

## **Project Summary**

From April 2003 to April 2006 the project has successfully realized its trajectory across 11 European and non-European countries (Austria, Italy, Great Britain, France, Russia, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Poland and Tunisia) with 31 activities of differing natures. In many of the countries “Impulses” and “Focal Points” took place: long term residences of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards in which “Tracing Roads Across” unfolded all of its possibilities of interaction through public and semi-public activities – presentations of performative opuses, seminars, exchanges-in-work with theatre groups, public projections of documentary films, open conferences and meetings. In addition “Interventions” took place in many countries: shorter visits including seminars of a theoretical nature, documentary projections and occasionally presentations of performative opuses. The second visit of the Workcenter to a given country proved that “Tracing Roads Across” had already established a strong network of organizational, artistic and scholarly alliances. In all of the involved countries the return of the Workcenter team was awaited by a growing number of artists, scholars and theatre lovers.

The solid alliance of “Tracing Roads Across” co-organizers and partners effectively sustained the project through its many accomplishments, and even through the unexpected difficulties encountered over such a long and articulated plan of activities. It is important to stress that all co-organizers and partners generally proved a profound understanding of their roles by providing a solid, careful, patient and respectful support for the Workcenter team, and by focusing their attention towards a smooth accomplishment of all of the project’s activities.

More than 6000 people have been reached through “Tracing Roads Across” activities. Our web site – user-friendly and constantly updated – informed our subscribers of each upcoming activity through a newsletter and it enlarged our contact list throughout the three years. The project as planned created an alive exchange of knowledge on tradition in performance, addressing individuals from different countries, social and cultural backgrounds, religions, ages, and acquaintance with theatre research. From the meeting with the audiences of Moscow and Vienna to those of Göreme, Cappadocia - Turkey and Zaros, Crete - Greece, “Tracing Roads Across” helped frame human encounters between artists.

The practical researches of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards have progressed in their craft during the three years of “Tracing Roads Across”. Both the development of the performative structures and the individual artistic growth of individual team members give ample evidence to this result. The creative opuses *One breath left–Dies Irae* and *Dies Irae: The Preposterous Theatrum Interioris Show* in Project *The Bridge: Developing Theatre Arts*, and *Action* and *The Twin: an Action in creation* (later known as *An Action in creation: work session*) in the domain of “art as vehicle” have been developed within “Tracing Roads Across”.

A further achievement of “Tracing Roads Across” is the work accomplished by its Exploration, Documentation and Video Documentation teams. Due to the efforts of the Exploration team led by Ms. Gül Gürses, artists, theatre experts and the general public were able to see performances and witness demonstrations or work sessions of performative opuses in unique architectural spaces in the different countries. Aya Irini church in Istanbul (Turkey), Saint-Nicholas Church in Caen (France), St.St. Konstantin and Elena Church in Balchik (Bulgaria), the cave church of St. John the Baptist in Cappadocia (Turkey), the active Greek Orthodox church of the Madonna of the Angels (Eklisia tis Panagias) in Crete (Greece), are some of the extraordinary places where project’s artistic team has presented its work during “Tracing Roads Across”.

On many occasions, projections of documentary films accompanied “Tracing Roads Across” activities. Alongside the historical “Art as Vehicle” (1989) and “A film

documentation of *Action*” (2000), new video materials realized by the Video Documentation Team were presented: “Action in Aya Irini” (2003) and fragments of Workcenter opuses shot during different activities. The Video Documentation Team also made complete video recordings of the project’s Opening and Final Simposia.

The “Tracing Roads Across” Documentation Team was actively present in a majority of the project’s activities. The Documentation Team, composed of scholars, theatre experts and anthropologists, followed the work of project’s artistic team, attending activities, observing performative opuses, work sessions, seminars and exchanges-in-work. A few of the Documentation Team members have had a long acquaintance with the research of the Workcenter, and many others came closer to the research within the circumstances of “Tracing Roads Across”. The Documentation Team actively contributed to creating its own function within the project: besides creating a corpus of texts which documents the different stages of the practical researches developed by the Workcenter over the last three years, through writings and conversations with the Workcenter’s Artistic Director, Thomas Richards, and its Associate Director, Mario Biagini and among themselves, they provided a constant intellectual analysis that interacted with the project. The vivacity of the scholarly alliances created within “Tracing Roads Across” is confirmed by several publications, among which is the first book of critical analysis on the research of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, *Un teatro apocrifo*, written by Prof. Antonio Attisani (University of Venice, Italy), and a collection of essays, which will be published in Italian in two books, related to “Tracing Roads Across”, edited by Prof. Attisani and Mario Biagini: *Il Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, TRACCE, attorno a Tracing Roads Across* and *Il Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, VISIONI*. In addition, an important goal has been accomplished by IMEC, a partner in “Tracing Roads Across”: the French institution has created and will shortly make accessible the first archive containing most of Jerzy Grotowski’s writings and documents.

“Tracing Roads Across” has also been a three-year travelling location of learning both for the Workcenter team members and stagiaires, and for the large number of European and non-European young artists who took part. Alongside periods of internal research, the Workcenter team held practical meetings with young actors and directors during the three “Eastern Meeting-place” in Novi Sad (Serbia and Montenegro) and in Moscow (Russia), and also during the exchanges-in-work with theatre groups and ensembles, coming from all eleven countries involved in the project. “Tracing Roads Across” also created the circumstances in which several individual artists could repeatedly come in contact with the Workcenter over the duration of the project, thus helping them to achieve evident and valuable steps in their professional development.

The research that Jerzy Grotowski started at the “Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski” in Italy in 1986 – later named by him the “Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards” – has now developed throughout twenty years of continuous practical researches. “Tracing Roads Across” is the door through which an incomparable theatre inheritance and an alive ongoing research on performing arts has successfully entered in contact with a large number of interested people. As well, the project has created the circumstances in which the quality of the Workcenter’s performing arts research could be supported, tested and further enriched. The wide and flourishing net of organizational, artistic, and scholarly alliances created by “Tracing Roads Across” accomplished the ambitious intentions of strengthening the bridge between the Workcenter research and the field of theatre beyond the boundaries of commercial criteria, fostering cultural dialog and allowing artists from 11 countries to contact notable competency which is born from a long term, persistent research in performing arts.