

# Challenges of the Mind

**Artistic Director ● Dr Jurij Alschitz**

## New Dimensions in Theatre Training

A reader of the online  
conference 15 – 17 June 2020

**Curator, Moderator and Editor ● Christine Schmalor**

An initiative of the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT/ITI and the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts invited by the Galiaskar Kamal Tatar Academic Theatre on the occasion of the 6th International Theatre and Education Festival-Forum "Nauruz".

Published by the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT/ITI  
edition ars incognita  
2020

# Content

Welcome note by Professor Farid Rafkatovich Bikchantaev .....	3
Welcome Address by Prof h.c. Tobias Biancone .....	6
Introduction by Christine Schmalor .....	9
Keynote by Dr. Jurij Alschitz .....	13
Conference speakers .....	17
Professor Pavlos Kavouras	
Empowering theater training through performative awareness: on the dialogics of reflexivity and transcendental consciousness .....	17
Marcus Lobbes	
Bodies in Spaces. Changed working conditions under the condition of a partial relocation of production and work processes into digital and virtual spaces. ....	32
Interlude37	
A Question of Change.....	37
Johannes Gärtner	
SENSE – MEANING – NOThing but mySELF .....	38
Dr Dumitriana Condurache	
The one-to-one method and its new perspectives .....	46
Felipe Cervera	
Planetary performance pedagogies: towards pedagogies of remote co-presence in theatre training .....	52
Professor Dr. Erik Lint	
Expressive Media: Roots for the Future .....	54
Christine Schmalor	
New Dimensions in Theatre Training .....	67
Roundtable Discussion .....	71
Dr Jurij Alschitz	
The spirit of self-creation is a free soul .....	71
Professor Alejandro Puche	
The ritual of rehearsals in the virtual age .....	72
Tobias Biancone	
It's all about Communication .....	75

Jaroslaw Fret	
Body Constitution for pandemic time .....	76
Janice Poon	
Not losing hope .....	79
Online Theatre Training in Russia.....	81
Interviews	
Sergei Dreyden .....	81
Alexander Filippenko .....	82
Adolf Shapiro .....	83
Yulia Peresild .....	84
Professor Rosa Shaikhaydarovna Akhmadieva	
Prospects for using distant educational technologies in the training of cultural and artistic professionals .....	86
Elmira Kurilenko, Victoria Bogdanova	
Pedagogical Discoveries or positive Aspects of Distance Learning for Artists at a Higher Theatre Education Institution .....	91
Igor Malikov	
Online training for actors and directors .....	97
Voices during and after the conference.....	99
The Organisations.....	104
The World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT / ITI.....	104
The ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts.....	105
Galiaskar Kamal Tatar Academic Theatre.....	106

**Please respect our work and get your own copy at our [BOOKSHOP](#)**

Published by  
World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT e.V. | research centre of the International Theatre  
Institute  
Berlin, Germany  
[akt-zent@theatre-culture.org](mailto:akt-zent@theatre-culture.org)  
[www.theatre-culture.org](http://www.theatre-culture.org)

In collaboration with the Galiaskar Kamal Tatar Academic Theatre, Kazan, Russia

All © by the authors

All rights reserved

ISBN 978-3-946735-14-4

## Welcome note by Professor Farid Rafkatovich Bikchantaev

It is a pleasure for me to welcome everyone reading this online brochure dedicated to the International Online Conference on new dimensions in Theater Training “Challenges of the Mind”. The above mentioned conference was held under the auspices of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts, on the basis of the World Theater Training Institute “AKT -ZENT” (ITI Research Center) and in the frame of the VI International Theatre and Education Online-Festival-Forum “Nauruz”. The Festival-Forum was organized by the Galiaskar Kamal Tatar State Academic Theater (Kazan, the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia), where I work as the artistic director.

Our theatre has once in two years been holding the education Festival-Forum “Nauruz” since 2010. During this period more than three thousand people from Tatarstan, Russia and the CIS have completed their performing arts tuition under the supervision of almost one hundred of specialists in different areas of theatre training. This year because of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic we took the liberty of making our traditional educational program online. It should be noted that such a format allowed us to increase participant number, and more importantly, allowed for a continuation of communication.

I am grateful to Tobias Biancone, the President of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts and Director General of the International Theatre Institute who is our ongoing teacher and tutor. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Jurij Alschitz, the Director of the World Theater Training Institute “AKT–ZENT” and Christine Schmalor, the Conference moderator, for their active participation, brilliant ideas and their realization.

I got lots of wonderful impressions and reflections on the theatre, its essence, past and future during the conference dates, June 15-17. I also had the feeling of the theatre community that keeps up with the times and tries things out, having no fear of going wrong.

The theater was challenged. And many of us could immediately reform, change their work methods and even get very interesting experiment results in the sphere of online training. On the one hand, the experiments convinced me that it is possible to go online in the process of directors’ and actors’ tuition (I have been teaching for more than 30 years). This training format gives some brand new tools and has good prospects for further development.

On the other hand, though it seems surprising, the online format did prove that theatre is a living art, and theatrical knowledge that we try to transmit online is aimed at teaching how to evoke a lively emotion and human response in the audience.

This professional talk became our mutual theater mind challenge to the hastily changing modern epoch that makes us change together with it. It seems to me that in these days the realization of the following fact hit all of us. No matter how we are pressed and lead by time, it is necessary for theatre and theater education to preserve the foundations of living,



quivering, leisurely, and contemplative, better comprehension of theatrical truths. And during this downtime, this forced disconnection from the live theater “oxygen”, we are all the more convinced that real, full-blooded, tangible life is the true theater basis.

This forced stop assumed the meaning of lost time that should be realized and recovered ... in any and every possible ways including virtual ones. Surprisingly online communication allows us to approach this aim when live intersection of energies is impossible.

My dear Friends! I wish you useful reading and immersion into new, debatable, issues of theatrical pedagogy. See you soon!



**Professor Farid Rafkatovich Bikchantaev** (Russia, Tatarstan). Director and Teacher. Artistic director of G. Kamal Tatar State Academic Theatre and the International Theatre and Education Festival-Forum “Nauruz”.

Over 17 years, he has staged more than 30 performances in various theatres. Today F. Bikchantaev continues his bold experiments in the field of theatrical language, in which the traditions and aesthetics of the national theatre are creatively refracted and enriched. He passes on his experiences in academies and universities as both teacher and advisor.

## Welcome Address by Prof h.c. Tobias Biancone

Dear Farid Rarkatovich Bikchantaev,  
dear Jurij Alschitz,  
dear Christine Schmalor,  
dear friends and colleagues from Kazan, and all over the world

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to speak to you on the occasion of this Online Conference that is focussing on New Dimensions in Theatre Training. I am amazed about the interest that this conference has evoked all over the world. The number of participants demonstrates that this topic has been very well chosen.

When thinking about theatre training the first question that I have is “Why is the training of actresses and actors or stage directors and all the professions that are related to theatrical performance so important for the future of theatre?”

The first concern that comes to my mind is “the audience”. Without an audience no actress and no actor will be able to do what she or he likes to do. Without an audience no stage director will feel that she or he is doing a worthwhile job. This is especially witnessed in these days of the Covid-19 pandemic when governments are closing down theatre venues all over the world – for health, safety and other reasons. Many theatre artists talk about how they miss the audience. Some state that they miss not being able to be in dialogue with the people in the audience. For numerous individuals, troupes and institutions it also means that their existence is at risk.

To be able to do a job in an excellent way a person needs training that leads him to do an extraordinary job. Work that is done in a professional way is what members of the audience will appreciate when actresses or actors are on stage. I guess that all of us have experienced the magic moments that theatre professionals have made us sit in an audience, be one with the actors, feel the tension, the emotions, the thrills and the inspiration that a play can give to us. From my viewpoint, that is the reason why professional theatre training is so important. Theatre will only live and have a future as long as excellently trained actress and actors will be able to inspire an audience. And this implies that they will receive applause, support and remuneration.

But who are the members of the audience? Well, from my viewpoint, theatre is there for everybody. It should not be limited to any kind of group of people. Not just for the colleagues. Not just for an elite. Not just for the rich people. No, theatre should be accessible to everybody.

Now the next questions that I have are: “How can a theatre educator lead her or his students to become excellent actresses, actors or any kind of theatre professionals?” – “What is needed in theatre education to make theatre to survive better and bring about professional theatre professionals?” Well, that is the main issue of this conference.

I will inhibit myself of giving you my viewpoint. I would rather raise some questions for this conference about **new dimension in theatre training**:

- What will happen to the old traditions of theatre training? Will they become obsolete?
- How can theatre students learn to think for themselves?
- How can students be allowed to find out for themselves what the essence of theatre is for her or him?
- How can an actress or actor or any theatre related professional find her or his “own signature” – a signature that belongs only to her or him and is unique to her or him?
- How can the online tools that are offered to anybody add value to existing theatre methods?

Coming back to the issue of the audience: When a couple of actresses and actors are telling me a story in an extraordinary and unique way, when I feel the magic of a performance, the only question that does NOT come on my mind at the end of great performance is: According to which methodology have they been trained. I could not care less. I guess most of the people of the audience do not put emphasis on this. But when reflecting on theatre training and theatre education this question necessarily should be raised.

“Many roads lead to Rome.” I am sure this saying can be applied in theatre training as well. I am quite sure that all the speakers and participants are on a road to bring knowledge and know-how to others. To listen to their thoughts and experiences, to hear about their reflections on new dimensions for theatre training, to find out how the Internet can play a role in this regard, that is what the three-days conference is all about. It is with utmost interest that I will follow the different voices. I hope you share this attitude with me.

I would like to thank the teams of the Galiaskar Kamal Tatar Academic Theatre in Kazan and the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT and the Secretariat of ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts for creating, promoting and organizing this platform.

I would like to warmly welcome all the speakers and participants. It is great to have you here and now in this real virtual space.

May this online conference be an inspiring and motivating event for all of us.



**Prof. h.c. Tobias Biancone (Switzerland)**

Poet and Writer. President of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in Performing Arts and Director General of International Theatre Institute, the World Organisation for the Performing Arts. Professor honoris causa of the Central Academy of Drama, Beijing.



## Introduction by Christine Schmalor

Everything began back in Autumn 2019 with the idea of pairing the biennial International Theatre and Education Festival Forum “Nauruz” with an expert colloquium. Artistic Director, Dr Jurij Alschitz, suggested the theme of the festival be the integration of online education into modern educational practice. Under the title *Theatre Training in Hyperspace*, this expert colloquium was to explore the latest trends, experiences and possible perspectives relating to theatre training methods, culminating in a discussion for all participants on the final day in the large hall of the G. Kamal Tatar State Academic Theatre.

However, in the Spring of 2020, everything changed worldwide within a very short time; the theatres closed, conferences were cancelled or postponed and training practices in theatre schools, academies and universities were changed in such a way that a large percentage of teachers were asked to teach online. How? With what tools? With what methods? According to which curriculum? Scenarios of the future had become the present.

Consequently, the international workshop festival “Nauruz” turned into an online festival featuring approximately twenty courses attended by over seven hundred students, mostly professional theatre makers. This overwhelming demand, as well as the great acceptance and enthusiasm, made it worth the effort to offer this new format in a very short time; the organising theatre and its staff have made a quantum leap!

In this way, our intimate expert colloquium turned into an online conference entitled *Challenges of the Mind*. With over three hundred and fifty registrations from over fifty countries in such a short space of time, the online conference about *new dimensions in theatre training* indicated a huge surge of interest in the topic, as well as a willing captive audience. During the registration process, many participants already took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions to colleagues in advance. Most of the questions and comments can be summarized in this way: "If anything, how should online training for actors be possible?" and "how can physicality be transferred into virtual space and taught in any form?" Responses gathered here evidence an understandable helplessness in the face of sudden change. The well-known analogue training methods of the rehearsal room have been transferred practically and mentally into a digital format, which, although perhaps leading to new insights and experiences also clearly shows its own limitations; more, for several demands the transfer proofs simply being impossible.

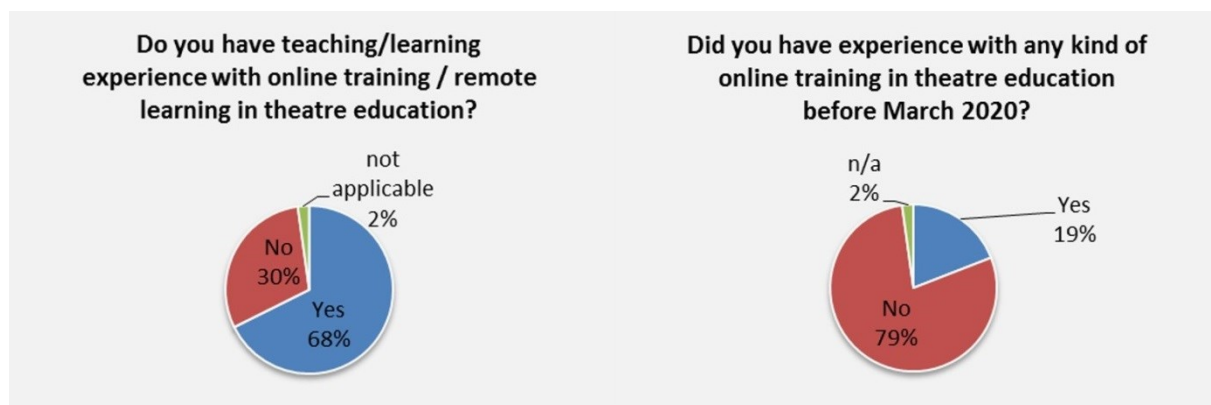
It is exactly this problem that was discussed during the conference. Which questions are actually useful? If online methodology does not already exist, how and where should we begin? What can new technologies offer and what not? These changes go far beyond technical questions and, ultimately, we must first define the new subjects of our research.

On each of the three days, two hundred colleagues entered the virtual conference room for two hours. They were welcomed by international experts, who shared their experiences, thoughts and ideas. In fact, the format of the meeting (over the course of several days)

proved to be very successful, resulting in a professional and cordial atmosphere amongst the colleagues, even though the majority - the participating audience - could only be connected visibly to each other at the end of each session. After the discussions concluded, the participants were able to reflect on the ideas shared and then had further opportunity to continue the exchange. This personal communication was used by many attendees, in addition to other virtual chat possibilities. For example, telegram chat is still being used intensively one month later.

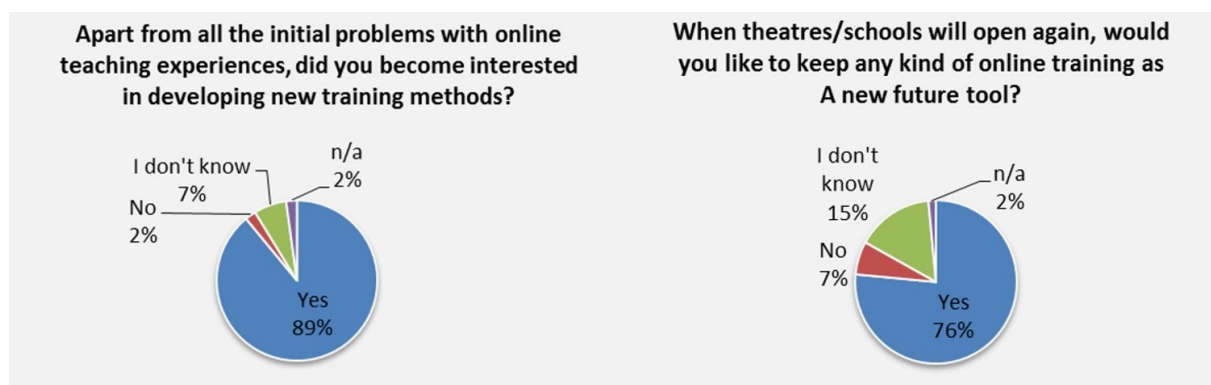
During the first and second day we conducted two short surveys.

The answers below show a snapshot that is clearly reflective of the contemporary Covid-19 context. In a very short time, i.e. within three months, the ratio has reversed in terms of practical experience versus online teaching.



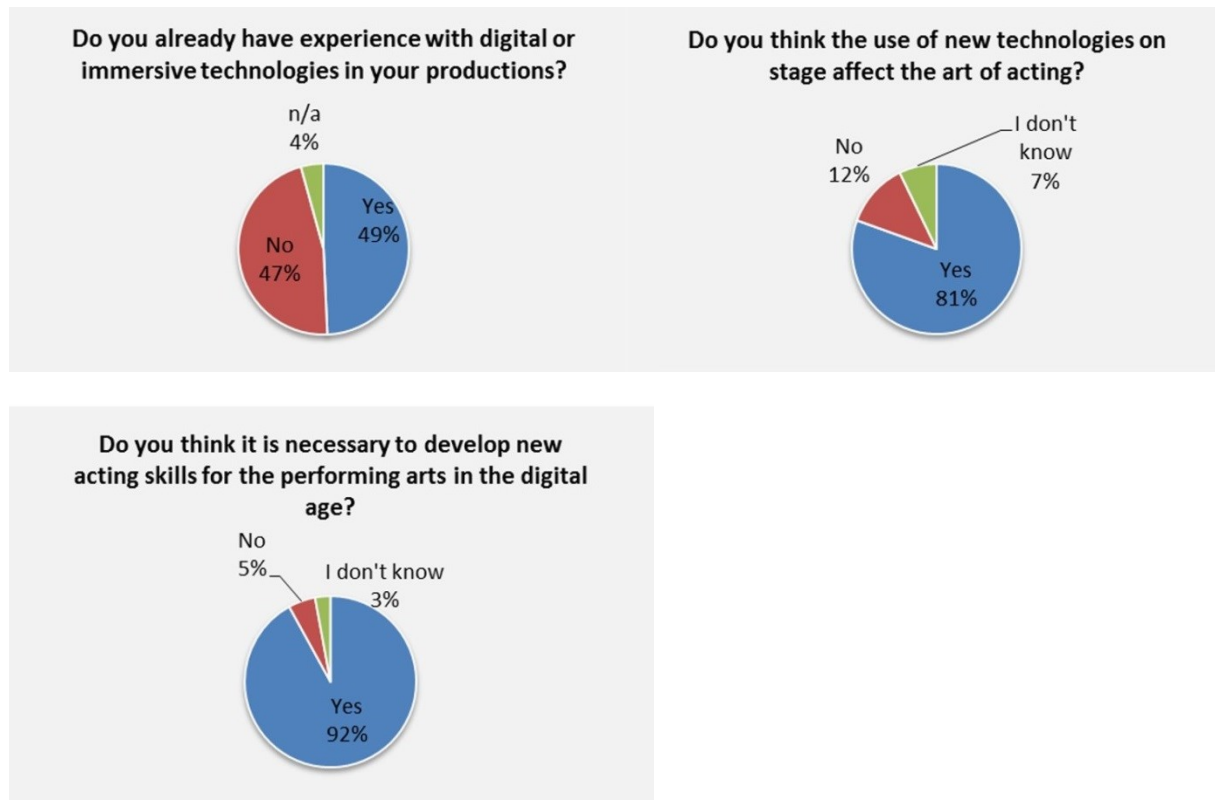
This sudden change in the daily pedagogical work of those surveyed seems (despite all the problems) to be perceived as positive and inspiring. Almost 90% of participants signaled an interest to develop new training methods! This means that in the current 'emergency situation' a great activation of pedagogical-artistic potential has already taken place.

Over 75% of conference attendees appear to have had such good experiences with online training that they see potential for incorporation into their existing teaching practice. For some respondents the extremely positive learning experience during the festival may also have had an influence on the answers to these questions.

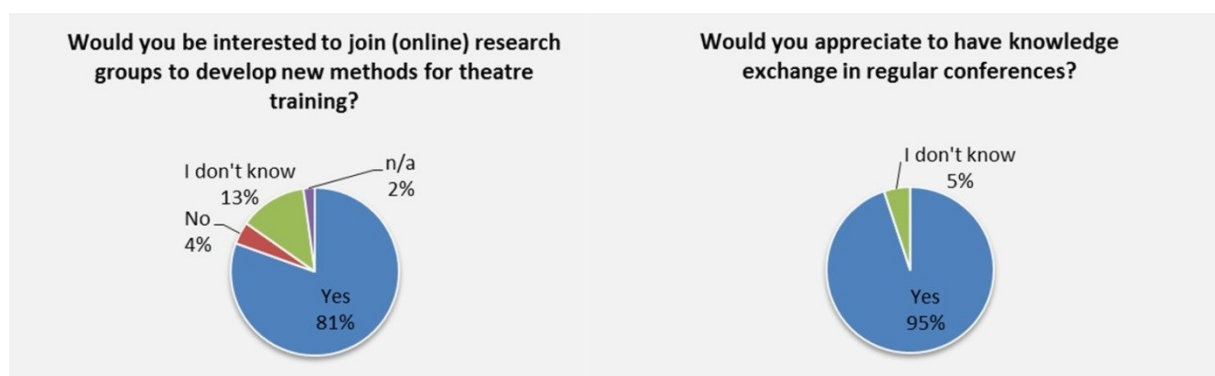




Regarding the use of digital technologies in art production, 50% of those surveyed said they already had experience with the use of new media and digital technologies on stage. A large majority think that an artistic production using virtual, augmented, or mixed reality with its new stage formats will bring about a change in acting practice and skills that must be taken into account in training. Over 90% say that we need to develop new acting techniques.



The graphics above and below clearly demonstrate the urgent and great need for exchange, further education and research in the field of theatre pedagogy, which also became evident in the immediate aftermath and continuing follow-up and in the numerous, almost euphoric comments on the conference.



This great interest is a profound incentive for us - the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT - to continue our research and educational activities.

We hope this compilation of speeches, expanded by a few texts on practical experiences newly obtained from Russian colleagues gives all participants the opportunity to re-read and fully digest what they have heard.

It is the moment to express my deep gratitude to the speakers, who not only prepared themselves thoroughly for their contributions, but created together such a warm and creative atmosphere during the three days; and even more, they additionally revised their texts for this documentation. Thank you for this dedication!

We are only at the beginning of big changes. This conference may be considered as a prelude to what will now be re-thought and invented on many levels. The crucial point is: teaching drama is a pedagogical, creative and scientific profession! The future of education lies in the hands of teachers and nowhere else. The experiences of Spring 2020 have kicked off a process of self-empowerment which is irreversible.

With collegial greetings,

Christine Schmalor



**Christine Schmalor (Germany). Theatre Teacher and Producer.**

She is co-founder and Programme Director of the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT/ITI. She was president of the ITI Theatre Education and Training Committee (2004-2011); today on the Board of directors of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in Performing Arts.



## Keynote by Dr. Jurij Alschitz

I have been overwhelmed by the interest and enthusiasm for online training which I received in the past few days as part of this “Nauruz”-Festival, when I was teaching teachers online. Nice comments make you happy, of course, but I am also suspicious to all this enthusiasm. It is a little bit too much.

This is perhaps part of my nature - that I start doubting when students become too happy, too enthusiastic. I become suspicious. It is too quick. I am not only a teacher, but a scientist. I see life differently in the context of online connections. We don't know where we are in this moment and we should carefully analyse what is going on as well as what is happening to us. We are Lilliputians standing at the dawn of a very new age. Our first successes will not resolve problems which we will encounter. We have simply opened a door, a new box - and I hope it is not the box of Pandora.

Starting with these strong changes in education, we may ask what could happen in the next five, ten, or twenty years? If you allow me, I will take up the position of a croupier playing out different cards for speaking. I have no right to make a mistake. In fact, I like the risk and it is the artist in me who tells me to go; the pedagogue and scientist ask for the doubts. Therefore, let me reflect on some aspects of this new era in education.

One week ago as we started the online course with teachers, I had one impression, the next day a different one. This was too quick for me. The subject of self-education which I proposed is a subject which I started researching and teaching over twenty years ago. At that time, I wrote a book about it: The Vertical of the Role. I am from the generation of the books. Digitality has no roots in my system. I wrote books about innovations, I proposed hybrid education, combining online preparation with stage work. Now suddenly I find myself online... I made the jump from the galaxy of Gutenberg to Zuckerberg - in twenty years. Too quick! Why? Because our mind is still in the time of mechanics and printing books.

I ask myself: why have so many people come to the online-seminars of this festival? Is it confusion? In such times people certainly like to be together. This whole festival and conference about finding new dimensions in theatre training shows such an enormously high level of participation. Overwhelming and wonderful, but too big.

Fundamentally, we are facing, a very strong change from one formation to another. Revolution! This is a big word, but for me it is revolution. It is a big digital, pedagogical revolution. I ask myself, what unites us? What do we want? Do we have the same aim? Do we have the same image of what is waiting for us in the next days or after we have established a digital model of education?

We can imagine to a certain extent how it will change universities, the positions of students, teachers and theatres but can we imagine the changes in society and ramifications for our global life on earth? It is not just about going online with our training. We are facing fundamental cultural changes on a global scale.

I asked the famous Russian actor Alexander Filipenko whether he thinks that online training is a realistic option or just fashion or fiction - and he immediately said "Not!". He is an actor who knows well how to work but he did not understand what online education means. He immediately spoke about the relationship between actors and audience. Online education is understood as a form of self-preparation.

But I speak about something different. Digital pedagogy is a completely other discipline. More precisely, it is another system which is still waiting to be discovered. It will demand significant changes to our way of thinking and is based on a fundamental change of mindset. This is a serious thing. Consider how we are looking back at the Middle Ages today. How will people look at us in two hundred years' time? The online revolution has started already. You can do everything online: shopping, holding elections, making love... But online education is another, further-reaching change. It will affect our system in its totality: the mindset, the orientation and finally the functions of the brain.

Let us look once more into the past: Homer's poems were transmitted orally. What happened to the people when writing suppressed the oral tradition? How and what changed? Our students still belong to the old mindset. They may read less and less books, but still they were brought up within the culture of books. Today they are changing to the clicks. What will happen? Education - started from speaking, went on to writing, to the telephone, radio, TV, mobile phone, computer ... We developed our senses accordingly which has continued to affect all other abilities and behaviors. As scientists we should understand how it works. Recently, a Chinese doctor told that he cannot feel whether a person is male or female anymore via pulse-diagnosis. We are changing.

The Covid-19 pandemic is terrible and frightening, but there exists another pandemic: digital autism. As a serious result of digitalization we can see that human beings are changing habits and losing their ability to communicate with living people. We know that Steve Jobs did not allow his children to use Ipads.

There are so many questions to be considered. The first experience with online education might be successful, the second not. We are on a long road in terms of digital education; it is not possible to change so fast. As I already stated, I like changes and revolution. I will be on the first line, with the flag - but - we should understand that we are just taking our first steps to understand the meaning of digital education.

A central point here is the flow of energy. It is obviously different. Today, cognitive skills are considered to be highly important. We are hungry for information and knowledge. I remember my father; first thing each morning he got hold of the newspaper to get information. Today we can get it easily at any moment without any physical obstacles. More than we actually might need. We may live in the information society - but I ask: what do you mean? Information or knowledge? This is a big difference! Everyone can get an answer through google at any time within seconds and thinks they have obtained knowledge. We need to look at it carefully: this so-called hunger for knowledge; is it hunger for knowledge

or for information? The foundation of the traditional educational process consists in the transaction and transference of knowledge from teacher to student. It is an exchange of matter and energy. We can call it energy transfer. Besides this, my personal teaching practice follows another rule: I do use not the transaction but the opening of knowledge. We are still speaking about a transfer of energy, in contrast to online or digital pedagogy where the fundament is information. This is a completely different prerequisite. The society of information is a different society.

If I should make a precise definition of “information”, I cannot. But I like the very theatrical definition from Norbert Wiener, father of cybernetics and artificial intelligence. When asked “what does information mean?” he said “information is not matter, not energy. Information is information.” That’s it. What we know is: it is not matter and not energy. For that reason it is absolutely impossible to speak about knowledge.

According to the new physics, we can say that all processes - everything that is going on around us - is part of the process of exchange of information. This is quite important. It comes out of our traditional understanding of the transaction, transferring and transmitting knowledge. Simply put, it is just exchange of information.

As we remember from school, information does not follow the law of keeping energy. Therefore, if online education is based on the exchange of information, the exchange of energy does not work. So we can say the process of educating online is an illusion. We are glad to see each other, however, if the internet collapses, we disappear. In the digital age we only can send information. It is not knowledge.

Now we are coming to the main point: we are encountering an element of education which is playing an increasingly central role: the interpretation of information in the conscience of the student. We need to transform information to knowledge through interpretation. This third element - interpretation - or commentary, mediation, verification, transformation etc. forms the basis of this new important mindset. It works like an adaptor. Something could be very interesting, but it is not knowledge and we should not conflate the two.

We now arrive at the next question: How should students deal with information? Are they ready to transform it? I am sure we need the creative mind to change a cipher to knowledge. Thanks to our traditional education system, for a long time we needed only a little amount of creativity, while receiving the transfer of knowledge. But today, if students do not learn how to transform information, they will stay with huge amounts of information but nothing more. Therefore, the main objective of digital pedagogy must be the development of new competences such as connectivity and creativity.

Using this, we will arrive at a new and highly different type of pedagogy. I am looking forward to seeing these wonderful possibilities; even if 80% of my knowledge belongs to the galaxy of Gutenberg.

We are all in the very beginning.



**Dr Jurij Alschitz (Germany). Director, pedagogue, scientist, author.**

He is founder and artistic director of the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT/ITI. Already in 1999 he created the bi-annual international festival for theatre training methods – METHODIKA; His ongoing research project “The World Theatre Training Library” was recognised by the International Theatre Institute as one of the most important theatrical explorations of our time. In 2012 he implemented the first MA Master Programme for Teaching Professional Theatre at UNAM, Mexico. Today his research is focused on Quantum Pedagogy and the new possibilities opened up by online and hybrid training.

## Conference speakers

### Professor Pavlos Kavouras

#### **Empowering theater training through performative awareness: on the dialogics of reflexivity and transcendental consciousness<sup>1</sup>**

The main objective of this conference is to encourage its participants, i.e. the speakers and the audience, as well as any person or collectivity, institution or organization involved in theater education and theater making to move forward with new ideas and subjects for research. The conference focus is on how to transcend habitual consciousness through a new knowledge paradigm that could be used as a methodological tool for empowering theater education through blending creatively face-to face with distant learning. The aim is to explore new perspectives of knowledge and promote them as a shared prospective for regenerating theater teaching and theater making. To this end, online and live embodied activities with similar objectives to that of the *Challenges of the mind* conference may be planned for the future so as to prepare the ground for achieving and disseminating a new kind of art knowledge.

I will argue that the new knowledge on which theater training and theater making may rely for reconstituting the theatrical habitus revolves round Self-awareness and gives primacy to consciousness rather than cognition. The methodological scope of such a reflexive knowledge is not informative, but performative, thus employing performed as well as performing aspects of manifest consciousness (Kavouras 2006a).<sup>2</sup> The new knowledge contains and, eventually, has the capacity of using for its own purposes the habitual digital or analog modalities of the contemporary technological culture. As a self-conscious framework of mentality, it resists the tendency attributed to ego-consciousness that reduces the integrative potentiality of consciousness to any of its digital or analog reflexive partialities. Thus, local as well as global, face-to-face learning methodologies of a digital or non-digital kind could be brought together in the multi-faceted context of this new

---

<sup>1</sup> In this paper, I have incorporated as constitutive part of my argument the programmatic responses of Christine Schmalor and especially Jurij Alschitz to the “Challenges of the Mind” theme of the first “Online Conference about New Dimensions in Theater Learning” (15-17 June 2020). I draw on their abstracts in the official program as well as on their online spontaneous reflections to the discussions that were generated by the paper readings in the conference.

<sup>2</sup> Adjectives that end with the suffix “-ive” express tendency, disposition, function and connection. The same applies to participial or verbal adjectives, i.e. adjectives that have the same form as participles—present or past participles that is verbs ending in –ing or -ed/en. Thus, the participial terms “performative”, “informative,” “integrative” and “differentiative” that are used extensively in this paper are taken to mean simultaneously “performing and performed,” “informing and informed,” “integrated and integrating,” and “differentiated and differentiating,” respectively.

knowledge in the form of a hybrid reflexivity, which connects art to humanity through a heterogeneous mixing of culture, technology and education. The rapprochement of self-realized knowledge with the culture of technology may thus pave the way for the expression of a new kind of creativity, which is based on a shared and actually lived condition of self-reflexive hybridity. By juxtaposing self-reflexive hybrid methodologies and epistemologies blending the diverse aspects of the habitual consciousness of technoculture<sup>1</sup> with the emergent reality of the inner awareness of humanity, the hybrid discourse of art, science, philosophy and education may be used as an organizing principle for expressing and communicating the new knowledge through such habitual activities as conferences, seminars, master-classes and workshops. This is a project that may contribute significantly to theater learning and theater making in diverse registers of reference by helping to create a heterogeneous stage for blending differentiative instances of performative otherness at the decisive presence of an integrative catalyst. The overall scope of establishing such a self-awareness network of hybrid reflexivity is to help promote a creative modality of realized experience, expression and communication. This new knowledge of humanity transcends any cultural-historical reshuffling of differentiative consciousness due to technological transformation through blending, for instance, orality with writing, hand-writing with typography, unmediated hearing and seeing with audiovisual technology, thus reconstituting the established unstable balance between habitual consciousness and modern technoculture.

Whether we perceive ourselves to be the inhabitants of the global village, a planetary universe or the Aristotelian *ecumene*<sup>2</sup>, we are undoubtedly living through a historical moment which is governed by the choice of unveiling the intuitive awareness of self-realized humanity. It is a moment when we and the various other entities of our cosmos—all the significant Others of our inner constitution of being and becoming, as well as our sensorial perceptions of the outer environment—are cohabiting one and the same reality. This is a tripartite reflexive reality referring to nature, society and consciousness. At the level of consciousness, this reality manifests itself as an integrative modality existing in harmony with its differentiative counterpart. Thus approached, reflexive humanity is ecumenical in scope and has the potential for empowering any inquiry into the hybrid awareness of self-reflexivity in theater making and theater training—an awareness of the two-way streams flow of consciousness namely, integrated differentiation and differentiated integration. This is a revolutionary knowledge, which is based on a reflexive modality of knowing intertwined

---

<sup>1</sup> The term technoculture is a neologism meaning culture influenced by technology, especially computer technology and the Internet (Penley and Ross 1992). Although technoculture refers to the relationship between culture and technology, it actually gives priority to technology over culture to the extent that humanity is estranged from its long historical cultural awareness based on actually lived and crystallized self-knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecumene* refers to the world's inhabited land. The term is derived from ancient Greek in which it meant the known world or the habitable world. In this paper, I use the term *ecumene* and its derivatives, i.e., ecumenical, to connote the integrative blending of knowledge and habitability, with reference to a mentally conceived and, eventually, realized cosmos.

with the inner awareness of humanity's own self-realization. It follows then that such knowledge can be used both as a diagnostic and as a therapeutic device in humanity's effort at exiting the vicious circle of its entrapment, mainly due to the technocultural crisis of human values and lack of clear vision for the future. This revolutionary consciousness could be realized and perceived as a new project calling for art in general and theater in particular to rediscover humanity and vice versa. That would be a project about an achieved art (and theater) manifesting itself in coexistence with a self-conscious humanity.

Jurij Alschitz stressed the importance of focusing on the idea of self-organization as a new cultural potential—an idea developed in and by the social system itself.<sup>1</sup> He also connected self-organization to Chaos as a new regulative principle with respect to entering consciously and handling creatively the dead-end situations caused by the vicious circle of the unfulfilled promises and troubling realities of postmodern technoculture. In ancient Greek mythology, Chaos and Cosmos represent distinct yet interrelated symbolic realities, corresponding to the absence or presence of Order, respectively. According to mythology, Order derives from Chaos in the latter's willing effort to exit from its absolute quietness and timeless immobility and manifest itself as an independent Other which is capable of moving through acting or creating. Hence, order is one of the two possibilities of creativity, the other being disorder, or manifest chaos.<sup>2</sup>

No linear ontology or epistemology, no intellectualist approach to art and humanity can account creatively for the vicious circle of the habitual differentiation of contemporary techno-culture. The knowledge framework of the established habitus is informed and thus delimited by its long-standing alienated and alienating orientations that are blind to humanity's inner explorations. They are blind to the extent of systematically undermining and eventually excluding the alternative prospective of a self-realized, integrative knowledge. Yet, it is precisely this problematic order of things that bears the potential for fomenting its *antithesis* namely, chaos, as a conscious manifestation of immobility and quietness. Chaos is a paradoxical reality in that it can be anti-systemic and systemic at the same time, as it represents symbolically the momentary or timeless balance between two adjacent states of Order, i.e. two distinct states of Cosmos or, alternately, two states of non-Order that is, two successive states of non-movement or non-manifestation. Due to its archetypal duality, Chaos may be perceived as a symbolic gate leading consciousness to self-awareness. As a reflexive potentiality for self-knowledge, Chaos can empower art towards reconstituting itself in the prospective of encountering realized humanity.

---

<sup>1</sup> System is any set of principles or procedures according to which something is done. Any organized scheme or method maybe called a system. By implication any culture as an actually lived and experienced reality based on common social rules and shared practices is a system. Hence, cultural systems are based on various forms of social order.

<sup>2</sup> Order means cosmos in ancient Greek. The word cosmos has two main meanings. The first category includes order, decency (modesty) and harmony, whereas the second one decoration and adornment. Hence, the composite meaning of cosmos also encountered in the Homeric epics, is orderly beauty (harmony).

The main question we need to pose and attempt to answer is whether today's actors and directors, teachers and students, schools and theater organizations are ready for such a radical transformation of knowledge in the established educational paradigm. We almost take it for granted that such a dramatic change in our global reality will happen—if it happens at all—in the digitalized and digitalizing environment of the prevalent informative technoculture. If this is the case—and I believe it is very much so—we need to ask ourselves how can we deal creatively with the digital modality of knowledge without reverting to interdisciplinary juxtapositions between technoculture and self-realized culture. The question is whether digitality can be blended creatively with a new mentality deriving from the archetypal return of Cosmos to Chaos. This is a truly revolutionary possibility for humanity, one that brings along with it a radical reversal of order. The habitual primacy of the differentiative modality of consciousness over the integrative one in the manifestation of Cosmos may be reversed yielding a two-way stream of awareness from integrative to differentiative movement and vice versa.

Digitality is intertwined with culture and humanity. It is weaved with the long-standing historical knowledge of culture that is based on actually lived experiences of humanity in culture's long-standing interface with technology. In fact, the field of *Digital Humanities* represents such an attempted synthesis by blending digital technologies and technoculture in particular with the various disciplines and perspectives of the faculty of *Arts and Humanities*. Yet, *Digital Humanities* is ontologically framed and methodologically framing cultural reality through the digitality of technoculture. As a new discipline, it aims to achieve a dialectical synthesis or, in an other register of reference, a heterogeneous creation of a hybrid unity that is the product of a differentiative mixing of the two constituent modalities of knowledge, i.e. the digital and the non-digital. This is a reductionist perspective. As a digitalized perception of reality, *Digital Humanities* relies on a digitalizing methodology for materializing its projected scope. Such reductionism is apparent when it comes to considering the condition of a self-reflexive awareness of humanity, perceived and expressed as actually lived instances of culture. *Digital Humanities* as defined can neither contain nor account for the transcendental aspects of self-reflexive humanity.

Jurij suggested that one way to move forward is to replace the theater of the sphere by quantum pedagogy. Such an initiative implies substituting the holistic grand narratives of the habitual system of education for concrete, atomized and invisible clusters of a hybrid reflexivity aiming at revolutionizing the current condition of humanity. Offline, online or by devising and using a new hybrid format, such an orientation may yield for all those involved in theater education and theater making a deep and unprecedented sense of emancipation, due to the coupling of creative mentality with self-realized consciousness. The mentality attributed to this new state of consciousness is quite flexible compared to the habitual auto-differentiative reflexivity. Mental flexibility is greatly enhanced as creativity gains a new reflexive momentum through the possibility of transcending ego-consciousness. In this new condition of reflexivity, the subject and the object of creation blend into their extinction, thus mutually annihilating each other. Such annihilation of creative subjectivity and creative



objectivity is the result of the transcendence of ego-consciousness. Hence, a flexible reflexive mentality may qualify as the necessary symbolic vehicle for achieving a momentary *ekstasis*, that is a transitory exiting from the habitual state of consciousness.<sup>1</sup> In this context of fleeting transformation, the aesthetics of creativity may become the threshold at the gate leading to the conscious streaming of self-realization. In this case, the differentiative dialogics of the mind may become flexible enough so as to encounter and blend with the dialogics of the integrative modality of self-awareness.

Let me elaborate on the dialogics of such flexible reflexivity by exploring it in the perspective of the potentiality of transcendental consciousness. By drawing on my experiences and realized knowledge as a cultural anthropologist and researcher in the field of the performing arts, I will present my thoughts in the form of four main caveats.

## **Caveat #1**

### **Creation and creativity; the poetics and rhetoric of self-awareness**

Creation is the action or the process of bringing something into existence. Creativity is the use of imagination or original ideas to create something. Creativity is not mere inventiveness, but also the essence and the quality of being inventive. Defined as such, creation and creativity are two interrelated aspects of the acting mind. Aristotle's famous term of *poetics* accounts beautifully for the relation of creation to creativity. *Poetics* in Greek means art of making or creating; and creativity is the state of mind in which a particular enactment of poetics is realized. Aristotelian poetics is based on the concept of *mimesis*, Greek for representation or reflection, which is taken to be a characteristic feature of humanity. This is more evident when mimesis becomes doubly reflexive dealing with mimesis itself, i.e. as *mimesis* of a *mimesis*. In this vein of thought, poetics as mimesis may be understood as a Platonic approach to art and humanity through consciousness. In fact, all poetics of creativity, all mimesis is intertwined with ego-consciousness. Representation and reflection rely always on the presence of a subject/object perspective whenever a mental relation is established between the knower and the known, the maker and the thing made. The presence of the subject/object relationship modifies the flow of consciousness by identifying its mobility through mimesis as ego's attachment to the process and the products of creative imaging. As a result, the modified consciousness manifests itself as a hyperactive modality that veils self-awareness through the reflexive or mimetic illusion of an emergent ego mentality.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ekstasis* in ancient Greek meant displacement, cession and trance. From a philosophical or mystical perspective, *ekstasis* corresponds to the state of being beside one's Self or rapt out of one's Self. For an illuminating discussion of poetics as *ekstasis* in relation to the rhetorical aspect of mimetic consciousness, see Longinus and Smith (1740).

Any act of creating relies for its enactment not only on the poetics of representing and reflecting but also on the rhetorical dimension of acting qua making. *Rhetoric* in Greek means art of persuasion. Creating does not happen in a void but is always intertwined with an audience—an embodied, imaginary or symbolic audience. The presence of an audience—irrespective of size or kind—complements the act of creating. The creative ego must account for the emergent evaluation of the reflected creation. The performers' creative Other is the audience. This means that performers must endow their creations with a momentum of persuasion to win their audiences over. In any creative situation persuading is inextricably coupled with making, rhetoric with poetics. Thus, the creator's ego struggles poetically and at the same time rhetorically for its recognition as a distinct and distinctive personality, aiming primarily at acceptance and ideally at excellence.

**To conclude:** It is important to establish in theater education the timeliness and deeper significance of self-awareness. Such a realization may enable the Observer in consciousness to be present in the poetics and rhetorics of any mimetic act of reflexive creativity. Acting as a constant witness, the conscious Observer may serve as an integrative catalyst—given its structural immobility and manifest quietness—in the mimetic blending of the differentiative aspects of reflexivity in art education and theater training in particular.

## **Caveat #2**

### **Performance as realization and assessment**

What was said above about creation and creativity applies fully to any critical approach to performance and performativity. First, let us clarify the usage of the terms in question. Performance is a kind of creation. Not any kind of creation but a special one as it depends for its enactment on socially shared rules and principles about acting, which are the result of historical fermentation of ideas and practices in any given culture. Performance refers to two distinct but interrelated kinds of creation or action: realization and assessment. Realizing means making. Hence, realization is actually the outcome of a manifest poetics. Assessment corresponds to the reality of rhetoric and is present at any instance of the expression of creativity. Let me take an example to shed some light on the usage of these two terms, i.e. realization and assessment. Taking an example from music, it may be argued that a musical piece does not exist in performative terms outside its realization. It has to be played so as to exist. It must be enacted as a function of time, irrespective of space or modality. The realization of music in performance is always coupled with its assessment, as no performance happens in a void. That is why performance is always linked to an audience which plays the role of the assessing Other in the poetics of the reflexive rendering of creativity. This is a reflexive modality that manifests itself in the form of an embodied, imagined or symbolic otherness that is coupled ontologically with a personal, individual or social Other relying for its appearance and sustainability on the ego-consciousness of the performers and their audiences.

**To conclude:** The conceptual framework of the new hybrid reflexive knowledge to be used in art education and theater training in particular uses such analytical categories as poetics, rhetorics, performance (realization and assessment), and the dialogics of ego-awareness. This framework helps to comprehend and develop the dynamics of consciousness as mimetic creativity, in the context of which performances of otherness and awareness of performance are realized. The creative mind is always associated with a state of otherness. The question is whether such mimetic otherness, apart from being a representation or reflection of consciousness, can modify the manifestation of consciousness in the form of ego-reflexivity as a subject/object creativity. Otherness is the product of othering. Hence, any inquiring into the problem of whether otherness can transcend its reflexive limitations in creativity has to be re-addressed by focusing on the dynamics of othering, that is the process whereby otherness is realized. This is a question of fundamental importance for theater training. It may be argued that performative awareness is a gate through which the inquiring subject may come across the dialogics of reflexivity as transcendental consciousness. Given that all performances are about otherness, how can othering modify performance itself?

### **Caveat #3**

#### **Performing otherness, othering performance**

The new revolutionary knowledge appears in the form of a flexible mentality, which is a hybrid manifestation of transcendental consciousness. Its self-reflexive orientation enhances humanity's urge to act creatively in the context of a conscious effort to achieve an integrative comprehension of its existence, i.e. the inner and outer cosmos of its being and becoming. The reflexive vehicle through which such mimetic creativity is enacted and explored as awareness is consciousness. Since consciousness is always about something, i.e. about an other, its manifestation as reflexivity involves constant acting or creating. Such reflexive creativity is a transitive condition whereby mimetic acting as performative othering appears to have two distinct yet related orientations. The first orientation of performative othering is hetero-transitive. In other words, othering is identified with its product namely, otherness, as an other to the othering consciousness entity or reality. The second orientation is self-transitive: its otherness is transcendental, liberating othering from its emergent otherness and enabling it to manifest itself at a higher order of self-realization. Let us follow more closely the dynamics of othering in its relation to otherness. Transitive othering is a reflexive modality of mimetic creativity whereby consciousness occupies itself with reflections of embodied, symbolic or imagined Others. All such reflections are external to consciousness itself and therefore, othering in this case is hetero-transitive. Othering turns self-transitive when consciousness takes as its single object itself. In this case, there is no imaging. Mimesis of mimesis is totally annihilated and mimesis as such, i.e. creativity, becomes creative in the extreme sense of manifesting itself without any imaging at all. The transition from hetero-transitivity to self-transitivity as othering involves a state of passivity

whereby the subject of action becomes less important than the object of action. Once realized as a unique instance of imaging, the latter melts away as “pure” action or creation and prevails in consciousness—“pure,” in the sense of it being free of any subjective or objective imaging.

In the reflexive framework of othering, the continuous flow of mimetic otherness is nothing but the manifestation of consciousness’ own pursuit for self-knowledge. Hence, a methodology based on reflexive othering could be quite useful to the arts and theater in particular, as it represents a new revolutionary knowledge about mimesis that may help artists and teachers to move towards reconstituting the habitual poetics and rhetorics of creativity. Representation and performance are always about otherness. But as we have already seen there is a modality of consciousness whereby it becomes the object of othering. This self-transitive othering corresponds to a higher state of consciousness as it enables the seeker of truth to reach a transcendental reality of being. In such a state of consciousness, the subject/object duality of ego-consciousness is totally annihilated and only the relation of consciousness to itself emerges as a unique reality of self-knowledge.

Consciousness has the capacity to perform othering not only on “other” entities but also on itself. As the purpose of conscious othering is knowing, when it is applied to performance it modifies creativity in a two-fold manner, yielding either a differentiative knowledge or an integrative one. Differentiative performances are performances of otherness, that is enactments of creativity depending for their mimetic realization and artistic assessment on hetero-transitive othering. Unlike differentiative performances, the integrative ones are expressions of the self-transitive modality of othering. Hence, any integrative performance creates through its poetical and rhetorical manifestation a mimetic state of self-awareness through othering performance itself. Therefore, the mimetic focus on conscious othering may enable performers to take the integrative path of reflexive creativity, thus empowering themselves and their audiences with the choice of actively transcending any subjective or objective imaging in the performative process. The reflexive principle of self-othering is a fundamental truth that may be used as the conceptual foundation for developing a revolutionary knowledge about humanity in its encounter with the arts, sciences, cultures and philosophies of the world. This knowledge can be used as a firm and inspired analytical basis for devising a reflexive methodology of mimetic othering, to be used in the performative aesthetics of ego-consciousness. The usage of such a potent tool especially in the field of the arts is conducive to achieving a hybrid reflexivity of self-awareness through art consciousness.

If organized in the framework of self-reflexive awareness, theater training and theater making can be truly revolutionary processes. All the engaged parties, i.e. teachers, students and even the parents of young students, as well as the various relative organizations and institutions may benefit significantly from such a mimetic focus on realized self-awareness. Such a concerted orientation towards self-transitive othering may empower all those involved in the artistic expression and realization of humanity to transcend the vicious circle

of differentiative ego-consciousness by reverting to a self-conscious integrative mimesis. Self-transitive othering modifies the performative condition of creativity significantly. The modification concerns the eventual and still transitory dissociation of the poetics of performance from its rhetorics. Thus, the self-transitivity of consciousness in the mimetic performance is transformed into a creative passivity and finally into a reflexive intransitivity. The state of consciousness manifesting through such intransitivity, whereby poetics prevail at the expense of any rhetoric, is known as a reflexive state of ekstasis.

The hybrid reflexivity of othering is a gate for re-integrating differentiative creativity. As poetics depends on ego-consciousness for its manifestation, the actors engaged in theater training and theater making demonstrate a stable tendency towards exploring and expressing creativity through reference to their habitual mimetic consciousness. Thus, they often end up launching their performative attitudes towards the Other, the New, or the Different in ways that aim at promoting mimetic heterogeneity and hybrid reflexivity as instances of genuine innovation, while, in reality, they reproduce—without even being aware of what they are doing—the established states of the habitual awareness of mimetic humanity that are ignorant of self-othering and, eventually, boringly ego-centric in their apparent ingenuity.

**To conclude:** All performances, however informed in mimetic awareness they might be, are reflexive creations dealing with otherness. Otherness means the state of being an Other, a foreigner, a stranger. It is generally accepted that performances are generating reflexive states of mimetic otherness. Introducing the process of self-othering in performativity is a revolutionary choice. Othering is the poetics of self-awareness, par excellence. Human consciousness is always about something other than itself, an emergent Other occupying its discriminating horizon of awareness. The mimetic production of otherness is intertwined with ego-consciousness, both of them being the results of the differentiative process of reflexive creativity. But consciousness is also capable of focusing on itself beyond any subjectivity or objectivity. The process of self-transitive othering empowers mimesis, enabling it to move towards the integrative choice of self-awareness by annihilating the mechanism of imaging generated and sustained by the performing ego. Ego is a reflexive objectification of mimetic consciousness identified with the subjective and objective aspects of imaging in the context of performative otherness. The reflexive dialogics of self-awareness in performance may help us to understand and use intelligently the potential of mimetic transformation of consciousness from a state of differentiative otherness to that of integrative othering.

## Caveat #4

### **On the reflexive dialogics of differentiative integration and integrative differentiation: the One as many, the many as One**

The One as many, the many as One—this is a well-known mystical maxim. Its integrative power has been inspiring the initiates of ancestral rituals and the followers of occult doctrines worldwide since time immemorial. The reflexive awareness of such a spiritual realization is closely connected to the biological evolution of the humankind. According to physical anthropology, modern humans belong to the species of *Homo Sapiens Sapiens*. This species is biologically capable of performing a double reflection. In other words, this species' consciousness has the capacity of reflecting while reflecting. Such a faculty endows the species with the potential to become aware of its own being, i.e. in the case of *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* to know its humanity. Humans as we know them today are capable of observing themselves while observing others or themselves, as self-reflexivity saturates their experiences, expressions and communications. This doubling capacity of *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* has empowered humanity with choice, i.e. the freedom to decide on how to use reflexivity. Thus, the doubling faculty may be employed either to establish a new state of ego-consciousness or transcend ego mentality.<sup>1</sup> Such reflexive choice enables human consciousness to move from an integrative state of awareness to a differentiative one whereby ego-realization is possible. At the same time, this choice permits the inquiring or mimetic mind to orient its reflexive movement towards the integrative modality of othering consciousness by transcending differentiative otherness. The annihilation of otherness pertains to any and all the instances of reflexive subjectivity and/or reflexive objectivity. In other words, reflexive choice enables modern actors to establish otherness as a vehicle for the expression of their ego-consciousness. Choice also permits humanity to reconstitute the established habitus of its ego-creativity through othering otherness until the unique awareness of conscious One-ness is attained. It follows that any conceptual framework based on reflexive choice should be methodologically organized in such a way as to be able

---

<sup>1</sup> In a lecture given in 1949 in Athens, the renowned Greek poet Angelos Sikelianos made special reference to the great mathematician and philosopher Blaise Pascal regarding his approach to the human faculty of double reflexivity. Talking about artistic achievement, Sikelianos distinguished between great and outstanding art works by using Pascal's analytical framework for discriminating reality through the principle of difference. According to Pascal, any differences occurring through movement in a two-dimensional reality such as the geometrical plane may be represented as differences in degree. Any differences in movement beyond the plane (i.e., in space) should be accounted for as differences in order. In his lecture, Sikelianos used Pascal's criterion of difference in order to single out several art works as outstanding creations of humanity: Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Being in agreement with Sikelianos, I wish to carry this idea further by arguing that the condition of double reflexivity encountered in *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* may be understood as a capacity for reflexive differentiation and integration in analogy to movement producing differences in degree and in order, respectively. Hence, the state of reflexivity as ego-consciousness may be distinguished from that of self-consciousness in a perspective of difference in order. Self-consciousness represents a higher order of reflexivity, i.e. a self-realized condition of humanity, if compared to ego-consciousness.

to account for the reflexive dialogics of consciousness through othering mimesis as differentiative integration and integrative differentiation.

**To conclude:** The reflexive dialogics of self-othering is the revolutionary principle around which a new knowledge paradigm concerning mimesis may be constructed and applied to theater learning and theater making. Differentiative and integrative othering can radically change the way we perceive and analyze the world surrounding us. Human creativity can be empowered through performative awareness. Self-conscious othering may be used as a methodological tool for blending harmoniously the multi-faceted cosmos of otherness and its ensuing ego-consciousness with the integrative reality of self-consciousness. Humanity encounters itself in the context of creativity through performing its otherness and, eventually, othering its own performative manifestation. Conscious othering transforms creativity and a hybrid self-reflexive condition of performative awareness emerges as a new modality of mimesis for teaching and doing art.

### **A dialogical project for a self-reflexive theater education**

A new project about self-reflexive theater education may be developed in the form of a hybrid dialogue between the old knowledge paradigm of mimesis and the new revolutionary knowledge of creative consciousness based on self-awareness. In principle, any such dialogue cannot be static, homogeneous or holistic in the usual sense of these words, but must be dynamic in a multiple way. Its main objective will be to stimulate, build and sustain the mimetic field of hybrid-reflexivity in which the two-way flow of consciousness namely, the integrative and the differentiative streams of creativity, may be manifested. It is in such a hybrid context of self-awareness that Jurij's suggestion to substitute quantum pedagogy for the theater of the sphere can be pursued and realized. By integrating habitual knowledge of mimesis in light of this revolutionary awareness, a new hybrid-reflexive approach to self-realizing humanity may be established through the reconstituted discourses of art, philosophy and education. The dialogical project in question should ideally engage as many people as possible among those who can "see" the optional choice of integrative reflexivity as the revolutionary *modus operandi* of such a mimetic endeavor towards self-awareness. The focus shall be on the transcendental integration of the diverse instances of the habitual knowledge of mimesis in relation to humanity, as well as on the integrative transformation of differentiative consciousness in the arts and in theater training and theater making in particular. To this end, a doubly reflexive methodology for hybrid mimetic education will be required. Theater training and theater making equipped with methodologies based on mimetic self-othering may contribute significantly to humanity's greater exposure to and clearer understanding of this revolutionary potentiality. Indeed, such realized activities could help humanity to transcend its ego entrapment in the vicious circle of the contemporary technoculture by performing a self-conscious othering on the habitual play of mimetic otherness in and through digitality.

**Let me conclude** by outlining a practical framework to be used in dialogical education based on a hybrid-reflexive approach to theater training and theater making. I have enlisted below a set of ideas in the form of a thematic orientation for dialogical reflexivity to be undertaken by such activities as conferences, seminars, lectures, master-classes, rehearsals, and any kind of relative presentations. The topics are foci for creativity and self-awareness and concern all the agencies and structures involved in theater training and theater making.

- Raising self-awareness in the reflexive dialogics of learning, making & performing (LMP) and theater learning, making and performing (TLMP) in particular, as humanity's capacity for knowing itself
- Distinguishing between distant and live LMP. Achieving the hybrid-reflexive skills necessary to move from a situation of distant to one of live LMP and vice versa that is, blending the heterogeneous components of the LMP unity creatively in a new differentiative hybrid format
- Using a general but not homogenizing framework of hybrid-reflexive LMP in a digitalizing and digitalized system of mimesis to serve as a global background for building the basic capacities required traditionally by TLMP
- Disseminating such realized practices of LMP and engaging in dialogical interaction at a meta-communication level that is, doing a meta-reflection on the habitual actuality and the revolutionary possibility for further development of the TLMP initiatives
- Understanding the dynamics of proximity in local face-to-face contexts and how proximity may be transformed into a hybrid-reflexive reality whereby TLMP can be expressed and negotiated in a new spirit of creativity. In this new modality of TLMP, a reflexive dialogics of intimacy and distance may be substituted for the mono-dimensional modality of proximity. Thus, the two-streams flow of consciousness of the hybrid-reflexive condition of the dialogical TLMP will be expressed through the dynamic interaction of creative possibilities between two states of mind concerning intimate distance and distant intimacy
- Digital consciousness as a digitalizing and digitalized awareness of being and becoming should be re-examined in the light of hybrid-reflexive LMP. For example, many of the so-called "experimental" instances of TLMP are mono-dimensional in their creative substance and therefore, superficial, as they rely poetically and rhetorically on the primacy of differentiative mimesis over the integrative modality of humanity's self-realizing hybrid-reflexivity
- The methodology of meditation should be employed to serve as a system of knowledge that may prepare habitual reflexivity to dissociating itself from self-consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The bibliography on this subject is vast. A focus on meditation in the context of the mystical traditions of Shamanism, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islamic Sufism is quite



Such a deliberate dissociation of the ordinary mind from realized consciousness leads to the awareness of self-consciousness. Devoid of any reflexive baggage and free of imaging, meditation may qualify as an appropriate practice for achieving a radical renewal of TLMP

- Using cultural anthropology and reflexive ethnography in TLMP. Rituals and myths when explored in a global and diachronic perspective can be illuminating regarding how humanity has understood and expressed the relationship between consciousness and creativity, especially the hybrid reflexive realities of the sacred in relation to those of the profane or secular.<sup>1</sup> Theater anthropology and Performance anthropology may contribute a lot to the reflexive dialogics of TLMP.<sup>2</sup> The anthropological perspectives on theater and performance coupled with ethnographic evidence obtained through long time field research can broaden considerably the horizons of understanding TLMP. The usage of Cultural anthropology in TLMP can empower teachers and students, actors and audiences, institutions and organizations through achieving a more comprehensive awareness of self-realized humanity based on systematic academic knowledge of culture and the arts<sup>3</sup>
- Understanding the interface between aesthetics (ego-consciousness proliferation) and spirituality (ego-consciousness transcendence) as a hybrid dialogics between reflexive integration and reflexive differentiation
- Using poetics and rhetoric in TLMP to understand the role of engrossment in attaining the revolutionary state of *ekstasis*, i.e. exiting a habitual state of mimetic reflexivity and, eventually, entering a new state of consciousness. *Ekstasis* potentially leads to illumination. In such a state of mind consciousness expands through self-othering to attain knowledge of itself, thus realizing a state of otherness beyond all otherness

Empowering theater training and theater making through performative awareness is based on the systematic exploration and consistent expression of the hybrid dialogics between self-reflexivity and transcendental consciousness.

---

illuminating regarding its usage in TLMP. See, for example, Taimni (1961, 1967 and 1974), Patanjali (1962) and Izutsu (1984).

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Radin, Kerényi and Jung (1956), Balandier (1972), Diamond (1974), Friedson (1996) and Rudolph (2008).

<sup>2</sup> Turner (1969), Attali (1985), Schechner (2006), and Kavouras (2006b). Special attention should be given to the radical tradition of Eugenio Barba and its *International School for Theater Anthropology* (ISTA). On Barba, his work and ideas regarding theater as a self-reflexive modality of mimesis, see Grotowski, Barba and Brook (1968), Watson (1993), Hastrup (1996), Savarese (2010), Barba (2015), Masgrau (2015) and Brook (2019).

<sup>3</sup> The crisis of the representation movement in cultural anthropology in the 1980s may be of particular use to introducing self-reflexive dialogical education to TLMP. See, for example, Clifford and Marcus (1986), Marcus and Fischer (1986), and Kavouras (1991). The anthropological discourses on Orientalism, colonialism and critique of Western civilization may also be quite pertinent to the development of a hybrid reflexive framework for TLMP. See, for example, Montaigne (1958), Diamond (1974), Bourdieu (1977), Said (1978), Wolf (1982) and Post (2006).

## Bibliography

- Attali, Jacques. 1985. *Noise: the Political Economy of Music*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.
- Balandier, Georges. 1972. *Political Anthropology*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Barba, Eugenio. 2015. *The Moon Rises from the Ganges: my Journey through Asian Acting Techniques*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brook, Peter. 2019. *Playing by Ear: Reflections on Sound and Music*. Nick Hern Books.
- Clifford, James and George E. Marcus (eds). 1986. *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography: a School of American Research advanced seminar*.
- Diamond, Stanley. 1974. *In Search for the Primitive: a Critique of Civilization*. Transaction Publishers.
- Friedson, Steven M. 1996. *Dancing Prophets: Musical Experience in Tumbuka Healing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Grotowski, Jerzy, Eugenio Barba, and Peter Brook. 1968. *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Simon & Schuster.
- Hastrup, Kirsten (ed.). 1996. *The Performers' Village*. Graasten: Drama.
- Izutsu, Toshihiko. 1984. *Sufism and Taoism. A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts*. University of California Press.
- Kavouras, Pavlos. 2006a. "Ethnographies of dialogical singing, dialogical ethnography." *Music & Anthropology* 10 [https://www.umbc.edu/MA/index/number10/kavour/kav\\_0.htm](https://www.umbc.edu/MA/index/number10/kavour/kav_0.htm).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006b. "[Voices, Meanings and Identities: Cultural Reflexivity in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the XXVIII Olympiad in Athens](#)". In: *Making Music, Making Meaning*. International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM). DVD-ROM.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1991. *Ghlendi and Xenitia. The Poetics of Exile in Rural Greece (Olymbos, Karpathos)*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International.
- Longinus, and William Smith. 1740. *Dionysius Longinus On the sublime*. Dublin: S. Powell.
- Marcus, George E. and Michael M. J. Fischer. 1986. *Anthropology as cultural critique: an experimental moment in the human sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Masgrau, Lluís. 2015. Introduction – "Eugenio Barba and traditional Asian theatres." In: Eugenio Barba, *The Moon Rises from the Ganges: My Journey through Asian Acting Techniques*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Montaigne, Michel de. 1958 *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*. Trans. by Donald M. Frame. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Patanjali. 1962. *Yoga Sutras. Kriya yoga and kaivalya yoga*. Edited by S. V. Ganapati. Madras: Hindi Prachar Press.
- Penley, Constance and Andrew Ross (ed.). 1992. *Technoculture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Post, Jennifer C. (ed.). 2006. *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader*. New York : Routledge.
- Radin, Paul, Karl Kerényi, and C. G. Jung. 1956. *The Trickster; a Study in American Indian Mythology*. New York: Bell Pub. Co.
- Rudolph, Michael. 2008. *Ritual Performances as Authenticating Practices: Cultural Representations of Taiwan's Aborigines in Times of Political Change*. Münster: LIT Verlag Münster.

- Savarese, Nicola. 2010. *Eurasian Theatre: Drama and Performance between East and West from Classical Antiquity to the Present*. Edited by Vicki Ann Cremona, Translated by Richard Fowler. Holstebro, Malta and Wroclaw: Icarus Publishing Enterprise.
- Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Schechner, Richard. 2006. *Performance Studies: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Taimni, I. K. 1974. *Science and Occultism*. Wheaton, Illinois and Adyar Madras, India: Theosophical Publishing House.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1967. *Self-Culture in the Light of the Ancient Wisdom*. Wheaton, Illinois and Adyar Madras, India: Theosophical Publishing House.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1961. *The Science of Yoga*. Wheaton, Illinois and Chennai, India: Quest Books, Theosophical Publishing House.
- Turner, Victor W. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- Watson, Ian. 1993. *Towards a Third Theatre: Eugenio Barba and the Odin Teatret*. New York: Routledge.
- Wolf, Eric. 1982. *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.



**Pavlos Kavouras (Greece). Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnomusicology at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens**

His scientific work blends anthropology and sociology, musicology, history, philosophy and cultural studies. He is Founder and Director of the Ethnomusicology and Cultural Anthropology Laboratory of the NKUA. In 2016 he was visiting professor at UCLA, Department of Ethnomusicology. Since 2019, he is in charge of International Affairs for the Greek *Analogio* Festival. Since 2020, he is an executive officer of the NKUA Center for Excellence "Inter-religious Dialogue." He has done extensive ethnographic research in Greece, the USA, Southwest India and Egypt. He has published numerous books and articles in English and in Greek, and is the General Editor of the *Ethnomusicology and Anthropology* scholarly series for Nissos Publications.

## Marcus Lobbes

### **Bodies in Spaces.**

### **Changed working conditions under the condition of a partial relocation of production and work processes into digital and virtual spaces.**

Thank you very much for this invitation!

I would like to contribute a few thoughts about my and our topic, the performing arts in the digital age, also and especially in my position as artistic director of the Academy for Theatre and Digitality in Dortmund.

I'd like to start with my favourite motto for the last two years:

"Complexity becomes the cultural form of the next society." (Prof. Dirk Baecker, University Witten/Herdecke)

First of all, a major misunderstanding in the relationship between the performing arts and digital transformation unfortunately all too often consists in thinking primarily in technical categories. We can change that, and we can change it now.

Do we need the innovation screw in the theatre, what does innovation mean, how do we behave towards it and is it relevant for the arts, performing or visual, at all - or do we let ourselves be driven through the ring by the push of innovation without being able to judge whether we are steering or being steered.

In my opinion, this requires that we as artists, technicians, students and researchers should not only use the latest technological developments - as has always been the case in the history of the performing arts - but should first question them.

For me, this does not mean that every technical device, every achievement, every gimmick should be used to keep up with the times, we are not exclusively subject to technology-related questions, on the contrary: it means that we should explore and know the possibilities that the world offers us and our audience. My task at the Academy in the coming years will be to work with all those who work and research there to find out where a particular need for the new technology in question may lie in the respective artistic performance.

As far as art is concerned, there is once again an urgent appeal to take your time. Not to enter the digital space as a new country, but to actively shape it. To dare an experiment for once more than the analogue annual schedule normally allows, not to see fate as an opportunity, so to speak, but failure - now is the time to also find out what is not working - artistically and technically. The challenging thing about it, again referring to the question: "Am I more analogue or more digital?" is that not everyone has to be able to do everything. We can also have the courage to specialize, even admit what we cannot or do not want to represent.

Until now, there were only three archetypes of space: the inner interior - the room, the inner exterior - the courtyard, and the outer interior - the square.

These are culturally shaped spaces that repeat themselves. They reflect certain expectations and open up differentiated possibilities for action.

Now a fourth, immaterial space is added to them, connected to our individually shaped inner, intellectual-artistic space - our own idea of space and action that arises through art.

This fourth space, the digital space, will be the frame of reference to be conquered in the future.

In the last few weeks, I have been teaching actors at the University of Art in Graz, per Zoom - a course in which I have been working for three years on the definition of people in space, a course that seemed to depend almost existentially on the fact that we really gather together on site, conquer real places, define ourselves through them or vice versa - the human being, the body defines space as a place of action: we open up site-specific narrative spaces of action for reality-generating play processes. These spaces around us make the performative offer, we react to them with movement and sound, body and language. Playing in and with the space enables unusual perspectives on everyday places in our environment.

After much consideration, I decided to give the course, measuring the space on the Internet - what ideas can we convey? Which image can be created, not as a copy, but as a symbol, a meaning?

And it's amazing how quickly these digital natives are coming to terms with the new results, knowing that it means an extension of theatrical spaces, which is currently taking place around and around us. The physical theatre will not be removed or replaced, but it will be expanded and enriched by another space of experience.

To show this in a small scale, I would like to ask you to turn on your cameras for a moment:

Can you describe the room with your hands the space the camera gives you?



And now we're going to do an empathy experiment: All persons with an even birth date, please look directly into the camera of your device for 45 seconds. The others please choose a person on the screen to look at directly:

What do you think? Did you feel looked at? Maybe even read something on the face opposite? Knowing that we are all live in the same room right now?

There is still a lot of research to be done on these feedbacks, be it on acoustic stimuli, be it on textiles that function reactively etc. - and a feeling and understanding of this must of course be directly included in the training!

If we are to understand the mediation of the performing arts in relation to the tools that want to access us through the so-called "digital transformation", we must learn to understand them and their conditions, especially in

(a) The terminology or the concepts, i.e.: What do we mean when we talk about the Internet, online activity, digitalisation, digital transformation, digitality, the post-digital age, virtuality or cyberspace? If we don't know whether we are talking about the same thing, how can we act together (this is also a big challenge in analogue life)?

and

b) In the recognition of other coordinates, i.e. in the conquest of digital and virtual space already in education.

We are currently experiencing a breathtaking acceleration of online formats - and this is a huge opportunity, both in training and in the exercise of professions.

Among other things, the question is how, beyond the offer of a performance, a feeling of a visit to the theatre can be created? How can I as a performer get a feeling for the space that goes beyond film or filmed theatre?

Most of the theatre formats currently shown on the Internet are currently just filmed, so that theatre can be consumed on the screen at home. There is hardly any possibility of immersion or participation. Can we encounter each other differently? Can we communicate, for example in designated rooms? Do we perhaps even meet the artists there? Do we find formats in which a visit is reflected as in the classical theatre situation, i.e. in the form of representation for which the material shown was originally intended? For example, a space for the artists to meet and prepare for a performance, just like in the theatres? Is there a foyer situation, perhaps a welcome by foyer personnel? Time for an audience to look around, to see which and how many other people would like to participate in the event? The opportunity to make an appointment? To exchange ideas during the break or afterwards? All of this, in other words, an experience of what an audience knows and appreciates on an evening at the theatre, could be depicted, other transmitter-receiver models could develop than those that have existed up to now: to visit a theatre, a digital one, not just to call it up.

Finally, however, and this is clear in all the debates about it, it is of course about communication between an audience and the artists: we have not yet found an equivalent for a direct reaction, for example a sleeping, restless, tense, concentrated audience: On the Internet, even when we're all live, everything feels the same. This must be taught in training: To get involved in the conditions, to participate in the exploration of the spaces and their conditions already in the study.

And of course, to gain a technical understanding: Not in order to be able to design everything yourself, but to be able to talk about possibilities with the new theatre staff on an equal footing.

If communication creates its own reality, i.e. as a community it is democratic and no longer imposed, as individuals it is autonomous but networked, how are the communication structures in the network to be understood? What new understanding of community should we strive for in order to be able to take our meaningful mission seriously as artists?

Professor Felix Stalder (Media theoretician, Univ. of the Arts Zurich) writes correspondingly from a scientific perspective: Digitization does not just stand for phenomena such as automation or digital mass communication, but much more fundamentally for a change in the world we live in, which also affects our self-image and our understanding of society as a whole.

Are we actually aware that we are currently forming new communities because the approaches to the events are different? And not only for an audience, but also and especially for theatre professionals. Who are the members in this community? Can there even be a central cultural space on the Internet as there is in analogue, physical theatre? Even in the analogue theatre space, the community is usually not territorially based, but, at least in the idea, openly accessible to all who wish to define themselves in it. In the Internet, too, we are dealing with a - theoretically - openly accessible model.

To tell you a little bit more about the facilities of the [Academy for Theatre and Digitality](#):

The concrete work of the Academy is divided into four areas:

First, and this is the main focus of my work, we at the Academy are dedicated to research on digital techniques in artistic processes. To this end, we award scholarships, funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, so that we can work on concrete theatrical issues without time pressure and with the necessary technical means.

Secondly, a master's programme is being planned, for which we are in concrete talks with the Dortmund University of Applied Sciences. In short, this will enable people who have qualified for either the performing arts or digital technologies to learn interdisciplinary working methods. As with all of the Academy's undertakings, one of our main concerns is to promote the possibilities of mutual communication.



Thirdly, we want to create a central place where further education and training can take place. The first is to create a central location where further education and training can be carried out. The digitisation of individual people in the theatres has already begun in those areas that the public cannot perceive directly during a performance, and of course it is important to introduce the staff to the new technologies.

Fourthly, and this brings me to the main focus of my work, we are dedicated to researching digital techniques in artistic processes. To this end, we award scholarships, funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, so that we can work on concrete theatrical issues without time pressure and with the necessary technical means.

As I said before: One of the major challenges is the development of system solutions and interactive systems that bring together and integrate individual solutions. What we will need for this is efficient and user-friendly operation of interactive systems for mixed realities.

Thank you very much.

**Marcus Lobbes (Germany). Artistic Director of the Academy for\_Theatre\_and\_Digitality in Dortmund.**

He has been working as a director and designer in drama and music theatre in the major German Theatres since 1995. New collective working forms with the ensembles and his close contact to contemporary authors are the hallmarks of his artistic signature.

In addition to numerous invitations and awards, his approach also finds its way into the training of young talent: he has recently been invited as a guest lecturer and speaker at the Academy of Performing Arts in Ludwigsburg, the Salzburg Mozarteum, the University of Rostock, the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz, the University of Art in Graz and the Robert Schumann Music Academy in Düsseldorf.



## Interlude

### A Question of Change

*Christine Schmalor*

As Jurij Alschitz and Pavlos Kavouras have shown, we are facing fundamental changes. Our discussion and the questions in the chat speak a clear language. Nevertheless, it is not only the external changes we must consider, but rather the much more profound changes which are taking place inside our system right now. It is here that much greater problems become apparent and it is for us to face these challenges head on. A popular saying "this is human nature" may be true, but does that mean that this human nature will never undergo any change? How and by what would we even recognize this change? Here we are faced with a paradox: how does an "old" human nature teach the "new" human nature? Our current attempts to move in the digital world still originate from an old human nature. There is nothing wrong with that but we should be continually aware of it.

*Jurij Alschitz*

May I interrupt? Yesterday I spoke about revolution, of course with some irony and humor. Still it makes sense to think how we plan to arrive at this, our new galaxy; new technology opens up new questions. One main subject we need to pay attention to is **Ethics**. Any kind of our speaking, our discussion about one or the other technology only makes sense if we change ourselves too. We must ask about the dream of what our school is. This school is a virtual one in the space. We all know the space of the internet is wonderful, but also dirty, aggressive and even vulgar. Our virtual school does not need the janitor, but we are, in the truest sense of the word, the caretaker that this school will be very clean. We need to establish an atmosphere of knowledge, not to hear or become overwhelmed by the noise of all the information, but to receive knowledge in a clear, clean and pure way.

Before he turned on the radio to listen to the Moscow Art Theatre, my grandfather changed his jacket and prepared himself. It makes no sense to grab some popcorn and speak about art and online education whilst lying down on the sofa. Without the atmosphere of pureness, it makes no sense to dream about a new form of education either. New technology is nothing without new ethics. This is the revolution in our minds; otherwise I will become a contra-revolutionary!

*Christine Schmalor*

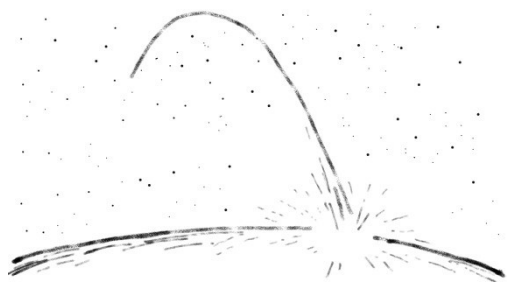
Talking about changing human nature should not therefore be confused with the fear of becoming a slave to technology or a robot. On the contrary. It is, in fact, our emancipation from any authority. The strongest challenge is the development of our human nature out of inner necessity. I believe that the non-hierarchical digital world offers new opportunities to reach another freedom, opening the human capacity to enter further dimensions of spirituality. It is up to us.

## Johannes Gärtner

### SENSE – MEANING – NOThing but mySELF



The greatest job of the brain - for not getting crazy – is the addition: Addition of rooms, of figures, sounds, harmony, and smells, tangible, thinkable. The most important word is the parole of the god Hermes: It`s the word AND. The word in-between.



After this great opening yesterday and one night offline I would like to share some first thoughts with you reflecting on processes which I fixed in my online play-developing-workshops during the last weeks. We all have to learn the online vocabulary. And as in other languages we learn to think “online” by speaking. – So, what could be an adequate mindset, where the trees of knowledge grow like in a wood and where the weeds can be recognized?

Yesterday somebody mentioned that we just took off with the digital UFO. And we are already looking for a top view, the track and the course. At the time we steer the UFO like a rowing boat: you see the winding track of your tour in the water in front of you, but this is backside – behind you is the open ocean where you are heading for. Everybody is waiting for setting the sails, getting out of the bay.

I want to start with a look back in ancient times when new media came up. The answers of yesterday aren’t the answers of today of course. But the structure could tell us something:

#### 1. The cave of Chauvet



My most beloved opening is the first cinema of the world. Werner Herzog did this great 3-D-movie about it: Huge rock paintings, 35.000 years old. Moving the fire torches all along the walls you can see the horses galloping! In the painting some have eight legs for this effect! After the camp-fire opera it has been the first stone age cinema. What a hero must have

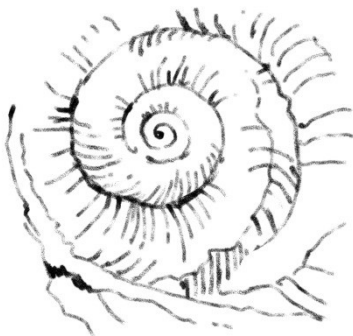
been the painter “Steve Jobs senior”; was he holding the torch and singing by himself?



So let us turn 180° - same cave: A wall full of red points – nearly the same time! Concrete and abstract art in one gallery? Some British scientists interpreted this after optical experiments with humans: The shaman has seen such light points in trance, calling the

spirit of the animals, connecting his spirit with themes. It was not just a picture of daily hunting life; **it was a human spirit's imagination of an animal spirit. That means nothing less than the shaman was talking to a living universe. – We should not be too fast in looking for parallels ... parallels do not know an abbreviation.**

## 2. The Nautilus



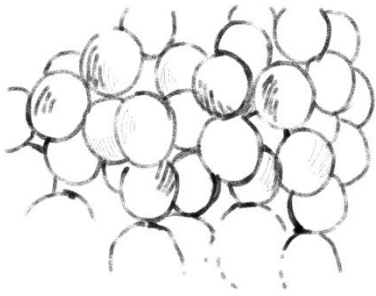
A little later on in the spiral of evolution there has been the writing - in pictures and abstract. Very elitist! Things became combinable, which one would not have thought possible before. The character of Epimetheus – the man who can learn just by experiences changed to Prometheus – the man who can plan things just by brain. The

intellect as a mirror became clearer and clearer.

Some thousand years later in Korea, China and Germany book printing was invented. The knowledge left the monasteries. Authorities changed. As today. The knowledge was made public. The intellect developed more and more. Things became conceivable that the reader could never have imagined before! But have still the figures of thoughts been developed out of remembered sensual impression which has been already in mind of the reader? And what about the memory? Jurij Alschitz told about the oral tradition of Homer. And what about the endless songs of the aborigines?

Did the new mindset - which was to create - have something to do with the new developing media - just indirectly? What about today?

### 3. Bubbles of Knowledge



Does the continuously growing rational knowledge in form of information satisfy us? Why are we still so hungry? Each five years, some say each three years, the human knowledge doubles up. The amount, not the quality! And what gets lost? The longing of the human mind is looking for new combinations. But isn't this the hope of a lottery gambler to

reach this state, that your inner voice says: "This is satisfying.

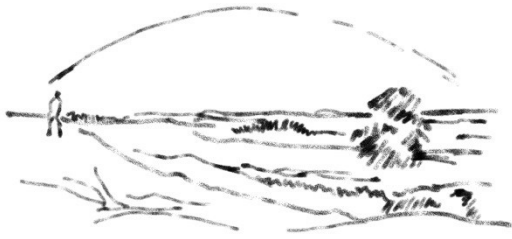
This is something like the truth." It is the hope for eternal permutation as the way to salvation. Or is it probability calculation as hope for redemption of the insufficiency of factually knowledge?

It's foreseeable – although not now – that this is a dead end in the horizontal. Even the permanent new combination of knowledge is just combination. The German author Hermann Hesse described it in the "Glass Beads Game". The feeling of real knowledge, real understanding about the inner being of things, doesn't occur. All knowledge stays just an inner reflection of the intellect, memorable vocabulary in a finally strange language that hits our inner being just at the periphery. This library isn't alive!

On the first view we all know how to put a question to the digital media and what parameters we have to answer to. We all know the classical techniques of questioning. And in digital media we can set links: links that put most of our senses on diet. Because sensuality demands space, volume, relations in space and time. **Ultimately digitality is an experience without practical experience.**

For sure: With this diet we lose weight. But there is one chance, an effect we know from fasting, staying hungry: Our taste, the whole senses could get sharpened! **For a correct understanding of the term: Thoughts are more than the intellect.** Formulation of thoughts, pure thoughts open the possibility to dive into thinking without deflection. The thought is thinking the thought. The reflection reflects itself. This is the only thing that separates us from other creatures we know. It's the human aspect.

#### 4. Our small cosmos



At first in the cave there has been the trance, a subconscious or semi-conscious gate to higher knowledge. But how do we come along with this: Scientific knowledge reflects about countable, measurable things, at least about cause and effect. The humanities practiced

revolution and finally physics did as well. **On a sideways the epistemology follows, telling you in an easy consensus: Knowledge is the meaningful combination of appearance and term.**

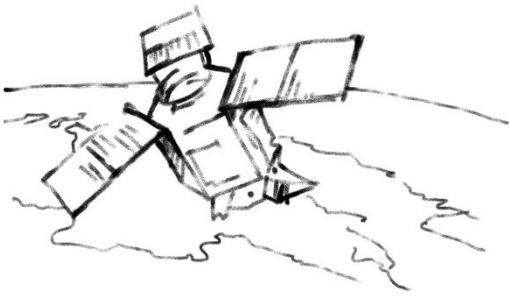
In case of digitality our thinking is very close to Epimetheus, just living from experiences. Our figures of thoughts in case of digitality still have their sources in sensual experiences. As Markus Lobbes said: We are looking in cyberspace for something like a foyer talk, or backstage impressions. But: Is knowledge beyond sensual experiences at all imaginable? That would make us different from all other creatures.

Self-education therefore spans out into the sphere between conscious learning, empiric and logic, and – on the other side – into the more artistic process, which is to be described with intuition, imagination, inspiration. It can be reached mainly through a process of meditation: **A thoughtful view into your own cosmos inside, full of terms and images.** And cosmos means order as Prof. Kavouras explained yesterday. – The meditation technique one might use depends on the cultural background; like the artists' techniques, which they sometimes even cannot explain themselves.

Even in the education of Plato there has been knowledge about intuition, something beyond rational intellect that beams itself into the things seeing the inner being of it. You could call it the cosmic theatre: the inner being of things appear in relationship to each other. This is no illustration, no illusion.

How seldom it is, we know. And we know how difficult it is to separate this from a self-fulfilling prejudice. How can we fulfil the demand, what is necessary to avoid getting lost in information and not just looking at the outside world? Theatre, as I understand it, means revelation, getting and becoming knowledge of the inner being.

## 5. Authorities – Revolution



So authorities vanish and change. Jurij Alschitz spoke about that, it is not possible to share knowledge. There is no master Google or master Bing that cares for our enlightenment. But the authority of internet is still the written word or the picture. Are the new aspects of “real-time” and “worldwide” not just

extensions of the old authorities and the real revolution hasn't take place yet? What would be the real revolution?

**Please allow me a short look on another aspect:** Authority has always something to do with confidence and trust. A lot of people call “trust” the gold standard of the new epoch. Online education is always an operation on the open heart of the student – and the teacher – in cyberspace, in public. The question is: In what can we trust?

Back to the revolution: In all traditions, in all myths, there is the imagination of human creation as a picture of the world, the cosmos. Taking this seriously, doesn't it mean we are existing in a living universe, a living cosmos?

We want to get to know the cave. But we are cave, cave bear and cave explorer in one. We are inside and outside at the same time! We are in our hands and are able to look at our hands.

Isn't this our longing to get to know the inner life of things? As the great Jewish philosopher Martin Buber pointed out: Not to speak about the things (in fear not to know enough about them), but to speak with the things, to say YOU to them. And later maybe even ME. You get to know just what you know and already are – in all day context AND in the greater context.

## 6. Calling the cosmos – thoughts coming alive



In this context theatre is appearing as a sphere with its different levels with the stars of knowledge. Each sphere needs its own kind of thinking; terms appear always in a different context. We have to get so flexible and alive in our **thinking, that we are able to understand and to describe upcoming connections und relationships in each sphere.**

But where does the light come from? From the knowledge stars outside? Or – as Goethe describes it – light is there, where light meets light. There is his wonderful poem: “Wouldn’t the eye be sun like, it could never see the sun!” Knowledge appears where – change of terms – spirit meets itself.

We all think we know what we would need for **online theatre and hybrid education**: 3-D-cameras, 3-D-beamers, Dolby surround, real time data – I would love this cyber space paradise. But is it what we want: Extension of illusion with other tools?

Out of the background noise from the theatre big bang one can still hear an echo: What is truth? But how to get to know it practically in life?

To cut it short: The circumstance, that we are reduced from 3-D to 2-D without any wider sensual impressions could be a pity and we could wait until the digital surface will be polished and the sound will be brilliant. But in the same way we should welcome it as the opportunity for the emancipation of this hope to a real lively thinking in our spirit. It demands for the only freedom we have, the freedom of mind. Once again, that means not just following sensual impressions with thoughts; it means that thinking is something real practical like physical acting. The intellect is not just as a seismograph, a memory bank or a one to one mirror but self-creating.

## **7. Interlude**

We are looking for enlightenment or at least knowledge in a sphere of a sensual half vacuum. The vision of paradise will not be a physical one anymore, if it ever has been. It is a projection, but not less real with upcoming completely new figures of thoughts. Isn’t it great: Because of the cyber reality we learn to separate our - so it seemed - normal constitution anew: body, feelings, thoughts. We can reflect on it and because of this new mirror we can recognize ourselves as acting spiritual beings! And this display mirror shows us clearer who we are not. Could we smash the mirror without shards?

The inner mirror is our intellect and our mind. Much more than just reflecting the outer things we can observe ourselves. The watcher watches the watcher. That is maybe the beginning of spirituality. The possibility of a theatre that acts on people like a natural phenomenon – it happens without any psychology. Not moving around the characters asking for their features. It just happens.

We have reached a crossing without looking for it. The digital world is covered with crossings. One way is to polish the digital surfaces until we will need the electric power of one power station for one streaming evening. We haven’t talked about this aspect yet, but the internet is no perpetuum mobile in the sense of generating energy. We could follow the

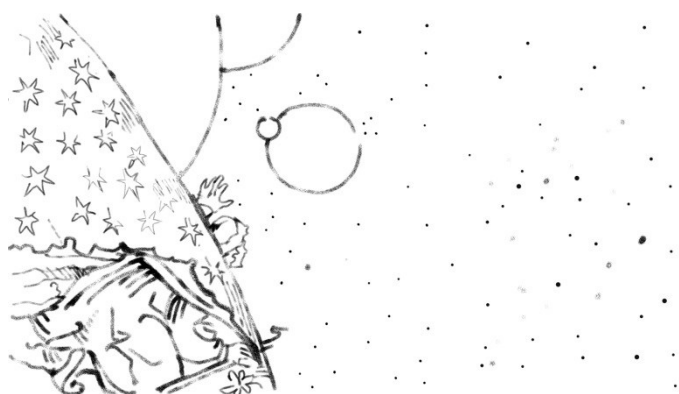


path of algorithms with more and more artificial intelligence. We could take any of the variants in between. Some may walk us more than we walk them.

But I am always fascinated by one of this middle ways: The human spirit and its possibility to transform knowledge into life: Outer knowledge, that gives security, it's perfect to describe; illusion elevates our feelings; – and inner thoughts coming out of a lively thinking of intuition leading you to the inner being of the world. But that demands real interest – as Peter Brook describes it in his wonderful Sanskrit tale – to be between things, to dive into.

How can we describe intuition better than by putting his interest, his focus on something. Classical psychology does not know so many tools for this, especially not with the body's own chemistry. Everyone knows that the moment of an emerging idea is usually not accompanied by noise.

## 8. Mirror mirror on the wall



So this leads us to the question how we organize ourselves. And how we are organized? What kind of docking stations we implemented offline, that we can use the online opportunities? What harbours do I have inside and what ships should I put on my inner ocean? What questions keep us busy? How are we organized in thinking – feeling – willing? Do we have to add

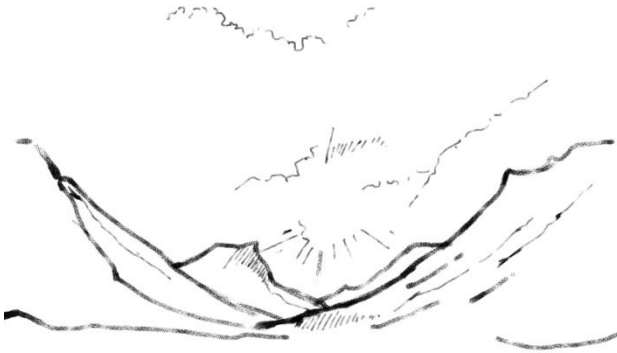
some senses? Not with artificial intelligence. Maybe the question for a modern education is a question after a modern anthropology? Which laws organize us? Are they different at each level of the sphere? Could we open new addresses in the student, sending the old questions might be very productive.

“I want to know the truth!” is implied in our soul. We are creations of truth, suffering from lies as everybody has experienced. That could be a powerful inner motor! We should provoke the students; they will find many tools on their way!

If it is true, that we are a little cosmos inside a big one, we can recognize knowledge and laws – nothing else than thoughts! – everywhere. Then we can start a great dialog with the big cosmos overcoming an old theatre to an interactive cosmic spiritual theatre, where the stage design includes the tree of knowledge AND the tree of life!



## 9. The cold Sun – Coda – Sunset in Cyberspace



We are warned by other media revolutions: The medium colours the message. There is this wonderful word by the great conductor Cellibidache: “The diabetes of the reviewer always is listening to the performance too!” We shouldn’t mistake the medium for the message, especially not the internet, which tries to prove it IS the message.

When I have been a student, I always dreamed about a theatre monastery, just studying, the stage, my teacher and me. Even today in each production I dream of this. It’s not possible, especially not as a freelancer. During the lockdown the home office brought us closer to a home-offizium (visitors’ space of a monastery). A little bit more concentration at a mostly comfortable place. Was it possible? Beyond all the uncertain aspects of this time it showed up, that the ability of concentration needs to be rehearsed more than ever. The exercises therefore are known!

Prof. Manfred Spitzer, a German Psychologist did a lot of studies and meta studies: The more people – especially pupils – used their devices the less they were able to transform information into knowledge. Ok, regarded with the old parameters of education.

The digital sun knows from no sunset. It’s always day and everything and everybody should be reachable at any time. But brain research showed the necessity of unconscious night work of your brain, your mind – transforming information into knowledge.

So, how to handle our Hybrid-education-app? Sending a digital carrier pigeon what the student has to dream about? Maybe he is in “Not-creative-modus” and won’t be woken up. Do we need creative big brother? “1000 ideas a day keeps the algorhythm away?” Our aim to set a question that the student will not wake up without an answer could be motivated best if he is able to regard his mind as self- productive and active! “Sleep on it for three days!” my grandmother always said. Do we have to keep telling this to our students online?

We are creations of rhythm and should pay attention to this in all online processes. The good advice great teachers of all times gave us: Loneliness, emptiness, switch off and getting your little ME watching your higher creative ME. “Wouldn’t the eye be sun like, it could never see the moon!”

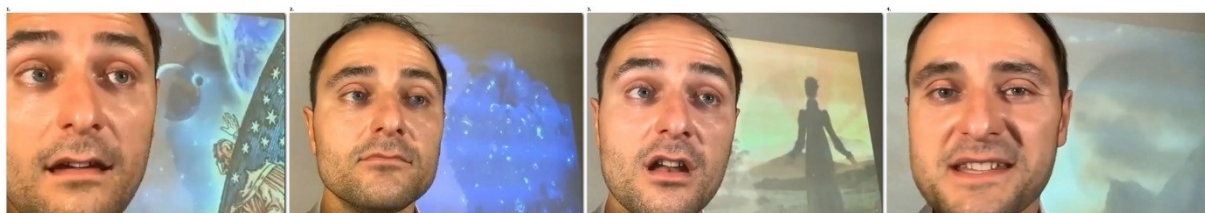
It could be very cold in the digital cosmos. You can be very alone with all those digital people around you. So sometimes it is necessary to step back and explore the most interesting cave we have: Our skull bone cave and what happens there.

Maybe all this is nothing new. I guess it was Epicure, asked by a pupil why he is always talking about the same, answering: “It’s always about the same!”

For all the euphoric thoughts about the future that we have - I cannot offer a ready-made method. I can only advertise for a way of thinking with a balance between the processes of the human spirit and the hope of salvation through a new medium.

Thank you for your attention!

*Graphic: Lucie Slatinská*



**Johannes Gärtner (Germany). Actor, director, author, teacher and producer.**

Since 2013 he is the director and producer of the RICHARD WAGNER FESTIVAL Graupa together with his production company CERCA DIO. He works as a free-lancer for various companies and schools. [www.cerca-dio.de](http://www.cerca-dio.de) | [www.johannesgaertner.de](http://www.johannesgaertner.de)

## Dr Dumitriana Condurache

### The one-to-one method and its new perspectives

Dear hosts Ms Christine Schmalor and Mr Jurij Alschitz from The World Theatre Training Institute, Mr Yakupov Ilfir Ilshatovici, Professor Farid Rafkatovich Bikchantaev, directors of The Galiaskar Kamal Tatar Academic Theatre and all the brave team from which I would like to mention Ms Aliya Toporova who is being so helpful and efficient. Dear all, I am happy to be together with you through the means of this favourable illusion as called yesterday by Mr Alschitz.

First, I would like to congratulate the organisers for the accent put on the creativity of theatre teachers. Usually people attribute creativity to artists and forget the huge amount of genuine creativity implied in the process of conducting and accompanying students through this quite tough path of finding their own voice in theatre (or consider it of secondary relevance).

Then I must say – concerning yesterday’s meeting – that I’m happy for the good mix of philosophical and practical thinking, because important (dramatic) change cannot come first but in thought, there lies the core of change, therefore I consider what I heard and experienced yesterday afternoon to be, in its essence, not information, but knowledge.

And, of course, you'll see that there are some meeting points in my presentation, too, which is for the best.

Back in my teenage years, I used to talk for hours and hours with my best friend; it was a fix phone like we had in the 80s and 90s and we would joke about how magic it would be if we could see each other. Very soon, this science-fiction dream became our worldwide reality.

Therefore, I can't help myself considering the recent change in our lives through this 'magic' perspective.

During this period (of time) I have had the opportunity to meet fine people, professionals from all over the world and it's always a pleasure and a very good surprise, like it was meeting you yesterday and Saturday.

This is a normal situation, in which professionals come together and talk about their experience and the need for future development of their experiences. Without this magic box we are looking now at or through (whatever variant you like to choose) this would be hardly possible, because of many reasons, such as distance, time, and money.

In my thesis I launched the idea of the one-to-one creative way (or meeting). This is a fact that accompanied me throughout the years.

This can be regarded from a philosophical, an existential, a pedagogical and/ or an artistic point of view, taken separately or intermingled.

From the artistic perspective, I see the one-to-one relating as essential for the dramatic act. Quite opposite to what Peter Brook affirmed about monologue or monodrama (that it is a minus in the theatre phenomenon, as theatre means first of all communication), I think that monodrama or one man/woman show can capture the essence of a play, of an idea, of a dramatic impulse.

So I would in fact agree with his other assertion that is theatre is a person who traverses an empty space and another one who watches him or her. Here comes the importance of the other who watches, because it's also in her or his eyes that theatre is going to find meaning in the future, not only in the creators' mind. It's, more than ever before, the look that provokes the mind in order to create the illusion or only the discourse. The meaningful look.

As to translate into the digital language, THE SCREEN FRAME (as the scene mirror or the painting frame) – as Marcus Lobbes showed us yesterday – is another empty space to be filled with spiritual experimental content.

To go a little further with my interest for the one-to-one work, I should say that from the beginning of my work I felt attracted with this kind of expression form.

Just to give you a few examples of dramatized and directed texts: *Miss Christina*, after Mircea Eliade, *Cassandra* (after Aeschylus), *Medea* (after Seneca) – in which I chose to tell the story through a single character or *Happy Days*, *Endgame* by Samuel Beckett – where I

represented couples, but focussing mainly on one character, people mirroring each other's solitude and rarely or never increasing each other's happiness.

From the existential point of view, I should say that this would be the expression of the deep Self, seen and valued through the Other's eyes. I mean the actor-director, professor-student work relation.

And from the philosophical point of view, finally, this is Me and Myself, in front ('in front') of the others, in front of life and death.

I chose not to say face to face, but one-to-one, because of obvious reasons... that is thinking, from the beginning, of digitalization.

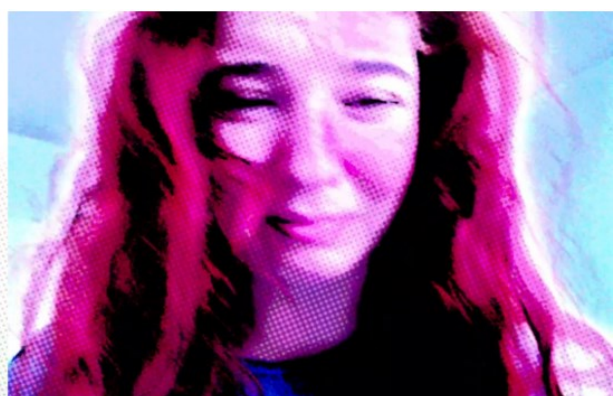
I've also chosen not to focus in my speech on the shadow of alienation that might appear from behind the screen... (But this we can maybe discuss further on during the conference.)

I left for the end the pedagogical point of view once because it is our main subject these conference days, but also because it might contain the three others.

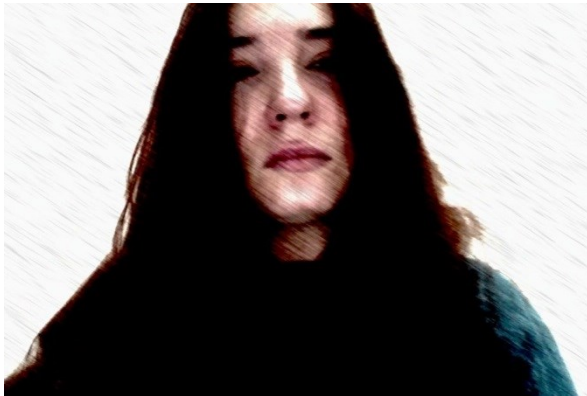
During these last months' time I 'took advantage' of my inclination to the one-to-one work and I tried to provoke students with themes that they would work on by themselves then present them to me. I'm speaking now about my students in Interpretation techniques in the actor's art – for student directors. As a result, I saw an increased degree of autonomy and self-confidence. And there were also students who managed to discover themselves (while making theatre but in fact creating video content) and other, very few, who were mostly confused about the freedom they suddenly seemed to have or, better said, to confront with.

I think, of course, that for the student directors such an experience is appropriate, as they should and some already have a certain degree of autonomy. That is why I chose two fragments of an exercise: Nina from *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov, worked from the distance with one of my students in directing, in the Interpretation techniques in the actor's art, as I have mentioned above to show that it did work. We cut a little piece just for you to see (and I'm positive that many of you have lived lately similar experiences) just to frame the stylisation process.

In the two videos presented during the conference (Alice Oşlobanu, actress, student director 1st year), you will see the first approach to the character:



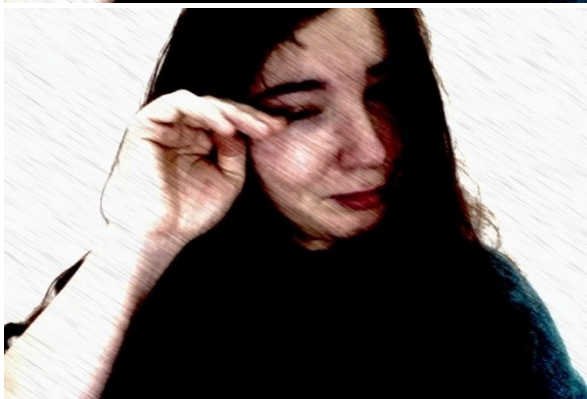
In the second one, you see the student's work on developing a deeper expression through the stylization of the rhythm of breath and by expressing the inner self also by poetic gesture and facial masks:



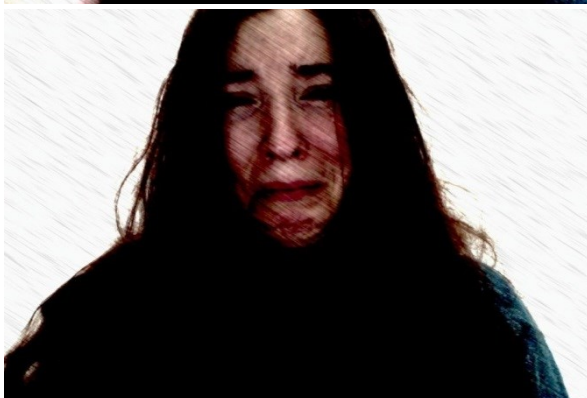
Every living creature... has ended the sad circle of their lives and became extinct.



... geese ...



... spiders ...



... star-fish ...



I am alone (preparing to utter).



I am alone.



I`m alone (whisper).



Silent pantomime.

The quality of attention and opening is proved, in my experience, to be better while working one-to-one. The student or actor seems to more easily overpass his/her inhibitions and find a smoother way to creativity. (The group work brings about other important features.) This `on-line period` relied on work based on this way, but the challenge was the inherent questioning of the core concept in theatre, that is presence. A somehow new way of being



present and being in the other's presence started to develop. Energy still existed and transmitted, but mediated.

Another issue is that acting and directing went towards a hybrid genre, which has to be taken as so, that is we cannot definitely assert we prepare students for theatre through online platforms, but provoke their imagination and train their means for exactly what they are doing at present, letting their future experience to revisit and put to different work context what they have exercised.

In the end, I do not intend to draw conclusions, but maybe raise questions for us all to talk about.

So, where or what is the space where we meet just now? Is this a mirror – for oneself and for the other? Is this a portal to each other's imagination?

Are the edges of theatre, filmed theatre and film blurring and mixing? Therefore, what do we have to teach students?

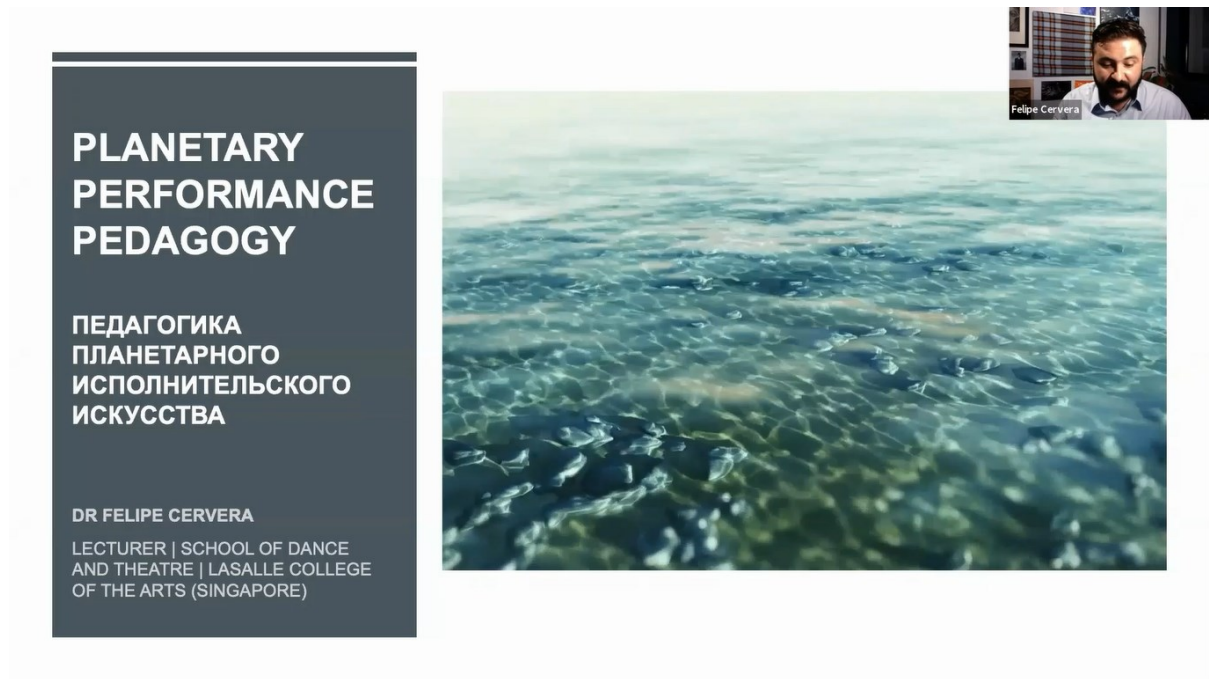


**Dr Dumitriana Condurache. (Romania) Teacher and Director.**

She is teaching Stage Directing, Interpretation techniques in the actor's art, Stage Speech and Voice techniques at the Theater Faculty of "George Enescu" National University of Arts Iasi, Romania; Associate professor for Interpretation, Composition and Musical Studies Faculty, opera directing in The Opera Class. She has directed or researched on antique Greek drama, Shakespeare, Beckett, Strindberg, Handke, as well as poetry and opera. She is interested in exploring new ways of expression, such as marionettes and multimedia.

## Felipe Cervera

### Planetary performance pedagogies: towards pedagogies of remote co-presence in theatre training



Felipe Cervera shared the principles and rational of methodology of already 2 years on-going experimentations at Lasalle College of the Arts in Singapore called Planetary Performance Pedagogies.

The meaning of “planetary” derives firstly from the humanities, emerging in the nineties as a critique of the global as an epistemology to favour one instead of multipolar knowledge and authorities of knowledge. Planetary thought is anchored on the idea that, instead of one knowledge going global, there are always already various overlapping knowledges on the same planet and at the same time. Secondly, it refers to the environmental sense; it acknowledges the relationship of the planet to knowing, as well as our relationship to nature.

With this in mind, the goal of a planetary performance pedagogy is to re-evaluate how theatre and performance making, and therefore theatre pedagogy training, relates to the planet both in a conceptual and a material condition of how the body of the student learn and interact with other bodies in synchronous and asynchronous time and space.

Finally, using planetary instead of global means to see theatre as world making practice.



# ASYNCHRONOUS + SYNCHRONOUS PEDAGOGY

## АСИНХРОННАЯ + СИНХРОННЫЙ ПЕДАГОГИКА

- **Re-evaluation of co-presence: the planet as a classroom**

Переоценка со-присутствия: планета как учебная аудитория

- **Collaborative methodologies: remote tutors/companions + face-to-face instructors**

Методологии совместной работы: учителя/партнеры удаленно + очное преподавание

- **Digital and mobile technologies as extensions to the classroom: the planet as a learning environment**

Цифровые и мобильные технологии как продолжение учебной аудитории: планета как образовательная среда

This project is an enquiry into a distributed model of performance pedagogy, a collaboration across hemispheres between makers, teachers, and students. So far, it has taken the form of a series of provocations, mentoring, and asynchronous sharing over a series of months with a group of acting students in Singapore and lecturers-companions in Florida and Sydney working with digital and mobile technologies, and future collaborations of various dimensions are planned.

The full-length documentation of the practical research will be soon published and available:

## FORTHCOMING

**Multipolar classrooms: Towards a Planetary Performance Pedagogy in Theatre, Dance & Performance Training Journal (Taylor & Francis / Routledge)**

**[felipe.cervera@lasalle.edu.sg](mailto:felipe.cervera@lasalle.edu.sg)**

Будущее: мультиполярные занятия: движение в направлении планетарной педагогики исполнительского искусства в театре, журнал «Обучение танцу и постановкам» (Тейлор & Франсис / Раутледж)

### **Felipe Cervera (Singapore). Writer, theatre-maker, and academic.**

He is a Lecturer of Theatre at LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore and holds a Status-only appointment as an assistant professor with the Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies at the University of Toronto in Canada. His research interests are collaborative theatre-making, teaching, and research, and the interplays between performance theory, science, and technology. He serves as associate editor of Global Performance Studies and Performance Research.

## Professor Dr. Erik Lint

### Expressive Media: Roots for the Future

In this presentation I allow myself to explore different approaches in thinking about the tension between technology and the body in theatre and in education - with the aim of being able to reflect on the bias of teacher and student in art education in times of Corona. I will talk about the didactics used within the IDlab where anticipatory skills and curiosity determine self-realization, socialization, co-creation and team building. The first feedback we received from the students is that of an appreciation for the experienced freedom to openly share feelings about a vulnerable private situation, without performance pressure and high expectations. The lack of peer-pressure and absence of the classic master-apprentice relationship was acknowledged, even by the teachers.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the students valued this emancipated relationship with the teacher. Although they were both thrown back on their own and felt distanced and left alone, they also felt united in a quest for creativity in a zone of the unknown. The split and lock down became a solidary collective quest for new forms of expression; a quest for a new performative stage to be invented.

Despite these advantages and positive experiences, it is clear that everybody lacks knowledge and the experience on how to deal and anticipate the times to come. In a distributed educational setting for theatre education real mental and physical contact is distanced and dispersed. So no one will argue that this period of Covid-19 will also nourish a deep longing for physical presence and a collective experience in a shared space. The essence of theatre is being-in-the-world, in connection with each other and the self in a shared space. Liveness; that is an essence we do not want to lose. Whether we've got into a phase of transduction where hybrid performative spaces and theatre education has to evolve into a new direction is a question we do cannot answer yet. But merely think of in terms of possibilities and loss.

In *Expressive Media: Roots for the Future* I will present some results of IDlab workshops that have roots in history, question the here and now, in the face of the future. The frame of reference that forms the foundation of our didactic approach at IDlab during and before Covid-19 can be found in four philosophical publications and in *writing beyond writing*. IDlab presentations are judged not so much on the end result, but rather in terms of the processes by which they were created. This will be dealt with later. First the four sources of inspiration:

1) In *The ignorant master* Jacques Rancière treats pedagogy critically and advocates ignorance, equality and emancipation, based on the ideas of Joseph Jacotot; How can one teach what one does not know?<sup>1</sup> If we translate Jacotot "emancipatory" method of teaching

---

<sup>1</sup> Rancière, Jacques. *Le Maître Ignorant*. Paris: Libr. A. Fayard, 1987. Print.

Rancière, Jacques, and Jan Masschelein. *De Onwetende Meester: Vijf Lessen Over Intellectuele Emancipatie*. Leuven: Acco, 2007. Print.

to the 21st century then we can ask a supplementary question: who becomes the master and the pupil in the times of digital (il)literacy: the student or the teacher?

2) In *the emancipated spectator* it's all about the 'equal' relationship between performer and spectator (teacher/student) that can also be thought of via *the pensive image*. Rancière describes the image and the distribution of meaning as a complex intermediate zone, oscillating in-between disciplines and historical traces. The pensive image is “the thought of the person who has produced it and of the person who seeks to identify it.”<sup>1</sup> The thoughts that the spectator/performer (or student/teacher) share in their common experience, practice, encounter and quest deserve a sense of equality instead of hierarchy.

3) In *L'Intrus* (The Intruder) Jean-Luc Nancy looks back on the penetrating experience of a heart transplantation. Nancy reflects on the psychological and physiological effect of the intruder, because his immune system had to be turned off in order to receive and embrace that strange heart. It also touched his soul, because his old sick heart transformed into the real stranger in his body.<sup>2</sup> The intruder thus indirectly raises the fundamental questions about cause and effect of Covid-19 and the immune system of our bodies and the environment we live in.

4) Bernard Stiegler explains in his essay *How I Became a Philosopher* that humans cannot exist without the social group and its technical milieu. Stiegler speaks on the one hand of *co-individuation and co-evolution*. It ties together the individual (*the I*) and the social group (*the We*) and the interior (man) and the exterior (technology).<sup>3</sup> With the prefix co- for individuation and evolution, Stiegler shows that man's psyche as individual or group is inseparable from the medium in which one moves and the media with which one is in contact.

These works reminds us of our common ground and responsibility as performers to continue to think and work as co-creators in which A plays in realities with B in co-presence of C. Be it in real, or in a distanced asynchronous virtual playground, or in a hybrid form.

---

<sup>1</sup> Rancière, Jacques, and Gregory Elliott. *The Emancipated Spectator*. London: Verso, 2011. Print.  
Rancière, Jacques. *De Geëmancipeerde Toeschouwer*. Amsterdam: Octavo, 2014. Print.

<sup>2</sup> Nancy, Jean-Luc. *L'intrus*. Paris: Galilée, 2005. Print.

Nancy, Jean-Luc, Joost De Bloois, and Ignaas Devisch. *De Indringer, Gevolgd Door De Stad in De Verte*. Amsterdam: Boom, 2002. Print.

[ <http://www.maxvanmanen.com/files/2014/10/Nancy-LIntrus.pdf> ] last visited 17-07-2020

<sup>3</sup> Stiegler, Bernard. *Acting Out*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ. Press, 2009. Print.

## **The Academy of Theatre and Dance in Amsterdam**

Following this introduction, I would like to present the short academy trailer ***Let's stay connected*** because it expresses the present time and context of theatre education while we have to stay inside. [ <https://tinyurl.com/y3wubxjh> ]

This trailer encapsulates an audiovisual metaphor that includes text, image, sound and thus associations. Our Academy of Theatre and Dance (ATD) based in the city centre of Amsterdam houses 14 bachelor and 3 master programs. The ATD is the only one of its kind in the Netherlands: we are the only theatre and dance academy in the country with all disciplines and relevant resources under one roof. Students from multiple specialisms can meet and inspire one another here, break new ground and challenge conventional thinking. They can collaborate and feed each other's ideas, learn and take courage from one another – and bring new ideas to life in the process.

In these times of Corona we, staff, students and teachers, tried to stay connected, continue, share and create new work. And as a community, we tried to hold on to our mission that ends with a question that expresses our shared responsibility:

If we trust that art matters

If we can learn from everyone

If we think artists contribute to shaping the world

How will we act?

Of course, this became a very prominent question mark. After all, asynchronous and physical theatre education at a distance in Corona times seems to be a direct denial of the core of theatre as a transitory art form of simultaneous being together in shared space. But despite all these unfortunate circumstances, we had to deal with it. So where can the encounter with our students take place? And where can we meet our audience and how do we contribute to shaping our world at times of social distancing? It became a new prominent question we had to relate to.

## **Interdisciplinary Digital Laboratory (IDlab) of the ATD**

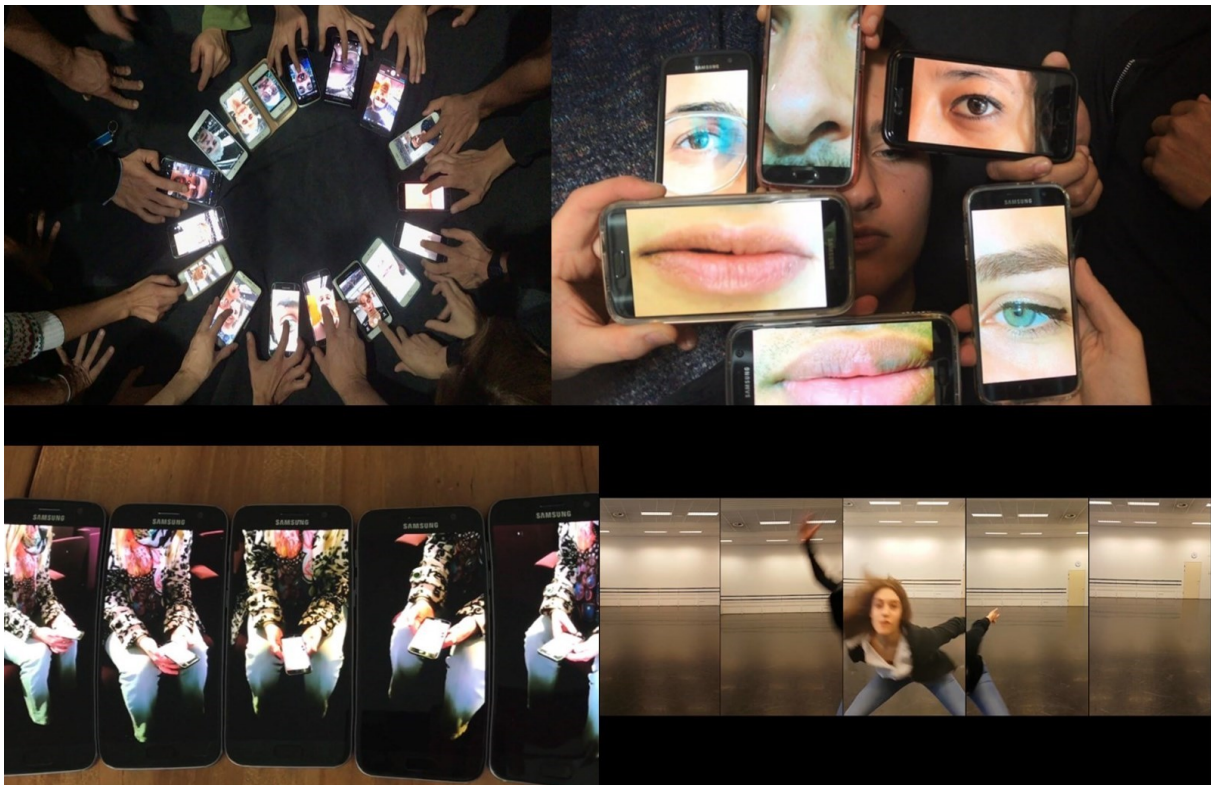
IDlab is a poetic laboratory for digital technologies which has its roots in the history of the theatre because of the technological innovations it has always undergone. Since 2017 IDlab is an open space for interdisciplinary cross-departmental projects and collaboration and it offers a place for the latest developments in digital technology. We bring innovation and experimentation into the heart of the academy and we support process and student driven educational projects of the different departments. As the curator and manager of IDlab I would like to present the performative technologies we have been using in our studio before and after the Corona lockdown and closure of the building.

For these techniques such as video mapping, virtual reality (VR), mixed reality (XR), game and mobile technologies and finally 360 video and audio we use the umbrella term: performative *expressive media*.

To give you an insight into IDlab's activities as an R&D department, I will present a number of projects.

### **Mobile Choreography - Modern Theatre Dance department**

by Zeynep Gündüz and Keez Duijves



Mobile Choreography is an innovative approach to make multiple-perspective films with mobile phones. To make Mobile Choreography students need their mobile phones, and a dose of imagination. No pre-knowledge of camera or editing is required. Put together a group of students and dancers and we let them explore the numerous possibilities of Mobile Choreography! Dance and movements are split, recorded, edited and can be presented in a creative playback mode. You can playback images on a tabletop or as an installation in space.

Synchronizing multiple mobile phones can be tricky. [The Mobile Choreography App](https://www.mobilechoreography.org/) helps to synchronize multiple devices over a wifi network during record and playback modes. One phone is assigned the 'Master' and the rest of the phones are 'Slaves' to the Master phone. The Mobile Choreography App is available from the Apple Store and Play Store for free.

<https://www.mobilechoreography.org/>



## Capturing Intention – Double Skin / Double Mind

DS/DM workshop - Modern Theatre Dance department

by Emio Greco | PC / ICKamsterdam



See also: <https://vimeo.com/17154664>

The interactive installation Double Skin/Double Mind offers participants the possibility to take part in a virtual version of the workshop in real time, while receiving verbal, physical and peripheral information. The design made by Chris Ziegler (ZKM Karlsruhe) - consisting of an aluminum frame construction with one projection screen, four sound speakers and one tracking camera - surrounds the participant. The movement tracking program Gesture Follower developed by Frédéric Bevilacqua (IRCAM) compares the different data of the filmed version of the workshop with the real time data of the participant's movements.

In march 2018 AHK ID-Lab and ICK initiated a research week focused around the DS/DM interactive installation with contributions from Utrecht University, Motionbank and IRCAM. Main goals for this research week were taking stock of the state of the art of the installation ten years after its creation, considering technological updates, discussing potential new purposes and values of the installation. Following this week the DS/DM installation featured in the section “body and code” in the exposition at Centre Pompidou Coding the World.

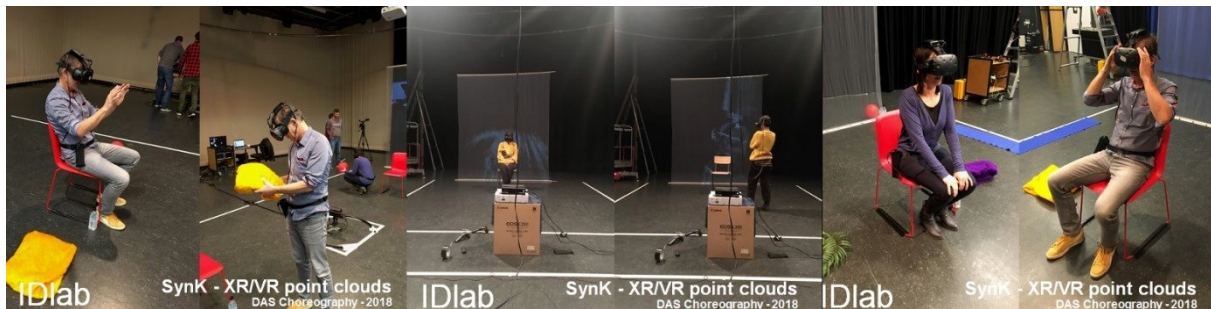


Within the framework of the DS/DM physical training and workshop IDlab started to experiment with 360 degree video-recordings of performance outcomes of the workshop with students. The choreographic material originated from ROCCO. Dancers become boxers and boxers become dancers. They challenge each other in a boxing ring with telling blows, nimble footwork and virtuoso tactics. The Insta360Pro camera was positioned in the exact centre of the boxing ring and dancers had to imagine the audience/spectator in the middle. The result of this recording can be experienced with a VR Headset. The single viewer can choose where to look at or to turn away. The pictures above are 2 dimensional video still taken from that 360 recording.

## SynK

DAS Choreography MA-department

By Setareh Fatehi and Frederick Rodrigues



See video: <https://tinyurl.com/yy76k7kj>

This installation uses tracking technology and real time point clouds generated from depth cameras fed into two VIVE Virtual Reality sets. The installation allows two people/bodies to simultaneously enter the VR environment and be presented with a real time volumetric images of another. The computer tracks, records and distributes in real time the two bodies and objects in IDlab Studio. Participants could experience the presence of once own body in a virtual space and play around with physical/virtual objects. One could even experience a swap into the body of another participant. Virtuality goes beyond pixels; our imaginations, memories and relations create multiverses in the realities that we live in. However, *synk* sticks to visual perception with an invitation to dress up with the images of another. Using the quality of augmented reality *synk* flirts with the desire of being together while inviting to see the different methods of listening, tuning and synchronizing.

## Touch

3 BA departments: Directing, Scenography, Design & Technology

By Willem Weemhof and Jan van den Berg

This course is initiated and lead by Jan van den Berg with 20 students participating. It is about the relation between Performing Arts & Science and Jan creates voyages of exploration beyond the limits of the naked eye and intellect.

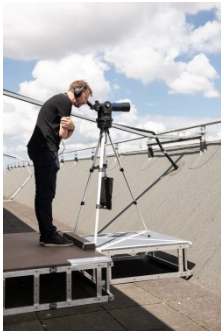


Students become acquainted with scientific research into space, energy, matter and black holes and how multidisciplinary teams work together to find answers to complex issues. Students visit Amsterdam Science Park of the UvA that hosts the FNWI. The Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science is surrounded by knowledge institutes

and so-called spin-off companies that started out from the research. It is a hub of leading education, high-quality research and knowledge-intensive companies.

The assignment is simple:

- Imagine a meeting of a human being(s) with something unknown.
- Make sure that this encounter leads to a touch; a literal or figurative dialogue.
- Experience that 'characters' or spectators are essentially 'touched' or 'changed' by touch.



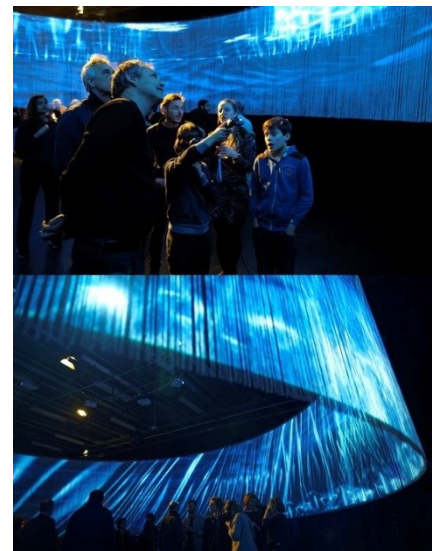
In 2019 students created short performance where Touch was coupled with proximity, time and music. Spectators had to go to the doctor and wait in total silence in the waiting room for a long time before treatment could take place. This consisted of a viewing and listening session with a telescope and headphones of a concert on the roof of the conservatory 2 kilometers away from the roof of our academy for theatre and dance.

### 360 Social Immersive VR experience

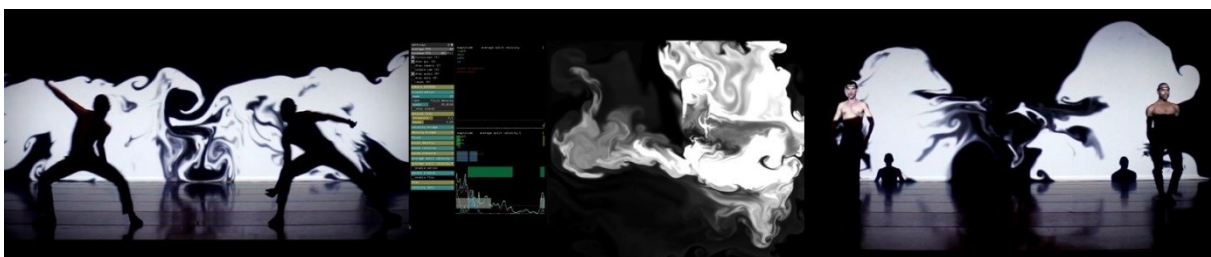
By Arist in Residence: Vesna Petresin  
in collaboration with Erik Lint, Aron Fels, Bram Snijders  
Opening IDlab Event. Special thanks to SRTP festival,  
What if Collective/MGMT, Goldsmith University.

During the opening of the IDlab, the artistic and technical production team presented IDlab to the AHK community with a social event and experiment in which the inside world of a VR work was folded outwards using SPAT-3D audio and a 360-degree video projection filament screen.

With a single HTC-VIVE set, each visitor could individually navigate through a highly interactive time/space VR-sphere consisting of thousands of minuscule semi-transparent reflecting water particles. All visitors around him/she/they could witness it on the 360 panorama.

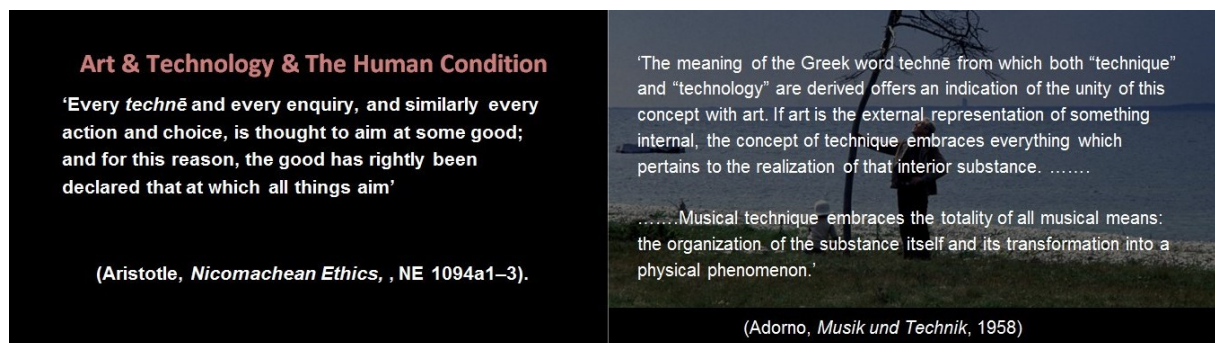


### Neuroscientific research on “synchrony”





In HARMONIC DISSONANCE– SYNCHRON(ICIT)Y, Suzanne Dikker (Neuroscientist at NYU & UU) and Matthias Oostrik (Interactive media artist) collaborate with Arnoud Traa (Sound designer and composer) and ICK to investigate human synchronicity and synchrony through artistic and scientific inquiry. Dancers wear EEG devices that measure their brainwaves while they interact with audio-visual reflections of their movements. This allows the research team to collect datasets and explore how motion synchrony (coordination, mirroring, unison, anticipation, resonance, play, etc.) may lead to a sense of togetherness, to synchronicity of the mind. A symposium and one of research phases was hosted by IDlab with participating students.



## Beyond the here and now

If we see the online world in times of Corona at the level of proximity and intimacy and not as a poisonous intruder with fake realities, the question is how we can use online tools and media in our pedagogy to aim for the good; to strive for a future and reflect upon sustainable values of the past.

The co-presence with an audience in the performing arts has already taken hybrid forms. It is clear that the production and reception theatre in the public sphere has changed by the growing influence and the transformative power of computational media. The distributed, relational, and the dispersed aesthetics of computational communication affect the relation between spectators and performers. There is no fixed spatial-temporal configuration of theatre in venues with a clear start and ending. Performances explore and are moving beyond its limitation, beyond the here and now.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> - Balme, Christopher. "Surrogate Stages: Theatre, Performance and the Challenge of New Media." *Performance Research*. 13.2 (2008): 80-91. Print.

- Auslander, Philip. *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. London: Routledge, 2011. Print.

- Lehmann, Hans-Thies, and Karen Jürs-Munby. *Postdramatic Theatre*. London: Routledge, 2009. Print.

- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.

## Content – Form: Writing beyond writing

We want to share this awareness of the scope and potential of theatre to the students in IDlab. Our didactic approach is about daring to explore and experiment without the performance goal as paramount. The creation process is not a contest.

In our approach we add something to the classical dramaturgical *content – form duality*. Language in the IDlab requires *writing beyond writing*. Language is also information and code. Communication is human and technological. And for digital natives, image is enormously important. The viral power of internet memes is a modern form of writing based on text, (an)notations/characters and pictures. The content - form duality can thus be displayed in a tripartite model in Venn Circles. Content/Form can be found in the hybrid in-between zone.

It is not something typical of our era of digital literacy. There has also been a time of information and communication before book printing in times when illiteracy was circumvented. In which image and its coding was connected. Like the Aztecs in Mexico. It is a form of visualization and *writing beyond the writing* that we are now developing on the world wide web.

For IDlab, language is located in that inter zone between text, pictures/audiovisuals, (an)notation/associations. Between the digits of 0 and 1, and those of man alone and together; 1 and beyond 1>. The imagination is not only triggered by the heart and mind, but is also generated by playing around with software and algorithms. So bodies are both organic and inorganic and connected in playfulness.

Two projects deserve to be highlighted in this context.

The research of artist in residence Fred Rodrigues  
<https://vimeo.com/398787805/ef137cd437>



and the scenography graduation installation Connectome by Noor Senfert Kroese.

<https://www.stenfertkroese.com/connectome/>

## IMM - Roots for the Future – Feb/May 2020

Roots for the Future is also the title of an Immersive Media Project initiated by the department Scenography in cooperation with IDlab and the Composition department from the Royal Conservatory The Hague. Halfway through the course that would end in a performance in the main hall, the lock down was announced and the whole project had to be rethought.

Before the start, students received the following information about the course.

## 1. Introduction

IMM (Immersive Media Project) is a project in which students from Scenography (Academy for theatre and Dance) and Composition (Royal Conservatory The Hague), collaborate on a visual-musical performance. The goal is to investigate the relation between music, moving images and the (audience-) space; the students will create a number of time-based works immersing the audience both in a visual and a musical way. The resulting performance will be blending into a coherent one hour (about) immersive musical-theatrical experience.

## 2. Learning objective

There are two main objectives in this assignment. The *first* is to learn how to structure time. The most profound structure in music is time. But time is also in theatre one of the main parameters to make structure. In this project you start to work on a musical and dramaturgical/visual score, as a time based organisation. This score will be the ground plan of your project. The *second* objective is to investigate the relation between the musical and the visual by means of immersive visual media. Theatrical relationships might shift using these kind of media. In this project a starting point is given in the form of a working title for this project: Roots for the Future. Although this doesn't define the outcome, it should work as a trigger for a collaborative interconnected work.

## 3. Music, Image, Space

There is a rich 'genre' in art that uses a combination of music, image and space. Directors, visual artists, architects, composers and musicians have been exploring the opportunities these entities deliver. From opera to abstract performances, from time-based art installations to film and projection. Artists like Mondriaan (Promenoir) or Kandinsky (Der Gelbe Klang) tried to set their work to music, or working with a film timeline like Matthew Barney, composers like Mauricio Kagel or Heiner Goebbels incorporate various theatrical or visual media in their work. Throughout recent history these artists have been exploring the realm between art forms, the forms of art that emerge from using multiple media.

The IMM Project presents the opportunity to explore this artistic realm in a collaboration of students from Scenography of the Academy of Theatre and Dance and Composition from the Conservatory van The Hague. In groups, the Scenography & Composition students brainstorm and co-create. In regular group sessions the groups work in one large space, presenting the opportunity to share each other's progress and to present examples and work-in-progress ideas to the whole group. This will greatly help the creation of a fourth work, on which all students collaborate together.

The students jointly create a timeline/score based on their ideas for their ROOTS FOR THE FUTURE. After having setup this score they investigate and experiment with the possibilities of *time-based visual media* (projection, video, light) as tools for scenography.

The scenography-students investigate and experiment with the possibilities of *time-based visual media* (projection, video, light) as tools for scenography. And the Composition students incorporate the ideas into their musical or theatrical performance, broadening their scope on theatrical design and the use of multimedia.

The resulting performance will eventually be presented in a collective evening program in the main theatre hall of the Academy of Theatre and Dance. The staged performances aim to be 15 minutes each and may consist of music, video, image, performance, installation, projection, mixed-reality, interaction and/or experimentation for fellow students and other spectators.

#### 4. Covid-19 – Lockdown - Change of plan

On March 16th the students and teaching staff decided to continue the project, but strictly online and remotely, resulting in a premiere with a concrete date and time. A streaming video platform would become our expressive medium. We agreed to see the world wide web and show control software as a HUB; as the open canvas for opportunities. This HUB contains technical bodies for **co-creation/co-evaluation** during Covid-19.<sup>1</sup>

With this decision to continue we held on to our belief that working towards an event at a given time and place – even online – would help us to **stay connected**. We stuck to our didactic premise that socialization, eventization and communication is central for developing skills, attitude and knowledge. How to accept, anticipate, deal and remain creative during the lockdown became a new learning outcome.

#### IMM - Roots for the Future

The teaching staff - Vesna Petresin, Othmar Sweers, Cecile Brommer, Yannis Kyriakides, Willem Weemhof, Fred Rodrigues is proud to share these results of our students with you.

The online performance Roots for the Future lasted 2.5 hours and the audience was present in Zoom. Twitch and Zoom were used for real time presence. WebSocket has been used for real time interaction between performers on different locations (as alternative to MIDI). Software: Arduino, Unity, MAXMSP, Adobe Creative Cloud, OBS live streaming software. Programming language: Javascript, html, C++, Open Framework.

---

<sup>1</sup> Like Bernard Stiegler we see the relationship between man and technology as **co-evolutionary**. In-between on the one hand living beings and on the other hand things Bernard Stiegler positions in *Technics and Time I* a third genre of being: technical objects (inorganic organized beings). Stiegler, Bernard. *Technics and Time: 1*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998. p.17.

## the\_wild\_pony

Join us in our digital techno club. A live performance in Zoom  
by: © Katharina Wegmann and Esther Wu with Mher Brut  
and Pleuni Veen

[Video](#)



## Twitch\_Plays\_Max

A joint effort to create a collective artwork by © Pedro Latas

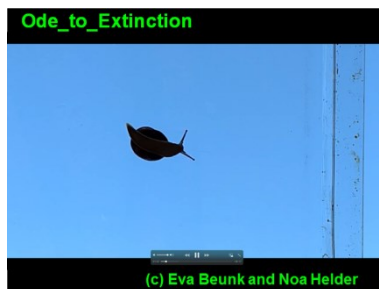
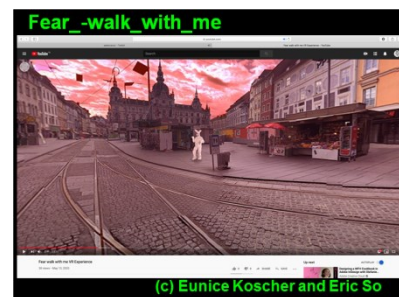
[Video](#)

## Fear\_-walk\_with\_me

*How can I distinguish information from disinformation when  
I am surrounded by constant confusion and indoctrination?  
What is the truth and who can I trust?*

by © Eunice Koscher and Eric So

[Video](#) !! Please listen with stereo headphones.



## Ode\_to\_Extinction

*Isn't it, in the end, only up to the person who looks at it?*

by © Eva Beunk and Noa Helder

[Video](#) !! Please listen with stereo headphones.

## \_Alterations\_

*My being*

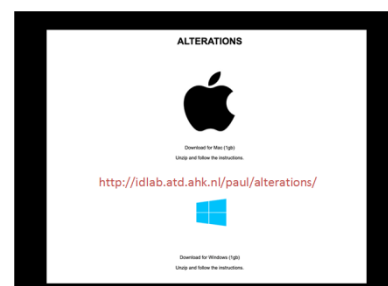
*My body,*

A search for life as we travel inwards

by © Paul Boereboom and Amba Klapwijk

Created in Unity

Download file/program: <http://idlab.atd.ahk.nl/paul/alterations/>





**Prof. Dr. Erik Lint (Netherlands). Artistic director IDlab at the Academy of Theatre and Dance (Amsterdam University of the Arts), Member of Management Team.**

As a filmmaker and video designer he collaborated with choreographers (Nanine Linning, Emio Greco|PC) and directors (Johan Simons, Ivo van Hove). He has also taught dramaturgy, performance theory, intermediality at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and initiated the program bio-virtual – between the real and the virtual: a seminar about the co-evolutionary relation between man and technology. His Interdisciplinary Lab (IDLab) at the academy is a poetic laboratory for analoge and digital technologies where students work in creative teams. IDlab brings innovation and experimentation into the heart of the academy using techniques such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), mixed reality (XR), and 360 degree video and audio.

## Christine Schmalor

### New Dimensions in Theatre Training

#### Research projects of the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT

The sudden digitalization of our daily life which we experienced during this Spring 2020 arrived like a culture shock. No complaints. What happened? We all activated our possibilities to learn and to change things. What is a digital mindset? How can we understand digitality as a cultural competence which may open up artistic and creative potential as well as new methodological insights? Should we, in this moment, cut off all the roots of analogue theatre training? Not at all!

Why should we discuss “either - or”? We are simply called upon to address the changes that should have already been made for some time. The simple transfer from analogue training to the screen does not work at all. So much is clear. Theatre is a live format, which lives from the live contact between actors on stage and their audience. It will never change. But we might find additional new art forms, as well as new training methods for a changing generation of theatre artists. They are waiting to be discovered!

What happened to teachers and students during lockdown was an outburst of creativity and a cultural change towards individual responsibility, both for creating tasks and realizing them in a far more self-guided modus than ever before. In addition, the hierarchies of knowledge transfer changed irrevocably. Teachers and students became more than ever a learning unit to solve problems together, to learn from each other and to give room to individually open knowledge.

Despite all the practical problems which had to be solved by leading academic colleagues and department heads, aside from all the doubts regarding when we might be able to activate the theatres again or to play to full houses, I see great chances for innovation and creation through this crisis. Perhaps this emergency was necessary to move theatre and theatre training finally into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT (WTTI) with the Artistic Director Dr. Jurij Alschitz has followed for over twenty years one aim: to develop training methods which are ahead of their time. Now, I will only relate to the subject of online-training. It was back in 2017, when we started to integrate online training methods as a new possibility and means of self-preparation.



## 1. Hybrid Theatre Training

<https://hybrid-theatre-training.org/>

Hybrid theatre training combines online training with the practical work in the studio. Through the online-training platform based on Moodle, (a system which is widely used in the academic world by major universities), we created courses for the actor's self-preparation, namely the method "The Vertical of the Role" which was developed by Jurij Alschitz back in the late 1990s<sup>1</sup> For the new format, we changed the working steps to develop a more spherical view of theatre and a holistic outlook for students.

Video [Jurij Alschitz: Self preparation of actors](#)

The subject of "Self-preparation" is widely forgotten in the regular curriculum of academies. Students need to learn to become autonomous working artists, which stands in contrast to existing, systemic power-structures currently found in the realms of theatre and film production. But also teachers very often enjoy acting as masters following the traditional scheme of knowledge transference and ensuring certain hierarchical structures remain intact. Take here the example of a famous expression which is often heard in rehearsals or lessons: "please show me...." or "I want you to ...". Naturally, students / actors wait for their evaluation after presenting a proposal. It is the manifestation of artistic dependency.

The pedagogical philosophy of Jurij Alschitz and his team of teachers at the WTTI follow one main principle: to facilitate the development of the artistic personality. The actor becomes a creator. I refer to the article by Jurij Alschitz in this reader titled "The spirit of self-creation is a free soul".

With the hybrid-programmes we moved the courses about self-preparation online. The perspective to meet the teacher on stage stimulates the students. During this preparatory online time students receive written tasks, as well as short video tutorials. They submit their work and the teacher gives feedback in written form or via one-to-one virtual meetings. In group meetings students can exchange their findings and begin presenting some exercises.

Everything is oriented towards the moment of the physical meeting with the teacher on stage. It is a process of energy accumulation carefully guided by the teacher which must absolutely be released on stage in one moment.

I am stressing this fact because it is essential for the methodological concept of online training. With the courses on self-preparation, it is quite clear: you prepare for something in order to realize it. As it is in improvisation - you know the final. In our case, it is often the initial meeting with the director, the teacher or with the ensemble at the start of a production.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jurij Alschitz, *The Vertical of the Role*, Berlin 2003, published in different languages



## 2. ALthattheatre

### Programme: ALthattheatre

With this programme we move from self-preparation to self-education as a never-ending process. This is far more than the popular understanding of life-long-learning; it is a change of mindset, a specific attitude to life. With the first run of ALthattheatre in 2019, Jurij Alschitz introduced Quantum Pedagogy for theatre training.

ALthattheatre reflects today's reality in hyperspace. It has already become natural for us to link time, space and information in a non-linear way. The use of hypertexts and interdisciplinary connectivity opens up ways of thinking and acting that, in their full complexity, are inherent to artists. We call it spherical thinking - thinking which leads you to the perception of theatre as a Whole and yourself as an active part within it. You enter the non-hierarchical cosmos of theatre.

"This conception of the Theatre implies a sense of eternity. The Theatre is indeed an everlasting entity which bears no notion of past or future; it simply lives in an eternal present. This timelessness allows anyone from anywhere at any time to be a part of it, something greatly emphasised by this project: it reaches out to anyone across the globe of any age, gender, nationality or stage in their career. Regardless of our differences, we are all brought together by our resonance with the Theatre and can work together to broaden our knowledge." (J.Alschitz)

The practice of Quantum Pedagogy allows students to discover their potential in the shortest possible time. Based on resonance and wave theory, Jurij Alschitz developed a specific format to stimulate a change of mindset which opens a person's capacities to become a creator of knowledge instead of a passive consumer. A team of teachers work in a unique formation which uses specific impulses at all levels – theoretical and practical and, as a result, students approach theatre in its full totality.

Practically, ALthattheatre is conducted in a hybrid format: six weeks (40 days) online training prepare the students to be able to accept the six week (40 days) impulse training, which enables them to continue with their self-education for the rest of their artistic career. Again we use the principle of energy accumulation during the online part through tasks with the perspective to release the energy through creation on stage. Self-education becomes the fundament for ongoing self-creation as an artist. Students develop the capacity to be responsible for their own artistic identity. No Masters Degree will give them the deceptive security to have finished with their educational journey.

Video: [EXERCISE 40/40 by Jurij Alschitz](#)

While both programmes function on the hybrid principles, we can still work with all classical analogue tools available just in a very different manner. But what happens then if a course itself concludes online? It is simply a further step along the line of self-education.

### **3. Online Theatre Training Academy**

Jurij Alschitz and the team of teachers are currently developing a new training programme to be delivered exclusively online. The students/actors/artists will use their knowledge for any performative format - on stage or in space.

Here we come back to the crucial point of all forms of education: energy. As Jurij Alschitz put it previously in his keynote speech: we are conveying information - bits. I believe, we should not teach the techniques of interpretation, transformation and application, but give only guidance and provocation for the students to develop their own tools for deciphering. Then it will become a school of creativity.

The subjects offered will therefore not follow the classical canon. Courses about "The Role" will speak for example about fractality and intertextuality of the role and the "Renaissance of the Dialogue" will shed new light on aspects of an old theme through the use of different media and a world-wide classroom.

Such courses pave the way for new forms of perception, knowledge acquisition and cognitive expansion. Today, I observe a great interest in rituals and ritualization, as if one senses with what urgency immaterial cultural heritage must be experienced and held on to. The individual desire for rituals may arise from different needs, be it a new form of spirituality, or the search to maintain cultural traditions. It requires a new orientation in space and time. Once the shock of globalization is behind us - comparable to a contemporary rootlessness - we will discover a different kind of freedom and security that liberates the spiritual horizon beyond cultural borders and leads to a new concept of the world soul or global connection. The shock that generations before us have experienced, that the earth is not the centre but a dust particle in the universe finds its counterpart in the physical uprooting of the individual in cyberspace.

The question is - do I take this uprooting as a threat or as a step into a spiritual freedom in which I connect with other people and cultures on completely different levels. The factors that determine a cultural identity will be completely different from those that have so far been gained through a classical educational canon.

We are only at the beginning of an incredibly exciting and interesting journey.

## Roundtable Discussion

The discussion on the last day had the motto “Assuming the future is shaping the future”. Jurij Alschitz discussed with colleagues which aspects and topics should be on our minds in the near future. This included the sharing of the recent experiences with online training under the conditions of the lockdown in Spring 2020.

### Dr Jurij Alschitz

#### **The spirit of self-creation is a free soul**

The professional skill of the actor in the post-pandemic era will be determined by their ability to be creatively independent.

Is the actor ready to be an artist in his profession? Or has the theatrical practice of recent decades completely corrupted him, finally rendering him an obedient performer not only to the will of the director, but also to the taste preferences of the viewer, the requirements of producers and managers?

Maybe the quarantine regime, without its usual constraints, will push actors towards active creativity, forcing them to abandon the disastrous dependency and the passive position which has developed in recent years. Maybe it will open their eyes to the fact that only independent creativity will be able to maintain their status in the theatre system.

They say that self-creation is possible for everyone. Yes, everyone creates, but they are pretenders. There are only very few creators. Creativity is unique - it is singular. Real artists are concerned only with themselves, in order to preserve their uniqueness and not fall into the trap of universal uniqueness. It is more honest therefore to study yourself because schools nowadays prepare students for universal creativity and not for their own unique path. Theatre has now become just a place for production. But the moment will come when we will be convinced of the existence of the soul in the theatre once again.

Self-creation is a free soul!

Self-creation means independent thinking - in the sense of being an author. The author of yourself; not the performer but the creative artist.

The world is changing and there is a notable robotization of man. What is the difference now between man and robot? (Which by the way is not afraid of any virus.) Man has the ability to think in images. Those whose work is tied to creativity will survive - whatever one does, one must have a creative approach to everything. The creator-man is capable of integrating new elements into contemporary culture.

We are entering into an era of robotization which impacts almost every discipline. Although I do not imagine robots in the theatre, the very atmosphere of society where more than half

of the processes will be robotized will undoubtedly affect the theatre school with new criteria and assessments.

We were all once conceived by the Almighty as creators and, in the same way, the art of theatre needs an actor-author: he is a creator himself; he creates his own world and his life in it. He himself is responsible for his decisions, for his actions, for his role. He builds, creates and reveals. This position changes his attitude not only towards life on stage, but also to the theatre itself and his own profession. The actor-author plays differently because he is fed by a special energy.

I am a director by education and have been interested in pedagogy for thirty years. I know the profession of an actor not by hearsay but in practice. Therefore, I can tell you - an actor will never get full creative satisfaction from rehearsals or performances, if he only implements the ideas of others. The energy of playing is immeasurably higher by his own understanding than by any other suggestions.

Our "Own" understandings are played differently to someone else's. Out of all the areas of acting, improvisation will be singularly important - we are not robots and it will be appreciated among robots too! Creative and poetic thinking is achieved by self-education and self-development. Neither extraordinary interpretation, nor the techniques, not the colorfulness, not the polyphony will impress the spectator of the robotic era. Robots equipped with hundreds of programs can do it all but only the lively, unpredictable action of an actor on stage will be appreciated.

Self-creation is self-education from the position of the author alone. This independent view is only possible in an atmosphere of freedom and mutual respect for one and other; when everyone takes the responsibility for his or her life according to his or her beliefs.

How far we are from it!

## **Professor Alejandro Puche**

### **The ritual of rehearsals in the virtual age**

The world is going through one of the nightmares never dreamed of and which has become especially fierce with our art. Theater is in a state of forced questioning and transformation, in a new crisis for an art that has overcome others, linked to censorship or budgets. Paradoxically, we experience sensations similar to those evoked by Antonin Artaud, in *The Theater and Its Double* when he compares the process of a society faced with the plague with the transformative power of theater.

Society has been forced to stop its devastating urgency for consumption and production, and theater, for its part, has been stripped of all vanity, the public, live performances, premieres, seasons and festivals. However, despite the impossibility of the meeting we have to stay active; We do not have the right to a break. We must understand that being productive is also to continue reading, writing, thinking, having meetings with the actors and devising projects.

The meeting space, the rehearsal with colleagues changed radically. Now it really does not exist: everyone is under their own roof and we find ourselves through a screen, without having to walk, take a bus, drive a car, or ride a bicycle to get to assist to the rehearsal. We just have to sit in front of the computer to attend class.

In this never imagined context, it would be good to value and keep some of the pillars of theatrical methods, including ritual, which seems to me the most important. An initiative that has recently emerged in Spain has caught my attention. Let me describe it: anyone who feels alone can call experts in solitude, those who, not being locked up, have no more contact than with their sheep. Yes, to herd herders, who volunteer to help the lonely and disoriented in the cities. They are called by conventional telephone and you can talk to them in the midst of their work. You can also listen to the sheep's bleating and share aspects of your life; they serve as a guide. But more than having someone to talk to, the experience becomes a possibility of entering a ritual space and time, when the companion dog is called, at the time that he orders the sheep to take the road, when it's time to take a break. The caller is introduced to that ancient ritual in which Don Quixote participated when he confused the herd with soldiers. The same ritual appears in Lope's *Arcadia* and Virgil's *Eclogues*. Within that ritual we speak with the pastor. Entering their ritual is the really useful experience, beyond communication, as the Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han points out, when he remembers the fundamental role of ritual in society.

For us it is important in digital media rehearsals not only to create communication, but to create community, rituality. Although it is not easy to establish a ritual space in the current situation, because the actor does not only enter the rehearsal, but also comes accompanied by his house, the daily life. The actor enters the rehearsal with his pet, his neighbors or the noise from his street. His body is not on a screen, it's in his house. Sometimes we forget that and we believe that he is with us, but only his mind is in rehearsal, his body is still there, with its temperature, light, and particularities.

Therefore, it is convenient to remember the ritual, to reestablish the specific time of the rehearsal as one time within another time. Do not forget greeting each other, making jokes, talking about life, breaking the barrier between the presence in the house and the virtual space. When the actors show their house, their street, of course they are preserving their intimacy that serves to perceive their vital and ritual space.

Recently during the seminar organized by the Kamal Theater, an actor suddenly took to the streets within the scene of Dostoevsky's Novel in Nine Letters, when it was already dark in Abakan, Russia, and for us in Colombia by day. His body was in Siberia and we were in the tropics, and yet we were trying to be in a common space. As in the Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge by Castaneda, the first thing to do is to recognize and find yourself in space. The volume, the camera, the face of your colleagues, the ambient temperature and the collective mood. And above all you have to play, design warm-ups for this format, make the bodies get up from the chairs, jump on the floor, walk around the space and put mental dexterity in a bind.

Let's go back to refreshments, to coffee breaks, to foster friendship among the participants. Why should online meetings only concentrate on the transmission of knowledge? It is about to build a common poetics, to reach a collective discovery, to achieve an unforgettable ephemeral moment.

Thus, we connect as with the pastor to get involved in his rituality. This is one of the centennial pillars of performing art that will last even beyond this virtual setting.



**Professor Alejandro Puche (Colombia). Director and teacher.**

He worked at the Department of Stage Theatre Art, University of Valle del Valle in Cali, Colombia from 1996-2020 and is Head of the experimental theatrical group "Laboratorio Escénico Univalle".

He graduated from the faculty of directing at GITIS and worked as an actor at the theatre "School of Dramatic Art under the direction of Anatoly Vasilyev". He was the head of the National School of Dramatic Art in Bogota, Colombia; 1994-1996.

With master-classes on directing and acting he took part in theatrical festivals and projects in Colombia, Russia, USA, Brazil, Cyprus, Spain, Bangladesh, Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, etc.

## Tobias Biancone

### It's all about Communication

You ask rightly: What should we do? What should a teacher do?

I would like to start from the beginning: there is communication - from one person to the other; there is one individual that communicates with the other. This is fundamental in our life. We are communicating with other people, with animals, with flowers, etc. It always starts with a source and goes to the receiver. Maybe this source is a teacher, maybe an artist, maybe just anybody. In any case this source wants to communicate a message.

Normally we have a kind of goal what we want to achieve as teachers. Let's do it, let's use all the techniques which are available to us. Let's see what is necessary, what not. Look what works, throw out what doesn't work. I want to take the example what Jurij (Alschitz) used before about Stanislavsky. He tried and tried and tried and then threw away what he did not need. And in the end, this way he achieved something. I think we need this Stanislavsky attitude and use it right now.

We would like to communicate either with our students or with our audience; still, you have to be aware, that there is not only one way, but also the other way around: It is also listening. It is about respect to the person who is in front of us. In the past, we had student-teacher relations of admiration or fear. Today, if you really communicate with people, it is respect and listening; these are the basics.

And you ask, what is still true now? How we want to communicate today? We have to take care of which technologies we want to use to communicate now.

Let me give you one example. The actress Judy Dench was once asked why she became so successful, and she said: "I owe it all to my voice training because I learned about the importance of the voice". Two weeks ago, there was a speaker at the conference of the Shanghai Theatre Academy. He is one of the most famous movie and theatre actors in China. He said: "I am horrified. People cannot communicate anymore. They have this microphone everywhere, which amplifies them very loud everywhere, but they cannot communicate with their voice anymore. They get lost in technology."

I think of all these elements which have been important and necessary to us in the past, like talking to you, talking to you, talking to you. We have to see, what and where we need it, what can we do better to reach our students; when we can use online technologies to communicate better with them and then check what is really helpful and what not. We will understand what can be done without being in the same room and what not.

But - one important thing - what about the energy? What about the energy in the live performance? Or when I am in front of Jurij (Alschitz) or Claudio (de Maglio), and we are sitting in the same space?



So, we have to try everything possible, try, try and then - throw away what is not functioning. You can be in love with your microphone, but if you forget your audience, what is the use of technology.

*(Transcription)*

## Jaroslav Fret

### BodyConstitution for pandemic time

My friend and member of Teatr ZAR, Mertsan Semerci, recently reminded me of an anecdote about one of his professors at drama school in Ankara: he used to say at the beginning of every semester: "I can't teach you anything, but you can learn something."

How important and special meaning these words have in the present moment.

At the beginning of the pandemic time, our image related to the foundations of culture (of any culture) shook. How is possible to continue this message contained in the Greek paideia ( Παιδεία ) - to accompany subsequent generations on their path for relatively short time, so that they can creatively and responsibly continue independent art? How to create a bowstring in education that can fire new arrows to create a "theater of tomorrow", since this is the motto of Jacques Lecoq's vision that we took as the title and the problems implemented at the Theater School Meetings: "Making tomorrow's theater", realized by the Grotowski Institute since 2011?

If I were to use the term „model” for the type of education we propose - I would call it **participating model** (as opposed to institutional/instructional education). Our activities elaborated within this model have been completely stopped, and even the extraordinary medium which the global network has become will not allow us to recreate the basis of the inclusive model - real participation.

Now, we don't know what we participate in, but it is difficult to deny that we participate in something. The nature of this participation putting us all in a new situation- beyond habits, known problems, usual solutions like Jurij Alschitz has concluded: “beyond our zone of comfort “. All concepts such as: teacher, master, instructor, specialist, trainer, expert have never been a determinant of relations in our pedagogy. Now, however, we have nothing but colored screens on which we try to recognize ourselves and our voices - where this recognition takes place - within us, in our minds and in our isolated bodies. We all become partners on field of education.

## **Body↗Constitution**

While implementing the Postgraduate Acting Self-Formation program as part of the European Capital of Culture Wrocław 2016, we understood that this formula, which in part includes the first professional contract, and on the other hand constitutes an additional, individual chapter in acting education, is a response to the need to "redefine" - asking about your own a place in the theater of young people who just leave acting schools. It was not so much about filling gaps in education (we do not feel called to such assessments), but rather about completing the formation process related to the readiness to self-define, taking on one's own (and not prompted by the system) challenges, or simply - creating.

The "applicative" model of education (based on the belief that the "mechanical sum of classes" involving and colliding with each other different and often very distant domains of the acting craft - determines the educational success of the school) it does not answer the question of who is an actor? Educational programs - workshops - sessions educating the technique, do not shape - do not ask about the attitude (behavior, experience, message) towards other participants of the collection which is theater. Now is time to ask our self about it.

One of the most important tasks that can be set for education in the domain of theater art is related to the transition from the level of application of techniques to the level of practice / practicing culture - expressing oneself based on various codes and material flowing from the closest environment in which we are immersed by choice or "from destiny". The issues of sources and material in the actor's work are an extremely difficult level in self-education and perhaps even more important than the question of method / methodology. It is about building an actor's work culture and a culture of self-development.

In the BodyConstitution program, which has been running for over a decade, we try to support the holistic self-definition of the person in action - the actor - his / her body that he / she has (like an instrument) and is (always remains as a person). You have a body and you are a body. You use (play) and create (live) in the body. Numerous lines of practice derived from martial arts such as aikido, capoeira, kalaripayattu and numerous experiences of polyphonic (Georgia, Corsica) or monodic (Armenian modal singing) singing create a field of practice - the beginning for the practice of one's own language, own theater. BodyConstitution "teaches" that not the technique itself is the basis in the acting craft, but rather the ordering of one's own field of voice, body and mindfulness (interaction) practice - ordering / establishing the practice of social communication. After all, we all have a voice. And we are all a voice.

How do we draw from "sources" both in training and working on the actor's material, which we further transform into "scene material" so that it can later be included in the performance? Do we notice three registers in which the source material is simultaneously transferred to the actor's work? These parallel registers best describe three words: transmission - transition - transgression. In what proportions are these three registers

present in the actor's work? How is the material collected during research / exploration "translated" and to what extent does its transfer break the boundaries set by tradition and source techniques?

It seems extremely important today to redefine the issue of the "transmission" registry, in times when the dominant transgressive media.

Since the beginning of XX century (thanks among others K. S. Stanislavsky) we understand that stage acting as craft is based on research and deepest analysis of ... human reactions or rather re-actions. Today we shall add something - the issues of re-sponsibility since are actual like never before. It will bring life back to our theater. It will re-create us.



**Jarosław Fret (Poland). Founder and leader of Teatr ZAR, theatre director and actor as well as the Director of the Grotowski Institute.**

He organized a series of expeditions to Georgia, Armenia and Iran, conducting research into the oldest forms of religious music of Eastern Christianity a.o.

He has originated and coordinated numerous Polish and international projects of the Grotowski Institute, including the Grotowski Year 2009, Masters in Residence, the International Theatre Festival *The World as a Place of Truth* and the Theatre Olympics 2016 in Wrocław. His efforts led to the opening, in 2010, of Na Grobli Studio, a new location of the Grotowski Institute. In 2019, another new venue of the Institute was established, Bakery | Centre for Performing Arts.

<https://grotowski.net/en>

## Janice Poon

### Not losing hope

I want to tell a little bit about my situation here in Hong Kong. The Academy was closed already in February and we re-opened on the 1st of June.

It was in April, right after our last conference (Live Discussion with Global Theatre Academies on Monday 13th of April 2020, an initiative led by the School of Drama, HKAPA and Hong Kong Dramatists; editor's note) – during when the Academy was shut down, in addition to our very special situation where Hong Kong people are right now - we came to a point where I felt that our students were losing hope. Losing hope to study, losing hope being theatre practitioners. And we absolutely did not know when the Academy could be opened again, and how long the Pandemic would last.

And then, honestly theatre became the last of hope for me as a teacher and a kind of survival kit for my students to give them hope. We have been in that desperate situation.

Originally I should have started directing a student production in that time, so I decided to go online, with zero budget. The play I was directing was “Pornography” by Simon Stephens. There are seven scenes in the play. I divided the play into seven episodes. During the pandemic we all watched Netflix and got used to episodes, so I divided the play, that people could watch one episode every night. It was running one week, and on Sunday it finished with the last episode. But I have to insist, that this should be a live performance. This is the essence of theatre, no matter what the medium of performance is.

And I started to rehearse online - I was at home, they were at home. Of course they were not trained to perform in front of computer screens. They had theatre acting classes at the school, but now they had to learn a very new language in front of the computer camera; a kind of camera acting. But they did not lose what they have already learned in class. They were transforming their knowledge and skills through another medium to apply it in this different medium.

Another thing we have to deal with in an online performance as such is technology. Most of the students are not well off. The quality of their screen depends totally on the internet connection at their homes and the digital device they used. You can immediately tell the difference from the screen quality. Frequent lagging is also expected. Moreover, living in a densely populated city like Hong Kong, most of our students don't have their own rooms. They rehearsed in their living rooms where you can sometimes overheard conversation of their family members who shared the same tiny room, with sound effects from babies, dogs and traffic in the street.

You might immediately ask, “How can you rehearse and perform in such undesirable condition?” Yes, this is undesirable, and sometimes inconvenient. But if that's the only way, we navigate our way out. And I have to stress that we have a very good team of students

who support each other and sort things out. Some of their parents left the apartment on the performance night and watched it online with relatives and friends. They shared and witnessed the rehearsal process, and enjoyed the performance of their children.

Still, when you go into an online platform and people meet there, you have a special mix between being private and public. Students, the actors meet in such a situation supposing to be private, the audience was excluded like now, but was peeping into another situation, the performance. It echoes with the state of watching and being watched, the objectification and consumption of the other in pornography, the title of the play.

The students taught me about all the technical devices and possibilities. We even used sort of film editing effect and changing visual elements by utilizing the build-in functions of the online platform originally designed for video conferencing. Now we are back in school, back in a physical venue and students are of course very happy about this. But through this experience I was thinking, what we are teaching now in a physical venue, a proscenium stage is just one way. What if the online platform is just another venue where we perform like theatre? How are we going to perform in this venue? How do we teach students to perform in this kind of venue?

When we have been in such desperate situation, losing hope, we managed through this kind of rehearsal to encounter a human condition again. Students are alive again, laughing, crying. If this digital platform was the only way how we could continue to teach, to communicate and continue to do live performance, I would do it, because I could feel that hope in humanity exists. I could survive with my students and my community. This is what I want to communicate in this conference.

*(Transcription)*



**Janice Poon (Hong Kong). Senior Lecturer (Playwriting and Dramaturgy) and Academic Project Officer in the School of Drama at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.**

She is also the Artistic Director of Hong Kong Dramatists and cultural practitioner engaged in cross disciplinary playwriting, directing, dramaturgy, curating and theatre making, focusing on play development and cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural theatre making.

## Online Theatre Training in Russia

The conference framework used for the “Nauruz” Festival captured a large audience from different regions in Russia, who have participated particularly actively in the discussions generated. I think we can say that there is no other country where methods of acting are discussed as intensively and passionately as in Russia. This includes conservatism and dogmatism on the one hand and, on the other hand, the committed and highly professional search for new methods and energy of innovation.

Two articles about current pedagogical online practice which arrived to us as direct answers to the live-discussions are therefore to be published here. This is preceded by a conference contribution from Roza Akhmadieva presenting in detail how the *Kazan State Institute of Culture* is approaching the challenges of online training, and which conclusions she draws from it as director of the institute.

In preparation for the conference, Jurij Alschitz asked several well-known personalities within the Russian theatre scene for their opinion on whether they could imagine online training for actors. During the conference, we shared their spontaneous reactions and reflections on this theme.

### Interviews

#### Sergei Dreyden

**Actor, winner of the Golden Mask National Theatre Prize and Nika Prize of the Russian Academy of Cinematographic Arts.**



Сергей Дрейден - лауреат Национальной театральной премии «Золотая Маска», премии Российской Академии кинематографических искусств «Ника».



Jura, hello! At one time in the 70s, Elena Vladimirovna Junger, who was in America and knew the widow of Mikhail Chekhov. She had a book "Actor's Technique". And when we talked at the Comedy Theater, she gave me this copy for a short time. I went through it chapter by chapter. And not only am I sure, it's not because I'm proving myself that I can learn... I've already learned some things, graduated from the institute and so on. So, I'm sure that this book, "Actor's Technique" by Mikhail Chekhov is meaningful; let's say, to be used with some alive elements - and there were drawings in the book itself. Surely you know it. It would be possible with such material for some leisurely and regular work. It is very interesting to write and compose education. I absolutely believe in it. Absolutely. I have no doubts about it. I bow to you and wish you good luck! Bye.

## Alexander Filippenko

**Actor, People's Artist of Russia, winner of the State Prize of Russia.**



Александр Филиппенко -  
Народный артист России,  
лауреат Государственной премии России

*J. Alschitz:* Alexander, good afternoon! Alexander Filippenko is a famous actor, who plays a lot in the cinema, in the theatre. I want to ask you a question. Do you think online education of a dramatic actor is even possible or not?

*A. Filippenko:* No!

*J. Alschitz:* Immediately the answer is "No". Okay. Then let's dream with you. You appeal to me very much as an actor, not only through your performing, but also because of your thinking. It's very important to me, and I think of you as my actor, if I may say so. Just imagine, if you were trained online, at a distance - it would be another Sasha Filipenko. Or would it be the same?



*A. Filippenko:* Absolutely! You know, this is a television theater, a radio theater and an online theater - these are different planets, which have a different style of acting. And Zakharov taught us at the Shchukin School that the main thing that a director should decide at the very beginning is to determine the style of acting. And all what is different online - is the way of acting. Here we have a conversation with one person. This is a confessional moment.

*J. Alschitz:* Alexander, I know you have a lot of mono-productions. Now we are trying to create such a mono-performance not for showing online. It is also completely incomprehensible to me, but there's absolutely no energy exchange you're talking about. It's about preparation, about this hybrid moment in which an actor has to be able to do some work at home. Don't you work on your own and spend a lot of time on it?

*A. Filippenko:* Yes, yes, yes. But these are different things here. And you see, you have to define exactly the way you communicate with the hall. It is the justification in this case. It is the confessional moment that should mainly be present.

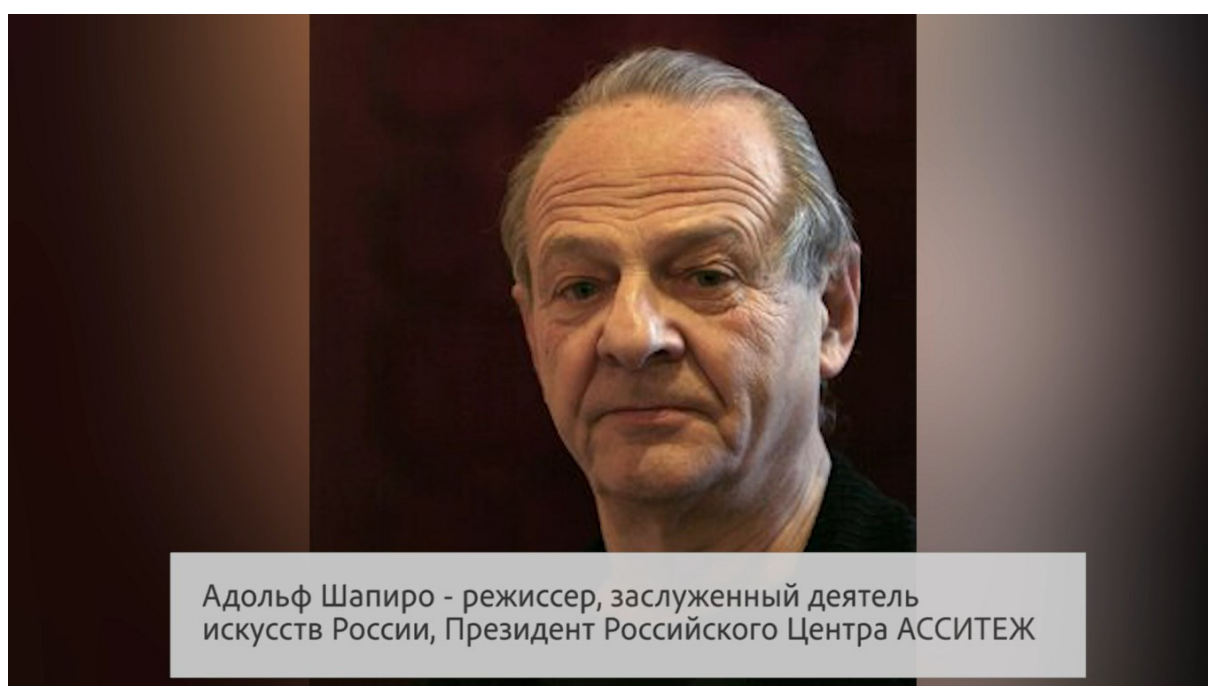
*J. Alschitz:* So it would be a different theatre if you brought it up online, right?

*A. Filippenko:* Absolutely. This is all different. It's already a different communication with the audience, you know?

*J. Alschitz:* I see. Sasha, I thank you. I'm completely on your side of the barricade. The main thing is that this pandemic disappears, and we will build our own theatre.

## **Adolf Shapiro**

**Director, Honoured Art Worker of Russia, President of the Russian ASSITEJ Centre.**



Адо́льф Шапи́ро - режиссер, заслуженный деятель искусств России, Президент Российского Центра АССИТЕЖ

*J.Alschitz:* Do you think online education for actors is possible or not?

*A. Shapiro:* Well, it's kind of partially possible. Maybe some part of the work with an actor will make up for.

*J.Alschitz:* For example?

*A.Shapiro:* For example, the sense of strength of the author. Structure, peculiarity of the author. The construction of the phrase. Thinking of the author. The worldview. There is one thing that happens here, there is a concentration of attention on what is always not enough time in such a duty work.

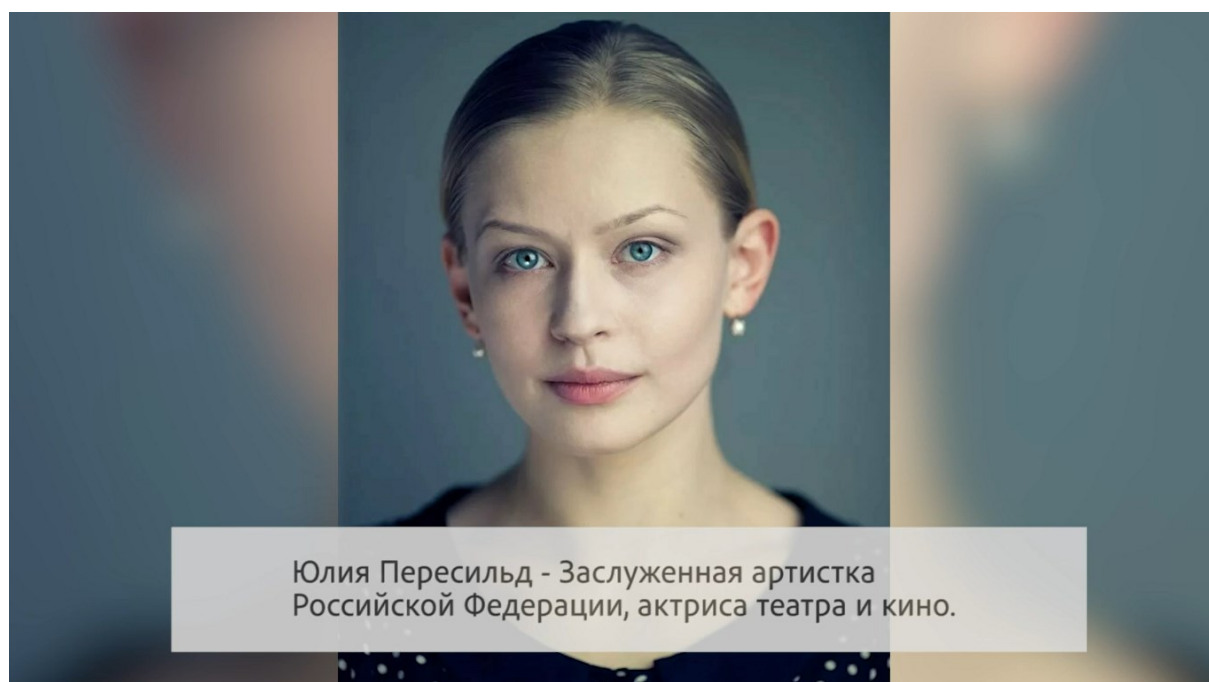
*J.Alschitz:* It's true. It's a slightly different emphasis on another kind of education that is missing. Yes, I absolutely agree. But what about the quality? Will the result of education be different, too? How will it affect the theatre? The actor? Acting? And theatre in general?

*A. Shapiro:* You know, we don't understand it yet. That's not what I'm worried about right now. What worries me is that I'm reading interviews with theatre directors, producers. And I hear the same theme, that after this terrible period we need funny performances. I think, in this context that's an extremely dangerous thing. We need to keep the theatre on some level. Because there is a certain truth in this statement, well, an incredible threat of further commercialization of the theatre.

*J.Alschitz:* I thank you. Your opinion is very valuable to me. We need to look again at the situation that has developed.

## **Yulia Peresild**

**Honored Actress of the Russian Federation, actress of theater and cinema.**



Юлия Пересильд - Заслуженная артистка  
Российской Федерации, актриса театра и кино.

*J.Alschitz:* Julia, good evening! I'm talking with Julia Peresild, a famous actress of theater and cinema. And I want to ask you a question, Julia. Do you think the online education of a dramatic actor is possible?

*Y.Peresild:* You know, it's possible temporarily. In fact, if we talk about a serious thing, about serious education - let's say, you can get some skills online, including. You can learn how to record samples, you can learn some of these skills. But not from scratch. In my opinion, it's impossible to take an artist from scratch and train him online. Let's just say that it's possible to get some skills. Well, how do you practice your skills? Well, I don't know. I think this is generally difficult.

*J.Alschitz:* Yes, I think it's very difficult too. But life shows that we have to change the forms of education and online education will certainly be part of this new education.

*Y. Peresild:* There are great online formats too, you know? For example, in the online format you can read and analyse the text. Well, working with the body online is impossible. Work with a partner, in general, online is very difficult. We've even made the performance online now, but we've already had this performance on stage before. So it was a little easier for us. Although I think that some formats can go online. Including readings of professional scriptwriters and plays. It makes it even easier. There's no need for everyone to be in the same location? You can be one person in Berlin, one person in Moscow, one person in Los Angeles, and somewhere else. Then you can do it together.

*J.Alschitz:* Okay, dear Julia, thank you! And I'll wait for you in Berlin.

*Y. Peresild:* This it is one of the cities I am missing so much.

*J.Alschitz:* Well, I hope to see you either in Moscow or Berlin. I'm hugging you. Have a nice day. Bye.

## Professor Rosa Shaikhaydarovna Akhmadieva

### Prospects for using distant educational technologies in the training of cultural and artistic professionals

Today, the question of developing theatrical art is relevant both in the field of professional and amateur art. Today, the government pays great attention to the development of theatrical sphere. Theatrical buildings are being renovated and modernized under the national project "Culture". The industry shows steady growth dynamics. All this requires a systematic approach to training professional staff.



Of course, it is impossible to improve the level of theatrical skills without training highly professional staff. At the same time, it is necessary to understand that the training requires a universal creative personality, which can prove itself not only as an actor, but also as a director, teacher, manager, choreographer, vocalist, etc.

Kazan state institute of culture is training all major specialist's degrees for the professional theatre, in addition training is provided in the direction of "Folk art culture", the profile "Amateur theater management ". The national projects "Culture", "Science", "Education" and "Digital economy", in which the Institute takes an active part, put new objectives for us: to improve the qualification of creative and managerial personnel in the field of culture.

As you know, all the theaters are now closed, and the artists are now trying to fit into the new online reality. Thus, many rehearse in zoom, recording monologues on the front camera, broadcast online the best productions of the theaters, organize creative teams meetings, but there is one nuance: artists, especially theatrical, lack a splash of emotion, improvisation and affiliate game, which, unfortunately, zoom cannot provide.

I would like to pay special attention to the fact that since 2015 the Institute has been focusing on the introduction of digital technologies in the educational process, our university

is a pilot among universities of culture of the Russian Federation, which allowed without much difficulty to switch to distance learning under the threat of coronavirus infection.

The use of digital technologies in the educational process is not a new direction in Russian education, and since 2014 Russia has been actively developing a legal framework. New educational standards have been issued that note the possibility of using distance technologies in education, now the standards have become more practice-oriented and meet the requirements of modern society.

The introduction of distance learning is impossible without an integrated approach to the electronic educational environment of the university. This, undoubtedly, contributed to the optimization of the learning process: the ability to automatically form and control the academic load of professors and teaching staff, helped to avoid duplication of disciplines, improve the quality of document preparation, analyze the results of training, etc.

All university lecturers were trained to work in the electronic educational environment. The created educational environment allows to place all relevant information on the Institute's website, from news to developed educational programs. The Institute has long ago switched to electronic library systems, successfully using distance technologies both in basic education and in the system of additional education.

Kazan state institute of culture in modern conditions actively uses "online learning" with application of remote educational technologies in all directions: educational activity in electronic information and educational environment (implementation of basic and additional educational programs).

Teachers create electronic teaching materials and set the sequence of the academic progress expected from the students. This is very important especially in theatrical subjects, as there are practically no ready developed courses on stage speech, make-up, acting. And we are glad that our teachers are able to create them.

For example, when studying the "Acting skills" discipline, a teacher places both theoretical material (lectures, video links, links to educational and methodical literature) and tasks to perform practical tasks (wikis, glossary, blogs, forums, workshops), to control the theoretical part they use testing tasks, including those that are practically-oriented. It is important for us that each student has a personal account in this system: all submissions, grades and teacher's comments, forum posts are saved, which allows the teacher to control "attendance", progress and activity of students during their study online. Although training is provided remotely, our teachers know how to organize student collaboration even under these conditions.

Lessons on "Stage speech" are most often conducted by teachers through Zoom or Google Meet, as they are convenient platforms for video conferencing, online meetings for distance learning. It is very important to keep "live communication" even through remote services, it is also convenient in practical classes: the teacher conducts online training (for breathing,

articulation, removal of muscle clamps, etc.), and the student can share his screen to show the teacher and classmates video recording of their readings.

All possible remote technologies are used, for example, during the course "History of theatre" case technologies are used. The essence of the case method is that the learning of knowledge and the formation of skills is the result of students' active independent activity in resolving contradictions, which results in creative mastering of professional knowledge, skills and thinking abilities. Teachers develop case studies using an individual approach as well as the profile of students' training.

Telecommunication technologies are widely used, as it is very important for our students to have an opportunity to show video and animation materials on different educational servers, work on educational telecommunication projects, asynchronous telecommunication, organization of online contests. This technology uses videoconferences, video and audio broadcasts, virtual seminars and discussions (I would like to note that we also invite leading Russian and international teachers to these seminars).

Of course, during distance learning, when personal contact is lost, we pay great attention to cultural and educational work, we hold lectures online on the official channels of Kazan state institute of culture (Youtube, Instagram, Telegram, Vk.com), and of course on the website of the Institute for both students and the public. As an example, I would like to mention Veniamin Borisov's lecture "What will happen to creativity and us" (Moscow); master classes by teachers from Indonesia who presented a puppet-shadow theatre.

Distance education allows the teaching staff to meet more often, discuss issues and exchange experiences at round tables, conferences and seminars. For example, in the past month the university held more than ten round tables with employers of the Volga region and the Republic of Tatarstan. In particular, such important topics as employment, target admission to higher education institutions, and other hot issues were discussed during such meetings.

Active research activities continue (organization of research conferences, scientific and methodological seminars, contests of scientific works of students, postgraduates and young scientists online). Thus, for example, on May 22, 2020 the V International scientific and practical conference "Social and cultural activity: vectors of research and practical perspectives" took place, within the framework of which among other problems the theatrical art concerns were considered (more than 1000 scientists from different parts of Russia and the world took part in the conference).

Creative work (preparation of online concerts, exhibitions, master-classes, theater and film screenings, etc.) is even more active at present, the results of which you can see on the official internet portals of the Institute.

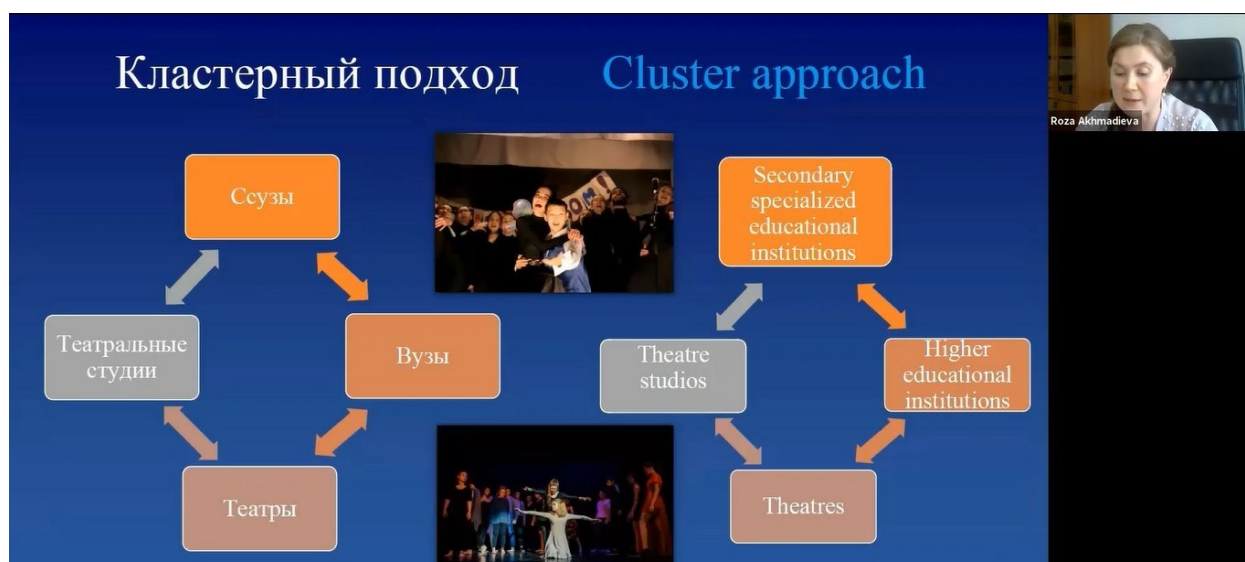
Of course, we pay special attention to educational work (flash mobs, contests, online excursions, visiting virtual concert and theater venues).



Among the features of distance learning students note the following:

- flexibility (teachers were able to take an individual approach by placing assignments based on the level of preparation and the profile of the students);
- parallelism (for distance students it was important that there was an opportunity to combine the main professional activity with studies (before the session to study the placed material in the electronic educational environment of the Institute and to perform the tasks), for full-time students it was possible to learn in parallel with the main direction of training additional skills and abilities on online - platforms of "Open education");
- distance learning (the opportunity to study at a distance from home (students studying in KazSIC live both in the Republic of Tatarstan and in the Volga, Ural, Sakhalin regions, as well as abroad), but not all students had quality communication, which led to some difficulties, it was possible to get out of this situation due to the asynchronism of learning;
- asynchronism (offline learning based on communication tools that allowed data to be transmitted and received at a convenient time for each participant, independently of each other (this proved to be especially important in different time zones and Internet connection interruptions). This way, students were able to complete assignments at a convenient time and attach answers for assessment;
- coverage (we had new opportunities when we were able to attract leading teachers from other regions and countries, as well as employers and practitioners) to conduct master classes and classes, and to connect everyone willing to join our events);
- new information technologies (videoconference - communication in direct contact with teachers and students; case technologies - based on the use of sets (cases) of text, audio, video and multimedia teaching and learning materials and their distribution for independent learning, with regular consultations with teachers, and various chat conferences.



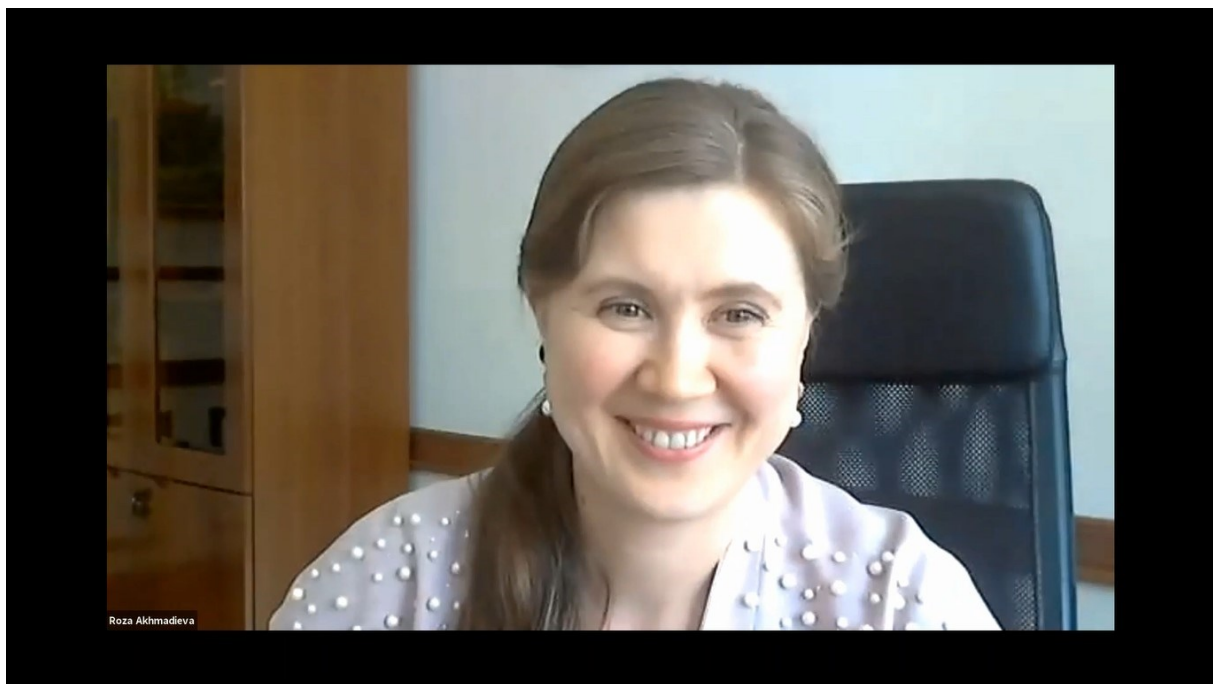


Currently, there is a problem of dissociation in the main stages of training in the field of theatrical art. In this regard, it is necessary to take the following measures:

- To strengthen the interaction between all stages of education, the cluster approach according to the scheme: theatrical studios (circles), then secondary specialized and higher educational institutions, and representatives of theaters. Work is already in progress in this direction, but it is necessary to consolidate our efforts, as this is a common problem.
- We train our staff precisely from the point of view of target training, based on the demand for specialists in theatres.
- To raise the level of festivals and competitions held in the Republic of Tatarstan and in Russia. There are very high level contests: "Theatrical Volga", "Nauruz", "Almandar", designed not only for young people, but also for children, as well as for retirement-age people.

A modern specialist must possess knowledge of both traditional and modern theatrical culture. This is expressed in the knowledge of the history of our country, our Republic and traditional folk culture, but also in the knowledge and command of modern trends in art. We all need to unite our efforts in order to bring the theatrical culture to a new qualitative level.

In the context of the coronavirus pandemic in the Russian Federation, the national economic recovery plan provides state support for federal budget institutions that have had to suspend their work. This measure will enable state theatres and concert halls to retain their staff, reimburse expenses for cancelled events and ensure the safety of the public once restrictions have been removed. The plan also provides financial support to non-governmental theatrical and concert organizations. Extensive government support will increase attendance at cultural institutions after the end of the pandemic that froze the activity of theatres and concert halls. Therefore, we hope that we will all soon meet not online, but in our favorite theaters.



**Professor Dr Roza Akhmadieva (Russia, Tatarstan). Rector of "Kazan State Institute of Culture".**

She is honored Scientist of the Republic of Tatarstan, full member of the Russian Academy of Education Information, of the public council under the Ministry of Education and Science, and of the public chamber of the Republic of Tatarstan in the commission for culture and interaction with the mass media.

**Elmira Kurilenko, Victoria Bogdanova**

**Pedagogical Discoveries or positive Aspects of Distance Learning for Artists at a Higher Theatre Education Institution**

Summery:

The article focuses on the problem of distance learning of actors at the higher theater school and the unexpected positive aspects of this process. Attention is paid to the peculiarities of "Puppet theater actor". The authors discuss the influence of on the human psyche and the specific ways of educating students in the first year of puppeteers training. It suggests a way of integrating the pedagogical tasks of the two subject disciplines "Acting" and "Stage Speech".



Today, under the conditions of the pandemic, teachers around the world are forced to switch to teaching online. Distance learning can last indefinitely, and creative disciplines must continue. Every day for the last three months we have mastered distance (digital) pedagogy, selected software that can be used in distance learning, and which can be used by any student in our school. We studied what pedagogical methods can be used in online education and how, in this regard, to adjust pedagogical tasks.

We switched to videoconferencing, realizing that group sessions would be temporarily unavailable. We began to formulate tasks that students would be able to work at home on their own and send to us in the format of video work. Previously, we had a problem with students poorly recording what they already understood in practice, and the new day began with the memories of the day before. With students, we had to end the class with a mandatory analysis of the work done, because only a reflexive fact is put aside in memory. But now, when students videotape their exercises and tasks done at home, by mounting the material, they record their work more clearly. When students receive feedback that records errors or inaccuracies, they try to take into account all the comments as accurately as possible so that they don't mount the material over and over again. This is the first positive thing about distance learning: the clear recording of tasks that have been completed.

Of course, the teachers' working time has multiplied, since they had to work with each individual. But the increased workload of teachers is nothing compared to what pedagogical discoveries we have made. For example, the second positive side of working with video is the close-up details. Speaking the language of cinema, we used to work with students in the stage space of classrooms on the "general plan". Now it's as if the camera is closer and we see the student in the close-ups doing a homework assignment. The teachers saw clearly the problems that had been beyond the pedagogical reflection for years.

Before outlining these methodological discoveries, we must say that we are working with students in their first year of specialization "Puppet Theater Artist", but we believe that it will also be useful for dramatic actors to look into the studio of puppeteers. Drama actors and directors often come to us for open classes and exams, get new experience, are inspired and cannot always reflex why they need it so much.

The fact is that the human psyche needs symbols, symbolic rows affect a person beyond his or her will. Even when a person does not subject them to comprehension, symbols reach the depths of sub consciousness, bypassing the rational part of the psyche. "When the soul begins to understand a symbol, before it there are notions that are inaccessible to the pure mind," - as Jung wrote in the book "Man and Symbols. (Cit. by: Encyclopedia of Symbols. M., 1995, p.10).

The doll, for example, as a synthesis of various symbols has always accompanied man and sometimes served as a salvation when the tragic nature of existence became intolerable to the psyche. In a social network came across a story about how the doll saved a girl who was exhausted during the war. The girl couldn't eat anymore and was practically dying. But when they made her a doll out of old rags and asked her to look after and feed her, the girl came back to life. The mechanism of such influence of the doll on the person in many ways mysterious, and requires reflection and further understanding of the means of modern science about the human psyche.

Perceiving the puppet show, the viewer obviously receives a message, related not only to the content of the play. Not only the material, from which the doll is made, and the puppeteer himself, reviving inanimate matter, penetrate into the viewer along with the content of the play, but also the doll's attitude to space-time (chronotope), in which it exists. The viewer looks at the puppet as if in a mirror, looking at and looking at his changed reflection, recognizing and remembering himself. It is symbolism of the puppet that triggers thinking processes in the viewer, which provoke the emotional perception of history differently, and often more sensual than it happens in a dramatic theater.

In the very structure of the human psyche, there are at least two plans. The first structures are "real", i.e. the lower, primitive, natural, conditioned by biological features of the psyche. The second are the higher ones, which are built in the process of cultural development of a man through acts of mastering his behavior with the help of symbols and stimuli. This feature of the human psyche preserved the lives of people who were in inhuman conditions in the Gulag, for example, due to the fact that people constructed a new reality, composing music or stories, and through this symbolic activity could more easily endure the hardships of real existence. The process of cultural development itself is the process of moving from the natural field to the symbolic one. It is this process, the process of inculcation, that a student of a theatrical university experiences anew and on a new level, passing through all stages from "cultural childhood" to the relative maturity of his cultural body.

Dolls as symbols are interesting to people who are more intelligent and able to read the symbolic plan behind the doll. Of course, we mean only puppet theater, which is not a substitute for the human theater. A theater where the puppet is an artistic phenomenon. Where a puppet isn't like a human, or a simplified human model. All these truths, which are obvious to professionals of puppet theater, have not just to be explained to students, but to be shown in practice how it works, starting with the simplest elements. At the initial stage of development of primary skills of a puppeteer it is necessary to teach students the most important dynamic stereotype of behavior on stage, different from the body stereotype of behavior of a dramatic actor. The actor-puppeteer's consciousness often moves to the periphery of the body - in the arm, leg, knee, abdomen, shoulder. If the dramatic body is spent entirely, reacting to any impulse from the partner, the puppeteer must learn to restrain his natural organism, control the involuntary impulse and direct it only to the periphery of the body. Learn to react not by yourself, but through the "extension". In connection with this task, first-year students often create an image of a character from a part of their body. This year we decided to make the main expressive tool for all students of the course: the hand. For video training, this restriction is the most productive in the distance learning environment.

In close-up, we saw that the verbal articulation of a doll - the hand is sometimes inconsistent with the plastic dynamics of the doll - the hand. We realized that this training should not only start earlier than we did in practice, but also to be conducted digitally! We realized that it is better to work out the details in video recording mode. Students have the opportunity to record a sample and then analyze their mistakes and achievements from outside. The close-up shows better this connection, the connection between the doll's speech and the plastic expression of the doll's behavior.

The next conclusion we made is the necessity to integrate the disciplines "Acting" and "Stage Speech" with each other. In Russian theatrical schools, the once conditional division of these disciplines is gradually becoming unconditional. Students often do not combine the skills acquired during acting classes in stage speech. When working with a text, for example, a puppet stops "coming to life", it is difficult to master the coordination of the doll's articulation, as the teacher's attention is mainly focused on mastering the student's own coordination. In other words, stage speech is taught by puppeteers according to the laws of drama theatre. And puppeteers need to immediately create conditions for the education of two stereotypes of the actor's behavior on stage. This year our studio has eliminated these problems, and stage speech is taught in a rigid connection with acting.

In the work on the speech of the future artist, including a puppet theater actor, an important place is taken by mastering the skills of voice resonance, because in the future, when creating a speech characteristic of the character of a doll, it is necessary to activate certain resonators. The predominance of one or another resonator is due to the features of the doll, the external structure of its speech system, its scale.

In addition, the puppeteer often works in uncomfortable positions, on a narrow, uncomfortable path in the work with the puppet, in tight behind the screen with the upper doll or in close contact with other partners in the management of the three of one tablet doll. It is especially important for him to work on breathing, power distribution, flight of speech sound in different body positions and in different configurations of the stage and hall. Classes of stage speech in intensive training for puppeteers are even more relevant than for dramatic actors and should take more time.

Before meeting with a theatrical training and then a figurative puppet, students master their hand like a puppet. In the exercises (see link below) all tasks are aimed at mastering the hand as part of the actor's body in the logic of a separate independent character. All students had to create an image of the character from their own hand and perform a number of tasks on acting and stage speech, closely following the translation of speech in the hand.

There was a single training of the future puppeteer, where from the first steps students learn to combine word and gesture, word and movement, the search for speech characteristics and mastering of verbal and dumb action.

For a dramatic actor such training would probably also be interesting and useful for the development of understanding the basics of stage speech, imagination, non-standard thinking and the accumulation of new cultural practices.

The task of the video training is to integrate tasks for the disciplines of "acting" and "stage speech" through a puppet tool.

The first block "Articulation exercises with a doll" presents articulation exercises, where the student not only needs to accurately perform exercises to warm up the vocal apparatus and coordinate them with the articulation of the doll, but also to fantasize about the proposed circumstances for their interaction with their own hand-doll. In the same unit, the articulation of the doll and the search for its voice characteristics are being done.

We understand that the task of searching for the voice characteristics of the doll is a task to be ahead of schedule. In the first year, all you have to do is master your own voice. However, each student has his or her own "voice machine" and in each particular case (in each student's work) he or she uses it, following the mask of the doll, and presenting an individual speech characteristic of his or her individual nature. A puppeteer should accumulate different scenarios of voice diversity as early as possible and learn to work with the rhythms peculiar to the doll.

The second block, Edward Lear. Limerick. "Students learn verbal action through training on the material of the Limerick Edward Lear. The task of the exercise - to translate a poetic text of absurd content on the language of the stage action in the specifics of the puppet theater.



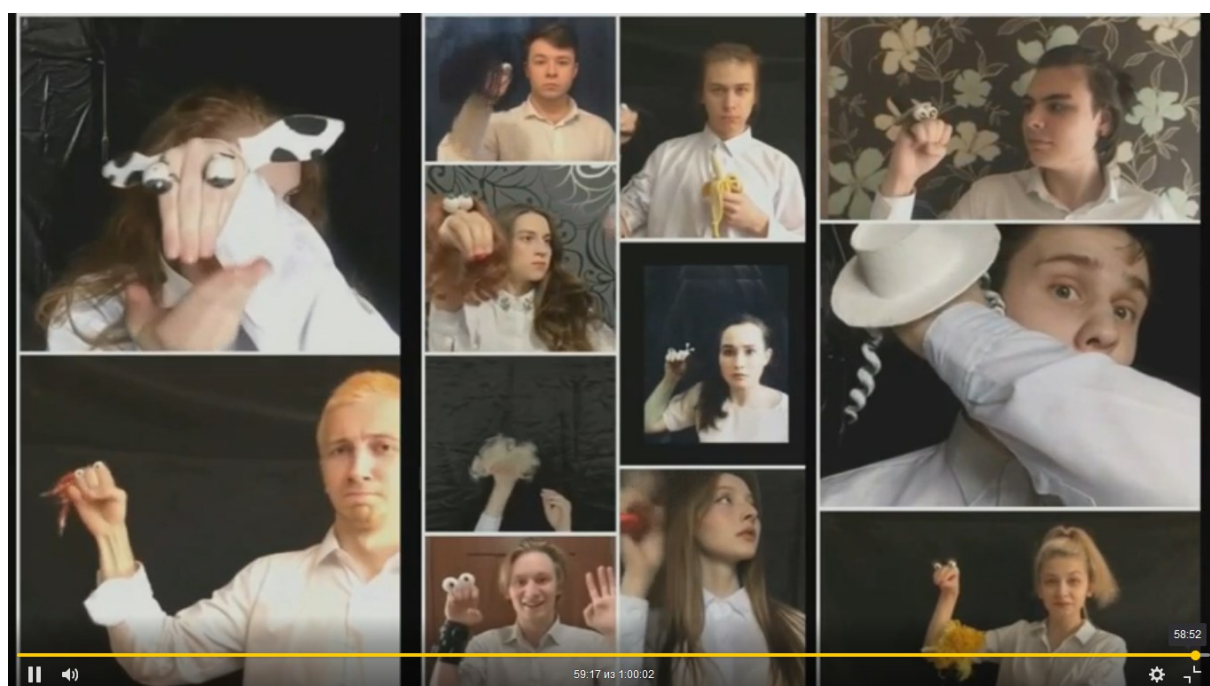
The final stage of the video training (the next three blocks) is the actor's etudes on observing people, etudes on mastering the "language of action" and exercises on a chain of simple verbal actions.

Let's draw conclusions. Distance learning has revealed a number of problems that are successfully solved through distance learning. This training helps to teach students of the specialization "Puppet Theater Artist" the basics of the birth of a word through the hand-doll, the combination of speech and gesture of the doll, and also helps to learn all the elements of acting, which will be the basis for further professional work. In addition, puppeteers can learn their business alone, being at the same time an artist, director, artist and producer of his own theater.

However, we are convinced that such training can and should be combined with group activities in direct contact with the teacher. One cannot become an actor without the practice of targeted, productive interaction with partners on stage.

<https://youtu.be/ZBDrZee0JJM>

Have a good viewing experience!



**Elmira Kurilenko is Candidate of Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Puppet Theatre Department at the Novosibirsk State Theatre Institute.**

**Victoria Bogdanova is Associate Professor of the Department of Musical Education and Stage Speech at the Novosibirsk State Theatre Institute.**



### Online training for actors and directors

Online theater is another theater. There's only a screen. Just for now. Technology is evolving and will probably go beyond this flat rectangle. There's a big difference with cinema and TV. Everything is happening in the present time and there is a possibility of text, voice and video communication with the viewer. A serious flaw is the irresistible distance. But there are also some magical features. The possibility of close-ups, details, choosing the most unexpected space for action. You can even use points in different parts of the world, and simultaneously! There is a feature of working with the camera, today the image apparently does not come with the same frame rate as in the movies. Therefore, a sharp gesture is smeared, but the movement of water, planted sand or a pile of hair is fascinating, it slows down. It is possible to use a selfi camera and with the actor to be in the most unexpected places: under the table, on the balcony, under the blanket, run along the street or ride with random people in the tram. Training must take all this into account. Of course, there's an eternal problem with the material. I don't know any good plays for this kind of theater yet, but there is a need for it, and there will probably be proposals soon. It's possible and necessary to use world dramaturgy, film scripts, literature. There are also theatres: stringing, verbatim, plastic. So far I do not understand how to work with dolls in this format, there is a lot to consider and do it seriously. I think it's possible to work with table theater, muppet dolls and puppets with moving facial expressions. Puppets are the hardest thing to do. The big plus is that actors can rehearse for themselves. They can record everything on camera, view and immediately correct it, send it to a teacher or director and already he will make comments. In general, each performance of online theater can be recorded and further improved.

Not all of the actor and director training, which we were engaged in live, is possible in online space. The exercises require transformation. But it's amazing that the exercises work! And it's what we learn from. There are not enough new exercises! Of course, if you study only in an online space, you will get an online actor or online director. But for professional actors and directors, learning how to work online can be interesting and useful. Here you should pay attention to work with the camera. Pay close attention to lighting. It's great that daylight works perfectly! Many speech exercises have been successfully downloaded online. You can use live instruments, record in the background, or turn on sound right on your computer. You can display an image from your computer on the viewer's screen and use pictures, photos, videos and more. I don't know if color correction can be used online, it would be nice, but they do use a chromakey, though not very well so far. After all, the world is changing and there are so many things in the theatre today! The main thing is that it helps to reveal the artistic plan!

I used to have to do rehearsals and participate in online training too. The result did not satisfy me much. Unfortunately, even today there is some shaking of this soil. We depend on quality Internet connection, on the work of the equipment. There is bad hearing or no sound

at all! The image can hang. But everything is solvable. New platforms for conferences are appearing. The Internet is becoming more and more accessible.

I'd like to touch on the subject of etiquette. Online space has its own features, probably online etiquette should be created and brought up. The home atmosphere, in which many participants of online conferences are, is relaxing. On the one hand it is great that we can be in torn shorts, lying down, drinking coffee, wine, smoking. And tobacco fragrances will not distract other participants. But on the other hand, we don't allow ourselves that in a living workspace. Where's the line? What will not interfere with the other participants? What will help the creative atmosphere? Fellini loved the noise on the set, but when two people are talking online at the same time or there are extraneous sounds, nothing can be understood. Online space is a special, unexplored area, after all. And we're taking new paths and leading the way!

**Igor Malikov is a professional actor and director. For more than fifteen years he has been leading actor's training. After almost seven years in Cyprus, where he had an own acting studio and theater and also conducted training for future film directors, he lives now in Yevpatoria (Crimea) giving from time to time master classes St. Petersburg.**

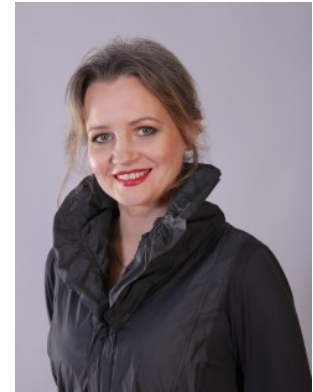
Here, Igor Malikov shares one more experience at a film school in St. Petersburg, where he met with students twice: "I gave a master class, then I gave an assignment for the next lesson. The students had a week, they had to send me a written work, then prepare a monologue on this work. Not everyone completed the written assignment, but those who did were surprisingly free to do the oral assignment as well. Thus, already at the second lesson we had a performance consisting of student monologues. Amazing power of the task! Now, working online, as a teacher, I correspond with the actors. Indeed, sometimes we trust the pen more than the spoken word. With these letters, as if a distance is broken through, there is a revelation that sometimes does not occur in real meetings. I also ask that you send me a video. There is fear of the camera. There's no such clamp in the letters, of course. For me, the epistolary genre is the most important part of online training today."

## Voices during and after the conference

By titling the conference “Challenges of the Mind”, we hoped to do so in the truest sense of the word. Already before the conference began, we asked colleagues for their opinion concerning online-training, as documented in the chapter Online Theatre Training in Russia. Two other voices arrived from leading Lithuanian artists:

**Vesta Grabstaite**, actress and leader of the Directing and Acting Department of Lithuanian Music and Theatre Academy answered to the question whether she thinks online education in acting makes sense and why:

“For me it is imitation of education because we lose the essence of the theater - live energies interactions. We can teach what may be screen acting but not theater acting.”



**Kirill Glushaev**, student of Rimas Tuminas, then his successor as artistic director of the Small Theatre of Vilnius; actor of Korshunovas, director of his own private theatre company, friendly shared his opinion about the same question:

“It has already been two months of my everyday practice of rehearsing online through *skype*. I am almost on my way to premiere so what can I say about ‘acting education online’?”

Directing is a form of educating. In both cases there is a question: ‘what are we rehearsing for with an actor?’ or ‘what are we educating this person for?’



In my everyday twice-a day rehearsals, including analysis, composition of a text, space design for the ‘desktop stage’ view (you have to take care of how spectator will be watching the performance on his device), timing etc. the thing I am sure is the most important - you are getting used to ‘translating’ theatrical ‘here and now’ phenomena into 2d-view for desktop; kind of cinema being filmed online in one take. Everything gets organized for the ‘desktop view’ and ‘desktop feeling’, ‘desktop listening’, ‘desktop energy exchange’. Every theatrical step you take - you reinvent it in a cinematic, but still webcam live-show way.

So if we speak about acting education online - it is fine when you are not having a final destination with live contact. Because acting live needs live feedback through live people. 2d-feedback fulfills the actor in 2d-way. If you are up for it - it works. When going on stage in live mode - I will re-rehearse it back.

On the another hand - it is a very good way for the director or educator to find ways how to communicate and give instructions and feedback without 'acting- showing' how to act or 'philosophical director's long reads' about the role's importance or the future of the theatre and other bla bla bla... It is much more difficult to be holding others' attention and focus through the desktop, so you have to be more precise in listening and focused - inspiring speaking.

To sum up I want to say that in my experience it is obvious: acting online is good for online formats. Like skiing or tennis with virtual reality glasses is good for virtual reality.

There are a lot of different realities nowadays, but the 'reality of theatrical presence' is still unique. And tools for constructing it will stay unique, I am sure."

**During and after the conference participants exchanged ideas and thoughts. We like to share a small selection, as well as a representative resonance to the event as a whole.**

**Alvaro Franco** (Universidad Central, Bogotá): I think the real work is to stop the inertia. The inertia of 'traditional' thinking and teaching... Thank you very much to all of you. I hope to see you again. Thanks to all of the people that organized this event. Best regards from Bogotá, Colombia

**Akinsiku Abiodun** (Performing Arts and Film Studies, Lead City University, Ibadan): Maybe this is the time to first teach the teacher in order to teach again. This tech-disruption will require a tech-artistic approach to teaching practical based theatre courses. Thank you for helping me travel and learn without leaving Nigeria, Africa.

**Ilina Chatziioannidou** (Cand. Dr. phil. Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany): For me it is very interesting to listen to the questions regarding the art education in the future and to see how people around the world approach and work with new techniques and technology. In this way I think we can gain a common understanding and not only recognize the problems associated with new circumstances but also offer solutions

**Dr. Glecy C. Atienza** (Professor at the College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines, Alliance of Cultural Workers in Metro Manila):

Dear Colleagues in Theater:

Greetings from the Philippines! Please accept my profuse thanks for your efforts in putting up this conference. It brings sunshine to the rest of the theater world as we negotiate our way through the pandemic. Indeed, my mind has been challenged by the exchanges – soul-searching in fact, as one is made to observe, compare experiences and appreciate the differences in our practice. As head of a college theater network in Metro Manila, I have been doing theater training for student theater artists and teachers for the past 20 years. I realized we share the same kind of work except that yours is done with confidence and with pride in sharing your humble work with your colleagues. The training opportunities create

communities of creatives, who are eager to share their theater experiments as efforts in understanding humanity and making lives better for all.

We should learn to do that – taking pride in our work and sharing theater as our laboratory in creating a future. We do our work in the margins, as we strive to "belong" to the standards set by the profession. It is about time that we realize the distinction of our work, as theater artists in the communities, and bring this special experience as our contribution to humanity. I like the tenor of sharing--philosophical yet practice-based, humbling too, as works are shared in the context of "this is my take on life as theater work, what do you think?", as diverse as they are culture-based.

I am particularly pleased at how our sessions have not been limited by technology. I can see how technology has been managed to prioritize sharing as we negotiate "live" and "living" engagement, despite the confines of the camera. I realize that theater in the new normal is a matter of perspective and vision. Theater will always be a free space for engagement, with or without the confines of technology, as long as there are people, theater artists/creatives who are willing to embrace and adjust to the new norms as new challenges, not confinements, in creativity. These perspectives are valuable.

Right now, our network of college theater groups – students and teachers – are doing regular online sessions to experiment on home-based theater approaches. We are bent on keeping theater work afloat. We realize the value of theater experience and we hope to jumpstart a new kind of live, educational experience employing theater approaches for community concerns.

Thank you for the inspiration. Congratulations to you! See you tonight!

**Jehan Manekshaw** (Co-Founder and Head of Drama School Mumbai, India):

We have just launched a series of classes where our current batch under lockdown is exploring the idea of "theatre-making: transpositions and transference", to help develop awareness and sensibilities of bringing the performer and story-tellers theatremaking skillset into other media.

We were challenged with the idea of what to teach our existing batch of students who were forced home due to the pandemic, and given the uncertainty for theatre in the coming year or two, we started to think about how we could equip them for alternative futures. The classes themselves are a proto-course, which we hope we can soon turn into a global course that brings together experts and participants to explore the question through both discussion, but more importantly, doing and application.

(...) That's so good to hear that in parallel these things are happening elsewhere. A number of things happened (...)

- We embraced digitalisation to bring faculty from all over the world to engage with them.
- We are now challenging them to create their originally planned final projects in different mediums (not as a final project but as an experiment to see what new learnings come from the exercise).

<https://dramaschoolmumbai.in/drama-from-behind-closed-doors-dsm-covid-19-response/>

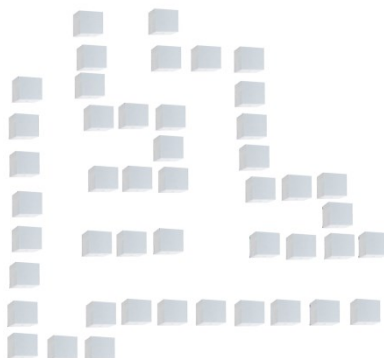
<https://dramaschoolmumbai.in/drama-from-behind-closed-doors-part-ii-the-show-goes-on/>

**Elizabeth de Roza** (LASALLE College of the Arts/School of Dance and Theatre, Singapore):

Thank you to all presenters for the sharing. Commenting on the notion that there is a difference when thinking, making, learning through embodiment. I agree that there is a need to extend the studio and classroom through this sense of digitalization. How then is embodied knowledge generated versus through an observer point of view and data collection? Because at the end of the day, we need to return to the body, the body in the space. Perhaps, it is crucial to acknowledge that though we are trying to make sense of the new 'normal' and as we share our experience on how we teach - can I ask, how are we engaging? Is the body fully engaged or are we engaging through our embodied cognition? What is the experience, the sense? Perhaps we should go back to this one to one - the sense of what is performance versus live-ness. Maybe that is what we need to do - look at one to one teaching? Asking what is the basic of any actor-training? And then build from there or expand?

**Jehan Manekshaw:** I think there is something in exploring removing the boundaries of the actor as human, and think of them as cyborg. Digital Humans... Embodiment for them does not end at the flesh and blood spiritual psychological entity that was born in nature... But extends further...to their media their digital cognition... (A Cyborg Manifesto)

We cannot teach this. We have to become self-aware of our practice as cyborgs ourselves and start to explore it with our students. We can only give them from our past experience, structures of enquiry and investigation... The rest... Is what gets created in the room.



**Vidyanidhee Vanarase** (Founder and director of IAPAR - International Association for Performing Arts and Research, India): It has been a wonderful conference. There was a lot of learning. The conference has encouraged to think in many more ways than the traditional methodologies. Thank you for everything.

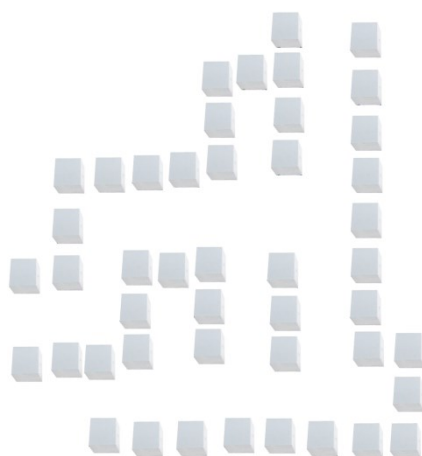
**Serenella di Michele** (Director Didattica Teatrale Italy): Congratulations!!! Three intense and interesting days. Above all, it was precious to verify the theater's opening to innovation. Guarantee for our future! Thank you, for the continuous training you give me!

**Ziliya Yavgildina** (Vice-Rector of KazGIK, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Russia): Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this very important and interesting event. I got an idea of the state and problems of theatrical education of Russian and foreign colleagues, and enjoyed communicating with colleagues from different geographical locations. Thank you, all the organizers and participants.

**Veronica Fabrini** (Department of Performing Arts at the State University of Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil): I would like to congratulate you and thank you for this thought-provoking conference, in this very unique and special moment of profound paradigm changes in life and art. The speakers and participants helped me a lot to move my thinking towards new perspectives in theatrical pedagogy.

**Svetlana Rogova** (Russia): Thank you for the opportunity to join the Knowledge. Everything happens on time and for good reason. If it wasn't for the pandemic, I could never have gotten to an international conference. It's God's work. "Become better and make the world around you better" was the message I received in today's speeches. The conference will come back to live, please don't leave us, let's use the online training and broadcast the conference to listeners around the world. It is a great joy to listen and learn!

**Dunay Yespayev** (Russia): Here's what's interesting! It looks like the conference is over, and I still have the feeling that all of you are at my house and we are hotly discussing something important. Different languages, temperament, emotions, but something whole...





## The Organisations

### The World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT / ITI

<https://www.theatreculture.org>



The WTTI is the appointed research centre of the International Theatre Institute, the [World Organization for the Performing Arts](https://www.theatreculture.org).

It was founded by the artistic director Dr. Jurij Alschitz and the programme director Christine Schmalor as AKT-ZENT International Theatre Centre Berlin to establish post-graduate courses for theatre practitioners with the aim to connect training, research and artistic production. Over the years, Dr Jurij Alschitz established a teaching and rehearsal practice called “Training as Method” and formed a team of teachers, who works worldwide.

Today, the WTTI works exclusively towards the innovation of theory and practice of theatre training. All seminars, master-classes and lectures in any country are considered as part of the permanent World Theatre Training Laboratory giving birth to new exercises and methods.

The WTTI enters a new era of educational practice with a range of innovative projects. The scientific focus lies in the development of the artist’s “self-education” and “self-creation” based on the concept of the “homo creativus” and on the understanding of a “holistic theatre”.

In 2019 Dr Jurij Alschitz introduced for the first time the practice of Quantum Pedagogy as a milestone to modern theatre training, changing basic paradigms of time, space and knowledge transfer.

The WTTI developed courses for Hybrid-Training, hereby combining online preparation with stage practice. Starting in fall 2020, the Online Theatre Training Academy will offer specific courses to any interested student or professional.

The World Theatre Training Institute is member of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts leading the working group for hybrid and online Training.

## The ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts

<https://www.iti-unesco-network.org>



### ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts

The joint initiative of UNESCO and the [International Theatre Institute](https://www.iti-unesco-network.org) together with more than 40 higher education and research institutions was built in alignment with the guidelines and procedures of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chair and Network Programme. The Network's main focus is higher education in the performing arts – drama, theatre, dance, music theatre, playwriting and all related performing arts disciplines.

The ITI/UNESCO Network strives towards building a global platform for higher education institutions to gather, learn from each other, organize exchanges involving scholars, artists and students, and tackle common important academic, artistic and institutional issues. It promotes projects which bring together both theory and practice. It supports the development of the performing arts in developed and developing countries, with particular emphasis on Africa, helping to improve accessibility to performing arts higher education.

Video: [ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts](https://www.iti-unesco-network.org)



Network meeting 2018

## Galiaskar Kamal Tatar Academic Theatre

<https://kamalteatr.ru>



In 1906 the first public performance in Tatar language was presented in Kazan. This day went down in history as the date of birth of the Tatar theatre. In 1939 in honor of 60th year of birth of the classic and father of tatar dramaturgy Galiaskar Kamal, the theatre was given his name.

With a long and changing history, with remarkable performances and artists the theatre reached national and international reputation. In 1996 the theatre performed abroad for the first time. In 2002 Professor Farid Bikchantaev became main director of the theatre. He widened the horizon for international encounters and integrated educational activities in the theatre's programme.

Since 1998, the bi-annual International theatre festival of Turkic nations "Nauruz" invites a broad variety of productions Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, regions of Russia (Altay, Dagestan, Crimea, Sakha-Yakutia, Tatarstan, Khakasia) and other regions and states, hereby opening an unknown panorama to the international visitor.

Since 2010 the International Theatre and Education Festival-Forum "Nauruz" offers in the years between a wide variety of courses for theatre professionals of all disciplines led by international specialists. Dr. Jurij Alschitz collaborates as adviser and teacher for several years.



Ilfir Yakupov (manager) and Farid Bikchantayev (artistic director)

**Thank you!**