

TRACING ROADS ACROSS

a project by

WORKCENTER OF JERZY GROTOWSKI AND THOMAS RICHARDS

Thomas Richards, Artistic Director

Mario Biagini, Associate Director

Tracing Roads Across outlines a vision that houses the ongoing creative development of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards throughout a three year period. The project – whose duration spans from April 2003 to April 2006 – is supported by the “Culture 2000” Programme of the European Union, and is made possible by a network of cultural operators from six different countries.

Impulse in Bulgaria - Varna and Balchik

May 12 – June 10, 2004

Impulse in Bulgaria is one of the three Impulses activities of **Tracing Roads Across**. An Impulse is a yearly, month-long visit of the Workcenter team, happening either in France, Cyprus or Bulgaria, and which includes exchanges-in-work, an open public conference, performances and demonstrations of opuses.

Impulse in Bulgaria is realized with the collaboration of “For a New Bulgarian University” Foundation (Chairman, Giorgi Tekev). With cooperation of: Municipality of the City of Varna, Municipality of the City of Balchik, and Varna International Theater Festival. Impulse in Bulgaria is financially supported by: European Cultural Foundation, National Center for Theatre Bulgaria, Pro-Helvetia Bulgaria. Special thanks go to Krassimira Filipova, Giorgi Tekev, Vazkressia Vicharova, Assia Ivanova and Vanessa Reed.

During **Impulse in Bulgaria**, the **Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards** will be present in Varna and Balchik with all branches of its ongoing research:

Art as vehicle: at work on an alternative potentiality of performing arts

“We can see the performing arts as a chain with numerous links, where at one extremity one finds art as presentation (theatre in the strict sense), and at the other extremity, art as vehicle. It’s something very ancient, rather forgotten. For the persons doing, the doers, the performative opus is a kind of vehicle for the work on oneself, in the sense that, as in certain old traditions, the attention for art goes together with the approach of the interiority of the human being.”

- **Action**

May 20, 21, 27, 28, 30, June 2, 3, 7, “St. Konstantin and Elena” Church, Yavorov str. 18, Balchik

During **Impulse in Bulgaria** professionals, specialists of theatre and theatre lovers will be invited to witness **Action**, a creative opus in the domain of “art as vehicle”. From 1994, Thomas Richards directs **Action**, an opus which he created and on which he carries on a continuous work. **Action** structures, in a material linked to performing arts, the work on oneself of the doers. The opus is composed of lines of actions elaborated in detail, constructed with and around ancient vibratory songs.

The Workcenter team doing **Action** is: Thomas Richards, Mario Biagini, Marie De Clerck, Souphière Amiar, Jørn Riegels Wimpel, Francesc Torrent Gironella.

- ***The Twin: an Action in creation***

4 and 6 June, "St. Konstantin and Elena" Church, Yavorov str. 18, Balchik

The Workcenter team has begun to develop a new opus in the domain of "art as vehicle", ***The Twin: an Action in creation***. This new opus is being developed in the form of a "Work-in-creation". For the first time in the Workcenter history an opus is being elaborated, in specific periods of the opus' creation, in the proximity with different groups of witnesses. During **Impulse in Bulgaria** interested individuals will be invited to witnesses work on this emerging opus.

The Workcenter team involved in ***The Twin: an Action in creation*** is: Souphiène Amiar, Cécile Berthe, Mario Biagini, Marie De Clerck, Francesc Torrent Gironella, Elisa Poggelli, Johanna Porkola, Thomas Richards, Pei Hwee Tan, Jørn Riegels Wimpel.

Places are limited for both works: all those interested to be invited should contact:

Assia Ivanova, Phone: +359 2 8110319, Mobile: +359 888122513, Fax: +359 2 8110319, Fax in Balchik: +359 57976849 (from May 10, 2004), E-mail: impulse@nbu.bg

Project *The Bridge: Developing Theatre Arts*

- ***Dies Irae***

May 21, 29, 30, June 2, 4, 6, 19.30hr, City Fine Art Gallery Varna, Liuben Karavelov str. 1, Varna

Since May 1998, the Workcenter is developing a new branch in its research, a branch that is evolving and maturing next to the research on "art as vehicle", Project *The Bridge: Developing Theatre Arts*. Therein, a bridge is being sculpted in the material of performing arts, a bridge stretching from the world of the theatre to the investigations on "art as vehicle". What is appearing in Project *The Bridge* is neither theatre in the strict sense, nor "art as vehicle". The first piece created inside Project *The Bridge* was *One Breath Left*. Now, a new opus is emerging, ***Dies Irae***, directed by Mario Biagini and Thomas Richards.

Is it a group of actors gathering for their daily performance, or a bizarre team of researchers investigating on borderline experiences? The objective of their inquiry: to provoke a revelation that will reach them from the crack between life and death, to beg an answer from the depths of the unconscious about human nature and the nature of theatre art. Surely, it would be a theatre company with a very peculiar conception of art.

"Life's splendor forever lies in wait about each one of us in all its fullness, but veiled from view, deep down, invisible, far off. It is there, though, not hostile, not reluctant, not deaf. If you invite it by the right word, by its right name, it will come. This is the essence of theatre, which does not create, but invites."

They perform a piece telling the story of an experiment on human beings during borderline experiences. Each day, one of them is chosen to undergo the experiment. Through a complex and gradual enactment, the chosen one – today it is a woman – is led into a deep and unknown state, during which she is prepared to be the vessel of a mysterious force. Does she hang between life and death, or knowledge and ignorance? The other participants, who guide her through this singular liturgy await, as she grasps for accomplishment, longing for revelation.

The Workcenter team in ***Dies Irae*** is: Gey Pin Ang, Mario Biagini, Pei Hwee Tan, Souphiène Amiar, Cécile Berthe, Francesc Torrent Gironella, Elisa Poggelli, Johanna Porkola, Jørn Riegels Wimpel.

Dies Irae is open to an audience, for reservation contact:

Assia Ivanova, Phone: +359 2 8110319, Mobile: +359 888122513, Fax: +359 2 8110319, Fax in Balchik: +359 57976849 (from May 10, 2004), E-mail: impulse@nbu.bg

Meeting/Dialogue – 7 June, 19.30hr, Festival and Congress Center

Festival Complex Varna: Bul. Slivnitza 2, Varna

A meeting/dialogue with the witnesses and the spectators of the Workcenter opuses.

Open Conference – 8 June, 15.30hr, Festival and Congress Center

Festival Complex Varna: Bul. Slivnitza 2, Varna

Thomas Richards and Mario Biagini will hold an open conference on the researches conducted at the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards within the frame of **Tracing Roads Across**.

During **Impulse in Bulgaria**, aside from its public events, the Workcenter will hold exchanges-in-work with two Bulgarian theatre groups.

Tracing Roads Across, as well as directly concerning the Workcenter's practical research, periodically focuses the artistic team's attention towards a vast number of young theatre groups, performance artists and students, and also gives the team the opportunity to address topics related to creative analysis with theatre experts and scholars. The project creates the circumstances in which the works and creative processes of young artists and scholars can be analyzed from the point of view of performance craft. A three-year travelling cultural dialogue is being fostered between chosen theatre groups, organizations and cultural operators from eleven nations. The participating individual artists, theatre groups and intellectuals delve at different levels and in different stages into the practical aspects of the overall project. **Tracing Roads Across** as well creates the opportunity for non-professionals and theatre-lovers to come in contact with the artistic research and performative opuses of the **Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards**.

“Tracing Roads Across” – The Three Years' Specific Activities:

Main Work: *Tradition and Performance*

A yearly five-month activity in Pontedera, Italy, where the Workcenter deepens its research and develops its performative structures. It includes several in-depth extended meetings and exchanges-in-work for invited theatre groups from participating countries, open public meetings and conferences, projections of film documentaries, performances and demonstrations of opuses. The “Main Work” is hosted by Fondazione Pontedera Teatro.

Frame Work: *Opening Doors*

A yearly residency of the Workcenter team at the Theatre des Augenblicks in Vienna, Austria, where the Workcenter continues its artistic work and research and realizes exchanges-in-work with invited theatre groups and individuals, open public meetings and conferences, seminars, projections of film documentaries, performances and demonstrations of opuses.

Focal Points:

- *Crossroads in Istanbul, Turkey*
- *Bridging through Mediterranean Sea, Greece*
- *Anatolian Gate, Southern Turkey*

Three extended activities where selected countries host the Workcenter and its open public conferences, projections of films, performances, demonstrations of opuses, seminars and

exchanges-in-work with theatre groups. The artistic work takes place in spaces – mostly of ancient construction – of high quality in terms of their potential for human interaction during a performative event.

Eastern Meeting-place

An intensive, practical seminar, hosted the first year by the University of Novi Sad – Academy of Arts - Body Unlimited Postgraduate Program (Serbia and Montenegro) and the second and third year by the Moscow Theatre “School of Dramatic Art” of Anatoli Vasiliev (Russia), which takes place at the end of each project’s year, where selected individuals from all the participating countries – practitioners and scholars – work together under the leadership of the Workcenter team.

Impulses

A yearly, month-long visit of the Workcenter team, happening either in France, Cyprus or Bulgaria, and which includes exchanges-in-work, seminars, open public conferences, projections of films, performances and demonstrations of opuses.

Interventions

Conferences and short seminars of a theoretical nature held throughout the three years of Tracing Roads Across in Italy, Poland, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Cyprus and France. Occasionally this activity will include open public performances, and demonstrations of opuses, and practical seminars.

International Symposia:

Performing Through – Tradition as Research at the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards

A two days Opening International Symposium in Vienna, Austria, with speakers from theatrical and anthropological fields of investigation, focusing on the relation between traditional and contemporary forms of art in the context of the Workcenter research.

Living Traces – Performing as a Shared Reality

A two days Closing International Symposium in Pontedera, Italy, with speakers and participants selected throughout the three-year project, focusing on the artistic phenomena developed within the project as they appeared in the different environments and places, cultures and societies.

For more information about **Tracing Roads Across** consult the project’s web-site at: www.tracingroadsacross.net

or contact Gülsen Gürses - Project Manager at:

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Project Organizer and co-ideation:

Theater des Augenblicks – Vienna, Austria

Co-organizers:

Fondazione Pontedera Teatro – Pontedera, Italy
“For a New Bulgarian University” Foundation – Sophia, Bulgaria

Centre Dramatique National de Normandie – Comédie de Caen – Caen,
France
Public Agency for Development (Municipality of Zaros) – Crete, Greece
University of Cyprus – Nicosia, Cyprus

Main Partners:

Turkish National Theatre – Istanbul-Ankara, Turkey
Kent University – Canterbury, Great Britain
A.C.C.A.A.N. – L'Atelier Cinéma de Normandie – Caen, France
The Centre for Studies on Jerzy Grotowski's Work and of the Cultural
and Theatrical Research – Wroclaw, Poland
IMEC – Institut mémoires de l'édition contemporaine – Paris-Caen,
France

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