greeks of the pre-Socratic era were already aware of this. [...]

Grotowski explained that it was as if there were two horizons: the first horizon, within which all our human ambitions could be fulfilled in a more or less noble manner – and failing to fulfil these ambitions in a perfectly noble manner did not make them less human. Yet, there was also another perspective, "a second horizon", and this was what interested Grotowski in the documentary film he had showed us. Although the Taranta could be said to be very simple and even naïve, the people who witnessed it immediately perceived that "second perspective" because the situation was a kind of trap: the young woman was fighting for her life, and those who were present had to help her. The Polish director remarked that it appeared almost primitive to us, and said that, in a sense, it was, yet there was a lesson to be learnt from this experience: the Taranta must be very well done, for example by the musicians, but it was not done to be appreciated as a spectacle by those watching, but for another reason. For some, it was simply a way of surviving, as in the Taranta, for others it was about achieving another level of perception of life and presence, and it could also be done by some for the gods. Grotowski noted that what mattered was that there was a reason that was not directly linked to profit, whether moral or material.

He then asked that we watch the first part again in which the young woman first resorted to a kind of pumping to reach a particular psychological state – and Grotowski reminded us that at this stage the performer was the spider, as it were, up until her dance in a vertical position, at which point something became fluid and organic. Then, there was a brief moment showing the musicians playing with a motivation that was not merely a need for acceptance. After having shown us this fragment, Grotowski said he was going to show us again the part in which the old woman performed and asked us to pay attention, at the beginning of the performance, to how she held her head. He said that whereas the young woman's head movement were linked to pumping, the old woman held her head in a different position. The movements on the ground were similar because they had the same structure, yet the old woman was more precise and was able to dissociate one element from another, and show each fragment in all of its details. Grotowski remarked that this was crucial, since without the details, this life-saving phenomenon could not take place, there could be no "second horizon", which according to the Polish director depended on the precise accomplishment of a creative, aesthetic, or artistic task in all its details, short of which it just wouldn't work.

He raised a question about the fragment to which he had previously referred, although he specified that it was not directly related to this film. One may think, he stated, that this ascending journey on the figurative ladder from the biological towards the subtle and back down towards the biological while retaining some of

the subtle was simply a continuity. However, this was not quite accurate, and what was at stake was the relationship between the inner process by which one was led and the body – the latter should not hinder the former by placing obstacles on its way – hence Grotowski's interest in the organic approach, although he stressed that it was also possible to take another type of approach. [...] The Polish director pointed out that the relationship between the body and the process that took place inside (although not solely inside) the body hinged upon an understanding, a cooperation, an approach that could be described as joyful yet that was not a form of identification. This important dimension was often forgotten. One either directed the body as if a puppet, and in that case the body became incapacitated, as it was so often the case with actors that manipulated their body's actions, or the relationship with one's body became narcissistic because one identified with one's body. One had to let the body have its own experiences of joy, freedom, possibilities, and this was the foundation for another departure, as if riding towards something higher, ascending and descending, which was not identification but a much deeper relationship between body and process.

Grotowski then showed us the fragment featuring the old woman in the documentary film [...] and [...] remarked that the dance was much more detailed when performed by the old woman because she was clearly a master. It was also apparent that there was a difference between the knowledge of how to do something and the corporeal ability to do so, since from the standpoint of biological vitality, the old woman's corporeal ability was very limited, yet her know-how helped her overcome such limitation when necessary. Moreover, the attitude of the musicians towards the old woman was different: this time they played not to help save someone's life, as with the young woman, but to support the old woman's demonstration. [...] The creators of this film had refrained from adding music when the recording failed, which made it possible to closely observe the musicians. Although they worked technically in this fragment, their whole being was engaged. This engagement was not comparable to the one needed when they played to help save someone's life during the performance of the young woman, where there clearly was "a second horizon", yet, as with all real artists, their corporeal impulses were engaged. Their playing did not merely entail manipulating the instruments with their hands. There was something else that encompassed, at the very least, the tempo-rhythm of the body, as well as the impulses of the body in action.

This reminded Grotowski why he was usually against the use of drums even when working with songs from the Afro-Caribbean tradition. He said that he usually worked with Westerners and the latter thought that playing a drum entailed hitting it. Consequently, the body remained more or less immobile as the hands hit the drum, making a lot of noise, and Westerners were convinced that they could drum because it was very simple. Grotowski objected that drumming was actually very complex. When observing someone who really knew how to drum one realized that it was not about producing a sound effect by hitting the drum. It was about a voice inside the drum that began to sing. It was not the blows themselves that dominated but a sonority emanating from the drum, as if a voice was singing from within. He pointed out that this was well known in older Western and non-Western traditions.

Grotowski then referred to the transcultural program he directed during the period known as Theatre of Sources. He explained that the participants belonged to different ethnic groups and practiced different religions, and they travelled to different parts of the world to meet people from traditional cultures. Grotowski also invited people from such cultures to work with him in Poland. One of these guests was a Baul, whom he described as a musician, dancer, performer, Yogi, and heretic, which was characteristic of the particular tradition to which he belonged in Bengal. Grotowski asked him to collaborate with European colleagues, and his task was to work on drumming with them to get them to learn to let the drum sing instead of hitting it. Grotowski said it didn't work. They worked for weeks on end to no avail. The Baul eventually left, and the group he had been working with met a last time for memory's sake even though they knew they had failed. They started playing without any expectations, without the will to succeed, and the drums began to sing. Grotowski related this experience to *wuwei* in Taoism, or the non-doing (*non-faire*). His colleagues had finally renounced their active struggle, and they had let the drum do its own thing. He compared this with traditional Japanese archery, which was not about someone shooting an arrow with a bow but about the arrow leaping forward by itself. There was no mental attempt to achieve victory, no wilful and mechanical effort to accomplish something, and suddenly something accomplished itself (*ça se fait*). It was not an individual "me" but something other than "me" that did the accomplishing, and this was what took place on the last day of that group's work with the drums. [...]

He remarked that when the musical recording was interrupted in the ethnographic film, for example, one could discern the small seeds (*petit grains*) that were part of the line of the live process that culminated into music. It was not the hands that made music, it was a more complex phenomenon that encompassed all the human faculties. Even though these village musicians were not great artists per se, they did their job well, and their work was noble in its own right. It was this kind of approach, especially when associated with saving someone's life, that could begin to give us a sense of the notion of "a second horizon". Grotowski concluded that what he called "second horizon" had to do with accomplishing something perfectly, clearly, correctly, yet even though what was accomplished might be accepted by others – which was very beautiful – there was another horizon justifying the work of those engaged in this approach. The latter could be said to be artistic but it was also beyond art, operating at another level and opening up onto something else.

Grotowski then ended the first part of this seventh lecture and asked those who wanted to ask him questions to return in one hour.

[...] A man [...] said that since Grotowski had mentioned non-doing (*le non-faire*), he wondered how this notion was positioned within Grotowski's current research. The Polish director replied that assigning this notion a particular position within his research would be dogmatic, which would, in turn, render this very notion inoperative. He stated that there were two particular aspects he wished to emphasize. Firstly, there were a number of rungs on the ladder to which he had referred, which meant that one needed to take one step at a time. However, if one actually managed to reach a high enough point, it was possible to abolish all the rungs, but one discovered this as one ascended

the ladder: one reached a certain point, a very high point, and reacted as if there were no ladder, no rungs, as if everything had been abolished, as with the great Zen masters or, in European culture, Meister Eckhart. Paradoxically, this was only possible if one reached that point with the help of that which would then be abolished. Secondly, he pointed out that it was always preferable to say no rather than yes in practice. It was better to say: "No, do not try to achieve something through some form of manipulation." This applied, for example, to someone starting with an action linked to a vital song, and seeking to reach a song of another order. Grotowski observed that when we willed our mind to direct, to find out how to achieve something, then it couldn't possibly work. Whenever doing so, we committed the perpetual error that epitomized a manipulative culture: wanting to know first and then applying that knowledge. This didn't work because, in the arts, one must take another route where doing was knowing (*faire c'est savoir*), instead of knowing and then doing. Grotowski noted that other route was akin to *wuwei*, the Taoist notion of non-doing, where one let the doing happen, as if – and he insisted that his recurrent use of the phrase "as if" was significant – as if the doing occurred in and of itself (*ça se fait*), and one let it happen. Possibly addressing the audience directly, he declared: "So that you, with your knowledge and so on, do not hinder what can be accomplished," and suggested that we should simply let the doing occur, if such an accomplishment was possible. Hence, *wuwei* did not signify "not doing anything," but letting what can be accomplished become so. Grotowski said that the best example he could provide was that of the arrow that shot forward by itself, not in relation to the point on the target which the archer wanted to hit, but because something within the archer, not the archer him/herself, let the shooting happen. Grotowski acknowledged, however, that when working with actors it wasn't possible to ask them directly to apply the notion of non-doing to their work because they would simply end up doing nothing at all. [...] The Polish director referred to the example he had provided about drumming, and pointed out that the actors from different cultures who had tried to learn how to drum had, in fact, followed the rules of doing (*les règles du faire*) by directing their hands with their minds in order to make the drums sing: the hands hit the drums in a staccato rhythm and the drums did not sing, upon which the actors gave up trying, having lost faith in their ability to do. It was precisely because they had let go of the will to do that something was able to happen and that the drums finally sang. Had they continued to work with the drums, their will to repeat the experience would have made it inaccessible for a while, but they would eventually have learnt. [...]

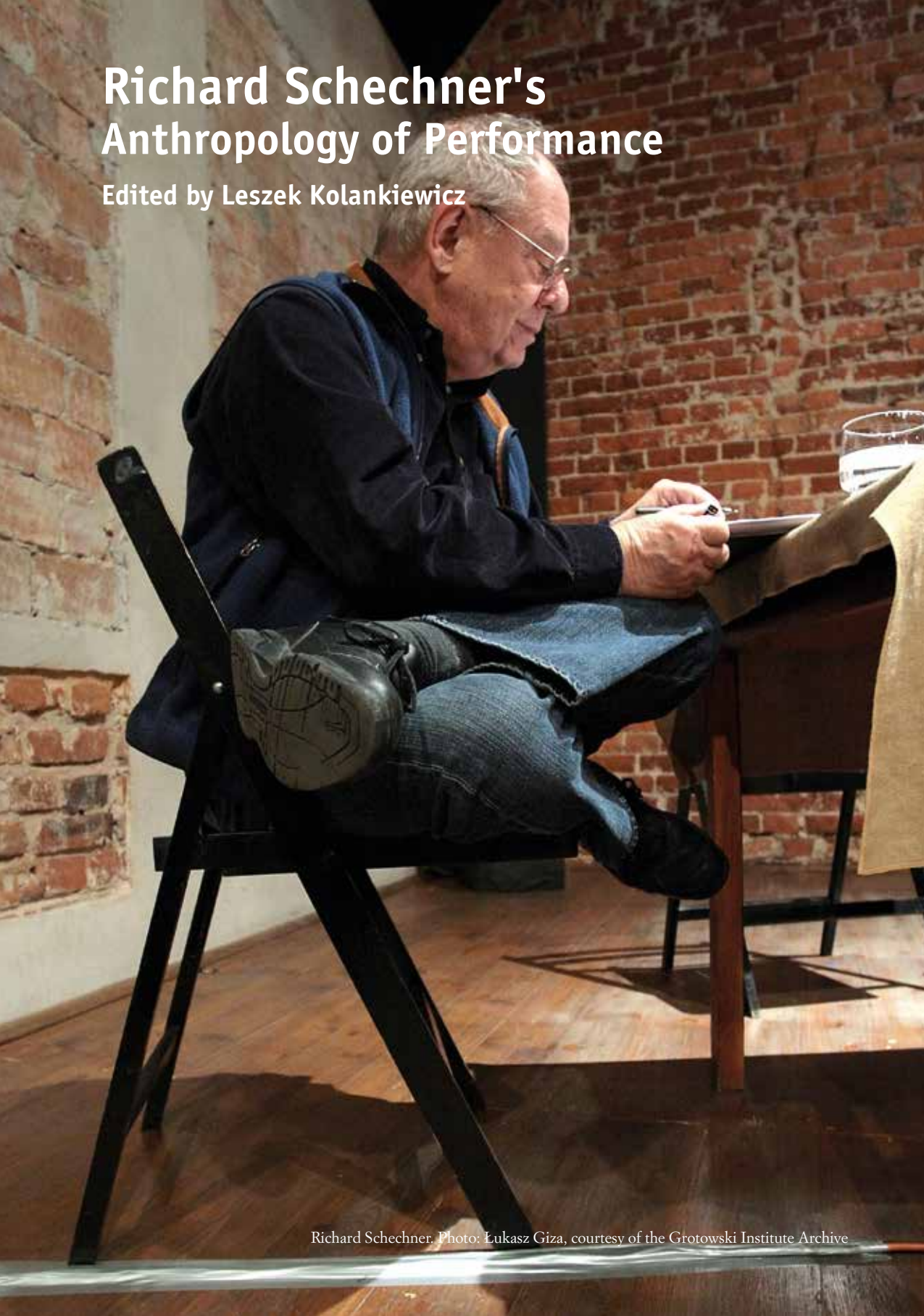
Grotowski returned to the notion of analysis and explained that one should not create the same obstacles for oneself every time. He declared that it wasn't true that great actors could be limited intellectually. They certainly weren't so in their work, even if that might not be apparent in them as individuals. Grotowski declared that, for him, analysis had to do with overcoming obstacles in the work. He spoke of the body-memory (*corps-mémoire*), a phrase which he did not employ to refer only to the body but to a larger territory, and which functioned *as if* the actor's body had memories *and* was the memory. Grotowski said that actors could take notes about certain aspects of the work, but that they should not take too many notes, because if they wrote everything down then something would be lost in the process. They may write down something that

evoked a memory, such as someone's first name, or they may write down a few elements that were quasi technical and that made it possible to precisely return, as it were, to a memory. One may also develop a short-hand way of noting the technical details that were key to an improvisation that could not be repeated, for example, the position of the body at a certain moment. Grotowski reminded us, however, that such considerations pertained to the type of work he had been involved in at a certain period. What was central to the work of the Teatr Laboratorium was that, beyond the rapidity of reflexes, the body was able to achieve such a high level of organicity, such primary vitality, that it could react freely while leaving some room within itself for an inner process to unfold. Grotowski specified that such a process was not only linked to the training but also to the work accomplished during rehearsals. He described it as an inner cycle of reactions that became visible. He specified that something similar still existed in his current work. Having compared the body to a horse with its own freedom, the Polish director warned of two dangers: first, trying to manipulate the horse with one's mind (*le mental*), and, secondly, letting the horse follow its natural path while observing it in a narcissistic way to derive some corporeal pleasure out of its actions. However, if these two dangers were eliminated, the body became an ally and it was possible, starting from one's vital forces, to take off towards something else (*décoller des forces vitales à autre chose*). Grotowski insisted that one should not search for a formula as it helped neither artistic work nor what he called "the second horizon". Indeed, the more one sought a formula, the happier the mind (*le mental*) was, yet the more blocked one became. Grotowski suggested that a kind of mystery, or non-verbalized secret inherent to the work should, ultimately, remain unspoken, and he evoked the image of a flowing river whose shores and boundaries of which we may know, but which we should nonetheless allow to keep flowing freely. He then observed that, whereas the Teatr Laboratorium worked on classical texts in which great questions were distilled, the Workcenter's research focused on songs. Above all, it was crucial not to transform practical work into a doctrine: the point of that work was to touch on something, to open a door halfway, to suggest a possibility. Grotowski then performed the action of making one's way through a thick forest, and pointed out how absurd it would be, when exploring such a vast unknown territory, to devise the formula: "after *this* tree, there must be *that* tree." He concluded that everything must always be accomplished each time for the first time.

The original text by Virginie Magnat has been edited by Leszek Kolankiewicz into this condensed version specifically for this publication.

Richard Schechner's Anthropology of Performance

Edited by Leszek Kolankiewicz



Richard Schechner. Photo: Łukasz Giza, courtesy of the Grotowski Institute Archive

Richard Schechner

Foreword Anthropology's Many Facets

I first heard the word "anthropology" when as a graduate student at Tulane University in 1960 I was assigned to read the writings of Jane Ellen Harrison (1912, 1913), Gilbert Murray (1912a, 1912b, 1925, 1961), and Francis M. Cornford (1914) who, following Aristotle's lead connecting ancient Greek tragedy to Dionysian dithyrambic singing and dancing, devised their "ritual origin" theory of tragedy. That theory proposed a "primal ritual" from which derived Dionysian dithyrambic dances, and from these, Greek tragedy. I soon found that these brilliant scholars were armchair anthropologists. That is, they studied ancient texts, examined vases and friezes, etc., but they did no "fieldwork" in the cultural anthropological sense: they did not study – no less participate in – the practices of living societies.

Growing increasingly skeptical of the Cambridge Anthropologists, in 1966 – having earned my PhD, become an assistant professor at Tulane, and editor of the *Tulane Drama Review* – I wrote and published in *TDR*, "Approaches to Theory/Criticism" which sharply criticized the Cambridge theory. In part, I wrote:

I do not propose to substitute *another* origin theory for the Cambridge thesis. Origin theories, I think, are irrelevant to understanding theatre. Nor would I wish to exclude ritual altogether. It is one of several is related to theatre. The others are play, games, and sports (special kinds of games). The relation among these that I wish to explore is not vertical – from any one to any other(s) – but horizontal: each autonomous form shares characteristics with the others; methods of analysis of one may be useful in the analysis of performance activities of men [humans]. If one argues that theatre is a "later" or more "sophisticated" form and therefore must derive from one of the others, I answer that this makes sense only if we take 5th century Greek drama (and its counterparts in other cultures) as the only legitimate theatre. Anthropologists, with good reason, argue otherwise and suggest that theatre – understood as the enactment of stories by players – exists in every known culture at all times [...]. We may then consider these activities as



103

primeval; there is no reason to hunt for "origins" or "derivations"; there are only variations in form and intermixing among forms, and these show no long-term evolution from "primitive" to "sophisticated." In some places, ritual, games, sports, and theatre are merged so that it is impossible to give the activity any single name. (1966: 26-28).

Nearly 58 years has passed since I published this text, but the road I mapped in 1966 is, generally, the path I have stayed on. Of course, over time, I added and revised. In "From Ritual to Theatre and Back" (1974), I focused on the ways in which ritual and theatre each may "derive" from each other. In *Performance Theory* (1988 and subsequent editions) and *Between Theater and Anthropology* (1985), I studied the performances of everyday life, the professions, and animals. Basically, for me, performance studies examines a very broad spectrum of activities. In all of these works, I am profoundly influenced by cultural anthropologists – especially those I knew personally and worked with, most powerfully Victor Turner (1969, 1974, 1982). We collaborated closely in workshops, conferences, and publications (Appel and Schechner 1990).

The brief intellectual history sketched above is necessary in the context of what is published below because I want to make clear the differences between my approach to anthropology and both Jerzy Grotowski's and Eugenio Barba's. I deeply respect their work, but my investigations – anthropologically speaking – have gone in a different direction. As I understand it, Grotowski sought similarities among cultural practices in a research that led him "back" and "deep" as he sought to find what he termed the "higher" or "vertical" connection. His was a search for ultimate truth expressed performatively. In his own way, Grotowski sought the "primal ritual" theorized by the Cambridge Anthropologists. Barba in his and Nicola Savarese's *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (1991, 2006) describe what they believe is the universal "pre-expressive" behavior of performers. Although in the book and elsewhere, Barba gives many examples, the majority are from western and asian cultures. That is, Barba has not looked as closely at myriad other possibilities in Africa, Native America, First Nations Peoples Australia, Pacific Island cultures, etc. I am not faulting him for this – but cautioning with regard to generalizing based on limited data.

My own "anthropological work," if it can be termed that, is in line with modern cultural anthropology – the thinking of Turner, Gregory Bateson (1972), Erving Goffman (1959, 1974), Clifford Geertz (1973, 1980, 1983), and many others. I realize that cultural anthropology has its roots in colonialism and Christian missionaryism. In later days, anthropologists have acknowledged and to a large degree dealt with and corrected these. Also there is a growing cohort of non-western cultural anthropologists, making the profession less imbalanced.

Cultural anthropologists use "participant observation" – living among and, as much as feasible, participating in, the lives of the people they are studying. This leads to embodied learning about a broad spectrum of practices. For what purposes? The question does not have a single or simple answer. Sometimes, it is pure research, learning for learning's sake. At other times, the information is used to exploit; and at still other

times, to aid. For myself, I have used what I have researched both to better understand the "broad spectrum of performance" – first outlined in my "Approaches" – and to enrich my artistic work. This is not the place to further explore these "applications". I note only that cultural anthropology and ethology (animal studies) have very much enriched and influenced my thinking and practice. This can be seen not only in my own writings, but in some of what is published in *TDR* which I continue to edit. The selections below from my writing are examples of the kind of anthropological thinking I do.

© Richard Schechner

Bibliography

- Appel, Willa, and Richard Schechner, eds. 1990. *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Barba, Eugenio, and Nicola Savarese, eds. 1991. *The Secret Art of the Performer: A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*. Translated by Richard Fowler. London and New York: Published for the Centre for Performance Research by Routledge.
- . 2005. *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer*. Translated by Richard Fowler. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bateson, Gregory. 1972. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology*. San Francisco: Chandler Pub. Co.
- Cornford, Francis M. 1914. *The Origin of Attic Comedy*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- . 1980. *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-century Bali*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1983. *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City: Doubleday.
- . 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harrison, Jane Ellen. 1912. *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1913. *Ancient Art and Ritual*. New York and London: Henry Holt and Co. – Williams and Norgate.
- Murray, Gilbert. 1912a. *The Four Stages of Greek Religion*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- . 1912b. "Excursus in the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy." In Jane Ellen Harrison, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1925. *Five Stages of Greek Religion: Studies Based on a Course of Lectures Delivered in April 1912 at Columbia University*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.
- . 1961. "Foreword." to Theodor H. Gaster, *Thespis: Ritual, Myth, and Drama in the Ancient Near East*, new and rev. ed. Garden City: Doubleday.
- Schechner, Richard. 1966. "Approaches to Theory/Criticism." *The Tulane Drama Review* 10, 4: 20-53.
- . 1974. "From Ritual to Theatre and Back." *Educational Theatre Journal* 26, 4: 455-81.
- . 1977. *Essays on Performance Theory, 1970-1976*. New York: Drama Books Specialists.
- . 1985. *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Foreword by Victor Turner. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 2003 (1988). *Performance Theory*, rev. and exp. ed. New York and London: Routledge.
- Turner, Victor W. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- . 1974. *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 1982. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Press.

Writings on ritual by Richard Schechner

- "From Ritual to Theater and Back: the Efficacy-entertainment Braid." (1974). In: idem *Essays on Performance Theory, 1970-1976*, New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977; idem *Performance Theory*, rev. and exp. ed. New York and London: Routledge, 1988.
- "Towards a Poetics of Performance." (1975). In: idem *Essays on Performance Theory, 1970-1976*, 1977; idem *Performance Theory*, 1988.
- "Selective Inattention." (1976) in: idem *Essays on Performance Theory, 1970-1976*, 1977; idem *Performance Theory*, 1988.
- "**Ethology and Theater.**" (1977) in: idem *Essays on Performance Theory, 1970-1976*, 1977; idem *Performance Theory*, 1988.
- "Performers and Spectators Transported and Transformed." (1979). In: idem *Between Theater & Anthropology*, foreword by Victor Turner, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.
- "**Restoration of Behavior.**" (1981). In: idem *Between Theater & Anthropology*, 1985.
- "Points of Contact Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought." (1982). In: idem *Between Theater & Anthropology*, 1985.
- rev. as "Points of Contact, Revisited." (2015). In: idem *Performed Imaginaries*, London and New York: Routledge, 2015.
- rev. again as "**Points of Contact Between Anthropology and Theater, Again.**" (2020). In: *Experiential and Performative Anthropology in the Classroom: Engaging the Legacy of Edith and Victor Turner*, edited by Pamela R. Frese and Susan Brownell, London, New York and Shanghai: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.
- "Ramlila of Ramnagar." (1982). In: idem *Between Theater & Anthropology*, 1985.
- "**The Future of Ritual.**" (1985-1987). In: idem *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*, London and New York: Routledge, 1993.
- "Wachma: Space, Time, Identity, and Theater at New Pascua, Arizona." (1991). In: idem *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*, 1993.
- "Striding Through the Cosmos: Movement, Belief, Politics, and Place in the Ramlila of Ramnagar." (1992). In: idem *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*, 1993.

Richard Schechner

Ethology and Theater

Abstract: *In this writing Schechner examines the convergences between human and animal behaviors. Using an ethological point of view, i.e. applying the evolutionary theory to the analysis of behavior and culture, the American scholar identifies common dynamics which at several levels govern both animal and human performances. The full version of this article was originally published in Essays on Performance Theory, 1970-1976 (Drama Book, New York 1977, pp. 157-201).*

Keywords: *Ethology, Theatre, Animal-human performance, Ritualization, Communication*

Animal-Human Performance Continuities

Darwin first proposed a continuity of behavior from animals to people in *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* [...]. For a long time his speculations lay fallow, but they are now being followed up. We want to know how much of "body language" is genetically fixed and how much learned. The underlying assumption is that an inclusive web includes both human and animal behavior. Is there also a cultural web? How are human religions, customs, and arts extensions, elaborations, and transformations of animal cultures? I want to explore this question as it pertains to theater. But I propose that the theatrical paradigm is a key to understanding larger plans of human social interaction.

Theatrical performances consist of ritualized gestures and sounds. These may be displays of non-daily behavior as in kabuki, kathakali, ballet, or the dances of Australian Aborigines. Or they may be replications of ordinary behavior as in naturalistic theater. Theater trades on recognizable moments and on sequences of behavior that succinctly "tell stories." I think all kinds of theater – that on show in theaters or churches, that of rites of passage, that of sports, that accompanying official displays of power, and that happening on a microsocial level in play and daily routines – comprise a single system of script, scenarios, disguises, displays, dances, impersonations, and scenes.

Studies of this system have been made by people whose knowledge of theater is from the outside. My experience, and therefore my perspective, is from the inside, as a theater director.



Both "fun" and "rehearsal" seem to be part of the performance sequences of the great apes. In his studies of the mountain gorilla of central Africa, Schaller says the functions of the chest-beating sequence include the discharge of excitement and showing off. Young males "occasionally displayed with great abandon, then sat quietly, and looked all around as if to judge the effectiveness of the behavior" (1963: 227). The chest-beating display also repels intruders and maintains group hierarchy. [...] The function of discharging excitement among gorillas is parallel to the cathartic function of theater proposed by Aristotle and Artaud, an ancient, persistent, and robust therapeutic tradition of performance. [...] The build-up of tension does not lead to fighting but to display; potential disruption is transformed into entertainment. This outcome is very much like human theatrical performances. There too violence is present in both themes and gestures; but the process of theatricalization renders this violence less harmful than it would be if actualized "in life." The resulting performance is entertaining.¹
[...]

To perform acts that are otherwise forbidden – punished, taboo, unthought of – is a way of "making fun." In human cultures these acts are often violent and sexual. This is as true of the obscene real-life dramas of the Kogu in Papua New Guinea as it is of Aristophanes [...] Rehearsals – whether these be the exploratory seeking for and repeating of actions characteristic of the modern theater, or the formal preparations that precede many rituals – are times of intense fun. [...] A big part of the fun of rehearsal is in trying out what may never be shown, a way of enacting the forbidden.
[...]

This is the way Grotowski worked during his poor theater phase (1959-68), the way Peter Brook and Joseph Chaikin developed their works. I used this method in all of my productions with The Performance Group (1967-80). Rehearsals are no longer what they were in Max Reinhardt's day when the director marched in with all the actions inscribed in a *Regiebuch*. Rehearsals have become centers of psycho-physical, sociological, and personal research. [...]

All this has been implicit in western theater since the end of the 19th century. Stanislavsky was the first to put the training of the performer at the top of the theatrical agenda, a training that finally led to the deconstruction of performance texts. During the more than ninety-year course of this development western theater became increasingly ritualized, moving into areas of human interaction once reserved for religion. [...] This kind of training is intrinsic to the traditional performance genres I studied in India, Java, Bali, and Papua New Guinea. It is also there in Africa and native America. But in modern and postmodern performance, new "ideograms" have to be invented or discovered for each production. [...] The first fruits of this method were the stiff biomechanics of Meyerhold; next came the carefully arranged, though ordinary-appearing, compositions of Brecht [...]. Then Grotowski developed exercises that helped actors "confront" texts, discovering meeting places between their own

1. [...] The unifying idea is the belief that visible behaviors, and what we can learn of deep behaviors through analysis of brain structure and activity, skin temperature, glandular secretion, and so on, correlate with what is happening socially, that is, between individuals and among groups. This kind of study is a holistic behaviorism. [...]

psychophysical impulses and the logic of the texts. [...] in Wilson's super-slow imagery spectators can predict moves and follow their trajectories through time-space. Also some actions are repeated so many times that the spectator is forced to look at different aspects of the action. Similarly, in the postmodern dances of Dunn, Forti, Jonas, Paxton, and others, as well as in the performance art of Allan Kaprow and many others, ordinary human actions are isolated, displaced, stopped, slowed or accelerated, repeated: all ritualizations ethologically speaking.

The movie camera has given artists the ability to stop action, examine gesture frame by frame, go forward and backward, repeat, and study compositions as they condense and evaporate; these techniques have reshaped theatrical imagination. A theoretical basis for these examinations exists in the work of "human ethologists" such as Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Birdwhistell, and Ekman.² The kind of ritualization they study does not focus on social organization so much as on microgestures: glances, eyebrow flashes, smiles, hand gestures, shoulder lurches, pelvic thrusts, etc. To be alive is to dance.
[...]

In [Schechner 1973] I cited Goodall's description of the chimpanzee "rain dance." This performance is both a prototype and a parallel to human theater. The spectacle Goodall saw, and other observations made in the field, confirm how fundamental the performer-spectator dyad is. In fact, we may be speaking of a triad: protagonist-antagonist-spectator. The dyad is the basic performance relationship, the triad the basic dramatic-theatrical relationship. [...] Among animals and many human societies, the roles shift during performance: this moment's observer may be the next moment's protagonist, while this moment's antagonist may be the next moment's spectator. But can I say with any assurance that the young male and female chimps sitting in the trees observing the mature males rushing with branches down the hillside in the midst of the terrific thunderstorm – the event Goodall saw – are spectators? And in what sense are the mature males performers? The display is most parsimoniously explained as a performance, a kind of playing.

Lorenz connects animal and human performances in this way:

The formation of traditional rites must have begun with the first dawning of human culture, just as at a much lower level phylogenetic rite formation was a prerequisite for the origin of social organization in higher animals.... In both cases, a behavior pattern by means of which a species in the one case, a cultured society in the other, deals with certain environmental conditions, acquires an entirely new function, that of communication. The primary function may still be

2. Since writing this essay in the mid-1970s, the debate concerning cannibalism has sharpened. Some anthropologists doubt that there is, or ever was, cannibalism – except out of the need for sheer survival (shipwrecks, for example). The debate is reported in Science (Kolata 1986). [...] Factual or not, cannibalism exercises a powerful hold on the human imagination and, like incest, is a primary taboo. Cannibalism – either "barbaric" or, for example, Christian (the Eucharist) – is a strong component of many cultures' belief systems; there is an undeniable link between what is eaten and what "becomes part of." To share food is to contract friendship; to share that food which is the loved/hated other is to acquire power. And is it too much to suggest that mother's milk – the first food – is mother herself? What exactly is the nipple the infant takes into its mouth? A myself who is another. [...]

performed, but it often recedes more and more into the background and may disappear completely so that a typical change of functions is achieved. Out of communication two new equally important functions may arise, both of which still contain some measure of communicative effects. The first of these is the channeling of aggression into innocuous outlets, the second is the formation of a bond between two or more individuals. In both cases, the selection pressure of the new function has wrought analogous changes on the form of the primal, non-ritualized behavior. It quite obviously lessens the chances of ambiguity in the communication that a long series of independently variable patterns should be welded into one obligatory sequence.... The display of animals during threat and courtship furnishes an abundance of examples, and so does the culturally developed ceremonial of man.... Rhythmical repetition of the same movement is so characteristic of very many rituals, both instinctive and cultural, that it is hardly necessary to describe examples.... This "mimic exaggeration" results in a ceremony which is, indeed, closely akin to a symbol and which produces that theatrical effect that first struck Sir Julian Huxley as he watched his Great Crested Grebes.... There is hardly a doubt that all human art primarily developed in the service of rituals and that the autonomy of "art for art's sake" was achieved only by another, secondary step of cultural progress. (Lorenz 1967, 72-4)

I doubt whether there ever was any "art for art's sake." [...] Actions are segregated "in the theater" where through exaggeration, repetition, and metaphorization they can be displayed and handled. The interactions played out in the theater are those which are problematical in society, interactions of a sexual, violent, or taboo kind concerning hierarchy, territory, or mating. This is not a characteristic of western theater only, but of theater everywhere. In my view drama is not a model of all human action, but of the most problematical, difficult, taboo, liminal, and dangerous activities. The theatrical actions vivifying drama are rhythmic, repetitive, exaggerated; the body adornments and physical deeds of theater are spectacular: everything in theater is ritualized, if we understand ritual the way ethologists do. Drama arises where clarity of signal is needed most: where the risk is greatest and the stakes highest, where redundancy of signal is an advantage. [...]

The second point in Lorenz's statement is the link between aggression and aggregation. He suggests the underlying effect of releasing aggressive behavior ritually is not to separate individuals but to bond them. I've seen this confirmed in Papua New Guinea [...] as well as in my own workshops and rehearsals [...]. Thus on two levels simultaneously – the level of drama and the level of theater – aggression and groupness often support each other, if the aggression is expressed in/as ritual.

Furthermore, [...] every drama is a story enacted for those who are, directly or indirectly, the subject of the story they are seeing, who are doubly represented – as characters and as spectators. Or, as Geertz said of the Balinese cockfight, it is "a story they tell themselves about themselves" (1973, 448). It is no accident that Shakespeare's plays are not only full of metatheatrical plays-within-plays and references to the stage but also thematically return again and again to questions of personal-vs.-state interests. [...] If

one of theater's functions is to model interactions resulting from the release of repressed material, another is to form groups that can control, through ritualization and play, this explosive material. In this way, theater can be a laboratory of group process.

Lorenz concentrates on the finished artwork. He doesn't differentiate between theater and the other arts. [...] Theater, dance, and music – these must precede the material arts whose remnants we possess. Ethological analogy suggests that people, like other primates, vocalized and danced before they spoke or told stories. The surviving Paleolithic sculptures and paintings were more of an "action art" than a "gallery art." Much of the cave art is located deep in unlit chambers difficult of access; other work is superimposed one image over another, forming rich palimpsests. This indicates that the cave art was designed to accompany performances or was executed as performances. [...] If Lorenz were more familiar with theater, he would see that rehearsal is the link between animal ritual and human art. [...]

Phatic theater

All animals, including *Homo sapiens*, exist within the same ecological web. But animals are not all alike. Analogies must be put forward cautiously. [...] Where everything is genetically determined, where no genuine learning takes place, where no improvisation or variation is possible, where error and/or conscious lying cannot easily occur, art is not. [...]

Schaller points out that people in a stadium watching sporting events display in much the same way as great apes do [...] People dramatically display their moods by throwing things when angry, kicking the wall, jumping up and down with enthusiasm, clapping or stamping the feet to show strong feelings, etc. These "mood displays" change character when they are ritualized into mass actions such as spectator sports, political rallies, or militarized parades [...].

In the 1960s and 1970s "phatic theater" – performances based on evoking mood displays – re-emerged in the west. This kind of theater is present in mass spectacles and their opposite: quasi-theatrical therapies where individuals learn again, or for the first time, how to let their feelings "out". [...]

A very radical integration of therapy into theater was Robert Wilson's work in the 1960s-1970s. Wilson drew also on non-western performances, especially trance dancing, selective inattention, and extended performance time/space. Wilson's approach to therapy was like what Australian Aborigines do. [...]

Spectators say that Wilson's work is comforting, even healing. I think this is because Wilson unfolds his images very slowly, evoking alpha rhythms, "slowing" the brain down, engaging the trophotropic right hemisphere [...]. Also because his performances are vast, truly epic world visions, they are all-encompassing, reassuring. While traditional western art since the Renaissance has been obsessively single-minded, monoscopic, intensive, and dialectical, Wilson's work is many-minded, multiscopic, extensive, and varilectical.

Wilson's methods, and their results, are like some shamans' performances [...]. I pointed out how Aborigines construct ceremonies from what a shaman "sees" either

while asleep or alone in the desert. He returns to his people and shares with them what he experienced – a dance, a narrative, a song. [...] Performances made from vision-quests, drug-induced visions, or dreams are treated by many of the world's peoples with special respect precisely because they hinge two spheres of reality. A shaman is a professional link connecting disparate but interacting reality spheres. [...] The one unifying factor is that the shaman after receiving the call in a flash, a crisis, a sudden sickness, later learns through difficult detailed training a specific technique which is a performance.

Earlier I mentioned "phatic theater," a kind of performance where the evocation and expression of a group mood is the most important thing. [...] The multivocality of ape communication is close to human phatic expressions. [...] The cry of a frightened child, the moaning of grief, the scream of pain, the gasp of terror, and other phatic expressions – as well as the body configurations, gestures, and facial displays accompanying these – probably constitute universal signals [...].

[...] Ordinary speech everywhere is immersed in a sea of exclamatory sounds, stutters, repetitions, ohs, ahs, and uhs; as well as variations in rhythm, pitch, and volume – a whole language of metaverbal communication giving to each utterance its unique and unrepeatable shape and significance. In any situation of strong feeling this infrastructure erupts into dominance: the cognitive value of words is submerged in a rising tide of phatic expression. The center of speaking actually shifts downward to where diaphragmatic breathing controls how sound is released automatically as sheer breath. Not enough is known about this transformational process, about how cognitive speech becomes metaverbal sounding.

In opera, Indian raga, and jazz "meaningless" vocables temporarily replace words at moments of intense expressivity. The extension of sounds built on modulations of pitch, volume, and duration characterizing the aria, the raga, and the jazz riff is a formal way of giving over to the phatic quality of "pure music." In left-brain/right-brain terms, the utterance that begins as left-hemisphere-dominant arouses the right hemisphere so strongly that the original cognitive function is overwhelmed – the singer, and the audience too, is "swept away," "moved," "overcome," "touched" – all dynamic and sensuous metaphors appropriate to the right hemisphere. [...]

Eibl-Eibesfeldt points out the relationship between inborn releasing mechanisms and artistic expression, especially music. Breathing and heartbeat can be brought into harmony with metronomes or melodies; drumming raises body temperature. [...] Of course anyone who has ever wept at a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, or a soap opera, or while reading, knows how susceptible humans are to an artistic induction of feelings. Brecht struggled against these reactions, wishing to highlight thinking or sitting in judgement. If even the tame shows of western theater are capable of inducing such strong reactions think how much more thorough are total theater performances – dreamed of by Artaud but realized mainly outside the Euro-American context. Outside if we consider only what we call theater. Certainly charismatic churches, rock concerts, and some sports events achieve every bit as much phatically speaking as the ritual performances of non-western cultures. [...] For all the differences, [Sergei M.] Shirokogoroff [the Russian anthropologist who studied

Siberian shamanism] and [Kenneth E.] Read [an anthropologist who lived with the Gahuku of Papua New Guinea] report the same pattern: a collective performance, rising to an epiphanic climax, then subsiding into a calm that leads to a "recollection in tranquility" of what it all means. This same pattern characterizes charismatic church services, rock concerts, and maybe even the waltz or tarantella in their heyday. These events each require not "spectators" but "participants," even "congregations," assemblies of believers who co-create the world of the performance. [...]

Lying and pretending

A great difference between human and non-human performers is the ability of humans to lie and pretend. There is plenty of deception in the animal world: mimicry, camouflage, and the like. But most, if not all, of these body modifications and behaviors are hard-wired, genetically determined. [...] People can choose to do, or not do; to adorn or transform their bodies, or not to; to wear masks, or to go bare-faced. Hamlet's very basic "to be or not to be" is a question only humans can ask – and answer in the negative if a person so decides. [...]

Ritualization, blocked display, and performance

Before considering drama, farce especially, which is a unique creation of our species, I want to look at more parallels between animal and human theatrical behavior. [...] Correlations between animal and human performances occur at deeper levels too, in events ethologists call displacement activities, redirected activities, and ritualization.

[...] I argue that ritualization in the theater is [...] a function [...] of the rehearsal-to-performance sequence, the periodicity of performances, and on the microsocial level, the prevalence of conventions designed to remove ambiguity from the communication. [...] Here I want to discuss ritualization from the point of view of the performer's process and the spectator's response.

The debate concerning whether there is a "universal" body language is now running in favor of such a conclusion. A look of surprise, a belly laugh, a howl of pain, a child's cry, the outstretched arms of a mother, and so on, are all understood everywhere. Paul Ekman [...] has shown how facial displays associated with six emotions – surprise, disgust, sadness, anger, fear, and happiness – are universally recognized. [...] There appears to be a developmental continuity of behavior among primates. Surely certain human behavior sequences are enacted everywhere in the same way; these may constitute a basic repertory of mini-dramas: the child running for protection into the arms of its mother; the open-palm greeting; freezing in place when a suspicious noise or an unknown threat is perceived; taking cover by means of hiding, crouching, or flattening when an over-whelming force is encountered. There is a large repertory of universally recognized situations eliciting equally recognizable responses. Theater plays with these situations and responses, often twisting ironies out of misunderstandings and misinterpretations. For with the ritualization of signals comes the possibility, among humans particularly, of irony, tricks, lies, and the dissemination of misinformation. [...]

There are two kinds of body language. The first is the "natural language" of animals in the wild studied by ethologists and the microsocial exchanges among humans studied by scholars such as Ekman, Goffman, and Birdwhistell. The second is the artificial languages of ritual and art. Separating these two kinds of body language is not easy; perhaps with humans it's impossible. Human social life affects human biology at a very deep level.

But let us look [...] at the Paleolithic cave art of south-west Europe [...]. Already in this art the human body is exaggerated, distorted, transformed, masked, and abstracted. Most of the art is of animals – but these animals are depicted in groupings that don't fit what goes on "in nature." Predators and prey are shown together in non-agonistic arrangements; some species are painted together that do not run together in nature; and a few paintings are of imaginary animals such as the unicorn-like figure at Lascaux. At least one figure depicts a person dressed in an animal skin and mask. This is the "sorcerer" or "shaman" of the Les Trois Frères cave. [...] the cave art, and the mobile art of the period too, suggests theater, dance, and music: an art of physical action. [...] To be in the world, as all animals are, is one thing; to present this being is something else; to transform it is something else again. And to transform it as a way of constructing its potential, its "as if," is the heart of the theatrical process.

Thus from the earliest art we can know about with certainty, and continuing to the present, ironies, contradictions, transformations, and imaginary beings and situations are part of art – while art itself is fundamental to religion and other belief systems. People make what isn't there, combine elements from fantasy, actualize situations that occur only as art or performance. These actualizations in the service of social organization, thought, ritual, or rebellious anti-structure contain, transmit, and (dare I say it?) *create* the very circumstances they purport to depict.

The way this process works is different, or at least inordinately more complex, for humans than for animals. The "innate releasing mechanisms" of animals – hard-wired in their nervous systems – cause the display of a sequence of behavior that is predictable and in many cases invariable. A stimulus – an interaction with another animal, or something else – releases an animal's display (Figure 1). [...] In people interaction also stimulates displays, but often these displays are blocked from full expression. [...]

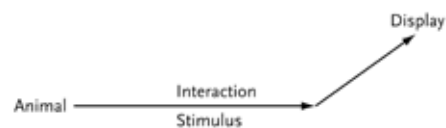


Figure 1

Art, custom, religion, and social convention flow from and cluster around these arenas of blocked display. [...] dammed-up excitation is frequently redirected inward where it happens as a fantasy [...] The fantasy picks up and elaborates on materials associated with the blocked display. The fantasy is like a dream [...]. Ultimately, [...] the fantasy plus its associated material from "other channels" re-emerges as a display. This display, a performance, is a public way to show private stuff (Figure 2). In this way many performances have a restorative function for the performer analogous to the cathartic function for the spectator.

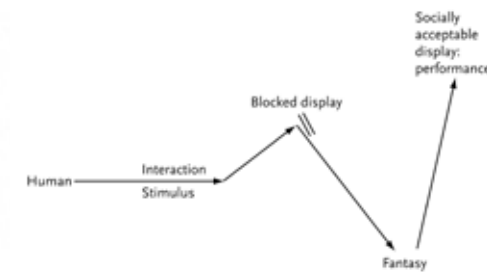


Figure 2

Performances can get at, and out, two sets of material simultaneously: 1) what was blocked and transformed into fantasy; 2) stuff from other channels that otherwise might have a hard time getting expressed at all. Seen this way, performing is a public dreaming. Conversely, dreaming is an interior drama. It is not only psychoanalysis that assumes as much. [...] Fantasy is interiorized display and performance is exteriorized fantasy. [...]

Drama, displacement, and redirection

Drama is a narrative dialogic text written to be performed. The high points of drama include Greek tragedy, Indian Sanskrit plays, the Elizabethan theater, Japanese noh. [...] Here I want to deal not with drama itself but with what E. T. Kirby [...] calls "ur-drama," the process of transforming social conflict into aesthetics. [...]

These events are analogous to what ethologists call "displacement" or "redirected" activity. As Lorenz describes it, "a redirected activity is just this: if I am furious with my boss, my fear may inhibit my aggression against him, so I release my aggression toward the underdog or toward anything else" (1959, 187). The high incidence of sex and violence in theater can be partially explained as redirected activities. [...] Among peoples of the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, tribal warfare was banned first by Australian colonial authorities and later by the Papua New Guinea government. What has arisen in its place are performances. [...] Among the Kogis of Papua New Guinea, observed by Ronald M. Berndt in the 1950s, warfare and cannibalism were replaced by local courts. By the mid-1980s there was debate regarding whether cannibalism ever was practiced in Papua New Guinea or anywhere else. But the Berndts accepted it as fact.

"Dead human flesh, to these people, is food. . . 'Cut my body,' a dying man or woman may say, 'so that the crops may increase. Eat my flesh so that the gardens may grow'" (Berndt 1962, 271-2). [...]

The cruelty with which the Kogis dispatched their enemies is reminiscent of Greek myths [...] like that of Pentheus of Euripides' *The Bacchae*. [...]

In 1976 when I originally wrote this chapter I accepted as factual these accounts of the cruel, bizarre actions of the Kogis. But in 1987 the debate concerning the existence of cannibalism made me think the "data" over again.

In the preface to his book, Berndt says, [...]

There was, however, as there must always be, much that we could not see: for example, violence during cannibal feasts, sharp fighting and confusion when a

village was raided, certain extra-marital ventures, and so on. Although by all accounts these were still taking place south of Wanevinti, it would have been unwise and dangerous to attempt research there at that time. (1962, xiii)

So the detailed descriptions of cannibalism and necrophilia previously presented [...] were not witnessed by the ethnographers. [...]

The accounts the Berndts accept as raw data I now interpret as displays analogous to how some of our artists depict American life in films, writings, and visual arts. Any prime-time night on TV, or the Rambo or Schwarzenegger films, or the dozens of horror movies full of bloody murder, ghouls, dismemberment, cannibalism, and corpse-fucking, will yield very similar information to what the Berndts gathered from the Kogu, if what is presented in the American media is accepted as raw data.

It is data, of course: not of events done, but rather of events dreamed, fantasized, and desired. These representations – of the Kogu, of American popular entertainment – [...] can be regarded as cathartic displays, healthy blowouts of fantasies everyone has. In either case, such accounts – true or false at the level of events – point to the violence of human possibility and imagination. Such violence is not, I think, a local event assignable to the Papua New Guinea Highlands.

Among the Kogu, co-existent with cannibal facts and/or stories, were "informal courts" where dramas were acted out. [...]

Sexual cases are especially relished. In such cases the court proceedings closely resemble traditional farces. For example, Jowajaca's husband caught her in the act of adultery. The court established that the adultery took place at least five times, but that Jowajaca had some cause: her husband didn't have sex with her often enough. Part of the judgement was that he copulate with her at once while the crowd watched. Throughout one night they were made to fuck many times, always in front of witnesses. [...]

It's not only in Papua New Guinea that trials and dramas converge, offering entertainment to the people. Public trials in Europe or America are ostensibly about crime and punishment, but often they are as entertaining as the "informal court" of Kogu. [...] Earlier still in medieval Europe disputes among the upper classes were frequently settled by duels or jousts waged by "champions", combatants who substituted themselves for those they represented. This practice developed in two directions: into sports contests where individuals and teams are "champions" representing clubs, universities, or cities (at least on the surface because in fact, of course, modern athletics are big business); and into modern legal practice where the champion of the state is the prosecutor while the champion of the accused is the defense attorney. [...] Both drama and trials are theatrical events of great entertainment value. And the two can be easily confounded. [...]

Ritual combats often employ theatrical means. [...]

"Sounding" is a [...] word duel common in American black neighborhoods. Soundings are formal tradings of ritual insults – also called "the dozens" or "signifying." According to Labov "the ways in which sounds are delivered, and the evaluation of them by the group, follow a well-established ritual pattern" (1972, 127). Sounds are

"evaluated overtly and immediately by the audience" (Labov 1972, 144). The mark of winning is laughter. [...]

Sounding feeds on the aggressive tendencies of laughter – which in its breathing pattern shares much with the derisive-triumphant pant-hoots of our fellow primates. [...] This is the root structure of a certain kind of theatrical dialogue, from stichomythia, the short, give-and-take dialogic assaults of classical Greek theater, to the punning wit and quick-flying obscenities enjoyed by such Shakespearean characters as Beatrice and Benedick, through to the laconic exchanges of Pinter. The audience's participation may not be heard (except in comedy and farce), but their judgmental presence is decisive. They are always being solicited to take sides.

[...]

The Kogu informal court, [...] and sounding are all examples of "redirected activity". They may also be examples of "displacement activity", a deep-level behavioral process that Lorenz explains this way:

Displacement activity happens if two mutually inhibiting motivations result in such a perfect equilibrium as to block each other completely. What happens then is that another movement, which is usually inhibited by both of them, becomes disinhibited because the other two neutralize each other. So, if a bird wants to attack and is afraid in more or less perfect equilibrium of these two motivations, he may start to preen or to scratch, or to perform other activities which are inhibited both by attack and escape, attack and escape being at the moment mutually inhibited. (Lorenz 1959, 188)

In the examples I've cited, the sexuality, violence, conflict, and obscenity are transformations, redirections, of behavior prevented their full expression. But other behaviors – laughter, feeling "entertained" – are "displacements" in the ethological sense. [...] In every case, forbidden or extremely dangerous relationships – adulterous, incestuous, warlike, cannibalistic – are blocked by law or custom even as they are desired. Drama condenses around the "I-want-but-can't/shouldn't-do"; or around the "I-do-but-will-pay-for". If the forbidden relationships are consummated in fact (as they sometimes are) the social order may be threatened. When the social order is threatened, even by fantasies and desires, a special kind of public performance is called for, one that uses "real people" acting out "real events" (the Kogu trial); or sometimes the principals can find "champions" to act in their behalf ([...] Euro-American trials); or often enough the desires manifest themselves in wholly fictionalized transformations of the forbidden events (dramas). But in all cases what must be performed are the forbidden acts which are thereby both released and contained. The formal nature of these ur-dramas – the Kogu court [...] the trial [...] the sounding – guarantees some measure of control over the impulses being enacted.

Also the ur-dramas suggest their own elaboration into full-fledged theater. [...] The resulting displaced activity – entertainment eliciting laughter and/or tears from the audience – is as different from its causes as a bird's preening is from is mutually blocked impulses to fight and flee. Instead of causing further anxiety the performance of forbidden relationships relaxes tensions. [...]

Laughter and Freud

So much violence is expressed in laughter. Cruel farces probably preceded tragedy. Laughter preserves the ambivalence of the conflicts that give rise to displacement activities. As such laughter is both aggressive and aggregating. Eibl-Eibesfeldt notes that: "The rhythmic vocalizations [of laughter] remind one of similar sounds made by primate groups when they threaten in unison against an enemy.... In its original form laughing seems to unite against a third party" (1970, 132). Thus laughter presupposes, even creates, a "we" that opposes a "them."

In 1905 Freud explained "joke-work" by offering a model analogous to his ideas concerning "dream-work." Freud thought dreams and jokes worked in much the same way, expressing/concealing unrecognized desires. Freud's model (interpreted by me in Figure 3)

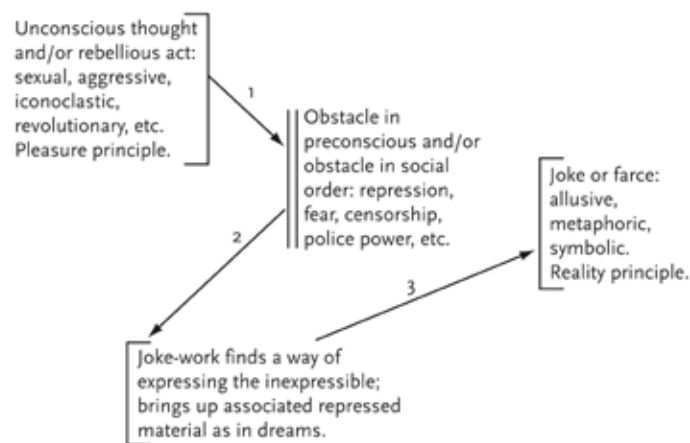


Figure 3

explains how farce especially, and maybe all theater, accomplishes the complicated task of uniting an in-group, threatening an out-group, and bringing repressed materials to the surface. Joke-work condenses, inverts, and displaces images, actions, and associations. A successful joke – and a farce is a string of successful jokes comprising a coherent structure that is itself a joke – is an extremely dense, specially coded communication. In releasing laughter the joke liberates laughter's double purpose of threat and bond. It also stunningly erases the gap between audience and performer: the audience hears the performers, laughs as a response; the performers hear the audience laughing, perform as a response; and so the farce progresses. [...]

But what purposes do jokes serve? First, there is "criticism against persons in exalted positions who claim to exercise authority. The joke, then, represents a rebellion against that authority, a liberation from its pressures" (Freud 1963, 105). And then there is delight in celebrating the obscene. It is clear how this works both in the Kogu court and in Euro-American trials. [...] In aesthetic farce there is no need even to pretend to deplore the crimes, outrages, and reversals of social order. Satire, parody, ridicule, and caricature are all species of hostile joking. These are the heart of farce, different from "comedy of

manners" which maintains a façade of politeness. In farce, the young ridicule the old, prodigality laughs away prudence, promiscuity overturns marriage, the poor rule the rich, the underdog lords it over the overdog. From Kogu to the Marx Brothers, [...] Harlem to Chaplin: a bedlam anti-structure as well as *sacer ludus* marks farce. But only temporarily: "for the time being."

Farical actions can by mocking authority become strong political weapons. [...] The student uprisings of 1968 in Europe and America combined farce and eroticism with radical thought and action. [...]

Ludwig Jekels, a follower of Freud, interprets comedy in a unique way. If the Oedipus complex is the basis of tragedy, he argues, then its opposite underlies farce: "the feeling of guilt which, in tragedy, rests upon the son, appears in comedy displaced on the father; it is the father who is guilty" (Jekels 1965, 264). Once the father – the authority of the old (state) – is done away with "we find the ego, which has liberated itself from the tyrant, uninhibitedly venting its humor, wit, and every sort of comic manifestation in a very ecstasy of freedom" (Jekels 1965, 264). In revolution the liberation is actual, if temporary; in aesthetic theater, in even the Kogu court and other "near-dramas," the liberation is monitored, controlled, overseen by authorities who give permission for the temporary suspension of the usual order of things. In this way rebellion is co-opted, serving the powers that be.

In-group, out-group

From an ethological perspective rituals evolve as a way of improving communications, removing ambiguities, making signals clear. [...] Rituals are biologically necessary because conspecifics need to mate, organize in stable social hierarchies, share territory. Interactions determining how these are to be achieved are likely to cause trouble. Rituals mediate these difficult interactions by creating a second reality more compelling than direct action. This second reality is performance.

These performances are just as aggressive as direct action but less deadly. Among animals, in fact, two separate kinds of aggression operate: that directed against prey is unemotional and deadly, while that directed against conspecifics is emotional but ritualized. [...]

In humans as in other animals, separating in-groupers from out-groupers gives rise to two complementary conflict systems: 1) aggressive conflict against outsiders ("not my people"); 2) aggressive solidarity for insiders ("my people"). These two systems express themselves everywhere, but especially in war, business, and sports. [...]

Conflict-resolution systems – mediation, courts, and diplomacy – try to convert the first kind of aggression into the second: widening the circle of insiders. Often the conflict-resolution process is a mirror or reduction-transformation of the conflict to be resolved: a theatrical playing out of the conflict.

In human theater the subject matter and actions include the most horrible deeds; bloody conflicts between people, gods, beasts, and demons; war and murder; atrocities; torture: every violent action imaginable. But all this is acted out as ritual and/or play. This is because redirected behavior and displacement activities in people create

complicated sequences of transformations, different in each culture, maybe in each individual, but interculturally recognizable as make-believe. Audiences can enjoy watching/participating and performers can enjoy playing out what otherwise would be dangerous, forbidden, or inhibited. Acting out the troubles of Oedipus, the murders of Macbeth, the adventures of Rama, the crucifixion of Jesus, the struggle of a shaman against the disease-causing demons, the farces or informal courts of the Kogu all yield great pleasure. In serious drama or tragedy as well as farce, the pleasures derive from the excess of energy released when obstacles to seeing/participating in taboo actions are suddenly removed. The sound of laughter is triumphantly, celebratorily, aggressive.

All human theater is created by processes analogous to dream-work/ joke-work. Dream-work/joke-work, in turn, are versions of redirected activities and displacement. Thus human theater arises precisely where animal rituals do and serve analogous needs. These performances are liminal events existing to mediate or explore for pleasure interactions that are potentially risky and disruptive. Where transitions/transformations are dangerous what van Gennep calls "rites of passage" are invented; where trouble is liable to break out, theatrical fun eases the way.

Conclusions

[...]

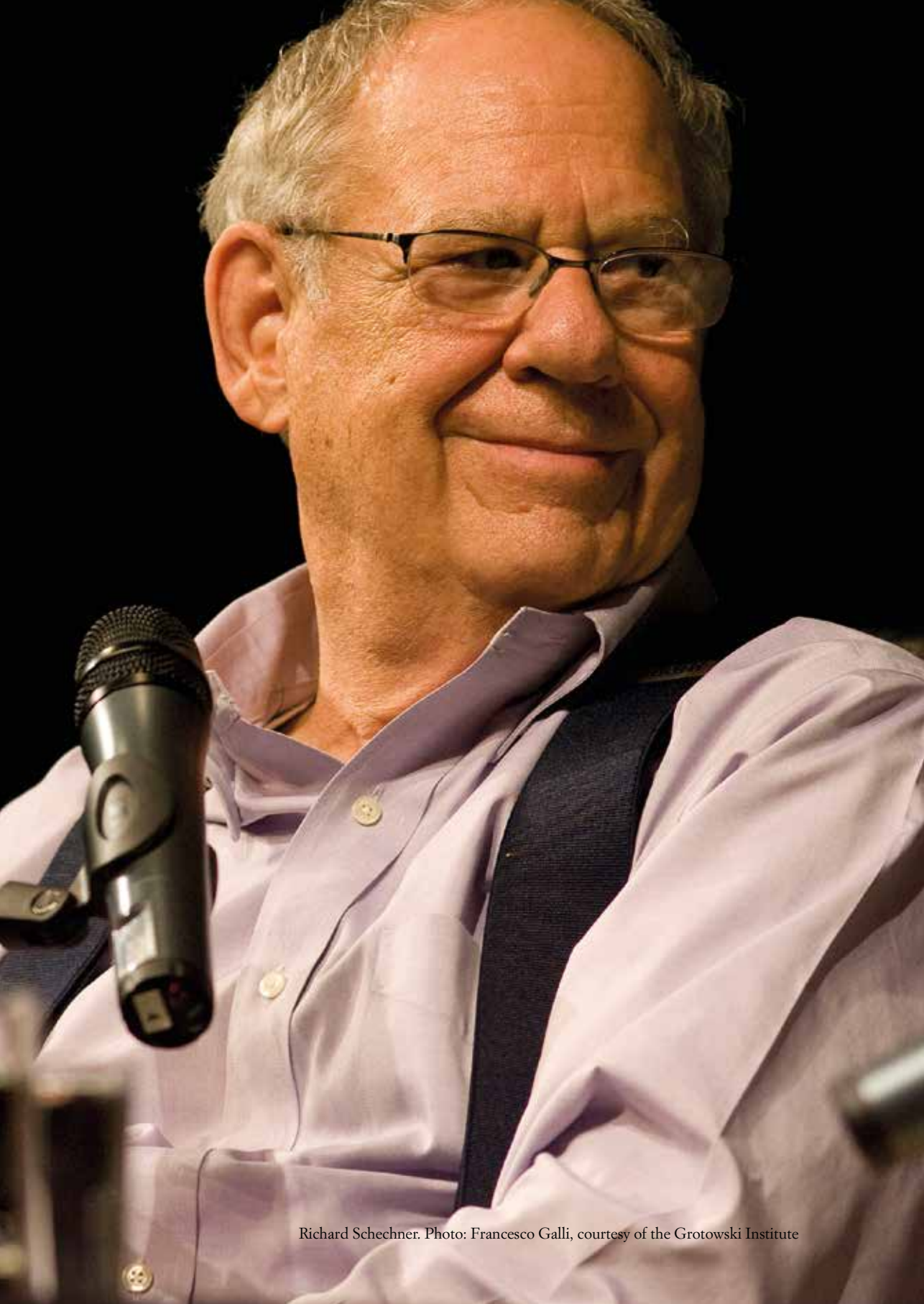
Ethological thinking is the application of evolutionary theory to behavior and culture. On several levels human and animal performances converge and/or exist along a continuum: 1) on the structural level where performances are redirected activities, displacement activities, and/or improvements of signal functions; 2) on a processual level of dream-work/joke-work; 3) on the level of technique where drumming, rhythmic vocalization, dancing, and visual displays are used to create, spread, and share moods; 4) on a cultural level where performances are means of social control providing avenues for the discharge of aggression or providing ways of mobilizing people either to maintain or change a given social order; 5) on a mimetic level where animals imitate animals and people imitate animals – even appropriating skins, feathers, faces, gaits, gestures, and sounds; 6) on a theoretical level where animals and humans are included in reciprocal social structures as in totemism. (Ironically, a criticism of ethologists is that they anthropomorphize.) These similarities and convergences offer a basis for re-examining human theater from the perspective of animal performances. A re-examination not of two opposing systems but of a single bio-aesthetic web.

© Richard Schechner

The original text has been abridged by Leszek Kolankiewicz.

Bibliography

- Berndt, Ronald M. 1962. *Excess and Restraint: Social Control Among a New Guinea Mountain People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Irenäus. 1970. *Ethology, the Biology of Behavior*. Translated by Erich Klinghammer. New York: Holt, Rinehard & Winston.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1963 (1905). *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*. Translated by James Strachey. New York: W. W. Norton (The Standard Edition).
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Jekels, Ludwig. 1965. "On the Psychology of Comedy." In *Comedy: Meaning and Form*, edited by Robert W. Corrigan, 263-69. San Francisco: Chandler Pub. Co.
- Kolata, Gina. 1986. "Anthropologists Suggest Cannibalism is a Myth." *Science* 232: 1497-500.
- Labov, William. 1972. "Rules for Ritual Insults." In *Studies in Social Interaction*, edited by David Sudnow, 120-61. New York: The Free Press.
- Lorenz, Konrad. 1959. "The Role of Aggression in Group Formation." In *Group Processes: Transactions of the Fourth Conference 1957*, edited by Bertram Schaffner, 181-252. New York: Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation.
- . 1967. *On Aggression*. Translated by Marjorie Kerr Wilson. New York: Bantam Books.
- Schaller, George B. 1963. *The Mountain Gorilla: Ecology and Behavior*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schechner, Richard. 1973. "Drama, Script, Theater, and Performance." *TDR: The Drama Review* 17 (3): 5-36.
- . 2003 (1988). *Performance Theory*, rev. and exp. ed. London and New York: Routledge.



Richard Schechner. Photo: Francesco Galli, courtesy of the Grotowski Institute

Richard Schechner

Restoration of Behavior

Abstract: Taking as reference the ethno-anthropological studies given by Erving Goffman and Victor Turner, Schechner analyzes the methods and dynamics of the transition from daily behavior to restored behavior and does so by examining both different ritual traditions and the workshop-rehearsals processes that are triggered in the field of dance and theater. This article, in its full version, appeared for the first time in 1981 in the journal Studies in Visual Communication 7 (3), pp. 2-45.

Keywords: Performance, Ritual, Workshop, Rehearsals

Restored behavior is living behavior treated as a film director treats a strip of film. These strips of behavior¹ can be rearranged or reconstructed; they are independent of the causal systems (social, psychological, technological) that brought them into existence. They have a life of their own. [...] Originating as a process, used in the process of rehearsal to make a new process, a performance, the strips of behavior are not themselves process but things, items, "material". Restored behavior can be of long duration as in some dramas and rituals or of short duration as in some gestures, dances, and mantras.

Restored behavior is used in all kinds of performances from shamanism and exorcism to trance, from ritual to aesthetic dance and theater, from initiation rites to social dramas, from psychoanalysis to psychodrama and transactional analysis. In fact, restored behavior is the main characteristic of performance. The practitioners of all these arts, rites, and healings assume that some behaviors – organized sequences of events, scripted actions, known texts, scored movements – exist separate from the performers who "do" these behaviors. Because the behavior is separate from those who are behaving, the behavior can be stored, transmitted, manipulated, transformed. The performers get in touch with, recover, remember, or even invent these strips of behavior and then re-behave according to these strips, either by being absorbed into them (playing the role,

1. In *Frame Analysis* Goffman used the term "strip of activity": "The term "strip" will be used to refer to any arbitrary slice or cut from the stream of ongoing activity, including here sequences of happenings, real or fictive, as seen from the perspective of those subjectively involved in sustaining an interest in them [...]" (1974, 10). My "strip of behavior" is related to Goffman's term, but it is also, as will be seen, significantly different.



going into trance) or by existing side by side with them (Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*). The work of restoration is carried on in rehearsals and/or in the transmission of behavior from master to novice. Understanding what happens during training, rehearsals, and workshops – investigating the subjunctive mood that is the medium of these operations – is the surest way to link aesthetic and ritual performance.

[...] Restored behavior includes a vast range of actions. It can be "me" at another time/psychological state as in the psychoanalytic abreaction; or it can exist in a non-ordinary sphere of sociocultural reality as does the Passion of Christ or the reenactment in Bali of the struggle between Rangda and Barong; or it can be marked off by aesthetic convention as in drama and dance; or it can be the special kind of behavior "expected" of someone participating in a traditional ritual – the bravery, for example, of a Gahuku boy in Papua New Guinea during his initiation, shedding no tears when jagged leaves slice the inside of his nostrils; or the shyness of an American "blushing bride" at her wedding, even though she and her groom have lived together for two years.

Restored behavior is symbolic and reflexive [...]. Symbolic and reflexive behavior is the hardening into theater of social, religious, aesthetic, medical, and educational process. Performance means: never for the first time. It means: for the second to the n^{th} time. Performance is "twice-behaved behavior."

[...]

Restored behavior can be put on the way a mask or costume is. Its shape can be seen from the outside, and changed. That's what theater directors, councils of bishops, master performers, and great shamans do: change performance scores. A score can change because it is not a "natural event" but a model of individual and collective human choice. A score exists, as Turner says (1982, 82-84), in the subjunctive mood, in what Stanislavski called the "as if." Existing as "second nature," restored behavior is always subject to revision. This "secondness" combines negativity and subjunctivity.

*

Put in personal terms, restored behavior is "me behaving as if I am someone else" or "as if I am 'beside myself,' or 'not myself,'" as when in trance. But this "someone else" may also be "me in another state of feeling/being," as if there were multiple "me's" in each person. The difference between performing myself-acting out a dream, reexperiencing a childhood trauma, showing you what I did yesterday – and more formal "presentations of self" (see Goffman 1959) – is a difference of degree, not kind. There is also a continuum linking the ways of presenting the self to the ways of presenting others: acting in dramas, dances, and rituals. The same can be said for "social actions" and "cultural performances": events whose origins can't be located in individuals, if they can be located at all. These events when acted out are linked in a feedback loop with the actions of individuals. [...] Sometimes collective events are attributed to "persons" whose existence is somewhere between history and fiction: the Books of Moses, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, the *Mahabharata* of Vyasa. Sometimes these actions and stories belong anonymously to folklore, legend, myth. And sometimes they are "original", or at least attributable to individuals: the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare, the *Ramcharitmanas* of Tulsidas,

the *Oedipus* of Sophocles. But what these authors really authored was not the tale itself but a version of something. It's hard to say exactly what qualifies a work to belong to, and come from, a collective. Restored behavior offers to both individuals and groups the chance to rebecome what they once were – or even, and most often, to rebecome what they never were but wish to have been or wish to become.

The restoration of behavior model (figures 1, 2, 3, 4) is processual, describing emergent performances from the point of view of rehearsal. Figure 1 shows restored behavior

as either a projection of "my particular self" (1 → 2), or a restoration of a historically verifiable past (1 → 3 → 4), or – most often – a restoration of a past that never was (1 → 5_a → 5_b). [...] In a very real way the future – the project coming into existence through the process of rehearsal – determines the past: what will be kept from earlier rehearsals or from the "source materials." This situation is as true for ritual performances as for aesthetic theater.

[...]

Figure 1 is drawn from the temporal perspective of rehearsal and from the psychological perspective of an individual performer. "Me" (1) is a person rehearsing for a performance to be: 2, 4, or 5_b. What precedes the performance – both temporally and conceptually – is either nothing that can be definitely identified, as when a person gets into a mood, or some definite antecedent event(s). This event will either be historically verifiable (3), or not (5_a). If it is not, it can be either a legendary event, a fiction (as in many plays), or [...] the projection backward in time of the proposed event-to-be. Or, to put it another way, rehearsals make it necessary to think of the future in such a way as to create a past. Figure 1 is divided into quadrants in order to indicate mood as well as temporality. The upper left quadrant contains mythic, legendary, or fictional events. The mood is subjunctive. [...] This past is one that is always in the process of transformation

[...].

The lower left quadrant – that of the actual/indicative past – is history understood as an arrangement of facts. Of course, any arrangement is conventionalized and conditioned by particular world and/or political views. Events are always rising from the lower left to the upper left: today's indicative becomes tomorrow's subjunctive. That's one of the ways human experience is recycled.

The lower right quadrant – the future/indicative – is the actual performance-to-be-enacted. It is indicative because it actually happens. It is in the future because the figure is conceived from the temporal perspective of a sequence of rehearsals in



Figure 1

progress: in figures 2 and 3, "me" is moving along with rehearsals from the left to the right.

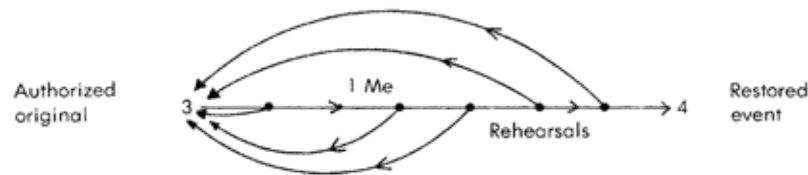


Figure 2

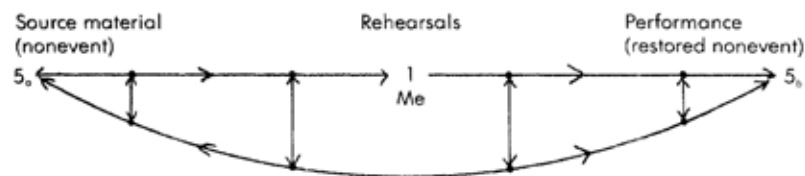


Figure 3

There is nothing in the upper right quadrant – the future/subjunctive – because performances are always actually performed. But one might place some workshops and Grotowski's paratheater there, as a sequence $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_c$. Paratheater and workshops are preparations and process implying performances that never-will-be. [...]

In $1 \rightarrow 2$ I become someone else, or myself in another state of being, or mood, so "unlike me" that I appear to be "beside myself" or "possessed by another." [...] The displacement of $1 \rightarrow 2$ may be slight, as in some mood changes, or very strong, as in some trances. [...] "Something happens" and the person (performer) is no longer himself. This kind of performance [...] can be very powerful. It can happen to anyone, suddenly, and such instant performative behavior is regarded as evidence of the strength of the force possessing the subject. The performer does not seem to be "acting." A genuine if temporary transformation (a transportation) takes place. Most $1 \rightarrow 2$ performances are solos [...]. The astonishing thing about Balinese sanghyang trance dancing is that each dancer has by her/himself so incarnated the collective score that solo dances cohere into group performances. [...] I've seen similar meshing of solo performing into an ensemble several times at the Institutional Church in Brooklyn. [...] Each trance dancer was dancing in trance alone, but the whole group was dancing together, the whole church was rocking with collective performative energy. [...]

Many traditional performances are $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$. So are performances that are kept in repertory according to a strict adherence to the original score. When the Moscow Art Theatre visited New York in the mid-sixties, it claimed to present Chekhov according to Stanislavski's original mise-en-scènes.

When I saw several plays of Brecht at the Berlin Ensemble in 1969 I was told that Brecht's *Modelbuchs* – his detailed photo accounts of his mise-en-scènes – were followed. Classical ballets have been passed on through generations of dancers. But even the strictest attempts at $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ frequently are in fact examples of $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ is very unstable, simply because even if human memory can be improved upon by the use of film or exact notation a performance always happens within several contexts, and these are not easily controllable. [...] These kinds of contextual changes are not measurable by Labanotation.² The difference between $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ and $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ is shown in figure 2. In $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ there is an event (3) that is always referred back to. This event serves as model and corrective. If during a rehearsal of one of Brecht's plays, according to his authorized mise-en-scène, it is suspected that some gesture is not being performed as Brecht intended it, the gesture is checked back against the *Modelbuch* [...]. What the *Modelbuch* says goes. [...] Many rituals follow this pattern. This is not to say that rituals – and Brecht's mise-en-scènes – do not change. They change in two ways: first, by a slow slippage made inevitable by changing historical circumstances; second, through "official revisions" made by the owners-heirs of the "authorized original." In either case, it is my view that $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ is very unstable: it is always becoming $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$.

Noh drama is a very good example of a performance genre that is both $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ and $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ simultaneously and consciously. The whole score of a noh play – its mise-en-scène, music, text, costuming, masking-is transmitted within several schools or families from one generation to the next with only minor variations. In this sense, noh – at least since the Meiji Restoration of the 19th century – is a clear example of $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$. [...] But each individual noh performance also includes surprises. [...] True to its Zen aspect, a noh drama staged traditionally occurs only once, finding in the absolute immediacy of the meeting among all its constituent players its essence. Like the Zen archer, the shite and his colleagues either hit the mark or they don't.

[...]

Optimally, then, each performance of noh, and every variation during a performance, is the leading edge of a long tradition formed during Kan'ami's and Zeami's time in the 14th and 15th centuries, almost extinguished by the mid-19th, and flourishing again now. This leading edge is both $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ and $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$.

[...]

Just as interesting as noh or experimental performance in regard to the relationship between $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ and $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ types of restored behavior is Shaker dancing. [...]

2. Labanotation, roughly analogous to musical notation, was developed by Rudolf von Laban in 1928. According to an article in the *New York Times* (6 May 1979, "Arts and Leisure" section, p. 19) by Jack Anderson: "The system records dance movement by means of symbols on a page that is read from the bottom up. Three basic vertical lines represent the body's center, right, and left sides. Where the symbols are placed on the lines indicates what parts of the body are moving. The shape of the symbols indicates the direction of the movement, and their length indicates the movement's duration." [...] Such systems are now widely used in dance, less so in theater.



Plate 1. Shakers dancing, based on a colour lithograph of ca. 1826 by Anthony Imbert. From The New York Public Library.

Shaker ritual included song and dance (Plate 1). Originally these were done by and for the Shakers themselves. But according to Suzanne Youngerman:

as Shakerism grew, the religion and the social organization it engendered became less ecstatic and more rigid and institutionalized. The dances and songs, which were the main form of worship, also changed from involuntary ecstatic and convulsive movements with glossolalia occurring during spells of altered states of consciousness to disciplined choreographed marches with symbolic steps, gestures, and floor plans. These rituals became elaborate and fixed dance "exercises." A steady stream of tourists came to the Shaker communities to watch these spectacles. (1978, 95)

The Shakers had stopped dancing by 1931 when Doris Humphrey, one of the pioneers of American modern dance, choreographed *The Shakers*. Working from pictures and research materials but never having seen any Shakers dancing, Humphrey in her dance was able to actualize something of Shaker culture. Youngerman says: "Humphrey's choreography embodies a wide range of Shaker culture incorporating many direct references to actual Shaker dances" (1978, 96). [...] But it wasn't until 1955 that Humphrey even met a Shaker.

Humphrey's dance [...] is also Labanotated, which means other companies can dance Humphrey's dance much the way orchestras can play a Beethoven symphony. In fact, in 1979 the Humphrey dance was performed by the Louisville Ballet at Shakertown, a

reconstructed Shaker village at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky. This is certainly not the only example of an aesthetic dance being a main way of physically re/membering (= putting back together what time has dis/membered) an extinct behavior. Shakers dancing is $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$; Humphrey's *Shakers* is $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. [...]

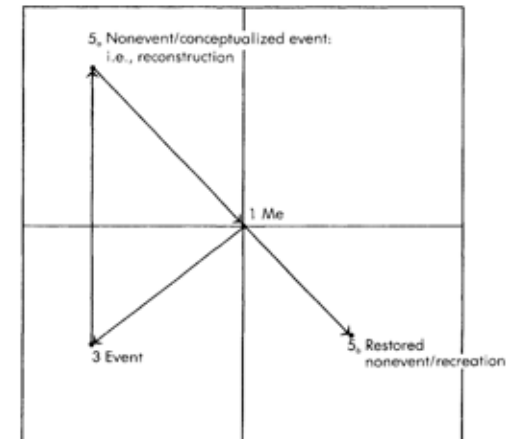


Figure 4

The Shaker story continues. Figures 1 and 4 illuminate it. Robin Evanchuk visited a few surviving Shakers in 1962 and again in 1975. These people had long since stopped dancing. By using their memories and the memories of people who knew Shakers and by drawing on the research of Edward Deming Andrews, Evanchuk reconstructed the "authentic" dances. [...] (Plate 2). [...]



Plate 2. *The Rendering*, directed by James Slowiak. Olsztyn, Poland, 2002. From left to right: Monika Maciejkowicz, Debora Totti, Andrzej Bartnikowski, Jairo Cuesta, Toby Matthews, Marek Ruczko, Salvatore Motta, Kamil Adamus, Krzysztof Trznadel, and others. Photo: Douglas Scott Goheen, courtesy of New World Performance Lab.

Thus we have three different but related performance traditions: the Shakers themselves (now gone), an art dance choreographed by Humphrey that is still performed by the Limon company and others, and an "authentic" reconstruction of Shaker dancing by Evanchuk. Of the first of these traditions – Shaker dancing in the 19th century – [...] I guess that it was of the $1 \rightarrow 2$ or $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ type, soon becoming $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ as tourists visited the Shakers to watch them dance. [...] Clearly Humphrey's Shakers is $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. But Evanchuk always refers back to 3, an "authorized original" [...] but she also states that it is her wish to restore not just Shaker dances but Shaker feelings as well: the fervor, joy and ecstasy that go with the dancing. Humphrey doesn't call her dance an ethnographic reconstruction, and Evanchuk doesn't call her work art. But Humphrey achieved something other than fiction; anthropologist Youngerman thinks Humphrey's dance comes close to expressing the heart of the sect. [...] It would seem to me that Evanchuk's reconstructions are actually $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$, evolving out of $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$ [...]. In cultures where performances are transmitted orally, is not the process of transmission very much like Humphrey's process in making *The Shakers*? The authority in such cultures rests not with "data" or "documented" earlier performances but with "respected persons" who themselves, in their very bodies, carry the necessary performance knowledge. The original is not fixed, as in Evanchuk's notes (or, ironically enough, in the Labanotated *Shakers*), nor is it in quasi-literary texts; it is in bodies that pass on not only the "original" but their own particular incarnation/interpretation of that original.

[...]

But even where there is "an" original – as in Brecht, the Moscow Art Theatre Chekhovs, and Humphrey's *Shakers* – contextual and historical circumstances make even the exact replication of a scored/notated original different than the original. [...] Technically the Moscow Art Theatre productions of Chekhov, the Berlin Ensemble productions of Brecht, and the Limon company's production of *The Shakers* are $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$. But in actuality – in the immediacy of their being performed now – all these performances are $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$.

[...]

History is not what happened but what is encoded and transmitted.

[...] I think restored behavior can best be understood processually by examining the rehearsal process: how the single behaved behaviors of ordinary living are made into the twice-behaved behaviors of art, ritual, and the other performative genres.

[...] During rehearsals a past is assembled out of bits of actual experience, fantasies, historical research, past performances. Or a known score is recalled and replayed. Earlier rehearsals and/or performances quickly become the reference points, the building blocks of performances. Useful recollections are not of "how it was" but of "how we used to do it." The "it" is not the event but earlier rehearsals or performances. Soon reference back to the original – if there was an original – is irrelevant. How Christ offered his disciples wine and matzo at the Last Supper (a seder) is irrelevant to the performance of the Eucharist. The Roman Catholic church ceremony has its own performance history. The language of church ceremony has never been the language Christ spoke, Aramaic-Hebrew. Nor are the gestures or costumes of the priests modeled on Christ's. And if the church had chosen another of Christ's gestures as the keystone of the Mass

– say, the laying on of hands to heal the sick – this would have developed its own traditional scripts. Indeed, in some Pentecostal churches the laying on of hands is the key representation of Christ, the demonstration of His presence. Or it may be speaking in tongues, dancing, or taking up serpents. Each of these scripts has developed its own way of being performed. What happens over years and centuries to the various church services happens much more quickly during rehearsals.

[...]

Look again at figure 1. The fetch, or distance traveled, is more for $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ than for either $1 \rightarrow 2$ or $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$. This greater distance is in the scope of time as well as the scope of mood $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ links rehearsal time, past, and performance time in both the subjunctive and indicative moods. I use " $5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ " because the nonevent and the restored nonevent are versions of one another, not independent occurrences. Doing a known score is $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$, but even this known score has behind it a $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ and is best expressed as $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$, figure 4.

The model offers ways of comparing performances and from comparisons the means of developing a theory that includes both aesthetic and ritual performances. The repetition of individual or social facts in the future indicative, $1 \rightarrow 2$, is ritual in the ethological sense. The repetition of a given or traditional performance score, $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$, is ritual in the social and religious sense. Aesthetic performances, such as Noh drama, whose proclaimed goal is to show audiences a 3 by presenting a 4 that has been tested against 3 is most often $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. The invention of new performances or the substantial revision of traditional performances (either intentionally or unintentionally) is $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. Events that use the performance process but do not produce performances are $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_c$. Performances that involves $5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ or $5_a \rightarrow 5_c$, draw together divergent times and moods; these kinds of performances are the most complex, multivocal, and symbolically rich.

[...] As performances, $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ are played in the indicative mood, but as performances of something they are in the subjunctive mood. "I am performing" is indicative; "I am performing Hamlet" is subjunctive. The difference between animal and human ritual is that animals are always performing what they are, while humans can choose to perform what/who they are not.

*

[...] Indian scholars trace Bharatanatyam (Plate 3 on the next page), the classical Indian dance, back not only to the ancient text on theater, *Natyasastra* (ca. 2nd century B.C. – second century A.D.), which describes dance poses, but also to centuries-old temple sculptings that show these poses. The best known of these sculptings is the group at the 14th-century temple of Nataraja (Shiva, the king of dancers) at Cidambaram, south of Madras (Plate 4). Most writings assume a continuous tradition connecting *Natyasastra*, temple sculptings, and today's dancing. According to Kapila Vatsyayan,

India's leading dance theorist and historian, Bharatanatyam is perhaps the oldest among the contemporary classical dance forms of India.... Whether



Plate 3 and 4. 3 Suri Sri Ranjani performing Bharatanatyam. Photo: Rohit Nagsai
4 Sculpture of Madanika, Chennakeshava Temple in Belur (Karnataka, India).

the dancer was the devadasi of the temple or the court-dancer of the Maratha kings of Manjore, her technique followed strictly the patterns which had been used for ages. (1974, 15-16)

[...] Vatsyayan's opinion is shared by virtually all Indian dance scholars. But in fact it's not known when the "classical" Bharatanatyam died out, or even if it ever existed. The old texts and sculptings surely show that there was some kind of dance, but nothing was remembered of this dance, not even its name, when moves were made in the first decades of the 20th century to "preserve," "purify," and "revive" it.

There was a temple dance called *sadir nac* danced by women of families hereditarily attached to certain temples. [...] Many girls attached to temples were prostitutes. As dance scholar Mohan Khokar says,

the time-honoured tradition of the devadasis, or temple dancing girls, had fallen into such ignominy that the girls, considered sacred, continued to be considered sacred but in a different way – as prostitutes. And with this the dance that they professed – the avowedly divine Bharatanatyam – too promptly got lost to shame. (1983, 1)

From 1912 on a strong campaign was waged by Indian and British reformers to ban the devadasi system. But a countermovement led by E. Krishna Iyer wanted to "eradicate the vice but have the art." [...] At the January 1933 Conference of the Music Academy of Madras, Iyer [...] presented devadasi dancing not as a temple art or as an advertisement for or adjunct to prostitution but as secular art. [...] Scholar and critic V. Raghavan coined the word "Bharatanatyam" to replace terms associated with temple prostitution. "Bharatanatyam" connects the dance with both Bharata's *Natyasastra* and India: *natya* means dance, *bharat* means India.

[...] Rukmini Devi, "a singularly high placed Brahmin and wife of the International President of the Theosophical Society [...] realized how great and lofty an art *bharatanatyam* was and how pressing the need was to rescue it from corrupt influences" (Khokar 1983, 1). Not only did Devi dance, she and her associates codified *bharatanatyam*. Their way to rescue the dance was to restore it in a $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ way. Devi and her colleagues wanted to use *sadir nac* but be rid of its bad reputation. They cleaned up the devadasi dance, brought in gestures based on the *Natyasastra* and temple art, developed standard teaching methods. They claimed that *bharatanatyam* was very old. And, of course, a conformity to ancient texts and art could be demonstrated: every move in Bharatanatyam was measured against the sources it presumed to be a living vestige of. [...]

The "history" and "tradition" of *bharatanatyam* – its roots in the ancient texts and art – are actually a restoration of behavior, a construction based on the research of Raghavan, Devi, and others. They saw in *sadir nac* not a dance in its own right but a faded, distorted remnant of some ancient classical dance. That "ancient classical dance" is a projection backward in time: we know what it looks like because we have *bharatanatyam*. Soon people believed that the ancient dance led to *bharatanatyam* when, in fact, the *bharatanatyam* led to the ancient dance. A dance is created in the past in order to be restored for the present and future. There is no single source for *bharatanatyam*, only the whole bundle $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ or $1 \rightarrow 3$ (*Natyasastra*, temple sculptings) $\rightarrow 5_a$ (presumed ancient dance) $\rightarrow 5_b$ (today's *bharatanatyam*).

[...]

I see nothing amiss in restorations of behavior like *bharatanatyam* [...]. Arts, and rituals too, are always developing, and restoration is one means of change. What happened in *bharatanatyam* [...] is analogous to what the French dramatists of the 17th century did when they conformed to what they thought were ancient rules of Greek tragedy. The dramatists had at hand Aristotle, Horace, the Greek and Latin playtexts, architectural ruins, pottery, but they did not have the actual behaviors of the ancient Athenians. The restorers of *bharatanatyam* [...] had living arts that they presumed were vestiges of older, more classical arts. They also had ancient texts, sculptings, and their own deep knowledge of Hindu traditions.

[...]

*

Although restored behavior seems to be founded on past events – "*bharatanatyam* is perhaps the oldest among the contemporary dance forms of India," "Vedic ritual is ... the oldest surviving ritual of mankind" – it is in fact the synchronic bundle $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ or $1 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. The past, 5_a , is recreated in terms not simply of a present, 1, but of a future, 5_b . This future is the performance being rehearsed, the "finished thing" to be made graceful through editing, repetition, and invention. Restored behavior is both teleological and eschatological. It joins first causes to what happens at the end of time. It is a model of destiny.

*

[...] Restoration of behavior as a dynamic system is expressed in figures 1-4. The core of this system is $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ is what happens during workshops and rehearsals. Workshops and rehearsals are two parts of a sevenphase performance process: training, workshop, rehearsal, warm-up, performance, cool-down, aftermath. Terminology varies from culture to culture, but the seven phases represent distinct functions that can be identified interculturally. The absence of one or more phases signals not "incompleteness" but an adjustment of the performance process to meet specific needs. For example, in Noh drama training is emphasized, but there is very little rehearsal; in Grotowski's paratheater there is a great deal of workshop but no performance.

Sense can be made of these differences by asking what it is that each phase in the performance sequence accomplishes. Training is where known skills are transmitted. Workshop is a deconstruction process, where the ready-mades of culture (accepted ways of using the body, accepted texts, accepted feelings) are broken down and prepared to be "inscribed" upon (to use Turner's word). Workshop is analogous to the liminal-transitional phase of rituals. Rehearsals are the opposite of workshops. In rehearsals longer and longer strips of restored behavior are arranged to make a new unified whole: the performance. This two-phase deconstruction-reconstruction process is exactly [...] what the founders of bharatanatyam did to *sadir nac*, the *Natyasastra*, and temple sculptures [...].

Although the workshop-rehearsal process and the ritual process are analogous, the terms used to describe them don't fit together neatly. This is because scholars have often treated play, art, and religion separately. But the basic performance process is universal: theater is the art specializing in the concrete techniques of restoring behavior. Preparing to do theater includes memorizing a score of gestures, sounds, and movements and/or achieving a mood where apparently "external" gestures, sounds, and movements "take over" the performer, as in a trance. Behavior that is other is transformed into the performer's own; alienated or objectified parts of the performer's self – either his private self or his social self – are assimilated and publicly displayed. It is the assimilation of old and new material – and the transformations this material undergoes – that I have summarized as $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$. The conclusion of the workshop-rehearsal process is the public performance; this is analogous to what van Gennep calls "reincorporation" and what Turner calls "reintegration." Of course, the whole project can collapse, especially in modern and postmodern circumstances where performances are more likely to be voluntary, liminoid, than obligatory, liminal. When things go wrong and people scatter, a "schism" occurs.³

[...]

How do workshops-rehearsals work? [...] There are two basic methods. The first is by "direct acquisition," where a master uses bodily manipulation, imitation, and repetition to teach the neophyte actual items to be performed. The performance text is whole, and

3. I'm taking a term Turner applies to "social dramas" and applying it to the performance process. But his conception of social drama is performative, and closely related to his understanding of the ritual process. Turner uses key terms like "liminality," "communitas," and "process" in laying out his theories of both ritual and social drama. See, especially, Turner 1969, 1974, 1982.

it is transmitted across generations. The second method of workshops-rehearsals is to teach a "basic grammar" that can be used to generate any number of performance texts. There is no one way, nor even any 250 ways, to perform *Hamlet*. There is continuity in how *Hamlet* has been performed from the time Shakespeare wrote it in 1604 to now. Training performers to play *Hamlet* means teaching them how to invent a performance text.

The separation of dramatic texts from performance texts that characterizes modern Euro-American theater leads to the separation of training from workshop and rehearsal. In many Asian forms training, workshop, and rehearsals are one; in Euro-America training is generalized in the sense that techniques are taught as "tools" that can be used to make any number of different kinds of performances. An actor pants not so that she may pant in performance but in order to strengthen her diaphragm, get in touch with the different ways her voice can resonate, control her breathing so that demanding physical work can be done without losing breath.

[...]

The workshop-rehearsal process is liminoid. It is "betwixt and between" the fixed world from which material is extracted and the fixed score of the performance text.

During the past fifty years, since Artaud at least, the two kinds of performance processes – transmission of whole items by direct acquisition and transmission by means of learning a generative grammar – have been linked. This linkage is, in fact, one of the great achievements of experimental theater in this century. [...] Examples multiply, bearing witness to exchanges between, especially, Asian and African and Euro-American theater. Three kinds of workshop-rehearsal are now occurring: (1) those used to transmit whole performance texts; (2) those based on grammars that generate new performance texts; (3) those combining 1 and 2. This last, far from being a sterile hybrid, is a most fertile response to postmodern circumstances.

There is another way of looking at the workshop-rehearsal process, one that connects Turner's ideas of subjunction/liminality to Stanislavski's "magic if." In *An Actor Prepares* Stanislavski says:

You know now that our work on a play begins with the use of *if* as a lever to lift us out of everyday life onto the plane of imagination.... There is no such thing as actuality on the stage. Art is a product of the imagination... The aim of the actor should be to use his technique to turn the play into a theatrical reality. (1946 [1936], 51)

The use of "if" encourages the actor to be in the "given circumstances" of the character. "What would I do *if* certain circumstances were true?" (Stanislavski, 1961, 33). It is during workshops-rehearsals that the "if" is used as a way of researching the physical environment, the affects, the relationships – everything that will sooner or later be fixed in the performance text.

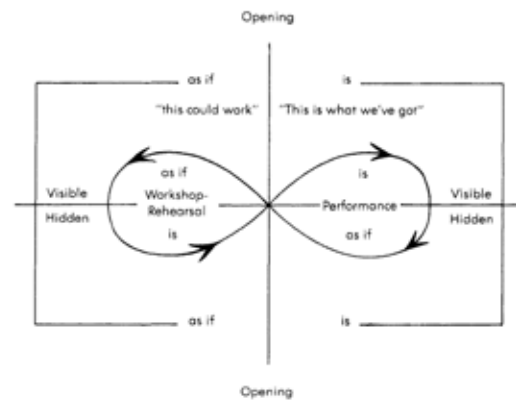


Figure 5

Figure 5 shows how the deep structure of workshop-rehearsal inverts the deep structure of performance.⁴ In workshop-rehearsal real work is being done, work that is serious and problematical: indicative, "is." But the daily experience of workshop-rehearsal – what a casual observer might feel – is an "as if," something tentative, subjunctive: "Let's try that," "This could work," "What would happen if?" Workshop especially is playful. There the techniques of "as if" flourish: games, role exchanges, improvisations – participants bring in stuff from all over. Workshops find, reveal, and express material; rehearsals give this stuff performative shape. [...]

The finished performance text is the inverse of the workshop-rehearsal. The performance text displayed before an audience, or requiring their participation, is "indicative": 2, 4, or 5_a. [...] The performance text is an "is," the more or less invariable presentation of what's been found, kept, and organized. But the deep structure under this "is" is a subjunctive as "if." The tears Ophelia sheds for Hamlet are actual, hot, and salty, but her grief is subjunctive. The cause of that grief may be something wholly unrelated to *Hamlet* or the actor playing Hamlet. The cause is possibly some intimate association the actress found during workshops or rehearsals. The Balinese dancer in trance may violently thrust a kris against his chest, but the cause of this action is not self-hatred but a manifestation of trance possession by the demon Rangda. The two processes – the American actress who uses her personal life, and the Balinese trance dancer who abandons his – may appear to be opposite, but they are actually identical. In each case the "given circumstances," the "as if" of the preparatory phases of performance, sink out of sight but underlie and cause the "is" of the performance text.

4. I first used this figure in 1977 when I was relating "social drama" to "aesthetic drama" (1977, 144). Turner used the model a few times (see Turner 1982, 73). In my 1977 use I hypothesized that theatrical techniques are the hidden, implicit underground of social and political action, the dramatic ordering of events; and, conversely, that social and political action underlies theatrical works. Thus I was denying the one-way action of Aristotelian mimesis and at the same time denying the proposition that "all the world's a stage." I accept both statements as dialectically true: each making the existence of the other necessary. Artistic action creates the rhetorical and/or symbolic possibilities for social drama to "find itself," and the events of ordinary life provide the raw stuff and conflicts reconstructed in art works. The visual pun on the figure for infinity was not intended – but when I saw it I was pleased.

Of course, there are variations of this process: to experiment means to "play around" and in so doing to create new situations. Brecht asked his actors to be in character ("is") most of the time but sometimes to stand beside their characters ("as if"), questioning the very actions they were performing. Thus Brecht introduced into the public performance a quality of the workshop-rehearsal process.

[...] The last part of rehearsal is practice. Longer and more complicated strips of restored behavior are organized into the actual performance. Music, costumes, lighting, makeup, et cetera, accumulate. Each of these is blended in with the intention of making an integrated whole. During this final push, gestures are edited so that they send the clearest signals and practiced until they become second nature. Pacing-the relation of the rhythm/tempo of each part to that of the whole-becomes very important. This last phase of rehearsal is comparable to the phase of reintegration in a ritual. Strangers to the theater often think only of this last phase when they hear the word "rehearsal." But as I have tried to show, reintegration is only the final part of a long process.

[...] Seeing what of the ritual process is missing from a performance can be a useful way of understanding what's going on. Grotowski's paratheatrical work took participants from cities and brought them to remote areas to perform actions with and under the supervision of Grotowski's people. [...] the actions always involved discovering and revealing hidden personal themes, finding new ways of behaving (alone or with others), and sharing I-Thou relationships. Many of the physical actions – running through the forest at night, sudden immersion in water, dances around fire and the passing of fire from person to person, group chanting, singing, storytelling – are very like those in initiation rites. [...] As performative action Grotowski's paratheater resembled an initiation rite in which a transformation of self, a change of status, was effected. But [...] Grotowski did not work out, nor were his clients able to supply, phase 3 of the workshop-rehearsal/ritual process: reintegration. [...] Participants were left hanging: they were separated, stripped down, made into tabulae rasae; they had deep experiences, were "written upon," made new; but these "new selves" were not reintegrated into the ordinary world. [...]

The absence of reintegration in Grotowski's paratheater reveals his intentions while he was conducting his paratheatrical experiments (ca. 1969-76). Theater has but two stances in relationship to society at large: either to be tightly woven into broader social patterns, as rituals are, or to serve as an analytical and dialectical instrument for a critique of society, as Brecht's theater tried to be. Most theater people are not conscious of these stances, their work drifts. But [...] very recently Grotowski began work on "objective drama" – trying to locate efficacious performance processes regardless of their religious or other ideological bases/contexts. This work may synthesize Grotowski's multifaceted career – poor theater, paratheater, theater of sources – into something that includes a reintegrative phase. [...]

*

Far-fetched as such projects may seem, they signal a very deep attempt to integrate the performative knowledge of several Asian, African, Caribbean, and Native American cul-

tures with the social, political, and aesthetic life of Euro-America. Such an attempt may have enormous consequences for the development of an intercultural theater. And just as theater workers are increasingly interested in anthropological thought and the techniques of fieldwork, so anthropologists find themselves more and more like theater directors.

[...] The situation precipitated by the fieldworker's presence is a theatrical one: he is there to see, and he is seen. But what role does the fieldworker play? He is not a performer and not not a performer, not a spectator and not not a spectator. He is in between two roles just as he is in between two cultures. In the field he represents – whether he wants to or not – his culture of origin; and back home he represents the culture he has studied. The fieldworker is always in a "not ... not not" situation. And like a performer going through workshops-rehearsals the fieldworker goes through the three-phase performance process isomorphic with the ritual process:

1. The stripping away of his own ethnocentrism. This is often a brutal separation, which in itself is the deepest struggle of fieldwork, and is never complete. What should he eat, how? And his toilet habits, his problems of hygiene. And the dozens of other things that remind the worker of the distance between his own culture and the one he wants to get inside of. But if his work is to succeed, he has to undergo some kind of transformation.
2. The revelation, often coming suddenly like inspiration, of what is "new" in the culture he temporarily inhabits. This discovery is his initiation, his transition, the taking on of a new role in his adoptive society, a role that often includes a new identity, position, or status. The worker "goes native," even inside himself.
3. The difficult task of using his field notes (or raw footage and sound tapes) to make an acceptable "product" – monograph, film, lectures, whatever: the way he edits and translates what he found into items understood by the world he returns to. In brief, he must make an acceptable performance out of all workshop-rehearsal material. His promotion to full professor ratifies his reintegration into his own society.

[...] Ethnography demands a double vision, inside and outside simultaneously or alternately. If the fieldworker is able to show all this [...], the third phase of the fieldworker's progression folds back into phase I. He tries to show his own people what the away culture is like in its own terms.

[...] The soft sciences are actually extensions of the arts and humanities. Ordinary life and performative life are related in the looped way I showed in figure 5. Theory in the social sciences is little more than what Geertz calls "thick description" (1973, 3-32). Presently the theater director is leaving the shadowy, out-of-sight offstage and entering the stage not just as another performer but as a unique figure: the embodiment of the workshop-rehearsal process. Fieldworkers now not only watch but learn, participate, and initiate actions. Directors have been, and fieldworkers are becoming, specialists in restored behavior. In this epoch of information and reflexive hyperconsciousness we not only want to know, we also want to know how we know what we know.

*

[...]

The workshop-rehearsal process is the basic machine for the restoration of behavior. It is no accident that this process is the same in theater as it is in ritual. For the basic function of both theater and ritual is to restore behavior – to make performances of the $1 \rightarrow 5_a \rightarrow 5_b$ type. The meaning of individual rituals is secondary to this primary function, which is a kind of collective memory-in/of-action. The first phase breaks down the performer's resistance, makes him a tabula rasa. To do this most effectively the performer has to be removed from familiar surroundings. Thus the need for separation, for "sacred" or special space, and for a use of time different than that prevailing in the ordinary. The second phase is of initiation or transition: developing new or restoring old behavior. But so-called new behavior is really the rearrangement of old behavior or the enactment of old behavior in new settings. In the third phase, reintegration, the restored behavior is practiced until it is second nature. The final part of the third phase is public performance. [...] But the ethological repertory of behaviors, even human behaviors, is limited. In rituals, relatively long strips of behavior are restored, giving the impression of continuity, stasis: tradition. In creative arts, relatively short strips of behavior are rearranged and the whole thing looks new. Thus the sense of change we get from experimental arts may be real at the level of recombination but illusory at the basic structural/processual level. Real change is a very slow evolutionary process.

[...]

© Richard Schechner

The original text has been abridged by Leszek Kolankiewicz.

Bibliography

- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.
- . 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Khokar, Mohan. 1983. "The Greatest Step in Bharatanatyam." *New Delhi Sunday Statesman*, January 16 1983.
- Schechner, Richard. 1977. *Essays on Performance Theory*. New York: Drama Book Specialists.
- Stanislavski, Konstantin. 1946. *An Actor Prepares*. Translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts Books.
- . 1961. *Creating a Role*. Translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts Books.
- Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- . 1974. *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- . 1982. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Press.
- Vatsyayan, Kapila. 1974. *Indian Classical Dance*. New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India.
- Youngerman, Suzanne. 1978. "The Translation of Culture into Choreography." In *Essays in Dance Research: From the Fifth CORD Conference, Philadelphia, November 11-14, 1976*, edited by Dianne L. Woodruff. New York: Congress on Research in Dance, 93-110.



Dionysus in 69, The Performance Group directed by Richard Schechner (1968).
Agave caresses Pentheus. Photo: Frederick Eberstadt, courtesy of Richard Schechner

Richard Schechner

The Future of Ritual

Abstract: In an attempt to define what "ritual" is, Schechner denotes in ritual actions, both human and animal, a similarity with those that emerge in the artistic performance field. The American scholar identifies elements such as violence and sexuality in rituals and characterizes the ritual itself as the dynamic capable of dealing with social crises that overturn culturally recognized systems and hierarchies. Furthermore, following Turner – and reviewing ethological and neurological points of view – Schechner recognizes ritual as having a creative property, which not only contains traditional cultural behaviors but is capable of generating new images, ideas and practices. This article has been published in several versions, undergoing several transformations: it appeared firstly as the inaugural essay of the Journal of Ritual Studies 1 (1), 1987, pp. 5-34; other fragments of it appear in Victor Turner's Last Adventure, an essay published both in Anthropologica 27 (1-2), 1985, pp. 190-206 and as introduction for Turner's book The Anthropology of Performance (1986). Another full version of this writing is published in the Schechner's volume which takes up the title of the article itself: The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance (Routledge, London and New York 1993, pp. 228-265).

Keywords: *Ritual, Action, Behavior, Ethology, Neurology*

Even to say it in one word, ritual, is asking for trouble. Ritual has been so variously defined – as concept, praxis, process, ideology, yearning, experience, function – that it means very little because it means too much.¹ In common use, ritual is identified with the sacred, another slippery word. But scholars have long discussed "secular ritual" (see Moore and Myerhoff 1977). Current opinion holds that the barriers between sacred and secular, like those between work and play, are both extremely porous and culture, specific. Rituals have been considered: 1) as part of the evolutionary development of animals; 2) as structures with formal qualities and definable relationships; 3) as symbolic systems of meaning; 4) as performative actions or processes; 5) as experiences. These categories overlap. It is also clear that rituals are not safe deposit vaults of accepted

1. The writings about ritual are voluminous. Ronald Grimes has done much excellent bibliographic work putting at least the writings in English into some kind of order; see his *Research in Ritual Studies* (Grimes 1985). Some of the texts that have influenced my thinking are: Armstrong 1981; d'Aquili, et al. 1979; Geertz 1973, 1980, 1983; Goffman 1967; Grimes 1982, 1990; Handelman 1977; Kapferer 1983; La Barre 1972; MacAloon 1984; Moore and Myerhoff 1977; Rappaport 1968, 1979; Staal 1979; Turner 1969, 1974, 1982, 1986; van Gennep 1960. Even this list is painfully partial. For references of a distinctly ethological kind, see footnote 3.



ideas but in many cases dynamic performative systems generating new materials and recombining traditional actions in new ways.

Whatever the future of ritual, its past is pedigreed. Ethologists, observing animals performing rituals, use the word without quotation marks.² Ethologically speaking, ritual is ordinary behavior transformed by means of condensation, exaggeration, repetition, and rhythm into specialized sequences of behavior serving specific functions usually having to do with mating, hierarchy, or territoriality. In animals, ritualized behavior is often set in "fixed action patterns" elicited automatically by certain kinds of stimuli. These patterns are augmented and highlighted by conspicuous body parts that have evolved over time for use in "ritual displays" – the moose's horns, the peacock's tail, the red rump of a baboon in estrus, the brilliant colors of any number of fish species. Other animals have the ability to dramatically change size or color. The evolution of ritual from an ethological perspective can be diagrammed as a tree (Figure 1). The further up the tree, the closer to human. Nonhuman primates such as chimpanzees and gorillas

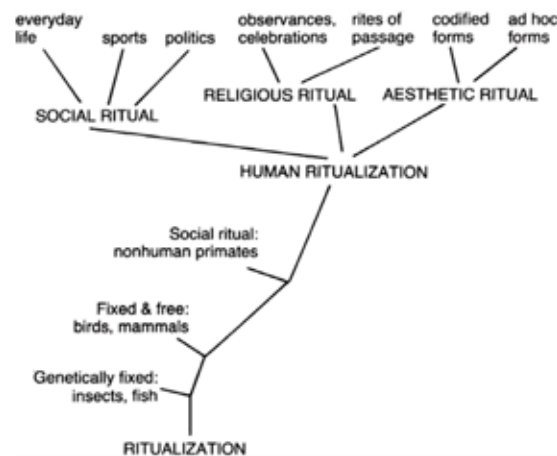


Figure1 The Ritual Tree

behave in some respects very much like humans. Some of their actions closely resemble human performance. Even if nonhuman primates cannot speak as humans do (lacking not only the muscular formations necessary for the articulation of speech but also a well enough developed brain) they can express and communicate feelings. Such expressive behavior, communicating and sharing feelings, might be closer to human ritual and its associated "behavior arts" (theater, dance, music, some kinds of painting) than anything rational or cognitive the "higher apes" are capable of.

But if there are homologies between animal behavior and human rituals and arts

there are important differences also. The patterned "waggle dance" of bees may look like dancing to a human observer predisposed to see such an analogy, but the bees are not dancing in the same sense as a kathakali dancer or the performers in *A Chorus Line* are. For the bees everything is genetically determined. There is no learning or improvisation, no composition classes where new behaviors are invented and tested. Nor are there rehearsals where behaviors are revised, taking into account the particular individual "talent" of this or that bee. The most that can happen is the accidental occurrence of some advantageous genetic variation that will then be passed on. Nor can any bee make a mistake or lie or be resistant. A ballet dancer can choose one night simply not to go up on point though the choreography tells her to do so. She might lose her role, or even her job, but she won't be examined to determine what genetic mutation caused her to go flatfoot. Not so with the "dancing" bees. If they go wrong, or change their basic pattern of behavior, scientists will look into their screwed-up DNA. Human performance is paradoxical, a practiced fixity very hard to achieve because it is founded on contingency. What a weird delight it is for people to go up on point, or recite words written hundreds of years earlier, or perform choreographed ineptitude as clowns do. Even weirder for other people to pay good money (or its equivalent) to watch and savor such behavior. And what is true of ballet or Shakespeare or clowning is true also of the Mass, an initiation rite of Australian aborigines, a Hindu puja, or a World Cup soccer match.

[...] In both animals and humans rituals arise or are devised around disruptive, turbulent, and ambivalent interactions where faulty communication can lead to violent or even fatal encounters. Rituals, and the behavior arts associated with them, are overdetermined, full of redundancy, repetition, and exaggeration. This metamessage of "You get the message, don't you!?" (a question surrounded by emphasis) says that what a ritual communicates is very important yet problematic. The interactions that rituals surround, contain, and mediate almost always concern hierarchy, territory, and sexuality/mating (an interdependent quadruple). If these interactions are the "real events" rituals enfold, then what are the rituals themselves? They are ambivalent symbolic actions pointing at the real transactions even as they help people avoid too direct a confrontation with these events. Thus rituals are also bridges – reliable doings carrying people across dangerous waters. It is no accident that many rituals are "rites of passage".

Both animal and human ritual actions are very close to theater. In theater, too, behavior is rearranged, condensed, exaggerated, and made rhythmic. Theater employs colorful costumes and masks as well as face and body painting every bit as impressive as a peacocks tail or a moose's antlers. In theater, perilous journeys and deadly conflicts are acted through. Even farces and comedies barely hide their violent subtexts. The violence of ritual, like that of theater, is simultaneously present and absent, displayed and deferred. The ritual actions are displayed even as the "real events" are deferred. Two wolves fight and at a certain point one animal gets the better of the other. The vanquished wolf suddenly offers his throat to his opponent but the winning wolf does not – cannot – slash the jugular. Surrender defers death. After the ceremony of offering the throat, the winner allows the loser to slink away. Or in Jewish circumcision an eight day old boy's penis is cut, his foreskin violently taken, as a direct and permanent bodily

2. The work by ethologists on ritual has been extensive. To begin with, see Darwin 1965; Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1970, 1979; Konner 1982; Lorenz 1959, 1961, 1965, 1967; Tinbergen 1965. For a critique of the way scientists – males mostly – have conducted their research with primates see Haraway 1989.

proof of God's special arrangement with the Jews: the deferral granted to Abraham who was willing, on God's word, to sacrifice his son Isaac for whom, at the last minute, a lamb was substituted. Or, following the same theme, when the Christian priest elevates the Eucharistic bread and wine, the grain and liquor are masks for flesh and blood, the real human body, God's lamb and first son, sacrificed on the Cross (God was not as lucky as Abraham). As the way to celebrate Christ's redemptive *sparagmos*, communicants are offered a cannibal feast once removed.

Violence, sexuality, and theater converge in the two main Western traditions, the Greek and the Hebraic Christian. These traditions combine Middle Eastern, northern European, and Eurasian elements – fertility rites, human and animal sacrifice, sun worship, and shamanism. Even a cursory look at Christian iconography and painting as it developed through the Middle Ages into the Renaissance reveals the orgasmic, not to say orgiastic, qualities of martyrdom as imagined and depicted. This display of violence against the body is not limited to bygone epochs. Violence against the body is a strong theme in contemporary art and popular culture. Chris Burden specialized in assaulting his own body, even going so far as to have himself shot; Stelarc exhibits his body suspended by hooks and cords. The violence of certain kinds of rock and roll is well known. American football, boxing, and especially professional wrestling celebrate a highly theatricalized violence. Special automobile shows called "demolition derbies" feature high speed car crashes and "monster trucks" whose specialty is crushing other vehicles beneath their gargantuan wheels. With the exception of wrestling, these events – as distinct from the extraordinarily graphic scenes of violence in the movies (often in slow motion in order to emphasize the spectacularity and bloody detail of the violence) – are not simulated. A close look at these violent displays cannot but disclose their erotic content.

[...] What of all this violence, examples of which could be multiplied many times over from different cultures around the world? It is not part of "real life". The first time or "original" violence of real life is anything but redemptive. Humans need to "make something out" of the violence of real life, if at first only by repetition. The rebroadcasting of events like the assassination of John F. Kennedy or the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle are kinds of low-level ritualizing, an attempt to absorb and transform the violence of the event itself into something redemptive. When official real-life violence approaches the absolute, as at Auschwitz Birkenau, the memorials and museums meant to commemorate seem almost to parody. [...]

But human ritual [...] might be said to short circuit thinking, providing ready-made answers to deal with crisis. Individual and collective anxieties are relieved by rituals whose qualities of repetition, rhythmicity, exaggeration, condensation, and simplification stimulate the brain into releasing endorphins directly into the bloodstream yielding ritual's second benefit, a relief from pain, a surfeit of pleasure. In saying that religion was the opium of the people, Marx may have been right biochemically speaking. But ritual is also creative because, as Turner showed, the ritual process opens up a time/space of antistructural playfulness. And whereas in animals the non-cognitive is dominant, in humans there is always a dialectical tension between the cognitive and the affective.

René Girard in his *Violence and the Sacred* [...] believes (and I agree) that ritual

sublimates violence: "The function of ritual is to 'purify' violence; that is to 'trick' violence into spending itself on victims whose death will provoke no reprisals" (Girard 1977, 36). All this sounds very much like theater – especially a theater whose function is cathartic, or at least a theater that "redirects" violent and erotic energies. Cathartic or not, theater always manufactures substitutes, specializing in multiplying alternatives. Is it accidental that so many of these alternatives combine the violent with the erotic?

The "sacrificial crisis," as Girard sees it, is the dissolution of distinctions within a society – from the erasure of the reciprocal rights/responsibilities of parents to/from their children, to the elision of all hierarchy. Incest and regicide are radical attacks on differentiation. Girard, a dyed-in-the-wool advocate of differentiation, says: "Wherever differences are lacking, violence threatens" (Girard 1977, 57). The enactment of ritual death – whether the victim is actually or theatrically killed – restores distinctions by emphasizing the difference between the victim and the rest of society:

The surrogate victim plays the same role on the collective level as the objects the shamans claim to extract from their patients play on the individual level-objects that are then identified as the cause of the illness (Girard 1977, 83).

In theater the substitutions are more complex than in shamanism. In theater the actor is a substitute for a surrogate. The actor who plays Oedipus or Lear or Willie Loman is not that "character" who itself is not a "real person." There may be no "real person" at all behind the scenes, but only the play of embodied representations:

[victim] → character → actor: audience ← [society].

At the place where the actor meets the audience, that is, in the theater place, society faces the sacrificial victim twice-removed. The individuals who comprise an audience "leave" society and "go to" the theater where they play the role of society, responding more as a group than as discrete individuals. The actor performs the character behind whom is the victim. The actor's performance is a representation of a representation. But in a ritual like the Eucharist, a layer of representation is stripped away from the actor's side. There is no character. The priest, an actor on behalf of Christ, faces the congregation which, like the theater audience, represents society, in this case the society of Christians (of the same denomination).

[victim]→actor: congregations←[society]

Still there is no direct meeting between society and victim. The priest performing the Eucharist "elevates" Christ while the congregants "stand for" the Christians they are. In some rituals, an animal takes the place of a human victim. And in other rituals a person faces the representatives of society directly and an actual sacrifice takes place:

victim: celebrants←[society]

This is very rarely the sacrifice of a human life. It may be a cutting or scarring or burning, etc.; or the exchange of rings, the giving of a thread, an immersion, or some other irrevocable act. Is it proper to use the term "victim" to describe a person who is not only not harmed but often celebrated? In these cases is there even the shadow of a sacrificial victim? Take the exchange of wedding rings. Certainly there is a suggestion of bondage. The gold ring is a master's gift marking and enclosing she (or he) who wears it. Before the custom of the double ring ceremony, it was the bride who was "given" to the husband and she alone who wore the ring. And the failure to live up to the arrangement of submission still does, in some cases, lead to violence and death. Or what can the burning candles on a birthday cake blown out by the celebrant signify if not the brevity of life and the temporary reprieve granted to one whom death will someday claim?

There are ways other than Girard's to explain the widespread association of violence, sexuality, ritual, and theater. In *Totem and Taboo* (originally published in 1913) Freud proposed an analogy between the thought of animists, neurotics, children, and artists.

It is easy to perceive the motives which lead men to practice magic: they are human wishes. All we need to suppose is that primitive man had an immense belief in the power of his wishes (Freud 1962, 83).

[...] Freud notes one mode of "civilized thought" that remains unreconstructed.

In only a single field of our civilization has the omnipotence of thoughts been retained, and that is in the field of art. Only in art does it still happen that a man who is consumed by desires performs something resembling the accomplishment of those desires and that what he does in play produces emotional effects – thanks to artistic illusion – just as though it were something real. People speak with justice of the "magic of art" and compare artists to magicians. But the comparison is perhaps more significant than it claims to be. There can be no doubt that art did not begin as art for art's sake. It worked originally in the service of impulses which are for the most part extinct today. And among them we may suspect the presence of many magical purposes (Freud 1962, 90).

Extinct impulses? Looking at Freud through a contemporary lens means throwing out the notion that some humans are more "primitive" – or "aboriginal" – than others.

[...] What we have is a diversity of cultures none of which is closer to the "beginning of human history" than any other. Each culture embodies its own system of organizing experience.

Crediting Freud with extraordinary insight, how can it be restated to suit today's view of things? Perhaps we should say that certain systems are more porous in relation to the unconscious than other systems. But the ways in which this porosity is encouraged or repressed, guarded, regulated, and used, differ vastly not only from culture to culture but within every culture, and even within each individual. Children, crazies, and

"technicians of the sacred" each encounter and filter differently what Anton Ehrenzweig calls "primary process" (Ehrenzweig 1970).

[...] Becoming an artist, even in the West, is not unlike learning to be a shaman. The techniques and ambivalent social status of artist and shaman approximate each other. In modern Western cultures it might be said that the impulses from which art is made – the experiences of the artist (the shaman's "call," the artist's "raw material") – originate in difficult confrontations between daily life and the unconscious. In many cultures such impulses are said to originate with gods, ancestors, demons, ghosts, etc. I believe these represent relatively unmediated material streaming into consciousness, Ehrenzweig's "primary process." The impulses manifest themselves in dreams, visions, obsessive thoughts, trance possession, speaking in tongues, and half hidden, feared yet irresistible violent and erotic wishes. Sometimes these impulses and their manifestations make the recipient feel ecstatic, happy beyond the power of description, and sometimes the recipient is terrified.

[...] But that which terrifies the neurotic the artist seeks to play out publicly. Or, as is frequently the case, the artist neurotic (or shaman-neurotic) is compelled to explore the very process that terrifies her/him. It is fashionable today to say that artists are healthy while neurotics are sick – that ten years of art are equivalent to a psychoanalytic cure (Sartre 1963, 544). Maybe. But from an operational perspective, art and neurosis are closely linked because both behaviors are generated by a porous and shifting boundary between the unconscious and the conscious. And what art manipulates on an individual basis, ritual does collectively. Ritual gives violence its place at the table of human needs. As Kafka noted:

Leopards break into the temple and drink to the dregs what is in the sacrificial pitchers; this is repeated over and over again; finally it can be calculated in advance, and it becomes part of the ceremony (Kafka 1954, 40).

Humans need to perform rituals. Where is this need located? Eugene d'Aquili *et al.* place it in the brain (d'Aquili, Laughlin and McManus 1979). [...]

D'Aquili *et al.* propose what they call a "cognitive imperative." A human being "automatically, almost reflexly, confronts an unknown stimulus by the question "What is it?" Affective responses such as fear, happiness, or sadness and motor responses are clearly secondary to the immediate cognitive response" (d'Aquili, Laughlin and McManus 1979, 168). If their thesis is true, then humans work from the top down, from the present to the past (evolutionarily speaking). Furthermore, narrativity – the need to construct a plausible story – is not only hard wired into the brain but dominant. This contradicts what I said earlier – that ritual short-circuits thought.

The contradiction can be resolved by supposing that ritualizing – the performance of ritual – is not a simple, one step, one way operation. My own experience from running many performance workshops during the past twenty-five years, is that rhythmic activities – especially if movement and sound-making are carefully coordinated and maintained for long periods of time – invariably lead to feelings of "identical opposites": omnipotence/vulnerability, tranquility/readiness for the most demanding physical

action. In other words, the narrative-cognitive stimulus works from the cerebral cortex down while the movement sonic stimulus works from the lower brain up. Performing a ritual, or a ritualized theater piece or exercise, is both narrative (cognitive) and affective. These work together to form the experience of ritualizing. If d'Aquili et al. are right, the affective states aroused by ritual are necessarily nested within a narrative frame. But from within – the experience of a person performing – the narrative frame dissolves, the action is just "done," not thought about.

Barbara Lex, another of d'Aquili's associates, proposes that trance, and other supremely affective states of flow, result from the extreme stimulation of both the ergotropic and trophotropic systems of the brain.³ [...]

Or, as Turner put it:

The rhythmic activity of ritual, aided by sonic, visual, photic, and other kinds of "driving," may lead in time to simultaneous maximal stimulation of both systems, causing ritual participants to experience what the authors [d'Aquili *et al.*] call "positive, ineffable affect." They also use Freud's term "oceanic experience," as well as "yogic ecstasy," also the Christian term *unio mystica*, an experience of the union of those cognitively discriminated opposites typically generated by binary, digital left-hemispherical ratiocination. I suppose one might also use the Zen term *satori* (the integrating flash), and one could add the Quakers' "inner light," Thomas Merton's "transcendental consciousness," and the yogic *samadhi* (Turner 1983, 230).

People seek experiences that provide a "rebound" or "spillover," simultaneously exciting both left and right hemispheres of the forebrain (see Fischer 1971; Turner 1983; Schechner 1988).

The ethological and neurological theories answer some questions but what they don't explain are the creative and playful aspects of ritual. Direct investigation of these aspects has been undertaken by some anthropologists and artists.

[...] the biology of the brain as modeled by neuroanatomist Paul MacLean. The human brain, MacLean theorized, is really three-in-one, a "triune brain" evolutionarily speaking, consisting of a "recent" frontal cortex, the seat of thought, a subcortical or "old mammalian" brain, the seat of emotions¹ and the oldest part of the brain the "reptilian." According to Turner's reading of MacLean, the reptilian brain is:

the brain stem, an upward growth of the spinal cord and the most primitive part of the brain, which we share with all vertebrate creatures and which has remained remarkably unchanged throughout the myriads of years of evolution... What MacLean did was to show that. ...the reptilian brain, whether in reptiles, birds, or mammals, is not only concerned with control of movement, but also

3. Flow as defined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi is "the merging of action and awareness. A person in flow has no dualistic perspective: he is aware of his actions but not the awareness itself. [...] The steps for experiencing flow [...] involve the [...] process of delimiting reality, controlling some aspect of it, and responding to the feedback with a concentration that excludes anything else as irrelevant." (Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 38, 53-54).

with the storage and control of what is called "instinctive behavior" – the fixed action patterns and innate releasing mechanisms so often written about by the ethologists, the genetically preprogrammed perceptualmotor sequences such as emotional displays, territorial defense behaviors, and nest building (Turner 1983, 226).

Turner felt that human ritual was founded in the "reptilian brain" and he saw in MacLean's model of the triune brain a possible unifying theory:

How does [MacLean's model] fit with Freud's model of the id, ego, and superego, with Carl Jung's model of the collective unconscious and archetypes, with neo-Darwinian theories of selection, and especially with cross-cultural anthropological studies and historical studies in comparative religion? ... To what extent is it true that human feelings, hopes, and fears of what is most sacred are a necessary ingredient in generating decisions and motivating their implementation?... If ritualization, as discussed by [Julian] Huxley, [Konrad] Lorenz, and other ethologists, has a biogenetic foundation, while meaning has a neocortical learned base, does this mean that creative processes, those which generate new cultural knowledge, might result from a coadaptation, perhaps in the ritual process itself, of genetic and cultural information? We also can ask whether the neocortex is the seat of programs largely structured by the culture through the transmission of linguistic and other symbol systems to modify the expression of genetic programs. How far, we might add, do these higher symbols, including those of religion and ritual, derive their meaning and force for action from their association with earlier established neural levels of animal ritualization? (Turner 1983, 228).

Whether or not MacLean's key unlocks the mysteries of the brain thereby disclosing the biogenetic sources of ritual (and the odds are against it, the triune brain hypothesis is no longer accepted by most brain neurologists), the idea shows how strong the desire is to connect the ethological and neurological, the "scientific," with the imagery of "old" cultures. There is a wish for validation and mutual confirmation. Ritual is given several faces – that of the very "oldest" behavior rooted in what the "reptiles" do; that of "old cultures" who intuit what Western scientists such as d'Aquili, Lex, and MacLean find in their research; that of a repository of "higher symbols" and religion. Activating what Turner theorizes, [Felicita D.] Goodman [founder of the Cuyamungue Institute, New Mexico] and Grotowski say they have found (or synthesized or invented) precise practices – rituals – drawn from or invented to be like the wisdoms of old cultures, wisdoms that answer the needs of "modern people." At the end of his life, Turner believed the patterns underlying these wisdoms were genetically based.

[...] Turner's speculations at the end of his life closely paralleled Grotowski's work. Grotowski begins with "objective" elements-tempo, iconography, movement patterns, sounds. The research is not historical, not how the Sanskrit "om" and English "Amen"

(a transliteration of the Hebrew "Awmain") may be versions of the same ur mantra; but that the open "uh" sound followed by a "hummed" closure is a sequence found in a number of cultures because it expresses brain structure. [...]

Like Grotowski, Turner searched for ritual's creative powers (Turner 1969, 1983, 1986). He wanted to show how ritual was not just a conservator of evolutionary and cultural behavior, but a generator of new images, new ideas, and new practices. [...] As Turner himself notes, there is a contradiction between his theories of playful liminality and the ethological-neurological propositions. To ethologists and neurologists ritual is central both to behavior and to brain structure/function. But Turner locates ritual "betwixt-and-between," in cultural creases and margins, making it more like play than anything else. The ritual process is liminal-liminoid, unauthorized, antistructural, subjunctive ("if"), and subversive. The contradiction also expresses the difference between Turner's social perspective and the ethologist's-neurologist's biological one. This difference is a version of an old, insoluble argument between determinists and those who assert that humans are free to make their own destinies.

It would be foolish to dismiss out of hand the practice and thought of two such visionaries as Grotowski and Turner – especially where their work converges. [...] Much as I admire Turner, I am uncomfortable with this attempt to relocate and thereby resolve the "problems" of ritual in the workings of evolution or, more specifically, of what he called "the most sensitive and eloquent instrument of Gaea the Earth-spirit-the cerebral organ" (Turner 1983, 243). I am uncomfortable with Grotowski's Performer and with wisdom that exists before or behind genres, in the "original" times, in the "old cultures". These anthologies of cultures; or the wish for globalism; strike me as premature because they are unavoidably expressions of Western hegemony, attempts to cull and harvest the world's cultures. Maybe later in history, if there is more equality of power, more actual multiculturalism, but not now.

[...] Turner went far beyond van Gennep when he said that the artworks and leisure activities of industrial and postindustrial societies were like the rituals of tribal, agrarian, and traditional societies. He called the arts and leisure activities "liminoid." Liminal rites are obligatory while liminoid activities are voluntary. Workshops of experimental theater and dance – including Grotowski's and Goodman's – are liminoid laboratories of psychophysical initiation. Some of the transformations accomplished by workshops are temporary, used to make specific performances and that's all. But sometimes workshops effect permanent transformations. An aesthetic ritual initiation can be as consequential and permanent as anything wrought on an aborigine. The "parashamans" of experimental theater and dance, Grotowski among them, intend aesthetics to yield initiatory permanence (see Grimes 1982, 255-66).

Parashamanism turns orthodox ritual on its head. Ethological procedures are mimicked, neurological responses elicited – but in the service of ideas and visions of society that are anything but conservative. In nonhuman animals ritual is a way of increasing signal clarity in order to mediate crisis. It is often this among humans too – but it is also something else: a means of conserving and transmitting traditional cultural knowledge and individual patterns of behavior. Turner knew this, but he

did not emphasize it. He focused instead on how the ritual process is a machine for introducing new behaviors or undermining established systems. This led him away from traditional or liminal rituals toward investigating the way artists work, the techniques of the parashamans, and to his own theatrical work in "performing ethnography" (Turner and Turner 1982).

It is precisely when this creative and/or subversive function of ritual dominates, spills over its usually well-defined boundaries, that art separates from – and sometimes opposes – religion. [...]

© Richard Schechner

The original text has been abridged by Leszek Kolankiewicz.

Bibliography

- Armstrong, Robert Plant. 1981. *The Powers of Presence: Consciousness, Myth, and Affecting Presence*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- d'Aquili, Eugene G.; Charles D. Laughlin, Jr.; John McManus, with Tom Burns [et al.]. 1979. *The Spectrum of Ritual: A Biogenetic Structural Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. 1975. *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Darwin, Charles. 1965. *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Preface by Konrad Lorenz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ehrenzweig, Anton. 1970. *The Hidden Order of Art: A Study in the Psychology of Artistic Imagination*. London: Paladin.
- Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Irenäus. 1970. *Ethology, the Biology of Behavior*. Translated by Erich Klinghammer. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- . 1979. "Ritual and Ritualization from a Biological Perspective." In *Human Ethology: Claims and Limits of a New Discipline: Contributions to the Colloquium*, edited by Mario von Cranach [et al.], 3-55. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fischer, Roland. 1971. "A Cartography of the Ecstatic and Meditative States." *Science* 174: 897-904.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1952 (1913). *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement Between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. Authorized translation by James Strachey. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- . 1980. *Negara: The Theater State in Nineteenth-century Bali*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1983. *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Girard, René. 1977. *Violence and the Sacred*. Translated by Patrick Gregory. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to-face Behavior*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- Grimes, Ronald L. 1982. *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*. Washington DC: University Press of America.
- . 1985. *Research in Ritual Studies: A Programmatic Essay and Bibliography*. Chicago and Metuchen: The American Theological Library Association – Scarecrow Press.
- . 1990. *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in its Practice, Essays on its Theory*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.
- Handelman, Don. 1977. "Play and Ritual: Complementary Frames of Meta-communication." In *It's a Funny Thing, Humour*, edited by Antony J. Chapman and Hugh C. Foot. Oxford and New York: Pergamon Press.
- Haraway, Donna. 1989. *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*. New York: Routledge.
- Kafka, Franz. 1954. *Dearest Father: Stories and Other Writings*. Translated by Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins. New York: Schocken Books.
- Kapferer, Bruce. 1983. *A Celebration of Demons: Exorcism and the Aesthetics of Healing in Sri Lanka*. Bloomington:

- Indiana University Press.
- Konner, Melvin. 1982. *The Tangled Wing: Biological Constraints on the Human Spirit*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- La Barre, Weston. 1972. *The Ghost Dance: Origins of Religion*. New York: Dell.
- Lorenz, Konrad. 1959. "The role of aggression in group formation." In *Group Processes: Transactions of the Fourth Conference 1957*. Translated by Bertram Schaffner. New York: Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation.
- . 1961. *King Solomon's Ring*. Translated by Marjorie Kerr Wilson. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co.
- . 1965. *Evolution and Modification of Behavior*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1967. *On Aggression*. Translated by Marjorie Kerr Wilson. New York: Bantam Books.
- MacAloon, John J. ed. 1984. *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals Toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.
- Moore, Sally F. and Barbara G. Myerhoff, eds. 1977. *Secular Ritual*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
- Rappaport, Roy A. 1968. *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a New Guinea People*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- . 1979. *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion*. Richmond: North Atlantic Books.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. 1963. *Saint Genet, Actor and Martyr*. Translated by Bernard Frechtman. New York: G. Braziller.
- Schechner, Richard. 1988. *Performance Theory*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Staal, Frits. 1979. "The Meaninglessness of Ritual." *Numen* 26 (1): 2–22.
- Tinbergen, Niko. 1965. *Social Behaviour in Animals with Special Reference to Vertebrates*. London: Scientific Book Club.
- Turner, Victor W. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure*. Chicago, Aldine Pub. Co.
- . 1974. *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 1982. *From Ritual to Theater: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.
- . 1983. "Body, Brain, and Culture." *Zygon* 18 (3): 22–45.
- . 1986. *The Anthropology of Performance*. Preface by Richard Schechner. New York: PAJ Publications.
- , and Edith Turner. 1982. "Performing Ethnography." *TDR The Drama Review* 26 (2): 33–50.
- van Gennep, Arnold. 1960. *The Rites of Passage*. Translated by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.



The Birth Ritual, Dionysus in 69, The Performance Group directed by Richard Schechner (1969).
Photo: Max Waldman, courtesy of Richard Schechner

Richard Schechner

Points of Contact between Anthropology and Theater, Again

Abstract: *A version of this essay appeared shortly after Victor Turner's death in Schechner's volume Between Theatre and Anthropology, with the title Points of Contact Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought (Routledge, London and New York 1985, pp. 3–33). In this new version Schechner attempts to broaden Turner's ideas on liminality and does so by adding three more points of contact to the original list of six, a circumstance which allows him to analyze the performative qualities of the Paleolithic caveman, to reinterpret the ancient theory of Sanskrit performance in a contemporary key, to analyze the techniques through which Grotowski stimulates and brings alive the body-memory. In conclusion, referring to his notes detailing the seminar he co-led at the New York University in 1978 (with Turner, Erving Goffman, and Alexander Alland), Schechner shares memories of his collaboration with the Turners. The full version of this essay has been published in Experiential and Performative Anthropology in the Classroom, edited by Pamela R. Frese and Susan Brownell (Routledge, London and New York 2020, pp. 21–37).*

Keywords: *Victor Turner, Anthropology, Restored behavior, Jerzy Grotowski*

I don't want to forget that anthropology as an idea, a practice, an epistemology (of "other" cultures) began as, and in service to, both capitalist-colonial expansion and aggressive Christian missionaryism. The colonial powers and corporations had to "know" the "natives" they were ruling and exploiting; and the churches wanted to expand their belief-reach, perhaps to save souls, but more pertinently to transform populations from "strange" (Verfremdung, in Brecht's sense) to "familiar", the better to manage. This is not to deny that many, if not most, individual anthropologists were "good people", sympathetic to those they were investigating, determined to "improve" their standards of living, and so on. It was not the first time, nor the last, that good soldiers were enlisted in a bad war.

There are points of contact linking anthropology to theater.¹ Performance is a broad spectrum of actions including but far surpassing the performing arts. The spectrum ranges from secular and sacred rituals, play, and arts to politics, sports, popular entertainments, business, government, medicine, and the activities of everyday life. In what

1. A version of this essay, called "Points of Contact Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought", was the first chapter of my pointedly titled *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Schechner 1985, 3–33). Published two years after Victor Turner's death, I wanted "between" to announce my intention of further extending Turner's ideas about liminality into the then almost-brand-new field of Performance Studies whose first academic department had come into existence at New York University in 1980. I revised the essay for my *Performed Imaginaries* (Schechner 2015, 151–82), where it was the last chapter. At hand, is still another version.



ways are acting, shamanizing, marketing, ruling, competing, healing, and presenting ourselves socially and personally expressions of the same process? What is this process? It is imagination, the human ability to pretend, the human capacity to be self and other simultaneously, to exist in the here and now as well as in the enormously diverse possibilities of wherever, whenever, and whomever.

The six "points of contact" discussed in *Between Theater and Anthropology* were:

1. Transformation of being and/or consciousness
2. Intensity of performance
3. Audience-performer interactions
4. The whole performance sequence
5. Transmission of performance knowledge
6. How are performances generated and evaluated?

These points of contact are just that: arenas of human imagination where performance theorists and practitioners hailing from the arts and anthropologists find common concerns. In this regard, anthropology is not a quantitative problem-solving "science" in the STEM sense, but a creative "art," thinking that is imaginative, that creates its objects of study by studying them, that (if you will) plays "deeply" in Clifford Geertz's sense of taking risks (see Geertz 1972).

Where do I stand today on these points of contact? Paradoxically, even with the advent of big data and algorithmic "solutions" to so many problems, the points of contact are valid. Even further, I would add three more which I think would please the Turners:

1. Embodiment. Epistemologies and practices which enact the unity of feeling, thinking, and doing. This work follows from the Turners' theories and practices of "performing ethnographies" of the 1970s-80s. [...] It critiques classical "objective" scholarship and respects indigenous theory-in/as-action.

2. The sources of human culture are performative. What makes humans "different," if not unique? Upright stance and bipedal locomotion, thumb and finger dexterity, controlling fire, tool making, clothing, metaphoric language, story-telling, depicting and enacting fantasy? No single biological, behavioral, or cultural trait sets humans apart. It is the confluence of them all, the incredible diversity and complexity of the package, that marks homo sapiens. This package is "performativity": the ability of humans to "twice behave," to play with behavior.

3. The brain as a performance site. What do trance performances, catharsis and empathy, mirror neurons, and emotional training techniques such as "rasaboxes"² have in common? To what degree can the brain be "tuned" by rhythm, music, dance, and song? This was the bundle of ideas Victor Turner was exploring in "Body, Brain, and Culture" (see Turner 1986, 156-178).

Twice-behaved behavior is restored behavior:³ a broad spectrum of entertainments, arts, rituals, politics, economics, and person to-person interactions. Everything and anything can be studied "as" performance.

2. Rasaboxes is a performer training technique I developed in the 1990s – and which is practiced and further developed today. Rasaboxes combines South Asian and Western theories and practices. See Mee 2014 and Bowditch, Cole, and Minnick 2020 [...]

3. I have developed the notion of "restored behavior" in several essays, most particularly in "Restoration of Behavior" in *Between Theater and Anthropology* (1985, 35-116).

Let me now look in a little more at each of the new points of contact.

Embodiment. Experience as the basis of indigenous knowledge that is shared through performing. Magnat begins her 2011 essay "Conducting Embodied Research at the Intersection of Performance Studies, Experimental Ethnography, and Indigenous Methodologies":

Embodiment, lived experience and intersubjectivity are key to experimental approaches articulated at the intersection of performance and ethnography (Magnat 2011, 213). [...]

Magnat demands that we take seriously not only the world views but the epistemologies-methodologies of "indigenous" peoples. As Manulani Aluli Meyer writes: "knowing is embodied and in union with cognition. [...] Genuine knowledge must be experienced directly" (Meyer 2008, 224).

This "genuine knowledge" is the indigenous knowledge that Candomblé and Capoeira practitioners – and the practitioners of hundreds of other kinds of performances all around the world – experience. Is this kind of knowledge any less "genuine" than what a person learns via books, lectures, classroom study, or over the internet? And who is "indigenous"? We are each and all "indigenous" to someone else. It used to be that everyone not-Western, not following the dictates of the Enlightenment, were outside the pale of knowledge. Knowledge itself was deemed to be Western. This conclusion went hand-in-glove with the work of missionaries, colonialists, and the plyers of global trade – including especially the massive slave trade that brought millions from Africa to the Western Hemisphere. The enslaved brought their cultures with them. Almost from the very start of the invasion-settlement of the Western Hemisphere, the European was infused on the one side by African practices and on the other by Native American theories and practices.

Over time some non-Western literate cultures – of India, China, and Japan especially, – were admitted to the superior "Club of Us" while cultures whose knowledge was expressed via orature,⁴ shamanizing, music, dance, costume, masks, and visual arts were relegated to the "Club of Not Yet." With globalization – a circulation of ideas, objects, people, and performances – it is no longer feasible to separate out these clubs. Especially in the world of arts where people working in/from New York or São Paulo or Tokyo or Shanghai or Dubai or Lagos or Capetown... and on through a very long list the notion of "native" or "indigenous" as distinct from "cultivated" or "cosmopolitan" has evaporated along with notions of "wild" or "wilderness." All that's left are reserves, parks, and zoos. To put it bluntly, "nature" no longer exists on its own; it is dependent on homo sapiens.

*

In all this dispersal of the indigenous, of embodied knowledge, a profound collaboration between performative and anthropological thought is entrained. But, for all that, is

4. To better understand "orature", see Thiong'o 1998 and 2007.

knowledge really equal? Anthropology still, and correctly in my opinion, depends on a positivist discourse. And where do we house the "truths" of religions ranging from the Big Five (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism) to the myriad other belief systems accounting for the physical and spirit worlds? Not to mention Creationists, Scientologists, Wiccans, and hundreds of other – what shall I call them – "cults"? Is the knowledge danced at a Candomblé *terreiro* to be given equal weight to the existence of the Higgs boson [...] Is the Large Hadron Collider's work and discovery less mysterious than the trance dancing of Shango or the other orixá? In terms of people's daily lives, which has more effect?

[...] The sources of human culture are performative. Early homo sapiens – anatomically modern humans – arrived in Western Europe about 50,000 years BP replacing Neandertals but also interacting and even inter-breeding with them. These modern humans were not farmers or villagers; they were hunter-gatherers. Their bands didn't stay rooted in one spot, but neither did they wander aimlessly. Each band had its own circuit: a more or less fixed route through time/space. This route was determined by seasonal vegetation and the movement of prey. Ceremonial centers were used over and over for vast stretches of time, millennia. Cave art evidences these centers, but maybe there were also fresh-air sites, long obliterated. The cultural level of these early modern Europeans – at least in terms of painting and sculpting – was very high: the masterpieces of the caves of Southwest Europe and the mobile art of Eurasia are testimony enough. Cave art from far back exists in many parts of the world. In fact, the earliest known depictions are from Indonesia (see Price 2019).

Of course, this art was not objects-to-be-collected-and-sold or "art for art's sake." The cave art, footprints of adolescents moving in a circular pattern, and bone flutes are the remains of what were complex ceremonial-ritual practices. That the art were part of or accompanied performances and was not designed for relaxed viewing as in museums or art galleries is clear from what the caves were: pitch-dark except for animal-oil lamps and torches; some are cold and wet; much of the art is difficult to access, made in cramped, out of the way spaces – almost as if part of the "message" is the effort, almost ordeal, necessary to come face-to-face with the representations.

A sunken river guards the fearsome Tuc d'Audoubert, two hundred long underground feet of which one breasts or boats upon before the first land; then comes a precarious thirty-foot steep shaft up ladders placed there and slippery pegs [neither probably there in paleolithic times]; and next a crawl through claustrophobic low passages, to reach the startling footprints of ancient dancers in bare feet and the models of copulating bison, in clay on the floor beyond (La Barre 1972, 397).

Certainly, this is not the Louvre, or any venue where people stand back and admire works.

And, don't forget, there was a lot more going on in the caves than image-making. The shamans were performers. They danced; they initiated the youths whose footprints remain on cave floors. No doubt people sang stories through long dark nights. As

Homer reminds us: "These nights are endless, and a man can sleep through them, or he can enjoy listening to stories." (*The Odyssey* XV, 392-3) The ability to story-tell – to weave a single narrative fabric of truths, lies, and fantasies – is one of humankind's most impressive and unique accomplishments. Part of the great cultural leap forward of the paleolithic was the integration of story-telling, dancing, and singing. This performative was transferred from one event to another: the style, if not the substance, of the narrations, choreographies, melodies, and rhythms, were known by makers and partakers. Were there any spectators as such? The performances were taught by one group, or shaman-artist, to the next. As the word tradition denotes, performance knowledge was passed on by means of cultural trade.

Furthermore, there were scripts – not something carved in stone or inscribed on parchment, but embodied "known" scenarios that pre-and-post-dated every particular enactment: a what to do and a way to do it. Each specific evanescent performance kept and transmitted the script which was more important than any single re-presentation. The scripts are performance knowledge, life-sustaining knowledge; knowledge that later would be called "sacred." And, when so, the performances would be called "rituals." But at first there were no such categories. People did these things for many reasons, including entertainment, which must not be thought of disparagingly. Keeping the scripts intact guaranteed the efficacy of the rites; abandoning the scripts endangered the cultural continuity of the group. In other words, in paleolithic ritual performance, as today, doing is a manifestation more than a representation. At least some of the caves were theaters. We probably will never know with certainty what the functions of the cave art were. Indeed, the functions may have changed over time. Some caves were in use for millennia.

Mostly scholars focus on the visuals, the paintings and sculptures, plus some enigmatic dots and other signs and handprints, are what survives. But what *happened* in the caves is as important – if we can find it out – then the visual traces. I believe that what actually grabbed people at the time was experiential: the sounds and movements enacted within caves, probably with an emphasis on the sounds. As John Pfeiffer writes:

caves are wonderful places for acoustic as well as visual effects. Underground ceremonies must have been designed to take advantage of and shatter the silence [...] Imagine the sound of bullroarers nearby in an underground labyrinth, the sound of flutes rising high and clear as a human cry or a bird from place impossible to locate (Pfeiffer 1982, 183).

In 2009, a bone five-finger hole flute dated 35k BP was discovered in Hohle Fels, Germany; in 2012, flutes from the nearby Geissenkosterle cave were dated to 42-43k BP. Pfeiffer notes that:

archeologists digging at a site on a tributary of the Dnieper River northeast of Kiev unearthed a set of mammoth bones painted red which they believe served as percussion instruments: hip-bone xylophone, skull and shoulder blade drums, and jawbone castanets. [...] The high-stepping, bison-horned man in Trois Frères

seems to be playing an instrument which has been interpreted as a pipe or musical bow (Pfeiffer 1982, 180).

Theaters are what Yann-Pierre Montelle thinks the caves were. Montelle reminds us that in Latin *cava*, meaning "cave," is etymologically related to *cavea*, the auditorium of a theater, or the theater itself. The link is in the sense of a "cavity" or hollow space. Montelle theorizes the continuity from the paleolithic caves to ancient theater is not in narrative patterns but in theater architecture. [...] Montelle points out that this paleolithic theatricality – though clearly present in Europe – is seen also "in the Americas, Australia, China, India, Central Asia, [Southeast Asia], and the Middle East. This global phenomenon helps confirm the emergence and ubiquity of theatricality on a global scale" (Montelle 2009, 4).

The brain as a performance site. Recent studies of the brain – supported by fMRI imaging, lead in two contradictory directions. First:

the case is being made for the biological basis of a wide range of behaviors and social problems once thought to be moral or psychological matters. In the law, neuroscientific knowledge is being presented as a challenge to notions of free will and personal responsibility, and biologized notions of morality are being offered through the use of fMRI in courtroom settings. In evolutionary psychology the brain has been marshaled to support conservative ideas about social roles (Pitts-Taylor 2010, 636).

[...] Not so long ago it was thought that the brain is "set" early in life; that neural learning was an early-life phenomenon. But now scientists know that the brain changes throughout life. Not only does it deteriorate, as in Alzheimer's and similar dementias, but, more importantly for what I am discussing, new neurons are created, new synaptic connections made, and older connections weakened or strengthened. In other words, the brain can be trained throughout life. Such training can proceed "automatically" or in response to conscious control. A brain able to learn and rewire itself challenges biological reductionism.

The plastic brain is a situated brain, culturally, biologically and socially. [...] Each brain responds to its environment and also to its own workings over the lifespan (Pitts-Taylor 2010, 637).

To date, most neural experiments and brain studies deal with the "brain in the head," what is encased in the skull. But there is also a very important second brain, a "brain in the belly." This brain is the enteric nervous system (ENS). The ENS is about 400 million neurons – about the same number as in the spinal cord – lining the esophagus, stomach, small and large intestines, pancreas, gallbladder, and biliary tree; the nerves within the muscles of the gut's wall; and the nerve fibers that connect these neurons to each other. The ENS operates more or less independently from the brain to which it is linked by the vagus nerve. Vagus – meaning wandering (as in vagrant) – goes from the brain

stem through the neck, thorax, and digestive system affecting breathing, digestion, and heart-beat. About 90% of the vagus nerve sends messages from the ENS to the brain informing the brain about what's going on "down there." About 10% of the vagus nerve sends regulatory messages from the brain back to the belly (and other organs affected by the vagus). The ENS is a complex neuron network able to act independently, learn, remember, and, as the saying goes, produce gut feelings (Blakeslee 1996, C1).

I learned about the ENS in relation to developing rasaboxes, a psychophysical training method I devised that links Sanskrit performance theory as expounded in the *Natyasastra*, a manual of theater training from about 2000 years ago, to modern theater practice, and my own work in actor training. The rasabox work organically linked the ENS, Asian martial arts, and actor training. Rasa theory in *Natyasastra* states that aesthetic experience – both from the performer's and the partakers' experience – is of tasting and sharing the flavor, the "juice" (rasa), of what is performed. Aesthetic experience is not so much visual as it is visceral. The Asian martial arts speak often and in detail about the region between the pubic bone and the navel as the center of the body's energy. My rasaboxes work concentrated on exploring the connections between these realms of knowledge.

[...] Rasabox training explores the deep empathy confirmed by the observation of "mirror neurons": when someone performs an action and/or feels an emotion, specific neurons fire – and when spectators watch performances in life, dance, theater, film, etc. – the *same neurons* fire in the observers' brain as in the performers. In other words, spectators perform in their imagination along with the performers they observe. This is true not only visually, but with regard to all the senses. In fact, smell and taste are more powerful and "primal" than sight and hearing in this regard. It all goes to demonstrated that emotions are physical, embodied, and contagious. [...] both brains – the one in the head, the other in the belly, can be trained. What's needed are more systematic efforts at enhancing and enlarging the communication between the two neuron networks – and further explorations of our complicated neuron networks connecting people to each other. Our bodies do not end with our skin but extend beyond into the brains of others.

Where does anthropology and performance come in? If the brain is plastic, if it is shaped by the environment and can be trained, then we can envision new ways of understanding how culture actually "inhabits" the brain. Many traditional rituals – especially those using trance – operate performatively by means of repetition and rhythm (drumming, singing, dancing). The psychotropic effects of trance are well known. [...] The gateways to trance – whirling, singing, meditating: there multitudinous many ways to induce trance – are consciously controlled; but once in trance, a mind-brain state similar to that of dream-sleep takes over. Trance may be thought of as a kind of "lucid dreaming," dreaming where the dreamer to some degree controls the trajectory of the dream. [...] Trance, of course, is performance, a physical doing, a powerful way of injecting cultural practices deep into brain structure, actually altering the brain. Obviously – but sometimes the most powerful truths have been out there staring us in the face – trance performing is both a cause and a result of retrained brains. Masters of trance – shamans, Candomblé performers, and other traditional performers, and some artists – have trained their bodybrains using traditional methods. It is time now to

investigate and characterize these methods – to treat them as embodied knowledges. The old-fashioned opposition between "rational" and "instinctual" thought/action needs to be discarded in favor of holistic studies that treat master performers not as "objects of study" but as partners in research.

[...] The brain is trainable, and performance in its broadest sense, including indigenous methodologies, are excellent examples of such training as well as models for how-to-do-it; what is done with this knowledge is another question.

The deep fetches evidenced by paleolithic performances are what Jerzy Grotowski researched during his Art as Vehicle phase from 1986 to his death in 1999. [...] As Dominika Laster writes, "Grotowski examined the role of the body in the transmission of transgenerational collective memory" (Laster 2016, 21). [...] Grotowski devised extremely detailed and precise ways of "unblocking" body-memory. He sought collective memory in Haitian Vodou,⁵ Islamic *dhikr*, and the Baul songs of Bengal. He guided [Thomas] Richards – whose grandfather was Jamaican – toward his Caribbean roots. [...] Richards looked in Afro-Haitian vibratory songs. Sometimes he walks holding a stick, a very old – an ancient – man; his voice is both deeply resonant and limpidly fluid.

Grotowski's life-work, if it can be summarized, is parallel to what anthropologists – in their own way, with their own methodologies – seek.

[...] Grotowski believed that in addition to [...] "horizontal ability" to connect with others was also a "vertical ability" to connect with the past and with "higher powers." I do not share Grotowski's belief in higher powers, or even know exactly what he meant: he was not an orthodoxly religious man. But I do respond to his sense – shared by tragedians of several cultures that human life is to some degree "shaped" by gods, genes, history, ecology, other human beings – who knows for sure?

Here I end, not conclude. What performance does is create worlds or – if you accept at face value what masters of sacred ceremonies aver – performance gains admittance to other worlds and interactive relations both with other people and with nonhuman beings. Is what physicists do at CERN (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire) less mysterious than the trance dancing of Candomblé's Shango or the other orixá? The dancers I experienced near Rio in July 2012 located their Higgs boson. Isn't our job as anthropologists and artists – as human beings with big brains – to foster actual and respectful communication between those possessed by the orixás and those possessed by the Large Hadron Collider?

After the end

Ultimately, for me, the strongest "point of contact" is personal: my relationship with Victor Turner and with Edith Turner from 1977 to Vic's death in 1983 and Edie's in

5. Grotowski's interest in Haitian vibratory songs is part of a fascinating network of people and practices. One aspect of this network are the Polish soldiers who were part of a force dispatched by Napoleon to Haiti in 1802 to suppress the revolution of the slaves. The campaign failed; Haiti won independence in 1804. Some Poles joined the revolution and in gratitude were offered Haitian citizenship. About 240 accepted and their descendants are known today as Polone-Ayisyens. In 1980, Grotowski came to Haiti in search of possible relatives. He invited one man, Amon Fremon, a houngan (Voodoo priest), to Poland for the Theatre of Sources. For more on Grotowski's Haitian connection, see Kolankiewicz 2012.

2016. From 1977 to 1982, Victor and I collaborated on four conferences and one twelve day workshop delving into performance. [...] The goal of these conferences was fully articulated only after they were history:

was to approach the genres of theater, dance, music, sports, and ritual as a single, coherent group *as performance*. The underlying question became whether or not the same methodological tools and approaches would be used to understand a noh drama, a football game, a Yaqui deer dance, a Broadway musical, a Roman Catholic Mass, an Umbanda curing ritual, a Yoruba masked dance, and a postmodern experimental performance? We knew that very few people qualified as "comparative performatologists" and so the basic question would have to be dealt with genre by genre, culture by culture. We hoped that the conferences would lay the groundwork for proposing general principles or, as Turner called them, "universals of performance". (Schechner and Appel 1990, 3.)⁶

[...] To my knowledge, two books and several articles have dealt with these conferences and workshop.⁷

Turner and I first met face-to-face after he phoned me in the spring of 1977. "I am in New York to introduce a lecture by Clifford Geertz at Columbia," Turner said. "Why not you and I go out for a beer after?" Knowing Turner's writing, I was eager to meet him. When we did, what should have been a 45 minute getting-to-know-you chat turned into a 3+ hour seminar-of-two. Really, we were made for each other: inquisitive, good sense of humor, wide-ranging interests, not afraid to go out on a limb, rampant with appetites. And, of course, performance. What Vic called "process" I called performance. It was social drama, liminal-liminoid, communitas, ritual, and more. Vic's mother was an actress; theater was in his upbringing. He had an urgent belief in the efficacy of human enactment; and a delight in it also. [...] Through Vic I met his "star group" of anthropologists and culture-workers, Edith Turner, Barbara Myerhoff, Barbara Babcock, John MacAloon, and Paul Bouissac, among a group of about 25. Here I want to share a few notes and recollections. First, of the 1978 two week summer workshop convened at my theater, The Performing Garage (home of The Performance Group, which I founded) and sponsored by the School of the Arts [...], New York University.

[...] The key information in the workshop's announcement was:

This is an intensive workshop – two sessions daily, five days per week with all faculty participating in most of the sessions so that there will be maximum

6. Turner lectured on "universals of performance" at Smith College in 1982. After his death, the lecture was published as the Epilogue of his *On the Edge of the Bush* (Turner 1985), edited by Edith Turner. "Are There Universals of Performance in Myth, Ritual, and Drama?" synthesizes much of the work Turner and I explored together.

7. Papers from the 1977 Burg Wartenstein Symposium formed the basis for MacAloon 1984; Victor Turner 1979 deals with aspects of the 1978 NYU workshop; Victor and Edith Turner 1982 continues the discussion of "performing ethnography"; the 1981 and 1982 conferences are the subject of Schechner and Appel 1990.

interaction among faculty and among faculty and students. The workshop will explore the interface between ritual and theater. [...] The aim of the workshop is to shatter boundaries between performance and social sciences and between art and cognitive studies. [...] participants will be selected to ensure a balance between artists, scholars and scientists.

[...] In a letter I wrote to the [...] instructors [...], I followed Vic's lead for the program:

Victor suggested the following skeletal scheme for our workshop [...] and I think it's a good idea, and so I pass it on for your acceptance, revision, transformation:

1. Students work in teams (2 or 3) and these teams are [...] interdisciplinary. Each team takes a classic ethnography – either from nonWestern or Western (i.e., urban) culture, and they transpose [...] this data into a theatrical script. They discuss the staging, costuming, preparations, role playing. In fact, they tell how they would stage this event if they were to stage it and/or film it. [...] And/or all social events may be, as Goffman says, understood as performances. [...]

2. Sometime during the two weeks each of us presents our own most current work. [...]

3. Some field work take [sic] into account the unique environment of NY: in the summer especially the parks are full of various street entertainers; certain neighborhoods have strong personalities as total environments: Times Square, Little Italy, Chinatown, West Village, etc. Also that we see several performances of a more formal kind in theaters, nite-spots [...], discos.

I realize that this is a lot to cover in two weeks, but at the same time from the applications (...) we will have a rich diversity of students. [...] Should be a good show.

It certainly was that, and a lot more.

[...] Turner was a transgressive superstar for sure. The take away, 41 years later, from that workshop is a flash of memories. Sitting in a circle on the second floor of The Performing Garage in SoHo. Participating in, evoking, and responding to Vic's ebullience, brilliance, jouissance, and appetite to go where few if any anthropologists have ventured. This in contrast to Goffman's profound skepticism and irony and Alland's academic probity. And to recall that Edie was there with Vic, coaching and coaxing, sometimes critiquing, never passive, a player.

After the NYU workshop, two more conferences. Then, in early fall 1983, Vic was struck by a massive heart attack. On December 18 that year, shortly after breakfast, a second attack killed him. [...] His funeral in Charlottesville, Virginia, took place on December 21, the winter solstice. Being Roman Catholic, there was a Mass and a solemn procession. Then family, friends, colleagues, and students – about 50 people – gathered at the Turners' Carrsbrook Drive home. [...] My [...] memories of the ceremony in the Turner home are of an Ndembu seclusion hut, built by I don't know whom, but definitely supervised by Edie. She went into the hut and we collectively performed the rite for the passing of a headman. I could hear Edie weeping, wailing, suffering her enormous loss. Outside, people were telling jokes, singing, dancing, describing Vic, enticing Edie to step

from her isolation and rejoin her community. To transform mourning into celebration; to combine the two; to enact the ritual process. [...]

© Richard Schechner

The original text has been abridged by Leszek Kolankiewicz.

Bibliography

- Blakeslee, Sandra. 1996. "Complex and Hidden Brain in the gut Makes Cramps, Butterflies, and Valium." *The New York Times*, 23 January 1996: C1-3.
- Bowditch, Rachel; Paula Murray Cole, and Michele Minnick. 2023. *Inside the Performance Workshop: A Sourcebook for Rasaboxes and Other Exercises*. New York: Routledge.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1972. "Deep play: notes on the Balinese cockfight." *Daedalus* 101 (1): 1-37.
- Kolankiewicz, Leszek. 2012. "Grotowski in a Maze of Haitian Narration." *TDR The Drama Review* 56 (3): 131-40.
- La Barre, Weston. 1972. *The Ghost Dance*. New York: Dell.
- Laster, Dominika. 2016. *Grotowski's Bridge Made of Memory*. Calcutta, London and New York: Seagull.
- MacAloon, John J. ed. 1984. *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals Toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.
- Magnat, Virginie. 2011. "Conducting embodied research at the intersection of performance studies, experimental ethnography and indigenous methodologies." *Anthropologica* 53: 213-27.
- Mee, Erin. 2014. "Rasa is/as/and Emotional Contagion." In *The Natyasastra and the Body in Performance: Essays on Indian Theories of Dance and Drama*, edited by Sreenath Nair, foreword M. Krzysztof Byrski, 157-73. Jefferson, N. C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.
- Meyer, Manulani Alui. 2008. "Indigenous and Authentic: Hawaiian Epistemology and the Triangulation of Meaning." In *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, edited by Norman K. Denzin, Yvonne S. Lincoln, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 217-32.
- Montelle, Yann-Pierre. 2009. *Palaeoperformance: The Emergence of Theatricality as Social Practice*. London and New York and Calcutta: Seagull Books.
- Pfeiffer, John. 1982. *The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Pitts-Taylor, Victoria. 2010. "The Plastic Brain: Neoliberalism and the Neuronal Self." *Health* 14 (6): 635-52.
- Price, Michael. 2019. "Cave Paintings Suggest Ancient Origin of Modern Mind." *Science* 366 (6471).
- Schechner, Richard. 1985. *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 2015. *Performed Imaginaries*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Schechner, Richard, and Willa Appel eds. 1990. *By Means of Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thiong'o, Ngugi wa. 1998. *Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 2007. "Notes Towards a Performance Theory of Orature." *Performance Research* 12 (3): 4-7.
- Turner, Victor. 1979. "Dramatic Ritual/Ritual Drama: Performative and Reflexive Anthropology." *The Kenyon Review* 1 (3): 80-93.
- . 1985. *On the Edge of the Bush*, edited by Edith Turner. Tuscon: University of Arizona Press.
- . 1986. *The Anthropology of Performance*. Preface by Richard Schechner. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Turner, Victor, and Edith Turner. 1982. "Performing Ethnography." *TDR The Drama Review* 26 (2): 33-50.



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY
DIRECTOR: EUGENIO BARBA



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI BOLOGNA



COMUNE DI BOLOGNA
ASSESSORATO ALLA CULTURA



6th INTERNATIONAL SESSION

Facts and Tales

ISTA sessions 6 - 7

ISTA 6, Bologna, 1990

Performance Techniques and Historiography

Eugenio Barba

PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

An essential part of theatrical culture consists of the study of the performance practices of the past. The history of the theatre is not only a 'reservoir of the past'. It is also a 'reservoir for the new' containing knowledge which from time to time makes it possible for us to transcend the present. This does not mean isolating oneself, but imagining other *possibilities* for the theatre. The history of the theatrical reforms of the 20th century, in the West as well as in the East, shows the strong link of interdependence which connects the theatre of the past with new artistic creation.

On the other hand, historiographical understanding is often impeded by a lack of experience, by the absence of an empirical dimension, by the impossibility of overcoming the limits established for the spectator. Theatre scholars often come face to face with *testimony* without being in a position to *testify*. They run the risk of accumulating the deformations of memory, without possessing the means to correct them and to arrive at a living image of the meaning which theatre had in the past.

The link between *theatre* and *written words* is a fertile means of transmission and cultural growth. But it is often overbalanced in favour of books, and the memory of the living experience risks being dispersed in erudite pages devoid of context. Among

the various forms of ethnocentrism which veil our vision is one which does not depend on geographical and cultural location but rather on the roles created by the theatrical relationship. It is that ethnocentrism which only considers the theatre from the point of view of the spectators and neglects the realm of the performers: the network of their relationships, knowledge and ways of thinking of which the performance is the fruit.

From this arises the vital importance of creating a *time for common experience* in which, preserving the specificity of various competences, the artists who embody particular traditions dialogue with scholars who take on the task of sharpening the instruments necessary for understanding the multiform reality of the theatre and its history. In such a confrontation, hypotheses, doubts and questions can be woven into a common research in which the distinction between practical and theoretical specialisation is temporarily dissolved. The purpose of this *time for common experience* is not the achievement of immediate and unitary results. It offers new points of departure and new stimuli for successive individual research on the part of both those who give life to the performance techniques and those engaged in passing on the memory.

Extract of the musical score *Subo al triquete* by Ivan Hansen composed for *The Crossing*. ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Part for the Balinese musicians.



REPORT

6TH ISTA PUBLIC SESSION

THE UNIVERSITY OF EURASIAN THEATRE:
PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

BOLOGNA, ITALY, JUNE 28-JULY 18, 1990

The 6th public session of ISTA, the International School of Theatre Anthropology, was held at Bologna in the Emilia Romagna Region of Italy, from June 28th to July 18th, 1990. This meeting marked an important development for ISTA: the completion of its research into principles which are the foundation, in different cultures, of both the performer's art and the spectator's perception.

The 1990 meeting was the first formal association between ISTA and a university: the University of Bologna, the oldest university in the West.

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY (ISTA)

ISTA is an international and interdisciplinary institution based in Holstebro, Denmark, since its foundation by Eugenio Barba in 1979. Being a research laboratory concerned with the performer, ISTA has become a center for diffusing both the Asian and Western performers' experience and knowledge. ISTA holds public sessions upon the request of national and international organizations which sponsor it. ISTA does not provide standard teaching. Each of its sessions focuses on a particular theme and pedagogy. In addition to which, these gatherings help synthesize previous work and generate new areas of research.

As well as professional performers from different cultures, ISTA gathers a scientific team composed of specialists from various disciplines who are related to the universities and scientific research centers with which ISTA has established its links.

ISTA has organized the following public sessions:

Bonn, West Germany: October 1-31, 1980
Volterra, Italy: August 8-October 8, 1981
Blois and Malakoff, France: April 12-26, 1985
Holstebro, Denmark: September 17-22, 1986
Salento, Italy: September 1-14, 1987
Bologna, Italy: June 28-July 18, 1990

THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

The concept of **theatre anthropology** is a very precise one: it is the study of the performer's behaviour and action in a performative situation in which s/he implements his/her biological and mental competence according to principles which differ from those of daily life. This extra-daily implementation of the body, which is called technique, is the foundation of the performer's **presence**.

The notion of **pre-expressivity** has been coined to designate the performer's competence, based on his/her training, which enabled him/her to master specific body techniques different from those used in daily life. **Pre-expressivity** has its foundation in mental as well as sensor-motor rules which are integrated by the performer and is an acquired capability which manifests itself in scenic actions, that is, the way in which the performer behaves on stages.

During its ten years of existence, numerous performances, demonstrations, workshops, and scientific examination ISTA has progressively clarified its perspectives as well as its methodology and the results obtained from its research. Given the fact that the object of study is extremely complex - the human being in a performative situation and his/her relationship to the spectator, regardless of culture, throughout the course of history - **theatre anthropology** is neither a doctrine nor an orthodoxy.

The growth of theatre anthropology is linked to both the development of scientific disciplines and the artistic as well as the epistemological evolution of those disciplines which constitute it. This is why, nowadays, **theatre anthropology** is a pertinent methodology for the synchronic and diachronic study of the performer. And, in fact, theatre historians have already started to employ it in their work.

THE UNIVERSITY OF EURASIAN THEATRE

The recurrent principles which the previous ISTA sessions have helped discover, correspond to the deep structures of techniques which lead to the performer's presence. This discovery stems from the identification of physiological and mental laws common to all performers. The principles constitute the elementary foundations upon which each culture elaborates its particular performance forms.

This relationship between the universal and the particular has led to an operative notion: that of **Eurasian Theatre**. **Eurasian Theatre**, in terms of **theatre anthropology**, is a body of knowledge, techniques, and trans-cultural practices which form a common competence to performers from different traditions. This inter-relationship of knowledge does not imply a levelling of forms. The mutual borrowings function at two levels:

- that of poetic metaphor which nourishes the artist's concrete action and
- that of technique which supports the quality of his/her esthetic action.

When the Western performer refers, for instance, to the Japanese principles of **JO HA KYU**, s/he nourishes his/her imagination engendering the mental images which are the basis of physical action - that is, the level of poetic metaphor.

At the same time, s/he adopts the three phased rhythm of **JO HA KYU** to structure gestures and movements avoiding stereotypes and banality at the technical level. What the spectator perceives is not a Western performer who imitates a classical Japanese style but an artist who seizes his/her attention. The inter-relationship is effective, however, it is not obvious, while the **quality** of presence is undeniable.

The **Eurasian Theatre** does not lead to the erasure of individual traits. On the contrary, the inter-relationship cannot exist unless the product of the two entities has a strong identity.

DEFINITION OF THE 6TH SESSION

The 6th session was organized around two major themes:

- Eurasian Theatre
- Theatre Anthropology and Historiography

The former led to an transcultural theatre work during the first week of the session. The title of the project, "**The Crossing**" expressed its meaning, its method, and its objectives. The work, in English, implies the traversing of a given space - sea, desert, country. It also designates inter-relation since in genetics, the term refers to certain displacements or inter-mixing of genes.

The latter theme constituted the subject of the international colloquium mounted in collaboration with the University of Bologna in their premises.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants who attended the 6th session were essentially from one of two groups:

-Asian and Western artists: performers, musicians, composers, and singers. The first group formed the core of the theatrical work created by Eugenio Barba in the first week of the meeting.

The second group consisted of two subgroups:

- a) directors, actors, and representatives from cultural institutions;
- b) scholars, scientific researchers, anthropologists, and theatre specialists.

Countries of origin and the number of participants*:

Argentina	3
Bali	10
Brazil	3
Canada	1
Chile	4
Colombia	1
Cuba	3
Denmark	8
Egypt	1
USA	5
France	6
India	5
Israel	1
Italy	34
Japan	8
Peru	2
West Germany	5
Popular Republic of China	1
UK	3
Switzerland	1
Soviet Union	1
Uruguay	1

Total: 107

* This list does not include six members of the Odin Teatret.

Even though in the previous ISTA sessions the activities which corresponded to each group and subgroup were always clearly differentiated, in this instance, a unique project "The Crossing", involved everybody in a common task during the first week.

THE CROSSING

The theatrical work called "The Crossing" was developed by the participants themselves who were divided into international and interdisciplinary cells. Each cell was asked by Eugenio Barba to:

- 1) determine an archetypical situation common to most cultures;
- 2) consider that the chosen situation must have dynamic value and become a scenic web which permits the process of going from one culture to another and from one perspective to another.

After a general meeting, the cells suggested ideas based on these directions following which each cell was asked to develop a scenario for the performance.

Once Sanjukta Panigrahi chose a scenario, "rehearsals" began.

PEDAGOGY OF THE 6TH SESSION

Within the living performance arts, in which intentions are less important than what the performer allows to be seen, it is not sufficient to teach "techniques". One must also propose ways to learn to learn, appropriate, and make sense out of these techniques. The epistemological lesson carries pedagogical consequences.

The experience of previous sessions demonstrated the value for all participants - actors, directors, and intellectuals, of being placed in work situations different from those they regularly encounter in their professions. Both the Asian performer's art and that of certain Western performers are the product of a lengthy sensory, motor, and cognitive immersion begun at an early age. It is only possible to discover and make sense of the principles underlying these forms after patient observations and exercises. The unusual organization of the day's work at ISTA was based on these factors. Let's underline the essential points:

1. The introduction of music as a linking rather than an illustrative component in the collective work, as well as a poetic metaphor and accompaniment for each dramatic sequence. This musical work was realized by the composer Ivan Hansen along with the Balinese, Indian, Japanese, and European musicians.
2. The appeal to performers capable of thinking through actions (thinking in motion) and not to those who rely on verbalization (thinking in concepts): Artists formed through precise body techniques for whom imagination is not merely an abstract entity.
3. Each scene was elaborated then fixed through a combination of collective creation and the director's concern for thematic unity.
4. An ambiguity of meaning was created to compensate for the unavoidable shortcomings of the work. This ambiguity was supported by a strong final scene which offered an enigmatic synthesis of the whole.

EVALUATION OF THE WORK

About thirty hours were devoted to an analysis of the work. Each of the two forementioned large groups described the experience of creating the piece. This long period was very useful to distinguish different perceptions, subjective impressions, technical considerations, and professional opinions.

Summarizing, the success of the project relied on:

- 1) -The professional skills of the participants from the first group (performers/musicians).
- 2) -The selection of participants according to their interest.
- 3) -The general rules of work common to all ISTA public sessions: schedules, punctuality, silence zone and silent time to allow for personal work and rest, mixing of nationalities, and bilingual work situations.
- 4) -The quality of the work spaces provided by the beauty of the Villa Guastavillani set amid green lawns on a hill, away from the city.

5) -The recreation of the different levels of the theatre system: unexperienced performers, well-known masters, personalities who already belong to the history of the theatre, actors, dancers, musicians, critics, theatre historians, theatre specialists, sociologists, anthropologists, academics and researchers, passionate spectators, all put at the same level.

The intensity of the work is one of ISTA's characteristics. A public session constitutes an exceptional situation which nourishes each participant's intellectual and artistic research in depth and during the entire time.

First week schedule

5:45 a.m. - 6:45 a.m.: Ulvetime (silent time).
6 a.m. - 6:30 a.m.: Breakfast.
6:45 a.m. - 11 a.m.: "The Crossing".
11 a.m. - 12 a.m.: "Ora et Labora" (individual and group work).
12 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.: Lunch.
12:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.: "Dream Therapy" (individual and group work). A library was set up in the Villa to which all were invited to contribute a book as well as at least one article of their own.
3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: "Citas". Lecture/demonstrations led by invited participants.
5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.: "Nightingales and Owls". Lecture/demonstrations and research on voice techniques.
7 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.: Diner.
8 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.: "Avatara". Meetings, lecture/demonstrations, analyses of performances.

The schedule for the second week was adjusted to the needs of the International Colloquium which, as stated above, was held at the University of Bologna. The schedule included meetings and lecture/demonstrations open to visitors and public performances.

For the first time, all participants took an active part in the *Theatrum Mundi*. This performance, which took place on Sunday July 15th, included a song composed during "The Crossing" and sung by participants. The *Theatrum Mundi* is a unique intercultural spectacle which, in this instance, involved more than fifty Asian and Western artists.

THE LECTURE/DEMONSTRATIONS

The meetings were devoted to the analysis of different corporal, musical, and vocal techniques drawn from the cultures represented in the public session. Special attention was given to the articulation of technical principles and symbolic values. Some of the material touched on has been dealt with in previous publications based on ISTA's work, therefore, let us only consider new areas explored during the 6th session:

- The voice: Balinese, Indian, Japanese techniques; bel canto tradition, and contemporary theatre techniques.

- The new forms of creation in the Asian cultures, especially in Bali, India, and Japan.

It appears that when contemporary creation inverts certain traditional values, it integrates the fundamental principles of classical techniques in a conscious way.

THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

Three full days of study open to the public were held in collaboration with the University of Bologna at its premises in the city:

July 12th: Symposium on theatre Anthropology: Ethos and Pre-expressivity.

July 13th and 14th: International Colloquium: Performance Techniques and Historiography.

During the course of the colloquium, artists and academics discussed the historical perspective of their work. Sanjukta Panigrahi, for instance, reported on the history of the Odissi dance, being herself the most remarkable artist in the genre. In fact, mainly thanks to her, such regional dance has become a classical dance form.

An important event marked this part of the 6th ISTA session series of activities: the collaboration with Jerzy Grotowski's Centro di lavoro. On this occasion, the possibility of exploring areas of common research was proposed.

ORGANIZERS

The 6th ISTA session was organized by:

Pietro Valenti - Centro Teatrale San Geminiano - Modena
Renzo Filippetti - Teatro Ridotto - Bologna

The cultural coordination: Prof. Franco Ruffini

The organizational coordination: Elisa Dal Re and Monica Vaccari from the Bologna Town Council Division of Information Services and Public Relations.

BUDGET AND FINANCING

The 6th session was made possible thanks to the financial support of the following institutions:

- University of Bologna
- The Cultural Department of the Town Council of Bologna
- Bologna University - Bologna Town Consortium
- Italian Ministry of Culture
- Danish Ministry of Culture
- Japan Foundation
- Saison Foundation
- Town Council of Holstebro

GUESTS ARTISTS

BALI

I Wayan Berata Sskar, dancer
Tjokorda Istri Putra Padmini, dancer, musician
Catra I Nyoman, dancer, musician
Laksmi Suarti Desak Made, dancer, musician
Ray I Wayan, dancer, musician
Surytini Ni Ketut, dancer, musician
Tjandri Ni Njoman, dancer, musician
Tjokorda Taka Tisnu, dancer, musician
Ida Bagus Nyoman Mas, dancer, musician
Pasek Tempo I Made, dancer, musician
Confessa Giuseppe, dancer

INDIA

Panigrahi Sanjukta, Odissi dancer
Panigrahi Raghunath, musician, singer
Nityanand Mohapatra, musician
Das Hemant Kumar, musician
Pradhan Gangadhar, musician

JAPAN

Azuma Kanho, Nihon Buyo
Hanayagi Kanichi, Onnagata
Azuma Senkai, Nihon Buyo
Kojima Naobumi, shamisen player
Wakayama Tomiro, singer

ODIN TEATRET

Eugenio Barba, director
Roberta Carreri, actress
Jan Ferslev, musician
Rina Skeel, producer
Julia Varley, actress
Torgeir Wethal, actor
Frans Winther, musician

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ISTA Permanent Scientific Committee and the signatories of the present Report consider that it is essential for the University of Eurasian Theatre to have a permanent home where it could mount regular activities periodically. The University of Eurasian Theatre must function as a centre for research and information in collaboration with those universities who have been collaborating with ISTA for many years.

If the headquarters of such an international network for the exchange of knowledge was based in a dynamic city with a university tradition and an international reputation, it could accomplish its academic and culturally diverse goals through specifically designed programs.

We had the opportunity of appreciating the city of Bologna's kindness and the attention of its public. Given the interest and the open attitude of the University and the Town Council of Bologna, and the scientific results of this first independent session of the University of Eurasian Theatre, the ISTA Permanent Scientific Committee and the signatories propose the University of Bologna as the permanent base for the University of Eurasian Theatre.

Signed by:

Prof. Clive BARKER, University of Warwick
Prof. Frank HOFF, University of Toronto
Prof. Jean-Marie PRADIER, University of Paris 8
Prof. Franco RUFFINI, University of Bologna
Prof. Masao YAMAGUCHI, Foreign Languages University of Tokyo

Bologna, July 25th 1990



Eugenio Barba, Julia Varley, *Theatrum Mundi* rehearsal.
ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Photo: Fiora Bemporad

Julia Varley

A Candle Lit Among the Pages of Books

Abstract: This article is a chronicle on ISTA Bologna 1990 touching on different aspects of the session. It was first published in 1992 in English in Women and Theatre - Occasional Papers (Warwick University); in Spanish in Máscara, a. II, n. 9-10; and in Italian in Teatro Eurasiano, n. 2. In 1994 and 1996 the article was included in the anthologies about ISTA, The Tradition of ISTA (FILO-ISTA, Londrina 1994), and in The Performers Village (Drama, Copenhagen).

Keywords: ISTA, Theatrum Mundi, Sanjukta Panigrahi, Kirsten Hastrup

I am bent over inside the costume of Mr Peanut, the 'death' character on stilts.

After the fireworks and the circle dance of all the characters from the performance *Theatrum Mundi* in Bologna, I, like all the others, have fallen to the ground. I have taken off my stilts and I am ready for the last transformation, which will reveal me as a European woman, holding the baby death in her arms.

I am ready, but listening to the Indian music which has not yet reached its final meditative Om, I can hear that I am early. So I remain still, bent over in my costume and listen to Sanjukta Panigrahi who is dancing above me.

During previous meetings with Sanjukta I have often heard her explanation of the introductory prayer-dance, in which she asks the earth to pardon her as she will stamp on it, while her feet follow, underline and dialogue with the rhythm of the drum.

Sanjukta was dancing on the terrace directly above the stage on which I had fallen. I heard the rhythm of her bells; I remembered the beauty of her dancing and I felt like the earth beneath her feet. We were performing together.

At the end, in front of the spectators, waiting for the moment when we could pack, get changed and travel away in our different directions, we were one world, the *Theatrum Mundi*: Europeans, Balinese, Indians, Japanese, Americans. The two weeks of work of



the 6th session of ISTA had reached their conclusion. A session I had arrived at curious to meet with different Oriental masters in the solution of concrete scenic tasks.

* * *

The characters who fell to the ground at the end of *Theatrum Mundi* were monsters: enormous, exceptional, proud.

It happened that while I was putting on my stilts, the chair I was sitting on slipped and I fell over backwards into a bush with my legs and stilts in the air. The Japanese Kabuki lion (Kanichi Hanayagi), who was having a quick cigarette, and the Balinese Rangda and Barong (I Nyoman Catra and Tjokorda Raka Tisnu) ran to my rescue.

They were afraid, surprised, worried and wanted to help. But their large costumes, masks, hair, long nails and fur made their hands useless. Inside my costume I could but laugh as the crazed monsters tried in vain to pull me out of the bush so we could go up to the stage where the orchestras were waiting for us.

Inside these costumes, behind these masks, the ability to see, to hear and to move is so reduced that one is obliged to activate a sixth sense in order to communicate.

In the love scene between Mr Peanut and the Balinese witch Rangda, in which neither I nor Tjokorda could see each other, the attraction which guided the rhythm and course of our meeting was extraordinary.

* * *

The same kind of communication united Kanho Azuma from Japan, Tjokorda Istri Putra Padmini from Bali, Sanjukta from India and me, from Europe, around a candle and some sheets of paper during *The Crossing*, the work that took place every morning and during which all the participants of the 6th session of ISTA staged a performance.

We looked out across the valley of Bologna and passed along the candle. There was no need for us to signal to each other. Each of us was responsible and grabbed the timing from the air. We had no shared language with which to communicate, we were guided by the experience which was revealed in our capacity to act together.

In the group of four we improvised a dance around a candle and some sheets of paper which were thrown, carried, burnt and read.

I met Kanho with the direction of my whole body, I met Padmini and Sanjukta with the play of tensions between my hands, face and legs.

Because of the bright sun I could not keep my eyes open. Kanho also had her eyes half shut, whereas Padmini and Sanjukta acted with their eyes to meet and signal to each other, as if their eyes were hands or a back-bone. Our rhythms affected those of the others. I felt myself to be the most easily influenced (or open to influence), especially by the slow, restrained and smooth Japanese rhythm that I had experienced during a long improvised dialogue with Kanho on the first day.

The space, the centre, the leaving, the returning, the turning, finding oneself in pairs or isolated, passing the object - the candle - and the variety of relationships to the object, were all basic elements that each of us used to keep the group 'in motion'.

It was not a great challenge. At times we got bored, as if we felt a lot less different than our outer appearances suggested.

This dance of energies, this movement around each other, was not the centre of our attention: most important was to protect the candle, to keep it alight, but we never managed this throughout an entire *Crossing*. Sitting in the background we all held our breath as during the 'doctors' scene Catra and Kanichi fought near the candle and trod on it. I had hidden a lighter in my costume.

Later we waited in the big hall. I lit another candle to replace the one Sanjukta had had to put out by fanning it as taboo did not allow her to blow it out. Kanho helped me decorate the candle again.

I remember these silent moments, the preparations, more than the dance everyone watched.

* * *

In the same way I remember how Sanjukta Panigrahi, Suzanne Vill and Kirsten Hastrup spoke during ISTA (is it a coincidence that women are the bearers of new words?).

Sanjukta responded to Eugenio Barba's request to speak about the five most fundamental experiences in her development as an artist by treating the question as a scenic task and so transforming it into an equivalent: she spoke of the five 'masters' she had had.

With the same inquisitive and cheeky smile with which she usually answers Eugenio Barba's questions, that smile which instantly reveals her beauty and her intelligence, Sanjukta spoke also of emotions on stage (why are academics always so insistent on asking about this point?). She spoke of how emotions are expressed through attention to detail and in the minute variations made to a single theme through a personal dramaturgy or subtext, which she calls 'dialogue'. Emotions are expressed in the moment in which technique is surpassed because then one is free to play with it.

* * *

In "The Room of the Sirens", one of the working spaces we had the use of at Villa Guastavillani, the 6th ISTA session's venue, the question "is there a pre-expressive level of the voice?" was in the air.

If the breath and the diaphragm are the base on which the actor or singer leans to make vocal sounds, the different breathing techniques could be thought of as the different extra-daily changes of balance; supporting the voice in different parts of the body and face or the use of the resonators could correspond to the principle of opposites; the play of volume and intensity with voice, to the amplitude and resistance of actions; the change of tone, of timbre and of colour, to the variation of the muscular tone that makes an action alive.

However, what appears obvious in the physical demonstrations of actors or dancers, becomes much more difficult to distinguish in vocal demonstrations. The complexity of details that influence our aural sensitivity and the close connection to the perception of

sound also as music, make recurring principles difficult to find, not least because of a lack of terminology.

Suzanne Vill spoke at length of different vocal techniques with an openness and understanding in a field where complexity often leads to exclusive and contrasting opinions and the incapacity to see beyond the specific technique one uses. It is a field where often words describe not that which physically really happens, but the sensation that allows it to happen, which can in fact be its opposite.

In the same way in which the Japanese, Indian and Balinese performances are examined at ISTA, to try to understand what renders them fascinating, besides the cultural context that has determined them, Suzanne spoke of vocal techniques in an attempt to pinpoint that which characterises them before considering the concepts of aesthetic beauty which have determined them.

* * *

The theme of the 6th session of ISTA was "Historiography and Performance Techniques". Parallel to this theme Kirsten Hastrup described the relation between context and text in her experience as an anthropologist. I was translating and therefore part of the context: unfortunately what I remember of the text is limited, but I know it was important.

It dealt with questions that are close to my own: how to communicate through words the reality of actions and experience; how to change actions into words; how to transform experience into poetry; how to invent new words for a new history, also of theatre; how to give an appropriate place in theatre history not only to the 'ideas' and the men who have conceived, written and realised them, but also to the 'actions' and to the men and women who have carried them out, perceived and understood them. If the performances, the actions, the facts, belong to the part of the memory that remembers through all the senses, while the directors' reforms, the 'ideas' belong to theatre history which influences our present, how is it possible to invent a new sense for theatre history with a present that creates its own memory?

* * *

At the international symposium entitled "Historiography and Performance Techniques" Franco Ruffini spoke of the difficulty he had in extracting fully comprehensive indications from Stanislavski's volumes on the work of the actor and of his search for a new reading of the texts.

Scholars, researchers, professors and critics learn to see beyond appearances, through the costumes, the effects and the aesthetical values and so also to see the actions in the pages of history and to understand the past in a different way.

Franco Ruffini spoke of an actor who moves a chair. The very fact that this simple action was an important reference of his new reading of Stanislavski is extraordinary, as is Kirsten Hastrup's courage in declaring herself seduced by beings that belong to the mythology of the place she is studying. In the book it remains the actor who pushes the chair, but this actor who is carrying out the action of pushing the chair is actually shifting



Eugenio Barba, Kirsten Hastrup and Julia Varley. ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Photo: Fiora Bemporad

his/her weight backwards and downwards, towards the floor, doing the opposite. This opposite of reality still has no place in books, just as actors have no place in the history of the ideas of theatre and just as it is the directors of the theatre laboratories who are remembered, as though it were the ideas and not the actions that create. As an actress, I would like to be able to 'enter into history'. So I write, and when I write I tell of what has happened. It immediately becomes biographical, almost gossip, not history. And so I persist and insist with the professors and academics in an attempt to communicate my dissatisfaction. But that which is important to me, the memories, the sensations, the experiences, the events, are not necessarily interesting to others. And so I ask: "What would you like to know from my article on ISTA?"

* * *

We were in the Gobi Desert, the open-air space where we worked on *The Crossing*. Eugenio sent me, together with Kanho, Sanjukta and Padmini, behind a wall to find out how we could appear above the bushes that covered it. We found chairs, ladders, tables, we climbed the wall, we wriggled between the branches and finally we managed



Sanjukta Panigrahi and Eugenio Barba at the front of *The Crossing* participants. In the first row the 'elders': Ivan Hansen, I Made Pasek Tempo, Vicente Revuelta, Santiago García, Masao Yamaguchi. ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Photo: Fiora Bemporad

to appear. Eugenio shouted furiously: "Get down! Get down! You've ruined the end!" Suddenly the colleagues with whom we were rehearsing *The Crossing* had become the spectators to surprise during the final performance. This element of surprise helps the spectators 'believe' in what the actors are doing. The experience of 'believing' is necessary in order to be able to be 'scientific', to 'understand', to 'explain'.

Then one starts studying, working, concentrating on details, repeating and repeating in order to find something new in what is old and known. In the same way that Sanjukta goes beyond technique by playing with details, the scholars go to the microscope, reading and re-reading the same documents, looking and looking again at the same processes or results of work, for days, months, years, to discover that which always existed but which they were not able to see.

The 'being in love' that is the gift given by the extraordinary beauty of Sanjukta, by the charm of the Asian performances, by the staging of time and of space, by that which surprises, by that which functions, by that which Eugenio's attention is focused on, allows us to open our eyes anew, for our curious eyes to bring together our stomach and our mind.

This being 'in love', which many have resisted and that is criticised because it is seen as a closed family circle with an acritical perspective, has in fact permitted a qualitative jump forward and a really special critical collaboration: the historical vision of theatre gets closer to the creative process.

The writing of history becomes an art with the same rules applied as in the making of a performance. The theoreticians and the practitioners of theatre come together, while keeping their fields of work defined.

In the same way as during the creative process we don't seek the result, but it is allowed to evolve, so the critic does not try to understand, but allows for the possibility of being understood.

The proof that 'god exists' - Sanjukta dancing - allows for this new approach to the history of theatre; it results in a different historiography.

For this reason when I see the ISTA scholars, and the Italians in particular, each on their own, closed in their studies, with their books, reading, writing, linked by an invisible thread (or an audible one - the telephone!) and then I see them out and about at the festivals, in the rehearsal rooms, amongst the theatre groups, at the conferences which are increasingly structured according to the rules of a live theatrical presence, they seem to belong to a unique event, which should go down in history.

I imagine the mythical artistic environments, I imagine Paris with Cocteau, Salmon, Picasso, Rodin, Apollinaire, Satie, Modigliani, Braque and Stravinski who meet and clash, who study and ignore each other, and it is as if the ferment of the cafés and the attics of Montparnasse is recreated in certain privileged Italian universities.

And so I would like to become a historian of the historians of theatre. So the scholars become natives, the subject of observation, and, as in the Odin Teatret performance *Talabot*, which takes the biography of a living anthropologist as its theme, the roles are turned upside down. The path of opposites is achieved and for once one could affirm that an actress has made history...



Susanne Vill

Floating in the Voice Universe Power and the Variety of Vocal Expression

Abstract: Experiences and demands at the ISTA in Bologna 1990 concerning practical vocal activities, interpretations of compositions and improvisations as well as systematic and theoretical reflections on phonation and vocal styles resulted in a complex catalogue of vocal techniques and expressions. Scholars can use it to analyse performances. Speakers, actors, singers and vocal artists may use it as a manual for exercises and inspiration of sound colours.

Keywords: ISTA 1990, Breath, Voice, Sound, Vocal techniques, Vocal styles

The ISTA session *Performance Techniques and Historiography* 1990 in Bologna was to become a life-changing experience that fed my mind with a wide range of phenomena in *Theatrum Mundi*.

Recommended by Eugenio Barba's former assistant Christoph Falke, I was invited to join the meeting as one among 104 participants.

Arriving at the Villa Guastavillani I heard the Balinese singer Ni Nyoman Candri and wanted to ask her about her technique. For an unobserved warming up of my voice I went to the cellar of the villa. But Gaia Varon heard me and took Eugenio there. He had wanted to invite opera singers to demonstrate their art in the ISTA's programme *Owls and Nightingales*, but only a quartet with a *répétiteur* of the Bologna Opera agreed to come for a few hours. So, Eugenio asked me to sing in the *opening* wake-up music at 6:30 a.m. that started the daily work.

Among the material presented for the 'divine' choice of a scenario for our production, I was fascinated by David Maayan's recitation of the beautiful Hebrew poem *Sof bajamim laila*. I asked him to recite the poem together with my vocal improvisation of its front line, with my accompaniment played on the two Balinese gong agung (gong gede) and with Hemant Kumar Das on his sitar. Among the sounding *openings* our presentation was the first amalgamation of elements of different cultures in one organic piece of music.

Ni Nyoman Candri showed me how she produced the sounds of the stomach, the belly and the heart. Then Tomiro Wakayama let me try the Japanese formant technique with its inner sounds that are so different from the belcanto technique of an open emission. The musical conductor Ivan Hansen composed a love song for the scene of the Mandarin (Torgeir Wethal of Odin Teatret) and the beautiful woman (the

Journal of Theatre Anthropology, 3-4, 2024: 185-199 • Mimesis Edizioni, Milan - Issn: 2784-8167 (print), Issn: 2724-623X (online)
Web: <https://jta.ista-online.org/> DOI: 10.7413/2724-623Xo69 - © 2024 Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution, Non Commercial, No Derivatives License (CC-BY-NC-ND).

Susanne Vill at ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Photo: Fiora Bemporad



185



Susanne Vill's demonstration at ISTA 6.
Photo: Fiora Bemporad

onnagata Kanichi Hanayagi), and I had to sing it accompanied by an intercultural group of musicians. I also was asked to add vocal improvisations to the musicians of mixed nationalities and their musical styles. One day, when I finished my warm-up with my favourite Puccini aria "O mio babbino caro", Eugenio came in and said: "Susanne, when you are singing, I can't work, this is sabotage!", and his helpless smile apologised for the complaint.

When Eugenio asked me to give a work demonstration of my vocal technique for the participants, I chose the subject *European Techniques of Voice Production and Styles of Singing*, and wrote down a list of modes and effects of voice production in different musical styles. Later this list functioned as the basic cell of further catalogues published in essays and presented in work demonstrations and workshops at ISTA sessions, in Austria, Germany, Israel, Singapore and Spain. The surprising offer met me far away from my library. So, I chose for my solo presentation as examples of musical styles: Birdy's "People" for pop, "Denn wie man sich bettet, so liegt man" from Brecht/Weills' *Mahagonny Songspiel* for a song style, "Un bel di vedremo" from Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* for belcanto, and for Wagner-Gesang Brünnhilde's "Starke Scheite" from *Götterdämmerung*.

After the demonstration Eugenio said: "It is wonderful. If I ask you to give me a bird, you give me a bird, if I ask you to give me a pearl, you give me a pearl, and if I ask you to give me whale, you give me a whale - even a whale."

As a special favour Eugenio chose me and five other participants to visit Jerzy Grotowski's laboratory at the "Centro per la Sperimentazione e la Ricerca Teatrale" in Pontedera. A small bus took us there. Thomas Richards welcomed us and became our guide for the evening. The vault of the performance, lighted by many candles, filled a solemn, almost spiritual atmosphere. The visitors were placed aside from the 'stage' area and told not to speak or interact. Then five actors presented results of their exercises of the last three years. The intensive, charismatic presence of the actors imposed a strong impact on us spectators. Their actions and chanting induced various impressions, some of them painfully touching, others surprising with an unforeseeable simultaneity and beyond our grasp with the mysterious transference of their mental synergy.

Leaving the performance space, we were invited for a meeting and dinner at the performers' home. There we could ask some of our many questions and received astonishing answers.

The University of Bologna had granted our meeting a generous financial support, that ISTA appreciated by offering in return a programme of lectures by the scientific staff, scholars and artists. Within a one-hour time limit, each of the free speeches should combine academic and artistical approaches. Among the scholars' proposals Eugenio also chose my suggestion *How to imagine the vocal dramatic expression of opera singers of the past by use of historic recordings?* To prepare this unexpected task, I went to a record shop in Bologna, where I found recordings of castratos and divas. Then the symposium *Theatre Anthropology: Ethos and Pre-Expressivity* started with eleven scholars and artists, me amongst them. I presented my insights. For the first part of my speech, I chose 'legendary voices', rated according to their vocal technical perfection, taking into consideration the recording conditions at the turn of the century and what they could

acquire from the singers' input. Then I moved on to the vocal styles and dramatic impact of the interpretations, discussed as phenomena of contemporary fashions. The last part referred to lost traditions: castratos with Alessandro Moreschi's recording of Paolo Tosti's *Ideale*, and Frieda Hempel's adding another f^3 to the Queen of the Night's aria in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

The activities at ISTA demanded a vocal presence of about 12 hours a day, something totally unusual for singers of my tradition. When, finally, my voice left the unaccustomed use, the otolaryngologist at the hospital prescribed medicine, rest and silence. So, for the final performance of the *Theatrum Mundi* at the Chiostro San Martino I rehearsed the choir with Ivan Hansen's composition of *Subo al triquete*, a Spanish translation of a Walt Whitman poem. With the creations of *The Crossing* Eugenio staged a performance of 31 intercultural scenes with the ensembles of Bali, India, Japan and Odin Teatret. A spectacular *coup de théâtre* with fireworks highlighted the 'dance of energies'. The numerous spectators cheered enthusiastically, and the Mayor of Bologna honoured the director and the leading team for the great success and an unforgettable event.

Leaving Bologna, we knew we had experienced an extraordinary theatrical marvel.

Power and the Variety of Vocal Expression – Vocal Techniques

The voice is used for: communication – expressing emotions – conveying emotions – conveying aggression – energising others – comforting – conveying subtexts – commenting situations – illustrating objects – painting a landscape in vocal sounds – creating vocal art forms.

In *Voices of the World. An Anthology of Vocal Expression*¹ the authors treat vocal techniques in terms of calls, cries and clamours – voice and breath – spoken, declaimed, sung – compass and register – colours and timbres – disguised voices – ornamentation – voices and musical instruments a) singing in the instrument b) imitation of instruments – employ of harmonics.

In the chapter of polyphony, they distinguish vocality concerning heterophony – echoes and overlapping – drones and ostinato.

Composers of new music distinguished different characters of vocal utterances and forms of vocal sounds:

- Creatural sounds:² prelingual noisy, rustling sounds, infantile or archaic expression, babbling, roaring, shouting, screaming. In an eruptive sounding process the dull, shapeless sound, breaking forth from the human interior, supports the shaping of the affective potential.³

1. Gilles Léothaud et al., *Voices of the World. An Anthology of Vocal Expression*, Paris: Musée de l'Homme 1996.

2. The term appeared in this sense in: Dieter Schnebel, *Denkbare Musik. Schriften 1952-1972*, Hans Rudolf Zeller (ed.), Köln 1972; cited in: Dieter Schnebel, *Aktualität Wagners. Anmerkungen zu Sprache - Musik - Drama*, in: *Tristan und Isolde*, programme Württembergische Staatstheater 1981.

3. Wolfgang Rihm about his opera on Heiner Müller's *Die Hamletmaschine*: "Der Text, sein Text, steht für sich und ruft um sich hervor, worauf er steht." ("The text, his text, stands for itself and calls up around itself what it stands upon.") in: Wolfgang Rihm, "Gangarten, Hamletmaschine, Brief an P.O.", in: *Die Hamletmaschine. Musiktheater in fünf Teilen*, programme of the world premiere Nationalltheater Mannheim 1986/87.



Susanne Vill rehearsing with Jan Ferslev, Ivan Hansen, I Made Pasek Tempo, I Wayan Rai, Ida Bagus Nyoman Mas. ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Photo: Fiora Bemporad

- Cultural sounds:⁴ our lingual and musical reality, the entirety of the historical tone generators.
- Artistic singing: artistical modes and techniques of vocal sound production.

The music theatre may combine the potentials of vocal expression: the creatural sounds, also known from ritual invocations, meet the cultural sounds of our musical traditions.

Qualities of the voice:

Pitch of the voice, range, volume, vigour, timbre, flexibility, capacity to carry the sound on through a distance, capacity to modulate the sound.

Vocal techniques work with:

The placement of the tone in the mask, on the top of the head, etc., to meet and use formants, harmonics, breath, support (of the diaphragm, *appoggiarsi in petto*, *appoggiarsi in testa*), resonators, well-balanced registers, articulation, diction, changes of speaking – singing/speaking – singing, the singing voice, the screaming voice.

The musical intelligence of the speaker/ singer impresses with an ability to imagine and invent different sounds, with psychological and dramatic empathy and the capacity to form sounds according to the aesthetic aim of expression.

Producing vocal differentiations:

Speaking in a realistic manner: natural – contrasting the 'natural' meaning of the situation – as a subtext – ironic – sarcastic – exaggerated – weird – strange – grotesque.

4. loc. cit.

Finding realistic sound shapes through: imagination (to be someone or something else) – expression of emotions: fear, anxiety, sadness, sorrow, yearning, frustration, rage, anger, dislike, disgust, envy, restlessness, interest, joy, pride, pleasure, desire, lust, surprise, jealousy, compassion, embarrassment, shame, guilt – vocal gestures – onomatopoeic sounds – illustrations.

Modes of speaking⁵

Natural: authentic, spontaneous, without mediation, being in a certain situation, including small irregularities, inadequacies, changes of the movements of speaking, of speeds, of intensities (dynamics).

Articulating: reading without inner participation, rattling off a text like learnt by heart, 'in search of the meaning', distance between the sensual representation of the meaning of the text and the pronunciation of the words, audible lack of understanding, no participation of the consciousness.

Auratic: articulations go apart from the meaning of the text. The way of speaking transports a certain melodic, rhythmic pattern or movement beyond the words. The aura of sound covers the structure of meaning and creates an appearance of beauty, of the special, of the sublime, of determination, of fate, of necessity, of higher orders, forms of being (politicians, official speakers etc.).

Analytical: interpretation of the text, decoding the signs and symbols for a precise articulation, calling on the sensual representations of reality, on which the text relies, kinesthetic actualisation of the coherences of life and duplicating the logical and poetological form given to the text by the author. The speakers understand and mediate the text, they also speak with subtexts: the sensual representation of the realities of which the text speaks, including analogies and paradoxes. The kinesthetic actualisation shows different aspects of experience.

Emotional: emotions such as joy, pleasure, desire, pride, surprise, aggression, dislike, envy, jealousy, rage, anger, fear, sadness, shame, disgust, sorrow, guilt and pain colour the speaking. (This is not in favour of the speakers who often lack the means of expression, or of the audience. Sorrow and pain are not so strictly tabooed like the other emotions.)

Illustrating: inserts of short laughter or sobbing (only to show a simple character).

Figurative: the movements of the speaking actions display the character of signs, but they are independent of the syntactic and poetic structures of the text. Changes of the speed of articulation, of the pitches, directions of speaking, of addressed points in the space (dance of the articulation, danger of mannerism).

Speaking and singing in a non-realistic manner

Artificial modes: art of speaking, recitation in different styles.

- Following musical patterns.
- Using modifications of musical material: repetition – variation – contrast –

5. Manfred Mixner, "Analyse des Sprechakts – Arbeitstechniken für Sprecher bei der Rundfunkproduktion", ("Analysis of the Act of Speaking – Techniques for Speakers in Broadcasting Productions") in: Thomas von Fragstein, Hans Martin Ritter (eds.), *Sprechen als Kunst, Positionen und Prozesse ästhetischer Kommunikation*, Frankfurt am Main: Scriptor u.a. 1990, p. 173-180.

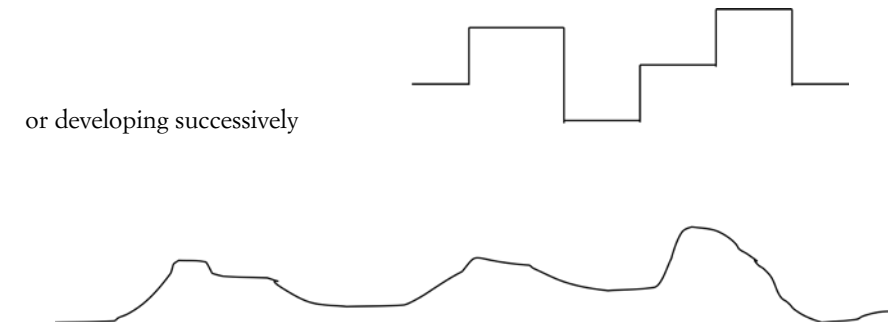
continuation, development.

- Construction by use of the five parameters of music: variations may concentrate on a single parameter or on combinations of two or more parameters.

Pitch:

Tonal - chromatic - atonal

Intensities (dynamics): Moving in steps to different levels



or developing successively

Durations:

Choose fixed rhythms – free rhythms – define and use units of time (a number of seconds by use of a stopwatch).

Tone colours:

Caused by imaginations of different sounds – expressions – characters – contents.

Density:

Create passages which differ in the density of their succession of sound/action events.

Use external non vocal means

Hands to clap, to hold and move in front of the mouth, to snip etc. – pipes – mouthpieces of instruments – technical instruments: amplifier, vocoder, echo, sound software and digital editing.

Breath

Breathe through the mouth – breathe through the nose – fill the upper thorax – fill the chest – abdominal breathing – *appoggiarsi in petto*.

Gestures of breath:⁶

- To pant, to gasp, to puff, to wheeze, to groan, to press, (open-mouthed) wondering.
- To clear one's throat.
- Draw a deep breath with and without sound – inhale panting – breathe pantingly

6. See: Schnebel, Dieter, *Maulwerke (I Atemzüge, II Kehlkopfspannungen & Gurgelrollen, III Mundstücke I, IV Mundstücke II, V Zungenschläge & Lippenspiele)*, 1968-1974, Mainz: Schott Music s.a.

with open mouth and as much air as possible – breath tremolo and vary the position of the mouth – breath vibrato – vary the depth of the breath regularly and aperiodically – break the lines – change the duration and depth – change inhaling and exhaling.

Noises⁷

- Fricatives: to creak, to grate, to press, to spit, to puff, to snarl, to snore, to hiss.
- Vibrating sounds: to coo, to roll, to flutter.
- Plosives: b, p, d, t, g, k, to spit, to stammer, to stutter, to click one's tongue, to smack (one's lips).
- Use these noises by changing the position of the mouth (imagine different vowels) and changing the pitches.

Gestures in articulation

sound – character – expression – relation – impulse (realistic and non-realistic)

Use combinations of sounds and text:

as vocal material – change and vary it as musical material;

as sound colour – change the colours without relation to the meaning;

for carrying some special contents:

- onomatopoeic modes: murmuring – howling – croaking – etc.
- oral gestures: chattering – babbling – pontificating – sermonizing – preaching – reciting – singing psalms – shouting – screaming – muffled – husky – etc.
- defining the character of the speaking person: naïve – soft – positive – openhearted – powerful – convincing – empathic – sophisticated – distinguished – reserved – authoritarian – proud – wild – anxious – weak – etc.
- defining the origin/ social background of the speaking person: speaking in language varieties – with a foreign accent – a dialect – a sociolect – youth language – etc.
- expressing conditions of body and mind: cool – sober-minded – inspired – enthusiastic – hopefully – greedy – envious – power-hungry – passionate – tipsy – husky – prosaic – dispassionate – exhausted – dull – hurt – desperate – drunk – on drugs – stoned – crazy – etc.
- expressing emotions: speaking excited – angry – furious – nervous – eager – anxious – keen – curiously – stiff – with pent-up emotions – dramatically – dreamingly – surprised – astonished – complaining – crying – howling – hooting – wailing – squalling – blubbering – bawling (with rage) – calming down – cheerful – funny – serene – raucous, etc.
- defining relations with people or things:⁸ dominating someone – rejecting someone – throwing something away – attracting someone – surrendering to someone – submitting something to someone/ something – offending someone – attacking someone – caressing someone – withdrawing yourself from someone – expressing ambivalence – lying to someone – cheating someone – confusing

7. From Hanna Aurbacher's workshop *Gesang – Stimme* at the Institut für Neue Musik und Musikerziehung, Darmstadt, Germany, April 13-16, 1973.

8. From Julia Varley's workshop *Vocal Actions*, Universität Bayreuth 1993.

someone – alienating the object of your speech – speaking like from afar – imitating another voice – speaking with another voice – like a medium – like an obsessed person;

- adapt your voice to a special communication: speaking with an animal – a child – an almost deaf person – with a megaphone for a big crowd – a foreigner e. g. a Chinese (the meaning of the words depends on the vocal melody), etc.
- transferring an impulse, speaking emotionally for the purpose to: address – stimulate – motivate – energise – moderate – appease somebody.

Speaking

Use of the different resonators⁹ – place the tone in the mask – outside of the body – at the top of the head – in your chest – in your belly – in your back etc.

Singing

Italian technique: *con emissione aperta* – *emissione coperta/suono coperto* – using different formants – falsetto – pipe-voice;

pop and rock vocals: crooning, belting, shouting;

with ethnic techniques like diaphonic and throat singing: overtone singing (Choomii), undertone singing (Kargyaa), the throat singing of the Inuit (Katajjaq) – Balinese sound of the chest, of the stomach, the heart¹⁰ – sound of the head, Chinese falsetto (jiasheng)¹¹ etc.

Articulation

Legato – *portato* – *staccato* – *vibrato* – *non vibrato* – *sotto voce* – *mezza voce* – *un fil di voce* – *leggero* – *portamento* – *glissando* – with a trill – darting – suddenly falling in – slurring the sound – hoarse – raucous – croaking – guttural – open sound – pressed – nasal – clear – aspirate – whisper.

Terms of expression

Terms of expression in the different parameters of pitch, duration, intensity, sound colour, density.¹²

Durations:

Short – long – various shades from *lento* (slow) up to *vivace*, *vivacissimo*, *prestissimo* – *accelerando* (*poco a poco* or *subito*, accelerate gradually or suddenly) – *allargando* (slowing down) – *andante* (walking) – *moderato* (slow) – *allegro* (quick) – *agitato*.

Intensity and dynamics:

Different levels of intensities from *pianissimo*, *piano* up to *forte*, *fortissimo*, *ffff* or *fff possibile*;

9. According to Jerzy Grotowski's practices.

10. Like in the Balinese vocal technique shown by Ni Nyoman Candri in Bologna.

11. The Chinese head tone technique jiasheng is a special falsetto used in Peking opera to characterize the principal feminine role, see: *Les Voix du Monde*, CD II, Disguised voices (p. 145): 9. China [Han], Song from the Peking Opera *Jingxi/Pingju* in the opera *Yutangchun* (*Sprintime in the Hall of Jade*) sung by Zhang Junqiu.

12. Mentioned in Dieter Schnebel's *Maulwerke* (see fn 6) and György Ligeti's *Aventures et Nouvelles Aventures*.

Gradual development, beginning almost toneless *crescendo* – *diminuendo* up to *morendo*,
al niente, *quasi niente*;
 Sudden breakthrough.

Traditional Italian terms of expression

Quasi meccanico – *molto tranquillo* – *tenuto* – *delicato* – *sostenuto* – *dolcissimo* – *misterioso* – *eco* (*solenne*, *funebre*) – *estatico* – *espressivo* (*molto*) – *capriccioso* – *virtuoso* – *fantastico* – *gesticolando* – *agitato* (*allegro*) – *espressivo* – *appassionato* – *eroico* – *feroce* – *molto aggressivo* – *molto energico* – *con tutta forza*.

Technical instructions for the voice production¹³

Voiceless – voiced – with head voice – aspired tone – fade out the sound of your tone – touch your sound only fugitively – stylised expression – stop suddenly – accelerate your vibrato – repeat the sounds quickly – glottal sound – quick movement of the tongue and the lips – move your lower jaw to create a slow aperiodic vibrato – push your lips forward and speak or sing into the space in front of your teeth – form a tube with your hands and whisper into it – form a horn with your hands – close your mouth with your hands – close your nose with your hand – sing into a tube to denaturalise your sound etc.

Working with the text

- Build levels on different parameters: pitch – duration – intensity – tone colour – density (succession of sound events).
- Use as construction modes: formal patterns – inserts (words – texts – sounds – songs).
- Interjections:¹⁴ laughter – exclamations – shouting – cries – noises – vocal segregates – coughing – swallowing – gulping – sobbing – laughing – suffocating – etc.
- Levels of speaking – singing.

Vocal styles

in opera, operetta, musical, jazz, pop, rock, ethnic, new music and digital performance:

- Belcanto – Wagner-Gesang – expressions of Verismo – alternations of speaking and singing
- 'natural' vocalising – legitimate singing (clear phonation with flat resonance) – *parlando* – speech song – *sprechgesang* – *chanson* – song (Brecht/Weill)
- jazz with scat (vocalises, improvised singing with meaningless syllables, onomatopoeia, imitation of instrumental phrases)
- pop vocals, rock vocals, 'power-voice'¹⁵ (screaming voice with amplifier and digital sound editing) – crooning (soft, aspirated sound) – belting (clarion, reedy sound) –

13. Selected items from György Ligeti, *Aventures et Nouvelles Aventures* and Dieter Schnebel, *Maulwerke*, translations by S.V.

14. Eco ascribes these voice qualifiers and voice characterizing forms within the paralinguistic utterances to a para-language.

15. Andrés Balhorn, *Powervoice. Die praxisorientierte Methode für den Rock-/ Pop-Gesang*, mit Audio-CD mit professionellem Trainingsprogramm, Hamburg: Gerig, 2007.

83 ("Communication") 84

4 Sopn, Alt, Bar.: durch Röhre hindurch sprechen, um die Stimme zu denaturieren (hohl!)
 4 A tempo um die Stimme zu denaturieren (hohl!)
 4 J=80 (Più mosso)

Poco misterioso

[Sopr., Alt., Bar.: stets übertrieben deutlich artikulieren. Auch die ppp-Stellen sollen gut hörbar sein (Murmelsstimme stets intensiv). Die ganze Szene wird mit immer zurückgehaltener Erregung vorge-tragen.]

stets scheinbar unbeteiligt sich verstellend, als wäre man ännungslos

85 86

87 88

geheimnisvolle Frage, mit grosser innerer Erregung

geheimnisvoll-intensiv

zurückhaltend zäckerisch

zurückhaltend zäckerisch

geheimtuerisch

Flüstern: geheimnisvoll-intensiv

- shouting (exclaiming) – screaming (high outcries) – grunting (deep guttural sound) – growling (low grunting)
- ethnic vocal styles like overtone singing (Choomii), undertone singing (Kargyraa), the throat singing of the Inuit (Katajjaq), Chinese falsetto (Jiasheng)
- beatboxing
- new music with various vocal techniques and sound effects
- digital performance with editing of vocal sounds.

Different forms of crossover are possible between stylistically correct interpretation, special use of breaking stylistic identities, alienation through sound, use of different styles and ethnic vocal techniques.

Use of postmodern techniques¹⁶

Repetition

Fragmentation: Take a part of your text out of the context, alter it with a new rhythm – other accents – separate special elements (phonemes) – imagine a colour for the text – speak it with the imagination of a contrasting colour – alienate it with a contrasting style (natural – articulating – auratic – analytical – emotional – illustrative – figurative).

Deconstruction: Find a comment for your text – explain what it's about – tell the motives of the author behind the text – tell the biographical or psychological background of the text – give the historical background – speak about its form – criticise it – tell what you like of it – tell about the scientific discoveries made since the text was produced – put questions – give riddles.

Montage: Break the reading of the text and insert: your comments – other texts (in different languages) – singing – music – dancing – painting, a conversation with somebody about the text (questioning, explaining, continuing the story).

Heterogeneity: Create heterogenous passages contradicting the meaning of the text.

Ambiguity: Show the ambivalence of facts or meanings inherent in the text.

Plurality: Open the presentation of the text for different meanings, leaving the interpretation to the audience – denote the signs (go back to the roots, take the text 'literally').

Intertextuality: Quotations of different authors – quotations referring to the meaning of the text (newspapers, poems).

Virtuality: Use technical equipment (vocoder, echo, slides, cameras and projections, videos) – choose a sample of a different/ historical person's voice to pronounce the text – let an artificial intelligence perform and/ or transform the text, etc.

Interculturality: Use elements of different cultures (texts, songs, pictures, dances, movies etc.) – speak in a different language – with a different accent/ dialect – dress/transform into a person of another colour or identity for speaking the text.

Aesthetic patterns of postmodern theatre¹⁷

applied to vocal expression:

16. Features of Alfonso de Toro's, Hans-Thies Lehmann's and Patrice Pavis' analyses have been adapted as indicators for vocal performances.

17. The selection combines techniques mentioned by Alfonso de Toro, Hans-Thies Lehmann, Patrice Pavis and adds techniques of digital editing.

Theatricality: Use of different media of the theatre – change from one mode of expression to another, from speaking to singing, pantomime, dancing etc. – work with ready-mades – use certain patterns, samples.

Virtuality: Express the text in different media using the voice with loudspeakers, tapes, beatboxing, digital editing, and the body with cameras, video, digital editing, virtual reality, augmented reality, artificial intelligence.

Intermediality: Define the character through the technique of vocal expression – switch from speaking to singing, spelling, translating, writing, performing – change from speaking to singing, with vocoder, echo, digital editing – use sensors and sounds of databases¹⁸ – use a digital voice changer to modify your voice – use a text to speech editor¹⁹ to present your text in different, even historical voices and various languages – use an AI voice generator²⁰ and choose voices such as conversational, narrative, explainer, children's, character, emotional, training voices, voices with local accents – in different languages and accents, etc.

Performativity: Together with the voice form a (coherent or different) meaning with the body, by means of the environment, microphones, loudspeakers, tapes, CDs, pictures, cameras, videos, DVDs – spread the text among different speakers – interact the meaning of the next word or sequence.

Discontinuity: Break the lines, phrases, modes of pronunciation and expression, switch to different vocal techniques, switch to different musical styles, etc.

Heterogeneity: Combine opposite forms of vocal and physical expressions and of theatrical media to create complexity – use an AI voice changer to transform your voice to the sound of a historical voice, etc.

Interculturality: Use different vocal techniques like belcanto, diaphonic, change of formants, throat singing, overtone and undertone singing – alternate your vocal presence with references of a different culture – combine your vocal utterance with inserts or underscores of voices of different cultures – use an ai voice generator to switch to different languages and cultures.

Montage: Combine different vocal styles like folksong, opera, jazz, ethnic, pop, rock – use technical equipment.

Intertextuality: Use intertexts, references to related sources, quotations, to add new aspects to the text.

18. In his virtual opera *Heptameron* Gerhard E. Winkler worked with sensors and sound databases. He created more than 300 samplers of body sounds including sounds of the heartbeat, blood pressure, swallowing, digesting etc.. For *Braindance / Brainmusic* Thilo Hinterberger and Otmar Gendera developed a technique to transform rhythms of the brain into sounds: the actions of the dancer's brain creates and controls the sounds which accompany the body movements. In dancing the dancer composes the density and intensity of impulses while the computer technician calls the corresponding sound colors up. Cf. Susanne Vill, "Spielräume zwischen Medienkunst und Virtueller Realität", in: Henri Schoenmakers et.al. (eds.), *Theater und Medien / Theatre and the Media. Grundlagen – Analysen – Perspektiven. Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, Bielefeld: transcript: 470f.

19. Various text to speech editors with different voices and languages are available, e.g. <https://filmora.wondershare.de/video-editing/text-to-speech-software.html> [last accessed on August 27, 2023].

20. *The AI Powered voice Generation Platform* offers an "expansive library of 900+ voices" such as conversational, narrative, explainer, children's, character, emotional, training voices, voices with local accents – "in 142 languages and accents", <https://play.ht> [last accessed on August 27, 2023].

Floating in the universe of the voice, releasing one's imagination and observing the development of physical and technical materials lead to finding further means of expression, artificial creation and composition.

Oral Sources

Aurbacher, Hanna. *Gesang – Stimme*, workshop, Institut für Neue Musik und Musikerziehung, Darmstadt, April 1973.
 Henius, Carla. *Improvisation – Happening und Werkreue*, workshop, Universität München, May 1984.
 Varley, Julia. *Vocal actions*, workshop, Universität Bayreuth, November 1993.

Bibliography

Berg, Alban. 1963. *Lulu*, opera (1937), score: Wien: Universal Edition; completion by Friedrich Cerha. 1979. Score: Wien: Universal Edition.
 Dixon, Steve, 2007. *Digital Performance*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
 Cynthis, Zbigniew. 2015. *Acting with Grotowski: Theatre as a Field for Experiencing Life*, Paul Allain, Khalid Tyabji (eds.), Abingdon, New York: Routledge.
 Eco, Umberto. 1972. *Einführung in die Semiotik*, München: UTB: 21.
 Fischer, Peter-Michael. 1993. *Die Stimme des Sängers. Analyse ihrer Funktion und Leistung – Geschichte und Methoden der Stimmbildung*, Stuttgart: Metzler.
 Fischer-Lichte, Erika. 1983. *Semiotik des Theaters*, 3 vols. Tübingen: Narr.
 Grotowski, Jerzy. (1968) 2002. *Towards a Poor Theatre*, illustrated reprint edition, Abingdon, New York: Routledge.
 Heider, Werner. 1975. *Katalog für eine Stimme*, Mannheim: Mannheimer Musikverlag.
 Lehmann, Hans-Thies. 1981. "Die Inszenierung: Probleme ihrer Analyse", in: *Zeitschrift für Semiotik* 11:1: 29-49
 ———. 2006. *Postdramatic Theater*. Translated by Karen Jürs-Munby, Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.
 Léothaud, Gilles and Bernard Lortat-Jacob, Hugo Zemp in collaboration with Trần Quang Hai and Jean Schwarz. 1996. *Les voix du monde. Une Anthologie des Expressions Vocales – Voices of the World. An Anthology of Vocal Expression*, Musée de l'Homme, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.
 Ligeti, György. 1966. *Aventures et Nouvelles Aventures*, 1962–1965, Frankfurt: Henry Litolf's Verlag/ C.F. Peters.
 Mixner, Manfred. 1990. "Analyse des Sprechakts – Arbeitstechniken für Sprecher bei der Rundfunkproduktion", in: Thomas von Fragstein, Hans Martin Ritter (eds.), *Sprechen als Kunst, Positionen und Prozesse ästhetischer Kommunikation*, Frankfurt a. M.: Scriptor et. al.: 173-180.
 Pavis, Patrice. 1989. "Die Inszenierung zwischen Text und Aufführung", in: *Zeitschrift für Semiotik* 11:1: 13-27.
 ———. 1982. *Languages of the Stage: Essays in the Semiology of Theatre*, New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.
 ———. 1988. *Semiotik der Theaterrezeption*, Tübingen: Narr.
 Rihm, Wolfgang. 1987. *Gangarten, Hamletmaschine*, Brief an P. O., in: *Die Hamletmaschine. Musiktheater in fünf Teilen*, 1983-1986, score: Wien: Universal Edition: 17.
 ———. 1987. *Musiktheater aus der Sicht des Komponisten. Die Hamletmaschine*. Programme of the world premiere Nationaltheater Mannheim 1987.
 Skeel, Rina (ed.). 1994. *The Tradition of ISTA*, Londrina, Brazil, FILO, International Festival of Londrina/ Holstebro, Denmark: ISTA.
 Schnabel, Dieter. 1968-1974. *Maulwerke (I Atemzüge, II Kehlkopfspannungen & Gurgelrollen, III Mundstücke I, IV Mundstücke II, V Zungenschläge & Lippenspiele)*, Mainz: Schott Music.
 ———. 1981. *Denkbare Musik*. Schriften 1952-1972, Hans Rudolf Zeller (ed.), Köln, cited in Dieter Schnabel, *Aktualität Wagners. Anmerkungen zu Sprache – Musik – Drama*, in: *Tristan und Isolde*, programme, Württembergische

Staatstheater: 17-29.
 de Toro, Alfonso. 1995. "Die Wege des zeitgenössischen Theaters – Zu einem postmodernen Multimedia-Theater oder: Das Ende des mimetisch-referentiellen Theaters?", in: *Forum Modernes Theater*, vol. 10/2: 135-183.
 Varley, Julia. *Notes of an Odin Actress. Stones of Water*. London and New York: Routledge, therein: "The echo of silence", 23-28; "Precision and decision: the whole voice", 40-42; "Score and Sub-score", 78-85, this also in: *Journal of Theatre Anthropology* 1, 2021: 212-221.
 Vill, Susanne. 2005. "'Worte, Worte, Worte' ,in des Welt-Atems wehendem All' – Stationen des Text-Musik-Verhältnisses im Wandel der Operngeschichte", in: *Bühnenklänge*, Festschrift für Sieghart Döhring zum 65. Geburtstag, Thomas Betzwieser et. al. (ed.), München: Ricordi: 83-102.
 ———. 2008. "Spielräume zwischen Medienkunst und Virtueller Realität", in: Henri Schoenmakers, Stefan Blaeske, Kay Kirchmann, Jens Ruchatz (ed.), *Theater und Medien / Theatre and the Media. Grundlagen – Analysen – Perspektiven. Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, Bielefeld: transcript: 457-477.
 ———. 2017. *Kommunikative Kompetenz in der Operninterpretation – mit Interpretationsanalysen von Plácido Domingo als Andrea Chénier, Francisco Araiza als Des Grieux und René Kollo als Tristan*, Amazon 2017.
 Wethal, Torgeir. 1972. *Vocal Training at the Odin Teatret*. Holstebro: Odin Teatret Film.
 Winkler, Gerhard E.. 2002. *Heptameron als interaktive Oper. Das Werk im Gespräch*. 8. Münchener Biennale, Internationales Festival für neues Musiktheater, programme: 34.

Selection of Images

ISTA 6, Bologna, 28 June - 18 July 1990



Fiora Bemporad

Photographing ISTA

Analogical Work at Villa Guastavillani

Since the first ISTA, the extensive photographic documentation has been exceptionally valuable in illustrating the different postulates of theatre anthropology alongside the many books and articles. The photographers did not only document the demonstrations and principles examined during the ISTA sessions. Their photographs also reflect the particular situation of research, teaching and coexistence between teachers, scholars and participants - amongst whom well-known personalities of the theatre world - during long hours of intense daily exertion.

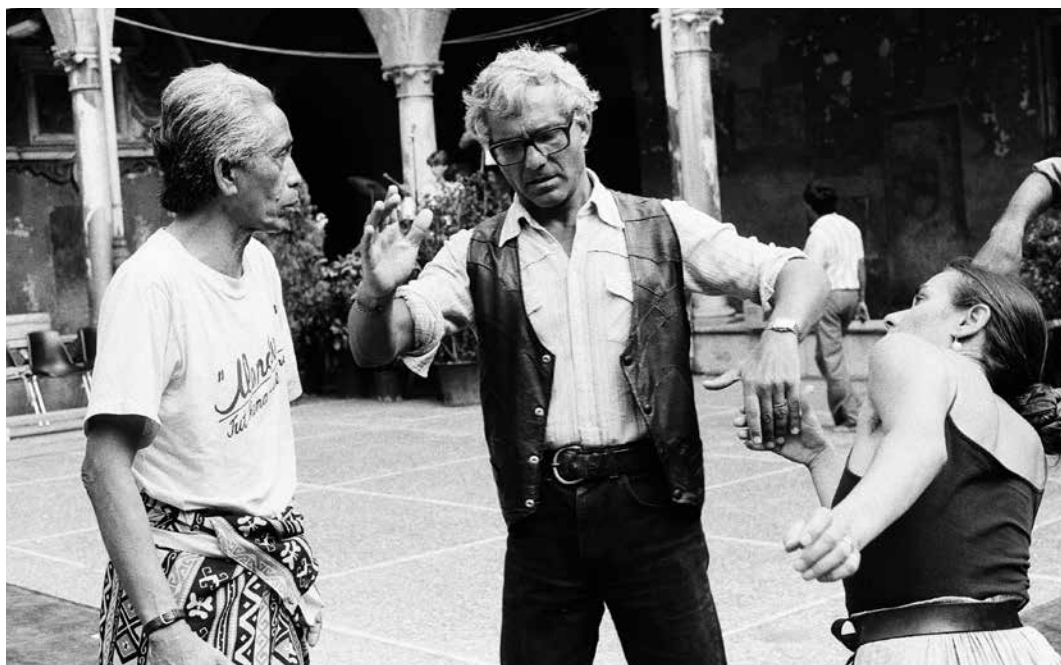
Until the beginning of the 21st century, photographers worked exclusively in analogue form which required a continuous choice of the subjects to be photographed given the limited number of films that could be processed every day. During ISTA sessions, photographs were taken during the day, from dawn until the last performance in the evening, and at night they had to be developed, enlarging some of them for scholars and press. Most images remained for ever part of a submerged iceberg.

I photographed ISTA for the first time in Bologna in 1990. At the Villa Guastavillani, which belonged to the University of Bologna, I developed photographs with Tony D'Urso in a small room where we improvised a precarious and dusty laboratory with temperatures of over thirty degrees centigrade. I have since photographed the ISTA sessions in 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2003. Following is a small selection of photographs from ISTA Bologna 1990 which have never been published before.

In 2022 all the approximately 10,000 negatives of my photographs of ISTA sessions and Odin Teatret performances were digitised, including about 1,300 images of the ISTA Bologna 1990 session. This digital archive is now accessible at LAFLIS (Living Archive Floating Islands) together with those of other photographers who have documented Odin Teatret and ISTA activities since their beginnings.

Tjokorda Istri Putra Padmini. Demonstration at ISTA 6, Bologna, Italy, 1990. Photos pages 200 to 211: Fiora Bemporad





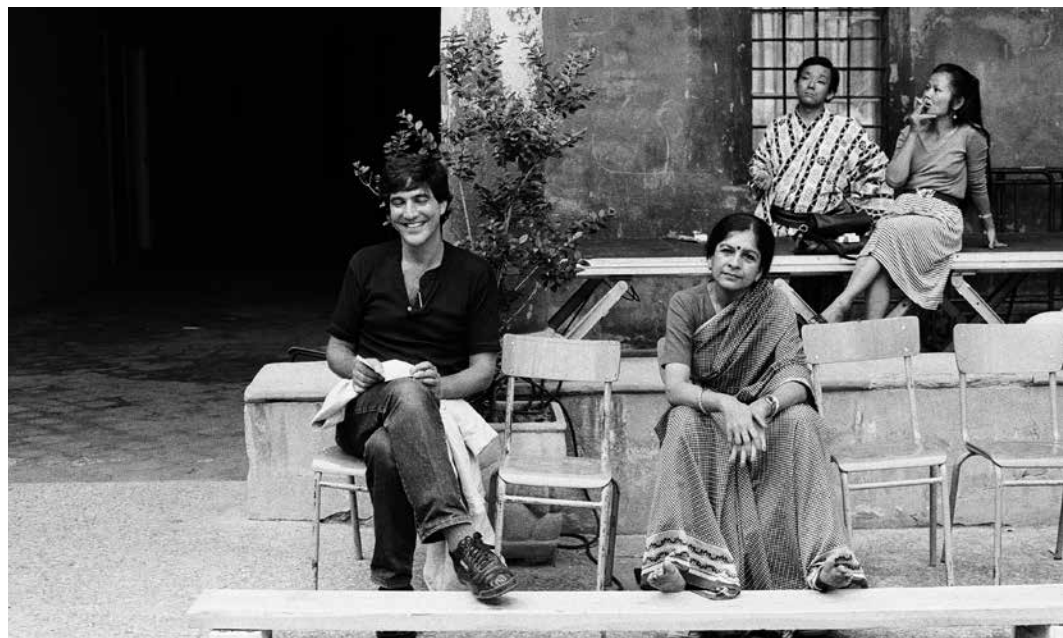
Previous page: Sanjukta Panigrahi (India), I Nyoman Catra (Bali), I Made Pasek Tempo (Bali), Kanichi Hanayagi (Japan), during demonstrations.
 I Made Pasek Tempo, Eugenio Barba and Roberta Carreri rehearsing *Theatrum Mundi*.
 This page: Buyo kabuki with Kanho Azuma (Japan). Mr Peanut with Julia Varley. Balinese ketchak in *Theatrum Mundi*.



Peter Elsass, Giovanni Azzaroni, Susana Block, Victor Weijie Yu.
Theatrum Mundi rehearsal.



Meeting of participants and scholars.
The Crossing.



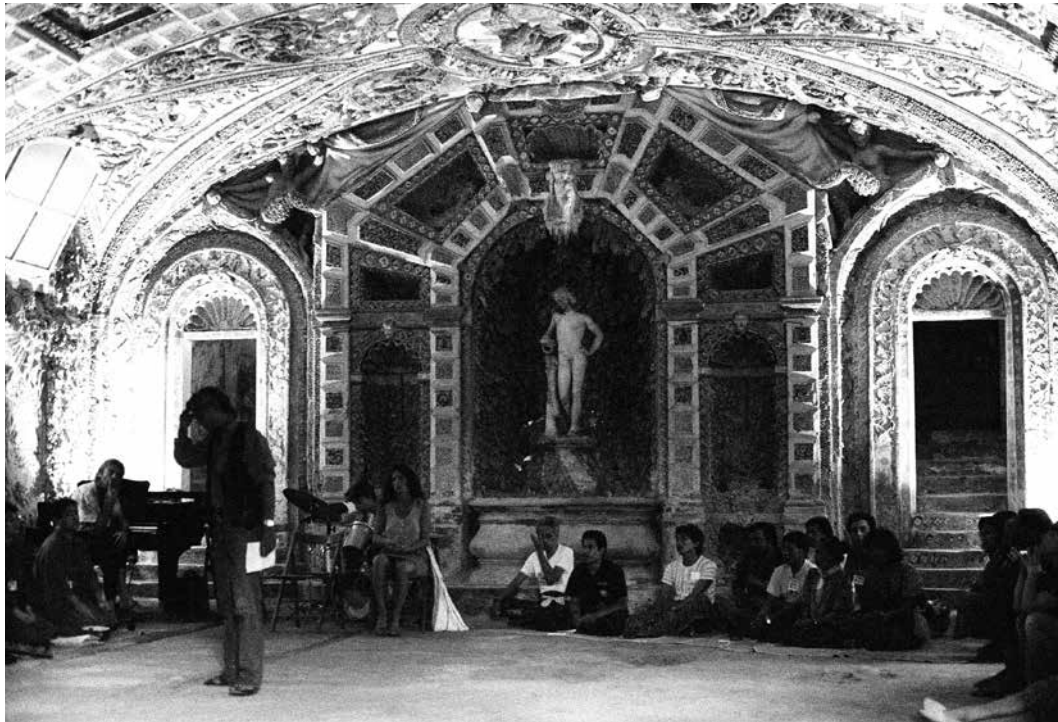
This page: Ronald Jenkins, Sanjukta Panigrahi, Kanichi Hanayagi, Natsu Nakajima.
Felisa Jezierski, Nitis Jacon, Torgeir Wethal, Roberta Carreri, José Luis Valenzuela, Aderbal Junior.
Next page: Miguel Rubio, Luis Octavio Burnier, Eugenio Barba.
Kirsten Hastrup, Kanho Azuma, Susanne Vill, Mark Oshima, Nando Taviani.
Before a barter.
Julia Varley and Ragunath Panigrahi. Eugenio Barba.





This page: Performance Techniques and Historiography lectures at Bologna University.
Gaia Varon, Susanne Vill. Frank Hoff, Mark Oshima. Santiago García, Cristina Castrillo.
Natsu Nakajima. Mark Oshima, Kanichi Hanayagi.
Next page: Franco Ruffini, Nando Taviani. I Nyoman Catra, Eugenio Barba.
Performance Techniques and Historiography lecture at Bologna University.





This page: Jan Ferslev, Desak Made Suarti Laksmi, Ragunath Panigrahi.
 Ragunath Panigrahi, Jan Ferslev, Desak Made Suarti Laksmi.
 The Siren Room, vocal demonstrations.
 Torgeir Wethal, Kanichi Hanayagi, *The Crossing*.
 Next page: Torgeir Wethal, Julia Varley, Eugenio Barba, *Theatrum Mundi* rehearsals.
 Eugenio Barba listening to the chorus, *Theatrum Mundi* rehearsals.
 Sanjukta Panigrahi.

THE CENTRE FOR PERFORMANCE RESEARCH PRESENTS

PERFORMANCES EAST & WEST



MEMORIAL HALL
CHRIST COLLEGE
BRECON

SATURDAY 4th
APRIL 8.00pm
**SANJUKTA
PANIGRAHI
AND
ENSEMBLE**
*(Dance and Music
from India)*

SUNDAY 5th
APRIL 8.00pm
**MULTI-
CULTURAL
VARIETY
SHOW**

MONDAY 6th
APRIL 8.00pm
ITSI BITS!
**(ODIN
TEATRET)**

MEMORIAL HALL
CHRIST COLLEGE
BRECON

TUESDAY 7th
APRIL 8.00pm
**AN EVENING
OF BALINESE
& JAPANESE
DANCE
THEATRE**

WEDNESDAY 8th
APRIL 8.00pm
**THE CASTLE
OF
HOLSTEBRO
(ODIN
TEATRET)**

MARKET HALL
BRECON

THURSDAY 9th
APRIL 8.00pm
**GATHERING:
EXCHANGE
& BARTER**

A WORLD OF DANCE AND THEATRE COMES TO BRECON

4th-9th APRIL 1992

**A SEASON OF DANCE AND THEATRE
FROM INDIA, BALI, JAPAN AND EUROPE**

Tickets: £4.50 (£3.50 concessions)

Gathering - Exchange & Barter 9th April: ticketed event free of charge

Tickets available from: FH Jones, Newsagents, Brecon and The Book & Music Shop, Brecon.

Telephone bookings: Cardiff (0222) 345174 (before 1/4/92) or Brecon (0874) 611957 (after 1/4/92)

ISTA 7, Brecon, Cardiff 1992

Performances East & West

Fictive Bodies, Dilated Minds, Hidden Dances

ISTA 7 was organised by Richard Gough and Judie Christie, Centre of Performance Research, and financed by The Welsh Arts Council, The Arts Council International Initiatives Fund, The Calouste-Gulbenkian Foundation, The Royal Danish Embassy, The Development Board for Rural, Wales, Routledge UK, The French Embassy Cultural Office.

The session focused on the work of the director and, through practical work with ISTA's performing staff, explored ISTA's discoveries on pre-expressivity and extra-daily performance technique and behaviour, comparing different acting techniques, both personal and traditional, analysing common principles underlying the different styles.

SYMPOSIUM

Cardiff, 10-11 April, Centre for Performance Research, two-day symposium on "Fictive Bodies, Dilated Minds, Hidden Dances", led by Eugenio Barba, open to the public. Work demonstrations by Sanjukta Panigrahi and Julia Varley. Speakers: Fabrizio Cruciani (Italy), Patrice Pavis (France), Franco Ruffini (Italy), Nicola Savarese (Italy), Ferdinando Taviani (Italy), Julia Varley (UK/Odin Teatret).

ISTA BRECON-CARDIFF

Excerpt from 'Report on the 7th Public Session of ISTA' by Ric Allsopp, CPR

The first part of the ISTA project took the form of a practical workshop for 35 UK and international theatre directors held in Brecon in mid-Wales. Starting with the theme of "The refusnik - the individual who does not follow the norms, opinions or doctrines of authority" - Eugenio Barba led ten working sessions together with members of the ISTA research team.

The work focused on concepts of 'pre-expressivity' and the idea and practical implications of 'sub-score' - broadly defined as a network of images, associations and structures that informs the performer's patterns of behaviour and interaction in performance conditions.

The directors' workshop in Brecon included public performances each evening by the visiting artists as well as a 'barter', or exchange of performances, with local groups.



213

The weekend in Cardiff presented to an assembly of 160 an 'introductory' conference on the work of ISTA with papers and demonstrations from members of the ISTA research team on dramaturgy and codes of the performer, and research in theatre histories undertaken in the light of Theatre Anthropology.

Excerpt from the paper prepared as background for the conference session

Dramaturgy of the Performance - Remembering Histories by Fabrizio Cruciani, University of Bologna; Franco Ruffini, University of Bologna; Nicola Savarese, University of Lecce; Ferdinando Taviani, University of Aquila

But what does a 'present body' mean? Gradually, we came to understand that the quality 'present' ought not to be related to space (the body present = the body which is there, in a given point in space) as much as to time: the body present = the body which is totally involved in the present, at a precise moment in time. Which implies, clearly, but as a consequence, a precise point in space.

In sum: energy = the quality of the 'body present' = the body involved in the here and now.

This is to say: the body present = the credible body; presence = credibility. Credibility, not legibility.

For example: the body of a man involved in defusing a bomb who risks death at the slightest wrong movement, is credible even if we do not know he is defusing a bomb. Stanislavski advised actors to watch pairs of lovers in the street from a window. Even if we do not understand or hear their speech, we believe their every movement. Their bodies have the quality of presence: they are in the here and now of the present.

Taviani has carried out research into the acting of Henry Irving, concentrating on his style as it appears between the received wisdom of the 19th century acting manuals and Craig's biography of him.

On the basis of the specific results of this analysis, the comparison - proposed by Craig himself - between Irving and the 'Supermarionette' is emerging as far more than merely a suggestive metaphor, or generic praise. The 'Supermarionette' is emerging as an image which indicates the actor in flesh and blood (who rarely exists, but is no less desirable for that) who is capable of exercising absolute control over the slightest of his physical functions.

The self-control of which Craig speaks and the consciousness Artaud insistently refers to can be seen, therefore, as different ways to indicate the same ideal actor, or better, the same concrete project - even if difficult to bring into being: an actor able to refrain from betraying his score or script, but, no less important, to execute it every time as if it were the first time; an actor who is able to stay within the script, but to move withing the script.

This is a first step which leads forward to a perspective which replaces the historiographical notions of 'European Theatre' and 'Asian Theatre' with the notion of a 'Eurasian Theatre'.

Richard Gough

Underscores & Subtexts The Turbulence of Hidden Streams

Abstract: This dossier style essay offers a candid account of the proceedings (certainties and perplexities) and a detailed description of the genesis of the 7th session of ISTA held in Brecon and Cardiff in Wales, UK, 4 -11 April 1992: its modus operandi, form and function (including statements on underscore and scenarios for improvisations), extracts and summaries from the conference, and an honest appraisal of the failure to realise what was envisaged as an ambitious, longer-term, Eurasian Theatre Project. In the chronicles of ISTA an account of the 7th session has not been fully recorded, even though the ground-breaking research on sub-score and underscore has subsequently underpinned perspectives and programmes. The 7th session of ISTA was problematic on several levels especially during the practical sessions in Brecon when the predominantly British theatre directors began to question ISTA's approach and methodology, and friction arose between the 'Anglo-Saxon' artists-scholars and the Italian teatrologists.

Keywords: Subscore/Underscore, Director training, Certainties/Perplexities, Refuseniks, Hidden dances

An account of the less-chronicled 7th session of ISTA: Brecon – Cardiff, April 1992

Prologue

In a letter dated February 12, 1987, I wrote to Eugenio Barba to renew communication (there had been an unintentional breach for over a year as the major Cardiff Laboratory Theatre project on Chinese Opera had absorbed all focus and energy). Following opening remarks on recent projects, I launched the overture:

I would like to discuss with you the possibility of holding a weekend-long symposium on theatre and anthropology – a British introduction to theatre and anthropology – sometime later this year in London (September is a good month). I have also talked to Richard Schechner about this; he is very keen. I would see this as a prologue to holding a future session of ISTA within the UK (and hopefully Wales). I know the implications of this, financially and organisationally, are immense, but these days, we seem to be able to take even



greater risks and stage larger projects and find the means to do so. Through the Peking Opera project, we have entered (infiltrated!) the establishment art world (circuits, managers, foundations, funding bodies, etc.) and got used to budgets with a few extra noughts on the end. I think in another year's time, we will be well positioned to stage a major transcultural project, and what is more, we are interested and enthusiastic to do so. (Richard Gough February 12 1987)

The letter proceeds to inaugurate a discussion about an English language edition of *The Secret Art of the Performer* which I curiously and presciently mistitled *Dictionary/Anatomy of Theatre Anthropology*. Four years later CPR would publish a revised and extended version of this work in conjunction with Routledge who insisted that it be titled *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*. The eventual compromise was the amalgam: *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: Secret Art of the Performer* (1991).

Our Centre for Performance Research is also setting up its own publications and distribution division, and I am considering a few publication projects for the following year. We have been approached on Peter Brook's behalf to publish a book on the *Mahabharata* – the text, background information, interviews, photo documentation). I continue to miss an English version of yours and Nicola's *Dictionary/Anatomy of Theatre Anthropology*, and I wonder if you have any thoughts for a new expanded edition. (Richard Gough February 12 1987)

One year after this letter, CPR was to inaugurate its ground-breaking series of international conferences, Points of Contact (1988 to 2000) with *Points of Contact: Theatre, Anthropology and Theatre Anthropology* (the comma being a crucial indication of the arc of travel). Eugenio Barba participated with ISTA's foundational scientific team, the Italian professors Nicola Savarese, Franco Ruffini, Fernando Taviani, and the Odin Teatret actor Roberta Carreri. Significantly, in terms of the dialogic ambition outlined in the 1987 letter, Richard Schechner participated, as did the British social anthropologist (and ethnomusicologist) John Blacking and other anthropologists, including Danish Mette Bovin from Denmark who had conducted extensive research into African dance and collaborated with Carreri, in Burkina Faso. The one-hundred-plus delegates at this conference were a healthy mix of dance and theatre practitioners, performance and cultural studies scholars together with anthropologists; it was a significant gathering that had repercussions for years to come. It was one of the earliest addresses Schechner made to a British audience, and it unravelled the connections between theatre, ritual and anthropology, enabling a deeper understanding of the influence of anthropologist Victor Turner on Schechner and performance studies. It was also the first time ISTA was introduced in the UK, and the emergent principles of Theatre Anthropology were advanced to a critical but appreciative audience. The whole proceedings were greatly enriched by the presence and input of 'real' anthropologists Bovin and Blacking, who brought rigorous analysis to the table.

In September 1990, CPR produced in Cardiff a comprehensive season of the entire repertoire of Odin Teatret, together with many allied events; it marked the 10th

anniversary of Odin's month-long residency in Wales held in August 1980 and was titled *Odin in Wales: Ten Years On*. In addition to presenting the primary Odin ensemble production of that time – *Talabot* – the programme included all the solo performances (*Judith* – Roberta Carreri, *Itsi Bitsi* – Iben Nagel Rasmussen, *The Castle of Holstebro* – Julia Varley), screenings of all the films and workshops led by Eugenio Barba, Torgeir Wethal, Richard Fowler and Iben Nagel Rasmussen. Most significantly, with regard to the evolution of hosting ISTA in Wales, there were two conferences and one specific workshop curated as part of the two-week-long season. A symposium with Eugenio Barba was convened under the title *Autobiography and Anthropology*. This built upon and extended the Points of Contact conference of two years previously and explored Barba's trajectory, his kathakali encounters in Kerala Kalamandalam and his observations of the young boys' training and the school's strict regime; this led to a way of looking at and seeing analytically, and the foundational perspective of ISTA. While this symposium was an intimate one-day gathering, an international conference was also realised: *Great Reckonings in Small Rooms? Visions for a New Theatre*.

Although primarily focussed on the legacy of the Polish Laboratory Theatre and the various formations of laboratory theatres and research-led theatres of the 1970s and 1980s (with a reflection on Meyerhold's and Stanislavski's studios earlier in the 20th century in Russia), given the presence of ISTA's core scientific faculty, part of the proceedings was dedicated to an investigation of ISTA. These discussions focussed on how ISTA was extending the notion of a laboratory theatre into a sustained transnational research enquiry – through the realisation of a permanent school organising annual working sessions at multiple locations.



Perhaps most significant as a step towards what was to be staged in 1992 – the 7th ISTA Brecon-Cardiff – was a workshop Barba led specifically for theatre directors. This was a part of an ongoing series of workshops and meetings arranged by CPR that addressed the paucity (in the 1980/90s) of formal training for theatre directors in the UK. This was *Directors' Training Module Two*; it lasted eight days and involved 16 British theatre directors, many of whom were well-established and experienced directors leading theatre companies in the UK. The first 'module' was run by Augusto Boal earlier in 1990, and many other notable directors were to follow in this series, including Tadeusz Bradecki (Stary Teatr, Krakow); Roberto Bacci (Piccolo Teatro, Pontedera);

Peter Brook (CRT, Paris); Anatoly Vasiliev (Moscow) and Włodzimierz Staniewski (Gardzienice Theatre Association). The challenge to Barba and all the director training leaders was how to transform idiosyncratic 'know-how', tried and tested methods, and their own jargon (and the practical technical equivalent) into creative strategies and techniques in the rehearsal room that could be communicated, shared and put into practice. The challenge to the participant directors was to be open, to rediscover the 'beginners' mind, and to avoid shortcuts by reverting to their own methods and techniques. For the less experienced participant directors, the vista and horizons were less bounded; they were less cynical and circumspect – this would reoccur at the ISTA Brecon. What can be learnt from a visiting 'master' ultimately depends on how open one is to being a 'pupil'. Nevertheless, the issue of being held as a 'master' and the requirement to modify positions of power and knowledge and not resort to shorthand and habitual (mystified) techniques is paramount. In the main, the Directors Training workshop as a part of *Odin in Wales: Ten Years On* was a major success, and the feedback from most of the participants was exceptionally positive; this was a motivating factor for planning for an ISTA in Wales.

ISTA in Wales

Plotting & scheming: where there is a will, there is a way

From the initial proposal to host an ISTA in Wales (made in February 1987; see extract from letter above), it took over five years to realise the project, and it mutated through various forms. Initially, a grand project comprising an ISTA, a Festival of Eurasian Theatre and an Exposition of the Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium-Odin Teatret was advanced for September 1990. This three-part goliath carried the working title *Expo Eurasia*, and its integrity and rationale were to tease out the various components of Odin/NTL/ISTA and construct a matrix of cultural and educational programmes that took advantage of bringing to the UK the various performance ensembles and associated artists. Thus, a *Festival of Eurasian Theatre* would present the Balinese, Indian, and Japanese ensembles together with the European theatre companies (Odin Teatret and others) that would be participating in ISTA's research. However, this festival would have a separate identity and would be public facing, programmed in significant theatres. Likewise, when both the Festival and ISTA were completed, a residency of Odin/NTL would be hosted, and an entire exposition of its work would be presented – as had been done in the month-long residency in August 1980. This was planned as a collaboration between the Centre for Performance Research, Cardiff, and Dartington College of the Arts, Devon, with programmes extending through South Wales, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. The project was too ambitious, and the politics of co-production too complex; it could not be realised in its composite form and had to be broken into more realisable shards. *Odin in Wales: Ten Years On* was the first component to proceed and, as described above, contained elements that explored and introduced ISTA research to a UK audience.

On a personal note, the 6th session of ISTA held in Bologna, Italy, June 28 to July 18 1990 (fully documented in *JTA*), raised numerous issues for me as Artistic Director of CPR and as a producer still committed to hosting ISTA in the UK (and now three

years on from proposing to do so). It was an extraordinary experience to participate in a three-week programme with no other responsibilities but to attend, immerse oneself, watch, reflect and respond. Having never been to university, this was my first experience of structured research-driven learning; it was enthralling. However, I had driven from Cardiff to Bologna alone. I cherished the opportunity to drive away from the Villa, escape the intense programme, visit the city, and explore Emilia Romagna late at night. I had also rented a tent to live on the edge of the Villa's grounds, declining the dormitory accommodation and distancing myself from ISTA's communal living; I was an outsider in every sense. In the second week, my car was broken into, and all my belongings from the tent (including my passport and money) were stolen; I became something of a vagrant and a recluse, longing for my wife and daughter to arrive so that I could be rescued, and we could go on holiday in Tuscany. Moreover, although I remained under the thrall of ISTA, I kept questioning some of its principles and strategies. Having been so immersed in Chinese Opera for two years (1986/87) and having organised summer schools in Chinese Opera, Balinese dance, Japanese theatre and many forms of 'classical' Indian dance, I found myself thinking more about the complexities of learning from these forms and the entangled cultural politics of place, race, identity and religion. I had also spent time with Jim Brandon and Elizabeth Wichmann and encountered the Hawaii University approach to teaching Westerners Asian dance/theatre forms without adaptation or mutation. Furthermore, since the Theatre and Anthropology conference of 1988, I had visited Richard Schechner many times and become interested in intercultural theatre, performance studies and critiques of European and North American appropriation of non-western theatre forms. All of this led, in my view, to a healthy and fully engaged questioning of some of the principles of ISTA, and I continued through the third week of Bologna ISTA as a fascinated refusenik.

In 1991, I took the opportunity to rethink the unrealised *Expo Eurasia* and wonder if placing a UK ISTA within a larger pedagogical frame would be more efficacious. In Bologna, the idea to establish The University of Eurasian Theatre had taken form, but its foundation was entirely based upon ISTA's research findings. I considered that positioning a fully-fledged session of ISTA alongside two other 'colleges' could be productive: one that took a 'traditional' approach to learning from the theatre cultures of the world and a third that took an intercultural approach. This seemed to me a fuller conception of a University of Eurasian Theatre; it would convene over a month and allow participants to construct paths across and between the three different colleges with a shared commitment to exchange and collaboration within the 'university'. Another behemoth was born.

Here is the 'executive summary' of the project (in the archived documents, it is sometimes referred to as the *University of Eurasian Theatre* or the *Eurasian Theatre Project*):

EURASIAN THEATRE PROJECT

ISTA will be one part of the UNIVERSITY OF EURASIAN THEATRE proposed to be staged at Dartington between March 29, 1992 and April 11, 1992. The following are basic facts:

The 'University' will comprise:

1/ INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

Teaching and research staff – 50, participants – 50 Teaching and research staff will include Eugenio Barba and Odin Teatret (Denmark); Sanjukta Panigrahi and ensemble (India); I Made Bandem and ensemble (Indonesia); Kanho Azuma and ensemble (Japan); Ferdinando Taviani, Franco Ruffini, Fabrizio Cruciani, Clelia Falletti, Nicola Savarese, Marco de Marinis (Italy); Exe Christoffersen (Denmark); Jean Marie Pradier, Patrice Pavis (France); Suzanne Vill (Germany); Frank Hoff, Victor Weijie Yu (USA); Clive Barker (UK).

2/ TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

Teaching and research staff – 9, participants – 48 Teaching and research staff will include Prof. James Brandon and Dr. Elizabeth Wichmann (Hawaii), Jo Riley (Germany), and masters of Chinese Peking Opera, Japanese Kabuki and Korean P'ansori Opera.

3/ INTERCULTURAL SCHOOL

Teaching and research staff – 9, participants – 48 Teaching and research staff will include Peter Brook (France) (t.b.c); Jatinder Verma (UK); Ong Keng Sen (Singapore); Nigel Watson and Taliesin Indo-Celtic Band (UK); Saburo Teshigawara (Japan).

DAILY PROGRAMME (for each school)

will comprise workshops, seminars, lectures, demonstrations, and performances.

RESEARCH THEMES (common to each school)

Vocal action/ scenic action, text, sub-text and sub-score

RESULTING DOCUMENTATION

Educational videos, publications and reports, photographic essays, and broadcast documentation

CULMINATING EVENTS

Performances from each school and collaborative performance – THEATRUM MUNDI

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

240 (including students, teaching staff and organisers)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

£250,000 - Funding being sought from Arts Council of Great Britain; Visiting Arts; Council of Europe; Southwest Arts; Cardiff City Council; Cultural sector sponsorship; private sponsorship; foundation and trust patronage; broadcasting facility fee revenue.

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE: Centre for Performance Research Ltd.

This second triangulated project also proved to be too ambitious to realise, and in the same way that the Exposition of Odin Teatret had been splintered from *Expo Eurasia*, to be staged as *Odin in Wales: Ten Years On* in September 1990, now ISTA would be hosted alone in April 1992. However, the ambition to revive the *University of Eurasian Theatre* in a future year and reconstitute the three schools, where ISTA would flourish alongside two complementary research colleges/enquiries, remained very much alive for CPR as a

producer. The plan was to reconsider the appropriateness of such a significant enterprise by assessing the reception and pertinency of ISTA within a UK context (this article concludes with a reflection on the prospect of such a three-college research project).

The plan to stage the 7th ISTA in April 1992 and the continuing aspiration to realise the University of Eurasian Theatre is summarised in the following extract from a letter sent to staff at all the UK university Drama & Theatre departments and to many directors of independent theatre groups:

**Working on Performance East and West
7th International School of Theatre Anthropology
Brecon & Cardiff 4 – 11 April 1992**

We would like to draw your attention to the above project and the enclosed information. Some time ago, we gave you a copy of the *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer* – which we edited and published, and which Routledge distributes worldwide. This book has received considerable acclaim and is selling well. The ideas contained within it are already significantly influencing both practical work and academic studies within the field of transcultural and multicultural dance and theatre.

You will recall it has been our ambition for some time to stage what is, in effect, the living version of this book. 'Working on Performance East & West' is the first phase of a two-part project to realise that ambition. The second phase will take place in August 1993 and will be an expanded version of what will occur in Brecon and Cardiff this year.

As we are going to be seeking your support (both financial and moral!) for the staging of the 'University of Eurasian Theatre 1993' (the second phase), we thought it would be a good opportunity for you to get first-hand experience and insight into what goes on at such an international gathering by attending, observing, or participating in at least some part of the project happening this April.

(The letter continues to introduce ISTA, the practical sessions in Brecon and the international conference in Cardiff: *Fictive Bodies*, *Dilated Minds*, *Hidden Dances*.) (Richard Gough January 1992)

Working on Performance East and West

The 7th ISTA was therefore scheduled to take place in Brecon & Cardiff 4 – 11 April 1992.

There were 35 places available for participants in the practical work in Brecon and 80 additional places for the conference in Cardiff (plus several hundred tickets for evening presentations). All delegate places were taken for both the practical sessions and the conference, and a reserve/waiting list was opened. The combined number of ISTA, CPR and the visiting ensembles was 38.

This is the full list of staff attending ISTA Brecon-Cardiff:

ISTA/Odin Director

Eugenio Barba

Odin Teatret ISTA Staff

Kai Bredholt

Jan Ferslev

Hisako Miura

Tina Nielsen

Iben Nagel Rasmussen

Leo Sykes

Isabel Ubeda

Julia Varley

Torgeir Wethal

ISTA Scientific Team

Fabrizio Cruciani

Clelia Falletti

Patrice Pavis

Jean Marie Pradier

Franco Ruffini

Nicola Savarese

Ferdinando Taviani

Susanne Vill

Indian Ensemble

Sanjukta Panigrahi (Dancer)

Ragunath Panigrahi (Musician)

Hemant Kumar Das (Musician)

Annada Prasanna Pattnaik (Musician)

Ganghadar Pradhan (Musician)

Balinese Ensemble

Desak Made Suarti Lakshmi (Dancer)

I Gusti Ayu Srinatih (Dancer)

I Ketut Partha (Musician)

I Ketut Suteja (Dancer)

Japanese Ensemble

Kanichi Hanayagi (Dancer)

Mark Oshima (Theatre scholar)

Centre for Performance Research

Richard Gough (Artistic Director)

Judie Christie (Administrative Director)

Celia Webb (Development Officer)

Howard Cooper (Company Administrator)

Ric Allsopp (Research Associate)

Joan Mills (Director of *Giving Voice Project*)

Sid Marchant (Technical Manager)

Terry Tigrato (Assistant ISTA Project)

Scott DeLahunta (Assistant ISTA Project)

CPR Guest Interlocutor

Carol Martin

Preparing for ISTA in Brecon (letter to the participants)

Several people have been ringing in, anxious to know how exactly the work will be structured. We do not mean to be evasive about this, but we neither wish to prescribe the process nor set expectations. Eugenio Barba works in a very spontaneous way and in response to the interests and needs of the assembled group. He has an aim and a method and will work in Brecon for several days before our arrival with his colleagues and the Asian guest performers. All such preparations can be modified in response to our initial gathering on Saturday afternoon.

The performers from Bali, Japan and India, together with the members of Odin Teatret, will be the core group of actors. We, therefore, have an ensemble of actors from different cultures, traditions and genres. We have a team of directors – you, the participants – and Eugenio will act as an intermediary, responding to your propositions, interventions and suggestions. He will then work with the actors at a 'pre-expressive' level, revealing how one can work at this level and seeking your understanding, participation and action. Much of the work will take place as an amalgamated assembly, being a mixture of proposition, observation and action. Facilities and opportunities exist for working in smaller groups on specific tasks.

We will be working with the theme of the 'refusenik' – an individual who does not follow the norms, opinions and doctrines of authority. This theme echoes across cultures and finds form in the figures of Inana, Antigone, Judith, Christ, Lao Tzu, Buddha, St. Francis, St. Joan, Prince Mishkin, Mata Hari, Mother Courage, Don

Juan, James Dean, Sid Vicious, Madonna ... We want you to prepare some ideas on this theme for instance, your own version, an historical account, a potential scenario, some starting points for improvisations. The more ideas and interpretations we can have on this theme, the richer will be our initial propositions from which the work can flow. (Richard Gough, March 20 1992).

The Brecon days**Brecon, Brecon Beacons & Christ College**

The location for the weeklong residential programme of ISTA was Brecon, one-hour drive north of Cardiff. Aberhonddu, the original Welsh name for Brecon, is an ancient rural market town situated at the confluence of two rivers, the Honddu and the Usk. It has been strategically important since Roman times, and the remains of a Norman castle tower above 'Watergate' where the two rivers meet. Brecon has a magnificent cathedral over 900 years old despite a small population of only 8,000 inhabitants (approximately). It sits at the top of the Brecon National Park and looks down (south) onto the Black Mountains and Pen Y Fan (866 metres high).

The Brecon Beacons National Park (now referred to as Bannau Brycheiniog, the ancient Welsh name having been reclaimed in 2023) lies on the border between Mid Wales and South Wales and covers an area of 520 square miles; it is a ragged rectangle in shape with Hay-on-Wye in the North East, Abergavenny in the South East, Llandovery in the North West, Llandeilo in the South West, Merthyr Tydfil the southern gateway into Bannau Brycheiniog. The town of Brecon is on the northern edge. The 'Peaks of Brychan's Kingdom' (literal translation of Bannau Brycheiniog) include four ranges of mountains: the Black Mountains, the Central Beacons, Fforest Fawr and the Black Mountain (Mynydd Du). It is an area of spectacular natural beauty and wildlife, popular with ramblers, marathon runners, extreme sports and adventure activities, and stargazers (a designated dark sky), and the British Army uses a part of the Black Mountains for endurance training.

As the ISTA sessions were scheduled during the Easter holidays (Holy Week, April 1992), CPR was able to rent Christ College, Brecon; this included studios and classrooms, a theatre, a gymnasium, the splendid grounds looking out to the Black Mountains, single and shared accommodation and all meals provided by the college kitchens, served in the serene refectory, a hall of the Dominican Friary upon which the college is built. Christ College, Brecon, was founded in 1541 by Henry VIII and is one of the UK's leading private (fee-paying) co-education schools, comprising both junior and senior schools, boarding and day pupils ranging from 7 to 18 years old. ISTA had exclusive use of the facilities and 'houses' of the Senior School. The school's motto is: *Consequuntur quia non possunt credere* (They achieve because they believe they can), which proved to be a challenge to the uncertain and questioning participants of ISTA.

Although located near the centre of Brecon, the proceedings of ISTA were confined to the premises of Christ College, and there was no opportunity, or free time, for participants to explore Brecon or the mountains that surrounded them. Theatr Brycheiniog, a multi-purpose theatre, arts centre and community venue, did not exist



Christ Church, Brecon. Photo: CPR archive

in 1992 (it opened in 1997), and the evening programme of performances was held in the theatre and grounds of Christ College. It was felt that there was a 'town and gown' separation functioning back in 1992, and it was unusual for professional theatre to take place within the college. Subsequently, public attendance at the evening events was less than CPR had hoped for, despite sustained efforts to welcome 'town folk' to the college.

Had an ISTA participant gone on a 'walkabout', crossed the bridge where the Honddu meets the river Usk, and walked a few hundred metres up Ship Street into the centre of town, they might have quaffed some good ale in The Sarah Siddons pub. Here in 1755, in the public house then known as the Shoulder of Mutton, Sarah Kemble, who went on to become the leading tragic actor of her day, was born. Sarah Siddons (née Kemble) was famous for playing Lady Macbeth, earning astronomical fees, and prominent painters clamoured to paint her portrait. A reproduction of one such painting hung in Christ College; Sarah Siddons watched over the proceedings of the next seven days.

The Practical Sessions of ISTA at Brecon

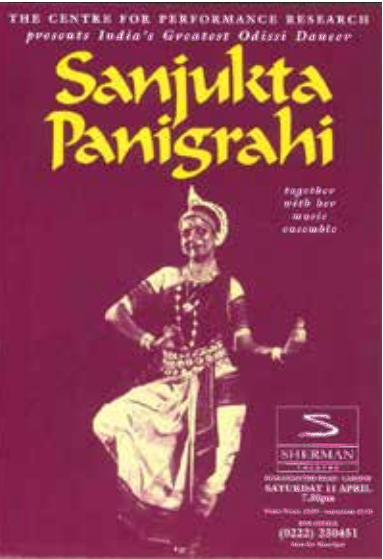
The opening session of ISTA at Brecon was scheduled for 14:30 on Saturday, April 4, 1992. Many participants assembled at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, the home of CPR, in the morning and were transferred to Brecon. All the ISTA staff and international ensembles had been hosted at Brecon several days earlier, settled in, rested, and had begun work and planning on Friday April 3. The introductory session was a generous three and a half hours and allowed for all the ISTA faculty to introduce themselves and for Eugenio Barba to deliver a framing lecture on both ISTA generally and its findings in the first fourteen years and the theme of 'subscore' to be investigated through the

practical sessions at Brecon. Following a break for supper, all participants (together with staff from Christ Church school and townsfolk of Brecon) attended a performance of Odissi dance by Sanjukta Panigrahi. This presentation was sublime, and the entire audience was entranced by her presence on stage, her dancing and the entrhralling music of her ensemble. One week later, Sanjukta would close the open sessions of ISTA in Wales with a performance at the Sherman Theatre, Cardiff.

Beginning - with Elephant

In the welcome and opening remarks at Brecon, trying to introduce and encapsulate ISTA, I evoked the ancient Indian parable of the 'Blind Men touching the Elephant' where each man describes the beast standing before them from the perspective of what they touched. It was intended to encourage a multiplicity of understanding and an openness to different viewpoints. I was also trying to forewarn all gathered that there was going to be a variety of research strategies engaged during the coming days, that some work would be practical, some discursive, some observational – more akin to masterclass than in the studio exercises – that talks, shows, demonstrations and presentations would all be part of the mix and small group sessions similar to tutorials had been arranged together with full assemblies and one to one meetings. At the point of introducing all the different members/components of ISTA – Eugenio Barba, the Odin actors, French and Italian professors, the Japanese, Indian and Balinese troupes, the extended faculty – I switched from elephant to caterpillar, the many-footed ISTA. And in the very moment of making the introduction, I sensed this was going to be a difficult and challenging project to steer; both the elephant and caterpillar I evoked were already rumbling, trumpeting and tap dancing.

Below is the outline schedule for the seven days in Brecon. However, the afternoons also comprised small group working sessions in the form of 'tutorials' with the academic staff of ISTA and later in the week with performers/practitioners. There were also assemblies of the participants and general debates more in the form of town hall meetings to discuss concerns and wishes and post-performance social events and late-night conversations. The days were intense, sixteen hours long and often with writing assignments or one-to-one meetings tasked over lunch and supper breaks.



Saturday 4 th April	
14:30 – 08:00	Introduction & Outline of themes and work of ISTA
18:00 – 19:30	Supper
20:00 –	Performance: Sanjukta Panigrahi – Odissi Dance

Sunday 5th April

08:00 – 08:45 Breakfast
 09:00 – 12:30 Working Session I
 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch
 13:30 – 18:00 Working Session II
 18:00 – 19:30 Supper
 20:00 – Performance: Multicultural Variety Show

Monday 6th April

08:00 – 08:45 Breakfast
 09:00 – 12:30 Working Session III
 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch
 13:30 – 18:00 Working Session IV
 18:00 – 19:30 Supper
 20:00 – Performance: Iben Nagel Rasmussen – *Itsi Bitsi*

Tuesday 7th April

08:00 – 08:45 Breakfast
 09:00 – 12:30 Working Session V
 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch
 13:30 – 18:00 Working Session VI
 18:00 – 19:30 Supper
 20:00 – Performance: Balinese & Japanese Dance Theatre

Wednesday 8th April

08:00 – 08:45 Breakfast
 09:00 – 12:30 Working Session VII
 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch
 13:30 – 18:00 Working Session VIII
 18:00 – 19:30 Supper
 20:00 – Performance: Julia Varley – *The Castle of Holstebro*

Thursday 9th April

08:00 – 08:45 Breakfast
 09:00 – 12:30 Working Session IX
 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch
 13:30 – 18:00 Working Session X
 18:00 – 19:30 Supper
 20:00 – Performance: Intercultural Gathering – Exchange & Barter

Friday 10th April

08:00 – 08:45 Breakfast
 09:00 – 12:30 Final Working Session XI
 13:00 – 14:00 *Lunch
 15:00 – Departure for Cardiff
 17:00 – 18:30 Settle into accommodation. Tea & Refreshments
 18:30 – Conference

[* NB. All days. Lunch will be a moveable feast depending on work process. It will be a one-hour break]

As can be seen from the above, there was a three-and-a-half-hour working session scheduled in the morning and a four-and-a-half-hour session in the afternoon. These were convened in the large gymnasium of the school, and only the registered

participants took part. The evening presentations were held in the Memorial Theatre, and these were open to the public, guests and administrative staff of CPR. Following the magnificent presentation of Sanjukta Panigrahi on the opening Saturday night, a medley of performance fragments from all the ensembles (including Odin) constituted the (in hindsight) unfortunately billed 'Multicultural Variety Show'. This compendium presentation was simply intended to introduce all the forms and performance cultures to the ISTA participants and Brecon townsfolk. The Odin Teatret performance *Itsi Bitsi*, powerfully performed by Iben Nagel Rasmussen, Jan Ferslev and Kai Bredholt, was the Monday night presentation. This was followed by a mixed programme of short extracts and solos of Balinese dance and Japanese Kabuki theatre for the Tuesday night programme. Julia Varley's enigmatic solo performance, *The Castle of Holstebro*, was the Wednesday night presentation, and the final evening event in Brecon for Thursday evening was the *Intercultural Gathering – Exchange & Barter*. Kai Bredholt had been tasked to curate this programme of short and inter-spliced performances garnered from both the ISTA ensembles and participants (hurdy-gurdy and saxophone players, capoeira dancers, folk singers etc.). Early in the year, CPR had made strenuous efforts to connect with and welcome Nepalese residents of Brecon to the evening programme (over 60 Nepalese families lived in Brecon in the 1990s due to the Gurkha soldiers based in Brecon as part of the 160th Welsh Infantry Brigade). A small group of Gurkhas sang in the spirit of the 'barter', as did local Welsh folk dance troupes and a choir. Kai Bredholt arranged the evening so that a series of performance 'surprises' were staged in the town leading to Christ Church and then in the grounds of the school with performances, barter and exchanges culminating in the Memorial Hall.



Practical Session, ISTA 7, 1992.
 Photo: CPR archive



I Ketut Sujteja, Balinese Topeng performance.
 ISTA 7, Brecon, 1992. Photo: CPR archive

The working day began promptly at 9:00. As participants entered the gymnasium at 8:45, all the performance ensembles were present and in the process of warming up, ready to work each day. The format was an open investigation led by Eugenio Barba; it was essentially explorative. Improvisations between different performers and different performance cultures were curated, with the participants witnessing the action (and debates) being staged in front of them. Barba often invited, sometimes cajoled and occasionally demanded a practitioner to articulate and demonstrate how underscore/sub-score functioned as a part of their creative strategy or performance tradition. Some likened this to an anatomy lesson (as captured in Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*) with Barba as Dr. Tulp holding the scalpel and revealing all to the assembled onlookers. Most participants found this captivating and elucidating for the first few days, but by the third day (working sessions V and VI), many became restless. The passive, seated observer/witness role for a group mainly comprised of experienced theatre directors began to strain – they wanted to stand up, they wanted to interact. Furthermore, there was a growing unease about the status and agency of the performers, especially the non-European practitioners and the regard for the cultural, spiritual and religious context of their performance traditions. A growing complaint that universalism and 'scientism' were being expounded and that performers were being subjected to a process of reverse engineering – to prove a thesis – was unsettling to the progress of the working sessions.

There appeared to be a marked difference in approach to research and discovery emerging and disturbing the participants. ISTA's scientific team quickly characterised this as an Anglo-Saxon versus a Latin sensibility. For many ISTA faculty members, British reserve, a cold and calculated distance, and analytical tendency were becoming judgemental and driven by political correctness. Many British participants felt they were drowning in metaphor, cast as complicit witnesses, and frustrated by a lack of precise methodology and terminology. It should be noted, however, that there were Polish, Danish, Brazilian, German, French and North American participants at Brecon and not all the British participants conformed to this characterisation. Barba was sensitive to this criticism within the sessions, and through conversations held outside the working schedule, he genuinely tried to make alterations in the practical work and open the floor to more significant debate. However, the Italian professoriate within the faculty of ISTA (in both the plenary sessions and the small group discussions) attempted to foreclose any such debate and became defensive about ISTA's research strategies and mode of functioning, insisting that participants should watch and learn from the master at work. This only enflamed matters, and for a distinguished group of participants, conversant with contemporary critical theory and familiar with working across cultures, the criticism became more entrenched and the unease more destabilising.

At the same time, there was another group of participants who wanted the opportunity to work with the performers from Asia and Europe; they hoped there would be occasions when they could conduct their own practical experiments to find answers to some of the questions being asked by Barba and ISTA. They desired practical and participatory workshops to augment the anatomy-lesson-style masterclass. This was never promised

and was not how ISTA functioned in the previous nine sessions. However, Barba remained open to change and adjustment even if some of his closest academic advisors were not. In the subsequent ISTA that was held in Londrina, Brazil, the following year, practical sessions with all the guest artists were a substantive and significant component of the two-week long programme.

The ideological concerns about ISTA's methodology and research strategies are captured from an interview that Ric Allsopp (CPR staff member) recorded with David Williams (theatre scholar/dramaturg and participant at ISTA Brecon).

David Williams Interview (extract)

DW: The first problem comes out of my presuppositions about what might be happening here, partially because of the way the workshop was framed as both a pedagogic activity and a research activity. I was quite intrigued as to how that might operate. It clearly does not operate as a pedagogic activity, so, for example, the people who imagine that they are in the directors training workshop must be very frustrated. The notion of the masterclass structure is actually very misleading in this context because the processes that are being used are curtailed by the exigencies of time for example, and for a director who is looking for strategies, for ways of generating material, for ways of constructing the kind of montage that Eugenio Barba is talking about, I think it must be very confusing because we are not really seeing a process, we are seeing a version of a demonstration that is neither research nor masterclass.

RA: In what way isn't it research?

DW: I think the real research maybe happens outside the sessions. The function of ISTA has shifted from the formal gathering to the smaller groups – primarily to what actually happens outside the sessions in terms of the kinds of discussions that take place at meals or over coffee. I have found that much more fruitful than the sessions themselves. I think it clearly is a research activity for a number of people here, but I think for the directors it is inordinately misleading.

I think there is a fundamental problem in this notion of 'witnessing' – a word which several of the Italian academics have used, which implies a whole set of factors in terms of our function in that process – it's not a forum which allows very easily for a real exchange formally – the exchange shifts into other contexts outside the sessions. I have a problem with the notion of witness in this context because it compounds the mythologisation of certain kinds of processes, of certain kinds of roles in theatre making and locates Eugenio Barba not as a researcher, not a searcher, but as guru... and that the hierarchy that exists in ISTA doesn't appear to be a self-critical hierarchy it seems to be reaching towards monolithic immutability rather than – and I think this is happening around these formal gatherings – a serious self-critical appraisal that is ongoing in terms of its language, its discourse, its function. Presumably, the Italian academics are trying to take this onboard –

they are very resistant to a whole range of discussions, they deflect all kinds of conversations as being inappropriate ...

RA: Can you give an example?

DW: There does not seem to be a willingness to confront certain types of ideological discussion or apprehend a critical account of gender and the representation of gender in this context. There does not seem to be any politicisation of this debate at all, and somehow Eugenio Barba overtly deflects this as not being pertinent. It seems to me that this cannot but be pertinent in this context. I'm particularly worried by the lack of discussion from a feminist perspective because it seems to me that there are a range of conversations and possible methodologies that can feed this work and open up some of the fissures that are there, in a way that can be productive rather than destructive.

RA: It is not clear to me what the methodology is ... when you see Eugenio Barba working in practice, it is not at all clear what he is trying to get at ...

DW: I don't think he knows, and there is value in not knowing – there are so many different agendas here – Richard Gough clearly wants him to focus and to verbalise a kind of direction without foreclosing on the possibility of the unforeseen – I think understandably Richard Gough wants to give a focal point and that is why we have moved towards this obsessive re-examination of what might constitute underscore... but the real research happens subsequently maybe – there are so many different vantage points which aren't actually expressed in the forum... Patrice Pavis for example who I imagine must be frustrated with the critical language that is being used, can in some senses take some of those problems away and in his inimitable enumerative style catalogue those things in a pseudoscientific fashion and make a hypothesis out of that – similarly there are other people who will take different things away and pursue them. I think my sympathies are primarily with these directors – the younger ones are very puzzled – and with the performers – there is something very strange about the relationship of Eugenio Barba as director and the performers which grates, in terms of the gap between the rhetoric of how one might respect and feed and sustain and nourish performers and in fact what actually seems to happen.

We were talking about Richard Gough's predicament as a paradigm of the irreconcilable contradictions that seem to exist for a lot of people. He is in a position where he wants to be a facilitator – he is responsible both to Eugenio Barba and to the participants and he clearly wishes to stimulate some of those kinds of discussions that are not really taking place – and in some senses it is a 'Catch-22' predicament, he cannot possibly win in this situation because he is beholden to Eugenio Barba and yet that cannot evacuate his critical sensibility – it cannot erase the possibility of his critical intervention and yet that is, in terms of the power base, the hierarchy that exists, that is often read not as a generative and constructive interrogation, but read in terms of hostility or in terms of wishing to displace somebody's credibility or

power. I think that is a great shame. I think that Eugenio Barba is in an importunately difficult position, but for slightly different reasons. I don't know what the answer is. A lot more time would be useful to allow more space – more contact with some of the performers would be interesting,

Given more time, I think there would be a way of structuring something with practical content, with a range of different kinds of performers, without it becoming a manipulative exercise. For directors, that must be very important – effectively, we are denied real participatory access to that work beyond a purely cerebral activity, which is often muddled anyway by the nature of the discussion. That must be immensely frustrating for the directors. I find it very stimulating hearing performers talk or sometimes avoiding talking about certain kinds of processes [...]. We have had Torgeir (Wethal, Odin Teatret actor) in our small group discussions and I found that more stimulating than one of the Italian Prof's righteousness – in terms of ISTA because Torgeir has some serious misgivings, and he genuinely wants to demystify certain processes, to communicate them rather than say at a certain point, as some people do, that it is not possible for me to talk about them.

RA: What do you think of the multicultural or transcultural aspect – that seems to me to be a big difficulty. He's working with a group from very diverse cultures and trying to locate some underlying commonality. There seems to be no discussion of cultural differences between, say, Kabuki and Balinese forms.

DW: It seems to be strategically an attempt to elide or suppress certain kinds of differences in search of this commonality – for example the strategy of 'reduction' in relation to Sanjukta, Julia and Iben – there is a sense in which reduction in that context is not as originally framed a way of compressing energy to make a radical tension in terms of the nature of an internal action and its external representation – that kind of unresolved tension – but almost as a way of allowing everybody to still be Balinese etc. – but hiding it, putting a cloth around Sanjukta, taking away her arms and suppress external actions and they are all allowed to exist as what they are – but somehow, they are all the same. It seems an absurd strategy in that context, although it is an interesting idea. It's clearly more pertinent in terms of the Asian forms – for example, some of the things that Kanichi does, you can perceive the charge that that contradiction, that counterimpulse makes. This is a huge and problematic discussion, and I am surprised by the kinds of strategies that are used. There is very little hybridisation as such, only an overlay of texts; there is very little attempt to allow certain kinds of formative languages to blur within one performer. There is almost an Aryan notion that you can't mess with the purity of a particular tradition, because you will sully it and I don't think that is necessarily true at all. It would be interesting, not for Sanjukta to make a Balinese action, but for processes between performers to be shared and generative processes advanced as a way of producing a hybrid form.

Despite the multiple agendas and conflicting needs running throughout the working sessions at Brecon, indifference and disengagement did not set in. Commitment to



Practical Session, ISTA 7, Brecon, 1992.
Photo: CPR archive

the overarching enquiry into 'underscore' is evidenced in the way that almost all the participants formulated their own 'statement' about underscore. These were gathered at the midpoint of the sessions and distributed as 'Initial Statements on Underscore', before the practical work focused on interpreting a set of scenarios co-authored by seven subgroups (for the final three sessions). They are reproduced here in full and form a collective output from the research conducted at the Brecon ISTA.

Underscore First Statements (Brecon ISTA faculty & participants)

1. The underscore is a set of mental and kinaesthetic constructs, they are the preconditions that stimulate plausible responses to fictitious situations made by the performer.
2. Underscore (or underscoring – active process?): the re-gathering or re-membling of associations, affects, images, etc. which belong with the score in order to keep the score and its message alive. (NOTE: This is a holistic process; the memory is in the body/self as an organism. The underscore is the ground of the score, or perhaps more dynamically the 'grounding'.
3. The personal, technical, social, metaphysical, ideological, and cultural idiosyncrasies uncovered over the period of conscious involvement in theatre in general and a process in particular. These volatile atoms of both conscious and unconscious awareness vibrate with themselves and with those of the expressive moment to create life. These vibrations are partially controllable through skill and increased awareness, but the element of spontaneity and the role of the unknown is the edge that is always necessary.
4. How to make alive a role/character in a scene: 1) To control /master oneself as a character who has already given force/energy to the whole body/soul (50%); 2) To express the story by the face and movements as well as the surroundings as communication with the action of the story; 3) To give stimulation/motivation of the pure soul to the movements of the members of the body and to the face (distribution of energy) according to the needs of acting in this character.
5. The underscore is perhaps a field of consciousness that is open in an actor. It is the result of the evaluation of the whole history of life of an actor. The five senses have

to be in a healthy and sensitive state. An actor whose five senses are not alive will not be able to find the underscore in himself. The underscore of an actor becomes very important in order to determine the following process, whether it is a dead thing or a thing alive. When the underscore is open, it will become a living thing that is able to anticipate what is happening around/outside of him. An actor that does not find his underscore will become a dead thing. The underscore becomes a sort of centre of communication from the inside to the outside and from the outside to the inside of the actor. It is of a metaphysical nature.

6. To make alive a role: 1) First of all the actor has to master the form of technique that he will use in his representation or dance; 2) To know the literature about the story that he will interpret; 3) To know very well the character of the person that he will represents; 4) The selection of the right costumes of every single character; 5) Sometimes usually, the accompanying music has a role in helping to enliven the atmosphere and the actor has to master the music; 6) Before the performance the actor already begins to concentrate on the character that he will represent, this even more during the performance, this feeling has to be fertilised, in order that the actor can transform himself (express) into the character whom he is representing; 7) The atmosphere/situation of the place of performance also helps to give support.

7. Underscore est un tempo-rythme émotionnelle basé sur un fleuve d'associations qui peuvent éveiller une action.

8. The performers understanding of the relationship of each particular action or moment to the meaning of the whole.

9. PREPARATION: 1) Selecting a theme and prepare the texts 2) Set the text to different ranges and different ways of singing according to the moods of the characters; 3) To know the essential points and definitions of the different characters that is in the text; 4) To find out how the changes from one character to another should be done; 5) Technical aspects like placements of hands, feet, eyes, neck, etc.; 6) Choreograph technically and practice; 7) Find out soft and strong aspects: B) Finally give the meanings to the technical elements. I cannot really explain what happens while performing. It is mainly feelings of the theme.

10. Performer/Dancer – The movement 'score' itself is known, remembered, and absorbed in the body, the group. There are cues along the way – pointers to emphasize maybe the start of new phrasing: dynamic/energy; rhythm change; spatial orientation; focus – others, room/stage, objects; stillness; spatial organisation within the body. Musical cues may be Vital for overall timing of the piece, sections, phrases, group meeting. The place (precise) where meeting others is to occur retine (sic). Overall: layers and layers of cues. NB – fundamentally a source of energy, focus, spirit of commitment to engage into these cues. A centre in self is kept alive – a text of pure flow/continuity, vibration.

11. The underscore is the idea behind an action, and all the images and technical devices that support the idea and create a link to the action, consciously and subconsciously. Me as I want myself to be: heroic, attractive, stupid. Struggling against the restrictions of technique, choreography, the audience (always the enemy!); to hold me in the 'here and now'. But my strategy for fighting these demons is my secret. Sometimes tactical, changing moment to moment in order to keep myself in the 'here and now' despite all unforeseen difficulties. I know when it begins – the threshold – jumping in the sea – and I know that nervousness (self-awareness, me-here-now), keeps me afloat because I have only this chance, this performance to get it right. So, it is a struggle! (perhaps the antithesis of the score: can I do it? can I succeed?)

12. Underscore:/Score – To have 3-4 actions which are simple and clear. Those actions become the points between which I can move. Those actions have a meaning, symbolic, as they create atmosphere in the room. There will be a line between these points. The underscore is the will to do these actions because this is me and I want to do this. At the same time, it expresses something of me being an individual looking for a bridge to get in contact with the outside/inside.

13. Underscore – An associational or imaginal network that evolves to feed/support/ focus/ inform those 'actions' visible externally as a score. This network may comprise e.g. textural/ textual/ kinaesthetic/ olfactory analogies, as well as a range of unconscious socio-cultural and acculturated determinants (e.g. the epistemological / perceptual implications of religious faith etc.). An intertextual /multi-textual collage in flux – "*in statu nascendi*".

14. The underscore is the totality or coalescence of visual, physical or sonic, actual or imagined stimuli which animate the total mental and biological organism of the performer. Each stimulus relates to the performer's action or reaction as it is mediated through one or more of the five senses: it may be a visual image, a rhythm or sound, a smell, a taste, or a tactile sensation that the performer has as s/he engages with an external object. Each stimulus is the internal correspondence to the external behaviour which the spectator perceives, though this is a purely theoretical distinction. In the performer's experience the internal signification and the external behaviour fuse into a single vortex of action. It is the performer's perception of this action which constitutes the underscore.

15. Underscore = ensemble of situational factors (situations of enunciation) and technical-artistic know-how techniques on which the actor/ress leans when performing his/her score.

16. I don't know if this is what is being called an 'underscore', but when I work my only possibility is to know what is essential to me in this work. Even if this thing is what you might call a 'personal obsession', and therefore a product of chance. The actor does not work on the apparent 'meaning' but on a private spring: spring that

flows as a source of life, and spring that coils and projects them into the unknown. The underscore is the text and the theme or written 'text' is the pretext for exploring this personal text. A reference point... the light that suddenly illuminates the dark.

17. What the actor leans on so as to be able to make the actions in a certain way. The actor's intelligence. The invisible body of the action. The nervous system deciding for the action. What is used consciously to build the actor's score and is then stored in the memory of the score so that at the moment of performing it can be 'forgotten'.

18. Underscore: I do not think about many things, there is only one thing in my mind: to dance. Furthermore, I have to know the contents and the story of the dance to express it more easily, through facial expressions and expression by movements.

19. The 'underscore' is a place that I have, that I create, where I go to resource my work. It is an internal space created by internal and external – from within and without. It is a juncture where the logic and the illogic meet, the image and the intuition. Once created it provides a concrete sensory reference point in my body/mind which is constantly in dialogue with my outwardness – from this I can produce in/for the audience myriad meaning.

20. UNDERSCORE – It is the process of adaptation to changes. These changes can be personal, social, or cultural; they can be climatic, due to illness or other form of stress factors. The performer has to cope with the milieu she/he evolves in, and with changing (moving) from one milieu to another. The underscore is a score made of the performers' cultural norms and conducts models. These affect the performer as a unit of an ethnic collectivity, but she/he also has her/his personal understanding of these norms and models. Then the performer must fill the gap between her/him and the spectator. The performer has an idea of the spectator's assumed knowledge. But there is the spectator's actual knowledge, the spectator's underscore.

21. A chain of images I am reacting to act, acting in in connection with. These are created in different parts of the process - have different needs as a starting point. In the moment of performing, I do not think about them, do not see them. They have become the skeleton of the now.

22. In naturalistic terms: the motivation-awareness of the actor of the subconscious or unspoken desires or hidden thoughts of the character. In performance terms: the constant kinaesthetic awareness of the actor of his/her own body-state in relation to that of fellow performers in the space and in relation to the score of the performance and the 'secret' thoughts of the performer which, based on his/her own inner thoughts, memories, feelings, desires and/or experiences prompted, created, or were the impulses for the movements in the score and now supports the score in performance and gives it life. The complex of associations which, in the mind of the performer, accompany each moment of the score.

23. UNDERSCORE: A series of mental images/memories/feelings/impulses which

link the performer's life with the life of the unfolding scenario of the theatre. A link: mental-physical (or vice versa): life-life; one world-another world; the known-the unknown (or vice versa): real-unreal (or vice versa); and so on.

24. The subtext is the creation of doing, in this I mean running standing, walking. An example, when the performers were asked to hide the books: this is what they did. But before the technique was put on: when they were simply trying to find out where to hide the books; simply doing this is what I saw the subtext to be: not trying not revelling in a technique simply doing. This for me is the third eye, the underscore.

25. Brain strategies based on genetic hardware and cultural software patterns which have been fixed during the ontogenesis. Brain strategies depend on training – mind/body memory. They determine the ways used for each individual: a) to process external/ internal information: b) to integrate/ analyse/ associate/ combine the cognitive/ sensorial/ motor/ emotional; c) to 'behave' as an actor or director, or... train strategies reflect the way individual (or/and a culture) considers his/ her/its relationship to the environment. They include rational and irrational skills, conscious and unconscious levels.

26. Definition of the Underscore. The 'underscore' is the personal and artistic energy that you bring to creative actions. It is made up of your experience as an individual and the way in which you held and use your skills as an artist. It is also your recognition of the imprints of your culture on you and the way that you interact with that culture. It operates at the intellectual, the technical and at the feeling level. It is activated by the imagination.

27. The underscore is: – The personal, emotional journey of the actor which gives life to the physical manifestation, and which may enrich what is seen and heard with contradiction and ambiguity as well as direct impulse. – A series of organic, emotional, spiritual impulses in the actor which guide her/him through the text and keep the relationship of the actor to that text constantly spontaneous and alive. – A map with enormous personal significance which the actor and the character shape.

28. UNDERSCORE: The ability to dance overscore without showing it.

29. The imagery or sensibility, whether concrete or abstract, that informs the vocal and physical actions – in improvisations, rehearsals, performances – of a performer. This imagery or sensibility is personal, but it is also social and cultural and as such is subject to being shaped by the immediate environment.

30. The liddle partiture (sic) you have to look for as an actor to fill in a personal way the score.

31. In my pre-expressive level, it is most important to find some particular part in written text which gives me strongest impression on my scene or scenario. It is mostly connected to my personal memory. Written text or music helps me to remember and

recreate vivid view for my scene – the touch, colour, smell, taste, temperature, etc. Once I've got the sensation on my body, even with some new task, for example. I can't walk quick because my legs are tired, I can continue walking in my vision with the task.

32. UNDERSCORE – INNER DIALOGUE (TO FIND SILENCE).

33. Underscore is the non-visible line which allows the actor to make the visible score surprising for the spectator, and above all for the actor himself.

34. The journey is through an unmapped land. The spectator is excited and terrified. The underscore is a series of landmarks where both performer and spectator can take breath and understanding before plunging into the landscape again. These landmarks are place both of security and danger. It is the kinetic structure which is the bone for living flesh of performance. Like meridians of Qi in the body, in maybe fire, earth, air or water, but its constant theme is movement and harmony.

35. The underscore is the work which has been done for a role or a theatre-piece before reaching the result. 'Forgotten' but invisibly present (as roots of a tree or the part of an iceberg which is under the water). During the 'acting' – the actor should not lean against anything. This leaning against nothing permits that 'something' – (under the score) can fill the actor. (The sensation of 'nothing' is why the actor often feels scared or 'seasick' before staging acting.)

36. The basis upon which any performer can 'lean' most fundamentally, is the clarity of the 'dedication' or purpose of his/her efforts, work (and success). The freedom this allows will let fly the internal systems of physical and mental 'activity' which gives 'presence' and energy – power – to the performance. The state of openness this brings permits the artist to allow the internal structures which normally hold on to the ideas and identity of the 'self' to be invaded and overcome by the vast unlimited 'ideas' of the cosmos – the rehearsal period must filter out those which fill the body and mind with force for the character needed – and find the 'beacons' of new 'identity' that can be used by the artist to inflame the character. This process is a filtering out, rather than a building upon.

37. Life learned/created out of life in specific extra-ordinary circumstances, that is learned and re-creatable. That is learned and absorbed with the aid of techniques.

38. Capability for self-remembering. Recognising the moment when it is alive for you. Awareness of a extra-daily brain-strategy which must become as familiar as recognising tiredness, hunger, etc. Feedback and the ability within an instant to do something to change, redirect, control diversions.

39. UNDERSCORE - a) Personal: a sequence of inner actions each of which has a concrete point of immediate focus (idea, image, gesture, prop, etc.) which informs the sequence of performed actions. The score must be punctuated by a sequence of

transitions (changes/adaptations of perception). The pace and rhythm of this pattern of perception (perceptible to the audience as glances, pauses, breaths, beats, commas, etc.) is essentially renewable in each performance and is never really repeated, but newly experienced each time the score (with all the variations chosen in rehearsal or presentation) is repeated.; b) Historical: I believe such age or culture has assumptions or emphases which not only determine the score, but are utilised by actors in their 'underscores' - the nature of these cultural assumptions effects the process, the style, the meaning and the effect of their performances, e.g. 18th century pattern of passions (emotive states + processes of perception = a tendency to emphasise gestures of 'starting'), Stanislavski's pattern of objectives (= tendency to emphasise seamless through-line), Odin's pattern of 'meaningless' action (= tendency to dance-like self-absorption). stories, etc. Very precise, artificially made, elaborated, with many details in which the actor/actress, the performer, can move with his/her imagination: stay, walk, run in different ways, changing path if he/she wants every time he/she performs or thinks of the performance.

40. A mental landscape – made by forms, sounds, different kinds of lights (yes, why not!?)

41. The underscore is the line of images, technical tools and strategies of how to evoke and develop the physical and spiritual capacities of the actor which s/he decided to use for the score to become – and stay – alive in performance.

42. The underscore is the distillation or detritus of all the work done in preparation or rehearsal of a role, distributed unevenly along the nervous system. This unevenness represents the rough, lateral, circuitous, painful history of this preparation/rehearsal. The asymmetrical distribution of this detritus constitutes a shape, a neurological topography. The 'points/places' (using a spatial metaphor?) where fragments of this detritus coagulate, form the 'points' of support or stepping stone for the score to stay afloat.

43. Underscore – is the performer sub-patterns, an internal code which helps the actor act and react (In a situation *inusitada*; an accident or incident during the performance - for example, the actor will use elements of this code to cope with the new situation). It is like a vocabulary sub-conscious of movements, words, sounds, feelings with which actors work. Underscore is the heritage – genetic, physiologic, psychologic, philosophic – plus the living experiences of an actor. This heritage is a *gama* of tools for the performer. The technique to achieve the 'source of underscore' and the way one translates it is what makes the presence of the actor.

44. The underscore is the fixed point from which a performer or any artist can facilitate a contact, a communication with another human being and subsequently the humanity common to us all. The underscore isn't evident consciously and in normal circumstances we do not look for it, but it exists and touches the subconscious when we experience a great performance or when we communicate on the most basic human level. It is our only opportunity to contact the spirit world while we are alive.

To create the conditions for this contact requires a mental and physical commitment which humans codify in the external forms of technique or ritual.

45. A psycho-physiological residue of encoding: to activate it is to rediscover physiological 'traces' which translate out into a patterning of movement, sounds, signs. Contact is via a precise and delicate mental and physical remembering which locates the cruces (sic) or the flow of energy.

46. Base para ser en una acción mediante el fluir y la asociación entre diferentes niveles de nuestra memoria técnica, afectiva y cognitiva.

47. The underscore is to be tuned with the inner rhythm of your own inner self and one of the group. It's just to be receptive to all impulses and let you to be a medium.

48. I believe the underscore is our kinaesthetic memory, or rather, 'body-thought'. During the rehearsal process the underscore becomes complete when translated into deeper sensual kinaesthetic impulses with strong emotional associations.

49. The secret pleasure the performer hugs to herself to keep alive the flame of presence. That which inflames the action and aligns it with another action, often carrying within it the 'memory' of previous work on the role. A mental and physical memory trace.

50. Underscore is a sort of flow of thoughts, images, or an organisation of physical patterns, which determines the directions of the body energy. The underscore is fixed and rigid at the beginning; and afterwards, while the score becomes more and more fixed and sure, the underscore may become more and more free to receive influences from the outside.

51. 'Underscore' c'est la complexité des expériences et des habilités qui font devenir possible la définition d'un 'score'. C'est une relation, une dialectique dans laquelle la définition d'un score précise chaque fois un 'underscore' (et pas l'envers). 'Underscore' c'est peut-être mémoire, activité mentale qui fait une sélection organique des expériences profondes.

52. Underscore: all the experiences (individual, cultural) that a person has acquired in his life and from which he/she is able to draw in the concrete moments of creation.

53. UNDERSCORE. The atmosphere that let the daily training in my body-mind; the physical truth of the moment; my life at that moment. Sometimes – 'The conscience of the unconscious conscious.'

[There were 53 statements in total – all included above in full]

Peter Hulton interview with Eugenio Barba, Brecon, 1992 (extract)

Barba's initial reflection on underscore was recorded in a documentary by Peter Hulton. This interview was made on the sixth day of practical sessions and before the working meetings concluded. The following is an extract transcribed verbatim from the video:

EB: No performer only uses the body in performance; s/he uses the body-mind. This means that there is a way of using the mind in performance – and by mind I do not mean only the rational aspect, I mean all the kinaesthetic apparatus. This way of using the mind we have called underscore. How does underscore function? If what the spectator sees as a character is the score – a succession of actions which are more or less the same or should be the same in each performance – then this score leans on, is animated by, is made alive for the spectator by something which, up to now, we have called underscore. This has now become the research. The ISTA workshop in Brecon attempted to map this very difficult territory. With the difficulties of terminology and the vast number of different approaches, there is always a danger of the research becoming superficial.

PH: Are you finding that, in this attempt to define the underscore, there are any particular movements of thought or practices, traditionally having nothing to do with theatre itself, that you are beginning to draw on – I am thinking particularly in the body-mind area?

EB: What is evident in the work on underscore is the way the performer, either as a young child or as an adult, is placed in their first working situation. The way s/he receives or reacts to this working situation – the way s/he has been told, through a certain silence, a certain severity, a certain atmosphere, the relationship with other partners – begins to build what I would call paradoxical thinking which characterises a performer.

This is where a performer does not think according to a normal daily life or functional way of thinking. S/he must think in a different way so that s/he can find a justification, a motivation for what s/he is doing – and this stems from the first day. We see that different traditions can have different ways of developing this way of thinking. A knowledge of how different ways of thinking determine the ways in which we build or create scenic presence, gives the performer a freedom to choose, a much richer choice where suddenly the performer has not only one possibility but many possibilities.

I feel that the importance of building a network of contacts among theatre people, is to establish what one could call an ecological system, which can resist the degradation of the theatre. An eco-system sustains the possibility of keeping in contact, of coming together, of organising research in places and situations where it might appear to be almost meaningless because it is pure research. Very often theatre research is considered to be useless if it is not directly connected to some objective application. I consider building such an eco-system to be very fundamental and very hygienic, culturally speaking...

PH: It is certainly true in this country at the moment and in the whole of Europe.

EB: ... because it provides a possibility of destroying so many prejudices concerning, for example, Asian arts, or classical forms. The ability to spend time together in a situation where there are twenty or thirty people from different countries and cultures, working together every day, with demonstrations, performances, completely shatters the usual horizons of knowledge.

This is the 'shaking' experience, which, of course, does not make us change our view but obliges us to think about our art. What is essential in my view is the confrontation with the Other. When we speak about cultural and professional identity, it is essential to confront oneself with the Other because only through this confrontation are you able to define what 'is' – that which characterises you, that which is your axis, your centre, your core, your heart, that without which you cannot be a live person. Of course, this is to do with values – I suppose in the end it is to do with values which are embodied in a policy or strategy of action which also can be a scenic action.

Final Evening in Brecon: UK General Election

On Thursday, 9 April, a General Election was held throughout the UK, some participants had made arrangements to make a postal vote in advance, others knew they had to forego their vote, and a few members of CPR made a rushed return visit to Cardiff, where they were registered to vote. For all the staff and associates of ISTA, and some non-UK based participants, it was an irrelevance. But for all, it did not go unnoticed; even though all the practical sessions during the day progressed uninterrupted, there was a tangible sense of hope and optimism in almost all the UK participants. The Conservatives had been in government continuously since Margaret Thatcher's election in 1979; in 1990, John Major won the party leadership following an internal ballot initiated by Michael Heseltine, and Thatcher resigned. Now, after thirteen years in power, polls during the run-up to the election indicated a hung parliament or a narrow victory to Labour, led by Neil Kinnock. Only after the presentation of Final Gathering in the Memorial Hall, ISTA's last night in Brecon (before departing for Cardiff), was there time to watch television. BBC announced an exit poll result as hung – 50:50 Conservative-Labour; around midnight, results were beginning to come in, and Labour was doing well; there was a jubilant atmosphere in the Common Room. Knowing an intense schedule of events was planned for Cardiff, and that the final sessions in Brecon were to commence early the next morning, most participants went to bed around one in the morning, exhausted but optimistic that thirteen years of Conservative rule in Britain was about to change.

The following day it was if a terrible malaise had inflicted most UK-based participants; the mood over breakfast was sorrowful and forlorn. The final two sessions of ISTA had to function through a fog of gloom and despondency. Overnight, the fortunes of the Conservatives had rallied; far from a narrow victory by Labour, John Major's Conservative party won the largest number of votes for a general election ever recorded in British History. The Conservatives were returned to government for a fourth term,

although Labour's earlier gains did result in more 'red' seats in Parliament. It should be noted that Cardiff and most of Wales remained Labour (and Plaid Cymru), but Brecon and Radnorshire continued as Conservative at a local level.

It was difficult to conclude the practical sessions of ISTA in a celebratory mode. The discontent, and for some disaffection, with the working process, was now made worse by a grim social and political prospect for the UK for the next four years. However, improvisations around the seven scenarios proposed by the consortium of working groups continued. Barba and the entire ISTA team valiantly remained focused on the task of offering practical investigations into each of the scenarios, now referred to as *The Seven Diamonds of Brecon*. The process of cleaving and sawing the rough diamond stone hewn by the lapidarist to 'cut' the diamond and reveal its refracting brilliance were akin to the challenge and relevant to the strategies adopted by Barba in these final sessions. At times the cleaving appeared brutal as the scenarios were split or shattered and rapidly populated ('cast') by the European, Indian, Indonesian and Japanese actor-dancers. Some participants felt that Barba fell back on old and established directorial techniques ('tricks') to gain a solution to the challenges advanced by the varied scenarios and that a masterclass *modus operandi* superseded an open exploration of how ISTA principles could be applied and an intercultural team of performers, could attempt to stage fragments of the scenarios. Time was pressing; to fully explore the multiple possibilities for interpretation and adaptation of *The Seven Diamonds of Brecon* would have taken many more days. The lapidarist's skill to cut rough stones is virtuosic and honed over decades; with unremitting commitment, Barba tirelessly offered embodied and staged performance fragments arising from the seven scenarios. Some participants found this to be highly illuminating and inspiring. Others felt it to be a form of showmanship with a compliant ensemble obediently fulfilling every wish and command.

The complete set of scenarios that formed *The Seven Diamonds of Brecon* exist in the CPR archive as handwritten texts. The members of the seven groups, self-determined by the participants, that devised and wrote them are unrecorded. This is one of the scenarios:

A STORY OF LOVE AND BOOKS (Diamond # 3)

Four characters: Abelard, Heloise, Aphra Behn, Ahab.

SCENE 1: LOVE AND BETRAYAL

A huge library with tables full of books. The two lovers, Abelard and Heloise, are separated by a pile of books. They read through the books in order to make a hole in the wall of books so that they can touch. Ahab, the cripple with the ivory leg, spies on the lovers and keeps piling on fresh books as an obstacle to their love. Aphra Behn is the librarian. Eventually, the lovers penetrate the wall and make love. Ahab spies on them. He loves Heloise.

SCENE 2: THE CASTRATION

Abelard sleeps in his room full of books, he wakes and finds himself castrated and pouring blood. He conceals his wound and bloody body with pages torn arbitrarily from books. He's engulfed in pages.

Time moves on... Ahab is a servant of a convent where Abelard is an important cleric. Heloise and Aphra are now nuns. Aphra is friend and confidante of Heloise. Heloise and Abelard continue to love.

SCENE 3: THE LOVE OF ABELARD AND HELOISE

Heloise and Abelard cannot speak to each other. The only way Heloise and Abelard communicate their love is through love letters that Aphra and Heloise write in the form of sermons for Abelard. These sermons which he delivers each Sunday talk about God and through that of love and revolt. Abelard returns his love to her via the confessional box.

SCENE 4: THE MEETING AND THE REVELATION

The only man Heloise is allowed to have contact with is Ahab who is a mute. Abelard disguises himself as Ahab so they can meet. Ahab discovers their secret and tries to denounce them. But he's mute. In desperation he removes his ivory leg to demonstrate Abelard's deception. The lovers are discovered. Ahab, jealous of Aphra's friendship with Heloise, tears off Aphra's habit revealing prohibited books and her unshaven head, i.e., she's not a nun in spirit.

SCENE 5: THE SACRIFICE

Abelard and Heloise are condemned to be burned at the stake. In their final hours together, they reconstruct their early lives together and the table covered with books. Enter a uniformed figure who binds them both to stake of books. Ahab is piling books around them to burn... instructed by figure. He begs to save Heloise's life but can't speak the words. In his desperation his ivory leg falls off, Aphra seizes it and in a frenzy beats him with it. He explodes into a million fragments, revealing his lack of soul. The explosion ignites the pyre. Abelard and Heloise die signalling their love through the flames. Aphra weeps.

Preparing for Cardiff: Questions Posed by ISTA Participants

In the final hour at Brecon, waiting for transfer to Cardiff, all participants were invited to wander in the grounds of Christ Church, take in the fresh mountain air, and formulate a question or two that could be carried forward into the Cardiff conference and discussions of the next two days.

(Question 6) How does East meet West without cultural denial according to the principles articulated in 'the book' re-pre-expressivity? Is the whole cultural spiritual life of the East acknowledged in the vitality, life, resonances of the performer?

(Question 7) Do you find that there is a relationship between physical work and the right thinking, imagining process, and if so, could you discuss and/or demonstrate some physical techniques you have found that promote imaginative work?

(Question 9) If what we believe in the actor is/are the neuromuscular dynamics (because they are real) then could it be possible for presence to be taught as a technique trans-culturally?... and is this what this ISTA session has been about?

(Question 11) Is pre-expressivity a matter of: a) personal qualities intrinsic to the individual, b) an attitude adopted by the performer – prior to rehearsal/performance; c) the technique of actions undertaken in the rehearsal situation in preparation for a subsequent performance?

(Question 12) In ISTA what is the purpose/function of the spectators?

(Question 18) Many actors use 'personal rituals' in order to raise a satisfactory state of concentration before performing. I would like to get feedback from the 'encultured performers' concerning these points: a) is it possible to get a training for concentration? b) is this training specific or included in a general training? c) is the ability to be concentrated linked to cultural values?

(Question 22) Are there qualities in and ways of using the VOICE in a pre-expressive state which can be identified across the different cultures, e.g. the co-ordination of breath with body movement, emotions and vocal energy?

(Question 24) Suteja [Balinese dancer] spoke about preparing his energy for performance, performers from many traditions do this. Is this an area where a director can help the performers, if so, how? What about the director's preparation for directing?

(Question 26) a) How does Sanjukta [Odissi dancer] create the other characters in the space (gods, etc.)? b) How does she create the relationship/dynamic between herself and the other (invisible) characters?

(Question 27) Is it possible for one or perhaps two of the actors to physically take us through the evolution of their scores, from initial point of departure to final score, showing and explaining to us the evolution of the piece and factors, forces, situations, etc. that influenced its development.

[There were 27 questions recorded; not all the participants posed a question]

The Cardiff Days

Fictive bodies, dilated minds, hidden dances

It was an established tradition to hold an open, public conference at the end of an ISTA, allowing scholars and practitioners, who could not participate in the extended practical sessions, the opportunity to encounter the ever-evolving principles and research insights being garnered and formulated by the ISTA faculty and Eugenio Barba. They usually took a conventional conference format: papers, lectures, demonstrations, masterclasses and performance presentations. CPR had already gained a reputation for curating more unusual conference formats and applying a dramaturgical approach to their realisation: staging, sequencing, juxtaposition and manifestation (this was to become a radical intervention and distinctive hallmark of its projects over the next twenty years). CPR was concerned to build upon the *Points of Contact: Theatre, Anthropology and Theatre*

Anthropology conference convened in 1988 and the more focussed symposium with Barba, *Autobiography and Anthropology*, hosted in 1990. CPR wished to avoid repetition and provide ISTA with a platform to advance its investigations, share its latest research findings and engage in a dialogue with a predominantly British (Anglo-Saxon!) audience. The simple format of an 'open house' was adopted by CPR as a vehicle for the conference, allowing a public to wander through the institution's rooms and to explore the corridors that connect them, and the treasures hidden within them. To this were woven three threads, intended to both entangle and plough an independent courses or streams of enquiry. One thread was comprised of young students at the start of their careers – the Beginners' Group – who were empowered to ask the naïve questions (innocent and yet cutting to the core). Another thread was a team of senior scholars and practitioners – the Elders – who could frame questions within a broader context of theatre history and critical theory. In addition they would shadow the beginners' group and act as advisors to CPR for the future of the *Eurasian Theatre Project*. And finally, the third thread comprised two independent scholars who were tasked to identify perceived certainties and perplexities about ISTA (from both the Brecon sessions and the Cardiff conference) and co-chair a concluding debate with their observations forming a foundational base for discussion.

This is how the conference was announced and advertised:

FICTIVE BODIES, DILATED MINDS, HIDDEN DANCES
A short open conference on the work of
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY
Friday April 10th — Saturday April 11th, 1992

hosted by
Centre for Performance Research, Cardiff

EUGENIO BARBA
with
Ferdinando Taviani, Nicola Savarese, Fabrizio Cruciani, Franco Ruffini, Patrice Pavis, Julia Varley, Odin Teatret, and Sanjukta Panigrahi

FICTIVE BODIES, DILATED MINDS, HIDDEN DANCES will be the first opportunity for a UK audience to observe, question and participate in the work of the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA), which will be presenting aspects of its comparative research in Western and Asian theatre forms to UK theatre practitioners, students and academics in an open conference.

The Centre for Performance Research (CPR) will host a provocative and stimulating conference in which members of ISTA have been asked to present profiles of their research work – in particular, work associated with the concepts of pre-expressivity and historiography – to the general public and a group of twelve 'beginners' drawn from theatre departments throughout the UK.

This beginner's group, complemented by a shadow group of experienced

practitioners and academics, will act as a touchstone for ISTA's work. The members of ISTA will provide an 'Open House' view of their work in four main presentations:

* *Dramaturgy of the Performer – East & West*: a working demonstration of the principles of pre-expressivity led by Eugenio Barba with Sanjukta Panigrahi & Julia Varley

* *Dramaturgy of Performance – Remembering Histories*: four complementary presentations on Commedia dell'Arte, Stanislavsky, Artaud, and Scenic Space in the light of the recurrent principles underlying the art of the performer proposed by ISTA's research work. With Fernando Taviani, Nicola Savarese, Fabrizio Cruciani and Franco Ruffini.

* *Signs of Life – The Codes of the Performer*: A dialogue between the theatre semiotician Patrice Pavis and Odin performer Julia Varley on the separate but related realities of the actor and the spectator, and the 'useful misunderstandings' arise between academic and practitioner.

* *Perplexities and Certainties*: a session of provocative questions concerning ISTA's work proposed by Dr. James Brandon and Dr. Carol Martin.

The Conference will be of interest to all those who wish to encounter ISTA's work and the concepts that it has developed. It is also for those concerned with understanding theatre from the point of view of performance, and its development within multicultural and transcultural contexts. It will be accessible to academics and practitioners alike and present opportunities for open discussion and debate.

Good food, refreshments and accommodation will be available, and this will, we hope, provide a suitable milieu for informal discussion between participants and ISTA members. In addition, the renowned Odissi dancer Sanjukta Panigrahi, who has collaborated with ISTA for several years, will give a Saturday night performance with her musicians in the Sherman Theatre.

ISTA was founded in 1979 by Eugenio Barba as a research laboratory for the comparative study of the performer's art. It has become a centre for the dissemination of Asian and Western performer's experience and knowledge. The public sessions of ISTA bring together professional performers, specialists and academics from various disciplines and cultures.

[This text was followed by further description of ISTA and quotes from Eugenio Barba.]

The conference was well attended by a broad spectrum of UK-based scholars and practitioners, including senior academics, early career university lecturers, experimental theatre makers and performers from diverse cultural backgrounds. CPR invited, as guests, several key multi-cultural and intercultural arts practitioners from Cardiff, London and Manchester, and several colleagues from mainland Europe and North America, who followed the work of Odin Teatret and ISTA, made the journey to Wales to participate in the conference.

CPR took care to mix the different groups and agendas that were running through the event, so, for example, at the opening banquet, held in the Happy Gathering, a Cantonese restaurant close to Chapter Arts Centre, on each of the round tables were

participants from the preceding week in Brecon, a member of the beginners and elders' group, an ISTA faculty member or two (scholar and performer), a selection of the new arrivals to the conference and a CPR facilitator. The intention was to nurture and enable dialogue, but the problem was always lack of time: an abundance of material to be shared and a reduction in the time and space allowed to absorb, digest and respond to it.

This is a more detailed description of the conference schedule, the intended aims of the gathering and the strategies employed by forming the different groups:

ISTA UK CONFERENCE 92 INFORMATION

Content:

The main material of the conference will be a profile of ISTA's work presented by its members with a particular focus on areas of pre-expressivity and historiography. These complementary areas are concerned with the dual logics of I) process and II) results:

- I the dramaturgy of the performer – logics in the making of performance at the level of pre-expressivity.
- II the dramaturgy of the performance – logics involved in the reception, interpretation and re-construction of performance at the level of expressivity.

Session I: Logics of Process (6:30 – 9:30)

Dramaturgy of the Performer: East & West.

This opening session will be led by Eugenio Barba with Sanjukta Panigrahi and Julia Varley in a working demonstration of pre-expressivity and process involved in the formation of the performer's body and scenic presence. The session profiles ISTA's research into comparative performance techniques.

Sessions II/III Logics of Result (9:45 – 1:00)

Dramaturgy of Performance Remembering Histories

These two interrelated sessions will be presented by four theatre historians, founding members of ISTA, concerned with historiography as a way of re-constructing the fragments and written memories of theatre history. This research has been undertaken in the light of the recurrent principles underlying the art of the performer in codified traditions proposed by ISTA. Four complementary papers on Commedia dell'Arte, Stanislavsky, Artaud, and Scenic Space will be circulated prior the conference. The four ISTA members, Fernando Taviani, Nicola Savarese, Fabrizio Cruciani and Franco Ruffini, will give short (20 -30 min) audio-visual presentations that extend and amplify their research work; the session will profile ISTA's research into performance forms and theatre histories.

Session IV: Dialogues (2:00 – 3:30)

Signs of Life: The Codes of the Performer

This session will take the form of a dialogue between a theatre semiotician (Patrice Pavis) and an Odin Teatret performer (Julia Varley). This dialogue will explore the application of semiotic analysis to the pre-expressive and expressive levels of the performer's scenic presence. The separate but related 'realities' of the actor and the spectator will be discussed in relation to building meanings through performance. The 'useful misunderstandings' that arise from theatre seen as an object of analysis and theatre seen as a process of construction or composition will also be touched on. The session profiles the use of particular analytical method in ISTA's research.

Sessions I – IV will be followed by the opportunity to ask questions from participants.

Session V (5:00 – 6:30)

Perplexities & Certainties: Testing the work of ISTA

The final session will consist of a series of provocative questions posed to the ISTA members by two advocates. The series of questions will have been synthesised from questions asked or proposed during the conference and will represent the major issues that have occupied conference participants. The two advocates (James Brandon and Carol Martin) will formulate provocative questions that enable ISTA to reveal its research, methods and scope. This session is seen as providing ground from which further discussions of the application of ISTA's research can grow.

Small Group Sessions (3.30-5.00)

In addition, there will be a Small Group session. Members of ISTA and other participating groups will have the opportunity to discuss aspects of ISTA's research – in particular, practical performance issues arising from the previous week's work with the UK directors' group. This might operate in two modes: UK Directors connecting material arising from the conference with their practical work with ISTA; conference participants connecting their perceptions of the conference issues with practical responses to ISTA research from non-ISTA members.

Conference Groupings:

The form of the conference will be developed around idea of an open house or open day – a guided tour around ISTA or a works outing – for participants. In addition to the faculty members of ISTA, Asian/ Western performers associated academics (James Brandon & Carol Martin) the UK participants in the conference will be grouped as follows:

UK Directors (35) This will be the group of participants from the ISTA workshop session of the week prior to the conference (4–10 April). They will be bringing an immediate sense of the practical work of ISTA and its impact on UK approaches to bear on the conference.

Student Beginners: (12) CPR has invited twelve UK Departments of Theatre to send a student participant to the conference. Initially, an idea was for ISTA to direct the presentations of its research to a group of twelve 'beginners' starting out in their work as theatre makers or performers. Whilst this idea still has a value for the CPR research project (University of Eurasian Theatre) it was felt that an ISTA 'open house' approach should be more generally directed to participants from all 'levels' of theatre experience. The Beginners Group will still occupy a central place in the conference, but as 'fieldworkers' in the research. They will be briefed by CPR and asked to question ISTA's work as presented through dialogues, papers, practical and theoretical presentations by members of the ISTA core group and test it against their own perceptions, experiences and visions of making theatre. The student group – in some ways representing a current and future orientation of theatre – will act as a touchstone for the aims of ISTA.

CPR Advisory Group: (12) The student group will be complemented or shadowed by a group of academics and practitioners who form the CPR Advisory Panel. This shadow group will, like the 'helping chorus' of Chinese Opera, both observe and help develop questions framed by the students. As an advisory group for CPR their brief will include amongst other tasks, helping to determine the direction of The CPR Research Project and its documentation.

It is clear from this document that CPR was not functioning solely as a producer, as a neutral host of another organisation's research project, it was not a disinterested presenter, but neither was it a commercial impresario (the project was a substantial financial risk and resulted in considerable losses). CPR had its own agenda and a research project wrapped around the hosting of ISTA; this is evidenced in its commitment to a 'Beginners Group', making meaningful connections with UK universities and forming a network with the UK academy. Also, the Advisory Group that was not only contributing to the discussions of the conference, but also identifying research questions and lines of enquiry for CPR's troubled *Eurasian Theatre Project* and the even broader *Process & Documentation* research project. CPR's lack of neutrality is also evident in the multiple layers of scrutiny and questioning woven into the proceedings, it had no wish to see ISTA 'fail' but it was committed to put its research findings under rigorous analysis with transparency and inclusive discussion. This was something that the Italian professoriate of ISTA thought was quintessential British, and when put under pressure from this line of questioning, they became defensive. Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley, however, appeared to take a more benign and flexible stance; Barba put it down to a cold Anglo-Saxon characteristic (affliction) and would often joke about Anglo-Saxon reserve and a judgemental reception of ISTA for years to come.

Many of the presentations made at FICTIVE BODIES, DILATED MINDS, HIDDEN DANCES, have subsequently been published or incorporated into other

articles. Most notably Julia Varley developed the answers to the questions posed by Patrice Pavis into an article for JTA (*Score and Subscore*). However, Pavis' questions have not been published in English but were shared via rapid translation and duplication to the conference delegates. Here is a sample:

Which Stanislavsky?

When Julia Varley and Eugenio Barba use the expressions; 'building a character' and 'sub-text' they are, whether they like it or not, referring to Stanislavsky's concept of work on oneself and work on the role. Does not the expression lend itself to confusion? All her work at Bologna and Saintes, however seems to point to the fact that the actress is not pursuing a character study but rather that she finds herself in the problematical post-Stanislavskian discourse of Meyerhold not knowing any more about the apposition between the person and the role, the interior and the exterior, but now confronting the famous Meyerholdian definition of the actor: $N = A1 + A2$ (where A1 is the builder giving the orders for the completion of the project and A2 being the body of the actor, the interpreter carrying out the commission of the contractor). To be precise, it must be said that she is borrowing probably the idea of physical score from Stanislavsky - not from the classical Stanislavsky we know who spoke about affective memory but from the Stanislavsky of physical actions.

In the tradition of Meyerhold-Grotowski-Barba, Julia Varley is working simultaneously from the perspective of A1 and A2. For her, A1 is the tendency (one dare not say drive) to create a form and to control; to do this she needs to start with a megatext (narrative text of the song "A time for cherries"), which provides her with a linear narrative framework, appropriate to representation, with well-defined protagonists and, most importantly, following a well-established physical path. A2 is the drive to offer up unformed, impulsive, or intuitive material, which is best expressed in the uncontrolled spontaneity of improvisation. Her task should be to not really know too much about who is leading the dance... A1 or A2.

Can the Western actress break free from her bodily conditioning?

It is difficult to know whether a Western actress can re-acclimatise her body to the Oriental performance mode, given that her body is shaped and cultivated by a series of cultural factors which could still appear to her to be spontaneous behaviour. Apparently, this is what she does: she tries to escape the mimetic and convincing rendering of the naturalistic actress in order to formalise her movements and vocalisations according to a code and aesthetic which alienate her from daily life. However, in fact, she is quite open to common ground and to these daily habits of walking and speaking, even if it's always a parody from her improvisations pastiching different behaviours, situations and ways of speaking. Thus, she finds it difficult to re-acclimatise her body in getting rid of culturally in-bred spontaneity in order to acquire extra-daily techniques. What is missing is precisely that towards which she gravitates (and this tension is obviously the motor of her art): a vocal and choreographic training which she would have received from classical dance or singing

classes (for example). What she has gained, on the other hand, is the ability of the Western artist to always hang her art onto reality, to get to know this reality better, a perception of the oneness of external physical score and interior dimension, the knowledge and the "proof" that one cannot separate them, the conviction that the artificially-recomposed body becomes after a certain time a natural body - a 'second nature' - just as much for the actress as for the audience for whom the most arbitrary staging becomes an organic being.

Julia Varley offers the audience a double look – at form and contents, at discipline and spontaneity, a vision both segmented and organic. "The spectator is struck not by the performer's strange physical dynamic, but by the organicity which emerges from it" (Barba 1989: 313).

There are so many questions to ask Julia Varley and all actors... at Cardiff and elsewhere. At the risk of a chronicle of misunderstandings between the actress and the theorist but in the hope of a few 'signs of life'.

[Patrice Pavis text – *Questions to Julia Varley: Signs of Life – The Codes of the Performer* – is 6,200 words long and was completed by Pavis in Brecon and translated by CPR Administrator Howard Cooper for distribution to participants in Brecon and the Cardiff conference delegates. Only a part of the last two pages is reprinted here.]

Barba Concluding Remarks – Transcript (extract)

One cannot separate the dance from the dancer. One cannot separate technique from the performer; one cannot separate personal identity from technique, which is what a person is using at any given moment. I imagine that when I try to indicate a level of organisation in the performer – in the way the performer is building his scenic presence – because my identity, my nervous system and my cultural background is present, it is impossible to separate it out.

Therefore, in order to define, to discover, to trace the ground of pre-expressivity, one has to imagine as if personality or culture or religion, as if the meaning is not the most important thing; but exactly only these dances of impulses, these very precise constructions of micro-sequences, which in the end can be the channels for what are called 'emotions', what is called 'political commitment', what is called 'God'. I don't know – everyone gives personal names to it; nevertheless, it is also very important to try to separate what is my personal way of working from what I am trying to indicate outside what is called my makeup. I suppose that all performers are facing this problem: how to give life to these words; how to make the first step so that the spectators begin to look – this is the question which in the end theatre anthropology tries to focus on – this is the question that theatre anthropology is asking of performances from different cultures.

Maybe one could say that if we started analysing or studying the first step, the first day of work, how each of us need the first step in order to become what we have become, then we would again much more easily and in a much more evident way,

discover those principles which are at the basis of expressivity, of presence, of scenic bios.

These cannot be separated from what the personality or the individual is, and the culture that surrounds it; but nevertheless, only if one is able to think, for research purposes, as if these two other profiles are not present, one is able to see and watch how certain principles have been built in the different experiences of the spectators. Maybe we will not like the results or maybe the result will be very far away. I can be fascinated or repulsed but even repulsion can in the end help me to define myself; because at the end all this work is only for one purpose: how to strengthen, how to give, how to preserve our own personal identity or own way of remaining very near what is essential to us, what is holy, something which can transcend us. You can call it our commitment to give a meaning to what we are doing, and we always give meaning in relation to other people. In the end, all of this research is concerned with how to strengthen our way of being in the 'polis', of being in the town, of being in the state.

Multiple Reflections

On the Sunday morning there was a series of closed meetings garnering feedback on both the practical sessions in Brecon and the Cardiff conference. A very positive set of responses were made by the Beginners Group, who were immensely grateful for the opportunity to participate and pose their own questions. The tutorial assistance provided by CPR through Ric Allsopp was deemed crucial in understanding some of



The Balinese ensemble, ISTA 7, Brecon, 1992. Photo: CPR archive

the principles being advanced by ISTA, and they found the meetings in small groups with individuals from ISTA and the directors/scholars who had been in Brecon most illuminating. The Elders Group (and advisors to CPR) were cautious about the ambition to host an expanded version of ISTA within the frame of the *Eurasian Theatre Project*. Although they felt the conference Hidden Bodies had been most fruitful, and all the presentations rigorous and generous, they sensed that an ominous cloud had travelled down from Brecon to Cardiff and that there were unresolved tensions between CPR, ISTA and the participants. Carol Martin had many insightful observations based on participating in all the Brecon-Cardiff proceedings and on reflecting on her experiences at the previous ISTA in Bologna in 1990. To date, Prof Martin has not published an assessment of the two ISTAs.

The final session and closing event of the entire Brecon-Cardiff ISTA was a meeting between CPR and ISTA (Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley, together with Susanne Vill, Patrice Pavis, Fabrizio Cruciani, Jean-Marie Pradier, Fernando Taviani, Franco Ruffini and Nicola Savarese). It should be noted that all participants were exhausted from the previous nine days work, and it might have been better to convene such a reflection when minds and bodies had recuperated; a certain negativity pervaded the discussions. The Italian professoriate clearly felt they had been working within a hostile environment and that ISTA could only flourish in a 'safe' and supportive context where misunderstandings were allowed. Julia Varley talked about the need for 'the possibility to disagree without having to defend' and 'to disagree amongst friends', the Brecon sessions had proved to be difficult for her. Patrice Pavis, however, advanced that it had been 'great to be working within an English-speaking context' and thought the challenges that had been encountered were good for ISTA and necessary, he welcomed a structure that 'would build down the tension between the two' (criticism and defence, English and Italian). Jean-Marie Pradier added that the 'Anglo-Celtic ability to share was similar to the Latin tendency, but the Anglo-Celtic prefer to connect and interact rather than just observe'. Eugenio Barba stated that despite all the cultural differences and a strong sense of being criticised and judged, 'the research of ISTA could be done' and that there was much more to be done.

On the matter of the prospect for an ISTA within a three college *Eurasian Theatre Project* there was much disagreement, although there was an overriding sense that this would once again put ISTA in a challenging and uncomfortable context. Susanne Vill, Fabrizio Cruciani, Fernando Taviani, and Nicola Savarese were very much against the idea, whereas Franco Ruffini was positive but raised what he thought was the main problem for this future project and the one that had just taken place – lack of time. He spoke about 'architectural time' and that 'there must be the flexibility and freedom of not being oppressed by time requirements'. He felt this was a necessary condition for ISTA but recognised it was difficult for any producer or impresario to raise funds for such freedom. The distinguished university professor Fabrizio Cruciani concluded, 'I love ISTA precisely because it is not a university'. This had great resonance for CPR (and should have been taken as prophecy, given their trajectory towards being incorporated within a university) – the enthusiasm for the *Eurasian Theatre Project* was fading fast and would evaporate within days.



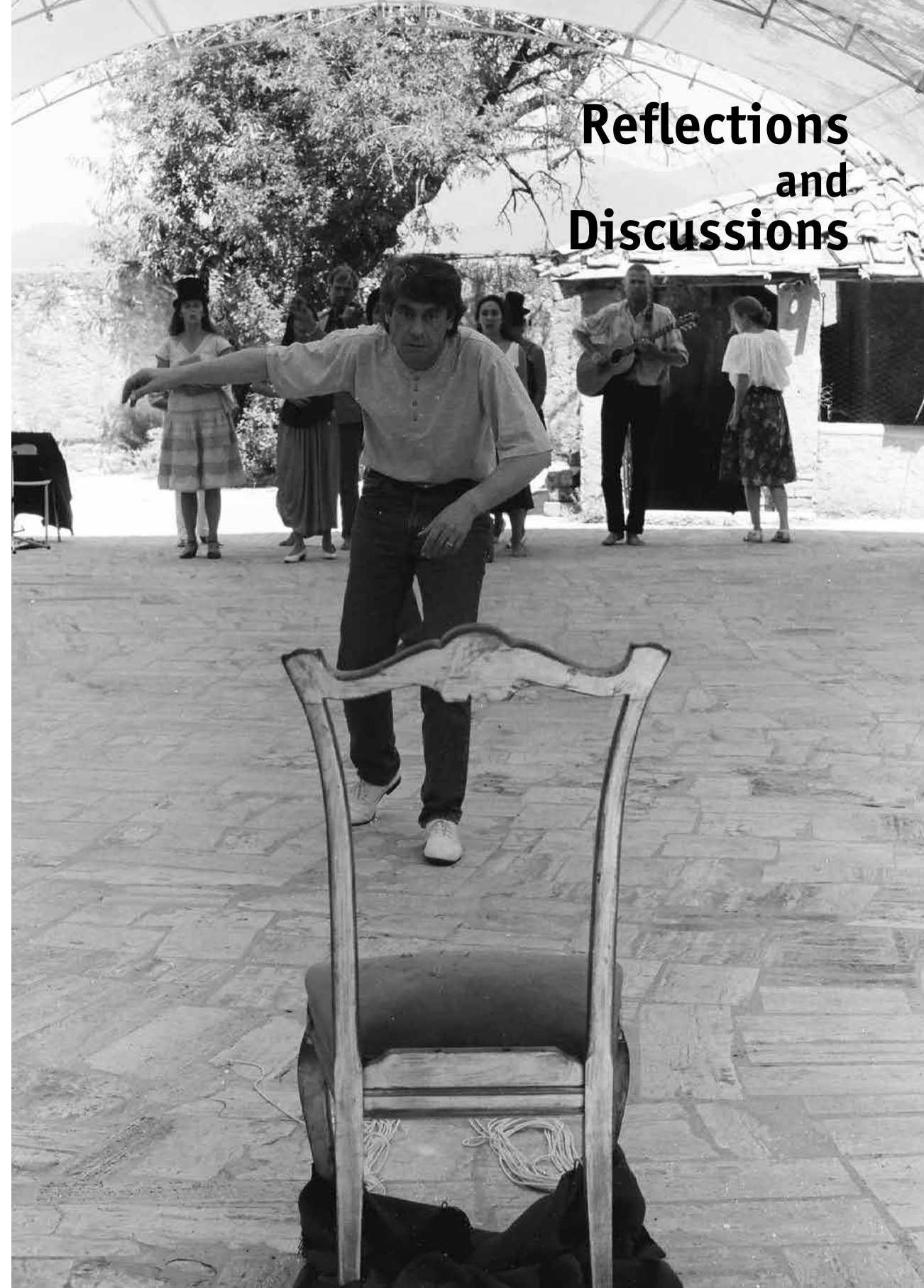
Christ College, 1992. Photo: CPR archive

Ending - with Elephant

After all the participants, guests, ISTA staff and Odin members had left and a clean-up of the Gym (studio) was completed, the CPR team decided to go for a walk. Fresh sea air on a late Sunday afternoon in April, with the sun already setting, was much needed; there were many cobwebs to blow out. A favoured spot for such outings, frequented over many years, was Lavernock Point, just beyond Penarth. Beside the Bristol Channel, looking towards Somerset, is a nature reserve with coastal paths and Jurassic slabs of stone and sand along a beach forever changing due to the cliff falls and rough sea. Although they had all visited this place many times, day and night, the plaque that marked Guglielmo Marconi's first successful radio transmission had peculiar significance. An Italian in Wales, research, trial and error, an invention that would change the world... Such fortitude. Marconi's first 'telegraphy without wires' was "Can you hear me".

As they walked beyond the slabs of rock, they saw in the sand an intricate outline that the incoming sea would soon wash away. At first it was indistinguishable, becoming more apparent as they advanced. It was a magnificent drawing of an elephant, skilfully marked out, no one in sight, a mystery to behold. Someone let out a cry, and another started laughing, and the tension, apprehension, and sheer exhaustion of the team was temporarily released. They crouched around the drawing at various points and, like a huddle of cave dwellers, placed a hand on a different part, pressing deeply – and then they departed.

P. 255: Eurasian Theatre University, Fara Sabina, 1993. Rehearsal of *Shakuntala*, dedicated to Fabrizio Cruciani. Photo: Fiora Bemporad





Faces of the Future - Phantoms and Fictions, Holstebro Festuge 2014. Photo: Tommy Bay

Fabrizio Cruciani

The Place of the Possible

Abstract: *The essay was published in Italian in Tecniche della rappresentazione e storiografia (1992), which collected material from the 6th session of ISTA held in Bologna in 1990. This text by Cruciani in the year of his death (1992) can be considered a summa of his continuous questioning on the not ephemeral nature of theatre and on the system of symmetries that he established existed between theatre practices and historiographic research. The author reflects how theatre is a field of investigation and argues why, from his point of view, theatre studies should be in a dialectical relationship with social, pedagogical, artistic, anthropological and historical studies. He identifies one of the values of theatre in its being a long-lasting category owing "its continuity and persistence in history because it does not produce works, but rather ways of operating".*

Keywords: *Theatre Anthropology, Theatre practices, Theatre culture, Theatre traces, Tradition, Historiography*

For its claim to study the trans-cultural and pre-expressive level of theatrical creation, theatre anthropology has been accused of being ahistorical, of not taking into account cultural diversities across space and time. The topic of this essay, on the contrary, highlights how theatre anthropology substantiates a deeper and more dynamic dialectic in the knowledge of theatre.

For the theatre maker, the relationship with history is the foundation of one's identity and the search for what is possible. For the scholar of theatre culture, the direct experience of performance techniques illuminates and frees from prejudice (the use of concepts that are more often accepted rather than known) and conquers a 'point-of-view'. In both cases, at the foundation of these relationships lies the notion that Eugenio Barba, with his theatre anthropology, has posited as the basis of creative movement, both in performance practices and in historiography: learning to learn - that is, a knowing marked by amazement and difference, not just a recognising, void of perplexity and creativity.

Theatre practice needs the freedom that Meyerhold spoke of (to know many and diverse performance techniques, searching across time and space); it needs the astuteness sought by Brecht (those who are not familiar with tradition will end up falling back into it); it needs the *true* tradition pursued by Copeau: not the progressively degenerating repetition of habits, solutions and answers, but the "*tradition de la naissance*" (to recover that creative movement which presided creation - in this sense Copeau speaks with reference to Moliere's dramatic works, but the same concept is fundamental for both the art and the historiography of the theatre).

Theatre culture needs to become acquainted with the fundamental questions related to the human being in the situation of performance. It needs to operate at the different



257

levels of organisation within the complexity of the theatre, and it needs to achieve points of view which allow it to know - that is to confront itself with - the globality of phenomena of which the theatre is an element, starting with its own identity.

The definition of the theatre (the 'what it is') is identified - in its concrete existence - by the precision and absoluteness of doing. In theatre studies and reflection, instead, such a definition remains subject to multiplicity and uncertainty. In historiography, the theatre never seems to be understood in and of itself: 'what is theatre?' is neither the question nor the answer of theatre studies; it is, if anything - to different degrees of awareness - an *a priori*, technically, an operative prejudice. In historiography, it appears to me that theatre always actualises and reveals itself as 'theatre and something else': and it is within such a dialectic relationship (theatre and...: representational requirements, expressive needs, society, commerce, utopia, behaviours, forms, visions, literature, music, the plastic and figurative arts, aesthetics, pedagogy, etc.) that I have always found the intellectual wealth and fascination of theatre studies. For this reason, the theatre, and theatre studies, are the dialectical place of convergence for situations and problems that are diverse in nature and in origin: the 'place of the possible'. This is also because, as has been pointed out, the theatre owes its continuity and persistence in history because it does not produce works, but rather ways of operating. Theatre works are the sum of the relationships that come into being in the aimed event, and of the forms in which such relationships are realised: what 'remains' are merely partial or sectoral traces, such as the play text (when there is one), the architectural structures used, scenic designs, reviews, the spectators' memories, and the projects, aims, records or memories of the makers (and, nowadays, the very partial documentation afforded by audiovisual recordings). The ways of operating persist in the 'duration' of theatre makers and spectators, in the culture that they produce and partake in, in the tradition that is an active system (when it is a positive value) of creating relationships with what happened. In this sense, the theatre is not ephemeral, just as any human work is not: the theatre is a long-lasting category beyond the present event of the performance.

From the scholars' perspective, the theatre is a field of investigation because it adopts expressive situations and languages that are not necessarily born in the theatre, but become theatre: with respect to cultures, the theatre is the place of possibilities materialised and located in that relational and representational culture that a civilisation is able to express. Hence, theatre knowledge is built not starting from theatre studies alone, but through the interplay of "theatre and..." (Theatre and representational requirements, and liturgy, and society, and literature, and figurative language, and entertainment, and whatever else may come useful to the research that validates the relationship). Considering the complexity of the theatre, a complex system of relationships and levels of organisation such as the theatre is, what is required is both a complexity of learning and the capacity to investigate each diverse level.

The theatre maker derives great wealth from recovering the tensions, the implicit techniques, the divergent uses and approaches, which could have become, and which in part have become, theatre life; thus, we avoid reifying, consciously or unconsciously, an exclusive and predetermined notion of what pertains to the theatre; and we become able to discover other assets, which may not have been thought of before. On the other hand, every creative theatre has, in a more or less explicit way, constructed and established a theatre history of its own, realising and actualising an active tradition, which thrives

upon seeking itself, upon its rediscovering the movement that has presided creation (the "*tradition de la naissance*").

For theatre culture to be alive and creative, it needs to make its way across the frameworks, definitions, habits, encrustations, and responses that have been erected as tradition; it needs to recover the modalities, the place of choices and of possibilities, the foundation routes, the questions that demand the assumption of responsibility and of values. Tradition is not the passive conservation of forms and values accepted in the small successive deteriorations of continuity (the identity of water in a pond); it is rather the active and dynamic achievement that investigates and draws upon the experience that has produced forms and values (the identity of water in a river).

In theatre making and in the historical knowledge of theatre, theatre is dialectically the 'place of the possible'.

Every theatre, being a creative theatre, is an act of foundation that, at the same time, makes a tradition alive. Creative theatre acts, almost always, in the name of a possible future, of an immanence of the present; and often it does so via the imagination and the revivification of a past through the "*tradition de la naissance*" in history. It does so by means of memory, which is organised selection (not an archive or a data bank) and conquest of identity.

In a dialectical reciprocity, for the study of theatre to be active, not to close itself in the updated repetition of forms or limit its knowledge to the spectator's point of view, it necessitates experience, to educate the gaze and the mind to see the problems and processes of composition. In order to construct *true* memory, historiography needs to learn to recognise tensions, techniques, skills, presences - even those which are not theatre in themselves, but become theatre.

Thus, (creative) theatre making builds - also - historiography, a possible knowledge of the past; and in this way historiography builds - also - a warehouse of the possibilities of theatre making. If theatre is, essentially, a set of relationships, so is the thinking about, the reflecting on, the studying of theatre. In the dialectical relationship between them, what we can call theatre culture is built, a reality which is not ephemeral, like performances, but which is long lasting, which does not concern the opuses, but rather the working in the theatre. Just as the theatre is not only born of theatre, so is theatre historiography not born solely of theatre studies: theatre culture is, therefore, a 'place of the possible', a living body which can/must become a body-in-life, and is realised in making theatre as well as in studying the past.

Theatre makes sense inasmuch as it is organically alive: that is inasmuch as it is not the art and technique of creating performances on the one hand, and the history of theatre performances and poetics on the other hand, but inasmuch as it succeeds in being theatre *culture*. Theatre anthropology investigates principles which are fundamental to human behaviour in performance situations, and it develops knowledge and experience of the pre-expressive level of the theatre; and with the practice of ISTA sessions it builds a laboratory where you can experience learning to learn and apprehending through amazement and difference, in order to define your own identity. It is a method which results in a real bridge for an organic and creative theatre culture.

Translated by Victor Emanuel Jacono



Eugenio Barba, LAFLIS opening.
Lecce 2023. Photo: Francesco Galli

Jean-Marie Pradier

Field or Humus?

Between ISTA (1980) & LAFLIS (2023)

Abstract: The creation in Lecce (Italy) in October 2023 of the LAFLIS, Living Archive Floating Islands, on the initiative of the Fondazione Barba Varley and the Regione Puglia is discussed in relation to the sessions of the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA), founded and directed by Eugenio Barba in 1980, and their role as fertile ground for the ethnoscenology manifesto (1995). Dedicated to Barba's work, Odin Teatret and Third Theatre, LAFLIS is a dynamic, original and stimulating installation artwork dedicated to memory, transmission and creation for researchers and artists alike. As a corollary, the lesson that emerges encourages us to reconsider the field diaries of ethnologists and anthropologists, which often give rise to infertile and revealing misunderstandings, as was the case for Bronisław Malinowski.

Keywords: Theatre anthropology, Ethnoscenology, Fieldwork, Diary, ISTA, LAFLIS

My active involvement from 1980 onwards in the sessions of the International School of Theatre Anthropology, better known by its acronym ISTA, whose founder Eugenio Barba (1936) promoted me to the rank of co-founder in 1996,¹ played a fertile role in the conception of the manifesto of ethnoscenology in 1995 and the development of its scientific implementation. I have given an account of this debt in previous publications.² The three-day inauguration of LAFLIS, Living Archive Floating Islands, on 4, 5 and 6 October 2023 in the Biblioteca Bernardini in Lecce, in the Italian Salento region, at the initiative of the Fondazione Barba Varley and the Regione Puglia, convinced me of something obvious. The ISTA sessions had been much more than a surface on which to meet Asian masters and their traditions. We experienced them with little awareness of the Salento roots of their founder and leader, Eugenio Barba himself. The stage - in the sense of theatrical vocabulary - veiled the humus, the organic, throbbing, composite matter that animates the depths.

1. On the occasion of the 10th session of ISTA, held in Copenhagen from 3 to 12 May 1996, E. Barba presented a commemorative plate to the group of 'founders' who had taken part in the first session in Bonn: 3 'masters' - Sanjukta Panigrahi (India), Katsuko Azuma (Japan), I Made Pasek Tempo (Bali), and the 'intellectuals' Fabrizio Cruciani (Italy), Jean-Marie Pradier (France), Franco Ruffini (Italy), Nicola Savarese (Italy) and Ferdinando Taviani (Italy). See: Schino, Mirella, *The Odin Teatret Archives*, (translated from the Italian by Gabriella Sacco), London and New York, Routledge, 2018, pp. 113-114.

2. Pradier 2014, 421-36; Pradier 2022, 77-91; Pradier 2022a, 145-51.



After spending twenty years of study as a 'theatre anthropologist' pursuing the distant and irreconcilable lives of Carmelo Bene and Eugenio Barba, two sons of Salento, Piergiorgio Giacchè writes beautifully that they intersect at least once at one point: "the point of origin (and perhaps of eternal return): the heel of a boot from which only he who can be saved is who is able to escape".³ From a geography so conducive to exchanges, trade, expeditions and invasions, we can surmise the curry of languages, beliefs, influences and adventures embodied in the imaginations that spurred on the founder of contemporary Italian ethnology, Ernesto De Martino (1908-1965), granted the gift of levitation to the humble friar Giuseppe de Cupertino o.f.m., and stimulated artists.

These singular traits led Eugenio Barba to organise the 5th ISTA international session in Salento in 1987, on the theme: "Tradition of the actor, identity of the spectator". He could have added the 'identity' of the theorist. Franco Ruffini, who had just finished writing a 'pretty hefty essay'⁴ on the anthropology of theatre, paying particular attention to the notion of pre-expressivity - one of Barba's key notions - described how our discussions, the sea, the workshops, the bad sleeping arrangements and Sanjukta Panigrahi's dances had given him a corrective to semiotic analysis. In short, the Salento ISTA was a concrete *topos* that taught the body, in other words the mind.

The spectacular return to the point of origin represented by LAFLIS's installation in Lecce is not the fruit of nostalgia in its original sense of 'homesickness', but of serendipity, as evoked at the 7th session of the ISTA, held in Brecon and Cardiff, Wales. The word and its spirit are scattered throughout Barba's autobiographical pages of *On Directing and Dramaturgy. Burning the House*,⁵ as close as possible to the meaning given by its inventor Horace Walpole in a letter to a friend in 1754: "Always making discoveries, by accidents and sagacity, of things which they were not in quest of". The ability to grasp the unexpected, this accidental sagacity had the resilient virtue of transforming what seemed like an ordeal into an opportunity. And so LAFLIS was born, a large-scale project carried out with the support of the Regione Puglia, the Italian Ministry of Culture's Directorate General for Contemporary Creation and a number of enthusiastic partners, in response to a bumptious blunder.

Happy consequence from a disconcerting foolishness

In an interview with influential *La Repubblica* theatre critic Anna Bandettini, Barba briefly recounts the extravagant episode that led to his decision:

I had imagined that my memory would remain in the place that had created it, in Holstebro, Denmark. For years, I had kept my private library in the old farmhouse that I had converted into the Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium in 1966. The academic Mirella Schino, assisted by Francesca Romana Rietti and Valentina Tibaldi, had classified, catalogued and transferred to the Royal Library in Copenhagen the

first 50 years of original documents and audiovisual material on the Odin's many activities. In 2020, I handed over the reins and my successor made the archive staff redundant, moved the 6,000 volumes in my library and, two years later, made me redundant too. It was a lesson in human nature. It was painful to see how the culture and tradition of our theatre were being destroyed using generational change as an argument.

In the rubble, I was reminded of Nietzsche's words: "In times of mourning, don't pray, bless". From every earthquake springs new life. With the partnership of the Regione Puglia, to which I have donated my library and my artistic heritage, the gods have saved the memory of Odin Teatret that was suppressed in Holstebro, and promise a new spring.⁶

In a sign of the times, when the same criteria for obsolescence apply to art as to a telephone, the affair provoked numerous reactions.⁷ As a backlash, however, it had the advantage of bringing back to its birthplace a theatrical and intellectual creation whose scale and international renown, by uprooting it, risked petrifying it into a bland museum object. Emerging from the Salento soil, making temporary stops around the world - Poland, India, Bali, Japan and China in particular, born in Norway in Oslo in 1964, growing up in Denmark in 1966 in Holstebro, nomadizing in particular in South America, Barba's and Odin Teatret's creation returned to the source to come back to life.

LAFLIS, Living Archives Floating Islands

Three clues shed light on the enigmatic and musical acronym LAFLIS and give meaning to the floating islands. They can be found at the bottom of the long banner hanging on the outside wall of the Nicola Bernardini Library in the historic centre of Lecce. The modest lettering reads: "Eugenio Barba, Odin Teatret, Third Theatre".⁸ The majestic architecture of the colonnaded façade of the library overlooks the Piazzetta Giosuè Carducci, bordered by the church of San Francesco della Scarpa.⁹

I had arrived the day before and visited the vast, light-filled interiors, which already house the archives of Carmelo Bene (1937-2002), one of the founders of the 'new Italian theatre', and Silvio D'Amico (1887-1955), founder of the Accademia Nazionale d'Arte Drammatica, a printing museum, thousands of books and reading rooms. Now, upstairs,

6. Bandettini 2023.

7. Several collective letters by international theatre critics and university scholars urging to preserve Odin Teatret's legacy have been sent to the Danish Minister of Culture and to the Mayor of Holstebro, to no avail.

8. The locution 'Third Theatre' is explained in a short text that Eugenio Barba distributed to participants at the Group Theatre meeting in Belgrade in 1976, organised with the support of UNESCO. Now a manifesto, 'Third Theatre' first appeared in *International Theatre Information*, Paris Institut International du Théâtre UNESCO, 1976, Autumn. See Taviani 1978, 8-15.

9. The name of the church - St. Francis of the Sandal - is said to derive from a visit by St. Francis of Assisi, who left one of his sandals here. A pleasant coincidence with the Franciscan sandals worn by Eugenio Barba.

3. Cf. Giacchè 2012, 321-32.

4. Ruffini 2013, 198.

5. Barba 2009.

the LAFLIS Living Archives are destined to welcome not ordinary archivists, but those seeking inspiration in a giant permanent interactive installation, lushly evocative of sixty years of theatrical nomadism. Of course, researchers and historians will find it a place to work and write. As a place of memory, its vocation is to pass on know-how and the ability to think, knowledge and models that are not to be copied or imitated, but rather imaginary, with a wilful energy and the perpetual movement of renewal. Here, the islands are twins of the floating gardens built by the Aztecs to survive, and on which they scattered seeds. Today, some Aymara communities on Lake Titicaca are struggling to carry on the tradition of the floating Uros islands, which are popular with tourists, while drought is affecting the growth of the reeds that are essential for their regular upkeep. Eugenio Barba compared the archipelago of stubborn theatre groups, driven by the sole desire to fulfil the dream of building their own lives, to these moving constructions on the surface of the water: the Third Theatre.¹⁰ More than a repository for ordinary historians, the archives should be understood as a reserve of seminal data for future creations, like the Svalbard world seed vault, located on the Norwegian island of Spitzbergen, and the banks of male and female gametes.

The atypical design of LAFLIS lies in the arrangement of elements that do not conform to the classic rules of periodisation, nor to the linear slide show of a troupe or an artist. The intention is to create a mental universe in keeping with the epigraph of the book published for the occasion. It is a phrase by Niels Bohr: "Every sentence I utter should not be understood as an assertion, but as a question". The lesson is not directive. It is part of the epistemological principle that Barba draws from Heraclitus and Niels Bohr: enantiodromy,¹¹ the complementarity of opposites.¹² Thus, paradoxically on the surface, the approach of theatrical anthropology, which aims to identify the universals of the presence of performers, forms a pair with that of ethnoscenology, which focuses on the diversity of embodiments of the imaginary. What is offered to the senses is not limited to sight. The stroll itself inspires astonishment, as visitors come face to face with an apparently disorganised, sumptuous pile of various elements evocative of a person, an episode, a spectacle or a tradition. Unusual, extravagant, clever set design. A glass floor beneath a bed of books, with a life-size effigy of Mahatma Gandhi in one corner, bathing with a book in his hands. There, puppets from the world, masks, balanced on other objects; jars in which appear ironically honorary decorations received by the founder of the Odin; the reconstituted offices of Barba and Julia Varley in Denmark; sarcophagi with flat display cases for documents and photos. Digitalisation, interactive and immersive spaces. Films. An unusual jumble of imprints, remnants of memories that give rise to reminiscences and invent new ones. The whole evokes the clutter of painters' studios, where they revel in it and draw the excitement essential to inspiration.

10. See Barba 1986.

11. Enantiodromy, ἐναντιοδρομία, "to run in the opposite direction", taken up by Barba in the article "La course des contraires" (Barba 1981, 33-60).

12. At the heart of Niels Bohr's epistemology, the notion of complementarity has given rise to stimulating and conflicting interpretations. See Bohr 2010.

A nomadic and festive inauguration

The programme for the three days devoted to the inauguration can only be sketched out in this article, in order to highlight a few significant features. The first sunny morning in the inner courtyard of the Biblioteca Bernardini gave the floor to the notables, not for the sake of mere protocol, but as a reminder of the delicate exercise of the artist who, for any project, must know how to secure the resources essential to its realisation. In the afternoon, the visit to the past of Odin Teatret, the invention of bartering in Carpignano in 1974, took place in the Sigismondo Castromediano Museum that tells the two-thousand-year history of Salento between land and sea, East and Far East, languages and cultures. In the evening, the Koreja theatre company presented a multi-sensory performance show, with bread and bread-making as the main characters: *Cumpanaggiu - il pane e il resto*. The following day, after a series of encounters, Bergamo's Teatro Tascabile and Teatro Potlach, heirs to the ideal of 'group theatre' performed the overture to LAFLIS in the Piazza Carducci; violin soloist; and magnificently dressed in mordant purple the lively, affectionate and curious Mr Peanut¹³ mounted high by Julia Varley, wandering between hundreds of enormous white balloons. The party was followed by a digital creation by Stefano Di Buduo, an installation introducing the multiple forms of LAFLIS.

On October 6th, leaving Lecce, we were taken to three nurturing smaller towns, each one a living archive of the theatre's floating islands: Gallipoli, Otranto and Carpignano. Gallipoli was his father's stronghold, where Eugenio Barba spent his childhood when he left Brindisi at the time of the war. There is the memory of Emanuele Barba, his great-grandfather who was an erudite doctor, a philanthropic humanist, a friend of Garibaldi and a free-thinker who created a museum to exhibit research into monstrous fetuses. The richness of Gallipoli's past, when it was the world capital of *lampante* olive oil, can still be seen in the hypogeal oil presses, or *trappeto* in the local dialect. It can be seen in the convents, the cathedral and the churches, including that of the Confraternity of Saint Mary of Purity, from which the penitents set off in procession during Holy Week before Easter.

In Carpignano, forty-nine years later, we re-enacted the barter of games with some of the people who had interacted with Odin Teatret during its five months permanence. In the street, standing in front of an enlargement of the photo taken by Tony D'Urso in 1974, showing her as a child climbing on the shoulders of Iben Nagel Rasmussen, a white mask with a tear in its eye, and in the same spot, Angela struck a pose again, this time carried by the young Romanian actress from Odin Teatret, Antonia Cioaza. With her back to the bougainvillea of Eugenio's house, a dancer begins to flutter. On the surface, the village preserves the architectural remains of an epic past, and a subterranean world: the Byzantine crypt of Santa Cristina, the oil press accessed by a narrow stone staircase. Places where the ghosts of a world of inhuman work and fat profits remain, echoed today by the olive trees withered by the Xylella virus, witnesses to the ecological disaster.

The third stop was in Otranto, a crossroads port facing Albania. In the port, the memorial to L'Approdo, Work for Migrant Humanity by Costas Varotsos, recalls the

13. Mr Peanut, with his skeleton head, an emblematic Odin character, became Julia Varley's travelling companion. See Varley 2009, 147-56. See also the film *Un personnage qui ne peut mourir* by Claudio Coloberti.

ramming in 1997 by an Italian corvette of the Kateri i Radës, laden with Albanians, and the drowning of a dozen of them. Another disaster, commemorated by pilgrimages to the 800 martyrs whose massacre by the Turks in 1480 haunted Carmelo Bene (1937-2002), who retired to the town at the end of his life. Each of these toponyms, now flattered destinations for industrial tourism, nonetheless retains its alluvial, aesthetic, memorial consistency, entwined in the contemporary, as fragile as the floating islands of the Uros.

The field, the imaginary and its embodiment

It seems to me that a certain preliminary match between the nature of a soil and that of a plant is necessary to ensure that it flourishes. There are fields in anthropology that correspond better than others to the expectations and skills of researchers. The misunderstandings observed during certain ISTA sessions between participants bear witness to this.¹⁴ The confusion was based on an erroneous interpretation of the notion of theatre anthropology, which was nevertheless clearly defined by Eugenio Barba, distinguishing it from cultural anthropology. From his earliest hypotheses, he took an eco-sophical perspective, well before the gradual return of nature to the Western conception of culture, following the historic break between the humanities and the natural sciences:

Originally, anthropology was understood as the study of human beings' behaviour, not only on the social-cultural level, but also on the physiological level. Theatre anthropology is thus the study of human beings' socio-cultural and physiological behaviour in a performance situation. (1983)¹⁵

Barba thus took a stance in favour of the pragmatic path of knowledge in the persistent conflict that pits it culturally against the conceptual filiation of knowledge, without denying their complementarity. He explains this in *The Paper Canoe* (1995), when he revisits the intervention of the British anthropologist and ethno-musicologist John Blacking (1928-1990) at the colloquium "Points of contact: Theatre, Anthropology, and Theatre Anthropology" organised by Richard Gough at the Centre for Performance Research in Leicester in the autumn of 1988. Identifying the polarity of cognitive activity, Blacking proposed distinguishing between performative or sensory-motor thinking - thinking in motion - and conceptual thinking - thinking in concepts.¹⁶ Eugenio Barba was struck by the relevance of Blacking's proposal, which seemed to correspond to his own approach, and quoted him, wondering about the possible translation of motion in French, Spanish, Italian or Portuguese. He retained neither the word 'movement' nor 'action', and concluded: "better not to translate".¹⁷ Nevertheless the notion makes

sense: "I ask myself whether *thinking in motion* might not be the best way to define the teaching of 'physical actions' which Stanislavski tried to pass on to the actor, the teaching of which Grotowski is now the true master."¹⁸

Beneath the philological perplexity of the founder of Odin Teatret lies precisely the ambiguity of the notion of action, constantly debated in the field of European philosophy and specialised vocabularies - that of theatre in particular - before the revival brought about by Anglo-American pragmatism. Eight years before the Leicester meeting, Victor Turner (1920-1983) had written a text for his seminar on the anthropology of performance. Developing a conception of anthropology based on experience - a figure of the field work - he came up with the seminal notion of *Homo Performans*¹⁹ as characteristic of the human species in his eyes as *Homo Ludens* had been in 1938 for the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga. It is worth remembering that the theory of performance is a theory of action understood not as an antagonist of thought but as an agent, closer to vitalism than to functionalism. The familiar bipolarity of the Western philosophical heritage has long distorted the translation of Japanese expressions that express the embodiment of learning, through the locution "learning through the body". A major reference in Barba's theatre anthropology, and in the practices of the International School of Theatre Anthropology, *tai toku suru*, 体得する, is not limited to what would be "physical education" (F. Champault).²⁰ Since then, the embodiment theory (embodied knowledge), the concept of enaction, and the notion of embodiment of the imaginary in ethnoscenology have tended to decentre thinking from an old aporia and at the same time revitalise the notion of field work by granting it its organicity.

ISTA, Third Theatre's field

The ISTA sessions were born out of the immoderation of a project that was intended to escape realisation. Once established in Holstebro, Denmark in 1966, two years after its foundation in Oslo, Odin Teatret became an inter-Scandinavian centre for research into the art of acting. The quality of the seminars and workshops led by renowned personalities quickly made it a world reference in the field of training. The masters had a lot to attract: Jerzy Grotowski, Ryszard Cieślak, Etienne Decroux, Dario Fo, Franca Rame, Jean-Louis Barrault, Jacques Lecoq, the Colombaioni brothers, Charles Marowitz, Otomar Krejča, Balinese and Japanese masters, and classical forms from India, including dancer Sanjukta Panigrahi who later became one of the co-founders of ISTA. This incredible effervescence attracted artists and intellectuals - Martin Esslin, Harry Carlson, Stanley Rosenberg, Rénée Saurel, Marc Fumaroli - and American avant-

18. Barba 1995, 88.

19. Turner 1986, 81.

20. Champault 2001, 75: « Il existe en japonais plusieurs expressions, toujours d'actualité et employées fréquemment, qui désignent l'apprentissage par le corps : *karada de oboeru* 体でおぼえる 'apprendre par le corps'; *mi o ireru* 身を入れる mot à mot 'mettre son corps' pour 's'appliquer, s'adonner (au travail)'; *mi o motte shiru* 身をもって知る, 'connaître avec le corps', dans le sens d'apprendre par expérience personnelle; *mi o motte shimesu* 身をもって示す, 'montrer avec le corps', donner l'exemple... Ce qui est assimilé à fond, *mi ni tsukete ira koto* 身につけていること, *taitoku shite ira koto* 体得していること est mot à mot 'ce qui est mis, pris, obtenu dans le corps' »

garde magazines such as *TDR*. In the effervescence of the 1970s, Odin Teatret held a special place as a free electron that resisted the big institutions and the usual modes of production, while at the same time setting the standard for independent theatre groups, most of them self-taught.

In 1976, in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Barba directed an international encounter for them. Organised by the Belgrade International Theatre Festival, founded in 1967, which had brought in the Théâtre des Nations, it was so successful that UNESCO asked him to direct two other meetings, one in 1977 in Bergamo, Italy - organised by Teatro Tascabile - and the other the following year in Madrid and Leikeitio in the Spanish Basque Country. The articles published in the UNESCO magazine prompted the Director of the Office of Culture in Bonn - then the provisional capital of the Federal Republic of Germany - to organise an identical event on his territory. In the spring of 1979, Hans-Jürgen Nagel approached Eugenio Barba for what he thought would be a simple workshop. Tired of being reduced to educational activities that consumed time and energy and paralysed the creation of new initiatives, Barba had the idea of accepting, but for a programme such that it could only be realised under financial conditions that were probably far beyond the possibilities of his interlocutor. In reality, Barba's intention was to engage in new research into the traditions of the actor's technique. One day in Holstebro, Barba received a call from Hans-Jürgen Nagel, who told him that he had put together the necessary budget. A date was set: October 1980, the place - an empty school at Bonn at total disposition - with a follow-up in Scandinavia in November.

The previous year, I had invited Barba to take part in a symposium on the biological aspects of theatre, organised in Karpacz, Poland, thanks to Alina Obidniak, director of the Norwid Theatre in Jelenia Góra and a close friend of Jerzy Grotowski. At the time I joined ISTA, I belonged to this Third Theatre archipelago, having founded a teatro laboratorio in Montevideo, after having been expelled from the University of Istanbul because of my support for the Kurdish national liberation movement in Iraq. In Bonn, Eugenio Barba and his actor Toni Cots had brought together ensembles of Balinese, Indian, Chinese and Japanese artists for a month's internship, along with 'intellectuals' - the name given to academics and scholars - and special guests: 53 participants from 19 countries. Masterfully organised, the programme of activities was particularly dense. The day began in the early hours in silence. We made our way to an open area where Raghunath Panigrahi (1932-2013) and his musicians were waiting for us, seated on a mat on the ground, usually with their shoulders protected from the cold by a woollen shawl. The singer, composer and partner to his famous wife, the Odissi dancer Sanjukta Panigrahi (1944-1997), would then use his left hand to activate the bellows of his harmonium placed in front of him, play the melody with his right and raise a devotional song - *bhajan* - celebrating the dawn. In this way, the holistic innervation of what we call 'physical' or 'bodily' learning took place, while Sanjukta used the term *shakti* to describe the source of the living arts, specifying that it was neither masculine nor feminine. Whatever his/her gender, a performer is always *shakti*, creative energy. An initial one-hour physical warm-up was followed by sessions specialising in the different traditions, demonstrations with commentary, and sometimes lectures. In the evening, there was a

performance or a special activity - a barter, for example. Each closed session ended with an open symposium and the presentation of a performance called *Theatrum Mundi* in which all the invited artists took part.

Even before the normal start of the daily programme, at 5.45 in the morning, small meetings were sometimes held to settle organisational matters. With the exception of the first session, which was held in Bonn, the following sessions took place in buildings and spaces outside the cities and urban congestion, in landscapes and under skies of great variety: Sweden, Brazil, Italy, France, Portugal, Germany, Great Britain. Many of the practical lessons and joint sessions were held in the open air, between trees. Housed on a farm when it first arrived in Denmark, Odin Teatret has retained its rural feel, with its beaten earth and foliage, its taste for villages and footpaths. To the point of inventing birthday banquets with tables stretched out on the sand of a long beach, facing the North Sea.

For me, ISTA was the richest field experience. I was in an international environment, active and not a spectator, in a community with many different sensibilities and curiosities, conducive to misunderstandings, questioning and exchanges. Life was teeming. We weren't cultures mixing, or civilisations colliding, but girls and boys, young and old, all with their own particularities. We were in an environment, a space, that allowed us to experiment not in a laboratory, or in an academic dispute, but in vivo, with the illusory nature of certain theories, categories and notions.

*

Field diary and travel maieutics

Speaking of ethnologists who go out to meet primates outside their cages, in their natural environment, Mary Sanders Pollock writes that the field is both a real place and an expression of the human imagination.²¹ This is also true in anthropology, she adds. The founder of transcultural psychiatry, Georges Devereux (1908-1985) was aware that the anthropologist's first field was himself. François Laplantine, who was one of his students, reports that he expected all those who planned to undertake one field work to first engage in an analytical treatment in order to avoid projecting their own fantasies onto others. He complied, and was delighted.²² Is the field work the subterfuge of the cure? Clifford Geertz likens the field diary written by the anthropologist on his return to the novel of sentimental education. It reveals what the unconscious was carrying in germ: the latent intellectual inclination that would later prefer gloss to description, abstraction to the sensory, the office to the journey or, on the contrary, a fertilised, liberated imagination. Though it is impossible to predict the nature of what might emerge when it blossomed. A bibliographical curiosity, according to Vincent Debaene, the accounts, testimonies and diaries that complement the scholarly studies²³ bear witness to the genic power of decentring, of the physical encounter with an ecosystem and an unknown humanity.

21. Pollock 2015, 89.

22. Laplantine 2007, 12.

23. Debaene Vincent, 2010, *L'adieu au voyage : L'ethnologie française entre science et littérature*, NRF, Gallimard, Collection : Bibliothèque des Sciences Humaines 2010.

When the authors themselves re-read their texts decades later, it is striking to note that they bring to light the maieutics of the journey that led them to choose both an 'object of research' and a way of studying it. Policed by the literary exercise, or raw materials found by chance, these field narratives constitute a neo-terrain whose examination brings to light unexpected elements that encourage ongoing deciphering.²⁴

Fantasies are not the only ones projected onto foreigners. Ethnologists travel with a great deal of cultural baggage, including, in the West, the theatre, an object so familiar from school that it becomes an optical system through which they perceive in the world the countless analogies borne by the metaphor of the *Theatrum Mundi*. Michel Leiris's *L'Afrique fantôme*,²⁵ published in 1934 on his return from the Dakar-Djibouti mission (1931-1933) led by Marcel Griaule, is one of the most vivid illustrations of this. Unwelcome by his peers, who, like Marcel Griaule, saw it as a provocation, these early confessions have given rise to a rich exegesis.²⁶ For ethnoscenology, they are a precious element in the study of the construction of the word theatre as a universal concept and heuristic device. Two years after the publication of his diary, in February 1936, Leiris presented a paper to the Société de Psychologie in which he outlined a theatrical theory of the practices associated with belief in the "Zar" genies in northern Ethiopia.²⁷ Twenty-two years later, embracing the aetiological myth of the ritual origin of theatre, he took up and developed his thesis in a scholarly book: *La Possession et ses aspects théâtraux chez les Ethiopiens de Gondar* (1958).

Leiris was not an isolated case. Alfred Métraux (1902-1963) and André Schaeffner (1895-1980), students of Marcel Mauss (1872-1950), adopted the cultural referent of theatre in their analysis of cults with a spectacular dimension, such as Vodou. Schaeffner joined the Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro in 1929 to look after the collections of musical instruments, and later became head of the musical ethnology department at the Musée de l'Homme. Influenced by his master's denial of history, he moved from metaphor to the invention of the uchronic, Euro-centric theory of pre-theatre.²⁸ Gilbert Rouget (1916-2017), his assistant, would introduce it into his sketch of a general theory of the relationship between music and possession.²⁹ In the United States, the young Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) undertook his first fieldwork in Bali (1957-1958), adopting the grid and vocabulary of theatre in his analysis of the symbology of power and his commentary on the famous Balinese cockfight.³⁰

Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009) had a very different theatrical experience when, in the late 1930s, he became an ethnologist and embarked on a journey of initiation into the indigenous societies of central Brazil. The travel book he wrote was intended to be

a novel. At Jean Malaurie's request, it was reprinted in a scholarly style for the Terre Humaine collection he had just founded in 1954, but it retained the chiaroscuro of its original title - *Tristes Tropiques* - and the substance of an apprenticeship novel. Its literary quality made the Académie Goncourt regret that it escaped its notice on the pretext that it was about ethnology. Thirty years after its publication, in an interview remarkable for its freedom of tone,³¹ Lévi-Strauss recalled the depressive episode specific - in his eyes - to ethnographic research, which cast doubt on his ability to practise in the field. He notes at the end of the volume: "In practising this profession, the investigator gnaws at himself."³² Isolated in Campos Novos, wondering what he had come there to do, disappointed and discouraged, he found consolation in the practice of dramatic writing: "it seemed to me that the problems that tormented me provided the material for a play".³³ Far from being an adventurous exploration of the classics, this was the result of a well-rounded education: "My play was entitled *The Apotheosis of Augustus*, and was presented as a new version of *Cinna*".³⁴ In response to a final question from Bernard Pivot, Lévi-Strauss summed up the interest of his work, now presented by its publisher as "the great book of contemporary ethnology". "Ultimately," he replied, "*Tristes Tropiques* reintegrates the observer into his object of observation, preferring to the field the indispensable work of the armchair anthropologist who puts in order the superabundance of data collected by those who are not armchair anthropologists".

The declaration that opens the book is no flashy mannerism: "I hate travel and explorers". The young Brazilian ethnologist Luiz de Castro Faria who accompanied him on his expedition to the Mato Grosso reported in his own diary Lévi-Strauss' lack of interest in practical, objective, everyday questions and his taste for philosophical digressions.³⁵ For us, his readers, the account of the fieldwork forms an inverted ethnology, outlining the components of the author's perception and intellection. The chronicle of the Campos Novos incident is significant. Lévi-Strauss talks about classical theatre, dialogical writing that he distinguishes from the theatrical phenomenon as understood by performers. Consolation comes from writing, not from acting and the biological, cognitive and emotional relationship with the other, partner or spectator. This is borne out by his admission of his allergy to the theatre in an interview with Georges Charbonnier in 1959: "I am - I apologise - allergic to the theatre (...) the fact that it is men and women of flesh and bone who walk around the stage, whereas I ask art to make me escape from the society of men to introduce me into another society."³⁶

From *ethnos* plurality to *anthropos* monism

In 2007, on the 30th anniversary of its publication in the United States, Paul Rabinow

24. This approach has been widely adopted in the literary world but is less familiar in the sciences. Adell Nicolas (ed.), *La vie savante. La question biographique dans les sciences humaines*, Paris, PUF, 2022.

25. Leiris Michel, *Phantom Africa*, (transl. Brent Hayes Edwards), London, Seagull Books, 2017.

26. Debaene 2010; Debaene 2015, 260-75.

27. Leiris 1938, 108-25. The paper has become a book: Leiris 1958.

28. Schaeffner 1980.

29. Rouget 1990, 226-27, 248-49.

30. Geertz 1980, 102-04; Geertz 1973, 1-37.

31. Lévy-Strauss interviewd by Bernard Pivot (1984).

32. Lévi-Strauss 1984 [1955], 450.

33. Lévi-Strauss 1984 [1955], 452.

34. Lévi-Strauss 1984 [1955], 453.

35. Castro Faria 2001 (translated in English by David Rodgers: Castro Faria 2003).

36. Charbonnier 1960: 102-03.

(1944-2021) prefaced the republication of his reflections on his first fieldwork in Morocco by concluding: "The strengths and shortcomings have become apparent to me over the ensuing decades as I have pursued fieldwork in philosophy in my own idiosyncratic manner. No doubt, many others have found things to enrich, infuriate, and contest in *Reflections*. To the extent those experiences have led them to question *anthropos* and *logos* (in whatever vocabulary these topics are framed), then the book of a fledgling anthropologist still deserves to circulate and be taken up in expected and unexpected ways. What else, after all, is critical thinking about?".³⁷

Now regarded as one of the major contributions to reflexive anthropology, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (1977) was not confined to an account of his experiences in Morocco. The author declared it to be an essay on ethnology and hermeneutics. For us, it marks the beginning of the author's move away from *ethnos* and towards the study of the discourse on the human being - *anthropos+logos* - in a development stimulated by his proximity to Michel Foucault. In 1974, even before its publication, the writing project was criticised. The moods of a young anthropologist mattered little, whereas a critical look at experience was the job of older anthropologists who had proved themselves. Clifford Geertz, his thesis supervisor, had assured him that publishing such a manuscript, which had been rejected by several academic publishers, would ruin his career. However, Robert N. Bellah, leader of the interpretative social sciences ISS, managed to get it accepted by the University of California Press in 1977, and wrote the preface. This preface disappeared from the French edition in 1988, replaced by one by Pierre Bourdieu, whose orientation - according to Rabinow - took the opposite view.³⁸ The initial terrain explored by the doctoral student is that identified by Paul Ricoeur, whom he quotes as saying: "the understanding of the self obtained through the diversions of the understanding of the other".

The 'I' is not the purely cerebral *cogito* of the Cartesians, nor the deep 'I', the psychological 'I' of the Freudians, he writes, "but rather the 'I' which, mediated by culture and situated in relation to History, is immersed in a world of constant fluctuations". In 2007, aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the early days, Rabinow continued his fieldwork in the field of philosophy, in his own way.³⁹ A critique without denial, as can be seen from the return of Robert N. Bellah's preface at the beginning of the book, and the relocation of Pierre Bourdieu's at the end. No doubt Rabinow had taken account of the pages devoted to him by Clifford Geertz, alongside Claude Lévi-Strauss, Bronislaw Malinowski, Edward Evans Pritchard and others, in a work that emphasised the literary nature of anthropological writing. Piquantly, Geertz had evoked the field through the novelistic image of "*l'éducation sentimentale*".

37. Rabinow 2007, XXV.

38. Rabinow 1988.

39. 2007, XXV: "The strengths and shortcomings have become apparent to me over the ensuing decades as I have pursued fieldwork in philosophy in my own idiosyncratic manner. No doubt, many others have found things to enrich, infuriate, and contest in *Reflections*. To the extent those experiences have led them to question *anthropos* and *logos* (in whatever vocabulary these topics are framed), then the book of a fledgling anthropologist still deserves to circulate and be taken up in expected and unexpected ways. What else, after all, is critical thinking about?".

The situation is radically different when a raw pre-literary material is found in the researcher's personal belongings after his death. The curtain rises on a fantastic world left to the reader's interpretative imagination, logic and fantasies. The war waged by the old and new critics in the 1970s opened up a general crisis in commentary, depending on whether one favoured the explicit nature of the text, in the name of clarity of the obvious, or whether one questioned the very act of writing. The intolerability of situations, chaos and confusion, and sexuality are difficult to accept in the name of taste and seriousness in a communication that claims to be scientific but is not explicitly literary. The tumult of affects only becomes socially acceptable when the primacy of style prevails, or within the confines of psychoanalysis, once condemned by the old critics. At that time, Roland Barthes replied to Raymond Picard: "If psychoanalysis is condemned, it is not because it thinks, it is because it speaks".⁴⁰

The Malinowski's hullabaloo: a diary in a queer sense of the term

In 1967, the Anglo-American translation of the true-false field diary of Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), published almost fifty years after it was written and twenty-five years after his death, was greeted with an uproar of commentary brimming with misunderstanding and ignorance, between churlishness and quarrels among peers, prudery and ethnocentrism. The initiative came from an English painter and sculptor, Anna Valetta Hayman-Joyce (1904-1973), alias Valetta Swann, his companion whom he had married in 1940, when he had recently emigrated to the United States and been appointed Professor of Anthropology at Yale University in New Haven. Two years later, Bronislaw, in frail health, died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of 58, even before embarking on a third field trip to Mexico, in the Oaxaca region, with his wife and youngest daughter Helena.⁴¹

On hearing of Malinowski's death, Feliks Gross (1906-2006), a friend and former student of his,⁴² was among the first to visit Valetta Swann, offering to look after her husband's personal affairs. At Yale, he found a small black notebook in his office containing a kind of handwritten diary written in Polish, which was sometimes difficult to decipher. Gross translated a few extracts for Valetta, who kept it carefully and took it with her to Mexico, where she decided to live in 1946.⁴³ After the war, in 1949,

40. Barthes 1966, 25.

41. Helena Malinowska Wayne (1925-2018) the youngest daughter, born of his first marriage. A journalist, she has contributed to the documentation of her family's history. Wayne 1984, 189-203.

42. Polish and Jewish, Gross was able to find refuge in the USA at the time of WW2, where he pursued a brilliant career as an anthropologist. During the occupation of Poland, the Nazis implemented a plan to exterminate the Polish élite.

43. Born in 1904 in Sussex, Valetta Hayman-Joyce chose painting against her mother's wishes. Divorced, she met Bronislaw in Europe in the 1930s. Moving to Mexico after his death, she remarried in 1958 to Mexican engineer and anthropology student Luis Bolland. Among her principal works, appreciated by Diego Rivera, *Las delicias* (1964) is exhibited in the restaurant of Mexico City's National Museum of Anthropology. The painting was inspired by his first stays in Oaxaca in the company of Bronislaw Malinowski.

Sir Raymond William Firth, a New Zealand anthropologist and ethnologist who had succeeded Malinowski at the London School of Economics, sent her other similar documents from London.

Composed in the solitude of his early island fieldwork, these early texts were more akin to those of the writers who scandalised puritan America than to the academic style. Inspired by the narrative model of the Polish writer Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski (1857-1924), who wrote in English under the pseudonym Joseph Conrad, Malinowski's notebooks contained ideas, erotic fantasies, affects and family stories, mixed with observational notes taken from everyday life. At the end of the 1960s, Valetta contacted one of Bronisław's publishers in New York with a view to publication. She felt that these graphic, manic, liberating impulses would provide students and colleagues, trained in the surface urbanity of academic studies, with the elements they needed to understand the autobiographical foundations on which all research rests. For Valetta Swann, an independent woman, affiliated to the Mexican artistic milieu rather than to the Anglo-Saxon university, these texts, freed from the usual hypercorrection of diaries, were an invitation to penetrate the labyrinthine space of the scientific creation of a man twenty years her senior and Polish by birth. The times seemed to lend themselves to the deconstruction of conventions. Legacy of the Beat Generation, underground, avant-garde, movement for the defence of civil rights and cultural and sexual minorities, liberation of morals. The new physics, popularised in particular by the lectures and articles by Niels Bohr (1885-1962) at symposia of psychologists and anthropologists, had contributed to the acceptance of the complementary relationship between rationality and instinctive life, while showing the limits of the causal thinking inherited from Western metaphysics. The diary could bear witness to this by revealing the passionate backstage of academic seriousness, the limits of the relationship with the other and the fact - according to François Laplantine - that "an ethnography of the intimate calls for a polygraphy".⁴⁴ In consultation with Firth, Valetta Malinowska edited certain passages, compiled a montage of the corpus and entrusted its translation to Norbert Guterman (1900-84), a contributor to the Marxist-oriented magazine *Monthly Review*. Assuming the risk of depreciating her husband world fame by the uproar that would inevitably arise among readers, Valetta Malinowska took the initiative and fully assumed her decision to publish these notebooks: "I am therefore, solely responsible for the decision to publish this book."⁴⁵ The very title of the work indicated the nature of its content. Since the term 'diary' designates a polymorphous literary genre with a plural language (R. Barthes),⁴⁶ it was decided to add a qualifier: A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term.⁴⁷ In the introduction to the first edition, Raymond Firth was careful to emphasise the diary's supplementary nature in relation to the scientific work.

44. Laplantine 2020, 152.

45. Malinowski 1989 [1967], IX.

46. Barthes 1966, 49.

47. Malinowski 1989 [1967] (also translated in 1985 into French, by Tina Jolas, under the title *Journal d'ethnographie*. Paris: Seuil).

Micro history and macro-anthropology

Bronisław Malinowski (1884-1942), praised as a model fieldworker and pioneer of field research as close as possible to the people who live there, both indigenous and nomadic, paradoxically attributed his anthropological vocation to reading *The Golden Bough* by James Frazer (1854-1941), who is sometimes caricatured as an armchair anthropologist. It was Frazer whom he asked to write the preface to *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), a work⁴⁸ which, in a way, for James Clifford, served as the founding charter of 20th century anthropology [53]. For the first time, the study included a systematic approach to fieldwork, advocating physical and cognitive empathy with the "subjects of study" [54] in order to understand their point of view without hypostasizing them. Frazer's laudatory preface emphasises the fact that Malinowski lived there like a native among natives for several months at a time, day after day, conversing with them in their own language without an interpreter. In this respect, Frazer assures that the Polish fieldworker is for him closer to Shakespeare and Cervantes than to Molière:

It is characteristic of Dr. Malinowski's method that he takes full account of the complexity of human nature. He sees man, so to say, in the round not in the flat. He remembers that man is a creature of emotion at least as much as of reason, and he is constantly at pains to discover the emotional as well as the rational basis of human action. The man of science, like the man of letters, is too apt to view mankind only in the abstract, selecting for his consideration a single side of our complex and many-sided being. Of this one-sided treatment Molière is a conspicuous example among great writers. All his characters are seen only in the flat: one of them is a miser, another a hypocrite, another a coxcomb, and so on; but not one is a man. All are dummies dressed up to look very like human beings: but the likeness is only on the surface, all within is hollow and empty, because truth to nature has been sacrificed to literary effect. Very different is the presentation of human nature in the greater artists, such as Cervantes and Shakespeare: their characters are solid, being drawn not from one side only but from many.⁴⁹

An erudite Polish outsider

Malinowski's first immersive expeditions to New Guinea on Mailu Island in 1914-1915, then to the Trobriand Islands in 1917-1918, were an ordeal he endured in spite of himself, as a solitary bachelor, while the First World War was bloodying Europe.⁵⁰ A Polish native, Malinowski was an Austrian subject because he was born in Krakow, the cultural and artistic centre of dismembered Poland,⁵¹ the son of a philologist father

48. Malinowski 1922.

49. Frazer 1966 [1922], IX.

50. See: Young 2004.

51. Poland was then divided between Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany. It did not regain its independence until 1918.

who was a professor at the city's prestigious university, and a mother who inherited the *kultura szlachetna* - aristocratic culture.⁵² A polyglot and cosmopolitan by upbringing, his youth in Cracow immersed him in the artistic and philosophical modernist movement Young Poland (*Młoda Polska*), which was neo-romantic and sensualist, focusing on the imagination, art for art's sake and passion for love. Frail and obsessed with poetry,⁵³ he preferred study to excess. His dearest friend, the painter, playwright, essayist and novelist Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz (1885-1939) - Witkacy to the Poles - portrayed him in a painting he entitled "Malinowski afraid of life", before transforming him in 1910 as the Duke of Nervermore in his autobiographical novel *622 Upadki Bunga, czyli Demoniczna kobieta*.⁵⁴

As a student of physics and mathematics and a doctor of philosophy of science under the *auspiciis Imperatoris*⁵⁵ of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow since 1908, and as a post-doctoral researcher, he benefited in Leipzig from the lectures of Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), creator of the first laboratory of experimental psychology and theorist of *Völkerpsychologie* - people's psychology -, as well as from the teaching of Karl Bücher (1847-1930), head of the school of history of political economy.⁵⁶ After graduating, stimulated by his discovery of Frazer's *Golden Bough*, a research grant enabled him to leave for England in 1911, where Charles G. Seligman (1873-1940) taught at the London School of Economics. Seligman (1873-1940) at the London School of Economics. Malinowski was a scholarly and polished 'outsider' as defined by H. Becker.⁵⁷

Leaving for a conference in Australia in the spring of 1914, he offered to his friend Witkiewicz (1885-1939), who was gravely depressed by the suicide of his fiancée, to join him in London for this venture. They were in Australia when the First World War broke out. Witkiewicz left to fight in the Russian army.⁵⁸ Malinowski obtained permission to continue his research in the Trobriand Islands in New Guinea. In two periods - the first from 1914 to 1915, the second in 1917 and 1918 - he tried to live as close as possible to the people, immersed in their environment with the inevitable hazards of promiscuity and discomfort. He did not shy away from biocultural issues,⁵⁹

52. See: Young 2004; Figeac and Dumanowski 2006.

53. Dragani 2018.

54. Witkiewicz's novel based on autobiographical material – *622 upadki Bunga czyli Demoniczna kobieta*, was not published until 1972 in a critical edition, and then translated into several languages: *622 Falls of Bungo or a Demonic Woman*.

55. Austria's highest doctoral award.

56. His latest research, undertaken in Mexico with his wife Valetta Malinowska, will focus on the rural economy.

57. Becker 1963.

58. Witkiewicz, alias Witkacy, was born in Warsaw and is a Russian national. Philosopher, essayist, playwright and painter, he is a central figure in Polish culture. Author of some thirty plays, and theorist of "pure form", his influence is particularly noticeable on Tadeusz Kantor and Krystian Lupa. On the relationship between the two friends, see the special issue of the Polish magazine *Konteksty* - Malinowski - Witkiewicz, 1-4 (148-251) 2000, in particular the article by Janusz Degler, a Professor at the University of Wrocław and a specialist in Witkiewicz's theatre.

59. About biocultural theory related to anthropology, see Hruschka, Lende, and Worthman 2005: 1-19.

such as sexuality, later developed in *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*,⁶⁰ a seminal work that linked him to the protagonists of sexology, the sexual liberation movement and queer anthropology.⁶¹ After a period of teaching and research at the London School of Economics, marked by the death of his first wife, the Australian photographer and writer Elsie Rosaline Masson (1890-1935), he left for the United States at the end of 1938 on a sabbatical. When the Second World War broke out, he was advised to settle there, where he was joined by Valetta Swann.

The incomprehensible din of ethnocentrism

The reception of the *Diary* ignited a firestorm of critical comment, blame and irony. Some of the reviews had the air of a settling of scores, spiced with the pleasure of destroying the prestige of a charismatic, caustic and occasionally stormy master. Clifford Geertz, a young university professor, was an opponent of the Malinovskian perspective of the field, to which he opposed influential metaphors of culture as 'text'. He published a casual paper in the influential New York Review of Books, which was more akin to thin description - weak description - than to the principles of thick description - dense description - borrowed from Gilbert Ryle and which he popularised.⁶² Entitled *Under the Mosquito Net*, and illustrated with a caricature of Malinowski by the talented David Levine, the article touches on a "very curious document, which its editors have decided to call *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*, apparently in an effort to communicate that it is a diary in a queer sense of the term."⁶³ The author sketches his victim without taking account of translation problems, neglecting the historical and geopolitical context and above all the Polish substance of the writings. Reducing Malinowski's work to the single point on which he has been unanimously and unreservedly praised, that of being an incomparable fieldworker, Geertz sets out to demonstrate its falsity. Malinowski was "a crabbed, self-preoccupied, hypochondriacal narcissist, whose fellow-feeling for the people he lived with was limited in the extreme"; a long-distance lover "frozen in timeless attitudes which, in anxious self-contempt, he obsessively contemplates". As for the evocation of Witkiewicz, it is reduced to being nothing more than a childhood friend with whom he quarrelled.

Twenty years later, Raymond Firth took stock of the episode in a new introduction to the second edition, offering a rich corpus of interpretations, indicative of the state of the discipline and its evolution. In fact, Geertz, now in his sixties and inclined towards multidisciplinary, had come to see the *Diary* as a precious document revealing the backstage work of research, and the inseparable nature of scientific writing and literary narration; our double helix,⁶⁴ he acknowledged in 1988 in a work that regarded the

60. Malinowski, *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

61. Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) refers to Malinowski in his works, starting with the expanded versions of *Die funktion des orgasmus* (1927).

62. Geertz 1973, 7-8.

63. Geertz 1967.

64. Alluding to the discovery in 1953 by Crick, Watson and Wilkins of the 'double helix' structure of DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid, the substance that contains the entire hereditary code. Awarded the Nobel

anthropologist as an author.⁶⁵ According to Geertz the *Diary* is disturbing not because of what Malinowski confesses, but because of what it says about being there: in the field. James Clifford is more explicit: the *Diary* is a document of capital importance for the history of anthropology, not because it shows the reality of the ethnographic experience, but because it forces us to understand the complexity of these encounters and to consider all written accounts of fieldwork as partial constructions."⁶⁶

The land of origins

It is the research and publications of Polish anthropologists and specialists in Polish language and culture that have reduced the clutter of misunderstandings and misrepresentations in which Bronisław Malinowski's work and personality had found themselves. Geopolitical developments in the aftermath of the Second World War did little to facilitate exchanges with Poland and knowledge of its artistic, philosophical and literary history. As a result, Polish artists - Jerzy Grotowski, for example - have sometimes been attributed influences from the West - Antonin Artaud at the expense of Witkiewicz⁶⁷ - even though their roots were nourished by Polish soil.⁶⁸ In October 1984, the international colloquium organised in Krakow to mark the centenary of Malinowski's birth provided an opportunity for an important clarification.⁶⁹

The critical edition of the *Diary* in its original language was not published in Poland until 2002, with an introduction by Grażyna Kubica, an anthropologist at Jagiellonian University and the author of numerous articles and books devoted to Malinowski's Polish roots.⁷⁰ From the perspective of the anthropology of aesthetics, and ethnoscenology, Malinowski's relationship with Witkiewicz⁷¹ as well as the artistic and amorous adventures of his youth deserve attention insofar as they outline the prolegomena of an ethnography of carnality, distinct if not in opposition to an anthropology of textuality. Today, the *Diary* 1967 affair is a textbook case.⁷² How is it that most anthropologists of the time were so indifferent to the essential question of language and translation, and to the historical, cultural and impulsive context of enunciation, which lay at the heart of Malinowski's approach, even in dialogue with linguists?

The notion of phatic communion⁷³ which he had intuited was taken up by Roman Jakobson and became the source of subsequent developments in the understanding of

the dynamics of the aspects of language that are more complementary than rivalrous: the cognitive and the emotional, the discursive and the capacity to perform, phonology and musicology, enunciation and motricity. Phatic communion suggested that language could also be considered as a mode of action, and as a tactile experience that went beyond the expression of thought. As a contribution to the theoretical perspective of performance,⁷⁴ phaticity invites the researcher to go beyond the mere quest for informative linguistic data, and to get as close as possible to the performers, without claiming to be reading over their shoulders (C. Geertz) some kind of culture-book. The director and theatrical scholar John Emigh, who teaches performance studies at Brown University, criticises Geertz for favouring a semiotic approach to networks of meaning in his study of Bali. He quotes the Sri Lankan anthropologist Gannath Obeyesekere: "If you read Geertz, you see webs everywhere, but you never see the spider."⁷⁵

ISTA, LAFLIS and the *Diary*

If the present can only be understood by considering the past that gave rise to it, it would seem that the past can only become intelligible if the present is questioned. What's more, the flesh-and-blood beings who live and make history are not asexual abstractions above ground, but elements of a complex living system in perpetual interaction. Between ISTA and LAFLIS, a soft terrain is emerging that is all the more fertile for academic research and artistic creation as it navigates between complementary poles whose common trait is the ceaselessly renewed achievement of the impossible.

The floating islands of theatre must stubbornly renew themselves in order to exist. Consequently, they cannot ensure their survival by relying on dogmatic, fixed, petrified doctrines. They need to find the nutrients they need to procreate. The stirring of memories that gives rise to invention. The field is both a revelation of the self and a driving force for the discovery of otherness.

References

- Bandettini, Anna. 2023. "Eugenio Barba, apre a Lecce l'archivio vivente". Il regista: "Ho quasi novant'anni e li celebrerò sul palco." *La Repubblica*, September 25, 2023.
- Barba, Eugenio. 1981. "La course des contraires." In *Les Voies de la création théâtrale. IX. La formation du comédien*, ed. Anne-Marie Gordon, 33-60. Paris: CNRS.
- . 1986. *Beyond the Floating Islands*, with a Postscript by Ferdinando Taviani, translated by Judy Barba. New York: PAJ.
- . 1986. "Between the Face and the Mask." In *The Village Voice*, November 25, 1986, 96-98.
- . 1995. *The Paper Canoe. A guide to Theatre Anthropology*, translated by Richard Fowler. London and New York: Routledge.
- . 2009. *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*. New York: Routledge.
- Barba, Eugenio, and Nicola Savarese. 1991. *The Secret Art of the Performer. A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, translated by Richard Fowler. London and New York: Routledge.
- Barthes, Roland. 1966. *Critique et vérité*. Paris: Seuil.

74. Pradier 2013, 284.

75. Emigh 2008, 61.

Prize for Medicine and Physiology in 1962, this discovery played a major role in the development of molecular biology.

65. Geertz 1988, 75.

66. Clifford 1988, 97-105.

67. Degler 1986, 45-67.

68. Kosiński 2008, 136-60.

69. Kubica 1985; Ellen, Gelineer, Kubica, and Mucha (eds.) 1989.

70. Malinowski 2002.

71. Saignes and Jasionowicz 2021, 199-26.

72. Landsdown 2017, 181-200.

73. Malinowski 1989 [1923], 296-336.

- Becker, Howard. 1963. *Outsiders: studies in the sociology of deviance*. New York: Free Press.
- Bohr, Niels. 2010. *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge*. Mineola: Dover Publications.
- Castro Faria Luiz (de). 2001. *Um outro olhar: diário da expedição à Serra do Norte*. Rio de Janeiro: Ouro Sobre Azul Editora.
- . 2003. *Another Look: A Diary out of the Serra Norte Expedition*, translated by David Rodgers. Rio de Janeiro: Ouro Sobre Azul Editora.
- Champault, Françoise. 2000/2001. "Apprendre par corps. Problèmes relatifs aux implications psychologiques et morales dans l'apprentissage des arts de combat au Japon." *Daruma* 8/9.
- Charbonnier, Georges. 1961. *Entretiens avec Lévi-Strauss*. Paris: Plon.
- Clifford 1988, 97-105.
- Debaene, Vincent. 2010. *L'adieu au voyage. L'ethnologie française entre science et littérature*. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 2015. "L'Afrique fantôme ou la bifurcation." *Critique* 815: 260-75.
- Degler, Janusz. 1986. "La théorie théâtrale de Witkacy." *Literary Studies in Poland* 16: 45-67.
- Dragani, Amalia. 2018. "'Un fois encore la poésie m'obsède'. Bronisław Malinowski, poète polonaise" *Fabula LHT* 21. <https://doi.org/10.58282/ht.2199>.
- Ellen, Roy, Ernest Gellner, Grażina Kubica, and Janusz Mucha (eds.). 1989. *Malinowski between Two Worlds. The Polish Roots of an Anthropological Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Emigh, John. 2009. "Culture, killings and criticism in the years of living dangerously: Bali and Baliology." in Davis Tracy C. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Figeac, Michel, and Jarosław Dumanowski (dir.). 2006. *Noblesse française et noblesse polonaise : Mémoire, identité, culture XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles*. Pessac: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine.
- Frazier, James. 1966 [1922]. *Preface* In Malinowski, Bronisław. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific. An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. London: Routledge - New York: Dutton.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1967. "Under the Mosquito Net". *The New York Review of Books*, September 14, 1967.
- . 1973. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight." *Daedalus* 101 (1): 1-37.
- . 1973a. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Book.
- . 1980. *Negara. The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1988. *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*. Stanford: Stanford university press.
- Giacchè, Piergiorgio. 2012. "Eugenio Barba e Carmelo Bene. Vite parallele e viaggi perpendicolari." *Teatro e Storia* 33: 321-32.
- Hruschka, Daniel J., Daniel H. Lende, Carol M. Worthman. 2005. "Biocultural Dialogues: Biology and Culture" *Psychological Anthropology. Ethos* 33 (1): 1-19.
- Institut National de l'Audiovisuel. 2019 [4/5/1984]. *Claude Lévi-Strauss invité d'Apostrophes* interview by Bernard Pivot.
- Kosiński, Dariuz. "Le théâtre polonais au vingtième siècle. Vers un acteur total". *Ligeia* 85-88 (2): 136-60.
- Kubica, Grażina, and Janusz Mucha (eds.). 1989. *Między dwoma światami – Bronisław Malinowski*. Kraków: Państwowe Wydaw. Naukowe.
- Landsdown, Richard. 2017. "From the Other Shore: Bronisław Malinowski's *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*." In *Literature and Truth. Imaginative Writing as a Medium for Ideas*, 181-200. Leiden: Brill.
- Laplantine, François. 2007. *Ethnopsychiatrie psychanalytique*. Paris: Beauchesne.
- . 2020. *Penser l'intime*. Paris: CNRS Editions.
- Leiris Michel. 1938. "La croyance aux génies 'Zar' en Éthiopie du nord." *Journal de psychologie normale et pathologiques* 35: 108-125.
- . 1958. *La Possession et ses aspects théâtraux chez les Éthiopiens de Gondar*. Paris: Librairie Plon.
- Lévy-Strauss. Claude. 1984 [1955]. *Tristes Tropiques*. Paris: Presses pocket.
- Malinowski, Bronisław. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific. An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. London: Routledge - New York: Dutton.
- . 1923. "The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages." In C. K. Ogden, and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning. A Study on the Influence of Language upon Thought and the Science of Symbolism*, with supplementary essays by B. Malinowski and F.G. Crookshank. New York Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1923 (new edition with an introduction by Umberto Eco 1989).
- . 1927. *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- . 1989 [1967]. *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*, translated by Norbert Guterman. London: Athlone.
- . 2002. *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*, edited by G. Kubica. Kraków: Wydawnictwo.
- Munk, Erika. 1986. "Roles and Poles Apart." In *The Village Voice*, November 11, 1986, 89-90.
- Pollock, Mary Sanders. 2015. "Tragedy of the Field." In *Storytelling Apes. Primatology Narratives Past and Future*. Penn State University Press.
- Pradier, Jean-Marie. 2013. "La performance ou la renaissance de l'action." *Communications* 92: 277-290. <https://doi.org/10.3917/commu.092.0277>.
- . 2014. "Ethnoscénologie. Les incarnations de l'imaginaire." *Teatro e Storia* 35: 421-36.
- . 2022 [1975]. "Bananes et mystère. Interview by Julia Varley." *Journal of Theatre Anthropology* 2: 77-91.
- . 2022a [1996]. "Rapport sur la 4^{ème} session de l'ISTA." *Journal of Theatre Anthropology* 2: 145-51.
- Rabinow, Paul. 1988. *Un ethnologue au Maroc. Réflexions sur une enquête de terrain*, préface de Pierre Bourdieu, traduit par Tina Jolas. Paris: Hachette.
- . 2007 [1977]. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco. 30th Anniversary Edition, with a New Preface by the Author*, preface by Robert N. Bellah; afterword by Pierre Bourdieu. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press.
- Rouget, Gilbert. 1990. *La musique et la transe, Esquisse d'une théorie générale des relations de la musique et de la possession*, préface de Michel Leiris. Paris: Gallimard.
- Ruffini, Franco. 2013. "Un de pied aux livres. Retour de l'ISTA." In *Les voyages ou l'ailleurs du théâtre*, ed. Catherine Naugrette, 197-207. Bruxelles: Alternatives Théâtrales.
- Saignes, Anna, and Stanisław Jasionowicz. 2021. "Bronisław Malinowski et Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz : voyage aux sources polonaises de l'anthropologie moderne." In *Slovo* 51: 199- 226. <https://doi.org/10.46298/slovo.2021.7449>.
- Schaeffner, André. 1980 [1947-48]. *Essais de musicologie et autres fantaisies*. Paris: Le Sycomore, 1980 (first published in *Polyphonie* 1, 7-14; expanded variant in 1965. *Histoire des spectacles*, ed. Guy Dumur, 21-54. Paris: Gallimard).
- Taviani, Ferdinando. 1978. "Le monde du Tiers Théâtre un véritable laboratoire international du théâtre à la recherche de nouvelles formes de communication." *Le Courier de l'UNESCO* 31 (1): 8-15.
- Turner, Victor. 1986. *The Anthropology of Performance*, preface by Richard Schechner. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Varley, Julia. 2009. *Pierres d'eau. Carnet d'une actrice de l'Odin Teatret*, translated by Éliane Deschamps-Pria, 147-56. Montpellier: L'Entretemps, 2009.
- Young, Michael W. 2004. *Malinowski. Odyssey of an Anthropologist, 1884–1920*. New Haven, Conn. - London: Yale University Press..
- Wayne, Helena. 1984. "Bronisław Malinowski: The Influence of Various Women on His Life and Works." *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford* 15 (3): 189–203.



Franca Rame. Photo: Courtesy of Fondazione Fo Rame

Julia Varley

In the Kitchen

Franca Rame and Her Theatre Technique

Abstract: Franca Rame belonged to a family with a theatre tradition going back to the 17th century. Franca Rame's words are edited in this article to tell her story and give space to her technical advice, besides presenting the original text of The Rape with its English translation.

Keywords: Franca Rame, Dario Fo, Fondazione Fo Rame, Breath, Voice, Emotions

In 2023 Fondazione Barba Varley and Fondazione Fo Rame collaborated on various projects. This gave me the opportunity to meet Jacopo Fo, Matteo Fo and Stefano Ber-tea. Jacopo is Franca Rame and Dario Fo's son, Matteo their granddaughter and Ste-fano is Matteo's husband. Matteo's commitment to her grandparents' memory and her battle to recognise the importance of Franca Rame, by for example demanding that all publishers include her name beside Dario Fo as author of their plays, has particularly impressed me.

One story awoke my curiosity: Franca Rame would often rehearse in the kitchen while cooking. She did this both alone and with other actresses. I wondered about her technical knowledge and the reason for her choice, recognising similar procedures in my own work. Much of her theatrical process was confined to her home's private sphere while the results shone on stage.

Franca Rame did not write or speak much about her theatre craft from a technical point of view. She concentrated her discourse on working class and women's rights, on supporting political struggles at a time of turmoil in Italy which saw many imprisonments and assassinations. Historically her political and social commitment has been recognised while her artistic experience is thought of as implicit, embodied and intuitive often dismissed as a consequence of her beauty. But Franca Rame was extremely aware of the craft's needs which led her to record every single performance and listen to the reactions of the spectators afterwards to improve the text and performance. Already in the 1990s, Franca Rame started a digital archive copying documents, programmes, photographs, posters, letters, critics, and gathering paintings, costumes and set designs from her family and from the work with Dario Fo. It was Franca Rame's family tradition that



283

guided Dario Fo in many of his artistic choices. Franca Rame also taught young actresses how to speak their texts.

I wondered if I could find theatre anthropology principles in her filmed lessons available on Fondazione Fo Rame's website. Listening to her words, looking at her stage behaviour and noting her suggestions has led me to think of the principles of stage presence in a different way. It is always difficult to separate what in theatre anthropology is called the pre-expressive level of the process from the result in performance because the actors' capacity of modulating, composing and giving form to energy determines the spectators' interpretation.

Like many actresses of the past Franca Rame chose to concentrate her energy on her activity and not to theorise. She produced, organised, directed, acted, she became a senator in the Italian Parliament and wrote a book about this, but, as far as I know, she did not produce articles about her stage experience. Like for many actresses and actors the technical aspect of the theatre craft seemed too prosaic and personal to write about, or too difficult to explain and put into words to make it worthwhile to share. But the technical knowledge was there. Comparing stage techniques of different theatre and dance genres has taught me to look beyond the form to find underlying principles. Franca Rame allows me to see how pre-expressive principles become a life choice.

Franca Rame was born in 1929 within a theatre family whose tradition goes back to the 17th century. She died in 2013. Her apprenticeship happened on stage, learning from her parents, sisters, uncles and cousins, like it still happens in some classical Asian theatre forms, on the base of imitation and reactions. Nothing was explained, just done. Franca Rame never went to a theatre school.

Franca narrates:¹

My mother was the daughter of a man who worked in the municipality, an engineer, or maybe he was just a surveyor. My mother was a teacher in a mountain village. Once, she went to her home village to go to the theatre. There was snow. A puppeteer had set up his theatre stall in the main square. The puppeteer and my mother met, and it was love at first sight. They danced at the Carnival feast from nine until midnight, my father dressed as Prince Charming and my mother wearing a mask. They made the clothes themselves. When he left, they

1. The video *Actor's Minimal Manual* is available on Fondazione Fo Rame's website <https://www.fondazioneforame.org/> through the platform <https://alcatraz.thinkific.com/>. It includes recordings of 71 lessons over eight days with Dario Fo and Franca Rame. The Manual is a synthesis of thousands of hours of unpublished filmed material recorded in between 2004 and 2016 at the Alcatraz Free University in Umbria, Italy. The recordings were collected thanks to the commitment of Jacopo Fo. The video Manual has been available online since 15 December 2022 thanks to a project of Theatre Company Fo Rame in collaboration with Fondazione Fo Rame. The audiovisual project has been curated by Mattea Fo, Stefano Berteia and Gianluca Rame.

Franca Rame's interventions are concentrated in the 5th and 6th videos of the first day, the 1st video of the fourth day, the 3rd and 5th videos of the fifth day, the 4th and 5th videos of the seventh day, and on the 2nd and 3rd and 4th videos of the eighth day.

For this article, Franca Rame's narration has been edited strongly to make a résumé and adapt the oral lessons for students present at the time to the written form, concentrating on the practical and technical aspects.

exchanged addresses and wrote to each other for a year. He returned to marry my mother, causing a great scandal. My mother had nothing to do with theatre and she married a poor wanderer and puppeteer.

To help her new family, first she worked as a manager, and made the puppets' clothes. With the advent of cinema, the company realised that they could not survive only with puppet and marionette performances. Astutely they decided to stage real people in the performances previously done with puppets. My mother became the main actress as she was so beautiful. I do not know if they were good, but they had what a great painter called the *quid*, which means they were equipped with an extra gear. The audience loved them. Their plays could be performed seven times in a row in the same village.

My real stage debut, with lines to say, was when I was three years old. My mother had said to my father: "It is time that Franca performs, because she is not doing anything. When we perform *The Lord's Passion* for Easter, she can play one of the angels." My elder sister Pia, who was nine years old, was the main angel. My mother sewed a beautiful costume of lace and made wings full of paillettes for me. For the Angel's halo, my father made a crown of lights with cables and a battery hidden in my underpants. I was supposed to follow my sister who accused Judas of betraying Jesus for thirty coins. Judas would hang himself while my sister accused him of being a traitor. She would say: "Repent!" and I was supposed to repeat the same.

I remember my mother preparing a minestrone and peeling potatoes, making me rehearse the scene many, many times. Finally all was ready for the debut, but something happened. Judas was played by my uncle Tommaso, a nice man who treated us children well. He had a hideous black wig. I was shocked to see my uncle like that, and I knew he had no intention of repenting, so I clung to his neck and said: "Why are you doing this? Don't do this. Calm down, Judas." And he replied: "O God, in your greatness, you send this little Angel so that I can repent, but I cannot repent." And I repeated: "No, you must repent, Judas." We improvised a dialogue. Finally, since the performance had to end, he tore me away from his neck and said: "Forgive me, little Angel but I really have to go and hang myself on the highest tree" and left. In shock, my sister also left the stage on tiptoe. I remained there. My mother was waving at me and didn't look very happy. "Come here!" she ordered. Instead, I went front stage, walking on tiptoe like my sister, and told the audience in a very sad voice "He hasn't repented." A loud applause exploded and from that evening, *The Lord's Passion* always ended with the Little Angel saying, "Judas has not repented".

This was our theatre, based on improvisation. Arriving in a town, we would immediately inquire about its past or recent history and stage the story after just a week. People were enthusiastic, recognising themselves or commenting "Yes, that's exactly how it happened..." The Rame family had a bus called La Balorda (The Fool). Rolls of canvas were kept for the scenery on its roof. Costumes were stuffed under the seats. Inside were wonderful people, actors who came and went. Each actor had a task: to take care of the painted scenes, of the costumes,

of placing the audience chairs, or of going around the town with La Balorda to promote the shows.

The whole company acted. We hung a list of the play's actions back-stage. We arrived in the afternoon, put up and presented the whole play in the evening. The next day we did another play and the next day another one. In thirty days, I could do thirty different shows. It was a crazy way of acting. I did all kinds of characters. I even fell asleep in Juliet's coffin in *Romeo and Juliet*. I didn't like Juliet as a character. My father didn't know how to wake me up. From back-stage he threw a shoe at me. I didn't understand what was happening when I found a shoe in my hand: "Wake up Juliet!" All these performances were a source of energy, as if we had truly done a backflip. I don't know how we could do it. Nowadays Dario and I have a subject we can develop, but the whole company has read the script and knows it by heart. However also today I am free to add parts at any time. I have the backbone of the play, but if something comes to mind, there is an accident, or someone from the audience says something, I can easily deviate, go back and change.

Sex? Thank you, so much for enjoying it is a play I have performed more than three thousand times. The show was staged in 1994 and I am still taking it around Italy and the world now in 2005. It was born by chance, taking the idea from the daring book *Zen and the Art of Fucking* that Jacopo, my son, had written. My son and I were on the sofa in the sitting room, and my husband was in the study. We talked about the book naming things as they are. At a certain point Dario with his eyes bulging out of his head exploded: "Shame on you! Mother and son having this kind of conversation!" "I am going to put it on stage!" "Are you going to stage this text?" "Yes!" And so it happened, except that after a while I had to change the title.

Another day I was busy making minestrone. (I have a good relationship with vegetables and when I am nervous, I make minestrone for a whole week.) Jacopo arrived and asked: "Mummy, how do women masturbate?" I cut my finger. I wasn't prepared for this. Dario and I felt like top-notch parents because we had explained everything delicately, as we all do, starting from butterflies, but it really didn't suit me to talk about masturbation...

When the text has just been written, I should learn it. I wrote it on sheets of paper, and I made my debut without having rehearsed at all, reading from the papers. I commented, then stopped, I thought of something. Then I gradually took away the papers and started cutting the text, to avoid finishing at five in the morning. This show was recorded every evening, because if you don't understand why a laugh came about, you will never get the laugh again. The timing of a joke is precise. Comic theatre is mathematics. You must learn to act with the audience. Dario knows I go by instinct. Sometimes he has tried to prove that a text worked even if I disagreed, but after putting it on stage he has never won the bet. The consequence is that we have to work together, tidying and destroying the text, and then rebuilding it from scratch. While writing, you are so inside

the text that you can't see. I don't know how to define it, but I know I have the capacity of judging the rhythm of a text. But it is difficult to say the result is not good after seeing someone writing day and night. But on stage I have to act, and the text has to have life in it. So, I need to find the right moment to criticise and say: "But here... it seems to me that..." for the changes to occur.

I have a character, I read the script, I mark the laughs. But I do not prepare the tone, it comes by itself. If I have to say I want to kill myself, I can say it in a thousand ways. I can find the most tragic and terrible way without screaming or crying. After a month the original text has to be thrown away because we have transformed it to the point that it has become something else. We listen to the spectators who give us the rhythm, the timing, who make us cut out what is useless, who make us understand what doesn't work and the situations that need to be reversed.

The performance *Tutta casa, letto e chiesa* (All house, bed and church) was born one afternoon in 1977, in the midst of feminism movements. The title comes from a Milanese proverb to which we added the bed as it is an integral part of women's lives. I was feeling very tired. I didn't like visiting occupied factories and getting to know the difficult life of people there and then returning home to a maid who served lunch, so I had dismissed everyone. This meant I had to look after the house, take care of the company's management, and act. I was drowning and I told Dario that I would prefer to just manage the company and go on stage only when it was absolutely necessary. Dario looked at me with a mischievous face but didn't argue. After exactly two hours, he handed me a text asking if I still wanted to be just a housewife and company administrator after reading it. I was stunned: it was basically a piece about my life with my son. It was a play about women. We got to work. We read all the books published on the condition of women. I was very careful, because the problem concerned me closely, and Dario was even more attentive because he had to immerse himself in a society that was not his as a male. We created four characters, four figures of different women. It has become the most performed of our texts abroad. I have taken it everywhere, to France, England, Germany, the United States, Greece and everywhere I have found women's total adherence to its satirical and grotesque themes. We laugh, cry, reflect. The laughter opens our brain, and nails of reason stick in our thoughts. The text moves and makes women aware of situations they live at home, unable to free themselves. Afterwards they come to me, they cry, or ask for an appointment so we can talk.

We understood that the theatre done in a bourgeois environment was dead and no longer had value, so we invented an alternative theatre. We played everywhere, in all the impossible places, from deconsecrated churches, sports halls, tennis courts, occupied factories, in places where workers used to go. In 1968 we left the traditional circuit and created an alternative one.

Il Risveglio (The Awakening) is a simple, comic piece, while *The Rape* is dramatic. For a while I did *Il Risveglio* with scenography and props: a sink, a table, a

basin. One day I found myself at the gates of the Fiat factory in Turin and they put me on two tables without anything. I had to mime. From then on, I eliminated everything in the monologue even in theatre venues. It became less heavy to carry around. The stage is empty, I just have a microphone around my neck.

Speaking a text, attention should be on the diaphragm, so as not to talk from the throat and keep everything in the head. I have some exercises and I advise to mark accents. Learn the text, read the newspaper in the morning out loud and set your voice there. Breathe deeply and let out all your breath. Little by little you get it. Suddenly you speak with your voice: you have all the tones, the high pitch, the low pitch. Then you speak a little louder. If you had to do a two-hour show, always speaking from your throat and head, you would lose your voice. You must learn to use your diaphragm. Don't act. If you are addressing a child, you cannot shout at him in a way that gives him worms. First speak lying down, then standing up. You don't have to say it all, you can mime. A glass of water... You mention it and take it, all without changing your tone. And you listen to the recordings after because the tones stay in your ear.

The Rape is a piece that demands a triple back somersault, because from a comic theatre we move on to a very serious, heavy and dramatic topic. *The Rape* is about violence suffered by a woman. The numbers of raped women and murdered women are increasing. My own kidnapping and rape were organised by the *carabinieri*, one of the Italian State official police forces. Some witnesses were present when it was ordered. The names of the kidnappers were known, there are papers concerning this, but nothing happened afterwards.

The piece was written in 1975 but presented later because I didn't have the courage to do it. I went on stage with it by chance. There was a chair, I had to do *The Awakening* and instead I performed *The Rape*. And I hadn't told anyone that I was going to do it. I did the piece without even notifying Dario. It went very well. Then I have done it again and again. I performed it thousands of times in support of the law against sexual violence.

Sometimes girls in the audience who hadn't told anyone about what had happened to them fainted. This kind of experience can never be erased. I decided that among the very first parliamentary battles I wanted to lead was for the recognition of sexual violence as a crime against the person and not against public morality. At that time the subjectivity of the crime committed against a person was not recognised.

I have performed *The Rape* all over the world. This piece is very important because it helps girls who have suffered violence. The topic that is part of a woman's life. It is a difficult piece to perform. I have to be cold without showing emotion. Unfortunately, some actresses start crying while speaking the text. It is difficult to keep a distance, especially when working with girls who are victims of trafficking or prostitution and for whom the engagement is higher. The words really need to be weighed rarely changing the tone, without dropping the voice or interpreting. In comedies you can change tones many times. Here everything

should be flat. You have to know the text by heart, because then everything seems normal and runs smoothly.

When I go on stage, I need to know exactly who I have in front of me to get the audience; how much I can risk, if I should be relaxed and think about other things or if I have to be careful and tighten up. I should never over-charge. I should keep the repertory toneless, breathing deeply with distance. Never scream or cry on yourself. It needs to be pure epic theatre. If tears come, bite your lips. You should tell this story as if we saw it from a window, as if it was something that had nothing to do with you.

This is the text:

*C'è una radio che suona, ma solo dopo un po' la sento.
Solo dopo un po' mi rendo conto che c'è qualcuno che canta.
Sì, è una radio. Musica leggera. Cielo, stelle, cuore, amore, amore.*

There's a radio playing. But I only notice it after a while.
It takes me a while to realise it's someone singing.
Yes, it's a radio. Romantic music: love... heart... moon... June... croon... love...

Ho un ginocchio, uno solo, piantato nella schiena come se chi mi sta dietro tenesse l'altro appoggiato per terra. Con le mani tiene le mie, forte, girandomele all'incontrario. La sinistra in particolare.

There's a knee, one knee, rammed into my spine... the person behind me must be kneeling on the other one...
Someone's gripping my hands with theirs. Strong hands... Pulling my arms in opposite directions... Twisting my left arm hardest...

Non so perché mi ritrovo a pensare che forse è mancino.

I don't know why, I find myself wondering if he's lefthanded.

*Non capendo niente di quello che mi sta capitando.
Ho lo sgomento addosso di chi sta per perdere il cervello, la voce, la parola.
Prendo coscienza delle cose con incredibile lentezza.*

I don't understand anything that's happening to me.
I'm terrified... scared witless... can't make a sound... can't utter a word.
Everything filters into my brain slowly... incredibly slowly...

*Dio, che confusione...
Come sono salita su questo camioncino? Ho alzato le gambe io una dopo l'altra, dietro la loro spinta? O mi hanno caricata loro, sollevandomi di peso?*

Jesus... this is Bedlam... everything's so mixed up ...
How did I get into the back of this van? Did they give me a shove and
then watch me clamber in, or did they lift me... pick me up bodily...

*Non lo so, è il cuore che mi batte così forte contro le costole a impedirmi di
ragionare.
È il male alla mano sinistra che sta diventando davvero insopportabile,
perché me la storcono tanto?*

I don't know. It's my heart knocking against my ribs, that's what's
stopping me thinking straight... that and the pain in my left hand ...
it's getting really unbearable now.
Why are they wrenching it so hard?

*Io non tento nessun movimento. Sono come congelata.
Ora quello che mi sta dietro non tiene più il suo ginocchio contro la mia schiena.
S'è seduto comodo e mi tiene tra le sue gambe fortemente dal didietro,
come si faceva anni fa, quando si toglievano le tonsille ai bambini.*

I'm not moving a muscle. An iceberg.
Now the one behind me has taken his knee out of my back... he's found a
more comfortable position ... he's got
himself sat down and he's holding me between his legs ... that's the way
they used to hold kids when they took their tonsils out in the old days.

*L'immagine che mi viene in mente è quella.
Perché mi stringono tanto? Io non mi muovo, non urlo, sono senza voce.*

That's the picture that floats into my brain.
Why are they squeezing me so hard? I'm not moving...
I'm not screaming... I can't scream. I've lost my voice...

*Non capisco cosa mi stia capitando.
La radio canta, nemmeno tanto forte.
Perché la musica? Perché la abbassano?
Forse è perché non grido.
Oltre a quello che mi tiene ce ne sono altri tre.*

I don't understand what's happening to me at all.
They're still singing on the radio but it's not so loud.
What's the music for? Why have they turned it down now?
Maybe because I'm not screaming.
There are three others... besides the one who's holding me.

*Li guardo, non c'è molta luce né gran spazio.
Forse è per questo che mi tengono semi distesa.
Li sento calmi, sicuri, che fanno? Si stanno accendendo una sigaretta,
fumano adesso perché mi tengono così e fumano?*

I look at them... there isn't much light... not much room either...
Maybe that's why they haven't stretched me out flat...
I have the feeling they're very calm. Very sure of themselves.
What are they doing? Lighting a cigarette. What the hell is going on?
They're smoking? At a time like this? Why are they holding me
like this and smoking at the same time?

*Sta per succedere qualche cosa lo sento. Respiro a fondo. Due, tre volte.
Non mi snebbio. Io ho solo paura.*

Something's going to happen. I can feel it... I take a deep breath... two...
three... No, it doesn't help. Doesn't clear my mind.
I don't understand ... I'm simply terrified ...

Ora uno mi si avvicina, un altro si accuccia alla mia destra, l'altro a sinistra.

Now one of them is coming closer... another one sits down on my right
and one more on my left.

*Vedo il rosso delle sigarette. Stanno aspirando profondamente. Sono vicinissimi.
Sì, sta per succedere qualche cosa, lo sento.*

I can see the red tips of their cigarettes. They're breathing heavily...
they're very close. Yes... something's going to happen... I can sense it...

*Quello che mi tiene dietro tende tutti i muscoli. Li sento intorno al mio corpo.
Non ha aumentato la stretta, ha solo teso i muscoli, come a essere pronto
a tenermi più ferma.*

The one behind me tenses his muscles... I can feel them... round my body.
He's not holding me any tighter, he's just tensed his muscles... like
he wants to be ready to hold me tighter.

Il primo che si era mosso mi si mette tra le gambe in ginocchio, divaricandomele.

The one who moved first gets himself between my legs... he's on his
knees... he pushes my legs apart.

*È un movimento preciso, che pare concordato con quello che mi tiene da dietro.
Perché subito i suoi piedi si mettono sopra i miei a bloccarmi.*

It's a very precise movement and he seems to be working in tandem with the one behind me because *he* immediately clamps his feet over my parted legs, to keep them spread wide open ...

*Io ho su i pantaloni. Perché mi aprono le gambe con su i pantaloni?
Mi sento peggio che se fossi nuda.*

I've got trousers on. Why are they spreading my legs when I've still got my trousers on? This is worse than if I was stark naked!

*Da questa sensazione mi distrae un qualche cosa che subito non individuo: un calore prima tenue e poi più forte, fino a diventare insopportabile sul seno sinistro. Una punta di bruciore.
Le sigarette. Le sigarette sopra al golf fino ad arrivare alla pelle.*

I'm distracted from thinking about this by a sensation I can't quite identify... a sensation of heat on my left breast... it's slight at first... then more intense... till it's unbearable...
A burn.
The cigarettes... through the sweater, right through to the skin.

*Mi scopro a pensare cosa dovrebbe fare una persona in queste condizioni.
Io non riesco a fare niente, né a parlare né a piangere.*

I find myself wondering what you're supposed to do in this situation.
I can't do anything at all... can't speak... can't cry...

Mi sento come proiettata fuori, affacciata a una finestra costretta a guardare qualcosa di orribile.

It's as if I'm outside myself... I'm outside a window being forced to watch something appalling happening on the other side of the glass.

*Quello accucciato alla mia destra accende le sigarette, fa due tiri e poi le passa quello che mi sta tra le gambe.
Si consumano presto. Il puzzo della lana bruciata deve disturbare i quattro.*

The one squatting on my right lights the cigarettes, takes a couple of drags and then passes them to the one between my legs.
They smoke them fast. The stink of the scorching wool must have unsettled them...

Con una lametta mi tagliano il golf davanti per il lungo, mi tagliano anche il reggiseno, mi tagliano anche la pelle in superficie. Nella perizia medica misureranno 21 centimetri.

They slit the front of my sweater open with a razor blade. They cut through my bra as well... and there's a shallow gash in my skin... later, expert medical opinion will measure the slash at eight and a half inches ...

Quello che mi sta tra le gambe in ginocchio mi prende i seni a piene mani, le sento gelide sopra le bruciature.

The one kneeling between my legs grabs my breasts in his open hands... they feel icy under the burns...

Ora mi aprono la cerniera dei pantaloni e tutti si danno da fare per spogliarmi. Una scarpa sola, una gamba sola. Quello che mi tiene da dietro si sta eccitando, sento che si struscia contro la mia schiena.

Now they're undoing the zip of my trousers ... and they all start undressing me; but they only take off one shoe, one trouser leg. The one holding me on the right is getting excited... I can feel his erection as he rubs himself against me.

*Ora quello che mi sta tra le gambe mi entra dentro.
Mi vien da vomitare. Devo stare calma, calma.*

Now the one between my legs is inside me.
I think I'm going to be sick. I must stay calm. Must stay calm.

*'Muoviti puttana, fammi godere'.
Io mi concentro sulle parole delle canzoni. Il cuore mi si sta spaccando.
Non voglio uscire dalla confusione che ho. Non voglio capire.
Non capisco nessuna parola. Non conosco nessuna lingua.*

'Move your hips, whore... show me a good time.'
I concentrate hard on the words of the songs... my heart is going to explode... I want to drown in the chaos inside my head... I don't want to understand what's going on...
I don't understand words... I don't understand any language.

*Altra sigaretta 'Muoviti, puttana, fammi godere'.
Sono di pietra.
Ora è il turno del secondo. I suoi colpi sono ancora più decisi. Sento un gran male.
'Muoviti, puttana, fammi godere'*

Another cigarette. 'Move your hips, whore.'
I've turned to stone.
Now another one's inside me. He's thrusting harder than

the first one. It hurts like hell.
'Move your hips, whore!'

*La lametta che è servita per tagliarmi il golf mi passa più volte sulla faccia.
Non sento se mi taglia o no.
'Muoviti puttana, fammi godere'.
Il sangue mi cola dalle guance alle orecchie.
È di turno, il terzo.*

The blade they used to slit my sweater open is waved in front of my face
a couple of times. I can't tell whether they've slashed me or not...
'Move your hips... whore... you're supposed to be showing me
a good time!'
Blood's trickling down my cheeks into my ears.
Now it's the third one.

*È orribile sentirti godere dentro delle bestie schifose.
'Sto morendo', riesco a dire... 'sono malata di cuore'.
Ci credono, non ci credono, si litigano, 'Facciamola scendere'.
No, sì. Vola un ceffone tra di loro.*

It's disgusting to feel a man inside you like this... enjoying himself
like a grunting wild beast...
'I'm dying... 'I manage to stammer out... 'I'm having a heart attack.'
They believe me... they don't believe me... They quarrel.
'Let's get her out'. No! ... Yes! ... Someone hits someone...

*Mi schiacciano una sigaretta sul collo. Qui, tanto da spegnerla.
Ecco, lì credo di essere finalmente svenuta.
Poi sento che mi muovono. Quello che mi teneva da dietro
mi riveste con movimenti precisi. Mi riveste lui. Io servo a poco.
Si lamenta come un bambino
perché è l'unico che non abbia fatto l'amore. Pardon, l'unico
che non si sia aperto i pantaloni ma sento la sua fretta, la sua paura.
Non sa come metterla col golf tagliato, mi infila i due lembi nei pantaloni.*

They stub a cigarette out on my neck ... here.
It was at this point I think I finally passed out.
I can feel they're moving me... the one that was holding my shoulders
puts my clothes back on. He moves neatly.
I offer no resistance. He dresses me. I hardly move... he was
the only one that didn't take his clothes off... I mean
he didn't undo his flies... He's nervous and upset because
he didn't get a 'fuck'... he's blubbering like a disappointed child,

but I can sense his haste... his fear.
He doesn't know what to do about the ripped sweater... he tucks
the two strips into my trousers.

*Il camioncino si ferma per il tempo di farmi scendere e se ne va.
Tengo con la mano destra la giacca chiusa sui seni scoperti.
È quasi scuro.
Dove sono? Al parco.*

The van stops long enough for them to throw me out... and
then drives off.
I'm outside. I'm clutching at my jacket with my right hand
to cover my bare breasts.
It's nearly dark.
Where am I? Plants... green... grass... I'm in the park.

*Mi sento, mi sento svenire, non solo per il dolore fisico in tutto il corpo,
ma per lo schifo, per l'umiliazione, per le mille sputate che ho ricevuto
nel cervello. Per lo sperma che mi sento uscire.*

I feel ill. I mean I feel as if I'm going to pass out... it's not just
the physical pain... it's the degradation... the humiliation... it's their
spit on my face... the sperm trickling out of me.

*Appoggio la testa a un albero, mi fanno male anche i capelli.
Me li tiravano per tenermi ferma la testa.
Mi passo la mano sulla faccia. È sporca di sangue, alzo il collo della giacca.
Cammino, cammino. Non so per quanto tempo.*

I lean my head against a tree... even my hair hurts...
Yes, they were yanking my hair to keep my head still.
I wipe my face with my hand... covered with blood.
I turn up my jacket collar.
I walk in no particular direction... I just walk ...

*Senza accorgermi mi trovo davanti alla questura...
Appoggiata al muro del palazzo di fronte la sto a guardare per un bel pezzo.
Penso a quello che dovrei affrontare se entrassi ora.
Sento le loro domande, vedo le loro facce, i loro mezzi sorrisi.
Penso, penso e ci ripenso.
Poi mi decido.
Torno a casa.
Li denuncerò domani.*

I find myself in front of the police station.
 I lean against the front wall of the building, looking at it for a long time.
 I think about what I'd have to cope with if I went in...
 I can hear the questions. I can see their faces... the smirks...
 I think about it.
 I think about it some more.
 And then I make my mind up...
 I'll go home.
 I'll report it in the morning.

Translated from Italian to English by Gillian Hanna

I have seen this piece being performed and read the text again many times while working on this article and on editing Franca Rame's narration. For anyone it is difficult not to react emotionally reading or listening to the words of *The Rape*. Disgust and rage at the injustice suffered by so many women do not allow me to keep cold and distant, making the discovery of technique, or the pre-expressive level, harder to isolate from the artistic result. But the distance and technique is exactly what Franca Rame insists on is necessary to achieve the result. She repeats incessantly: "Listen to me, be careful and never feel sorry for yourself. Never! Be cold and detached."

In her stories Franca Rame often mentions minestrone and cooking. The heart of the family and of the craft revolves around the kitchen. She needs to be concrete and practical, not to search for motivation and feelings. Housework and stage-work becomes cleaning and preparing, repeating and improvising, creating and giving. An Italian minestrone is characterised by the mixing of different vegetables cut into pieces of different sizes: beans, onions, carrots, celery, potatoes and tomatoes. Its preparation involves sautéing onion and carrots to which the chosen vegetables are then added, cut into more or less fine pieces and to which water or broth is finally added. A dramaturgical recipe...

In the fourth lesson of the project "Learning to see - Ten lessons on Theatre Anthropology" and in *Theatre Anthropology First Hypothesis*, Eugenio Barba says that "actors and dancers do not think according to abstract principles. They follow models, apply rules, use their imagination, above all they copy knowingly or unknowingly, and modify. They are inspired by other artistic forms whose principles enhance presence and transform everyday behaviour into an extra-daily one. [...] For actors and dancers it is essential to achieve the effectiveness of a behaviour that has a sensorially persuasive power and that transports the spectators into the reality of stage fiction. [...] The first is the law of alteration of equilibrium. [...] It is exactly the position assumed when ready to jump or spring in any possible direction. [...] This brings us to the second 'law', the law of opposition. [...] The principle of opposition is the base on which the actor constructs



Franca Rame. Photo: Courtesy of Fondazione Fo Rame

and develops his action. [...] The third 'law' could be defined as the law of 'coherent incoherence'.²

Listening to Franca Rame's stories and suggestions I think continuously of the three principles of theatre anthropology, in particular of that of opposition: the more a piece awakens feelings more it should be performed coldly; laughter is used to evoke reason; the space of alternative theatre is created in antagonism to bourgeois circuits; to find the life in acting the written text should be destroyed to start again from scratch...

Fiction turns into real life and life into a story to be told. Rehearsals happen in the kitchen, improvisation on stage. Even the translation, giving the distance of another language to the words appears like a principle of opposition.

Is this where theatre anthropology that just deals with presence meets anthropological theatre which aims at defining identity? When do stage presence principles become part of life, passing from 'how' to 'why' and 'where' in our theatre practice?

Thank you, Franca, for all you have done and passed on - for the craft and humanity.

2. Eugenio Barba, *First Hypothesis*, JTA n 1, Mimesis 2021, Italy. Transcription of a lecture by Eugenio Barba in Warsaw in May 1980, originally published in Polish in the journal "Dialog" (26, 1, 94-100)

Recurring Principles



Ombre Claire. Photo: Christophe Loiseau

Claire Heggen

Ombre Claire

Abstract: Illustrated by many photographs, this article aims to identify the stage presence principles used by Claire Heggen in the creation of her solo performance Ombre Claire with particular attention given to the relationship between the performer and the puppet she gives life to. As a pupil of Etienne Decroux, Claire Heggen remembers and transforms the terminology of Corporeal Mime maintaining its rigorous technical references within a poetical context.

Keywords: Corporeal mime, Etienne Decroux, Physical score, Puppet animation, Théâtre du Mouvement

CONTEXTE des origines d'une grammaire et d'une terminologie

Etienne Decroux nous dit que « L'acteur doit montrer son œuvre sans montrer sa personne ». N'est-ce pas là, déjà, une définition du marionnettiste ?

En 1988, Margareta Niculescu, directrice de l'Institut International de la Marionnette et de l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts de la Marionnette, m'invite à participer au chantier d'une école. Projet d'école pluridisciplinaire où il était alors inédit, voire provocant, de proposer une formation corporelle pour les marionnettistes. D'autant plus que la tendance du moment était au renversement des castelets.

Se pose alors, pour moi la question de manipuler « à vue » :

- Comment organiser le corps du marionnettiste par rapport à sa marionnette ?

En scène, l'étudiant ne pouvait pas se comporter de manière usuelle (quotidienne), en présence d'une marionnette qui, elle, était formalisée (extra-quotidienne).

- Quelle formalisation du corps du marionnettiste fallait-il donc opérer en fonction du type de manipulation ?

Conséquemment apparaît l'idée d'un « corps-castelet » dénommée ainsi par Alain Recoing (1990). C'est un principe que j'ai pratiqué chez Etienne Decroux sous l'appellation « corps géographique » dans les années 1970 et que j'ai développé moi-même en termes de « scénographie mouvante » dès 1975.

Le petit théâtre de marionnette de bois, disparaît pour laisser la place à un corps devenu le lieu même d'un autre théâtre !



Se posent alors pour moi, de nouvelles questions :

-Quelles mises en jeu du corps proposer, pour créer cette scénographie mouvante, plus organisée et incorporée ?

-Comment inventer des modes d'apparition renouvelés de la marionnette et des modes d'énonciation de l'acteur-marionnettiste plus variés.

J'ai mis alors en route « un chantier sur le chantier », celui d'une recherche tant pratique que théorique, appropriée aux nécessités esthétiques, techniques, corporelles et physiologiques, des élèves marionnettistes, dans le cadre d'une école des Arts de la Marionnette, à visée contemporaine.

Ce texte expose la pratique technique de mon travail et sa référence à Etienne Decroux en essayant de décomposer une séquence de mon solo *Ombre Claire* joué au Festival Transit à Holstebro dans le cadre du Magdalena Project.

Je présenterai dans un premier temps la séquence choisie, son moment dans la pièce, l'analyse de sa partition corporelle, photos à l'appui.

Le procédé du montage, image fixe par image fixe, montre la décomposition du mouvement mais ne donne pas l'idée du mouvement lui-même, ni de sa dynamique ni de sa musicalité. A vous, cher lecteur de « faire couler l'eau sur les marches » et d'en imaginer l'interprétation.

Je donnerai ensuite la définition de quelques-uns des principes de base utilisés dans la séquence. C'est un petit aperçu de la grammaire élémentaire et de la terminologie, que j'ai regroupées sous forme d'un abécédaire.

Enfin, j'aborderai « le pourquoi du comment ».



Ombre Claire - Contexte de la séquence

Ombre Claire, créé en 2013, est un spectacle pour une marionnette et une actrice gestuelle silencieuse. Inspirée de l'histoire véridique de Claire Pradier, fille de Juliette Drouet et du sculpteur James Pradier, disparue à l'âge de 20 ans.

Ombre Claire est un poème visuel à la mémoire d'un être trop tôt disparu, un voyage initiatique vers la mort entrecoupé d'épreuves et de silences suspendus, un rituel de deuil scandé par la musique de Schubert « La jeune fille et la mort ».

Par l'entremise d'une marionnette, Claire Heggen, animant l'inanimé, fait apparaître et disparaître la figure incertaine d'un ange à la blancheur fantomatique.

L'univers est blanc : scénographie (sol, fond de scène, voilages superposés) et costume constitué de voiles. La femme est toute de blanc vêtue et son visage neutralisé par du blanc. Figure abstraite qui, par un jeu de présence/absence, entre en relation avec une petite marionnette blanche, figure également abstraite.

La séquence se situe au moment où l'actrice, partie à sa recherche, extrait la marionnette de ses limbes.

Il s'agira donc, de montrer les principes techniques mis en jeu dans les rapports réciproques de l'actrice et de sa marionnette.

Cette séquence s'appuie essentiellement sur des principes de Etienne Decroux, que j'ai « déménagés » vers le monde de la marionnette et qui constituent pour moi une grammaire de base de la relation corps/objet. C'est-à-dire : les notions de *progressivité*, *dégressivité*, *fixation*, *contradiction* et *rétabli* entre autres. Voir définitions ci-après.

Partition corporelle d'une séquence de *Ombre Claire*

Position de départ de l'actrice, immobile, orientée 3/4 arrière, fond de scène cour (Photo 1). La marionnette apparaît sur le côté gauche de l'actrice dans un mouvement lent, en *progressif* de rotation. Le public la voit pour la première fois et c'est elle qu'il doit voir en premier (Photo 2, 3). Celle-ci se *fixe* dans l'espace, face public (Photo 4). L'actrice se *rétablit* face public, en lenteur douce, dans l'axe du corps de la marionnette portée, allongée à l'horizontale entre ses deux mains. Regard fixé sur la marionnette. Le public voit la relation des deux. Elle relève la tête, et regarde face public en parabase, à l'horizon, comme pour prendre le public à témoin en lui montrant l'enfant.



Le corps de l'actrice reste *fixe* tandis que la marionnette s'avance en *progressif* vers le public. La marionnette entraîne le corps de l'actrice à sa suite vers l'avant. Petit *déséquilibre* provoquant une accélération. Puis, la marionnette se *fixe* dans l'espace et le corps de l'actrice *rétablit* la relation de départ en se rapprochant de la marionnette en trois pas ralentis. Idem une deuxième fois.

Arrivée à l'avant-scène cour, un mouvement de *contradiction* s'effectue entre la marionnette à droite horizontalement et le corps entier de l'actrice en inclinaison latérale gauche. Cette *contradiction* se répète à l'opposé quatre fois provoquant une oscillation simultanée entre les deux, donnant à voir une sorte de bercement. La tête de l'actrice penche en *contradiction* au mouvement de son corps, faisant exister d'autant la marionnette par le regard posé sur « l'enfant » (Photo 1).

Une cinquième fois s'initie et s'amplifie en un mouvement *progressif* de la marionnette glissant latéralement et horizontalement vers jardin, entraînant l'actrice à se déplacer en cinq pas accélérés (Photo 2).

Arrêt et engagement dans une grande fente avant de la jambe gauche en décéléré, tandis que la marionnette continue à tourner horizontalement autour d'elle.

Celle-ci prend de l'avance sur le corps de l'actrice en un mouvement *progressif*. Le corps de l'actrice pivote à la suite de la marionnette, en *progressif* lui aussi, qui se continue par une double rotation des deux pieds, pour s'engager dans une grande fente sur jambe droite et se *fixer* simultanément en opposition à la marionnette dans la même diagonale. Arrêt.



Le corps de l'actrice se *rétablit* doucement sur la marionnette, dans l'axe de la diagonale.

Marionnette *fixe*, le corps recule à partir de ses appuis et prend de l'avance sur la marionnette en un petit accéléré, puis la ramène à soi en *dégressif* en un petit décéléré. Axes du corps et de la marionnette orientés dans la direction diagonale avant-scène jardin/arrière scène cour. Idem deux fois (Photo 3).

Une troisième fois s'initie, par une grande fente arrière, la marionnette en *dégressif* parcourt une courbe autour de l'actrice vers sa droite qui s'inverse en un mouvement *progressif* parcourant une courbe autour de l'actrice en sens inverse, une sorte de S jusqu'à se fixer face public. Mouvement en une suite d'accélération-décélération. Le corps de l'actrice se *rétablit* alors dans le même axe que la marionnette, face public (Photo 4).



Pieds joints regard posé sur la marionnette, tête inclinée vers le bas.

Mouvement lent de contradiction entre la tête qui se relève et continue son mouvement vers le haut en *progressif*, vers le ciel, tandis que simultanément en allongeant les bras en *dégressif*, la marionnette descend verticalement vers la terre. Tandis que l'actrice recule de trois pas lents, la tête se *rétablit* sur la verticale. Le regard en parabole, à nouveau comme une prise à témoin du public (Photo 1).

Corps *fixe*, la marionnette s'élève lentement en une courbe *progressive* du bas vers la droite de l'actrice jusqu'à la verticale au-dessus de la tête de l'actrice, entraînant celle-ci à se suite. Le corps de l'actrice se *rétablit progressivement* dans l'axe de la marionnette, de dos au public (Photo 2, 3).

S'ensuivent cinq tours de plus en plus rapides sur place, corps et marionnette dans la même relation verticale (Photo 4). Les tours s'arrêtent.

Puis, une grande fente de l'actrice, jambe droite en avant dans la diagonale vers avant-scène cour, simultanément à la dépose de la marionnette allongée sur ses épaules (Photo 5).

Dans la suite du mouvement, elle allonge ses bras latéralement. Elles font corps toutes les deux.

Le voile qui recouvrait la marionnette depuis le début prendra le relais de la relation corps/ marionnette.

L'actrice effectue quatre allers-retours, depuis la grande fente avant vers une grande fente arrière. Le moteur se trouve dans les appuis. Le transport du poids du corps, et son engagement en une suite d'accélération-décélération, produit en conséquence, un mouvement *dégressif* du voile (Photo 6).

Par un mouvement de rond de jambe arrière, la jambe gauche prend de l'avance sur le haut du corps qui se trouve en *dégressif* en même temps que le voile ; puis le haut du corps dépasse le centre du corps pour effectuer un mouvement circulaire *progressif*, le voile en *dégressif* toujours. De nouveau ce double mouvement *dégressif-progressif* tout en tournant, les jambes étant tour à tour motrices ou pivot. Arrêt face public.

Descente des bras avec flexion des jambes simultanée.

Les mains soulèvent la marionnette recouverte de son voile vers le haut, puis dans cette disposition, le corps descend l'ensemble des deux verticalement, en lenteur continue, jusqu'à la position à genoux (Photo 1).

Descente lente des bras et de la marionnette à hauteur de la poitrine, le voile recouvre également la tête et le visage de l'actrice ainsi que la marionnette. Les deux sont recouvertes du même voile (Photo 2).

Par une suite de « une à la fois » courts, la marionnette glisse en *progressif* horizontalement vers la droite de l'actrice restée verticale et fixe. La marionnette se *fixe* à bout de bras. A marionnette *fixe* l'actrice se déplace pour se poser au sol en *dégressif* sous la marionnette (Photo 3). A corps fixe, la marionnette descend verticalement pour se déposer sur le corps de l'actrice immobile. Toutes deux reposent sous le même voile.



Définitions des principes de base

Progressif

Dans un mouvement progressif, les segments du corps s'additionnent un à un, du plus petit au plus grand, successivement à la suite de l'objet, lui-même moteur du mouvement.

Le spectateur regarde là où ça bouge ; là où s'initie l'intention de mouvement ; comment celle-ci persévère, de la localité vers la totalité du corps ; jusqu'où l'acteur s'engage au risque d'une rupture de l'équilibre s'il le faut. La cause est dans l'objet, au détriment du corps. On peut dire que l'extrémité mène la base. L'engagement du corps au service de l'intention et du désir de l'objet, prend la forme d'une ondulation progressive qui peut aller d'extrême à extrême, dans les différents plans ou volumes de l'espace.

L'objet devenu sujet, objective le sujet acteur. Le spectateur regarde l'objet.

Dégressif

Dans ce mouvement, les segments se déduisent, se soustraient, d'un appui choisi dans le corps (pieds,



hanches, etc.) jusqu'à son extrémité (localité). Soustraction du plus grand segment au plus petit en succession. Le mouvement se développe selon une ondulation dégressive, qui peut aller d'extrême à extrême, dans différents plans et volumes de l'espace. Le moteur est dans le corps. La cause est dans les appuis, la conséquence est dans l'objet en dernier lieu, au détriment peut-être de sa visibilité.

Dans ce cas, l'objet a des chances d'être devenu une extension du sujet. On peut dire que la base mène l'extrémité.

Le spectateur orientera son regard plutôt vers le sujet.

Fixation

À la notion de point fixe, communément utilisé par les mimes et les marionnettistes, je préfère celle de fixation. Pourquoi ? Parce qu'elle est un double mouvement interne, simultané et contradictoire. C'est un mouvement de fixation où deux intentions s'opposent : bouger et vouloir ne pas bouger.

Dans le cas de la relation entre corps et objet, qu'est-ce qu'on fixe ? Un objet dans l'espace, un masque, une marionnette, un segment de la marionnette, son regard, le corps du marionnettiste, des parties de son corps et son regard, une relation cristallisée, un axe... La fixation de l'objet dans l'espace donne l'illusion d'une volonté, une in-

tention, délibérément séparées de celles de l'acteur. La résistance de l'objet, son refus d'aller avec l'acteur, le font exister d'autant plus. Nous sommes en présence de deux sujets. Le spectateur regarde les deux, la relation des deux. Ici, la fixation des mains sur le tissu donne une matérialité à l'écran derrière lequel le corps est mobile.

Contradiction

Quand deux sujets s'opposent dans une relation, en terme d'espace et/ou de l'intensité d'une résistance,



leurs intentions sont contraires, et s'annulent dans une immobilisation, une immobilité en train de s'accomplir. Le double mouvement de leurs déplacements simultanés peut démarrer et finir au même moment dans le temps. Ou la contradiction de l'un peut démarrer et finir entretemps à l'intérieur du mouvement de l'autre. La contradiction s'exerce entre deux entités, deux pensées, deux intentions. Elle confère une existence propre à l'objet/marionnette et donc une identité de sujet dans la relation des deux partenaires sujets.

Le spectateur regarde les deux, la relation des deux.

Ici dans la photo ci-dessous, la contradiction entre la main et la tête, se manifeste par la ligne tendue du tissu et sa résistance.



Le rétabli est un mouvement de ré-alignement des segments du corps (de l'acteur ou de la marionnette) entre eux, sur une ligne rectiligne par exemple. Le rétabli peut jouer pour le corps entier, ou pour une suite de segments. Par exemple : un bras en courbe « rentrant » dans une ligne rectiligne article du corps par article du corps, comme un train sur ses rails, wagon par wagon.

Dans la relation corps/objet, le corps de l'acteur peut se rétablir dans l'axe de l'objet, ou bien l'objet dans l'axe du corps.

Les tensions produites par des écarts préalables à un axe, se résolvent et s'apaisent momentanément par le retour dans l'axe d'origine. Le rétabli permet de mettre à plat les tensions et d'inscrire un nouveau départ de mouvement. Le spectateur ressent cette détente dans les deux cas de la relation corps/objet.



Lignes courbes et lignes droites, dialoguent et réalisent un portrait métaphorique des chemins pris par la pensée vagabonde.

Ici on voit dans la photo, comme les deux corps reviennent dans le même axe central du corps de l'actrice et du centre de la marionnette. Les deux se superposant.

Nommer

Ce qui est en jeu

-La notion de service : comment amener le regard du spectateur sur la figure marionnettique, ou sur la figure de l'acteur, et/ou sur la relation des deux.

- Le jeu d'apparition et de disparition de la marionnette en relation avec le jeu de présence/ absence de l'acteur, serviteur plus ou moins discret au service de la marionnette et de son animation.
- L'engagement du corps, jusqu'à quel point ?
- L'articulation corps/objet et leurs relations diversifiées.
- L'organisation dans le temps des actions (succession, simultanéité, causalité).
- L'espace de l'entre-deux entre proximité et distance, entre incarnation et délégation.

Questions

« L'acteur doit être sujet et objet d'art »

Etienne Decroux

- Comment l'acteur sujet et objet d'art peut-il se mettre au service d'un objet en instance de devenir sujet d'art ?
- Comment associer/dissocier une pratique d'acteur gestuel ayant une formation en Mime corporel d'après Etienne Decroux, entre autres techniques, avec la pratique marionnettique ?
- Comment passer d'une pratique extra-quotidienne de l'acteur qui sait concentrer sur lui le regard des spectateurs, à celle d'un jeu d'aller-retour avec/pour les spectateurs, entre l'acteur et la marionnette.

Vers un « marionnettiste corporel »

Il s'est agi pour moi, de dissocier le corps de l'acteur de celui de l'objet, de le décentrer pour décentrer le regard du spectateur, au bénéfice de l'objet et vice versa.

Ce que j'ai nommé marionnettiste corporel est un mode d'énonciation renouvelé pour l'acteur marionnettiste qui lui donne le choix de jouer sur plusieurs niveaux.

Le pourquoi du comment

Pourquoi j'ai fait tout cela? Qu'est-ce qui m'a intéressée, interpellée, au point de passer plus d'une cinquantaine d'années à explorer le corps dans tous ses états et 35 années à défricher et parcourir ses relations possibles à l'objet ?

Pour plusieurs niveaux:

La physique des matériaux: corps matière première de l'acteur et corps matière de l'objet, matériaux de la scène. Comment, leurs relations réciproques créent de l'altérité, de l'entre-deux. L'acteur n'est pas seul en scène. La scène est le lieu du partage.

Et au-delà de la matière, comment mettre celle-ci à distance pour la prendre comme objet de réflexion. L'être humain n'est plus au centre du monde. Il ne le possède pas, mais se doit de dialoguer avec pour y trouver sa juste place.

Le corps sensible d'un acteur à l'écoute de ses sensations, et perceptions, avant même le corps de l'acteur qui s'exprime. Ceci particulièrement dans sa relation à l'objet/matière. En me conviant à le suivre, l'objet m'informe profondément des changements subtils dans lesquels il m'invite à m'aventurer. En me décentrant, il décentre le regard du spectateur. M'informant, il me transforme. Je peux alors donner forme à ce qui devient performance, porteuse de présence et d'expressivité.

La linguistique : une chose qui n'est pas nommée, n'existe pas. D'où la nécessité de préciser, le vocabulaire technique, la grammaire du corps en mouvement, voire d'inventer une terminologie inspirante. C'est à dire, rendre visible, ce qui ne l'est pas, là où on n'y voit rien. Et permettre de découvrir une poétique nichée dans des lieux inattendus du corps ainsi qu'une construction symbolique structurante de celui-ci.

L'imaginaire : explorer, à partir d'images métaphoriques émergentes, les variations ludiques qui donnent libre cours à l'imagination pour soi et pour le spectateur. Sortir des représentations du corps prévisibles de l'acteur. S'évader du convenu, théâtral pour l'acteur, quotidien pour le commun des mortels.

La symbolique : se mettre à l'écoute des couches de sens potentiels qui se dégagent dans la confrontation à l'altérité radicale de l'objet. Laisser émerger les images métaphoriques, les articuler, les organiser en séquences dramatiques selon le sens qui se profile et non a priori.

La philosophie : la relation à l'inanimé, à l'inerte opposé au vivant, le jeu avec les notions de disparition, d'apparition et d'apparition-disparaissant, nous confrontent à l'illusion du vivant et font allusion à la mort.

Politique : rendre les gens conscients de ce qui se joue des relations, dans la double mimésis, mais aussi dans la triple mimésis qui s'exerce avec la marionnette. Donner les moyens et les outils de sortir du corps unique, central, attendu, pour explorer d'autres corps possibles, et leurs interactions à la scène et dans la vie.

Qu'est-ce qui nous agit ? Nous agit ? Qui manipule qui ? Et comment? Quelle est la différence entre animer et manipuler ?

Bref, comment s'animer pour réanimer le monde.



Photo Credits

p. 294 - photo 1: Christophe Loiseau; photo 2, 3, 4, 5: Nathalie Ritzmann

pp. 295, 296, 297: David Schaffer

p. 298 - photo 1, 2, 3: David Schaffer. Bottom: Nathalie Ritzmann

pp. 299, 300: Christophe Loiseau

pp. 301, 303: Nathalie Ritzmann

News



Anastasis, ISTA 17, 2023, Pécsvarad/Budapest. Photo: Francesco Galli

Franco Perrelli

LAFLIS Is Open (Italy)

LAFLIS (Living Archive Floating Islands), on Eugenio Barba, Odin Teatret and the Third Theatre, finds a home at the Biblioteca Bernardini, Lecce (Italy) as part of the Polo Bibliomuseale.

Establishing the Living Archive Floating Islands, Eugenio Barba and Odin Teatret have found a space where to deposit all the memorabilia, books and documents of their remarkable activity (more than eighty performances and an indefinable number of 'barbers' and cultural interventions-actions) since the beginning in Norway in 1964.

It is a creative and interactive exhibition of material, objects and documents - established by Regione Puglia, Fondazione Barba Varley and with the decisive collaboration of the architect Luca Ruzza and his OpenLab Company - which sees itself as something decidedly more than a usual museum or archive arrangement. The orchestration of the space and the dramaturgical disposition of theatre props, posters and books manage to represent the atmosphere, the existential and aesthetic forms and even the colours and rhythms of a theatre group that has existed and been active world-wide for over half a century.

Launched on October 4th, 2023, LAFLIS has all the requisites to become an important historical site for the memory of 20th-century theatre.

Its name refers to a book by Eugenio Barba, *The Floating Islands* (1979), dealing with the concept of Third Theatre, the archipelago of groups and personalities who - like Odin Teatret's founder - have not undergone a traditional theatre school apprenticeship and who have tried to find and build their own artistic and technical path autonomously in solitude. In that book Barba asked himself "how to stimulate the groups and find a different way of transmitting one's own experience".

If at that time the answer was theatre anthropology, today LAFLIS is trying to find a new way, addressing a wider and not necessarily professional audience. Ideally, Eugenio Barba intends to apply to LAFLIS a motto by Jacques Copeau: "Duration is a theatre's form of resistance", articulating the duration-resistance dichotomy into the development of the project through three sections of *memory*, *transmission* and *transformation*: three fields that interact in the eyes of visitors in the landscape of exhibitions hosted in the spacious and evocative spaces of the Biblioteca Bernardini in the centre of Lecce.

The idea is to integrate historical memory with the spreading of documentation and material also for educational purposes and more importantly to transform the visitors into active subjects. The visitors are immersed in the architecture and inner logic of Odin Teatret's performances or barter situations reworked and mounted in a theatrical yet organic path of installations and mises-en scène.

The reconstruction of Eugenio Barba's office and Julia Varley's changing room, a multitude of posters, sets, costumes, artistic and stage props, artefacts and memories of travels and explorations are set up in the same spectacular rhythmic cadence that

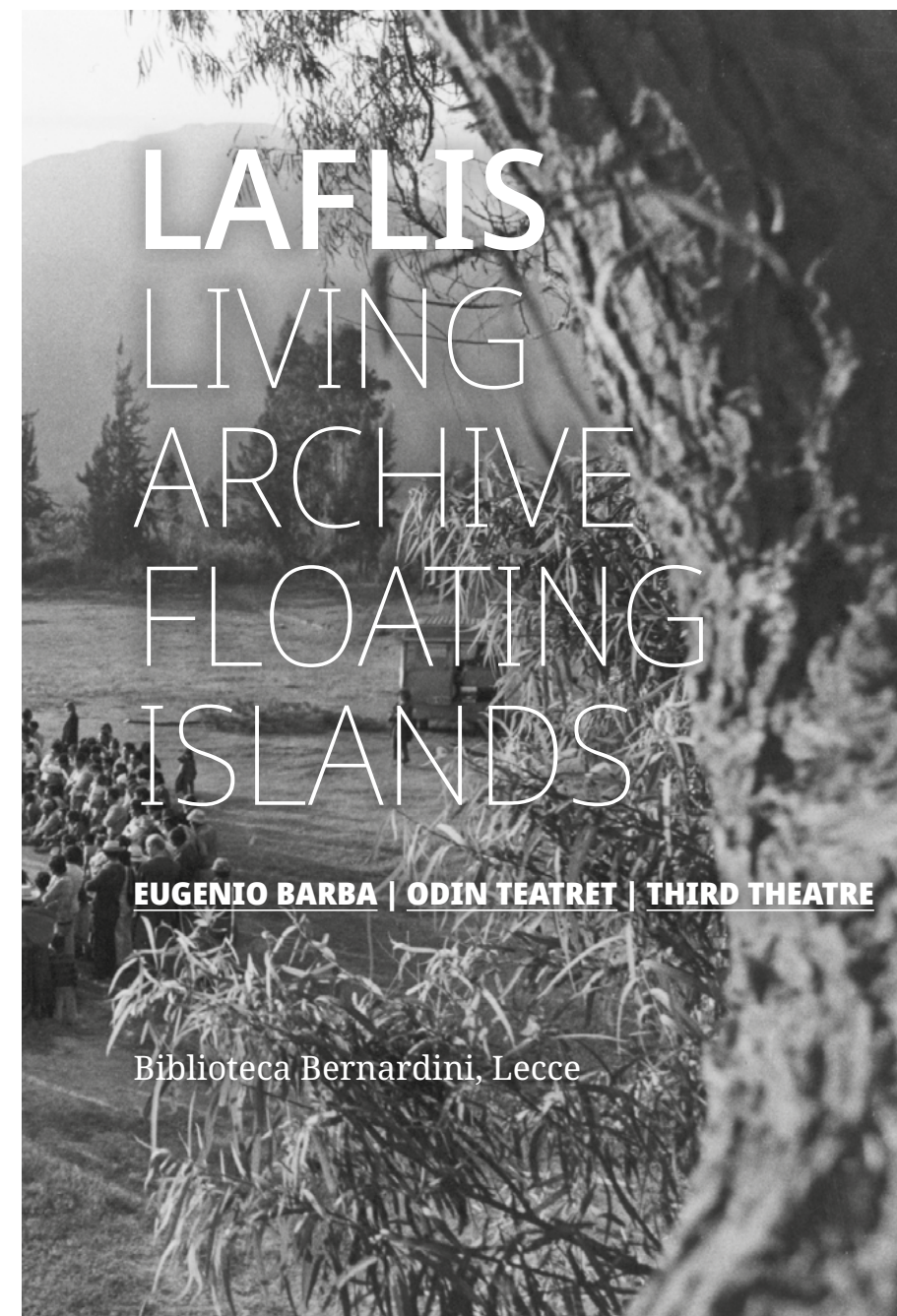
characterises Odin Teatret's performances: the most striking contradictions are underlined to arouse an amazement that illuminates social and personal reality with unsuspected sudden surprises. In short, LAFLIS appears to be a different declination of that "language that can affect the spectator", which has always been at the centre of Barba's and Odin Teatret's research.

LAFLIS positions itself inevitably beyond the boundaries of a museum or study centre to offer above all a sensorial experience. It is open to the most advanced contemporary art installation and virtual reality experiments, aiming to activate and intensify the visitor's senses and imagination in every sense. Its programme always includes the transformation of objects and documents "converted into a mise-en-scène of memory, a montage/collage of a laboratory theatre's visions and deeds" which, without denying its utopias, has not remained chained to 20th-century aesthetics, but has moved forward with curiosity into a new century and a different cultural climate.

Odin Teatret is not only a theatre group that has staged memorable performances: during its existence it has published books and journals, produced educational films, sociological enquiries, a travelling research laboratory on theatre anthropology (ISTA), festivals and initiatives for women in theatre such as The Magdalena Project. The Living Archive Floating Islands enhances this extraordinary variety and commitment not only through its structure and relevant documentation, but also with Barba's private library which, beyond its objective value, enables scholars to reconstruct the intellectual path of one of the most significant directors and theatre theorists between the 20th and 21st centuries.

As a living transmission centre LAFLIS also aims to map all the active nuclei of alternative theatre and culture for the purpose of their interconnection, offering opportunities for meetings, seminars and public exchanges. Furthermore, the LAFLIS programme specifies a precise commitment "for the growth of a catalyst environment of specialists in contact with artists, scholars and cultural activists" offering ten educational films on theatre anthropology by Barba, Coloberti and Varley from 2021 on line in open access (www.fondazionebarbavarley.org).

The plans for 2024 include the cataloguing of the approximately 6000 volumes of Eugenio Barba's library, an exhibition of Odin Teatret's posters by the Danish designer Peter Bysted and another of Tony D'Urso's photographs; an exhibition on the presence of Odin Teatret in Puglia, with particular attention to the 'barter' in the region of Carpignano during 1974-75 and the 1987 ISTA Salento; a permanent installation by Stefano Di Buduo and another by Rossella Viti and Roberto Giannini, the development of a platform which, in addition to making documents and installations digitally available, makes it possible to interact electronically with LAFLIS. A continuous activity of targeted research will take place in collaboration with the University of Salento and other academic institutions. In November 2024, Professor Francesco Ceraolo and his collaborators of the University of Salento will organise a four-day international symposium on the occasion of Odin Teatret's 60th anniversary dealing with its multiple scope as 'laboratory' and promoter of ISTA, International School of Theatre Anthropology.



NOW IS TIME

Opening of LAFLIS - Living Archive Floating Islands

From 4th to 6th October 2023, Biblioteca Bernardini, Lecce

It was 1974, when a group of actors led by the director Eugenio Barba came to Salento, to Carpignano Salentino, to give life to the singular experience of a theatre 'barter'. After nearly fifty years Odin Teatret's and Eugenio Barba's history meet Puglia again.

From 4th to 6th of October 2023, in **Lecce**, at the **Biblioteca Bernardini**, with a dense programme of exhibitions, installations, book and film presentations, and performances, that include the **Museo Castromediano** and **Cantieri Teatrali Koreja** - "**LAFLIS – Living Archive Floating Islands**" will open. This project is the result of a two-year collaboration between **Fondazione Barba Varley** and **Regione Puglia** with the **Polo Biblio-Museale di Lecce** which gives new strength and content to the section of the **Biblioteca Bernardini** dedicated to theatre and performance with the **Carmelo Bene Archive** and the **Silvio d'Amico Fond.**

On July 19th, 2022, Regione Puglia in Italy sanctioned the birth of a cultural partnership with Fondazione Barba Varley aimed at promoting, researching and studying the history of Odin Teatret, the Third Theatre and Eugenio Barba's life and artistic career. The partnership, which may also be extended to other private bodies and public institutions, provides for a scientific collaboration for research and teaching support, aimed at enhancing and promoting the Living Archive Floating Islands project, conceived by Eugenio Barba, which will be installed at the Bernardini Library in Lecce, Italy. A vital element of the partnership is the donation by Eugenio Barba to the Polo Biblio-Museale of the Regione Puglia of his personal library as well as of the bibliographic and documentary collections relating to his artistic experience with Odin Teatret. These documentary materials constitute a heritage of enormous cultural value as well as the testimony of one of the most significant artistic and theatrical events of the 20th century that is still alive thanks to the vitality of its protagonist Eugenio Barba whose origin and particular inspiration stems from the Salento part of Regione Puglia.

The LAFLIS project, result of the collaboration between the **Regione Puglia Cultural Department** and **Fondazione Barba Varley** with the **Presidenza Consiglio Regionale della Puglia, Teatro Pubblico Pugliese - Consorzio Regionale per le Arti e la Cultura**, has received financial support from **Culture Ministry - Direzione Generale Creatività Contemporanea**.

The **OpenLab Company** installations were designed by architect **Luca Ruzza** with **Daniela Disputo** and **Laura Colombo**. A Scientific Committee, named by Eugenio Barba, will take care of the cultural management of the Archive. Its members are: Emanuele Amoruso, Alex Giordano, Annelis Kuhlmann, Leonardo Mancini, Bianca Mastrominico, Franco Perrelli (president), Luca Ruzza, Francesca Romana Rietti, Valentina Venturini. Francesca Roma Rietti is the curator of LAFLIS and has its scientific responsibility.

MEMORY - TRANSMISSION - TRANSFORMATION

"We have become who we are because we have encountered a book, a painting, a film, a melody." Eugenio Barba, the founder of Odin Teatret, writes in a note, "or we have met a man or a woman who has guided us to open our eyes to another reality. (...) The past is not behind our backs. It is above us. It is what remains of the vertical dimension. History, the past we know, is the description of the *impossible that has become possible*. It gives us a glimpse of the world and the theatre as they could be."

"As a transformative environment, - Barba writes - a sanctuary of an anachronistic Present and recycling yard of the past, the *living archive* protects documents and artefacts arousing the silence that is the **Memory** of the *very ancient*. It gives intensified expression to this legacy, and this **Transmission** develops relationships, collaborations, publications, films, theoretical meetings, exchanges of experiences, specialist courses, training, and learning. Finally, the *living archive* is **Transformation**, the palingenesis of a cognitive patrimony, a metamorphosis into artistic forms and languages that triggers individual and collective associations and memories. It is a process that emanates as an unexpected sensorial existence from tacit and inert papers and objects.

The *Living Archive* is an operative space, social and emotional, where archivists, scholars, theatre/dance people and visual arts artists unite in the passion of freeing the past from its cage and letting it fly into the Present. All of them struggle doggedly with a question: can something else be made of the pasts other than what they are, that is, just pasts?

It is necessary to invent a refuge of practical inspiration that is also a springboard for the imagination. We could consider this refuge as a new incarnation of a traditional archive and the equivalent of the 'laboratory theatre', such as it was realised in the last century."

LAFLIS will therefore be the place where new knowledge can be developed and where we can reflect on what the Third Theatre movement has been and still is, which was inspired by the experience of Odin Teatret and spread to every part of the world, even to the most remote places, the places 'without theatre', founding a 'new tradition', more engaging and demanding than the one that normally thinks of theatre as a simple production and consumption of entertainment.

An interactive space, where the synapses linked to the double-stranded relationships of group theatre are visualised by fields of 'narrating' red poppies designed by the **OpenLab Company** with **Francesca Carallo** and her ancient papier-mâché technique, with digital mappings by **Natan A. Ruzza** and the video scores of **Zeno M. Ruzza**. The layout of the spaces was created by **Fluid** directed by **Antonio Galloso**.

A place where Eugenio Barba's vision, his concrete utopia, takes shape and moves the past: memory acts as fertiliser for the present and prepares the field for delivery to the future, a long journey that finds its home on the 'higher floors' of the Bernardini Library. "You are not here" says a carpet at the entrance to the Bene Archive, paraphrasing Bene's "not being". For Barba and Varley it is different, there is presence, a struggle that wins over Time by crossing it in its entirety, all, instant after instant... in the beauty, in the ritual that generates it and delivers it to those who participate, know how to read it and preserve it.

On the occasion of the three days of LAFLIS, in the Art Room of the Bernardini Library, the **Carpignano Barter Archive** will come to life, conceived and created by **Andrea Carraro** of the *Carraro Lab* of Brescia, a 360 degree immersive space with latest generation viewers, experimentation of Spores Project, the winning event of Creative Europe 2023, anarchically coordinated by **Federica Altieri**.

THE PROGRAMME OF NOW IS TIME

Three days of celebrations at Biblioteca Bernardini, Museo Castromediano and Cantieri Teatrali Koreja, dedicated to the experience of Odin Teatret and Third Theatre

4 October 2023

11:00 **Biblioteca Bernardini**, ground floor |

Press conference presentation with representatives of the Institutions involved

18:30 **Museo Castromediano** | Screening of "In Search of Theatre" (1974) by Ludovica Ripa di Meana, presented by Nicola Savarese

20:30 **Cantieri Teatrali Koreja** | "Cumpanagiu", theatre performance by Teatro Koreja

5 October 2023

10:00 **Museo Castromediano** | Presentation of Eugenio Barba's book "My Lives in the Third Theatre. Difference, Craft, Revolt", Franco Perrelli dialogues with the author

11:30 **Museo Castromediano** | Meeting "Women - Theatre - Memory" with Julia Varley and Mattea Fo

16:00 **Museo Castromediano** | Film "The Art of the Impossible" (2016) presented by the film director Elsa Kvamme

17:30 **Biblioteca Bernardini**, piazzetta Carducci | Teatro tascabile di Bergamo, scenes from "Valse", and improvisation with Teatro Potlach

18:00 **Biblioteca Bernardini**, cloister | "Books that fly", opening ritual with Odin Teatret and Teatro tascabile di Bergamo and Teatro Potlach, and good-luck speeches

Then **Biblioteca Bernardini**, first floor | "My life with Odin Teatret", opening of the Danish designer Peter Bysted's exhibition with the presence of the artist. "First stage": visit of the LAFLIS spaces with exhibitions, installations, archives and personal library of Eugenio Barba

20:30 **Biblioteca Bernardini**, piazzetta Carducci, "Books of Fire", digital installation by Stefano Di Buduo and Teatro Potlach

6 October 2023

Tour of Salento, on Odin Teatret's footsteps (Gallipoli - Otranto - Carpignano Salentino)

Francesca Romana Rietti

17th ISTA/NG Session (Hungary)

Fondazione Barba Varley, Budapest National Theatre within Theatre Olympics 2023 in collaboration with Sinum Theatre Laboratory organised the 17th Session of ISTA/NG in Pécsvár and Budapest (Hungary), 7-21 May 2023. The theme was Pre-Expressivity - Composition - Montage. The numbers say: 12 masters from 9 countries, 57 participants from 27 countries, 4 hours a day for physical and vocal training, 3 hours a day of performance's working process and montage; 10 work-demonstrations, 8 performances, 1 performance created during the session presented in the frame of Theatre Olympics 2023, 45.000 photoshoots, 45 hours of live streaming for 100 followers all over the world, 150 hours of filming

The artistic staff under the leadership of Eugenio Barba consisted of Keiin Yoshimura and So Sugiura (Japan), Parvathy Baul (India), I Wayan Bawa (Bali), Yalan Lin (Taiwan), Alício Amaral and Juliana Pardo (Cia. Mundu Rodá, Brazil), Alessandro Rigoletti and Caterina Scotti (Teatro tascabile di Bergamo, Italy), Julia Varley (Odin Teatret, Denmark), Ana Woolf (Argentina), István Berecz (Hungary). Francesco Galli (photographer, Italy), Francesca Romana Rietti (scholar, Italy), Leonardo Mancini (scholar, Italy), Claudio Coloberti (videomaker, Italy), Rina Skeel (organisation/design, Argentina) also followed the whole session as part of ISTA's staff.

The session concluded on the 20th of May 2023 at the National Theatre of Budapest with the performance *Anastasis* devised and directed by Eugenio Barba and performed by the artists of ISTA/NG and by the participants. Annada Prasanna Pattanaik (musician, India), Lorenzo Gleijeses and Manolo Muio (actors, Italy), Mirto Baliani (soundscape, composer, Italy), Stefano di Buduo (digital scenography, Germany) joined the artistic staff for the performance.

During the 17th session of ISTA/NG, theatre and dance performers from different traditions shared practically, in collaboration with Eugenio Barba, their specific composition and montage techniques and introduced the participants to the pre-expressive principles that guide the creativity of their performing forms. The participants had the opportunity to experience on their body the physical/mental know-how of actors/dancers of different traditions. This process, which included the artists' demonstrations and biographical talks, allowed the participants to experience and compare principles and strategies that contribute to the final montage of a performance. Central for the participants was the application of these principles in the montage by Eugenio Barba for the *Anastasis* performance programmed at the National Theatre of Budapest in the frame of the Theatre Olympics.

The session started in Pécsvár with arrival, presentation and opening the 7th of May; daily work 8-15 May from 07:00 am to 10:00 pm; session closing 16th of May; transfer to Budapest 17th of May; rehearsals of *Anastasis* 18-19 May; performance the 20th of May; departure 21st of May.

DAY	Time	Activity	Where
Wed 10.05	6:45	DAWN, silent time	1001 Nights
	7:00-7:30	Breakfast	Márton Gundel
	7:30-9:00	THE PRINCIPLES OF PRE-EXPRESSIVITY 4 groups of participants rotating with each master: Margarita Xirgu group. Flamenco dance with Teatro tascabile di Bergamo (Caterina Scotti) Sada Yacco group. Group theatre with Ana Woolf Edith Craig group. Balinese dance/theatre with I Wayan Bawa M. A. Valentei (Masha) group. Cavalo marinho dance/theatre with Alício Amaral and Juliana Pardo	Moby Dick
	9:00-9:15	Pause	Popol Vuh Mahabharata Divina Commedia
	9:15-10:45	THE PRINCIPLES OF PRE-EXPRESSIVITY 4 groups of participants rotating with each master: Margarita Xirgu group. Kathakali dance/theatre with Teatro tascabile di Bergamo (Alessandro Rigoletti) Sada Yacco group. Kamigata mai dance with Keiin Yoshimura Edith Craig group. Canti Baul with Parvathy Baul M. A. Valentei (Masha) group. Nanguan dance/theatre with Yalan Lin	Popol Vuh
	10:45-11:15	Pause	Divina Commedia Moby Dick Mahabharata
	11:15-12:45	COMPOSITION IN THEATRE AND DANCE with Alessandro Rigoletti and Caterina Scotti , Teatro tascabile di Bergamo	Mahabharata
	13:00-14:00	Lunch	Márton Gundel
	14:00-15:00	BARTERS, INTERACTIONS AND FUSIONS or MUSIC AS A PARTNER IN MONTAGE with Annada Prasanna Pattanaik , Mirto Baliani and Alício Amaral	All the spaces Béla Bartók
	15:00-15:45	VOCAL AND PHYSICAL COMPOSITION with Julia Varley or MUSIC AS A PARTNER IN MONTAGE with Annada Prasanna Pattanaik , Mirto Baliani and Alício Amaral	Mahabharata Béla Bartók
	15:45-16:00	Pause	
	16:00-19:00	MONTAGE: FROM PRE-EXPRESSIVITY TO PERFORMANCE with Eugenio Barba	Mahabharata
	19:15-20:15	Supper	Márton Gundel
	20:30	Departure bus for Pécs	
	21:00	PERFORMANCE SEEDS OF MEMORY , Ana Woolf (Argentina) for ISTA/NG participants and audience	Pécs
	22:15	Bus returns to Pécsvárad	
DAY	Time	Activity	Where
Thu 11.05	6:45	DAWN, silent time	1001 Nights
	7:00-7:30	Breakfast	Márton Gundel
	7:30-9:00	THE PRINCIPLES OF PRE-EXPRESSIVITY 4 groups of participants rotating with each master: Margarita Xirgu group. Group theatre with Ana Woolf Sada Yacco group. Balinese dance/theatre with I Wayan Bawa Edith Craig group. Danza/teatro cavalo marinho with Alício Amaral and Juliana Pardo M. A. Valentei (Masha) group. Flamenco dance with Teatro tascabile di Bergamo (Caterina Scotti)	Popol Vuh Mahabharata Divina Commedia
	9:00-9:15	Pause	Moby Dick

One day from the daily schedule at ISTA 17, 2023, Pécsvarad/Budapest.

Francesca Romana Rietti

Anastasis (Hungary)

Anastasis is a Theatrum Mundi Ensemble production composed and directed by Eugenio Barba performed at the National Theatre in Budapest, Hungary, on 20th of May 2023.

Anastasis depicts life's different phases and realities from birth to death and again re-birth in the world of nature, animals and humans. *Anástasis* is a hymn to the power of Life and an homage to the performer's art with its splendour of styles and expressions. It is enacted by performers from different countries and traditions: Japanese Noh, Chinese Nanguan Opera, Balinese Topeng, Indian Baul and Kathakali, Brazilian Cavalo Marinho and Bumba Meu Boi, Flamenco and western contemporary styles. It is a performance which gathers artists from various traditions can come about in many ways. The artists can abandon the style of their own tradition and, together with the others, find a common style. Or else, they can assume the style of a foreign tradition in order to give new vigour to the work they are presenting. Greek texts can be interpreted by Japanese actors who draw on noh, and texts by Shakespeare can be played in French by actors who take their inspiration from the scenic skill of kabuki.

With the Theatrum Mundi Ensemble Eugenio Barba follows another principle: each artist faithfully preserves the characteristics specific to his/her own style, integrating them into the context of the various scenes of the story.

- Synopsis
- 1. Welcoming the spectators - Two clowns, Mr Peanut and the Balinese Penasar, lead the spectators to their places.
 - 2. Introduction - A Transylvanian song in darkness.
 - 3. Presentation of the performance - Two storytellers, an Indian Baul and a Brazilian folk singer, inform the spectators about the events to happen.
 - 4. The power of nature - A Japanese woman admires the beauty of the landscape, while Death looms.
 - 5. The family - A father (Pulcinella), a mother (nanguan opera) and a Brazilian child (cavalo marinho) play in the intimacy of domestic life.
 - 6. Human weakness - The Baul storyteller shows the greed of an old man (Balinese topeng).
 - 7. Brazilian feast - A group of joyful people celebrates the vitality of a bull.
 - 8. Showing off bravery - The Brazilian singer and a Hungarian traditional dancer display their virtuosity.
 - 9. The feast ends - The bull is killed, while the family admires the landscape.
 - 10. People are hungry... - Two clowns (Bali and Brazil) find the dead bull and carry it out to have a good meal.
 - 11. ... and rich people dance - An elegant couple on stilts waltzes to Johann Strauss' music.

12. The boy's funeral - The parents mourn the dead son.

13. The face of darkness - An Indian kathakali demon attempts to annihilate the child's corpse.

14. The transformation of Death into Life - The bull and the child resurrect and the performance ends with Death becoming Life, among the actors singing a traditional Hungarian song ("By the river of Tisza under an almond tree / two lovers embrace each other").

On stage: Keiin Yoshimura (Japan); I Wayan Bawa (Bali); Parvathy Baul (India); Yalan Lin (Taiwan); Alício Amaral, Juliana Pardo, Rodrigo Lopes dos Reis, Matheus de Aquino (Cia. Mundu Rodá, Brazil); Caterina Scotti, Alessandro Rigoletti, Ricardo Gomes (Teatro tascabile di Bergamo, Italy); Julia Varley, Jakob Nielsen, Antonia Cezara Cioaza (Odin Teatret, Denmark); István Berecz, Ibolya Páli (Hungary); Lorenzo Gleijeses (Teatro di Roma, Italy)

and

Rocío Susana Antero-Cabrera Vites (Peru), Javier Arboleya Rodríguez (Spain), Taylor Ayling (UK), Aurora Bolaffi (Brazil), Viviana Bovino (Italy), Eugenia Cano (Mexico), Benedek Csonka (Hungary), Mark Diaz (USA), Anna Viktória Dömötör (Hungary), Federico Fanella (Italy), Natalia Georgosopoulou (Greece), Daniel Ginebroza (Spain), Gaia Diana Dalia Gulizia (Italy), Sarimé Álvarez Hernández (Cuba/Mexico), Cecilia Hopkins (Argentina), Asmaa Hourri (Morocco), Fanis Katechos (Greece), Dominika Laster (Poland/USA), Denis Lavie (France/Spain), Bojan Lazarov (Macedonia), Attila Lestyán (Hungary), So Young Lim (South Korea), Leonardo Mancini (Italy), Ana Patricia Marioli (Argentina/Germany), Natasha Mirny (USA), Pál Nyáry (Hungary), Lorenzo Ortis Gallo (Italy), Zsófia Pálfi (Hungary), Réka Pável (Hungary), Mirla Pereira (Cuba/USA), Darinka Pilári (Hungary), Ivana Milenović Popović (Serbia), Gisella Rotiroti (Italy), Cecilia Ruiz (Argentina), Karina Russa (Hungary/Venezuela), Natalya Rybalkina (Ukraine), Leo Schmukler (Argentina), Eirini Sfyri (Greece/Spain), Anna Somogyi (Hungary), Hal-Jun Sung (Taiwan), Nadine Szakács (Hungary), Natalia Tesone (Argentina), Renee Torres (Venezuela), Mérida Urquía (Cuba/Colombia), Alexis Vandist (Belgium), Kengip Wong (China), Gyan Ros Zimmermann (Ecuador/Chile)

Musicians: Gregorio Amicuzi (Italy), Rachid Bromi (Morocco), Linda Cunningham (Ireland), László Lukács (Hungary), Annada Prasanna Pattanaik (India), Rina Skeel (Denmark), So Sugiura (Japan)

Soundscape: Mirto Baliani (Italy)

Digital scenography and light design: Stefano Di Buduo (Italy/Germany)

Technical assistance: Manolo Muoio (Italy)

Film documentation: Claudio Coloberti (Italy)

Photographs: Francesco Galli (Italy)

Programme text: Leonardo Mancini

Assistants: Gregorio Amicuzi (Italy/Spain), Viviana Bovino (Italy/Spain), Antonia Cezara Cioaza (Romania/Denmark), Ricardo Gomes (Brazil), Leonardo Mancini (Italy), Jakob Nielsen (Denmark), Francesca Romana Rietti (Italy)

Director assistants: Rina Skeel (Denmark/Argentina), Julia Varley (Denmark/Italy), Ana Woolf (Argentina)

Composed and directed by: Eugenio Barba



Gaia Diana Dalia Gulizia

Anastasis, Theatrum Mundi (HUNGARY)

First published in Italian in *Culture Teatrali*, 2023

The Theatrum Mundi Ensemble - born within ISTA, the International School of Theatre Anthropology - brings together performers and musicians from different artistic fields and cultural traditions as part of the research group led by Eugenio Barba.

As a participant in the 17th session of ISTA which took place in May 2023 in Pécsvárad, Hungary I had the opportunity to gain direct experience of the Ensemble's work process, closely getting to know the traditions that every artist brings along. In some cases, they coincide with cultural identity, while in others they become professional identity as a result of a long and in-depth learning that the artist undertakes by choice.

Anastasis was the Theatrum Mundi Ensemble's performance conceived and directed by Eugenio Barba. The artists involved were Keiin Yoshimura (Japan, kamigatamai dance), Parvathy Baul (India, Baul song and dance), I Wayan Bawa (Bali, gambuh dance theatre), Alício Amaral and Juliana Pardo (Brazil, Mundu Rodà, Cavalo Marinho dance theatre), Yalan Lin (Taiwan, Nanguan dance theatre), Caterina Scotti (Italy, Teatro Tascabile, flamenco), Alessandro Rigoletti (Italy, Teatro Tascabile, katakhali), Ana Woolf (Argentina, Latin-American dances and Suzuki technique), Julia Varley (Denmark, Odin Teatret, voice training) and the musicians Annada Prasanna Pattanaik (flute, India), So Sugiura (shamisen, Japan), Mirto Baliani (soundscape, Italy), Rachid Bromi (oud, Morocco), Gregorio Amicuzi (drums, Italy), Linda Cunningham (drum, Ireland), László Lukács (guitar, Hungary), Rina Skeel (singer).

In addition to these, the protagonists of *Anastasis* were also Lorenzo Gleijeses (Italy), István Berec, Ibolya Páli (Hungary), Ricardo Gomes, Rodrigo Lopes dos Reis and Matheus de Aquino (Brazil) and all the participants in the 17th ISTA session.

The daily ISTA programme alternated theoretical meetings with work with individual artists and the practical application of principles, introduced through the illustration of short sequences taken from their repertoire. In parallel, study sessions were held every day to get acquainted with the personal and professional biographies of the individual artists in order to absorb and learn the basics of the traditions they presented.

The two-week programme of activities was very intense. The day began in the early morning, with a silent gathering on the small hill not far from the ancient monastery where we were hosted in Pécsvárad, and where the different artists greeted the new day with a song. After breakfast, the practical sessions led by the teachers began, followed by a work demonstration.

After lunch, the work continued with 'barter', free and spontaneous exchanges between the participants, with Julia Varley's session of physical and vocal composition, and concluded with a daily meeting with Eugenio Barba on pre-expressivity and dramaturgical montage. Finally, the evening was dedicated to the performances of the individual artists at the Bobita Puppet Theatre in the nearby town of Pécs for the ISTA participants and the local inhabitants.

Participating in the ISTA gives you the opportunity to experience directly the *principles that return*. These common elements, which recur in very different traditions, all have to do with the pre-expressivity of the performer's body, or rather of a 'body-in-life' capable of subjugating and keeping the spectator's attention active. To this end, the performer must implement a behaviour that is different from that of every day and that transcends the artist's habitual personality by deploying a surplus of physical and mental energy. This is what the actor/dancer's technique consists of.

The artists and teachers devoted themselves generously, accepting the 'challenges' that Barba proposed in order to present tangibly the results of the transcultural analysis developed by theatre anthropology.

By observing the exchanges that arose, we were able to understand what it means to return to a 'professional childhood': to look with fresh eyes at principles that appear alien to the familiar principles, and to gradually assimilate them into the body-mind system. During the work, some key concepts emerged, subsequently tested concretely during the lessons, repeated, assimilated and then put into practice in view of the final outcome: the performance *Anastasis*.

Cenesthesia, awareness of one's own body and perception of movement, is essential for the actor/dancer to be able to gain the attention of the spectator. A cenesthetic learning process involves the ability to learn by doing. This is what is experienced during the ISTA session through a process that includes phases of observation and imitation. By doing so, the cultural identity of one's origins is integrated with elements of other cultures and other artistic genres.

ISTA - states Barba - has also been defined as "the school of seeing": we learn by looking with our eyes and mind. By paying attention to our body, we can realise that when we perceive our actions devoid of energy, it is because energy has no roots.

An obvious example is the *sats*, the mental impulse and muscular discharge methodised by Barba and the Odin Teatret actors, recurring in all traditions of the performing arts. The *sats* enables you to retain a reserve of inner energy ready to express itself externally, passing from intention to action, thus enhancing the performers' presence and highlighting their scenic *bios*.

In all performing traditions, the principles that transform the body into energy are rooted in a shift of balance from the usual gravity centre. The body can be an orchestra, in which the individual parts play a melody that flows into the symphony of organic dance. This was evident in the scenes of Indian kathakali and Balinese gambuh dance theatre, where each limb contributes to composing the narrative. To acquire knowledge on a physical as well as intellectual level, we shaped our physical features, forcing us to assume unusual postures and to perceive the resulting different quality of energy.

We could notice that to achieve an effective organic body on stage, the teachers followed a ternary rhythm, different from the natural binary one. Through the demonstration of the physical and vocal sequences which were assembled into a composition (or score, a term used by Stanislavski and used in Odin Teatret's technical language), we found that changes in the rhythm of the movement through its variations and impulses can trigger a different perception in the performer as well as in the spectator, and consequently different emotional states. We experienced this by studying the physical and vocal score of Parvathy Baul's song and the various ways in which the voice has deep roots in the body through vocal training conducted by Julia Varley.

By experimenting with variations in rhythm, it could be observed that different forms of dance theatre, such as the Japanese kamigata-mai and the Brazilian cavalo marinho, contain the same intensity, channelled in different directions. We remarked that extra-daily energy in Western traditions is expansive and expressive, while it is more internal and concentrated in Asian ones. Furthermore, rhythm is also present in the apparent immobility of the body through invisible impulses that pass through it as inner movements.

The importance of the most minute details making up a score was highlighted through the practice of flamenco and the Chinese nanguan. It was surprising to

discover the great fluidity arising from the firm discipline of the Suzuki stepping technique.

The concluding performance of Theatrum Mundi Ensemble is the embodiment of the possible dialogue between distant cultures and artistic traditions. The individual artists do not abandon their own tradition in favour of another, but bring their peculiar know-how in a transcultural encounter that gives life to something new where the interweaving of actions, dynamisms and rhythms - the pre-expressive level of the performer's presence - become fundamental: sense beyond meaning. The alternation between listening and practice culminates in the scenic result: the path from pre-expressivity (stage presence) to montage is composed of elements absorbed in detail, combined with each other and then merged into the final outcome.

After a week of research, we entered the process leading to the birth of *Anastasis*. The montage of individual actions and scenes enabled us to glimpse gradually the unexpected features of the performance which, like a living creature, began to breathe.

Anastasis celebrates the power of life that ceaselessly regenerates; but it also celebrates the beauty of the performing arts and the richness brought by their variety, thanks to the intertwining of the styles embodied by great artists.

In the final phase of the ISTA, teachers and participants worked relentlessly towards the performance that would be staged as part of the Theatre Olympics at the National Theatre in Budapest.

The groups into which the participants were divided during the lessons merged together in a single working collective, creating individual scenes as an integral part of the learning process.

The role of the participants as members of the choir accompanied the unfolding of the individual scenes. A work process that transformed the elements learned during the working sessions into expressive scenic forms.

The dance steps of the Brazilian joyful cavalo marinho and bumba meu boi transmitted by Juliana Pardo and Alicio Amaral became progressively a choreographic introduction to the wildly vital ox, the symbolic red thread of *Anastasis*.

With the guidance of Julia Varley we composed a collective song: each member presented a fragment of a song from their own tradition, sung with a single voice.

Parvathy Baul accompanied the group into the mystical dimension of her tradition, through a chant which was given voice and gestures, translating the spirit of devotion with which Baul storytellers embody their art.

Ana Woolf intertwined a variety of steps from the Suzuki technique starting from our roots, i.e. the feet, in which all the expressive power is concentrated, removing it from the face.

Some scenes from the repertoire of the individual artists were included in the dramaturgical montage, acquiring an unexpected connotation in the new context of *Anastasis*: Lorenzo Gleijeses' monologue, taken from his performance *An Ordinary Day of the Dancer Gregor Samsa*, took on new meanings and intensified its nuances when connected to the character of Taiwanese Yalan Lin, whose singing and dance, born in a different context, resulted in an exchange that gave rise to an intensely expressive dialogue.

The character of Mr Peanut, Death, 'worn' by Julia Varley accompanied, as a contrast, the unfolding of the scenes together with the various characters of the Balinese masks worn by I Wayan Bawa.

The key to the whole work can be found in the greater importance assumed by the process compared to the result. The basis for the construction of the individual scenes was the work on the 'necessity' of each action, so that it could be 'alive', pulsating and credible. Each scene was created by modelling the living material, through careful research and elimination of the superfluous. We worked on the organic nature and precise design of divergent actions to achieve an overall harmony, with the intention of restoring a meaning that, once again, transcends the meaning.

Julia Varley

Nitis Jacon (Brazil)

Nitis Jacon died on the 19th of December 2023, while I was writing an article about ISTA for *NTQ* journal. When I heard the news, I immediately decided to dedicate my text to her. Nitis Jacon was a psychiatrist, doctor, theatre director and producer, and politically engaged. She gave an international name to FILO, the theatre festival in her hometown Londrina, Brazil, and she managed to organise the only ISTA session in Latin America in 1994. Nitis insisted that a Brazilian performing tradition should be represented at the ISTA session in Londrina. Thanks to Nitis, Augusto Omolu, the Afro-Brazilian orixa dancer, became a member of the ISTA teaching team and few years later an actor at Odin Teatret. The whole ISTA family owes a lot to Nitis. She is an exemplary member of the 'tradition of the impossible' in our craft.

Francesco Ceraolo

International Conference Call at University of Salento (Italy)

Contemporary perspectives: third theatre, archives, directing

An International Performative and Educational Conference entitled Contemporary Perspectives - Third Theatre, Archives, Directing, will take place in Lecce, Italy, 4-7 November 2024 organised by the Department of Cultural Heritage of the University of Salento in collaboration with the Puglia Region's Polo Biblio-Museale, Fondazione

Barba Varley, and LAFLIS - Living Archive Floating Islands, on the occasion of Odin Teatret's 60th anniversary. Odin Teatret and some of the most prominent personalities from group theatre in Europe and Latin America - Théâtre du Soleil (France), Teatro La Candelaria (Colombia), Yuyachkani (Peru) and many artists and scholars - will gather in Lecce to celebrate the 60 years of the theatre group founded by Eugenio Barba in Norway in 1964. This will happen through performances, screenings, lectures and meetings that are moments of reflection on the history and meaning of Odin Teatret's experience. Particular attention will be paid to its performances since the 90s, on current developments in theatre anthropology and the Third Theatre and on the research on theatre archives starting from LAFLIS - Living Archive Floating Islands.

The last thirty years represent an extremely relevant historical moment for theatre, in Italy and elsewhere. The two main lines of development characterising the time span from the post-war period to the first half of the 1980s - directorial theatre and the experimental practices of the New Theatre - lose their strongest and often mutually antagonistic characterisation and find a moment of dialectical meeting redefining roles and functions. Odin Teatret's performances are in this sense exemplary of a new way of conceiving 'stage writing' as a problematic kernel of the theatre's artistic identity, confronting itself with dramaturgy and conceiving it as a primary component of the performance.

The opening and the activities of LAFLIS, Living Archive Floating Islands in Lecce, is an opportunity to think about the function of archives and their use. Theatre archives are repositories of transitory traces. They contain memories, preparatory materials, photographs and objects that constituted a past and unrepeatable event. Yet, the archive together with the stage is the only physical space in which it is possible to directly experience the theatre. The archive is the denial of the theatrical event and at the same time its realisation, through which it is possible to relive the event itself. For this reason, for centuries theatre scholars have turned to archives as places in which to investigate works, and as alchemical spaces in which to recuperate the experience of a lost theatrical past.

Starting from the second half of the 20th century, with the development of audiovisual techniques for recording performances, theatre archives gradually began to change their status. Their function as custodians of past experiences has remained intact (increasingly 're-lived' through technical mediation) but an original and different one has been added to it. The archive is no longer just a sediment of the past, which indirectly conveys the experience of the performance, but a complex of finds and facts which recuperates the very procedure of the theatre and its doings.

A 'living' archive, as Eugenio Barba calls it, must not only bear witness but also generate an experience. The archive, again according to Barba, is an installation, an artistic process in itself which is made up of testimonies arranged according to an expressive logic. This is the case of LAFLIS, a place conceived as a technical-artistic installation that must induce an immersive experience in the 'spectator' as well as in the scholar who visit it. A 'living' archive ought to elicit a cognitive and sensorial process not only linked to the study of materials but to their particular disposition and presence in the space of the archive itself.

The conference aims to be a moment of reflection on the Third Theatre and on the epistemological and heuristic value of theatre anthropology in the 21st century. Having emerged unscathed from the crisis of the human sciences of the 1990s (from semiotics to sociology), anthropology continues to be an important field for the study of theatre procedures, not only due to the overlap of some of its assumptions with those of Performance Studies, as well as the fact that anthropology continues to find its preferred experimental field in the theatre. A decisive part of this longevity is linked to the activity of group theatres defined by Barba as Third Theatre which, on an international level, express a social ethic and a vocation in the actors' art which still today represent an indispensable asset for the communities in which they operate.

The conference is structured into three sections focusing respectively on the Third Theatre/group theatres, on theatre archives and on directing with particular reference to Odin Teatret's latest activities.

The conference is organised by the research units of the University of Salento concerning the projects PRIN 2022 PNRR "Archives of Floating Islands. Mapping Third Theatre in Puglia and Sicily" and the PRIN 2022 project "Directing in transition. A study on directing processes in Italy starting from the 1990s. Digital cataloguing of documentary material and historical and critical analysis" in collaboration with the Puglia Region's Polo Biblio-Museale, Fondazione Barba Varley and LAFLIS - Living Archive Floating Islands.

Scientific committee: Eugenio Barba, Francesco Ceraolo, Franco Perrelli, Julia Varley.

Julia Varley

Theatre Anthropology Online Course (International)

The first lesson the Theatre Anthropology Online Course with Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley was on February 22nd, 2023, and subsequently took place with an appointment every month for a total of ten lessons. The course was part of Fondazione Barba Varley's Sharing Knowledge project.

Before each lesson, one of the ten films on Theatre Anthropology made by Eugenio Barba, Claudio Coloberti and Julia Varley was screened. The films feature recordings from ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology) sessions since 1980 and other archival material. The participants watched the film beforehand and sent written questions concerning what they had seen. Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley answered the questions received from the participants during the monthly webinar appointment in Spanish with direct interpretation to Italian and English. Participation was free but attendance was mandatory for the issue of a certificate of participation. About 2,000 participants registered.

The films and Eugenio Barba's and Julia Varley's talks online explained the principles of theatre anthropology: the technical principles common to actors and dancers of

different cultures, the difference between everyday behaviour and extra-daily behaviour, the pre-expressive level and the construction of stage presence, animus/anima (strong and soft energy), the actor/dancer's strategies to capture the attention of the spectators and the effect on their kinesthetic sense and on their perception.

Lesson 1: ORIGINS OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY - Learning to learn, The kinesthetic sense

Lesson 2: THE PRESENCE OF THE ACTOR AND DANCER - The pre-expressive level

Lesson 3: DAILY BEHAVIOUR and EXTRA-DAILY BEHAVIOUR

Lesson 4: PRINCIPLES OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY - Alteration of balance, oppositions, consistent inconsistency

Lesson 5: THE CONSTRUCTION OF FORM - Apprenticeship as acculturation

Lesson 6: THE TEMPERATURES OF ENERGY

Lesson 7: THE DANCE OF ENERGY - Sats, resistance, absorption

Lesson 8: THINKING WITH THE FEET - Action and Effect of Organicity

Lesson 9: EURASIAN THEATRE - Theatrum Mundi

Lesson 10: ORGANIC DRAMATURGY - Artificiality and transparency

The ten films on theatre anthropology have been available since October 2021 and since 2023 they can be found with English, Italian and Spanish subtitles. The Barba Varley ETS Foundation offers these training activities free of charge at www.fondazionebarbavarley.org. If you want to support the activities, you can donate at Fideraum Bank, IBAN IT49L0329601601000067353114, Via Serafico 43- 00142 Rome, BIC/SWIFT code: FIBKITMM

Francesca Romana Rietti

CATA (Argentina)

Camping-Trans-Misión es el nombre de la residencia teórico-práctica organizada en colaboración con la **Fondazione Barba Varley** (Italia), del **Centro de Antropología Teatral en Argentina (CATA)** (www.centrodeantropologiateatralenargentina.com), dirigida por Ana Woolf junto con Mónica Marrafa, Viviana Quaranta, Natalia Tesone y Cecilia Volken. Se trata de una experiencia de inmersión en la pedagogía y la vida comunitaria basada sobre el estudio de las técnicas teatrales psicofísicas y el uso de la voz en términos de acción y dramaturgia. El trabajo se desarrolla desde el amanecer hasta la noche, alternando sesiones prácticas con momentos de reflexión intercultural basados en los principios de la antropología teatral. Está dirigido a actores, bailarines, cantantes, miembros de grupos de teatro, estudiantes, investigadores, profesores universitarios, antropólogos, sociólogos, gestores culturales y personas interesadas en sumergirse en el descubrimiento de este tipo de camino.

La segunda edición, *Acciones, evocaciones*, tuvo lugar entre Santa Fe y Arroyo Leyes

(Argentina) desde el 22 hasta el 26 de noviembre de 2023. Dirigida por Eugenio Barba y Julia Varley (Odin Teatret, Dinamarca), contó con la presencia de dos pedagogas argentinas, Silvia Pritz (coreógrafa y bailarina) y Ana Woolf (actriz y directora), y de una estudiosa de teatro italiana, cofundadora de los archivos del Odin Teatret, Francesca Romana Rietti.

Durante cuatro días, cuarenta participantes, que llegaron de Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Italia, Perú, Uruguay y Venezuela, además de las sesiones de práctica física y vocal dirigidas por Silvia Pritz, Julia Varley y Ana Woolf, asistieron a una masterclass de Eugenio Barba y Julia Varley, a un espectáculo y a una demostración de trabajo de Julia Varley y a otra de Ana Woolf; siguieron las clases históricas-prácticas-teóricas guiadas por Eugenio Barba sobre los principios de la antropología teatral y el tema de la transmisión del conocimiento; mostraron e intercambiaron fragmentos de sus trabajos; asistieron a ensayos abiertos de un nuevo unipersonal de Julia Varley dirigido por Eugenio Barba; encontraron representantes y artistas de las distintas comunidades locales y asistieron a la proyección de algunos documentales (presentados por Francesca Romana Rietti) de los Archivos del Odin Teatret, especialmente relacionados con los viajes del grupo y la tradición del trueque; elaboraron y montaron materiales escénicos presentados al final del trabajo, sellado con un banquete festivo de despedida.

En abril de 2024 CATA abrió las inscripciones y anunció la tercera edición, *Acciones en rebeldía. Teatro, necesidad y urgencia*, que tendrá lugar en Santa Fe desde el 19 hasta al 25 de noviembre de 2024 y que se concentrará en las experiencias latinoamericanas y el teatro de grupo. Ana Woolf la presenta así: "Este es un año muy particular para nosotrxs, como artistas y como artistas argentinas. Buscamos referentes de un continente que nos duele y a la vez nos toca porque en nuestra semejanza parecíamos atravesar una y otra vez el mismo río - aunque contradiga a Heráclito. Exilio, aniquilación de derechos obtenidos después de años de lucha en calles y espacios de militancia, economías de sacrificio sin premio al final del camino, la belleza de paisajes y su gente, solidaridad y espacios comunitarios de sobrevivencia. Venimos de Cristina Castrillo y de Arístides Vargas, de su exilio obligado por la llegada de una dictadura militar devastadora, venimos de Ana Correa y Teresa Ralli y de su grupo Yuyachkani que a través de la elección de su nombre nos recuerda siempre una acción primordial "estoy pensando, estoy recordando" ¿Podría llamarlxs artistas? Sí y también cuerpos en resistencia que se vuelven metáfora escénica, escritos en un papel con historias que nos hablan una y otra vez de un país que expulsa a sus hijos quienes seguirán soñando con nostalgia, un regreso. De ellxs queremos, necesitamos hoy seguir prendiendo para poder seguir transitando nuestro tiempo."

Maestras y maestro invitadx:

Ana Correa (Perú), actriz, educadora, directora, Magister en antropología visual y miembro integrante del Grupo Cultural de creación colectiva Yuyachkani desde 1978.

Teresa Ralli (Perú), actriz, educadora, escritora y directora y miembro fundador y parte del Yuyachkani desde 1971. Yuyachkani es uno de los movimientos teatrales de autor más representativos de Perú, además de uno de los más antiguos de Latinoamérica.

Cristina Castrillo (Argentina/Suiza), actriz, directora que se inició en los 1970 en Libre Teatro Libre (LTL) de Córdoba, Argentina, grupo importante en la historia del

teatro latinoamericano, y que luego se exilió en Europa, fundando en 1980 el Teatro delle Radici en Lugano.

Bruna Gusberti (Suiza), actriz y co-directora, después de su formación en Teatro delle Radici ha hecho parte de toda la actividad, espectáculos y giras de la historia del grupo a partir del 1989, se ocupa también de los talleres de formación y es la asistente de dirección de Cristina Castrillo.

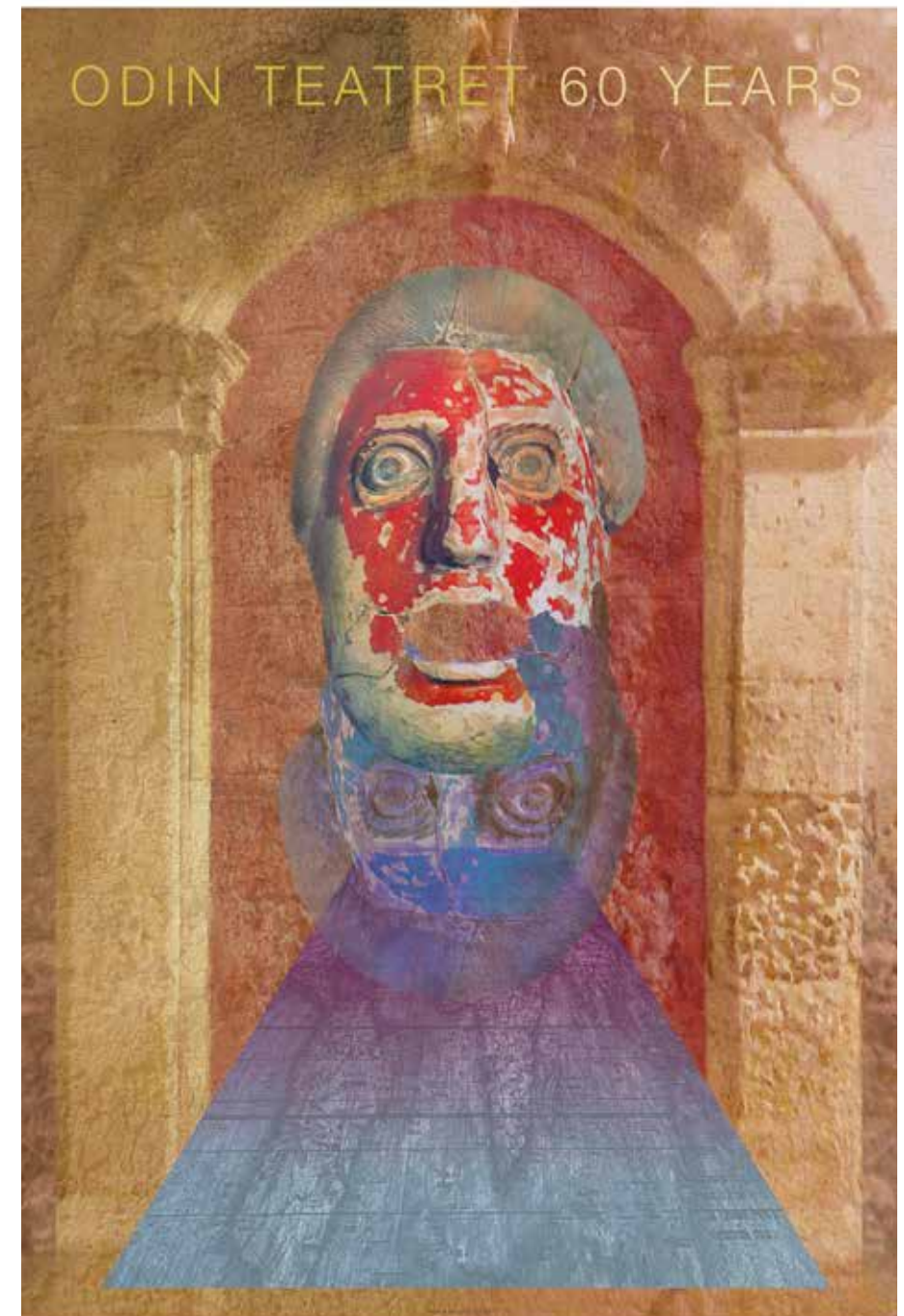
Ana Woolf (Argentina), actriz, directora, LAT Laboratorio de Antropología Teatral y CATA, Centro de Antropología Teatral en Argentina. Única integrante argentina del staff artístico pedagógico de la ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology), dirigida por Eugenio Barba, colaboradora internacional de OTA (Odin Teatret Archives).

Aristides Vargas (Argentina/Ecuador), dramaturgo, director; se destaca su trabajo con la Compañía Nacional de Teatro de Costa Rica, el grupo Justo Rufino Garay de Nicaragua, el grupo Taller del Sótano de México, la compañía Ire de Puerto Rico, etc. Fundador y director de uno de los grupos más prestigiosos de América Latina, Malayerba, de Ecuador. Dueño de una poética singularísima, de alto valor literario, que transforma la visión de lo cotidiano.

Julia Varley

Odin Teatret 60 (Denmark)

In an interview by Anna Bandettini for *La Repubblica* published on the 25th of September 2023, Eugenio Barba said: "I have a handicap: I fall in love all the time, and this fills me with energy. I fall in love with women and men who fight for an idea, who exude sunshine, I am seduced by absurd projects, by creating, for example, a 'living archive' which is an oxymoron, because the archive by its nature is a trunk full of old paperwork. My sons warn me that I will soon be ninety, but I tell them that it is why I have to hurry up and do as much as possible. I am currently rehearsing in Holstebro two new Odin Teatret performances for our 60th anniversary in 2024, which we will celebrate every month in a different country. We start already in October 2023 in Pontirolo, hosted by Teatro Arhat. [...] You can only leave as a legacy what belongs to you. I have nothing to leave. What you call legacy is a cemetery of memories, objects, books, decisions that come from obsessions and often fortuitous circumstances of my life, unrepeatable and inapplicable for those who come after me. Yet the theatre remains the place where ghosts return made of memory which, however, does not consist in the cult of the past, but is a force reaching forward, it is *sats*, the impulse to re-signify in a personal key what has happened. We are the ones who decide to be someone else's heirs, distorting their theories and results to rediscover an essence. I feel like an heir to Stanislavski and Isadora Duncan, yet what do they have in common with Odin Teatret? Fabrizio Cruciani is right when he states that the past is the storage of the new. So, I don't want to leave a legacy, but I don't forget that there will be heirs and that I have to leave something that



Design: Peter Bysted

has meaning and value. That is why I wanted LAFLIS not to be a repository of what has disappeared, but the place of apparitions and love at first sight. The discovery of something new that has no age."

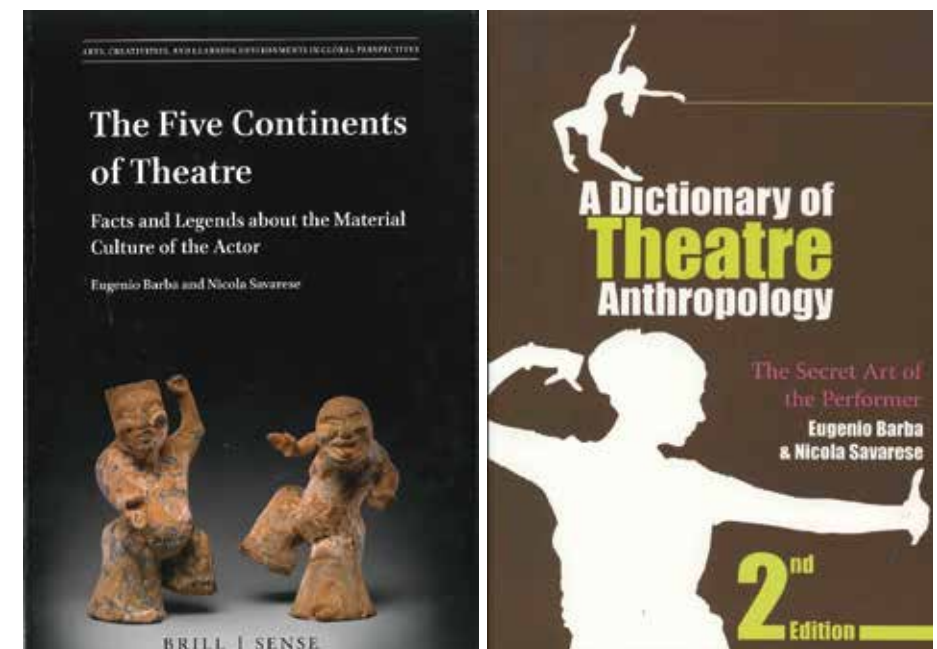
On October 1st, 2024, Odin Teatret turns sixty. During the whole year events around the world will celebrate the anniversary, amongst which: Mexico, hosted by Laboratorio de Artes Escénicas Jerzy Grotowski (13.1-9.2.2024 at Teatro Cervantes in Guanajuato and at Teatro Varsovia, Teatro Castillo, Teatro Galeón in Mexico City presenting *Compassion*, *The Deaf Man's House*, films, workshops, masterclasses); Italy, hosted by Teatro Menotti (12-18.3.2024 in Milan presenting *Ave Maria*, *The Deaf Man's House*, *Text-Action-Relations*, workshops, films, masterclasses, lectures); Norway, hosted by PIT Festival and Grenland Friteater (4-10.6.2024 in Porsgrunn, presenting *The Thrilling Violinists* and *The Deaf Man's House*); Italy hosted by Teatro Nazionale di Roma (20-31.5.2024 at Teatro India in Rome presenting *Compassion*, *The Deaf Man's House*, lectures, films, masterclasses); Denmark hosted by Brogården Kulturvæksthus in collaboration with Teatret OM (16-25.7.2024 in Ringkøbing, Odin Home: all Odin Teatret performances in repertory, workshops, masterclasses, poetry/music barbers, concerts, films, and open rehearsals of Odin Teatret's new production *Hamlet's Clouds*); Italy hosted by ScenArte, Abraxa Teatro, directed by Emilio Genazzini (30-31 August, Rome, *Killing Time*, *The Thrilling Violinists*, meetings for the 30th anniversary Festival Teatro Urbano and 60th anniversary of Odin Teatret); Greece, hosted by Fabrika Theatre and Synthesis Theatre in collaboration with Kostas Vantzios (21-28.9.2024 at Rectif in Athens and Dance School in Ioannina, presenting *Compassion*, *The Flying Carpet*, *The Thrilling Violinists*, lectures and masterclasses); Mexico, hosted by Teatro Boel and Universidad Iberoamericana in collaboration with Sarimé Alvarez (1-14.10.2024 in Aguascalientes and Mexico City presenting *Hamlet's Clouds*, premiere, *The Echo of Silence*, *The Dead Brother*, *The Castle of Holstebro*, *The Thrilling Violinists*, workshops, masterclasses, poetry/music barbers, concerts, films); China, hosted by Wuzhen International Festival (18-28.10.2024 in Wuzhen presenting *A Ordinary Day of the Dancer Gregor Samsa*, *Hamlet's Clouds*); Italy, hosted by Salento University (4-7.11.2024 in Lecce, a Symposium on Odin Teatret's 60 Years and Third Theatre with Théâtre du Soleil, Teatro La Candelaria and Yuyachkani presenting *Compassion*, *The Deaf Man's House*, *The Thrilling Violinists*, *Hamlet's Clouds*, masterclasses, lectures, films); Brazil, hosted by Cia Biruta, Tao Filmes, Mundu Rodá (21.11-6.12 in Petrolina, Brasília, João Pessoa presenting *The Dead Brother*, *The Flying Carpet*, *The Echo of Silence*, masterclass, lectures, films); Italy hosted by Teatro a Canone and Turin University (14-18 December in Turin presenting *Compassion*, masterclass, lectures, films).

In an interview by Giuseppe Liotta for the Italian journal *Hystrio*, Eugenio Barba says: "I entered the theatre in Norway in the late 1950s. Even today my motivation is that of the beginning. I scaled back my ambition. I don't think I'm changing the whole of society, but only my 'island', remaining close to myself and that handful of people who follow me. Over time this motivation has acquired the character of a challenge to become an example that the impossible is the possible which only requires more

time and more effort. There is a 'tradition of the impossible' in the history of 20th-century theatre. Stanislavsky and anonymous theatre groups are proof of this. I was interested in the transmission of knowledge from one generation to another, the meeting and collaboration with artists from other cultures or other fields such as anthropologists and biologists. In short, using theatre as a bridge or Trojan horse (Julian Beck dixit) to overcome differences and create short but intense experiences of exchange. ... I have been lucky. I founded a theatre that as an anonymous person entered theatre history thanks to the hunger for knowledge and the strong bond between me and a handful of actors who worked hard together for sixty years. Thanks to them and the secret people of Odin Teatret - our faithful spectators - I experienced an extraordinary adventure. For me, theatre was a greening island of freedom, the opportunity to engage in politics with other means: those of 'diversity' and 'beauty'. I hope to have the same luck in my next life."

Nicola Savarese

We publish here two articles published in Italy in memory of Nicola Savarese, one of the founders of ISTA, written by two of his colleagues, also very active within the field of theatre anthropology.



Marco De Marinis

Nicola Savarese (1945-2024)

Italian theatre culture mourns Nicola Savarese, who passed away in Rome on the 20th of June at the age of 78. Savarese was one of the most important theatre scholars of the second half of the 20th, also well-known outside Italy. But in his case, the definition of scholar is reductive and generic. Because in his rigorous and original research, he always brought into play all the facets of his complex personality and the multiplicity of his various interests, in between theory and practice.

From a very young age he was a painter in Renato Guttuso's atelier. A few years later, struck by his meeting with Eugenio Barba, he founded a theatre group (Teatro Arcoiris), in which he also tried himself out as an actor. The group did not last long, while the relationship with Barba was never interrupted since then. Together they composed two books of great value and widespread diffusion. The first, *The Secret Art of the Performer. Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (Edizioni di Pagina, in Italian), translated into dozens of languages all over the world and whose first Italian version appeared for La Casa Usher in 1983 with the title *Anatomia del teatro*.

As a scholar he had made his debut as a specialist in Renaissance, dedicating himself in particular to an innovative cataloguing of the tragedies of the 16th century. But the figure of historian, albeit in the highly innovative version of the so-called 'Roman school' (Ferruccio Marotti, Fabrizio Cruciani, Ferdinando Taviani, Claudio Meldolesi, Franco Ruffini), was too small for him and he invented his own specialisation, putting together his passion for travel, stories, images and the actor in an intercultural dimension. Thus was born *Il teatro aldilà del mare* (Studio Forma, 1980); a promising prologue to the search for life, which led him twelve years later to publish a dense volume of 542 pages at Laterza, *Teatro e spettacolo fra Oriente e Occidente*.

It is not so much the Asian theatres as such that interest him but rather the unveiling of the dense and often unsuspected web of relationships that our civilisation has woven since ancient times with the Near, Middle, Far East, also through the theatre, in the broader meaning of the term. Relationships which obviously increased starting from the 18th century, to grow further in the 19th century (golden age of exoticism) and triumph in the 20th century, when oriental suggestion became one of the main drivers of the two great seasons of reform. Also because in the second part of the century we often moved from suggestion to direct knowledge, with directors who no longer limited themselves to dreaming of the theatre 'beyond the sea' from afar but went looking for it on the spot.

The greatest of Nicola's many talents as a scholar-artist, alongside his taste for images (the 'stickers', he said) to which I will return, is his narrative ability. Under his storytelling pen the history of theatre, especially the Eurasian one, becomes an endless sequence of fascinating stories: tales, characters, anecdotes, surprising events. But the red threads that bind them together are always solid: the main one, in my opinion, is the idea that the leitmotif of theatre encounters between East and West is a *intercultural misunderstanding*, the fruitfulness of which, however, given the results, cannot be doubted. To limit

ourselves to the first half of the 20th century: Yeats and Japanese Noh, also fundamental for Jacques Copeau; the Balinese dance theatre that ignites Artaud's vision; the lesson on editing that Eisenstein draws from watching Kabuki; the Chinese actor Mei Lanfang, whom Brecht admired in Moscow and inspired one of the most famous theories of contemporary theatre: the *Verfremdungseffekt*, the 'estrangement effect'; the India of Ruth Saint-Denis and Anna Pavlova (in this regard see the precious appendix to the magnum opus represented by the agile volume *Eurasian Theatre*, Laterza, 2002).

I get to the images. I have never met another theatre scholar with the same penchant and sensitivity for iconographic documents, for their often adventurous retrieval, and comparative reading (à la Warburg, one might say). A history through images was already the pioneering volume of 1980, while for editorial reasons there are no illustrations in the large Laterza book. But in the meantime the long collaboration with Barba had already begun. Their *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, continuously updated for thirty years, contains hundreds of visual references, which represent the primary material for the proposed analyses and hypotheses. In the second volume written together the images became 1400! I am referring to *The Five Continents of Theatre. Facts and Legends of the Material Culture of the Actor*, Edizioni di Pagina, 2017, an original and courageous attempt to tell the events of the world theatre without resorting to chronological order and the separation between different civilizations, but always keeping the direction straight on the actor. And in fact the five continents of the title are not geographical but refer to the five questions used to organise the vast subject matter: when, where, how, for whom, why.

Despite the numerous and important books published, Nicola was above all a champion of orality. His storytelling talent, his humour (even stinging at times), histrionic taste, his ability to make unexpected connections allowed him to take over the audience in just a few minutes, any audience, from students to scholars, from theatregoers to the general public, fascinating and amusing them. Those who were lucky enough to frequent him cannot forget those authentic performances, supported technologically, which were his lecture-performances, to which he dedicated himself especially in the last two decades of the last century.

The most famous and also the most replicated is the one that debuted at the Santarcangelo di Romagna festival in July 1981, which became a book in 1997, after 112 performances all over the world: *Paris/Artaud/Bali. Antonin Artaud Sees Balinese Theatre at the 1931 Paris Colonial Exhibition*, Textus. The last one, to my knowledge, was *Quo vadis? At the Theatre with Ancient Romans: Mimes, Actors, Charioteers and Gladiators*, from 1997, where he put his ancient skills and passions to good use. Speaking of which, one should remember the important reading, with an innovative approach, *Teatri Romani. Gli spettacoli nell'antica Roma*, released in 1996 for the 'collana nera' created by Fabrizio Cruciani, and his collaboration, also as editor, with the journals *Dioniso* and, in digital format, *Dionysus ex machina* (the name comes from him). In 2007, on these topics, he oversaw the staging of a large exhibition at the Colosseum.

Nicola's last two books were once again two surprises, the last two rabbits pulled out of his magic hat. In 2019, for Edizioni di Pagina, he published a long interview with Carmelo Bene, to whom he was very close in the years before his death, with the title

Bene in cucina. Finally, in 2022 he amazes us with a kind of autobiography through a third party, in this case his maternal great-grandfather, Prospero Ferretti, painter and teacher (like him!), but also a follower of Garibaldi, who, coincidentally, had preceded him by a century on the Asian routes, from India to Japan (*Insolita storia di Prospero Ferretti pittore*, Mimesis 2022).

To close, a brief, more personal memory. Between 1996 and 1999 Nicola taught at the DAMS of Bologna University. After meeting him for conferences and performances, and especially at the long sessions of the International School of Theatre Anthropology, in Italy and abroad, I finally had him as a colleague and neighbour in the department. This allowed us to deepen our knowledge and our friendship. We shared a certain intolerance for academic rituals, we both lacked diplomacy and, perhaps, patience. We were called Castor and Pollux (for a change, it was his idea); they called us arrogant at times. We shrugged our shoulders, even welcomed it. It was he who literally forced me to switch from the typewriter, the keys of which I still insisted on hitting in the mid-nineties, to the computer. I will never be grateful enough.

Have a nice trip, Nicola! Wherever you are going, I am sure you will have fun.

This article was published in Italian for *Culture Teatrali* XV (2024) I-III.

Franco Perrelli

In Memoriam

For years Nicola Savarese had not been well: his health had been through a lot, but he had always got through, certainly affected, but invariably with a smile; sombre in body and light in spirit, 'without a white hair in the soul' in short, Mayakovski would have said. Beyond his temper, those who knew him could also enjoy his disposition: he was the most delicate and attentive of friends, but one of the freest and most passionate people I have met in my field. In the university environment, which sometimes gets lost in fake pleasantries or gregarious Byzantinisms, I have never heard Nicola spare, if he was convinced of it, a harsh judgment, even a very severe personal evaluation towards a colleague or some poorly focused study. "Is it worth it?" I asked him once; he looked at me amused: "Why, can you do differently?" On another occasion, when I wanted to provoke him, asking him if he was writing a certain essay for the purposes of a career boost, he stared at me incredulously: "But, Franco, you know that we only work to do the things we like!"

Nicola Savarese, however, could afford authoritative judgments: he was a scholar of absolute greatness, and above all very original. His skills primarily covered the complexity of Asian theatres (see the volumes *Teatro e spettacolo fra Oriente e Occidente* of 1992 and *Eurasian Theatre* of 2003). He then saw the possibility of overturning the

perspective, anthropologically focusing the discussion on the actor-dancer and moving in time between East and West, to the point of illuminating the performative nature of ancient Greek and Latin theatre (see the 2007 exhibition at the Colosseum curated by him). Then, again, with a leap into modernity, other threads could branch out towards the Eurasian cultural dialogue, involving the 'cruelty' of Artaud and the work of the great Russian and German directors who, in the first thirty years of the 20th century, had marked a revolutionary turning point in theatre.

Here another path began: the friendship with Eugenio Barba, who has always had a strong appeal in academic circles, but who in Nicola, in particular, found a collaborator in perfect harmony with their shared anthropological vision of theatre, based on an exchange, or rather on the mixing of cultures, the idea of dramaturgy understood as a montage of actions derived from a reconsidered 'anatomy' of the actors' body and their creative improvisation processes.

Nicola's contribution in this field is decisive, and, to some extent, transcends the highly but merely theoretical commitment. It was achieved also in actual personal performances (brilliant conferences-exhibitions-shows on Asian theatres), as well as in the care and support of various 'Third Theatre' groups from Puglia and beyond.

Furthermore, only Nicola could manage, even if faithful in his friendships, to combine his very close connection to Barba with that to another Salento born theatre phenomenon, Carmelo Bene, to whom he dedicated a fluvial interview in 1997, *Bene in the kitchen*. It was the result of a 'dazzling' attraction between the two personalities, whose cultural profile, apparently, could not be more distant.

Alone these comparisons tell us that Nicola died in Rome, yes, but he gave a lot to the region of Puglia. Despite holding courses all over the world, for years, he was the theatre soul of the University of Salento, and chose as his home Carpignano, the village that went down in history for Odin Teatret's "barbers". In his personal geography, however, Bari was also important to him. Here, together with Barba, he published with Edizioni di Pagina two fundamental books: *The Secret Art of the Performer* and *The Five Continents of Theatre*. On this last volume, Nicola had concerted a visionary reconstruction of texts and, above all, images, on the infinite interweaving of the far from simple documentation which is called 'History of Performance' and on the material culture of the actors. Looking through it, one had the impression of reading an almost filmic narration. When I asked him how he managed to achieve such a surprising effect for the reader, Nicola slyly observed: "But don't you know that I have always liked playing with stickers?"

The last time I heard from him, about six months ago, he could move very little, but he confessed to me with his fearless attitude: "You know, I'm doing like Napoleon: he had many tables in his palace and on each one he worked on a problem. I do the same in my study and thus move from one point of the world to another."

Nicola, now and finally, can fly from one point to another of that world, which he described to us, in his books, with its wonderful diversity and without borders between human beings.

This article was first published in Italian on *La Repubblica*, 21.6.2024

Letters



From Odin Teatret's performance *Hamlet's Clouds*. Photo: Stefano Di Buduo

Bianca Mastrominico (Italy/UK)

Edinburgh, 4 January 2022

Dear Eugenio,

Following our meeting, I have been reflecting on the difference between the dynamics of apprenticeship and transmission which I perceived while working with you and Julia on the Zoom platform. Through the years I've met you both through several media, and the online modality appears particularly interesting to me for the following reasons:

If we had worked together in presence, and John and I had asked to film our meeting, the working space would have been 'live' and the video documentation an echo of what we had done.

You and Julia would not have talked to us through the camera, and we would not have played for the camera either. We could have only observed the experience and the embodied memory 'outside' of ourselves, in the film in which these were documented. The camera eye would have captured an event which did not include it or consider it as 'a working space'.

Instead, what strikes me watching our meeting back is that having worked directly on and through screens, the space was lived and acted out in the moment, and it was recorded as it was perceived by us in that instant, without filters or editing.

The effect that I receive when I watch it back is that of 're-living' it and not just because I remember in my body, but because it is like being there once again, as the space we created together continues to exist on screen exactly as I lived it in that very moment.

For example, I can put myself into the situation, as watching and listening to you I can imagine that you are there talking to me, because there is nothing that indicates that this is in the 'past'.

Also, I can re-watch in gallery view (all our four screens together), but also in speaker view, which allows me to focus on the person talking and on their specific reactions, instead of those of the group. In so doing I obtain more objective information about how each of us was reacting, the intentions, the tones, and the expressivity.

This gives me the possibility of reflecting more deeply about why you said something to me, the physical expression, and the energy. All information which I could not retrieve through a film shot purely for the purpose of documentation.

The implications of this kind of connection and communication are fascinating, and are a leap into a future of holograms - once belonging to science fiction but today ever more real - as the next cyborg move to augment a sense of 'reality' in digital communication.

This of course does not diminish the intrinsic value of the printed book and all the materiality necessary to preserve the history of the 'living archives', though I feel it is useful to exchange my experience of having worked with both you and Julia on Zoom.

Hugs, Bianca

This letter was sent to Eugenio Barba following an online mentored rehearsal led by Barba and Julia Varley with Bianca Mastrominico and John Dean (Organic Theatre) in December 2021.

Franco Ruffini (Italy)

Rome, 6 January 2022

Dear Eugenio,

Theatre anthropologies, plural.

I'll start from the beginning. As I tried to argue in my online speech from Brazil (attached), theatre anthropology in its constitutive dynamics is nothing other than an actor's search for identity. It eliminates - or rather, sets aside - everything that actors need to 'make a scene', and leaves them only what they need to 'make presence', a body in action. It is a real action, devoid of any 'pretention' as expressed by Copeau or Stanislavsky. Theatre anthropology is, in essence, the path of conscious and effective contrast to pretention. It is a contrast to pretention, wherever it can be found: in the physical body in the form of gestures as the opposite of real action; in the psychic body in the form of emotions as the opposite of feeling; in the mental body in the form of wandering thoughts as the opposite of concentrated thinking; and of the volitional body in the form of desires as the opposite of will.

Having posed the question in these terms, we can legitimately - or rather, dutifully - speak of many theatre anthropologies: one for each body on which the fight against generic pretention is focused, through the fight against the specific pretention of that body. There is a theatre anthropology of the physical body, in the name of Meyerhold and his biomechanics; just as there is a theatre anthropology of the psychic body, under the banner of Stanislavsky and his revival; just as the same could be said for the mental body and the volitional body, always in the spirit of Stanislavsky with his various exercises.

It goes without saying, dear Eugenio, that what I call bodies here could be called, as is the custom, respectively psyche, thought and will, without bothering with the word 'body'. But the problem does not change, because it is only as a whole (as bodies or as functions) that we can legitimately speak of the body, singular with respect to grammar, and therefore plural with respect to composition. I will write it in capital letters: BODY, to distinguish it from the individual component bodies and, in particular, from the physical body, with which one is induced to assimilate it.

But the BODY does not coincide with the physical body: even if all the psychic, mental and volitional dynamics manifest themselves in the physical body.

This implies, in conclusion, that the front of attack on pretention is indifferent: that of the gestures of the physical body, that of the emotions of the psychic body, and so on. The battlefield always and in every case remains the BODY in its singular plurality.

Training: is it a singular exercise of the physical body? Or is it not rather a plurality of exercises - psychic, mental, volitional - that manifest themselves in the physical body?

Are there advantages in the approach to theatre anthropology that I have proposed here? I think so.

First of all: theatre anthropology as a conscious and effective contrast to pretention allows us to see it in practical, operational, and not just theoretical terms.

Furthermore: pretention as a parasitic dynamic, merely scenographic, allows us to see the different areas of action - psychic, mental, volitional - as specific bodies, within the singular plurality of the BODY.

Last but not least: the need to distinguish the BODY from the physical body, where the various dynamics of the contrast to pretention are revealed.

In short: a little clarity. Which may be the enemy of truth, but it is equally the enemy of confusion.

Dear Eugenio, I hope that these reflections of mine can be useful to you in any way.

I remain perplexed by the usefulness of comparing theatre anthropology copyright Barba with anthropology of performance copyright Turner and/or Schechner. It would still remain a comparison on a theoretical level, which would nullify the first of the advantages I have just listed. There remains the separate case of Grotowski, about which I won't say anything for now.

I tried to take advantage of your therapeutic advice, let's see what happens.

*A strong hug with the usual affection,
Franco*

About the authors

Coral Aguirre (Argentina/Mexico) is a well known author and theatre figure in Argentina and Mexico. She has confronted challenges such as state terrorism using theatre as a tool. She has received prizes with International recognition for playwriting and scripts. Her work has been presented in Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico. She has published several articles and essays in theatre journals.

Eugenio Barba (Italy/Denmark) created Odin Teatret in 1964 in Oslo, Norway, and in 1966 moved with it as a theatre laboratory to Holstebro, Denmark. In 1980 he founded the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA). He has directed 83 productions with Odin Teatret and the intercultural Ensemble Theatrum Mundi. Author of twenty-four books; his latest publication, in collaboration with Nicola Savarese, is *The Five Continents of Theatre. Facts and Legends of the Material Culture of the Actor* (Brill/Sense, 2019). He is the recipient of honorary doctorates from thirteen universities.

Fiora Bemporad (Argentina-Italy) studied photography at the Universidad Central de Venezuela. She has worked as a photographer for journalism (in Italy, Spain, Argentina and Denmark), book publications, theatre, publicity, fairs and calendars. Since 1990 she collaborates with ISTA and Odin Teatret. Her most characteristic photographs are portraits of authors, artists and politicians shown in many individual exhibitions. Her collective exhibitions include the itinerant "Undici donne fotografe" on invitation of the Italian Culture Institute; "Ciclos de Artistas Plasticos" with four painters; and Fotogaleria at the Teatro Municipal San Martin in Buenos Aires directed by Sarah Facio.

Fabrizio Cruciani (Italy) was a theatre scholar and critic who re-founded theatre studies, one of the founders of ISTA. He graduated at the Sapienza University in Rome, was a lecturer since 1971 at the DAMS in Bologna, co-founder in 1986 of the journal *Teatro e Storia* and editor of other journals such as *Quaderni di teatro* and *Biblioteca teatrale*. Amongst his most important publications *Civiltà teatrale nel XX secolo* and *Lo spazio del teatro*. His most seminal studies are on theatre reform in the 20th century and Renaissance theatre, outdoors theatre and actors training. He directed a theatre series for the publishing house La casa Usher and the notebooks of the Centro per la sperimentazione e la ricerca teatrale di Pontedera.

Marco De Marinis (Italy) was full professor of theatre disciplines at the University of Bologna, where from 2004 to 2017 he directed the La Soffitta Theatre Centre. In 1999 he founded the journal *Culture Teatrali*, which has reached issue 31 (La casa Usher). He has taught in numerous foreign universities. Many of his books and articles are translated into the main languages. Among the latest published works:

Etienne Decroux and His Theatre Laboratory, Icarus/Routledge, 2015; *Ripensare il Novecento teatrale*, Bulzoni, 2018; *Per una politica della performance*, Editoria & Spettacolo, 2020; *Understanding Theatre*, Seagull Press, 2023; *Grotowski. Il superamento della rappresentazione*, Editoria & Spettacolo, 2023.

Francesco Galli (Italy) has photographed in Italy and abroad in the following fields: anthropology, architecture, archaeology, landscape and theatre. He graduated in Architecture at La Sapienza University in Rome. In recent years his research has focused on urban and natural landscapes. Among others, he has worked for Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia, Università La Sapienza di Roma, Università della Tuscia, Kent University, British Columbia University, The Grotowski Institute, Teatro di Roma. Francesco Galli collaborates with Odin Teatret since 1993, photographing performances in Holstebro and on tour, ISTA and The University of Eurasian Theatre sessions, Holstebro Festuge and barbers. Francesco Galli follows all the meetings of the Bridge of Winds directed by Iben Nagel Rasmussen.

Piergiorgio Giacchè (Italy) is an anthropologist and author. As a researcher he has dealt with various socio-cultural problems such as youth conditions, deviance, mass communication, housing loneliness, cultural politics. He was a professor of Anthropology of Theatre and Performance at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Perugia. He was editor of *Ombre Rosse*, *Linea d'ombra*, *La terra vista dalla luna* and *Lo straniero*, journals founded and directed by Goffredo Fofi and is currently part of the scientific committee of the magazine *L'Ethnographie* published by the Laboratoire d'Ethnoscénologie of the Maison de Sciences de l'Homme - Paris Nord and is a collaborator of the monthly magazine *Gli Asini*.

Richard Gough (UK) is Artistic Director of the Centre for Performance Research (CPR) and Professor of Music & Performance in the Faculty of Business and Creative Industries at the University of South Wales, Cardiff, Wales, UK. He has dedicated the last forty-five years to developing and exploring interdisciplinary, experimental performance work. He has directed over eighty productions and led workshops internationally. He is the General Editor and co-founder of *Performance Research* (*The Journal of Performance Arts* published eight issues annually by Routledge, Taylor & Francis), and is publisher and series editor of Black Mountain Press and Performance Research Books (an independent imprint of the Journal).

Gaia Diana Dalia Gulizia (Italy) is a poet, performer, cultural journalist and sound therapist. After being an actress, she currently creates artistic projects combining poetry, sound and performing arts. As a cultural freelance journalist, she writes mainly theatre reviews, and is the founder of the cultural blog *Gaia e l'Incanto*. For some years, she has collaborated with independent cinema festivals in Morocco as a jury member and conducting creative workshops for young people.

Claire Heggen (France) is artistic director of the Compagnie Claire Heggen-Théâtre du Mouvement, a research and creation company. Author, actress, director, teacher, she develops transversal skills from contrasting aesthetics. Recently she created the eventful conference *L'Inventaire* (2021) and the performances *Laps* (2020) and *Aeterna* (2019). Claire Heggen also works on intersections between the arts as part of the Fondation des Transversales, European Academy of Mime and Gesture Arts. She co-founded and co-directed, with Yves Marc, the Théâtre du Mouvement from 1975

to 2017. Knight of Arts and Letters, she received the International Puppetry Institute Prize for transmission in 2015.

Leszek Kolankiewicz (Poland) is a culturologist. He was the originator of a so called Warsaw school of anthropology of performance. Between 2005 and 2012, Kolankiewicz served as Director of the Institute of Polish Culture at the University of Warsaw, and between 2012 and 2016 he was Director of the Centre de Civilisation Polonaise at the Paris-Sorbonne University. He is member of Polish PEN Club, member of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO, former President of the Committee on Cultural Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences, and former Director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee at the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. His books include: *On the Road Active Culture: The Activities of Grotowski's Theatre Laboratory Institute in the years 1970–1977* (1978), *Święty Artaud* (1988, 2001), *Samba z bogami. Opowieść antropologiczna* (1995, 2007, 2016), *Dziady. Teatr święta zmarłych* (1999, 2020), *Wielki mały wóz* (2001).

Virginie Magnat (France/Canada) is currently a Full Professor at the University of British Columbia's Okanagan Campus and her interdisciplinary research spans the fields of performance studies, cultural anthropology, qualitative research, arts-based inquiry, and Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies. She is author of two monographs, *The Performative Power of Vocality* (Routledge 2020) and *Grotowski, Women, and Contemporary Performance: Meetings with Remarkable Women* (Routledge 2014) along with the *Meetings with Remarkable Women* companion documentary film series (Routledge Performance Archive). As a performance practitioner, she specializes in movement-based performance training, body-voice integration, physical and vocal improvisation, collaborative, solo, and site-specific performance creation, as well as traditional singing.

Leonardo Mancini (Italy) has obtained his PhD in Letters at the University of Turin, in co-tutorship at the Université Paris 8. He has been DAAD fellow at the Freie Universität Berlin (Institut für Theaterwissenschaft), and he is currently Assistant professor in Performing Arts at the University of Turin. His research focuses on the history of the Italian Theatre between 19th and 20th centuries, declamation on stage, the pedagogy of the actor. Among his publications, he has recently published the monographs *Carmelo Bene: fonti della poetica* (Mimesis, Milano 2020), and Luigi Rasi. *La declamazione come scienza nuova* (Mimesis, Milano 2021).

Bianca Mastrominico (Italy/UK) is a performance maker, author/director, researcher and pedagogue currently based in Edinburgh, Scotland. Born in Naples, she grew up in a historical theatre family and received her first apprenticeship through the work of her parents, Pina Cipriani and Franco Nico. In 2002 Bianca founded Organic Theatre with John Dean, an international performance laboratory rooted in ongoing training and research for innovative practice and pedagogy. Bianca is Programme Leader for MA Digital Performance and BA(Hons) Performance at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, where she also teaches Theatre Anthropology as well as Theatre Laboratory and Devising Practices. Bianca has published for *The Open Page*, *Total Theatre Magazine*, *New Theatre Quarterly*, *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*, and *Body, Space and Technology*, amongst others.

Aline Menassé (Mexico) is an actress, director, playwright, teacher and translator. She began her career in theatre in 1970 and co-founded the Teatro Laboratorio La Rueca in 1980 and was member of the National System of Creators, Secretaria de Cultura from 2018 to 2021. Amongst others, she is playwright and director of the plays *Virginia the Death of the Moth*, *Frida Intimate Delirium*, and *Antigona's Island*; and director of the plays *Pervertimento* and *Otros Gestos para Nada* by José Sanchis Sinisterra; *Tloque Nabuaque/It who has everything in itself*; *Shlemiel the First* by Bashevi Singer; *Non tutti i ladri vengono per nuocere* by Dario Fo. She has attended workshops with national and international figures such as Jerzy Grotowski, Eugenio Barba, Odin Teatret, Roy Hart Theatre, Mario Delgado, José Sanchis Sinisterra, Patrice Pavis, Pol Pelletier, Ludwik Margules, Luis de Tavira, Héctor Mendoza.

Franco Perrelli (Italy) was Full Professor of Performing Arts at Universities of Turin and Bari. He is a specialist in Scandinavian and contemporary theatre. In 2009, he won the Pirandello Prize and, in 2014, the Strindbergpris of the Swedish Strindbergssällskap. He is chairman of the scientific board of LAFLIS. Many of his essays are translated abroad. Moreover, recently he wrote *On Ibsen and Strindberg. The Reversed Telescope*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019; *Kaj Munk e i suoi doppi*, Edizioni di Pagina, 2020; and *Il teatro scandinavo*, Carocci, 2024.

Jean-Marie Pradier (Morocco/France), a founding member of ISTA, is Professor Emeritus at the Theatre Department of the University of Paris 8. Founder of ethnoscenology (1995), dedicated to the study of performance practices. Scientific director of the journal *L'Ethnographie*, and a member of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Paris Nord. Among his many publications: *La scène et la fabrique des corps. Ethnoscénologie du spectacle vivant en Occident* (PU Bordeaux, 2000) and *Fànic, Fàlic, Fàtic – Vers una teoria neurocultural dels espectacles vius* (Universitat de Valencia 1998).

Francesca Romana Rietti (Italy) has obtained her PhD in Theatre and Performance History, Theory and Technique at La Sapienza University of Rome and has published the book *Jean-Louis Barrault. Artigianato teatrale* (Bulzoni, Roma, 2010). In 2004 she was a postgraduate research assistant at the Department of Dramaturgy of the University of Aarhus. From 2005 to 2021 she was part of Odin Teatret's staff and in 2008, together with Mirella Schino and Valentina Tibaldi, she founded the Odin Teatret Archives, based in Holstebro. From 2006 to 2021 she was also a lecturer of Theatre History in different Italian Universities and from 2022 she develops an independent activity of pedagogy and research. She is editor of *Il Ponte dei Venti. Un'esperienza di pedagogia teatrale con Iben Nagel Rasmussen* (Bologna, I Quaderni del Battello Ebbro, 2001) and of *Tracce. Training e storia di un'attrice dell'Odin Teatret* by Roberta Carreri (Corazzano, Titivillus, 2013 [2007]). Since 2014 she is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Teatro e Storia* and since 2015 she collaborates with the monthly review *L'indice dei libri*.

Franco Ruffini (Italy), a founding member of ISTA, has written extensively on theatre anthropology. He is Professor Emeritus of the University of Roma Tre. He taught physics and mathematics before devoting himself to theatre history focusing, among other things, on Stanislavski, Artaud, Decroux and Grotowski. His numerous books deal mainly with the reformers of the 20th century theatre. His latest publication is *Grotowski e Gurdjieff* (Editoriale Scientifica, 2019). His book *Theatre and Box-*

ing. *The Actor Who Flies* has been translated into English (Icarus-Routledge, 2014). Founding member of the journal *Teatro e Storia* (1986).

Richard Schechner (USA), one of the founders of Performance Studies, is a performance theorist, theatre director, author, editor of *TDR* and the *Enactments* book series, University Professor, and Professor of Performance Studies. He founded The Performance Group and East Coast Artists. His theatre productions include *Dionysus in 69*, *Commune*, *The Tooth of Crime*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, Seneca's *Oedipus*, *Faust/gastronome*, *Three Sisters*, *Hamlet*, *The Oresteia*, *Yokasta*, *Swimming to Spalding*, and *Imagining O*. His books include *Public Domain*, *Environmental Theater*, *Performance Theory*, *The Future of Ritual*, *Between Theater and Anthropology*, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, and *Performed Imaginaries*. As of 2018, his books have been translated into 18 languages. He has been awarded numerous fellowships including Guggenheim, NEH, ACLS, and fellowships at Dartmouth, Cornell, Yale, Princeton, and the Central School of Speech and Drama, London.

Julia Varley (UK/Denmark) since 1976 is actress at Odin Teatret. Since 1990 she has been involved in the conception and organisation of ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology). She is active in The Magdalena Project, a network of women in contemporary theatre of which is a founding member. She directs Transit International Festival and is on the editorial board of *The Open Page*, a journal devoted to women's work in theatre. Author of numerous articles and essays and has published five books, among which *Stones of Water. Notes of an Odin Actress* (Routledge 2011).

Susanne Vill (Germany) is a scholar, singer, director, and congress organiser. She has taught at the University of Bayreuth in the years 1988-2012, and at the University of Wien in the years 2010-2018; member of ISTA and EMA (Europäische Musiktheater Akademie). She has presented theatre productions and workshops in Europe, Israel and Singapore, at ISTA in Brazil and UK, and done telecasts about theatre festivals, publications about theatre, opera, singing and media performances. She has given lectures, concerts and radio recordings in Europe, Japan, Singapore and USA.

JTA

JTA next issue:

"Breaking the Rules"

2025

