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Farm in the Cave—a Laboratory Theatre
Farma v jeskyni – divadlo laboratoř

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Introduction

Laboratory theatres grew out of a need to seek out the truth through the body—a need to find something primal and essential for humanity.¹ This brings us to the body as a *vehicle*—our perception depends on the form of our existence. Our senses, physiological and biological needs create a common anthropological base.

Searching for the essence of humanity through the body introduces two things. First, there is the issue of how the body works—the impulses and energies that drive it; this introduces the topic and metaphor of the human being as an actor on the ‘stage’ of life. Secondly, there is the subject of community: an actor performs something to others and transmits that with his body in verbal and non-verbal ways of communicating with co-actors and spectators. Theatre is an illusion of life; it is life in a microcosm. That is why theatre brings a *topos* mirroring society, but theatre can also be a convenient form of spiritual seeking. This is a thirst for truth—a *living in truth*—a condition of being free (not dependent on structures or systems) that is characteristic of the 1960s. But perhaps that process is a reflection of the way Western society has evolved. This is like the idea of a ‘noble savage’—living beyond civilization in an innocence of pure impulses is dated from the 17th century.

The idea of understanding one's own culture, thanks to borderlines and peripheries, was introduced later on by the ethos of travelers, ethnographers, ethnologists, and anthropologists. A half-century later, this dynamic changed, just as the way of living has changed; even though problems of self-expression and freedom, in the framework of society, are definitely still valid (naming sexual minority or gender issues), and so is the problem of alienation in agglomerations that carried a need for experiencing and sharing communal feelings of belonging.

This study is about a particular way of making theatre and its interests; it is also about a specific artist and a theatre group founded at the beginning of new millennium. It is about the art of directing and an art of acting and performing for audiences in a theatrical space. At the same time, this study refers to things that are greater than theatre and that which is existential. In laboratory theatres, the body is the essence of human existence and a manner of experiencing the world is presented as something universal to which everybody has access.²

¹ I use the term ‘laboratory theatre’ and not ‘theatre laboratory’ consciously, referring primarily to Jerzy Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre that created a ‘model’ for modern laboratory theatres, influenced by the previous, historical theatre laboratories. The topic is broader discussed in the second chapter of the dissertation.

² The body, consciously presented in public, is also a ‘political’ statement. The actors of Akademia Ruchu [Academy of Movement; Polish experimental theatre founded in 1973] asked by the audience if a private action

The International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave (Farma v jeskyni) of Viliam Dočolomanský shares similar interests, research methods, needs and goals. Theatre is perceived as more than a profession—as a manner of living with physical acting, expanding one's consciousness and sensitivity: one's own body in space, the presence of another body with behaviors and sounds; reflecting the outside world. The art of Farm in the Cave and the art of other laboratory theatres are derived from such experiences. In this way sociological and historical contexts are important; social drama finds its reflection in a scenic reflection.

I have been observing Farm in the Cave since 2005 as an anthropologist interested in this specific 'laboratorial' community, its ethos and creation process based on imitation and transformation of reality into the medium of theatre. During those years my position was in flux, shifting from the perspective of a regular spectator through co-creator to scholar, making my point of view dynamic. It allowed me to be a part of this community keeping the unique distance of 'participant observer.'³ Being both an observer and a participant is perhaps the only way to learn about a laboratory theatre.

The dissertation is composed of two parts. The first part addresses the laboratory theatre as an idea, concept and practice as derived from the specific needs of a culture. It examines the roots of laboratory theatres: what ideas stand behind it? Are these ideas the very essence of theatre itself—a utopian vision of a 'place of truth,' a space for freedom and authentic human expression? To what kind of psychological, social or religious needs of Western culture does such a laboratory theatre offer an answer? What are its methods or techniques gained by the practitioners of this laboratory of humanism and humanity experienced through some kind of encounter (with *someone*, but also with *something*)? What is the self-reflected language of this experience? Farm in the Cave gives some illustrations of these questions.

is according to them also political, answered: 'everything shown in public is a political statement,' discussion after the performance *Mala scena* [Small Stage], Warsaw December 22, 2014.

³ Participant observation is a term associated with Bronisław Malinowski, one of the most important anthropologists of the 20th century. Malinowski developed 'participant observation' as a research tool and a method of study emphasizing anthropologists' personal relationship with informants, his involvement in social life of the researched group and the language's knowledge; the method consists of field notes, informal interviews, analysis of documents produced within the group, self-analysis of researcher, etc. all undertaken in an extended period of time. See: Bronisław Malinowski, "Wprowadzenie, przedmiot, metoda i zakres niniejszych badań" [Introduction, Content, Method and Extend of this Study] in *Argonauci Zachodniego Pacyfiku. Relacje o poczynaniach i przygodach krajowców z Nowej Gwinei* [Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melasian New Guinea], trans. Barbara Olszewska-Dyonizjak and Sławoj Szykiewicz (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1981), pp.27-58. Also: Kirsten Hastrup, *Droga do antropologii. Między doświadczeniem a teorią* [A Passage to Anthropology. Between Experience and Theory], trans. Ewa Klekot (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego 2008).

Considerations touch on the roots of theatre in general and theatre as an anthropological phenomenon. As such, this part discusses the ideas of Jerzy Grotowski who ‘founded’ an anthropological theatre; laboratory theatres as historical phenomenon; Odin Teatret of Eugenio Barba as an example of a successful laboratory theatre celebrating in 2014 its 50th anniversary; Czechoslovak White Theatre working in the end of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s as an example of similar needs that ended up in failure; and Centre for Theatre Practices Gardzienice founded in 1977 by Włodzimierz Staniewski as a direct example of a laboratory theatre which influenced Farm in the Cave theatre studio of Viliam Dočolomanský.

A close examination of Odin Teatret, White Theatre and Gardzienice introduces an international outline and a domestic context for Farm in the Cave. In the thesis, I recall the voice of creators reflecting their art by themselves or the voice of scholars and critics who experienced laboratory theatres in practice because they share a common language of description and the same principles. For that reason Grotowski is presented primarily through Peter Brook, a well-known theatre director and Grotowski’s friend since the 1960s, and by Thomas Richards, an actor chosen by Grotowski to continue his research. Thus, in reflecting Grotowski’s work and influence, the perspectives not just of a colleague and a pupil, but also a distance of two generations are presented. Laboratory theatres are revealed through perspective of the International School of Theatre Anthropology, an institution that co-evolved within the laboratory theatre community. Odin Teatret is presented mainly through its leader and director, Eugenio Barba, and by Odin Teatret actors who were equally important to the development of the company, and also by Richard Schechner, a theatre director who ‘founded’ Performance Studies. White Theatre is presented mostly through its members because the troupe's activities were not known publicly. Gardzienice is presented through the eyes of Farm in the Cave’s members; this concluding chapter serves as an introduction to the paper's second part. The first part, focused on philosophy and craft of laboratory theatres, does not examine its performances.

The second part focuses on the Farm in the Cave theatre studio as a specific example of a laboratory theatre based in Prague, Czech Republic. This part examines the studio's connections with the international community of laboratory theatres’ practitioners and scholars, and presents Farm in the Cave’s art by introducing its projects and performances. The director’s process of creating performances is introduced with an examination of anthropological inspirations working up to theatrical presentation.

Indeed, the example of Farm in the Cave raises the question of how this particular current laboratory works traditionally, producing performances, undertaking a process shared in common by some laboratories of research, expeditions and improvisations based on actors' training. In this way, the structure of such a created performance is typical for laboratories that work with rhythms and layers of understanding. Moreover, Farm in the Cave works with a classical laboratory theatre structure that is centralized around a single leader who is the only company director, and is governed as hierarchical structure of the other members. In addition to performance, the group's activities include leading workshops, organizing conferences or planning their own cultural center are again mirroring the way laboratory theatres are used to develop.

In this manner, is Farm in the Cave following a 'model' or is it a 'cliché'? Or has the troupe developed its own techniques, ethos, craft and a unique physical language? Where is the border between the art of director Viliam Dočolomanský and that of Farm in the Cave or rather we should treat them as one-and-the-same? This part is mostly based on my notes, interviews, informal discussions, and observations going back to 2005 as well as on papers written by members of Farm in the Cave theatre studio. It examines an inner perspective. The decision to concentrate mainly on the perspective of laboratory theatres' practitioners and scholars reflects the inner self-reflection that laboratories are constantly interested in, and also shows a tendency of both groups to cross the border between practice and theory in order to understand better each other and the issue. It presents an inner dynamic of laboratory theatres and gives a reader opportunity to have his own view and opinion. In both parts of the thesis about Laboratory Theatres and about Farm in the Cave I address the ideas of authors of the particular opinions as well as locating them in time.

To introduce my perspective in detail, my involvement dates back to 2005—only three years after the premiere of the 'founding' performance of Farm in the Cave theatre studio's *Dark Love Sonnets*. I attended this show at Prague's experimental theatre space Roxy/NoD. Shortly after, I saw a second performance, *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*, which was in the mainstream theatre Švandovo divadlo. On November 22, 2005, when studying under Jana Pilátová, I was invited to see a preview of *Waiting Room* at Roxy/NoD. I was so enthusiastic with these performances, I decided to apply for a year-long internship with the ensemble. The moment I was interviewed for it, Farm in the Cave had just returned to Prague from a spectacular success at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where *Sclavi* was praised by three main Scottish newspapers (The Herald, Total Theatre and The Scotsman); this was just before they got the prestigious Czech award of Alfred Radok's Prize.

Up until the beginning of 2007 and my official full-time internship, I assisted Farm in the Cave's performances and other actions, including observing the 'barter' between Farm in the Cave and Odin Teatret (represented by Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley with her performance *The Flying Carpet*) held on October 16, 2006 at the Preslova 9 space. Preslova 9 was a building that belonged to Švandovo theatre, designed for creating theatre scenography, where Farm in the Cave was rehearsing and where the ensemble maintained a small office. From January 2007 I was fully involved with the daily activities of the company working with the archive, helping with backstage during *Waiting Room* and, later on, I was also as a technical assistant responsible for releasing videos, photos and sound recordings for *Work Demo* presentation (a performance that includes a training demonstration, materials from expeditions, and scenes from regular performances mentioned above and work-in-progress etudes).

A significant part of my internship was also connected to preparing for the festival *Farma 2007*, which among other performances brought to Prague *Itsi Bitsi* of Iben Nagel Rasmussen (Odin Teatret). The festival was undertaken as an activity towards creating a residency space out of Preslova 9. From the very beginning I took part in long meetings undertaken regularly to consider projects, future development and find consensus on directions for the company to evolve. In the same time Anna Kršiaková and Patricie Poráková joined the group as apprentices. During this period I witnessed few personnel changes in the company—Matej Matejka, Nast Marrero García and Maja Jawor departed Cécile Da Costa returned after half-year break and Jun Wan Kim joined the company to work on a daily basis. After interning for a year, I was invited to stay as a production assistant. By this time I had already started my doctoral studies, so I decided to continue until May 2008. This was a time when Farm in the Cave's Afro-Brazilian project was just starting. Staying in contact with the company I collaborated on a few events including an Afro-Brazilian conference and the *Orixás* dance workshop that took place in December 2008.

Later on I was invited to work as a stage producer of the new performance based on the Afro-Brazilian theme. I agreed and from September 2009 to the premiere of *The Theatre* in February 2010 I worked again on a daily basis. During the process of creating *The Theatre*, my role had evolved into director's assistant, as well as a sound technician for the premiere. At the end of 2010, when Farm in the Cave lost the Preslova 9 residency space, and after the producer Šárka Pavelková departed, Viliam Dočolomanský asked me to help with a workshop that culminated with the performance called *Action 1* and with the main management of the company. At the end I collaborated only till April 2011, when Dočolomanský received the

New Theatrical Realities Award in Saint Petersburg. During this time I was involved in preparing *Action 2* after the workshop called *Specific training and creation of a theatrical language* and I was observing rehearsals to the long-term, unfinished project called *Amigas* witnessing this moment of transition and reorganization of the company's structure. From that time I decided not be involved directly in the work for the company and continue my research about Farm in the Cave as an observer.

For a year beginning August 2013, I worked on a daily basis for the production company of Šárka Pavelková created as a platform for dance and non-verbal theatre. Within that framework, I collaborated with Lenka Vagnerová & Company, one of the main dance theatre companies in Czech Republic. This work included assisting the process of creating the performance *Sorcerer* and participating in Edinburgh Fringe Festival with Lenka Vagnerová's performances *Riders* and *La Loba* awarded by The Herald. Those and other experiences from the field of dance, theatre and voice work gave me a broader context associated with Farm in the Cave's theme. The fifth project of Farm in the Cave, *Whistleblowers* premiered in April 2014, I attended as a spectator. Changing my previous perspective, I conducted interviews about the expeditions and research undertaken in the framework of this project. The celebration of Farm in the Cave's 12th anniversary found me again wearing many hats—as a guest, former collaborator of the company and scholar.

This detailed explanation of my connections with Farm in the Cave company should allow the reader to comprehend the complexity of these experiences enabling a freedom of interpretation. My research as participant-observer over those years was mostly invisible for the company members, even if it was never hidden. Changing from an internal to external perspective enabled me to understand the dynamic of the laboratory theatre from an anthropological point of view. Sudden departures from the company (an inner perspective) along with Czech theatre community's metaphors of Farm in the Cave being a 'sect' (outside perspective) are both phenomena very typical for theatre groups of laboratory type.

Being a part of that experience—as well as examining theoretical and historical background of the phenomena, together with constant discussions with other scholars (theatre scholars and anthropologists in particular) in Czech Republic, Poland or Greece⁴—this narrative of laboratory theatres could evolve. My anthropological approach is what keeps this work from being a full monograph of Farm in the Cave, but more a description of the laboratory phenomena in practice.

⁴ Epidauros Work-in-Progress Forum II of European Network of Research and Documentation of Performances of Ancient Greek Drama (Arc-Net) July 9-11, 2010 Epidauros, Greece.

Farm in the Cave's conscious development as a laboratory form of theatre, simultaneously working as a self-reflexive ensemble, is rendered mainly by its performances and projects. It is a laboratory theatre that observes itself, examining the body as it is—a poet born in the society, but rejected by it, a 'Gypsy' caravan, colorful, full of music, proud, free and unattached, but as well poor, cold, oppressive and ambivalent, hierarchical like 'corporation' one is afraid to leave; mirroring slaves, outsiders, unaccepted ones...

Part I: Laboratory Theatres

Grotowski—a Visionary and a Craftsman

“Grotowski is unique. Why? Because no-one else in the world, to my knowledge, no-one since Stanislavski, has investigated the nature of acting, its phenomenon, its meaning, the nature and science of its mental-physical-emotional processes as deeply and completely as Grotowski. He calls his theatre a laboratory. It is. It is a centre of research”⁵ (Peter Brook, 1966). That was a year before Jerzy Grotowski moved from the small town of Opole to Wrocław and renamed his theatre as Laboratory Theatre. Actually, he had added word ‘laboratory’ to the name of his theatre already in 1962 (The Laboratory-Theatre ‘of 13 Rows’) consciously using this scientific expression to describe a theatre whose aim was searching and experimenting. The experiments did not come from avant-garde ideas of searching for something new in order to shock or surprise the public. The experiments in which the Laboratory Theatre was interested reflected detailed and concentrated work on the theatre craft. It was the actor’s craft that enabled a director’s craft in creating performances. Very soon the word ‘laboratory’ became popular with experimental physical theatre. Most of the time it meant something shocking, previously ‘un-seen’ on stage—something going against the Deadly Theatre and its ‘nobler-than-life’ expression, as described by Brook in *The Empty Space* (1968). The word ‘laboratory’ started to be popular.⁶

The ideas of Grotowski managed to influence theatre mainly through visible results that were ‘objective’ and based on some techniques or methods that might be easily applied—even by people without any funding or proper space. Unfortunately, for the same reason, Grotowski's ideas set the stage for many misunderstandings in applying the methods and opened a discussion about imitators. The idea of the ‘poor theatre’ caused both effects—the development in the theatre craft concentrated on the actor’s physical expression (‘The Holy Theatre’ recalling Brook’s terminology) and popularization of theatre, which can be done by anyone willing to express through the body (effects of such inspiration are unpredictable concerning aesthetic or the meaning). The main difference of Grotowski’s idea was in practical exercises that could lead to fulfilling abstract visions, needs or beliefs.

Grotowski is a central figure for the theme of laboratory theatres. He introduced a

⁵ The article has been published in *Flourish*, the newspaper of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre Club in Autumn 1966. See: Jerzy Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre* (Holstebro: Odin Teatrets Forlag, 1968), p.13.

⁶ Eugenio Barba wrote that Constantine Stanislavski was the first to who label his theatre Studio a ‘laboratory;’ the second was Grotowski; and the next one was Barba himself—as a ‘barbarian,’ who made this word popular among other ‘amateurs.’ See: Eugenio Barba, *Teatr: samotność, rzemiosło, bunt* [Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt], trans. Grzegorz Godlewski, Iwona Kurz, Małgorzata Litwinowicz-Drożdźiel (Warszawa: Instytut Kultury Polskiej, 2003), p.57.

certain model of a theatre-group based on a strong working ethos of discipline and precision and an as-long-as-necessary creation process; in this way he successfully presented effects of his research into the theatre craft. Peter Brook is an example of a theatre practitioner who led parallel research into the actor's body and voice in order to create stage performances. He was interested in recreating the atmosphere of Shakespearian theatre as a marketplace; willing to test the basic theatre situation within a transcultural experience. At the beginning of the 1970s Brook traveled to the Middle East and Africa with the International Research Centre he had founded "to study how theatre operated outside Westernized society."⁷ He experimented with *bashtahondo* (a collection of nonsense sounds whose meaning would shift)⁸ and *Orghast* (an artificial language invented by poet Ted Hughes, whose expression should be understood by every human being, as 'words' with meanings based on communication with pure sound). Similar ideas for theatre experiments were 'in the air' and perhaps they came naturally with development of Western culture and its tendency to question forms.

It could be significant that both Grotowski and Brook⁹ were asked about the influence of Antonin Artaud and his idea of the Theatre of Cruelty on their work before they had even heard about him. In response, Grotowski pointed out a lack of truly practical aspect of Artaud's visions, saying, "I am often asked about Artaud when I speak of 'cruelty,' although his formulations were based on different remises and took a different tack. Artaud was an extraordinary visionary, but his writings have little methodological meaning because they are not product of long-term practical investigations."¹⁰ This shows Grotowski sees himself as original. Grotowski's research on the actor's expression could be applied by other autonomous theatre directors, like Peter Brook¹¹ or Eugenio Barba. And, thanks to this, Grotowski had created a 'wave' or a platform of experiments and common research (a nest, as Jana Pilátová named it¹²).

Brook, who had witnessed changes in the theatre craft, writes that Grotowski was obviously not the only one who in the 1960s worked on the actor's body and richness of its expression.¹³ The difference is that Grotowski managed to raise physical actions to a level

⁷ Yoshi Oida and Lorna Marshall, *The Invisible Actor* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), p.94.

⁸ See: Yoshi Oida with Lorna Marshall, *An Actor Adrift* (London: Methuen, 1992), p.73.

⁹ See: Peter Brook, *The Shifting Point* (London: Methuen, 1988), p.41.

¹⁰ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, pp.23-24.

¹¹ In 1966 Brook, inspired by Grotowski's ideas and theatre, invited him with Ryszard Cieślak to lead ten days workshop with actors of The Royal Shakespeare Theatre Company.

¹² See: Jana Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského. Na prahu divadelní antropologie* [Grotowski's Nest—On the Threshold of Theatre Anthropology] (Praha: Institut umění—Divadelní ústav, 2009).

¹³ See: Peter Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą. O Jerzym Grotowskim* [Theatre is Just a Form—About Jerzy Grotowski], ed. Grzegorz Ziolkowski (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2007), pp.57-58.

through which he could transmit the dramatic message performed in Polish to the international public in a nonverbal way, created, moreover, in a non-illustrative way.

Brook explains that Grotowski's *Akropolis* (first version premiered in Opole in 1962; in 1964 performed at the Edinburgh Festival) had physically affected him by changing rhythm of his breath, connecting him physically with the performance he was watching. Actors of the Laboratory Theatre changing the 'language' of rhythms spoke directly into something deeply hidden in every human being, as Brook is referring. He compares the pulsation he felt while watching *Akropolis* to jazz—the difference being that jazz resonates only with some parts of the organism, while Grotowski's performance created a total immersion.¹⁴ Continuing research of Stanislavski on physical actions, Grotowski wanted to achieve (like Stanislavski) a 'natural' behaviour on stage but, moreover, he was searching for something hidden. If Stanislavski started on concrete impulse, such as an impulse to sit in a chair, Grotowski wanted to extract a pure impulse of unknown origin; thanks to vocal intonations, movements and gestures of the body, he sought to explore precisely and in detail the relation of inner energies of the body and its external manifestations.¹⁵ *Akropolis* and especially *The Constant Prince* (premiered in Wrocław in 1965) with the extraordinary role of Ryszard Cieślak proved that the human being is able to transmit complex meanings through physicality to the viewers in the artificial situation of staged performance. That attracted an anthropological interest in research in the field of theatre and performing arts all over the world, including Brook's research in Middle East and Africa.

In the 1960s many people were exploring body expression from a narcissistic perspective, according to Brook; and such egoistic motivations for self-expression were not interesting to the public,¹⁶ whereas Grotowski was interested in the actor as a 'human vehicle' to express 'the Invisible.' "In Grotowski's terminology, the actor allows a role to 'penetrate' him; at first he is all obstacle to it, but by constant work he acquires technical mastery over his physical and psychic means by which he can allow the barriers to drop."¹⁷ In his first important manifesto *Towards a Poor Theatre* (published by Odin Teatret's Publishing House in 1968, it turned into a bible for all 'searching' theatre groups all around the world¹⁸) Grotowski wrote: "We do not want to teach the actor a predetermined set of skills or give him

¹⁴ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą, op. cit.*, p.15.

¹⁵ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą, op. cit.*, p.68.

¹⁶ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą, op. cit.*, pp.57-58.

¹⁷ Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), reprint of New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968, p.71.

¹⁸ See: Tadeusz Burzyński, Zbigniew Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego* [Grotowski's Laboratory] (Warszawa: Interpress, 1978), p.87.

a ‘bag of tricks.’ Ours is not a deductive method of collecting skills. Here everything is concentrated on the ‘ripening’ of the actor which is expressed by a tension towards the extreme, by a complete stripping down, by the laying bare of one's own intimacy—all this without the least trace of egotism or self-enjoyment. The actor makes a total gift of himself. This is a technique of the ‘trance’ and of the integration of all the actor's psychic and bodily powers, which emerge from the most intimate layers of his being and his instinct, springing forth in a sort of ‘trans-lumination.’ (...) The result is freedom from the time-lapse between inner impulse and outer reaction in such a way that the impulse is already an outer reaction.”¹⁹

However, this manifesto would stay abstract, had Grotowski not spoken about art of Ryszard Cieślak.²⁰ Thanks to Cieślak's art Grotowski's ideas were suddenly concrete and applicable. And they managed to influence creating stage performances in a revolutionary way not unlike Stanislavski's method did it a decade previously. Recalling Brook's opinion as an opinion of concurrent theatre director of those times—the work of Grotowski was going deeper into an actor's world to the point where the actor ceased being an actor and started to be an ‘essential man.’²¹ Brook, writing about the spiritual side of Grotowski's research, said that in addition to creating stage performances he was interested in discovering the secrets of human psychology through physical exercise and improvisation. To reach this level Brook explains that Grotowski needed to work with a person who was not only an actor (meaning a person able to live a fictional character's life), but a person who could transcend that and discover himself as human being.²² Cieślak was that person. Skilled enough to be open to techniques that experiment with the body to break-out from ordinary, daily ways of movement; to consciously separate an impulse and send it to particular part of the body.

In the film *The Body Speaks*²³ Cieślak talks about the body as an actor's instrument to produce movement and voice—a necessity to keep it open to transcend obstacles and limitations in creation. Cieślak explains that there are two types of exercises created in Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre: Plastiques and Corporals; these later on developed into basic training of the physical actor. Plastiques, which begin with the head and finish with the feet and hands, are a physical and mental warm-up of each part of the body. Plastiques are a searching for the borders of the body's shape, in extreme positions; are experimenting on

¹⁹ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.16.

²⁰ See: Tadeusz Burzyński, „Ryszard Cieślak – aktor natchniony” [Ryszard Cieślak—an Inspired Actor] in Tadeusz Burzyński, *Mój Grotowski* [My Grotowski] (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2006), pp.292-299.

²¹ See: Brook, *Shifting Point*, *op. cit.*, p.41.

²² See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.42.

²³ *The Body Speaks* (dir. John Musilli) was shot in New York in 1975. In this Musilli film, Cieślak is interviewed by theatre critic Margaret Croyden where he comments on fragments of the film *Training at Grotowski's Teatr Laboratorium in Wrocław* (dir. Torgeir Wethal) from 1972.

body's limits while the actor pushes it to go beyond comfort and towards the threshold of pain. The experimentation with those extreme positions leads to an understanding of ways to transmit an impulse, and research how and to where it can travel. Cieślak had extraordinary awareness of the body; he says he discovered pure nerves, as if being without skin. He explains this using the metaphor of a pianist training for a concert. Exercises are elements similar to musical notes, thanks to which it is possible to play music; similarly, an actor should be able to listen to the partners as to the music (rhythm), like when two jazz musicians are jamming, Cieślak says. For exercises, called Corporals, the spine and balance are essential as is the exploration movement between the positions. "You can do everything very correct as in circus, but it means nothing, the way of searching is important"²⁴—says Cieślak, pointing to the difference he sees in physical acting. The discovery of laboratory theatres lies in physical actions, where the body is a vehicle for meaning and is 'moved' by inner intentions. As such, meaning can be different for the actor's mind and in the viewer's mind depending on the circumstances in which the action appears on stage; this difference endows the action with layers of perceptions and makes it 'real,' based on true impulses. Cieślak emphasizes the relation to the partner or spectator—which should lie in giving, sharing or even 'serving'²⁵ as being an actor means being extravert. The vivid spine of an actor projects the movement to the parts of the body in order to communicate something more basic than gestures, so that later on an actor (a 'doer') can be with the others like with an element of nature.

Obviously, this is similar to the biomechanics and 'plastic' training of Vsevolod Meyerhold, with the difference that Grotowski (and Cieślak) were searching for organic, 'natural' movement of the body designed by nature to do and to manifest. Brook uses a metaphor that actor is like a glove. In this way, for Brook an actor has both the strength of a glove and emptiness of it.²⁶ Yoshi Oida, one of Brook's actors, praises this state as 'an invisible actor,' meaning an actor who persuades the audience to see the moon which is not there, and not contemplating the beauty of a gesture, which symbolizes 'looking at the moon.'²⁷ The actor itself needs to disappear in order to show something beyond, a meaning—to create life on stage.

Thomas Richards, an actor who became Grotowski's last collaborator, chosen by him to continue his last project (an 'Art as vehicle'), describes his very first years of working with

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ See: Thomas Richards, *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), p.8.

²⁶ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.102.

²⁷ See: Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, p.5.

Grotowski on physical actions. Even if Grotowski ceased being interested in creating stage performances, working on physical actions remained a basic step for continuing research in actor's craft. In *Working with Jerzy Grotowski on Physical Actions* published in 1995 Richards emphasizes tight connection between Grotowski's work and the work Stanislavski conducted in the final period of his life. Talking about the connection between two great craftsmen, Richards recalls misunderstanding of what 'organicity' and physical actions are: "I am aware that many people have experienced 'Grotowski workshops' conducted by someone who studied with Grotowski in a session of five days, for example, twenty-five years ago. Such 'instructors,' of course, often pass on grave errors and misunderstandings. Grotowski's research might be mistakenly construed as something wild and structureless, where people throw themselves on the floor, scream a lot, and have pseudocathartic experiences. Grotowski's connection to tradition, and his link to Stanislavski, run the risk of being completely forgotten or not taken into account."²⁸ The key to understanding Grotowski's ideas is to understand what a 'score' is (a word firstly used by Stanislavski), what fixed line of physical actions is, as well as what the improvisation inside the structure means in practice. Brook, talking about the way Grotowski works, says that in Grotowski's stage performances important was even a distance between two chairs in the audience. "The exact, precise timing of a hand movement, the fact that all the actors did become for him like a musical score, that was his word that he used and now we have, the actor's 'partiture' and therefore an actor's sound, appearance and movement as precise as musical indication—right down to a fraction of a second as written in a musical score."²⁹

Richards explains it from the point of view of an actor, who knows the struggle of keeping repetitive actions alive: "Grotowski always stresses that the work on physical actions is the key to the actor's craft. An actor must be able to repeat the same score many times, and it must be alive and precise each time. How can we do this? What can an actor fix, make secure? His line of physical actions. This becomes like the score for a musician. The line of physical actions must be elaborated in detail and completely memorized."³⁰ According to Grotowski, real spontaneity in improvisation can happen only inside the very precise structure. Richards writes: "Many times when speaking about improvisation, he gave the example of early jazz. He said early jazz musicians understood improvisation could exist only within a definite structure: they had mastered their instruments, and were starting from a base

²⁸ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.4.

²⁹ Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.53 [the correct transcription was done according to the interview by Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz 19:09:30-19:10:09, The Grotowski Institute].

³⁰ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

melody. Their improvisations were woven starting from that melody, which was their structure, and with which they were always keeping in relation. Whenever giving this example, Grotowski stressed he was speaking about early jazz.”³¹ Music, and jazz in particular, look like the best analogy for explaining an idea of creating a theatre performance based on lines of physical movement. Grotowski sometimes calls physical actions morphemes³² using a linguistic example, but as movement and voice are rendered with some rhythm, it looks like music is much better example. Not only improvisation makes jazz so interesting as an analogy, also all the work with rhythm in jazz—working with polyrhythm (simultaneous use of conflict rhythms) or syncopation (interruption of the regular rhythm) or sense of pulsation that jazz musicians call the ‘groove.’ All that creates layers of understanding of physical movement and it is affecting the audience, who follows the rhythm of the performance with the eyes (ability to ‘see’ the rhythm created by the body and actions) and ears (ability to ‘hear’ the rhythm of music, voice, steps or breath) which does not need to be the same and can be composed by theatre director in the same way the music is composed. Stage director of physical theatre works rather like a music composer, orchestrating rhythms of theatre performance.³³

“With Stanislavski, the ‘method of physical actions’ was a means for his actors to create ‘a real life,’ a ‘realistic’ life in performance. For Grotowski, rather, the work on physical actions was a tool to find this ‘something’ in which there would be a personal discovery for the one doing. For both Stanislavski and Grotowski physical actions were a means, but their ends were different,”³⁴ Richards writes. The difference between Stanislavski and Grotowski lies also in understanding ‘organicity.’ Grotowski states: “Organicity: it is also a term of Stanislavski. What is organicity? It is to live in agreement with natural laws, but on a primary level. One mustn’t forget, our body is an animal. I am not saying: we are animals, I say: our body is an animal.”³⁵ Richards explains it in details: “In his work, Grotowski redefines the notion of organicity. For Stanislavski, ‘organicity’ signified the natural laws of ‘normal’ life which, by means of structure and composition, appear on the stage and become art; while for Grotowski, organicity indicates something like the potentiality of a current of impulses, a quasibiological current that comes from the ‘inside’ and goes toward the

³¹ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.19.

³² See: Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

³³ Thomas Richards speaks about working as a music composer orchestrating chosen ‘symptoms’ into a score. See: Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.83.

³⁴ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.78.

³⁵ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.66.

accomplishment of a precise action.”³⁶ To ‘practice’ organicity Grotowski developed some precise exercises called Motions and Watching.³⁷ Richards explains that Motions starting with so-called ‘primal position’ of a hunter are based on simple stretches/positions of the body. “Motions is in part an exercise for the ‘circulation of attention,’ so when certain elements after many years became easy for us to execute, a new level of precision had to be added to make the exercise again a challenge.”³⁸ And he added: “Motions is deceiving; on the surface it seems very simple but it is not. To really approach even one of its elements, for example the ‘primal position,’ each of us who now practices Motions has invested years of systematic work.”³⁹ From that point of view it is more like the philosophy of martial arts, which requires devoting years of practice to understand what is under the simple surface of exercise. On the contrary, speaking about the Watching, Richard says: “The ‘Watching’ was like a very long game of ‘follow the leader.’ It had a precise but loose structure of simple sequences, almost physical games, and was led by one person. All of the others had to follow in the tempo of the leader, but each in his own individual stream. The whole event had to be silent, no sounds from the floor and no sounds from breathing.”⁴⁰ Again the ‘ideal’ is the situation of hunting an animal that makes no sounds in order to be ‘invisible’ and to hear the surroundings.

The difference in creating performances as pieces of music enabled physical theatre to speak to the viewer on a more basic level than text or dramaturgy of the narration. Even if Grotowski said that he was not doing physical theatre, but searching for relation between action and text,⁴¹ he mastered theatre directing⁴² understanding meaning of rhythms inside the performance. Brook writes that Grotowski used a form of theatre to search for truth⁴³ and calls him a visionary.⁴⁴ But Grotowski himself understands his work more in comparison with that of a medieval craftsman: “The word research implies that we approach our profession rather like the mediaeval wood carver who sought to recreate in his block of wood a form which already existed. We do not work in the same way as the artist or the scientist, but rather as the shoemaker looking for the right spot on the shoe in which to hammer the nail.”⁴⁵

³⁶ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.93.

³⁷ More exercises in „Ćwiczenia praktyczne” [Practical Exercises] in James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta, *Jerzy Grotowski*, trans. Koryna Dylewska (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2010), pp.147-191.

³⁸ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.52.

³⁹ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.53.

⁴⁰ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.56.

⁴¹ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.84

⁴² See: Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

⁴³ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.14

⁴⁴ See: Brook, *The Empty Space*, *op. cit.*, p.71.

⁴⁵ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.27.

Grotowski was interested in theatre that transcends clichés, habits and expectations of ordinary existence, to be able to direct contact with reality, which is hidden in its forms.⁴⁶ And even if he had developed a technique for achieving great results, it also created a wave of misunderstandings. Using the metaphor of a rolling stone, Brook points out the avalanche of bad applications and superficial imitators.⁴⁷ Theatre groups that had need to make theatre of ‘different intensity,’ started to follow a ‘method’ of Grotowski with the result, as Brook describes, of making just the same kind of Dead Theatre they had rebelled against, the only difference being that they used the ‘language’ of physical actions. As Brook says, Grotowski had never encouraged any theatre group or stage director to use his methods as he knew that results of the groups, who claimed to be inspired by his methods, was very bad work.⁴⁸

Thomas Richards personally experienced a similar need and a similar failure in applying Grotowski’s ‘method’ when as a young actor in the 1980s, he worked in New York on physical performance; Richards recalls the atmosphere of Grotowski’s ideas ‘created’ in him after short workshop: “I was ready to go back to New York and become a profound actor, ready to shock the world from the depths of my soul. I felt convinced there was something very deep in myself and I was quite ready to ‘express it.’ What I saw as my success in Grotowski’s workshop merely confirmed this.”⁴⁹ Explaining misunderstandings the group of similar admirers undertook in their work, he wrote: “We prepared a classical tragedy, all committing to a long rehearsal period. Each person in the group was in his own way a follower or a great admirer of Grotowski. We worked for profound results, sparing no effort, and tried to create a physical form of expression. (...) We were also interested in ‘facial mask’ as spoken of by Grotowski in *Towards a Poor Theatre*, so for each of my characters I developed a set ‘mask’ constructed by my face muscles. I understood much later that our way of elaborating this element was in practice a total misunderstanding of what Grotowski actually meant. Many years later, Grotowski spoke to me about the facial masks his actors had used in Akropolis, and how they had arrived at them. The facial masks in Akropolis were not frozen, constructed for some formal reason, but rather directly linked to the inner logic of the persons in their specific circumstances. (...) Each actor [of *Akropolis*] discovered his facial mask by repeating a specific inner formula and allowing it to sculpture his face, almost giving the wrinkles.”⁵⁰ On the contrary to this work, Richard’s experience of a young actor,

⁴⁶ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.80.

⁴⁷ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

⁴⁸ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, pp.51-52.

⁴⁹ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.23.

⁵⁰ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, pp.25-26.

who tried to apply Grotowski's 'methods' was very different: "I concentrated on my physical movements, facial masks, vocal intonations, and completely lost contact with my partners. By the opening, I had transformed myself into a blind and deaf puppet on stage. The performance was strongly criticized. It does not surprise me. We had fought to do something more profound than normal theatre; we thought we were superior, but in result we had just created banal theatre."⁵¹ The narration of Richards, recalling failures, lead him at the end to understanding and not to continuation of imitating and thanks to this it shows a very unique perspective.⁵² It presents as well a strategy of 'fascinated' dilettante, who understood limitations of physical expression without mastering a proper technique.

Grotowski created an interest, a thirst for theatre art based on expression of true self, a theatre as an oasis of truthfulness and profoundness; and also a shock of showing something, which is not an entertainment, which does not leave spectator in a relaxed state of mind, but rather provokes him, asking him to change. Grotowski as if brought back a need to experience catharsis through an art similarly to ancient Greek theatre; and brought to focus an anthropological interest in theatre as a form, which exists in every culture coming from rituals, childish games or story-telling. The interests of specific social-historical context, the previous 'forms' of theatre—if it were Medieval carnival forms⁵³ or trance cults⁵⁴—came to focus, as they brought different ideas of ways how the single individual was able to explore his freedom, truth, authenticity, animalistic body in movement, humanity in its potency of embodying or imagining—as Cieślak is saying: "You discover an animal in you, or imagine animals around you."⁵⁵ The questions Grotowski put an attention to in his manifesto from 1968 were pointing the uniqueness of theatre medium: "Through practical experimentation I sought to answer the questions with which I had begun: What is the theatre? What is unique about it? What can it do that film and television cannot? Two concrete conceptions crystallized: poor theatre, and performance as an act of transgression."⁵⁶

⁵¹ See: Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.26.

⁵² The writer's strategy was inspired by Vasily O. Toporkov's book *Stanislavski in Rehearsal*. See: Leszek Kolankiewicz, "Przedmowa do wydania polskiego" [Preface to the Polish Edition], in Wasilij O. Toporkow, *Stanislavski na próbie. Wspomnienia* (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2007), p.9.

⁵³ In 1965 Mikhail Bakhtin's influential work about carnival (*Rabelais and His World*) was published in Russian, translated into English in 1968.

⁵⁴ To illustrate, in 1952, a documentary *Trance and Dance in Bali* was released; this was filmed in the 1930s by anthropologists Gregory Bateson (1904-1980) and Margaret Mead (1901-1978). In 1955, *Les maîtres fous* [The Mad Masters]—an ethnofiction, short movie about Nigerian religious practices directed by filmmaker Jean Rouch (1917-2004) was released. Eugenio Barba writes about the influence of this particular movie on Brook and other theatre directors in his text "Children of Silence. Reflection on Forty Years of Odin Teatret," in *Why a Theatre Laboratory*, *Peripeti* 2/2004, p.68.

⁵⁵ In *The Body Speaks* (dir. John Musilli), New York 1975.

⁵⁶ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, pp.18-19.

Grotowski's concept of 'via negative' meant reducing theatre to situation between actor and director (spectator), but also searching for essence of the situation or the movement. Using language of Alchemists, Grotowski said that he was "seeking distillation of signs by eliminating those elements of 'natural' behaviour which obscure pure impulse;"⁵⁷ 'in/pulse'—push from the inside and 'in/tension'⁵⁸—pointing pre-expressive etymology of those words. Grotowski said: "Impulses precede physical actions, always. The impulses: it is as if the physical action, still almost invisible, was already born in the body."⁵⁹ And: "The intention exists even at a muscular level in the body, and is linked to some objective outside you."⁶⁰

This is on the level of a performer's craft and creating a stage 'text.' The dramatic 'text' or dramaturgy of the performance, the reality created on stage by set design or costumes (like the concentration camp in Grotowski's *Akropolis*) tend to clash with other aspects; these could include confrontations with the drama (with *Akropolis*, the poetic was text written at the beginning of the 20th century questioning Polish history in the context of ancient Greek or Biblical), imaginary actions created within the framework of staged reality that are clear for the spectator in the context of the imagined narrative world (such as a pipe that serves as an imaginary women in a wedding scene where simultaneously a crematorium/grave is being built through the whole performance of *Akropolis*)—this is a director's craft, creating specific montage in spectator's mind.

The director's craft, as Grotowski explained, is to be able to shift the spectator's attention—just like in a movie, when an imaginary camera follows the main accents of created performance.⁶¹ Brook, talking about the position of the spectator in Grotowski's stage productions is uses a metaphor of a Harlem resident⁶²—a person who observes actions from a window, being affected or not, but definitely not in the position of being able to alter the 'performance' he watches. The 'legendary' lack of applause after performances of the Laboratory Theatre (which for many started to be a sign of a 'profound' and 'truthful' work) comes perhaps not only from the strong topics chosen for staging, but also from being overwhelmed (or confused) by many layers of meaning hidden in the structure, leaving the spectator in feeling of uneasiness. "Acting is a particularly thankless art. It dies with the actor. Nothing survives him but the reviews which do not usually do him justice anyway, whether

⁵⁷ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.18.

⁵⁸ See: Grotowski's speech at the conference in Liège, 1986. Cited by Thomas Richards in *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions*. Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.96.

⁵⁹ In Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.94.

⁶⁰ In Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.96.

⁶¹ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, pp.88-89.

⁶² See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.21.

he is good or bad. So the only source of satisfaction left to him is the audience's reactions. In the poor theatre this does not mean flowers and interminable applause, but a special silence in which there is much fascination but also a lot of indignation, and even repugnance, which the spectator directs not at himself but at the theatre towards”⁶³ (Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*).

The most famous example of the difference between the actor’s ‘character’ and the spectator’s ‘view’ introduced the role of the Constant Prince. Grotowski said: “Nothing in his work was linked to the martyr that, in the drama of Calderon/Slowacki, is the theme of the role of the Constant Prince. All the river of life in the actor was linked to a certain memory, which was very far from any darkness, any suffering. His long monologues were linked to the actions which belonged to that concrete memory from his life, to the most minute actions and physical and vocal impulses of that remembered moment. It was a relatively short moment from his life—we can say some tens of minutes, a time of love from his early youth.”⁶⁴

Richards explains the way Grotowski worked with the actor: “In the performances of Grotowski, however, the ‘character’ existed more as a public screen which protected the actor. The actor did not identify with the ‘character.’ One can see this clearly from the case of the Constant Prince of Ryszard Cieslak. The ‘character’ was constructed through the montage and was mainly destined for the mind of the spectator; the actor behind this screen maintained his intimacy, his safety. Furthermore, the screen of the ‘character’ kept the mind of the spectator occupied in such a way that the spectator might perceive, with a part of himself more adapted to this task, the hidden process of the actor.”⁶⁵ And, referring it to his own work on the *Main Action* in 1989, he added: “One of the differences between Stanislavski’s and Grotowski’s use of physical actions lies in the technique of montage. All of my associations and actions revolved around this personal event, and that was my secret. No one who watched us do the ‘Main Action’ would ever know that: they, by means of the complete montage, would receive an entirely different story. While I followed my series of physical actions related to my father, next to me an actress followed another, completely different: her own personal story. But, because of the precise coordination in timing and rhythm of some of our actions, and because of the proximity of her and myself, a person looking would perceive our actions as being interrelated. They would see one story which had to do with the two of us together, when in reality we were following two completely different lines of associations and

⁶³ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.44.

⁶⁴ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, pp.122-123.

⁶⁵ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.98.

actions, which were separate. The actress did not know the memories on which I was working, and I did not know the ones on which she was working.”⁶⁶

The problem of imitation lies not only in other people copying somebody’s else ‘method’ or ‘technique,’ but also in a need of keeping alive the form in repetition. Brook wrote: “Repetition denies the living.”⁶⁷ Grotowski—in his search for presence in the present moment what is the ‘magic of theatre’⁶⁸—found a way to keep physical actions alive while working with them. He was not entrapped by rehearsal processes into fixing feelings; he didn’t need to achieve it by pumping an emotion state. He distilled physical actions from activities, movements, gestures (defining them as peripheral to the body) or symptoms (like to blush). In this way, he is aligned with Stanislavski who said, “The ‘small truth’ of physical actions stirs the ‘great truth’ of thoughts, emotions, experiences, and a ‘small untruth’ of physical actions gives birth to a ‘great untruth’ in the region of emotions, thoughts and imagination.”⁶⁹

“I CAN take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged”⁷⁰ (Brook, *The Empty Space*). Searching for the primary ‘theatre’ situation, a truth created by the form of theatre; a theatre profound like an image of ancient ritual brings up the fascinating paradox that lies in the theatre as a form. As all those ‘expected’ states of freedom, truth and authenticity are sought in the form, which works with illusion, ‘lying,’ magical ‘if,’ imagining and pretending. The ideas of life being theatre, Shakespeare’s “All the world’s a stage”⁷¹ or the Indian idea of *maya* (an illusion) resonates in visions of laboratory theatres. Living life while performing social roles, taking part in social ceremonies invokes a need to experiment with this form and examine its borders. As if theatre would be able to show ‘true’ life patterns by creating an illusion, or by researching on the illusion. As if a human could understand through theatre patterns of the life itself, life in society and psychodynamics of human actions. The questions of creating ‘life on stage’ are questions of imitating life. How to imitate life? How to research what life is, animalistic, authentic self in human body and voice? The reversed side of the same interest opens a question of manipulation as well.

One of the true fascinations about Grotowski is his ability to change, to transform; to

⁶⁶ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.65.

⁶⁷ Brook, *Empty Space*, *op. cit.*, p.172.

⁶⁸ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko forma*, *op. cit.*, p.48.

⁶⁹ In Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.65.

⁷⁰ Brook, *Empty Space*, *op. cit.*, p.6.

⁷¹ *As You Like* (Act II, Scene 7, 139) by William Shakespeare.

leave one form in search for another one (starting from his personal transformation in India). Brook wrote: “Grotowski was a spiritual scientist. He was a scientist in a sense that he tried to understand precisely and into the details how the human organism is working, and what is the meaning of different energies; as acting is based on energy.”⁷² He was able to influence other people’s lives, leaving seeds of his own passions and interests. The utopian belief of the laboratory theatre lies in the fact that the genre promises some kind of transformation, para-religious experience which is changing human’s fate.⁷³ In *Towards a Poor Theatre* Grotowski wrote about the spectator: “But he who fights to keep his mask of lies intact at all costs, leaves the performance even more confused. I am convinced that on the whole, even in the latter case, the performance represents a form of social psycho-therapy, whereas for the actor it is only a therapy if he has given himself whole-heartedly to his task.”⁷⁴

Directors like Brook or Barba, researchers in their own field, were able to create a platform with an original idea that their ‘laboratories’ developed; they’d make parallel researches, experiences and work on their own interest. Whereas Brook was exploring the connection to spectators, Barba sought out the pre-expressivity of the performer. Some of theatre practitioners decided to create laboratories so as to further pursue their research within a framework of a socially accepted model; the others were interested in creating a kind of ‘theatre family,’ a community that would only work together, but also sharing life. The Laboratory Theatre of Jerzy Grotowski didn’t create a model, but created a need for a ‘model’—practically speaking, a model with particular exercises, actor’s training, with a sufficient amount of time to develop performances that are by virtue of such circumstances, not typical for regular theatres. This ‘model’ was developed by Barba’s experience, and also experiments of Grotowski himself with paratheatrical actions engaging spectators and creating a wave of active culture and cultural animation. Grotowski is a precursor to research into a ‘laboratorial’ model. At the end of his life he had created a work-center that broadened the idea of laboratories into a kind of hermitage.⁷⁵ Grotowski’s last ‘laboratory’ was about the actor’s craft that would evolve through energies to achieve a ‘higher connection’ such that the

⁷² Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.71 (originally in French, translation mine from Polish).

⁷³ Zbigniew Osiński quotes in his monographic book about the Laboratory Theatre from an open letter to Grotowski written by known American theatre critic Eric Benley (1916) and published in *The Times* October 30, 1969. The critic wrote there about a thought that occurred to him while watching *Apocalypsis cum figuris* (he calls it ‘revelation’), which helped him to understand himself and his private live. He added that nothing like that had ever happened to him in theatre before. See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.97.

⁷⁴ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.46.

⁷⁵ The term used by Polish theatre scholar Grzegorz Ziółkowski in *Guślarz i eremita* [*The Guslar and the Hermit*] (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2007).

art could serve as a vehicle. Grotowski in one talk with Peter Brook mentioned that while he was interested in theatre, he used to use a spiritual/religious language to explain his ideas, but since he is working on discovering the ‘higher connection,’ a ‘vertical’ relation with something beyond, he employs a theatrical vocabulary.⁷⁶ Throughout his life Grotowski's research considered that at the beginning both the director and audience are necessary to intensify the process of experiencing something that exceeds us. However, when the action goes deeper, one needs to reject everything that is outside; the theatre, the actor and audience cease existing—and the human is ‘plays’ his final drama alone.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ The lecture took place in 1989 on the occasion of Peter Brook receiving an award Premio Europa per il Teatro, and was led by Romanian/French theatre critic Georges Banu (1943). See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.97.

⁷⁷ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.26.

Theatre as a ‘Liminal’ Place—about Laboratory Theatres

“Doing theatre research is just like floating in the middle of the ocean, hanging on to an island of smelly, shitty rubbish. You wonder where are you going. Then you wonder weather or not the work will be presentable. Then you present it. Sometimes the audience will tell you the performance works. That means something has been transformed. But we don’t know how and why. And that is the real difference between theatre laboratory and a scientific laboratory, where right until the end you don’t know weather what is in the test tube will be the proof of ‘successful’ experiment. At least in a science lab you know that the test tube contains a chemical compound, not just some dirty water.”⁷⁸ Clive Barker was both practitioner and scholar, a former actor of one of the very first European laboratories (Theatre Workshop of Joan Littlewood, a politically involved theatre group founded in 1945) and later on he was a professor of University of Warwick. This metaphor appeared in his speech about the experience of being in the theatre laboratory.⁷⁹ An ambivalent image of ‘islands of rubbish,’ where frustration meets excitement, opens the book by Mirella Schino entitled *Alchemists of the Stage: Theatre Laboratories in Europe*. The book is a reflection of the conference organized in 2004 by Odin Teatret and the University of Aarhus under the title: *Why a Theatre Laboratory?*⁸⁰

Perhaps the image of ‘islands of rubbish’ is an answer to Eugenio Barba’s term of ‘floating islands’ from 1979, describing laboratory theatres as independent places of creation—separated, but in contact. In the same year (1979) Barba had founded International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA) to gather theatre practitioners and scholars together to examine specific interests of laboratory theatres as well as to discuss the phenomenon itself. The term ‘laboratory theatre’ started to be used to describe experiments in the Western theatre of the 20th century, which often were close to communities from the border of social, political or religious utopia. ISTA itself is a scientific ‘laboratory’⁸¹ of theatre anthropology, a network born inside (or on the side) of Odin Teatret – Theatre Laboratory for the Art of the

⁷⁸ Mirella Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage. Theatre Laboratories in Europe*, trans. Paul Warrington (Holstebro-Malta-Wrocław: Icarus Publishing Enterprise, 2009), p.16.

⁷⁹ Describing the phenomenon, I use mostly a term ‘laboratory theatre; referring to the Laboratory Theatre Network; only in connection to the Schino’s book I keep the previous term: ‘theatre laboratory.’

⁸⁰ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage, op. cit.*, p.14.

⁸¹ Barba said that he called the project a ‘school,’ because in that time everybody wanted to have a ‘laboratory.’ See: Eugenio Barba, *Spalić dom. Rodowód reżysera* [On Directing and Dramaturgy. Burning the House], trans. Anna Górka (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2011), p.242.

Actor.⁸² ISTA, opened for actors, dancers, directors, choreographers, scholars, and critics introduced the idea of discussions connected to physical workshops or work demonstration of a particular technique (as for example highly stylized Indian dance Kathakali), so that participants can understand it through experience of their body.

Through practice, participants of ISTA assemble a common basis for naming and discussing the work of the performer. ISTA focuses on finding transcultural principles of performer's 'presence' and 'organic' movement on stage; rules and secrets of performer's extra-daily 'scenic presence' and 'scenic life.' Most scholars of laboratory theatres experienced what they try to name, most of practitioners self-reflect their experience using writing. Theory meets practice, as art meets life, which in that sense mirrors the idea of theatre laboratories. Schino wrote: "Theatre laboratories were a significant innovation of twentieth century European theatre. This innovation was however merely a new face of the much older and more remote zone of theatrical creation: the space that exists between art and life, between the craft and the person."⁸³ Leszek Kolankiewicz, a scholar who cooperated with Jerzy Grotowski during his paratheatrical period in the 1970s, as well as during Theatre of Sources at the beginning of the 1980s, emphasized that it is much better to speak of the laboratory of the alchemist; indeed, in both the theatre laboratory and the alchemical laboratory, one nurtures the essence of transformation—a transmutation of the seeker.⁸⁴ Grotowski interviewed by Barba in the early 1960s talks about building small theatres that resemble 'new monasteries.'⁸⁵

At the beginning a term 'theatre laboratory' was used in opposition to 'performance'—theatres labeled laboratories implied a performance preparation phase that was much more important than the performance itself; sometimes it was the only activity. Schino wrote: "Paradoxically, the term theatre laboratory came to be used as the opposite of performance. In any case, it indicates all those theatres in which the preparation of performances is not the only activity that goes on. But creating a performance can be an intricate, organic and labyrinthine job, usually opposite of a linear process."⁸⁶ That introduces the idea of theatre activity set up to develop the inner potential of its practitioners with the transmission to the audience only as a second step. From a historical point of view the first

⁸² It is a name that appear on the Odin Teatret's film about the company's training, *Training at Odin Teatret Theatre Laboratory for the Art of the Actor* (dir. Torgeir Wethal), 1972. See: "Physical training by Odin Teatret," TeatroTV, accessed December 17, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUH4i6-uuM>.

⁸³ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

⁸⁴ See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.11.

⁸⁵ See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.58.

⁸⁶ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.8.

'laboratory' was the Studio created by Stanislavski in the early 1930s to educate actors and develop a method of physical actions. The Studio was concentrated on pure research of the actor's craft; it was an educational experiment of searching for new ways to train actors, connecting life with the actor's craft to make the art realistic. The actor's task was to observe and imitate behavior, habits and clichés, to make them look truthful on stage. It was one of the ways to save theatre from an inner crisis, a searching for an evolution from the previous strategy, of Stanislavski, in finding emotional connections between the character and the actor. Practically his Studio was not independent, but worked only as a satellite group to a regular, dramatic theatre.

Jerzy Grotowski by creating his Laboratory Theatre was trying to find an escape from very pragmatic obligations that required running a regular, dramatic theatre: producing 8-12 new performances a season, and performing six times a week. In addition as the obligations associated financial and bureaucratic requirements.⁸⁷ By creating a 'laboratory' or later an 'institute' (as was the official name of Grotowski's theatre based in Wrocław: 'Institute for Studies of the Method of Acting—Laboratory Theatre') those practical problems were resolved. An 'institute' having a different status than a 'theatre' obliged the Polish state for example to partially refund each ticket sold for a performance.⁸⁸

Jana Pilátová writes that by the outset of the 1960s "From the second season 'Theatre of 13 Rows' did not work as theatre for which a number of premieres, performances and big audience was the most important."⁸⁹ But this change meant less money for salaries and costs of running the institution.⁹⁰ The aesthetic term the 'poor theatre' (the author of which was the Laboratory Theatre's literary director Ludwik Flaszen) meant not only an aesthetic principle, but also a necessity—members of the laboratory were doing in the theatre everything what was needed—from cleaning to backstage. And, as Pilátová says—working hours were not limited, nobody had a clear specialization, but all activities were more connected than in regular theatre. Each work was taken as a 'service'—even the actor's work was a 'service' for

⁸⁷ Zbigniew Osiński in his text entitled "Jerzy Grotowski and Ludwik Flaszen" wrote: "From today's perspective, the most important seem to be the *pragmatic reasons*. If Grotowski had not adopted the laboratory formula, he and his team (operating on official, professional state institution under the Ministry of Culture in Warsaw and, accordingly, under appropriate regional authorities in Opole and from 1965 in Wrocław) would have had to produce: 1) a *repertoire plan*, which meant the preparation of predetermined number of premieres in the season: eight or twelve new performances (at least one of them being a Soviet or Russian drama or a play from one of the Communist bloc countries – the choice depending on current political trends); 2) a *performance schedule* containing at least six shows a week; 3) an *audience attendance plan*; 4) a *business plan*. Every state theatre had to balance its accounts with the funding body." In Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.142.

⁸⁸ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.43.

⁸⁹ Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.21 (translation mine).

⁹⁰ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.22.

the audience.⁹¹ Very similarly, Nicola Savarese writes about Odin Teatret being a ‘home’ and illustrating it with the image of Eugenio Barba asking the scholar Savarese for help cleaning ashtrays before others would return from their morning run (ISTA session in Volterra, Italy 1981).⁹² It shows laboratory theatre as a space not divided from work; a place, where a clear definition of social roles are questioned; a community, a ‘theatre family.’ Savarese also addressed this: “What at the time I thought to be oddities, anomalies of theatre, became fundamental characteristics with which I am now able to distinguish a theatre laboratory.”⁹³

Jana Pilátová, who interned with the Laboratory Theatre in 1968-1969 (during the very end of Grotowski’s phase of creating theatre productions), observed that it was considerations regarding professional questions that brought Grotowski to the idea of ‘laboratory.’⁹⁴ As an actor was for Grotowski a figure related to human essence—in his ‘organicity’ expressing pure being, living without mask, costume, prop, social role, or even any image of oneself – one could have an impression that Grotowski preferred rehearsals than performances. Pilátová mentions this also for *Apocalypsis cum figuris*, the last performance of the Laboratory Theatre, which for an hour-long show, ten hours of material was gathered.⁹⁵ And even if this does not necessarily need to be true—as there were clear political reasons for preferring rehearsals⁹⁶—the inner/non public life of ‘laboratory’ was Grotowski’s main focus. It was organized in a significant way to keep its members occupied and not involved in public life.

This was particularly the case in 1968 a year of student protests in Poland. The protests started in January—against banning by authorities a performance of drama written by a 19th century Polish romantic poet⁹⁷—spread-out in March to most Polish University cities (also in Wrocław where the Laboratory Theatre was based right in the middle of the city on the main square), and resulted in the expulsion of thousands of students, arrests, court trials and anti-Jewish propaganda of the government, which culminated with mass emigration of

⁹¹ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.22.

⁹² See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, pp.225-226.

⁹³ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.225.

⁹⁴ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.21.

⁹⁵ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.102.

⁹⁶ Zbigniew Osiński mentioned: „In 1993, in a film made by the Swede Marianne Ahrne in Pontedera, the last film in which he participated, Grotowski said: *It was the epoch of Stalinism then, with very harsh censorship, so all my attention as a director was therefore focused on the fact that the performance can be censored but not the rehearsals. For me the rehearsals were always the most important thing.*” In Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.146.

⁹⁷ The premiere of *Forfathers’ Eve (Dziady)* by Adam Mickiewicz, directed by Kazimierz Dejmek (1924-2002) was held at the National Theatre of Warsaw in November 25, 1967; after 11 performances, government censors banned the performance as ‘anti-Russian’ (January 30, 1968). Banning the performance brought forth students’ protests that sparked the political crisis known as ‘March 1968.’

intellectuals of Jewish origin. In the same period trainings in the Laboratory Theatre were very intense to keep actors and interns away from external politics.⁹⁸ Among interns in 1968 there were actors, dancers, theatre directors, critics and sociologists from Norway, Sweden, France, Holland, America, Australia and Czechoslovakia. According to Pilátová, it was the only year when (partly because of historical circumstances) practitioners and scholars worked together and everybody needed to prepare forty minute-long presentation called a ‘concert’⁹⁹—to perform a physical expression. Only after that would Grotowski decide on an internship. Everybody participated in Flaszen's critical seminars as well as in physical training. Practice was connected to theory, in the same way as it would appear few years later at ISTA. “Why was the Laboratory so interested in physicality? Flaszen explained his and Grotowski’s idea with the example of *The Constant Prince*: He claimed that in the times of uncertainty the body is the very last guarantee of any absolute value—bare life is the last value, which we still perceive,”¹⁰⁰ noted Pilátová.

In relation to his artistic research Grotowski would attempt to identify forms that most corresponded with his theatrical needs and visions. He did not want to make theatre as a product that one could simply purchase. For *Apocalypsis cum figuris* he'd send his assistant to find spectators at universities, cafés, etc.; giving free tickets to those with whom he would like to work.¹⁰¹ Grotowski refused to make theatre as entertainment or edification. He put an accent on participation, direct meeting. Not wanting his actors to play, but rather to ‘open’ for the basic human sensitivity, Grotowski developed an idea of the ‘total act’—a borderline act of total presence in performing one’s true being in front of the viewers.

Eugenio Barba wrote about motives of Grotowski differently. Barba emphasized that Grotowski created a ‘laboratory’ because he wanted an emotional connection with his audience.¹⁰² At the very beginning, Grotowski’s theatre needed to cancel shows because there were nobody wanted to attend, even if the theatre was willing to play even for 2-3 people.¹⁰³ That situation resulted in the creation of a Circle of Friends of the Theatre of Thirteen Row in 1960 (for eighty people), in the framework of which Grotowski and Flaszen were giving open

⁹⁸ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁹⁹ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.22

¹⁰⁰ Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.94 (translation mine).

¹⁰¹ See: “Teatr, Rozmowa 04, Tomasz Rodowicz” [Theatre, Interview 04, Tomasz Rodowicz], interview by Zofia Dworakowska, in *Wolność w systemie zniewolenia. Rozmowy o polskiej kontrkulturze* [Freedom in the System of Enslavement. Speaking about Polish Counterculture], ed. Aldona Jawłowska and Zofia Dworakowska (Warszawa: Instytut Stosowanych Nauk Społecznych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2008), p.234.

¹⁰² Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.242.

¹⁰³ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.17.

lectures to educate spectators.¹⁰⁴ Being under influence of Reduta—Polish theatre laboratory (1919-1939) founded by Mieczysław Limanowski and Juliusz Osterwa as a commune that traveled to the most remote places in Poland¹⁰⁵—Grotowski decided to tour as well and from 1956 to 1965 he would present his performances in many small Polish towns.¹⁰⁶ The audience for Grotowski's performances was always limited to very few seats (mostly around thirty) to help performers transmit their energy. But even that limitation did not imply the theatre, being already famous, was full. Polish critic, Jan Kott starts his review about *Apocalypsis cum figuris* with such an image: "I saw Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre for the first time in the early 1960s in Opole, a small town in Silesia. The audience was restricted to twenty-five, but that evening only four or perhaps five guests from Warsaw and two young girls from the local school came to the performance of *Acropolis*. I saw Grotowski's theatre for the second time three years later. He had already moved to Wrocław, where he was given space in the old town hall. I came then to a festival of contemporary Polish plays and some sort of symposium, for which artists from entire country had gathered. The forum was boring, the plays mediocre, the productions uninteresting, but all the theatres were filled to capacity. At Grotowski's theatre auditorium was again restricted to thirty or forty, but at the performance of Calderon's *The Constant Prince* there were no more than dozen or so."¹⁰⁷ *Akropolis* was first performance of Grotowski that became famous worldwide; "is considered a particular realisation of the poor theatre and is still considered one of the canonical masterpieces of twentieth-century theatre."¹⁰⁸ Performance of Ryszard Cieślak in *The Constant Price* brought revelation to Eugenio Barba.¹⁰⁹ Many critics agreed that they were surprised seeing that visions of Grotowski are actually possible to accomplish.¹¹⁰ Even though performances of Laboratory Theatre were stunning, there was no audience interested in watching it.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ See: *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.65.

¹⁰⁶ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.86.

¹⁰⁷ In Richard Schechner and Lisa Wolford (ed.), *The Grotowski Sourcebook* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), p.134.

¹⁰⁸ See: "Akropolis," The Grotowski Institute, accessed November 13, 2014, <http://www.grotowski.net/en/encyclopedia/akropolis>.

¹⁰⁹ See: Eugenio Barba, *Ziemia popiołu i diamentów. Moje terminowanie w Polsce [Land of Ashes and Diamonds. My Apprenticeship in Poland]*, trans. Monika Gurguł (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2001), p.122.

¹¹⁰ Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.37.

¹¹¹ See also: "(...) And furthermore they gave their performances with only five people sitting and watching... So I felt that this group had respect for those coming to see them, even when it was such a small number."—quotation from the interview with one of the actor, Zbigniew Cynkutis. Jennifer Kumiega, *The Theatre of Grotowski* (London: Methuen, 1985), p.13. Eugenio Barba is mentioning lack of spectators as well: "In 1961, 1962, 1963, sometimes only three or four people came to his performances." See: Eugenio Barba, *The Paper Canoe. A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*, trans. Richard Fowler (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), p.82. The same appears in writing of Jana Pilátová in her book *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.30.

However, this does not mean there were no people willing to see a theatre show, as Kott's critics brings an image of other theatres packed.¹¹²

After Grotowski's significant success as a stage director in Western Europe and the United States,¹¹³ he decided to stop producing for the stage, and started the paratheatre. Dated from 1969 till 1976, paratheatrical performances opened for spectators to participate in actions that were presented as 'theatre of participation' and were accompanied by a manifesto entitled *Holiday: The Day That is Holy* (1970, in 1973 translated into English). This was an 'active culture'—the idea of rupturing the division separating actors and passive spectators—aiming to transform everything in social life, thanks to humanity (called the 'Self') encountering nature, undergoing liminal situations with others in order to find the 'total act' by oneself. Paratheatre meant in practice open calls in newspapers to people interested in 'meeting with the other people in motion and freedom'¹¹⁴ (1970); Grotowski worked with a chosen few (first separately, in 1971, and after 1972 together with the Laboratory Theatre's actors); the first actions guided by the team abroad for foreigners (1973—USA, France, Australia) and since 1974 in Poland—taking chosen participants out of the city to an isolated place. Brzezinka—a 'forest base,' ten hectares of forest with a stream and farm buildings without electricity and running water was a space where the group of invited participants was going through experiments (or experiences) under the direction of leaders who pre-prepared it together with Grotowski.¹¹⁵

You cannot purchase a ticket for these Special Projects, as one of Polish critics wrote.¹¹⁶ But by that time, Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre had already become organized differently and was an 'institute' with teams having different tasks.¹¹⁷ *Apocalypsis cum figuris*, played till 1980 was changing as well. The spectators' benches were the first thing that disappeared; instead, they'd have to sit on the floor; later, actors started to perform in their

¹¹² And the problem was not so much the cost of the ticket, as this had already been addressed—the Polish Ministry of Culture was co-funding every single ticket as officially it was not a 'theatre' but an 'institute.' See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.34.

¹¹³ Zbigniew Osiński has documented the Laboratory Theatre's reception abroad, mentioning for instance that *Time* magazine proclaimed Laboratory Theatre's visit to the US as the most important theatrical event in America in the 1960s. Ryszard Cieślak was awarded best Off-Broadway actor of 1969 by New York theatre critics; he is the only non-English speaking actor to receive the award, as well as the only actor who received both (Off-Broadway Theatre) awards for both Best Actor and Most Promising Newcomer. See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.88; pp.94-96.

¹¹⁴ See: Leszek Kolankiewicz, "Active Culture: The Primeval Times of Culture Animation," in *Culture Animation. Looking Back and Forward*, eds. of the English version Patrick Trompiz, Grzegorz Godlewski, Leszek Kolankiewicz (Warsaw: The Institute of Polish Culture, 2002), p.35.

¹¹⁵ See: Kolankiewicz, "Active Culture..." *op. cit.*, pp.35-37.

¹¹⁶ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.112.

¹¹⁷ Tadeusz Burzyński is naming six different groups working parallel in 1974/1975. See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.127.

normal clothes, pushing the border of imaginary world towards more ‘truthful’ experience.¹¹⁸ The performance of *Apocalypsis* was also a ‘ticket’ to paratheatre actions.¹¹⁹ It was in a way ‘presenting’ a result that paratheatre should have had: to exist truly. Perhaps for that reason some spectators at that time spontaneously joined the actors,¹²⁰ even though the structure of the performance was not opened to it.¹²¹ After this ‘theatre of participation’ had run in group workshops, Grotowski continued with his Theatre of Sources project (1976-1982)—meetings with ‘exotic’ rituals (such as from Haiti or Bengal) which supposed to bring experience for individuals in the contrary to group experience of paratheatre.¹²² Paratheatre itself disappointed Grotowski; he claimed that people didn’t know how to work, but were interested in the accumulation of excitement, calling the result an unstructured ‘emotive soup’¹²³ that used all kinds of pseudo-ritualistic clichés. As Richards noted, Grotowski was very conscious of typical misunderstandings about what the ‘paratheatre’ was: “Grotowski made a list: to carry someone in the air as if he is dead; to throw yourself down on the ground in a pseudo-crisis; to scream; to herd up in a close bunch, singing improvised songs with syllables like “Ah ah” or “La la”; etc.”¹²⁴ Nevertheless, as a few thousands of participants¹²⁵ went through the paratheatre (we can say contrary to what Grotowski’s theatre of productions had), it was a significant voice of counterculture that created some ‘wave.’¹²⁶ Grotowski’s next phase, Theatre of Sources was concentrated on examining sources of particular techniques, but the rules of participating were very much like in paratheatre (silence, auto-irony, unfocused

¹¹⁸ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.103.

¹¹⁹ In 1975, at performances of *Apocalypsis cum figuris* a poster was displayed addressing the audience: ‘To everybody who wants’ with instructions how to find Cieślak to speak with him, asking of the spectators: ‘why do you want to take part in the project and what do you expect?’ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.115.

¹²⁰ See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.109.

¹²¹ Contrary to performance like Schechner’s *Dionysus in 69*, which had an open structure for spectators to join the action.

¹²² Renata M. Molinari, *Dziennik Teatru Źródeł* [Diaries of Theatre of Sources], trans. Anna Górka (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2008), p.44.

¹²³ “In the first years, when a small group worked thoroughly on this for months and months, and was later joined by only a few new participants from the outside, things happened which were on the border of a miracle. However afterwards, when, in light of this experience, we made other versions, with a view to including more participants—or when the base group had not passed first through a long period of intrepid work—certain fragments functioned well, but the whole descended to some extent into an emotive soup between the people, or rather into a kind of animation.” Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.120.

¹²⁴ Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.20.

¹²⁵ Kolankiewicz, who took part in paratheatre, counted 4,500 active participants. He quotes the opinion of an American participant who called University of Research of the Theatre of Nations (June 14 – July 7, 1975) an ‘international Woodstock for the spiritually and artistically inclined.’ See: Kolankiewicz, “Active Culture...” *op. cit.*, p.38. Burzyński writes about more than 5,000 participants from all the continents who took part in the University of Research of the Theatre of Nations. See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.128.

¹²⁶ See: Zofia Dworakowska, “Kontrkulturowe wyjścia z teatru” [Countercultural Departures of Theatre], in *Wolność w systemie zniewolenia*, *op. cit.*, pp.152-155.

seeing, rule of not watching the others, going over tiredness in order to discover the body-mind),¹²⁷ exploring the craft of ‘performer’ in order to free the senses and the life energy.¹²⁸ Grotowski's Objective Drama (dated 1983-1992) ran in United States¹²⁹ because he remained abroad after Martial Law was proclaimed in Poland on December 13, 1981.¹³⁰ The Objective Drama was a continuation of Theatre of Sources and is considered as a transitional project towards Art as a vehicle.¹³¹ Art as a vehicle (dated from the second half of 1980s—till the end of Grotowski’s life) was held in Pontedera, Italy where Grotowski’s ‘laboratory’ took the form of a scientific laboratory, closed for regular spectators. In that sense Grotowski’s last project was similar to the idea of a ‘laboratory’—created contra ‘performance.’ Coming to the ‘edge’¹³² of his personal ‘artistic’ (or ‘spiritual’) development, Grotowski created a ‘hermitage.’ None of his ‘laboratories’ could serve as a model that could be easily repeated. It was his manifestos and practical solutions that inspired the others to create laboratories. Schino noted: “Theatre cannot be called a laboratory unless it has a given attitude towards the body, pedagogy and training,”¹³³ and this is an essence of Grotowski’s influence.

“Polish tradition of theatre laboratories is, thanks to Grotowski, more connected to ethics and spiritual dimension or value,”¹³⁴ Schino wrote. For the English-speaking world the term ‘theatre laboratory’ is more connected to the separate place in opposition to a capitalist system where you need to produce and present your product. Working out of society means making a kind of theatre that might be called alternative. As Savarese noted, ‘laboratories’ are usually located in unusual, eccentric and somewhat isolated places.¹³⁵ In spite of the separate economic and political situations distinguishing the ‘West’ from the ‘East,’ an idea of ‘laboratory theatre’ was always accompanied by an opposition to some system or regime. Alternative culture was labeled in 1968 by American sociologist Theodore Roszak as the ‘counterculture’—a culture that rejects the mainstream. Counterculture in its wider understanding (not a strictly political one) is a movement born with in the framework of

¹²⁷ Molinari, *Dziennik Teatru Źródło*, *op. cit.*, pp.43-45.

¹²⁸ Molinari, *Dziennik Teatru Źródło*, *op. cit.*, p.24.

¹²⁹ When Peter Brook wrote a letter of support for Grotowski's Objective Drama program at the University of California at Irvine, he called him a ‘scientifically trained observer’ of personification phenomena and personality mutations connected with crossing behavioral barriers. See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.30.

¹³⁰ The Communist government of the People’s Republic of Poland introduced Martial Law to suppress political opposition. This drastically restricted normal life of Polish citizens from December 13, 1981 to July 22, 1983.

¹³¹ See: “Objective Drama,” The Grotowski Institute, accessed January 5, 2015, <http://www.grotowski.net/en/encyclopedia/objective-drama>.

¹³² See: Thomas Richards, *Punkt graniczny przedstawienia* [The Edge-Point of the Performance], trans. Artur Przybyśławski (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2004).

¹³³ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

¹³⁴ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.90.

¹³⁵ See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.255.

mainstream culture in Western civilization in the 1960s and aimed towards radical change in the broader understanding of culture—encompassing the range of social system ideas and values, customs and life style and all forms of cultural expression like music, literature and art.¹³⁶ Alternatives from anthropological point of view are understood as trials of going out or beyond the society, often into the nature, in search of the ecological, ‘organic’¹³⁷ way of living and society’s rectify with new and direct relationships between people.

Alternative culture in its searching for transformation of self and surroundings, often in connection with transcendental experiences, is close to the point of view of Performance Studies theory (developed in 1970s) which takes any cultural fact as a relative one. A ‘performance’ except its ‘surface’ meaning contains other meaning hidden within its form (semiotic inspiration). The ‘performance,’ in which we participate as ‘performers,’ can be performed by us in conformity or in opposition to the social role that the performance as a form evokes. In 1960s theatre started to be used as a good parallel or metaphor to describe social phenomena and culture beyond the division on its mass or alternative manifestation. In 1959 American sociologist Erving Goffman published *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.¹³⁸ In 1964 psychiatrist Eric Berne published *Games People Play. The Psychology of Human Relationships*.¹³⁹ In 1967 French Marxist theorist, Guy Debord publish *La Société du spectacle* (The Society of the Spectacle),¹⁴⁰ which criticized social life for its lack of authenticity being a representation only, driven by media, its images and consumption. In the 1960s the model describing the relation between social and cultural ‘performances’ was developed by anthropologist Victor Turner¹⁴¹ and the theatre director Richard Schechner.¹⁴² According to their theory, the theatre overworks social dramas and social dramas are focused in theatre performances. Schechner, inspired by possibilities of this theatre metaphor, continued developing Performance Studies.¹⁴³ He is also known for his categorization of 20th

¹³⁶ See: *Wolność w systemie zniewolenia, op. cit.*, p.8.

¹³⁷ Grotowski—during his lectures on theatre anthropology in the framework of Collège de France—explains what he means by ‘organic’ by giving three oppositions: organic-artificial, organic-natural (what is natural and what is not natural behaving in particular culture or society) and organic-physical. See: Ziółkowski, *Guślarz i eremita, op. cit.*, p.331.

¹³⁸ See: Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959).

¹³⁹ See: Eric Berne, *Games People Play: the Psychology of Human Relations* (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

¹⁴⁰ See: Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994). First translation into English was published in 1970 (Translated by Fredy Perlman, et al, Detroit: Black & Red, 1970).

¹⁴¹ See: Viktor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982).

¹⁴² See: Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance* (London/New York: Routledge, 1993).

¹⁴³ See: Richard Schechner, *Performatyka. Wstęp*, trans. Tomasz Kubikowski (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2006).

century theatre avant-gardes.¹⁴⁴ The one connected with ‘laboratory theatres’ Schechner described: “The tradition-seeking avant-garde—so strongly present in Grotowski and Barba—but visible as well in ‘roots’ movements, ‘shamanic’ performances, and invented or radically updated rituals rejects fancy technology and cybernetics preferring the ‘wisdom of the ages,’ most often found in non-Western cultures.”¹⁴⁵

By definition, alternative theatre communicates with smaller groups of spectators. Laboratory theatres are even more specific. From the outset they were closed and small communities gathered around some kind of utopia that was often against the current political system—trying to escape aesthetic, political and social rules passed onto them by the culture. “Avant-gardists were on the left because the right was in power. When the left came to power, in the USSR for example, experimentalists were treated like kulaks, ripe for repression and extermination,”¹⁴⁶ Schechner wrote in *The Future of Ritual* written at the beginning of 1990s. Eugenio Barba, in his influential text entitled *Theatre-culture*¹⁴⁷ wrote, “You need to be ‘unsocial’ if you want to create alternative for society based on injustice. You need to be ‘unsocial’ if you do not want to accept rules of the game which absorb you. You need to be ‘unsocial’ if you want to at least in one part tear the net and beyond her found some other space, some other relations. [...] You need to be ‘unsocial’ to realize your own possibilities.”¹⁴⁸ Theatre offers freedom—from country, fate, skin, thoughts,¹⁴⁹ Barba wrote. Actors, according to him, being always in the position of discriminated, used the form of theatre as an alibi not to follow rules of the society, common morality, etc.¹⁵⁰ The paradox, as Barba noted, is that they had immersed in the world of fiction to find the courage not to pretend.¹⁵¹ Grotowski spoke in a similar way about paratheatrical experiences, defining them as moments of rejecting pretending, self-interest and fear when man stop to have his own (or somebody else) story about himself.¹⁵² The paradox of laboratory theatres is that questioning

¹⁴⁴ „What the avant-garde has become during the past 100 years or so is much too complicated to be organized under one heading. There is an historical avant-garde, a current avant-garde (always changing), a forward-looking avant-garde, a tradition-seeking avant-garde, and an intercultural avant-garde. A single work can belong to more than one of these categories.” Schechner, *The Future of Ritual*, *op. cit.*, p.5.

¹⁴⁵ Schechner, *Future of Ritual*, *op. cit.*, p.11.

¹⁴⁶ Schechner, *Future of Ritual*, *op. cit.*, p.6.

¹⁴⁷ *Theatre-culture* was published for the first time in 1979. Lluís Masgrau, an editor of *Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt*, stated that it is one the most important and the most translated texts of Barba. See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.215.

¹⁴⁸ Eugenio Barba, *Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt*, ed. Lluís Masgrau (Wales: Black Mountain Press, 1999), p.234.

¹⁴⁹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.241.

¹⁵⁰ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.220.

¹⁵¹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.208.

¹⁵² See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.111.

boundaries and hierarchy of the social order,¹⁵³ they immediately created their own rules with the constant need to go over the boundaries.

Schino speaks of a desire and a longing for ‘laboratory dimension’ present in 20th century theatre: “that sphere of theatre seemingly unconnected with performance, yet actually closely related to it.”¹⁵⁴ The rise of laboratory theatres in the 1960s was as well very much connected to the phenomena, which scholars call a ‘birth of the director.’¹⁵⁵ It means birth of director’s theatre, similarly as it happened the in history of cinema (from movies of stars to the art cinema). The 1960s are claimed to be the beginning of the ‘modern theatrical art,’ the ‘new theatre’—Grotowski’s ‘poor theatre’ and later on Barba’s ‘third theatre’ (different from mainstream, but also from the alternative theatre). The change in society and culture, which post-war generation made freeing themselves from restrictions of traditional system, affected Western culture paradigm towards culture of individualists.

Schino named three most important stage directors for development theatre laboratories in 1960s: Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook and Eugenio Barba. She includes also Joan Littlewood’s *Theatre Workshop* and Ariane Mnouschkine's *Téâtr du Soleil*. Understanding it mainly as a European cultural phenomenon she mentions other ‘laboratories’ like theatre of Tadashi Suzuki in Japan, Enrique Buenaventura, Santiago García and Patricia Ariza in Colombia.¹⁵⁶ Two main prototypes however were: the Laboratory Theatre and Odin Teatret: “Theatre laboratory are undoubtedly not a genre or a uniform category. They may include theatres that focus on political struggles or social issues; others intend on researching the actor’s craft; still other seeking primarily inner values or different forms of artistic creation. The term theatre laboratory does not designate an external point of reference or a model to be followed.”¹⁵⁷

The term ‘laboratory theatre’ is problematic. Barba often employs it as a practical category and claims that ‘laboratory’ is simply a theatre group that has no need to perform every evening; its core is a stable group of people who work using methods derived from their knowledge and scientific research—focusing mainly on the actor's art, they keep a specific ethos of work and pass on their professional know-how of their craft. This description is not precise as some theatre artists, working in similar ways, do not want to be labeled as a ‘laboratory.’ Such is the case with Włodzimirz Staniewski (who came from a student’s

¹⁵³ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.187.

¹⁵⁴ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.11.

¹⁵⁵ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.8.

¹⁵⁶ See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

¹⁵⁷ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

theatre and collaborated with Grotowski during his paratheatrical period). Staniewski does not want to call Gardzienice a laboratory, as for him theatre does not exist without a social context that can't be combined with such a hermetic 'laboratorial' approach.¹⁵⁸ Tadeusz Kantor, creator of Cricot2 who is often compared with Grotowski, is also talking very negatively about laboratories—claiming that real art can't be connected with any experimenting, as one can't test creativity. Every atelier or workshop, according to Kantor affixes borders to life and art that are supposed to be total. Kantor's theatre performances are philosophically closer to art happenings than to the field of theatre.

Ferdinando (Nando) Taviani,¹⁵⁹ a scholar who works as Odin Teatret's literary adviser, does not like term 'theatre laboratory' for reasons similar to those of Kantor. For him, the word 'laboratory' is too connected with searching for innovations or progressivity, which might give rise to misinterpretation; so Taviani prefers the label 'theatre enclave.' As the scholar wrote, the laboratory/enclave neither adapts conventional theatre system as far as artistic forms are concerned, nor a method of creation, inner organization or the way to connect with spectators. It does not produce regular performances and actors do not leave after one season (and if they do it is not connected with the end of the contract, but rather with 'traumatic leave,' as Taviani calls it). Only one director works with the actors within an 'enclave.' Regarding funding, theatre 'enclaves' tend to work within the grant system, asking money for projects—a research defined by cultural institutions and social activities. Taviani locates most of such theatre groups in Europe, mainly in Italy, Scandinavia, Poland, and France, but also mentioning Latin America (also because of Odin Teatret influence). 'Enclave,' according to Taviani, is already separated from the traditional theatre by name: a workshop, a laboratory, an atelier or the word-symbol as: 'Odin,' 'Living,' etc.; it is an amalgam of people, a 'constellation' of people (Staniewski's term), which brings forth mostly small, but vivid culture institutions. Also relevant is the presence of scholars who tend to serve as literary advisers for such 'enclave'/laboratories—to recall Ludwik Flaszen's role in Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre, Nando Taviani's in Odin Teatret or Jana Pilátová's in Viliam Dočolomanský's Farm in the Cave. Barba called 'laboratory' an "enclave: a handful of men and women united by rigorous craft in cultivating a garden which, in the eyes of

¹⁵⁸ Zbigniew Benedyktowicz, "Tajemnicę czynić bliską... Rozmowa z Włodzimierzem Staniewskim," in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice. "Metamorfozy". *Misteria, Inicjacje. Tajemnicę czynić bliską...* [Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice. 'Metamorphosis.' The Mysteries, Initiations. Making the mystery close...], p.9.

¹⁵⁹ Writing as a scholar Taviani uses name 'Fernando,' writing as a Odin Teatret's member he uses name 'Nando.' Mirella Schino writes about dual perspective of Taviani separated by changing names. See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage, op. cit.*, p.141.

others, seemed exotic or a utopia.”¹⁶⁰ Taviani warned however ‘blind’ enthusiasts that follows a ‘model:’ “We should not believe that the condition of enclave is itself a positive characteristic. Just as a theatre laboratory can be the screen that conceals a busying oneself in a scholarly pursuit of the many curiosities of the craft, an enclave can also produce a squalid theatre. In can, for example, be suitable ground for small tyrannies to develop, or for the survival of a routine.”¹⁶¹

Deliberation about laboratory theatres addresses the question of theatre's role in society or, broader, in culture. A laboratory theatre questions the way and the sense of creating performances. And this interfaces with the anthropological approach of questioning forms. Mirella Schino wrote that the theatre laboratory “is a theatre which does not want to be art.”¹⁶² Eugenio Barba said, “Working only for beauty is not worth it.”¹⁶³ Laboratory theatre searches for meanings and wants to serve as a ritual. It examines truth, but also the limits: the human possibilities. A story-teller, Barba wrote that three or four centuries ago, actors would perform for aristocrats in palaces, but also on marketplaces, for the public. Loud and colorful, they'd dance and do acrobatics and collect coins from spectators as a reward for their art.¹⁶⁴ Those actors back then would have been servants who'd run away seeking to be their own masters or to ‘serve’ the public; or perhaps they could have been young adventurers—people who were empowered by illusion of being ‘young forever’—refusing to play social roles and carrying social rules; the ones that escape shame or danger.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, the actors’ ancestors were thieves and prostitutes--people who transgressed borders and the rules of society. As Yoshi Oida wrote, actors are ‘special’ people;¹⁶⁶ each one needs to discover the homosexual aspect¹⁶⁷, to experience the difference between his own sex and the orientation of a given character (Barba speaks about inspiration of Asian theatre regarding the laboratory theatres).¹⁶⁸

Grotowski connects this shabby genealogy of actors with the problems of payment: “The actor is a man who works in public with his body, offering it publicly. If this body restricts itself to demonstrating what it is—something that any average person can do—then it

¹⁶⁰ Eugenio Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy. Burning the House* (London/New York: Routledge, 2009), p.202.

¹⁶¹ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, pp.176-177.

¹⁶² Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.1.

¹⁶³ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.14.

¹⁶⁴ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.152.

¹⁶⁵ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.153.

¹⁶⁶ See: Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, p.101.

¹⁶⁷ See: Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, p.54.

¹⁶⁸ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.301.

is not an obedient instrument capable of performing a spiritual act. If it is exploited for money and to win the favour of the audience, then the art of acting borders on prostitution. It is a fact that for many centuries the theatre has been associated with prostitution in one sense of the word or another. The words ‘actress’ and ‘courtesan’ were once synonymous.”¹⁶⁹ But money is not the only reason of culture ambivalence over the theatre. Theatre used to be the subject of disdain because people, who work with illusion and whose work is to manipulate and pretend are perceived dangerous. Barba recalls the image of Julian Beck, co-founder of the Living Theatre, saying that theatre is the ‘Trojan Horse’¹⁷⁰—an escape from the reality from which others had shut us out. And that leads him to the idea of the guerrilla, the conspiracy—but also prayer;¹⁷¹ something that has a structure, organization, hierarchy, faith, the higher goal and brings revolt.¹⁷² That is for Barba an essence of laboratories. The nature of theatre is to be different. Barba wrote, “I love the theatre, because by its nature, it is foreign whenever it wants it or not, whenever it knows it or refuses to acknowledge it.”¹⁷³

Laboratory theatres are often exploring the theme of outsiders, individuals opposing masses, revolts, liminal situations and reflect the society within they work. In a sense, they play the role of a ‘holy fool’ like the Russian ‘yurodivy’ who provokes, shocks by his unruliness—the one who hides wisdom in silliness for those who are ready to understand—uses a costume to express his vision. Laboratory theatres mirror something in society by paradox. Being also able to see more with their ‘idiot’ eyes of ‘comic’ character who jumps about uttering unarticulated language. The idea that participation in theatre can transform a spectator similar to *les rites de passage*¹⁷⁴ dates back to Greek catharsis, proceeds from there. It is to experience shock or revelation that transforms viewers’ emotions, purifying them: as such, theatre is a mission.

The Western theatre groups originate from theatrical or circus families—who transmit tradition, the ethos and techniques from generation to generation, moving or staying on the borders of the city, performing on squares—like Gypsies, being part of reality, but not society. Grotowski builds such an image, “But what was before the theatre of ensemble? We can imagine in the nineteenth century, above all in Central and Eastern Europe, certain families of actors in which, for example, the father and the mother were actors, and the old

¹⁶⁹ Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.33.

¹⁷⁰ Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.109.

¹⁷¹ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.14.

¹⁷² See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.22.

¹⁷³ Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.101.

¹⁷⁴ See: Arnold van Gennep, *Les rites de passage*, 1909. Published in English in 1960 as *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Manika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

uncle was the director: even though in reality his function was just to indicate to the actors ‘you enter through this door and sit in that chair,’ he would also take care of the garments and props when necessary.”¹⁷⁵ The image reflects laboratory’s searching for its origin. From its nature laboratory theatre attracts outsiders and accepts them. It is as oasis, a religious community that is driven by visions and ideas, but on the contrary to the closed oasis it needs to be performative as it wants to express oneself to others. It creates a place where you can be everybody and where everything can happen. “Theatre allows me to belong to no place, to be anchored not to one perspective only, to remain in transition,”¹⁷⁶ Barba said.

Theatrical work is ephemeral. It is a vanishing art that lingers on only as a reflection, a memory.¹⁷⁷ The spectator might recall a performance in the same way as he’d remembers events in his life, with all sorts of double meanings hidden within. It is the spectator’s memory that is the true substance of theatre,¹⁷⁸ Barba stated. As such, the form of theatre inspires a sense of nostalgia. On the other hand, theatre’s substance must be repetitive as it incessantly aspires to capture life through repetition, reaching for an ‘ideal’ version that exists but only in the mind—not unlike the ‘poems’ of oral tradition. In that sense, theatre is the closest form to life, as repetition and circular time is a universal human experience.

Laboratories also resonate with oral tradition with the master-pupil relation. The craft of theatre is an aspect of the laboratory theatres’ dictionary. Craft is a term that relates to manual work, learning from the master. The master who teaches through experience is included with the language of religion or martial arts—learning by observation and imitation is a part of oral tradition. Craft is not about professionalism gained at schools (many actors who work in laboratories have no schools, but are devoted to self-learning or are practicing particular dance or theatre techniques that creates a background for understanding all the other techniques).

Laboratories are in a constant search; they do not abandon acquired experience, but question it. Nowadays laboratory theatre is a form of cultural institution based on a community surrounding a strong leader, and also a specific ‘formula’ of producing theatre performances. However, the aesthetic effect is rather labeled as a physical theatre, where meaning is expressed by movement and voice and in that way is similar to dance theatre. For laboratory theatre, it is the hidden quality of movement that is important, and not a shape

¹⁷⁵ Jerzy Grotowski, “From the Theatre Company to the Art as vehicle,” in Richards, *At Work with...*, *op. cit.*, p.115.

¹⁷⁶ Barba, *Paper Canoe*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

¹⁷⁷ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, pp.63-64.

¹⁷⁸ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.289.

itself. Laboratory theatre's directors do not choreograph a movement, but construct the layers of hidden intentions.

In 2012, The Laboratory Theatre Network was created.¹⁷⁹ As it was described, “The laboratory theatre tradition, which can be dated from the studio theatres of Russia in the 1920s, has long embraced a complex matrix of concerns—societal, ideological, political, philosophical, psychological, aesthetic—and has played a key role in the worldwide development of knowledge and practice in the theatre, and across the cultural industries. The experimental methods and environments advanced by the great theatre reformers of the 20th century—Meyerhold, Copeau, Artaud, Osterwa, Brecht, Craig, Appia, Grotowski, Mnouchkine, Brook, Barba—have been adapted and transformed by national theatrical traditions across Europe and transmitted around the world.”¹⁸⁰ The Network was created by ‘four organizations considered to be prime inheritors of the rich European laboratory theatre tradition’—the Centre for Performance Research (UK), the Grotowski Institute (PL), Odin Teatret (DE), and Hemispheric Institute (US)—to examine historical and current configurations of laboratory theatres across the Europe and the Americas. The Network—interested in the question how the laboratory theatres have ‘experimented’ with form and content—“will investigate how laboratory theatres have carved out ‘liminal’ (betwixt and between) experimental spaces in relation to both mainstream professional theatre and the disciplines of theatre/performance studies and how, as such, they are in precarious and often isolated positions in the current geopolitical and economic climate.”¹⁸¹ Created to ‘learn from history’ the new institution wants to propose new models of experimental practice and ‘open’ towards public or even ‘raise questions of modern citizenship’ that means the label of laboratory theatre understands such a theatre group rather as ‘whistleblower’ of cultural changes.

¹⁷⁹ Centre for Performance Research (CPR) hosted the inaugural meeting of the Laboratory Theatre Network at Aberystwyth University July 19-21, 2012. “Project Summary,” Laboratory Theatre Network, Accessed February 20, 2015, <https://laboratorytheatrenetwork.wordpress.com>.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

Odin Teatret—a Thick Description of Theatre

“The Odin was formed in Oslo in 1964 from performers nobody wanted—young actors who were rejected by the Norwegian national theatre school. (...) Following Grotowski, Barba was determined that his theatre be intense in its dedication to training, careful in its preparation for productions—rehearsals would last as long as necessary, up to two years in some cases, and indifferent to immediate public reaction. It was a ‘theatre laboratory’ in the true sense: a place for research”¹⁸² (Richard Schechner, 1995, foreword to *Towards a Third Theatre* written by Ian Watson).

In 2014 Odin Teatret celebrated its 50th anniversary; three of those rejected students stayed with Barba for all those years.¹⁸³ There was nothing special in these young actors and a foreign, ‘self-proclaimed’ director. Many other groups like that were trying their luck because it seemed as though nearly everybody was ‘making theatre’ in the 1960s. Nobody would have said Odin Teatret was unique and that it would develop into an influential theatre and cultural institution. Ferdinando Taviani, a literary adviser of Odin Teatret wrote about the beginnings of Barba’s company: “Odin Teatret entered the stage by backside door, so to speak, a narrow, semi-professional door. They were careful where they put their feet. (...) the situation in Norway in 1964 was not enough to explain their conduct. In the early 1960s, half amateur, half-experimental theatre groups sprang up everywhere in Europe. They were active in school gyms, in church basements, in the shadow of factories, even in repositories of city theatre. (...) it was an infectious, optimistic theatre, ephemeral and fanciful, which would be in existence for nine weeks or nine months and then fade away.”¹⁸⁴

Eugenio Barba was a stranger in Scandinavia, an Italian immigrant with dark skin¹⁸⁵ and unusual experience of former soldier, sailor, welder in a workshop (‘true’ socialist among students¹⁸⁶), a traveler. Ludwik Flaszen, literary director of Grotowski’s theatre, knowing him

¹⁸² Richard Schechner, “Foreword. East and West and Eugenio Barba” in Ian Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), p.xv.

¹⁸³ From four original actors three moved with Barba to Holstebro. Anne-Trine Grimnes left Odin Teatret in 1968. Else Marie Laukvik and Torgeir Wethal continued. Wethal died in 2010.

¹⁸⁴ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage, op. cit.*, p.165.

¹⁸⁵ Barba, writing about his physical appearance, which was something quite different than that of a typical Scandinavian, said that this sensitized him to pre-expressive level towards reactions of the people. “For years, as an immigrant, I experienced every single day the wearing see-saw of being accepted or rejected on the basis of ‘pre-expressive’ communication. When I boarded a tram, I certainly did not ‘express’ anything, yet some people withdrew to make room for me, while others withdrew to keep me at a distance. People simply reacted to my presence, which communicated neither aggression nor sympathy, neither desire for fraternization nor challenge.” Barba, *Paper Canoe, op. cit.*, p.4.

¹⁸⁶ Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage, op. cit.*, p.167.

for three years as Grotowski's assistant, saw him as a 'perfect' student than an artist.¹⁸⁷ Later on Barba would be called a 'practical man of the theatre'¹⁸⁸ and a 'poet.' Barba abandoned in Poland,¹⁸⁹ came back to Oslo—Grotowski in the role of his mentor¹⁹⁰ advised him to start working with unemployed actors.¹⁹¹ Barba on the contrary had chosen young amateurs, not yet in their 20s as he preferred to work with people who did not experience traditional schools and are not 'lazy' and 'depraved' by them.¹⁹² After the first performance *Ornitofilene* (1965) that was very much based on Grotowski's ideas and techniques,¹⁹³ Odin Teatret was invited to move to Holstebro in Denmark, where the company was offered an old farm and some remuneration from the municipality. Even if it was an incredible luck as it happened literally thanks to one spectator,¹⁹⁴ the economical situation was not sufficient and Barba thought about farming (pig breeding) next to making a theatre.¹⁹⁵ The economical situation was not sufficient and Barba thought about farming (pig breeding) next to making a theatre.¹⁹⁶ "His book *The Floating Islands* (1979) examines a theatre existing independently that creates from whatever material resources are at hand. Barba has sought to return to theatre as a way of life, seeing this pattern in the origins of the commedia dell'arte, the wandering players, and in Molière's company. The third theatre groups give performances, but they insist that the relationships engendered by their work, inside and outside the company, are the criteria by which they judge it. (...) Because the third theatre is a way of life, the actors' 'work' is a full-time activity."¹⁹⁷

¹⁸⁷ See: Ludwik Flaszen, "Barba u początku" [Barba at the Beginning], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc. Związki Odin Teatret z Polską* [One Thousand and One Night. Links between Odin Teatret and Poland], ed. Zofia Dworakowska (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2014), p.42.

¹⁸⁸ See: Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

¹⁸⁹ See: Agnieszka Wójtowicz, "'Barba Eugenio tą razą w rozmowie był bardziej powściągliwy' Eugenio Barba w raportach Służby Bezpieczeństwa. Appendix do historii Teatru 13 Rzędów w Opolu" [Eugenio Barba in the Reports of the Security Service. Appendix to the History of Theatre of 13 Rows], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

¹⁹⁰ Barba, in the essay called *Invisible master* written in 1998, admits he had 'projected' an invisible Grotowski in the corner of the rehearsal room for 18 years; Grotowski 'watched' Barba and 'advised' him in the theatre work. Barba, *Ziemia...*, *op. cit.*, pp.139-140.

¹⁹¹ See: Letter written by Grotowski to Barba on May 12, 1964. Barba, *Ziemia...*, *op. cit.*, p.168.

¹⁹² See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.30.

¹⁹³ Grotowski commented even on the wrong use of the 'mask' technique by the Odin Teatret's actors. See: Letter from Grotowski to Barba dated on November 16, 1965. Barba, *Ziemia...*, *op. cit.*, p.208.

¹⁹⁴ "A nurse from Holstebro, Inger Lansted, attended one of them [performances of *Ornitofilene* at the University of Aarhus]. She was impressed with the production and, aware that Holstebro was instituting a new cultural policy, suggested to the town council that they invite the Odin to become the town's resident company." Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.2.

¹⁹⁵ See: Schino, *Alchemists of the Stage*, *op. cit.*, p.14 or Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.280.

¹⁹⁶ For this reason, some of the groups labeled it a 'ghetto' and protested that they were not a theatre, which is 'begging for crumbs of prestige and public funding.' See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.216. See also: Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.19.

¹⁹⁷ "Odin Teatret," Britannica, accessed November 20, 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/425163/Odin-Theater>.

As Barba comments in 1986 on his previous ideas, examining them through his experience: “The floating island is that uncertain terrain that could disappear under your feet, but where the personal limits could be overcome, and where a meeting is possible.”¹⁹⁸ Odin Teatret succeeded in creating a platform for theatre artists all around the world (mostly in Europe, Asia and Latin America), influencing the engaged theatre movement, for which theatre is a tool of social and political fight; it is an opposition. Turned into a ‘legendary’ counterculture, Odin Teatret animated small communities from Peru during Martial Law in 1978¹⁹⁹ to Poland in 1990s.²⁰⁰ For at least twenty years Odin Teatret fascinates theatre practitioners and scholars as it remains a theatre group for so long, creating so many activities under the umbrella of one laboratory including publishing, producing films, teaching, etc.

In the very first years, Odin Teatret worked in the same way as Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre—daily work was divided on trainings and rehearsals, during which actors worked on improvisations edited by the director.²⁰¹ It was a group training: everybody did the same thing in the same time; later on the actors decided to modify it respecting a personal rhythm (calling it ‘organic’).²⁰² At first there was always somebody watching (director, other actors) and the actors experimented on doing exercises in different rhythms like ‘walking on the moon’ (slow motion) or walking as a panther (sharp, clear and agile).²⁰³ Barba wrote that he started Odin Teatret as a social and cultural experiment, as Norway was at that time a country with a very traditional theatre culture, with no emerging alternative theatre scene. At the beginning Barba’s actors were working from 9AM to 4PM and from 5PM to 8PM having classes of gymnastic, rhythmic, acrobatics, improvisation, voice and concentration²⁰⁴ but also hatha-yoga, ballet or sport.²⁰⁵ They learned from each other and photos in books. The troupe was self-financed from weekly contributions of its members, driven by a strong working ethic (no one was allowed to miss a training session). The ensemble collectively considered whether to allow participants to seek work outside the theatre. After moving to Holstebro they

¹⁹⁸ Eugenio Barba cited in Schechner, “Foreword. East and West and Eugenio Barba,” *op. cit.*, p.xiii.

¹⁹⁹ See: Grzegorz Ziółkowski “Podróż teatralna jako barter” [A Theatrical Journey as a Barter], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.119.

²⁰⁰ See: “Teatr pozbawiony pogardy. Z Ryszardem Michalskim rozmawia Zofia Dworakowska” [Theatre Without Disdain. Ryszard Michalski Interviewed by Zofia Dworakowska], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.128.

²⁰¹ Lluís Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność. Rozmowy z aktorami Odin Teatret* [Technique and Creativity. Interviews with Actors of Odin Teatret], trans. Agnieszka Cieślak, ed. Grzegorz Ziółkowski (Wrocław: The Grotowski Institute, 2005), p.7.

²⁰² See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.75.

²⁰³ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.125.

²⁰⁴ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

²⁰⁵ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.75.

worked from 7AM to 9PM often including weekends.²⁰⁶ As Barba said, they wanted to train the same way as they thought the Asian actors were trained.²⁰⁷ The first ten years were about learning technique, a physical perfection,²⁰⁸ the second ten years were about building a ‘group culture,’ which would be prepared to meet any other group within in the so-called ‘barter.’²⁰⁹ The training was a process of self-assessment,²¹⁰ developing exercises to build trust and acting without fear²¹¹ or shame.²¹²

In the 1970s the division between training and rehearsal in Odin Teatret started to be less visible; later on in the framework of trainings the actors improvised and composed the physical scores by themselves, adding things that inspire them like costumes or musical instruments.²¹³ They sought their own energy. As Yoshi Oida wrote recalling atmosphere of the times, “During the 1970s, people were experimenting in many directions, particularly that of non-verbal communication. Artaud was fashionable, and many groups were exploring physical means of expression which were not dependent on intellectual understanding.”²¹⁴ It was also the time when Grotowski already headed towards experiments of paratheatre.

Odin Teatret’s actors Torgeir Wethal and Iben Nagel Rasmussen acknowledge that at time there was a strong connection and even a clear imitation of Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre; it stopped when Grotowski decided not to produce any more stage performances. Rasmussen said it was only in 1973 when Odin Teatret discovered its own aesthetic and training that it stopped imitating. She added, many other ‘post-Grotowski’s’ groups failed as they copied the form without the spirit or the other way round.²¹⁵ Wethal, mentioning his years of imitating Ryszard Cieślak, emphasized that imitation according to him is at the beginning necessary. He experienced it himself later on as the history of Odin Teatret developed.²¹⁶ The perception of Odin Teatret’s actors shows how much time it took them to ‘learn’ a physical language for theatre expression that they could call their own. It also shows that Odin Teatret as a laboratory is a community based on constant self-improvement of all

²⁰⁶ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.83.

²⁰⁷ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.85.

²⁰⁸ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.91.

²⁰⁹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.48.

²¹⁰ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.84.

²¹¹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.78.

²¹² See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.80.

²¹³ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

²¹⁴ Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, pp.153-152.

²¹⁵ See: Iben Nagel Rasmussen, “Ślad Ryszarda” [The Trace of Ryszard], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, pp.70-71.

²¹⁶ See: “On był doświadczeniem. Z Torgeirem Wethalem rozmawia Tereza Błajet-Wilniewiczyc” [He was an Experience. Torgeir Wethal Interviewed by Tereza Błajet-Wilniewiczyc], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.62.

members and, as Watson wrote, “The Odin Teatret is not a company they work for, they are Odin, so what they do defines both it and them.”²¹⁷

In his earliest manifesto Barba proposed an image of a ‘rift-theatre’²¹⁸—the theatre as revolution and actors as *guerrillanos*, living in isolation, fighting for professionalism.²¹⁹ He wrote that Odin Teatret was a first ‘barbaric’ laboratory made of people who were inexperienced, very young and not willing to undertake traditional education.²²⁰ Barba was also a self-taught director—he admitted that during three years with Grotowski he only sat and made notes²²¹ and in the situation of the leadership he needed to establish himself in the role of pedagogue first.²²² Because of that Odin Teatret was different than all the previous existing laboratories. That was also the reason why the ensemble was not accepted by the theatrical community. From a scholarly point of view Odin Teatret’s inexperienced, ‘barbaric’ actors were ‘insolent’ enough to proclaim: “we are laboratory theatre.”²²³ Barba said his group of amateurs, so many years ignored by the theatre community, discriminated and proclaimed ‘outside of history,’²²⁴ turned at the end into a new model.²²⁵

Lluís Masgrau, editor of Barba’s *Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt*, wrote that performances of Odin Teatret became complicated only in the 1980s and he related it to the changes in actors’ training that developed into a dramaturgic workshop. As actors started to work on creating their scenic personality, Barba’s role changed into ‘literary advisor to the dramaturgy,’ as Taviani named it.²²⁶ Masgrau, interviewing Odin Teatret’s actors at the beginning of the new millennium, found the final aspect of their development in their ‘solo’ performances (like Rasmussen’s *Itsi Bitsi* premiered in 1991)—made of personal experiences, selection of actor’s individual training and characters performed by actors over years in different Odin Teatret performances. Barba as the director influenced those ‘personal’ performances only adding narration and fulfilling the ‘skeletons’ created already independently by the actors.

According to Masgrau the actor’s training evolved over years into the work on actor’s stage presence.²²⁷ Personal development of Odin Teatret’s actors shaped not only Odin

²¹⁷ Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

²¹⁸ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.29.

²¹⁹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.30.

²²⁰ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.59.

²²¹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.225.

²²² See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.91.

²²³ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.59.

²²⁴ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.225.

²²⁵ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.92.

²²⁶ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.8.

²²⁷ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

Teatret activities, but also the aesthetic and physical language of the ensemble. Ian Watson recalling the beginnings of Odin Teatret emphasizes that as they had no money to hire any teacher, they taught themselves all they knew. As Watson said the “blind lead the blind,”²²⁸ adding that the young actors had little or no experience. For the same reasons they cooperated with publicity and organization—making theatre a community, not dividing professional life from the personal one. As Barba stated later on: “Anyone who wants to work at the Odin must learn to do everything, without distinction between artistic, administrative and technical tasks.”²²⁹

In Holstebro, Odin Teatret evolved from being just theatre group into a cultural center that in addition to producing and giving spectacles, was devoted to publishing books, presenting foreign theatres, running workshops and group training sessions, conferences, sociological research, practical and theoretical seminars, producing and showing didactic movies (before the video camera was available to everybody, as Barba added²³⁰). All those additional forms of activity were partly invented as ‘alibis’ to prove Odin Teatret’s social suitability.²³¹ It was a new way of understanding the role of theatre in society. The task was not easy, as even the army was sending protests to the municipality of Holstebro, not happy with the theatre that did not perform on a daily basis.²³²

The other ‘revolution’ in understanding the role of theatre came with the idea of ‘barter.’ In 1974, after nine years in Holstebro and four production, Barba decided to travel to a location where theatre did not exist or had no meaning.²³³ The group went for five months to Carpignano—a small, traditional village in Southern Italy. Barba, as a good storyteller, creates a situation of the unexpected: after three weeks spent in the middle of the village in ‘complete isolation’ as Barba emphasized,²³⁴ Odin Teatret decided to visit friends from University in Lecce who were staying in the same village. The actors took instruments, wore their colorful training clothes and went through the village. As friends were not at home actors confronted the situation of a crowd that would follow them asking them to perform. The ensemble decided to show parts of their training (which was understood as ‘dances’) and sing Scandinavian songs. After an hour of performance, instead of expected applause, the

²²⁸ Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre*, *op. cit.*, p.45.

²²⁹ Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.155.

²³⁰ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.59.

²³¹ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.210.

²³² See: Andrzej Mencwel, “Utopia Barby w gminie Holstebro” [Barba’s Utopia in the Municipality of Holstebro], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.427.

²³³ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

²³⁴ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

villagers started to show their dances and songs in exchange.²³⁵ This unplanned situation of meeting—where the audience commented loud as they were used to do while watching open-air cinema—was extraordinary experience for a ‘laboratory’ theatre group.

Odin Teatret, living in the village but not adapting the sexual or religious morality of the villagers, was perceived as a separate, autonomous cultural group.²³⁶ Barba added that in that era there were other alternative theatre groups that would travel to Italian villages in order to provoke a change by performing a theatre, but they were banned by villagers who threw stones at them.²³⁷ Yoshi Oida, who took part in Peter Brook’s expedition to Iran and Africa in 1971-1973, wrote that one of the very first things they had practiced before their trip was a ‘quick getaway if necessary,’ in case they would not be accepted by the local community.²³⁸ At the end it never happened and Brook’s actors struggled more to hold attention and gather the spectators—performing sometimes for five people and sometimes for few thousands of spectators;²³⁹ asked to show something ‘different’ than spectators’ daily life.²⁴⁰ Theatre as a tool of searching for identity²⁴¹ in the 1970s turned into theatre being a tool of social change.²⁴² But as Barba said, a man is a ‘world that walks’²⁴³ that clearly recalls the approach of anthropology²⁴⁴ and combines both perspectives—of personal development and social influence.

The situation that Odin Teatret experienced in Italy was in fact very similar to long ceremonies of religious theatre that Barba experienced in India, where extraordinary trained actors played more for ‘Gods’ than for eating, sleeping and a chatting audience.²⁴⁵ The discovery of the ‘barter’—the meeting based on performing—turned Odin Teatret’s actors into ‘God’s fools,’ as Barba called those running through village marketplaces clowning and parading.²⁴⁶ One could say, there is no strong technique needed for open-air social meetings. However, the ‘laboratory’ work on the actor’s craft was not given up by Odin Teatret. The

²³⁵ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.148.

²³⁶ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.144.

²³⁷ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.155.

²³⁸ Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, p.105.

²³⁹ Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, p.87.

²⁴⁰ One example of spectators’ requests given by Oida: „We laugh a lot in our daily life, so we want something mysterious.” Oida with Marshall, *An Actor Adrift*, *op. cit.*, p.101

²⁴¹ See: “Bez oklasków można wyżyć. Dyskusja” [You can Survive without Applause. Discussion], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.156.

²⁴² See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.208.

²⁴³ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.181

²⁴⁴ See: Wojciech Józef Burszta, “Koneser różnorodności” [The Connoisseur of Diversity], in *Tysiąc i jedna noc*, *op. cit.*, p.181.

²⁴⁵ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.309.

²⁴⁶ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.159.

International School of Theatre Anthropology, created as education for ‘rebels,’²⁴⁷ was based on a strong self-study pattern (the word ‘school,’ as Barba said, he had chosen as a provocation²⁴⁸) and consisted of many work demonstrations. A ‘searching theatre’²⁴⁹—theatre that is constantly negating its previous achievements and remaining in constant ‘development,’ needed to develop a strong technique.

Torgeir Wethal, interviewed by Masgrau about his actor’s craft, said his first material for improvisation was personal like memories or dreams, and that the main work was concentrated on fixing the score, being able to repeat it and edit the associations (in the new order created by the director). In that way the first inspiration was hidden or forgotten inside the physical action. However, thinking about those previous inspirations, Wethal said, “I remember that I was sure it is possible to create the entire underground flow of the performance, the entire parallel narration that had its own complete logic. Unfortunately I had never succeeded.”²⁵⁰ In the moment of acting the other actors and the theatre space were for Wethal a ‘screen’ on which he projected his own associations (like face of the beloved one).²⁵¹ The physical score—composed and set, elaborated, edited and transformed together with the director—was called a ‘material.’²⁵²

At the very beginning, when one actor would improvise the others observed what he did and noted, labeling and trying to remember his actions. Later on, together they had tried to recreate this improvisation discussing and losing many details. Ten minutes of improvisation was reconstructed for a week or ten days, as Wethal said.²⁵³ This technique was not satisfactory so they started to work with video that allowed reconstructing improvisations to the tiniest detail gathering much richer material. Even if, as Rasmussen noted, using video creates a danger of turning into aesthetic (outside) form,²⁵⁴ the new actresses like Roberta Carreri or Julia Varley were working with it from the very beginning developing their own memo techniques²⁵⁵ and concentrating on keeping the actions alive. The company never returned into the technique of recreating one’s improvisation using the collective memory.

²⁴⁷ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.95.

²⁴⁸ See: Barba, *Teatr...*, *op. cit.*, p.96.

²⁴⁹ See: “Bez oklasków można wyżyć,” *op. cit.*, p.166.

²⁵⁰ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.13 (translation mine).

²⁵¹ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.14.

²⁵² See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.14.

²⁵³ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.14.

²⁵⁴ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.26.

²⁵⁵ Carreri uses for example the text of a song she knows very well; the text corresponds with specific physical actions. See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.41.

Wethal, reflecting on his work and saying that the essence of the score does not lie in ‘what’ the actor does, but ‘why’ he does it,²⁵⁶ added, “Nobody really knows what I do. In the first phase of the work it is not important that my actions are banal.”²⁵⁷ This ‘why’ alive the action, the same as many inner layers create an internal life of the performance. Wethal gives an example of four layers: the position of his body (that could be defined as the Christ’s one); inner dialog with the partners; the dialog with the director; and the body memory of some feelings (like disgust).²⁵⁸ Those layers create credibility of the actor’s actions.²⁵⁹ Wethal adds, “I know that my actions seen from the outside could have completely different meaning to what I put there; the meaning is given by the context or dramaturgy created by the director.”²⁶⁰ And this is exactly the way Grotowski developed montage in his theatre productions. Wethal—creating logic of actions more than a character²⁶¹—expressed the idea that the physical score could be interpreted by the actor in the same way as text. Something created by intellect could be later on—by adding meanings and associations—interpreted by the body as if it would be a material to work with.²⁶² The problem actor fights is the problem of going over his own schemes.²⁶³ Similarly, Rasmussen said that after many years of physical acting the biggest challenge is for her to find (recognize) a new energy and not repeat something already once discovered.

In the framework of Odin Teatret laboratory each actor is different, developing his own passions and seeking for specific energy or one’s own movement. Following this self-development, actors sometimes confront Barba as leader and director. Once, when Barba decided to ‘close’ the group and Rasmussen and Tage Larsen decided to ‘adopt’ their personal interns. In this moment Larsen took care of Francis Pardeilhan and Julia Varley²⁶⁴ who joined the Odin later on. This inner dynamic of laboratory theatres shows the crisis as stimuli. According to Wethal the strategy to keep the company together was the will of the leader to allow the actors to develop their own projects under the umbrella of Odin Teatret Nordisk

²⁵⁶ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.17.

²⁵⁷ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.16 (translation mine).

²⁵⁸ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.20.

²⁵⁹ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.23.

²⁶⁰ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.20 (translation mine).

²⁶¹ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.19.

²⁶² See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.21.

²⁶³ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.16.

²⁶⁴ “On arriving to Holstebro, the apprentices either lived with their teachers or rent-free in the Odin theatre complex. They paid a share of the food and were entirely responsible for personal expenses such as clothing. Barba meanwhile, said nothing but ignored their existence.” Watson, *Towards a Third Theatre, op. cit.*, p.55.

Teaterlaboratorium; in this way, Wethal could explore cinematic art and Rasmussen developed her own teaching.²⁶⁵

Sometimes it was a member who changed the way the company developed—like Rasmussen when she discovered a connection between training and improvisation and started to work on her improvisations individually changing the director’s work and the aesthetic of the entire group.²⁶⁶ Sometimes it was Barba who influenced change; for example, upon receiving a letter from Argentina—he decided the ensemble could save money and travel to meet the letter’s author, and this evolved into Odin Teatret working with Latin America’s theatre (and politics). Barba wrote: “The physical exercises are always spiritual exercises. In the course of my experience as a director, I have observed an analogous process occurring in me and in some of my companions: the long daily work of training, transformed over the years, slowly distilled internal patterns of energy which could be applied to the way of conceiving and composing a dramatic action, of speaking in public, of writing.”²⁶⁷

The improvisations Rasmussen calls an ‘inner drive’²⁶⁸ that could be composed later on. The actress explains, “The improvisation is now for me something similar to the musical composition—I create and compose the material. The result of my improvisation is not half an hour of raw material, but something that is a kind of scenic poetry with its own meter, rhythm, accents, and phrase... It means that I am the one who does the first montage of my improvisation.”²⁶⁹ Previously, it had been the director’s responsibility to edit the physical material for an actor. Rasmussen introduced a change and—as she said—this enabled a freedom as the actors stopped being dependant on director ‘dictating’ his own ideas.²⁷⁰ Rasmussen developed working on characters during her training sessions, understanding that for each character she needs to create specific kind of energy and also to experience how a particular character walks, sits, etc.²⁷¹ As she explained: “At the very beginning the training is technique; you do everything as gymnastic; only after mastering this step, you could find the flow.”²⁷² Rasmussen recognizes the stage character as space within her body. It derives from impulse that carries her.²⁷³ After this phase the actress had discovered that she could work on the energy only; developing training that is about exploring this particular energy, without

²⁶⁵ See: “On był doświadczeniem,” *op. cit.*, p.67.

²⁶⁶ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.26.

²⁶⁷ Barba, *Paper Canoe, op. cit.*, p.86.

²⁶⁸ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.27.

²⁶⁹ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.26 (translation mine).

²⁷⁰ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.29.

²⁷¹ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.30.

²⁷² Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.26 (translation mine).

²⁷³ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.33.

creating any ‘character.’ At the end, Rasmussen said, the actor’s work is about broadening his personality and spirituality: “Let’s say composition of the character comes to the surface thanks to the technique and helps me to explore myself.”²⁷⁴

The scenic ‘material’ Odin Teatret’s actors gather could be elaborated in different ways by them or by the director. They see also a difference between stimulating imagination (by photos, propos, songs, etc.) and by documenting a stimuli (photo, etc.) what means a work on recreating and imitating (copying the position of the body from the photo). Rasmussen introduced a specific example of finding one of her characters, “Finding a costume was the main thing. When it was ready I started to collect books about *commedia dell’arte* with old drawings presenting Arlekin I recreated on stage later on. When I mastered it, I composed and even improvised sequences on its basis—connecting, exchanging and going from one drawing to the other. In that way I elaborated an hour material that was not used in the performance, but was necessary to find the energy typical for Trickster.”²⁷⁵ Carreri, introducing an example of physical action, recalls Cieślak and his explanations of human imagination’s qualities (improvising on being an animal or improvising being with animals), “If the text I used speaks about a dead sparrow, I could bend myself to raise it up and in the moment I would touch it, I could stand up like if I would be a dead bird lying in the hand of a woman who rises it up.”²⁷⁶ Addressing questions about physical acting, Carreri mentions changing the focus from the subject to object or expressing an action by different parts of her body, making it bigger or smaller or using other adjustments to receive more interesting (and still meaningful) movement.²⁷⁷

Carreri said that the fixed score recalls for her a melody. It has precise harmonic relation that could be materialized in different ways: by altering the rhythm, tone or sound. By those adjustments, according to the actress, the music transforms into melody, and the melody remains in performance’s composition.²⁷⁸ In the fixed improvisation edited by the director the physical material is for Carreri more important than the original sense that induced the movement. “As an actress I can’t act in a linear way. If I need to hug Polyneices, I need to consider whether I’m hugging my cat or suffocating an enemy. It means that I need to create a subscore, something that is hidden inside of my movement, but something that does not look weird, artificial, inexplicable or unbelievable. The importance of the subscore is that

²⁷⁴ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.33 (translation mine).

²⁷⁵ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.36 (translation mine).

²⁷⁶ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.42 (translation mine).

²⁷⁷ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.42.

²⁷⁸ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność, op. cit.*, p.43.

movement is no obvious, but a little double meaning.”²⁷⁹ The subscore could be labeled as intention.

This double meaning or creating many layers of understanding are typical for physical theatre that arose in the framework of laboratory theatres. As Carreri said, the hidden meaning could be surprising, oxymoronic, but needs to be truthful and could not be pretended. The hidden subcontext needs to stay in reference.²⁸⁰ That creates an inner world of the performance and makes the movements interesting. According to Carreri unpredictability and double meaning is the quality of a good actor. As the actor works consciously on discovering the new layers, he improvises also in the framework of the fixed score in order to ‘alive’ his movement. Because of that work the inner feeling of the performance prolongs. “The performance last always the same, but the inner time stretches, gets thick, starts to have weight,”²⁸¹ Carreri explains. In that sense Odin Teatret creates a thick description²⁸² in its anthropological sense, where physical actions are in harmony with the entire scenic world created for particular performance, keeping its inner logic.

“For performers, working on the pre-expressive level means modeling the quality of their scenic existence. If they are not effective on the pre-expressive level, they are not performers. They could be used within a particular performance but are no more than functional material in the hands of a director or choreographer. They could put on the clothing, the gestures, the words, the movements of a character, but without an accomplished scenic presence, they are only clothing, gestures, words, movements,”²⁸³ Barba said. For Julia Varley, physical actions have their own ‘nervous system’ and remembering the initial inspiration is not necessary; the consciousness of the body is sufficient.²⁸⁴ Barba calls this consciousness of actor’s body a ‘kinesthetic empathy’ that influences a ‘nervous system of the spectator.’ The actor’s organic movement influences ‘kinesthetic’ understanding of the spectator and affects him physically.²⁸⁵ To illustrate, Barba introduces the image of a river. The performance—like the river of life—takes place in front of the spectators’ eyes, but there is no specific thru-line to follow, no particular way of watching. Spectators need to select

²⁷⁹ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.45 (translation mine).

²⁸⁰ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.42.

²⁸¹ Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.47 (translation mine).

²⁸² This is a term of anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) who pointed out that human behavior can be understood only in a cultural context; the same movement in a different situation can mean two different things. See: Clifford Geertz, *Interpretacja kultur. Wybrane eseje* [The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays], trans. Maria M. Piechaczek (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2005).

²⁸³ Barba, *Paper Canoe*, *op. cit.*, p.105.

²⁸⁴ See: Masgrau, *Technika i kreatywność*, *op. cit.*, p.51.

²⁸⁵ According to Barba, tensions and modifications in the actor’s body provoke an immediate effect in the body of the spectator if it is up to a distance of about ten meters. See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.63.

aspects and follow their own narration. Barba wants to achieve an illusion of life, not a framed cinematic experience in which selecting and putting accents; by contrast, with a river of actions everything flows in front of the audience's eyes.²⁸⁶ Similar to film, traditional theatre based on literature wants everybody to see only one plot; to see the same. Barba would like every spectator to find his own history.²⁸⁷ He believes that if the spectator is no further than two meters from the stage, he is 'neurologically' connected with the performance; he perceives it with his body just as life. And thanks to this the spectator would accept that the performance (as life) is multi-layered, complicated and mysterious. Barba creates a space-river:²⁸⁸ „The attention [of the spectators] sailed on a *tide of actions* which their gaze could not fill encompass following one and ignoring the other.“²⁸⁹

There are four spectators Barba thinks about while creating his performances. One is a child who sees physical actions only, perceiving everything literally. Another is a foreigner who sees mainly the technique without understanding the language. A third is a director (his alter ego) who sees actors as humans in the context of their biography. And finally, there is a spectator who perceives 'thought' the performance everything that could not possibly be seen—details that creates the performance's world.²⁹⁰

Dramaturgy, according to Barba, is a life organism harboring different systems. Taking inspiration from anatomy, Barba introduced the human body as metaphor with many systems being in contact (like respiratory system, etc.). As he has written, different levels are driven by different logics, depending upon whether it is a vocal line or the 'line of character.' He brings out the idea of the plurality of dramaturgies: a horizontal narrative and the 'vertical dimension.'²⁹¹ The horizontal dramaturgy is constructed in a linear way as a development of the events. The other situation is with the dramaturgy where there is a "simultaneous presence in depth of different layers, each endowed with its own logic and peculiar way of manifesting its life."²⁹² In that sense there are three levels of dramaturgy: one that is a way of composing physical and vocal actions, its rhythms and dynamics (organic or dynamic dramaturgy); the other one that introduces a meaning (narrative dramaturgy) and the 'evocative dramaturgy' that is an intimate resonance present within every spectator.²⁹³

²⁸⁶ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.95. A term 'space-river' in Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.46.

²⁸⁷ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.155.

²⁸⁸ See: Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.46.

²⁸⁹ Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.47.

²⁹⁰ See: Barba, *Spalić dom*, *op. cit.*, p.294.

²⁹¹ See: Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.8.

²⁹² Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

²⁹³ See: Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.27.

As Barba says, he strives to violate the equilibrium of the spectators' perception—so that they'd be receptive the contradictory information. A physical score could be built upon the inspiration of a photo, memory, association or song; the director's task is to insert a 'mystery' into the action—something that goes beyond the illustration of reality and enriches the message in a coherent, but contradictory way thanks to association, rhythm, etc.²⁹⁴ Music in Odin Teatret's performances is a commentary, but also builds the feeling parallel to action.²⁹⁵ However, the sensory information must correspond with this what the spectator sees—so that his associations are not too far and the inner coherence is kept.

In his directing, Barba also uses a principle of equivalence (in the same way as almsgiving is a substitute for praying, as he explains).²⁹⁶ A gesture of the hand is instead a motion of the leg, thus maintaining the true essence of the action itself. What would be the equivalent of standing on tiptoes when sitting?²⁹⁷— Barba asks this to illustrate. Such gestures call for seeking the essential.²⁹⁸ On the other hand, Barba never proposes to the actors any theme for improvisation that is directly connected with text or narration of the performance; should he do so, he knows he'd only get an illustration.²⁹⁹ As such themes for improvisation are consciously contradictory. He says it is the best antidote for illustration, emphasis or emptiness of action.³⁰⁰ If a plot can't open-up for diverse associations, Barba would not keep it.³⁰¹ In that sense the actor's craft lies in mastering technique, pre-expressivity, codes, and transformations; the director's craft is to compose and 'hide' things. "I didn't intent the spectator to decipher a performance by finding the sense given out by its hypothetical (writer? director? actor?)."³⁰² As the director, Barba manipulates with actions and *peripetia*: 'saving' them by mixing so that the spectator would not understand them too easily.³⁰³ He wants the spectator to have a double perception.³⁰⁴ He creates an elusive order³⁰⁵ made of paradoxical thinking, thickness of oppositions and oxymorons.³⁰⁶ "To create a density which I struggled to attain in a performance. I needed *a thought* which justified each detail in the thick web of

²⁹⁴ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.71.

²⁹⁵ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.91.

²⁹⁶ See: Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy, op. cit.*, p.25.

²⁹⁷ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.109.

²⁹⁸ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.161.

²⁹⁹ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.225.

³⁰⁰ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.110.

³⁰¹ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.223.

³⁰² Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy, op. cit.*, p.187.

³⁰³ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.295.

³⁰⁴ See: Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.93.

³⁰⁵ Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy, op. cit.*, p.187.

³⁰⁶ Barba, *Spalić dom, op. cit.*, p.171.

integrations and circumstances, making them believe for me.”³⁰⁷

³⁰⁷ Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, *op. cit.*, p.140.

White Theatre—a Laboratory and the Politics

Czechoslovak White Theatre (Bílé divadlo) was a laboratory theatre that did not enjoy a popular success, but instead turned into a liminal experiment on the border between art and life. Working from the end of the 1960s until the beginning of the 1970s the group had three phases that reflect the ‘normalization’ period after the Prague Spring suppression. It would be difficult to label its third phase a theatre, if not for the two earlier phases—it is for this reason White Theatre is usually dated from 1969 till 1972, when the second phase had ended.³⁰⁸ Even though the second phase was the most ‘laboratorial’ one, the third phase is the most significant—a phase of hidden theatre, a theatre under conspiracy—as it reflects the situation of a laboratory theatre that had not found its place in society under the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. ‘Normalization’ is a term describing the period of Russian occupation of Czechoslovakia, which was accompanied by political purges, mass dismissals from work, expulsions from universities, emigration of many intellectuals, constant police controls and strong censorship; a time when people slowly left any kind of public or communal activity; a period of cultural and artistic regression, even more evident if compared to the ‘golden era’ of the 1960s; the historical moment when—contrary to the rest of Europe—in Czechoslovakia everything was to be, again, ‘normal’ following the great period of euphoric changes, visions and beliefs.

The very beginning of White Theatre derives from the opposition towards the regular, institutionalized theatre, its ‘profane’ operative form,³⁰⁹ as the Czech scholar, Jan Roubal named it. Very much like the beginnings of Odin Teatret, White Theatre was a community of ‘amateurs’ (people with no theatrical or dance education) who wanted to express ‘a universal condition of the human being.’³¹⁰ Unlike Odin Teatret, the history of White Theatre is a history of failure not only because of the lack of financial support of any cultural institution or lack of serious interest of media, but also because of any lack of the legal basis to continue a daily work, lack of spectators and—what is surprising—a lack of participants. All those problems show not only how the oppressive state is able to threaten a society that turns conformist in just a few years, but also how society—not able to participate in or accept an

³⁰⁸ Zdena Bratřovská and František Hrdlička are dating the studio: 1969-1974. See: an interview with Zdena Bratřovská and František Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015, to be published in *Taneční zóna* 3/2015.

³⁰⁹ See: František Hrdlička and Zdena Bratřovská, *Zpráva o bílém divadle* [Report on the White Theatre] (Praha: H&H, 1998), p.78.

³¹⁰ See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.25 or Martina Doležalová, *Bílé divadlo aneb alternativní divadelní scéna na niž se zapomíná a její ohlas v literatuře* [White Theatre or the Forgotten Alternative Theatre Scene and Its Echo in Literature], a seminar paper written on Pedagogical Faculty of Charles University, Prague 2005.

utopian idea of community as the one proposed by White Theatre—could make this community decide to finish the project. The other significant characteristic of White Theatre was a ‘lack’ of director—as František Hrdlička, White Theatre’s leader was a literary director, this caused different inner structure than in other laboratory theatres, typically based on a strong leader who is also the sole theatre director of the ensemble.³¹¹

In retrospection the founders of White Theatre treat it more as an educational proposal, finding its main value in ‘methodology’ of how to combine life and art³¹² and how to find the ‘new sources of imagination’ or even a ‘key to the inner creativity.’³¹³ Participation was open to everybody who had the will to experience the method; Hrdlička was interested in Shakespearian theatre, said that he had chosen a theatrical form, as it was the most folkloric and direct medium. In that sense White Theatre’s activities recall the paratheatrical experiments of Jerzy Grotowski with its assumption of spontaneous and creative being the ‘natural’ human state.³¹⁴

Report on the White Theatre, published after the Velvet Revolution, mentions the idea of combining White Theatre with Plastic People of the Universe³¹⁵—a rock band that played a crucial role in the Czechoslovak underground culture opposing the regime; the arrest of its members gave a direct impulse to initiate Charter 77.³¹⁶ The other plans, made in the 1970s, spoke about incorporating White Theatre’s system of training into the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (DAMU) as a ‘preparatory year.’³¹⁷ The authors of the report have shown strong interest in continuation or even in the institutionalized development. After the Velvet Revolution, White Theatre leaders were interested in ‘passing’ its methodology (acting school in Prague, Actor’s Studio in New York³¹⁸), but it never happened.

There are some difficulties with naming White Theatre a laboratory theatre, even if the interests, working ethos and visions are the same as other laboratory theatres. The scholars

³¹¹ Miloš Horanský—the director who collaborated the longest with White Theatre—worked in regular mainstream theatre and directed White Theatre only as an ‘experiment’ in his ‘free’ time.

³¹² See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.20.

³¹³ Interview with Bratřovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³¹⁴ See: Tadeusz Burzyński, Zbigniew Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

³¹⁵ See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.53.

³¹⁶ Charter 77, written in January 1977, was a document signed by many Czechoslovak intellectuals as an informal civic initiative. It criticized the Czechoslovak government for not respecting human and civic rights. Signing or even spreading the text of the document was considered as a crime by the Communist regime.

³¹⁷ It was Jan Císař (1932)—a dean of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague that time. See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

³¹⁸ See: Zdena Bratřovská and František Hrdlička. “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru: (vyprávění o Bílém divadle II. část)” [White Means Clean Sheet of Paper: (Story about White Theatre, part II)], *H_aluze* 30 (8)/2014, p.74.

prefer to speak about ‘laboratorial’ type;³¹⁹ the creators and participants speak about the ‘project’ or ‘community,’ even though they admit they had sometimes used the name ‘laboratory theatre’ to describe their group; in 2014 they introduced the label of an ‘experimental stage.’³²⁰ Asked if they had named themselves a laboratory, White Theatre’s creators answered: “Yes, sometimes, we’d use the word ‘laboratory’ to characterize our work. We observed the work of Grotowski’s ensemble, with whom this term is connected—detailed studies of which were published in *Divadlo* magazine [closed down in 1970—note KM], we were also in contact with Jana Pilátová who had been an intern in Jerzy Grotowski’s theatre and who lent us many publications; similarly, we observed Odin Teatret, the Living Theatre and mainly the work of Peter Brook, with whom our good friend, a theatre director Lída Engelová was connected, and she referred to it.”³²¹

The difficulty in labeling White Theatre a laboratory theatre derives perhaps from the fact that no performance was ever created. In 2013, Bratršovská and Hrdlička wrote: “Even if after 1989 White Theatre was no longer a banned topic, Zdena and František faced another problem: the scholars—especially from the Czech Theatre Institute—denied its existence; apparently they did not want to acknowledge that their lists and interpretations were incomplete. (...) This silence was broken by a seminar paper initiated by Bořivoj Srba and written by Petra Kohutová, a student of Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno, and by an interview with authors in *Amatérská scéna* magazine, led by Vladimír Hulec, the editor of this magazine.”³²²

However, the fact of not staging any theatre performance marginalizes White Theatre for critical attention. The inability to stage a performance was understood as a group’s ‘disability,’ underlying the psychotherapeutic effect such a project or—broader—the community had on its participants and its small circle of viewers.³²³ The Czech scholars emphasize the fact that White Theatre—unlike other Czechoslovak alternative theatre groups inspired by the ‘birth of stage director’—did not stop because of the political restrictions, but die to personal and psychological reasons.³²⁴ This shows that White Theatre’s experiment was not considered political, but is understood more as a social phenomena and definitely the theatre was not perceived through the lens of ‘revolutionary’ symptoms of its third phase.

³¹⁹ See: Jan Císař in Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.183.

³²⁰ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³²¹ Interview with Zdena Bratršovská and František Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2013 (translation mine).

³²² Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part II, *op. cit.*, p.72 (translation mine).

³²³ See: Petra Kohutová in Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.25 and Martin Pšenička, “Krvácející myšlenka: skupina Quidam (1966–1972) – mezi divadlem a performancí” [A Bleeding Thought: the Quidam group (1966-1972)—Between Theatre and Performance], *Divadelní revue* 1 (24)/2013, p.9.

³²⁴ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.33.

The first phase of White Theatre was a group called Studio, which lasted from September 1969 to June 1970. Hrdlička calls this phase a preparatory one. It started right after the Prague Spring, two months after Jan Palach committed suicide by self-immolation in a political protest against invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact armies. In *Report on the White Theatre* it is written that the project of Studio was supposed to be much broader than only theatrical. Studio was created in order to find ‘an inner space of freedom’ and also to be able ‘to perform any humane dramatic situation.’³²⁵ The very first participants were mainly actors or students, but also a stripper or a doctor. The rehearsals happened 2-3 times a week; they started at 6AM and were lasting for two to five hours. Participants were mainly performing improvisations on such topics as: Bomb, Shelter, Hunger, Plague, Wandering (in Imaginary Spaces) or Destruction of the World and its Resurrection (Recognizing and Reviving, Discovering of the Body and Voice),³²⁶ which perhaps reflects the fears of the Cold War times and the feeling of social trauma after Palach’s death. Bratršovská and Hrdlička, asked about the reasons for performing such topics, said they were interested in the borderline themes where the human could leave his ‘social role’ as it is a first step towards waking up authentic personality and being able to recognize any untruthful behavior.³²⁷

František Derfler, co-founder and the first director of Studio said: “My role consisted of a kind of practical application of certain exercises, experiments and etudes through which a group of young theatre enthusiasts wanted to gain better ability to express—mainly by physical actions—a general human condition, human situations and relationships. We learned from our experiences, from storytelling, but especially from literature, folklore and mythical stories.”³²⁸ Other topics of improvisations not mentioned above explored ‘archetypal’ motives (inspired also by Artaud’s Theatre of Cruelty and Jung’s concept of collective unconsciousness³²⁹), mainly about couples involved in circumstances of love and death, like the biblical story of Judith and Holofernes or the tale of Matoušek and Majdalenka from traditional Czech folk song. Derfler, under the influence of Grotowski’s performances, wanted to explore (like Grotowski) anthropological, archetypal situations and create a metaphorical physical language³³⁰—all that in the context of preparing the stage

³²⁵ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.25.

³²⁶ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.27.

³²⁷ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³²⁸ František Drefler, “Autorské herectví je blud,” interview by Josef Mlejnek, accessed November 20, 2014, <http://host.divadlo.cz/noviny/archiv2004/cislo02/rozhovor.html>.

³²⁹ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

production.³³¹ His collaboration with Studio came to an end as the result of a misunderstanding between him and Hrdlička regarding the future development of the group. Most of the professional actors left with Derfler or very soon after his departure and Hrdlička needed to actively search for the new participants—in clubs, at schools, on the streets, while hitchhiking—“the thought of the studio as a social unity came once we had stopped counting on professionals,”³³² one actress wrote.

Even if all the participants worked in Studio on a voluntary basis (and that had never changed), there was a strong will to professionalize—from the very beginning the group had a producer (whose work was mainly solving problems with rehearsal space; finding possibilities to earn money for theatre’s participants who otherwise barely had other jobs; and finding them a place to stay). Among long-term collaborators there was a choreographer who led professional warm-ups, a doctor who took care of the physical health of the actors and—what is quite extraordinary—a psychologist who cared for the actors’ mental well-being, while they were exploring their ‘existential, intellectual and erotic borders.’³³³

If we count the number of people gathered around White Theatre and its activities—including external collaborators and observers—it wouldn't be a small number; even though it wouldn't be larger than an audience of the so-called ‘apartment theatres,’ theatres which staged their productions at homes with a tiny audience, popular in Czechoslovakia in the beginning of the 1970s, before the regime located and terminated them. The will to professionalize has its clear political limits. As Kohutová wrote: “White Theatre worked semi-illegally, its aims were suspicious, and the people who were collaborating with it sooner or later fell into disgrace of the Communist regime.”³³⁴ The creators of White Theatre confirmed it: “We invited [to the presentations opened for public] personalities from the cultural life as we were very much interested in showing them our work; their opinion was of interest to us. Very often they were actually searching for us, since many of them lost their positions due to the ideological reasons and we were functioning as a hidden oasis of freedom. Achieving broader recognition at that time—when totalitarian system was getting visibly stronger—was neither realistic nor conceivable. Or alternatively it would mean the end of our work as we understood it, entering a pathway of compromises, maneuvering, creating a different image on the outside and another on the inside, which was in direct

³³¹ See: Zdena Bratřovská and František Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru: (vyprávění o Bílém divadle I. část),” *H_aluze* 29 (7)/2014, p.63.

³³² From the notes written in 1970 by Zdenka Hadrboľová (1937), a professional actress who left Studio and concentrated on mainstream carrier. See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.146.

³³³ See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.79.

³³⁴ See: Hrdlička and Bratřovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.20 (translation mine).

conflict with what we wanted—to make a total theatre with spontaneity and sincerity, fully ignoring boundaries and limitations.”³³⁵

The second phase, which according to White Theatre’s creators was the most productive one, lasted from September 1970 to January 1972. In this phase Zdena Bratršovská, the second most important person after Hrdlička, joined the group. Bratršovská, fascinated by the extremes and the wandering life,³³⁶ was accepted after a five day audition organized as a psychological experiment intended to test the physical ability, psychological strength and other predispositions for working in the ensemble. As Hrdlička said in the interview conducted in 2005, “Members of the group were mostly amateurs, literally taken from the streets (that is why the condition to be accepted was not the talent, but more the inner richness, trust, openness, reliability and endurance).”³³⁷ This audition lasted 8-10 hours a day and was opened to two visitors.³³⁸

After the audition, Studio took on its new name: White Theatre. The new name was referring to a ‘white track’—the first steps in the unknown field, but also to Peter Brook’s term the ‘empty space.’³³⁹ “Our work with his [Brook’s] method of the empty space was very closely related! Brook was for us a great source of inspiration and continuous comparison, just like Grotowski”³⁴⁰—Bratršovská and Hrdlička explained. Except for the days where the invited director could come and the troupe was able to work on etudes, the work was organized according to a strict timetable, from Tuesday to Saturday, from 8AM till 4PM, and was composed of five different classes led by the more experienced members of White Theatre or by invited specialists. Among the classes there were: yoga, voice work, psychogymnastic, judo, acrobatics, dance and rhythm, theory, dramaturgy, etc. At the end of the second phase, the management of White Theatre was also interested in adding classes of anatomy, trampoline and stunting and wanted to initiate a collaboration with a chronicler, a photographer and a filmmaker.³⁴¹

During some improvisations the actors experimented with nudity, trying to get over conventional shame and use it as an element of actor’s expression. Even if, according to the White Theatre’s leaders, nudity was not meant as an act of exhibitionism, but as a natural utterance of purity—some of the invited personalities from the world of culture did not react

³³⁵ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

³³⁶ See: Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part II, *op. cit.*, p.63.

³³⁷ Interview published in Babylon magazine May 30, 2005 cited in Martina Doležalová, *Bílé divadlo...*, *op. cit.* (translation mine).

³³⁸ Interview with Zdena Bratršovská and František Hrdlička, Prague December 8, 2014.

³³⁹ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.28.

³⁴⁰ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

³⁴¹ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.34.

well to those experiments, labeling it for instance a ‘regular sex-party.’³⁴² But, unlike the Living Theatre that traveled in Europe as a community, where the children were born and the theatre—as its co-founder Judith Malina said—was part of life without distinction between private, public, art, erotic, inner or ‘economical,’ the members of White Theatre agreed not to have any intimate relationships in the framework of the community, so their work would not be disturbed.³⁴³

Inspired by how Peter Brook worked with actors, how he provoked their fantasy and how precisely he worked with just one tone, the Czechoslovak ensemble developed their work with a ‘minimum’ as they called it: with an aim to create desire, anxiety or ire just with moving one finger of the hand.³⁴⁴ Many improvisations led to unexpected behaviors such as digging in the ground with one’s own head in the forest while experimenting on being a wild animal.³⁴⁵ Many tasks were performed unconventionally like the one of separating sounds, which was practiced not only by listening to an orchestra and distinguishing particular musical instruments, but also in a pub where the task was to be able to hear a distant conversation.

Despite the interest, plans and preparations, no performance was ever created. The only meetings with the public took place in a small Czech town (during a short period when the group stayed in Cheb) through an exchange with regular theatre actors and by public presentation for random people, which took place in a pub where the group was rehearsing and outside in the castle gardens. In Cheb pub spectators spontaneously joined the actions. While the group stayed in Prague some rehearsals were open (but the spectators were asked to come from the warm-up in the morning, so that they would not ‘disturb’ the work), but mostly only for potential future pedagogues and foreigners brought by collaborators (the psychologist and the doctor).³⁴⁶ Very few presentations were larger (for up to fifty people) and the gathered audience proposed themes for improvisations.³⁴⁷ “During the larger demonstrations of our work spectators were allowed to propose themes, which we processed on the spot (in those moments the actors directed themselves)—under condition that the theme was well known, mythological, universally human or at least dreamy.”³⁴⁸ The purpose of the meetings with the

³⁴² See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.212.

³⁴³ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁵ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.237.

³⁴⁶ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague December 8, 2014.

³⁴⁷ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.29, 32.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague December 8, 2014 (translation mine).

audience was not only to demonstrate the work, but also to make the spectators involved, so that they would forget it is a theatrical situation, and will be able to fully concentrate.³⁴⁹

Between six and eight people formed the core of the group, and except one person (Václav Martinec) there were no professional actors. A few people had an open invitation to join White Theatre's work (a professional actor who has not decided to quit his regular job, a dancer of Chorea Bohemica—a folk group founded in 1967, and three foreigners: a Greek, a musician from Ceylon and an artist from an unnamed African country who shared his cultural heritage by teaching rhythms or telling traditional fairy tales).³⁵⁰ During those two years, around 100 people took part in auditions, but most of them left or were rejected after the first day (auditions lasted between two to five days, depending on the 'quality' of people, their talent and motivation).³⁵¹

In the beginning the group rehearsed in the open-air. Later the rehearsals took place in different spaces such as a pub in Prague where the group was allowed to rehearse in the mornings before the opening. The longest and the most effective period of rehearsals took place in the House for Children and Youth (later on re-named the House of Pioneers and Youth) in Břevnov in Prague. As the group was not officially registered and had no public program, it was both necessary and difficult to 'cover up' their presence.³⁵² The director of the space registered the group as a photographic and modeling workshop and they would hide in the gardens when she was informed that the control was going to come.³⁵³ In the end, having no other spaces available, the group decided to rehearse in the forests around Prague. The actors made a living as night-shift pub dishwashers or other manual labor. Most of them took time off from school, family and work, devoting 'one year' to this experiment,³⁵⁴ where the 'difference between working and not working did not exist'³⁵⁵ and where 'the theatre was a way of living.'³⁵⁶

After a long process of asking many writers (including Milan Kundera and Josef Topol) for a satisfactory drama that they could work on, the group finally received a scenario about a blacksmith called *Legend about Paška* (Legenda o Paškovi) written for them by Karol Sidon (in March 1971) and—as Hrdlička and Bratršovská mentions—they rehearsed it intensively for two months. "We were rehearsing it with pleasure and profusely and we

³⁴⁹ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁵⁰ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague December 8, 2014.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.30.

³⁵³ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague December 8, 2014.

³⁵⁴ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.137.

³⁵⁵ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.22.

³⁵⁶ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.261.

performed most of it on our open rehearsals. The problem [with continuing the work] was that at this time our group was already facing its demise—the circumstances of this breakdown (tiredness, physical problems, need to find more participants, etc.) are mentioned in *Report on the White Theatre*³⁵⁷ Other problems, that did not help in the process of ‘staging’ the *Legend about Paška*, are to be found in the director’s notes. Miloš Horanský, the second director who had worked with the group for two and a half years, wrote in a form of short comments or images: “experiencing everything with the body;” “working on the border of trance;” “pursuing an expression after losing control;” “rhythm as a great element flowing in everything;” “rhythm as a materialization of breath and pulse;” “everybody is potentially brilliant in their uniqueness;” “improvisation is a pillar of the method;” “problem with setting.”³⁵⁸ It shows clearly the interests of the group, favoring an actor’s experience above an interest in actor’s craft and fixing the physical actions. Bratršovská and Hrdlička admit that the director asked only for small corrections to what the actors had proposed.³⁵⁹

And further: “rehearsal without a break; without corrections; to feel the wholeness strongly; to lose oneself; poor in details, but strong in atmosphere; in favor of such rehearsals; their seductiveness.”³⁶⁰ That is why the work-in-progress, open rehearsals or presentations spontaneously joined by people were taken as fulfilling and satisfactory. Performing in a rehearsal space (for the invited people or circle of friends and the chosen guests) or in pubs (spontaneous reaction of the random public) brings freedom and the feeling of experiencing something extraordinary together. It does not entangle the group into any industry relations or any ‘critical’ judgments of their work. Speaking about paratheatre, Grotowski said that it is not a happening, a group therapy or a formless element.³⁶¹ Without any video registration of White Theatre’s rehearsals, it is hard to say anything about the quality of the work from the actor’s technique point of view. Many visitors of White Theatre’s demonstrations mention the feeling of adventure, complete freedom of expression, shamelessness, total presence and an observation that actors are ‘risking’ their personalities;³⁶² they are mentioning ‘an authentic improvisation they had never experienced before.’³⁶³ On the question whether rehearsal process was focused on experiencing human possibilities or more on creating performance or any other form of presentation, Bratršovská and Hrdlička answered: “The discovery of new

³⁵⁷ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

³⁵⁸ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, pp.112-115 (translation mine).

³⁵⁹ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁶⁰ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.113 (translation mine).

³⁶¹ Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.132.

³⁶² Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.184.

³⁶³ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.32, 185, 240.

acting abilities was more important than the work targeted on creating a performance or another form of demonstration. This was connected to our societal context (stricter regime that did not allow any freer expression), that is also why we were acting semi-illegally.”³⁶⁴ They also admit the reactions of audience were not enough to develop their work.³⁶⁵

In their work they employed ‘basic universal expressions.’ They did not work with theatre editing, but only fixed some improvisations mainly while working with the scenario. And even in this situation, to keep the improvisation element in the fixed parts—they used a metaphor they termed a ‘cauldron within a riverbed:’ the general direction of actor’s actions, or a specific action or movement was set within ‘banks of the river.’ Between those banks, the free expression of an actor could appear: they could choose themselves the way to perform an action, in the moment of improvisation. As written in *Report on the White Theatre*, Americans who knew the work of Grotowski and the Living Theatre visited some of White Theatre’s rehearsals³⁶⁶ and reacted positively to the artistic qualities the group had achieved. White Theatre members also managed to travel twice to Wrocław to see *The Constant Prince* and *Apocalypsis cum figuris*, after which they had spoke with the actors of Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre. As mentioned before, they were in contact with Lída Engelová and Jana Pilátová. In 1972 when Ludwik Flaszen and Grotowski’s actors were returning from the US through Prague to Poland, they managed to meet and speak about differences between the two groups. Bratršovská and Hrdlička, mentioned that they had spoken about “asceticism required by Grotowski in the contrary to White Theatre’s requirement of childish playfulness.”³⁶⁷ In Grotowski’s ensemble they had felt the drill while White Theatre wanted the actors to experience joy and jokes... They were also not that attracted to the religious themes, which—according to them—were not connected to the universal human experience.³⁶⁸ *Report on the White Theatre* mentions a Norwegian, who was “shocked to see something so free and of the same top quality as theatres in Western Europe.”³⁶⁹ We could see that the group tried to connect with other laboratory theatres, not only by reading about their ideas, but also by trying to be perceived as one of them, while stressing uniqueness of their own work.³⁷⁰

The main difference lies perhaps in the fact that White Theatre did not work under one strong leader. Bratršovská and Hrdlička asked about importance of the director answered that

³⁶⁴ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

³⁶⁵ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁶⁶ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.29

³⁶⁷ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

³⁶⁸ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁶⁹ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.32 (translation mine).

³⁷⁰ Bratršovská and Hrdlička said that a few years ago they even send some materials about White Theatre to Odin Teatret, but never got an answer. Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

“The director in White Theatre was an important and organic part of the work, his persuasive voice with silent suggestions and navigation was, for actors, their alter ego. (...) Furthermore, the group was headed into the direction of a ‘theatre of an author’ where all actors tried to also be directors for themselves.”³⁷¹ The organization of the group was not clearly hierarchical, but more based on a community. There was a management of the group (the producer, director and literary director—just like in Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre³⁷²), but the participants were directed to find a ‘consciousness of order in themselves’³⁷³ (which resembles the most the beginnings of Odin Teatret in Oslo). Every three months the ensemble’s leadership (literary director, director and producer) decided about future developments.³⁷⁴ The rules for the community were strict (for instance, there was a rule that a person who would not come on time more than twice would be excluded from the group; or a rule that everybody needs to take part in every work proposed). The entire group was deciding on including new participants or—on the contrary—about excluding somebody (this happened a few times because of anarchistic behavior,³⁷⁵ pregnancy,³⁷⁶ exams at school³⁷⁷).

The troupe was “trying to bring a catharsis concurrently to everybody;”³⁷⁸ as they assumed it would keep the ensemble in balance. As written in *Report on the White Theatre*, if somebody performed aggression towards another person during improvisations, in the second improvisation, his task was to act with ‘love.’³⁷⁹ As Bratršovská and Hrdlička wrote, “All members knew that during intensive rehearsals they could enter ‘muddy depths’ of their own existence, and because of that everybody tried to bring back a catharsis to everybody in a form of a service or a benevolent gesture.”³⁸⁰ What they believed is that: “It is necessary that all members of the group are connected by the strong bond of friendship.”³⁸¹ Hrdlička as a musician (he was accompanying improvisations on piano in ‘imaginative and unconventional way’³⁸²) was also taking part in some experiments.

Roubal, examining similarities between White Theatre and Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre, wrote about strong patterns of the ‘poor theatre’ and ‘sacrificing’ an actor next to

³⁷¹ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

³⁷² See: Burzyński and Osiński, *Laboratorium Grotowskiego*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

³⁷³ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.137.

³⁷⁴ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁷⁵ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.29, 252.

³⁷⁶ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, pp.137-138.

³⁷⁷ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.149.

³⁷⁸ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.139 (translation mine).

³⁷⁹ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, pp.139-140.

³⁸⁰ Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part II, *op. cit.*, p.73 (translation mine).

³⁸¹ Bratršovská and Hrdlička “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part I, *op. cit.*, p.62 (translation mine).

³⁸² Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014.

understanding theatre as a ‘gift’ to spectators.³⁸³ The audience—even if it was semi-public—was an important element of the second phase. In the 1990s Hrdlička and Bratršovská wrote, “The rehearsals intentionally examined possibilities of theatre and not only possibilities of its members (as authenticity of the actors should cause authenticity of spectators).”³⁸⁴ In this cult of authenticity as spontaneity, in leaving behind conventional self-stylized barriers, in searching for the true ‘I,’³⁸⁵ Roubal found the main goal of White Theatre’s experiments. He also emphasized the role of the auditions that could be understood as another way of meeting the public while involving them in the actions.

Typically, an audition was very ‘theatrical’—it took place in a dark room with the only light coming from the half-meter candle placed in the corner of the room. A person interested in joining the troupe needed to be able to act immediately in an unknown place filled with a silent group of actors. Sometimes blinded with a black scarf, the person needed to be ready for unexpected, untypical questions (“How was your morning? (...) All the morning? What did the birds do? What did the trees do? Were you five or fifteen?”³⁸⁶) as well as being ready to experience aggression, nudity, etc. “He got what he wanted. If he wants to drag on with us, he needs to feel us first”³⁸⁷—Bratršovská and Hrdlička described an audition in *The Othered*, a novel inspired by White Theatre experiences written in 1974/1975 and popular as *samizdat* among the tramps and students till the Velvet Revolution and its publishing in 1992/1993.³⁸⁸ “The book is based on experiences inside White Theatre, but does not describe our work nor our specific ways of coexistence. *The Othered* are more anarchist, unlike the members of White Theatre, who had a clear working goal; but the similarity is in declarations of absolute freedom and therefore a kind of revolt.”³⁸⁹ As the authors said, the book reflects rather some bizarre rumors that were spread about White Theatre.

One part of the audition was to establish an ‘actor’s minimum,’ which could include: a circus number, a skit, a gestural characteristic of an animal or a contact with an imaginary partner.³⁹⁰ *Report on the White Theatre* states that the last auditions did not bring any new participants because expectations towards them grew simultaneously with the experience of

³⁸³ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, pp.76-77.

³⁸⁴ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.273 (translation mine).

³⁸⁵ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.78-79.

³⁸⁶ Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part I, *op. cit.*, p.64 (translation mine).

³⁸⁷ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.175 (translation mine).

³⁸⁸ From the end of White Theatre till nowadays František Hrdlička and Zdena Bratršovská collaborate as writers.

³⁸⁹ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague December 8, 2014 (translation mine).

³⁹⁰ See: Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part I, *op. cit.*, p.64.

White Theatre's members.³⁹¹ From this perspective the third phase of White Theatre is more understandable, even though it is still a curiosity. It constitutes a reaction to a very specific social and political circumstances, but it also reflects artistic development of its creators under pressure.

In *Report on the White Theatre* Hrdlička and Bratršovská mention a few negative factors that, according to them, made further development impossible. The frustration came from not having any visible success, apart from some minor interest: one short movie done by a Bulgarian student of a film school in June 1970,³⁹² two short pieces of information in official newspapers in 1971 and a short mention on the radio, which caused problems with controls of official authorities. Among other reasons there were also problems with finding any rehearsal space, coupled with the financial problems, as the director did not want to continue any longer without any payment. However, Hrdlička and Bratršovská emphasize that the societal context was the strongest factor that made them terminate the second phase of White Theatre.

Typically for laboratory theatres, people perceived the group as a closed community. “The method of work and life were indeed so specific that only a few people could have any idea how to explain it, and so many rumors were spread describing members as a religious sect or alternatively a sex-party or even ‘guinea pigs,’ selected and paid by foreign agents.”³⁹³ Society—driven by fear, suspiciousness and police controls—made it impossible for the ‘laboratory’ to exist. Even if White Theatre's members were not nervous about the reality—they had stepped out of the system (schooling, marrying, working) and created for themselves an oasis of freedom³⁹⁴—they needed to be careful not to be arrested on a charge of vagrancy as none of them had the obligatory stamp proving the regular job in their identity cards. Also not all of them were officially residents in the location where the troupe had possibility to rehearse, which was at that time required by the Communist state. The participants realized that the activities of White Theatre were not only inconvenient for the regime, but also very suspicious and that was also a reason very few people were truly interested in joining the troupe. Society had turned into conformists and stopped believing in the sense of any project that was neither official nor personal. As Bratršovská and Hrdlička said, some people confused it also with a hobby that did not require any change of work or the way of living.³⁹⁵

³⁹¹ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

³⁹² The film was unfortunately lost.

³⁹³ See: Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part I, *op. cit.*, p.60.

³⁹⁴ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

³⁹⁵ See: Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part I, *op. cit.*, p.64.

White Theatre's members that had no goal of directly opposing the regime realized that in their search for 'inner space of freedom,' they couldn't be tolerated in the totalitarian state.

A laboratory theatre does not follow social rules, but questions them. White Theatre was creating its community by rejecting forms of social life such as job, education or family (this is also the reason why some participants had departed)—rejecting basic values of Communist ideology. One could say that a similar rejection in the 1970s in the Western society was named 'alternative,' but still accepted within the framework of the system. In a totalitarian state similar ideas meant not only administrative problems with the system, but also a social ostracism that is problematic for a theatre that needs an audience to exist. Hrdlička and Bratršovská believed that the participants of White Theatre “would change the world and themselves through art”³⁹⁶—they proposed an utopian community inside the Communist regime that was able to survive, because just as any kind of minority it was against Communist values and the idea of social unification.

Under the circumstances it was also not clear for whom this project should exist. Who was supposed to be a White Theatre participant or spectator, whom did they so intensively seek? Perhaps there were no such people in general: between 1970 and 1971 the regime closed few important theatres, during the next decade there were no theatre magazines and no publications about theatre. Many actors and directors were not allowed to work under the regime's censorship. Whoever was continuing their art against restrictions, was just as a result of this fact finding themselves among the rejected ones. Only the ones who agreed with the Russian invasion were allowed to work publicly. 'Small islands of spiritual freedom'³⁹⁷ of semi-amateur theatres were slowly forced to finish their activity. Even if among the people interested in joining the group in the last audition there were such personalities as Nina Vangeli—at that time a student of Theatre Studies or Jan Číhal (who in 1982 founded a theatre group under the same name of 'White Theatre' in Ostrava), on February 20, 1972 White Theatre decided to stop its activity. “In these weeks it has become clear that we are not able to secure economically a permanent work of the management and that possibilities of any public presentation of our group are blocked due to the external situation.” their statement said.³⁹⁸ Scholars close the history of White Theatre with this second phase. Hrdlička and Bratršovská continue with the third phase, even if they do not call it White Theatre. One of the rules of White Theatre was that the group would stop if there would be less than five

³⁹⁶ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.36 (translation mine).

³⁹⁷ See: Petr Oslzlý, “On Stage with the Velvet Revolution,” *TDR* 3 (34)/1990, p.101.

³⁹⁸ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.34 (translation mine).

members plus the rhythmist (who was also a literary director).³⁹⁹ From all points of view the third phase, sometimes called New White Theatre is more of a wish for ‘laboratory,’ than any defined group. But, it is interesting how the idea of a ‘laboratory theatre’ developed under specific political conditions.

The third phase of White Theatre lasted between 1972 and 1976 and it involved only four people: Hrdlička, Bratršovská, Marek Posejpal, a musician who joined the group during the last public audition and Jiří Boreš—a student of economics who was recruited by Hrdlička in person during a walk and a discussion. In 1995, Boreš wrote that he decided to join the White Theatre, because in between the lines he sensed ‘conspiracy, action, resistance.’⁴⁰⁰ As he was already involved in the underground culture and some smaller actions against the regime, he got very much interested in this ‘daring project,’ as he called it.⁴⁰¹ In his talk Hrdlička was promising a ‘path’ that consists of hard work with no promised success, but a ‘path,’ that opens consciousness, worlds and relations that already brought a success in other fields to those who had chosen this experience of a non-ordinary state of consciousness.⁴⁰²

Boreš’s memories are published in *Report on the White Theatre* without any comment of Hrdlička and Bratršovská and they give the only description of how the group worked during this ‘third phase.’ The liminal situations were still the most interesting: “We were preparing ourselves for the worst, and during our expeditions to the forest and to the mountains we had learned something. We were dealing daily with those model situations in the Slovakian mountains as a part of our training: what if we needed to run away and hide; how would we survive if we had nothing to eat?”⁴⁰³—Boreš wrote. Apart from those liminal situations in the open-air, the group’s training happened also in the city. One of the tasks was for instance “to follow unnoticed a randomly chosen person for few days and nights, getting to know their habits and environment”⁴⁰⁴ in order to write a short story. “We learned how to infiltrate abandoned spaces,”⁴⁰⁵ wrote Boreš, meaning the physical actions, not metaphorical ones.

“And also this was for us an actor’s training: to be a thief, a bandit, an outlaw. (...) We discovered that even in the totalitarian state, you can move freely in the city with a kidnapped person so that nobody would notice, with even few minutes of rest in the most unbelievable

³⁹⁹ See: Martina Doležalová, *Bílé divadlo...*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰⁰ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.36.

⁴⁰¹ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

⁴⁰² See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.36.

⁴⁰³ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.40 (translation mine).

⁴⁰⁴ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.41 (translation mine).

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

places; instead of sleep, moving all the time for a few days between apartments.”⁴⁰⁶ It is significant how Boreš writes about that—especially in the context of a totalitarian state, which used similar methods against its citizens. We could even ask: how many people moved in the same time in the same city with a kidnapped person? Boreš called it in his memories ‘the action D’—which only strengthens the paramilitary associations. ‘The action D’ happened because one acquaintance was in debt with White Theatre’s members and did not want to give back the money. *Report on the White Theatre* did not provide more details—the same regarding the mentioned robberies: the reader would not know if they were real or simulated. Boreš says only that after ‘the action D’ a musician, Marek Posejpal left the group, recognizing the action as ‘immoral and dirty.’⁴⁰⁷

‘The action D’ is definitely closer to a ‘guerrilla theatre’ than to a typical theatre of performances. However, Boreš mentions that they lived by exploring Brook, Barba and Grotowski’s ideas.⁴⁰⁸ On the other hand Boreš writes about Hrdlička and Bratršovská: “I was learning *their* new non-conventional language. The words that sounded negatively like sadism or cruelty moved to another dimension, somewhere closer to *courage* and *truthfulness*.”⁴⁰⁹ This obviously referred to Artaud’s ideas, but sounds different considering that the group’s ‘training’ took place in public. In 2014, asked about the third phase Bratršovská and Hrdlička answered: “This question does not concern White Theatre topic. Those are private memories of J. Boreš about different actions, which we were doing together (yes, they were real, not simulated).”⁴¹⁰ And they added: “J. Boreš did not experience the work of White Theatre, he came later and helped mainly in recruiting new people for auditions.”⁴¹¹

Asked directly about references to site-specific or ideas of guerilla theatre, Bratršovská and Hrdlička said that since the beginning they were interested in some kind of happenings, but those were happening in their ‘free time’—such as: asking people in the tram to strip, because that is the last government’s law, carrying out an inflatable boat from the shopping mall so that they would ‘wake up’ security (the larger thing they had chosen, the ‘harder’ the task became, as they have mentioned). The other action that they mention is borrowing working clothes and digging up Wenceslas Square in Prague while nobody stopped them—

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁷ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.41.

⁴⁰⁸ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.38.

⁴⁰⁹ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.39 (translation mine).

⁴¹⁰ Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

but they call those actions kids' jokes, not theatre, adding that they had known such actions were not dangerous, because of the specific Czech sense of humor.⁴¹²

“Later on, searching for and meeting new people started to be the main content of our activity,”⁴¹³ Boreš wrote in *Report on the White Theatre* mentioning his ‘fake’ involvement in a volleyball club or nonofficial association of young tourists. Bratršovská wrote that she was going with Posejdal and Boreš to jazz concerts, theatre and film festivals, canteens, pubs, etc.—everywhere where they expected to meet young people.⁴¹⁴ They were trying to publish camouflaged calls and adverts in the newspapers, using socially accepted activities, such as realization of an amateur film or mountain hiking. Boreš mentions keeping their activities secret even from old friends. He was hitchhiking all over the Czechoslovak Republic ‘luring’ new members. “We were afraid of gossip and that the police could become interested in us,”⁴¹⁵ he wrote. By publishing his notes from 1973, Boreš is giving a specific example of (unsuccessful) recruitment of two tourists met accidentally while hiking. After a small talk during which they did not exchange any significant facts, White Theatre’s members were able to deduce where the tourists worked and locate them. This story, mentioned in *Report on the White Theatre* shows how desperate the members of White Theatre were to search for new participants. It also shows how they had adapted to the social ‘atmosphere.’ What are your living conditions, if you need to search for participants of an artistic project by such complicated and ‘secret’ actions? Especially for a project supposed to be a laboratory theatre exploring actor’s possibilities—the audition to which was moreover still the same as in the previous phases of White Theatre, and consisted of creating a simple musical instrument, reciting a part from a chosen drama and making a somersault.⁴¹⁶

In the end even those (theatrical?) actions needed to finish, because Boreš was expelled from university and was afraid of being recruited to the army. Because of this threat he decided to simulate schizophrenia. He wrote, “This was the strongest actor’s training that I went through during White Theatre. They [Hrdlička and Bratršovská] did not give up, and I needed to get ready to play the role 24 hours a day, for maybe more than one month without a break. It was obvious to us that the hospitalization in the mental hospital was necessary.”⁴¹⁷ After studying medical books and articles on schizophrenia, Boreš admitted himself to a hospital and was found there by the secret police that suspected simulation and was

⁴¹² Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague January 21, 2015.

⁴¹³ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.39 (translation mine).

⁴¹⁴ See: Bratršovská and Hrdlička, “Bílá znamená čistý list papíru,” part II, *op. cit.*, p.71.

⁴¹⁵ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.42 (translation mine).

⁴¹⁶ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.36.

⁴¹⁷ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.45 (translation mine).

interrogating him because of short stories of his authorship that were smuggled to the West. After hospitalization (it was ‘successful’ and Boreš even got the disability pension), he started to doubt the sense of White Theatre actions. The group finally split at the beginning of 1976. Boreš finished his memoirs, “The next day I was returning to Prague by train with feeling of ambivalent liberation. Expressing ambivalent feelings—that was White Theatre’s method...”⁴¹⁸ In the next year Boreš was among the first people to sign Charter 77 and emigrated to West Berlin. The history of White Theatre in its third phase reflects mainly socio-political context of those times. More and more political atmosphere, strategies of surviving thanks to the theatre had displaced earlier ‘études’ on the mythical or mystical themes. For four years the group was not able to recruit any more participants to the project. It definitely lost its theatrical context, being more of a way of living; still aiming to go “from conventional world towards authenticity and communicability.”⁴¹⁹

In his memories, Boreš mentioned twice his disappointment and surprise with the previous members of White Theatre not being contacted – but this happened probably because a former White Theatre’s actor, Václav Martinec decided to continue working on experiments with physical expression and founded an amateur theatre group consisting of teenagers from one of the Folk Art Schools in Prague called Tinderbox (Křesadlo). The collaborator of Martinec was Nina Vangeli who worked with Martinec until the closing of the group in Spring 1975 (the group was proclaimed by officials as ‘Maoist’ and prohibited) and continued with the same ensemble under a changed name Studio of Physical Theatre (Studio pohybového divadla) which worked until the early 1990s.

Tinderbox created five performances based on medieval, biological, biblical, oriental (traditional Chinese fairy tale) and antique motifs. Radka Mauricová-Kavanová, a former actress of White Theatre, wrote in the 1990s: “I remember the feeling of exasperation after Tinderbox’s performance that Vašek [Martinec] created after White Theatre. The whole presentation was made of our original ideas, parts of improvisations and the entire scores, but mechanically applied.”⁴²⁰ After the first performance (the premiere took place in the gym of the Folk Art School in March 1973), Jano Sedal the former White Theatre’s actor joined the group. In 1990 Sedal said, “Vašek [Martinec] was interested in an immediate effect, which

⁴¹⁸ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.48 (translation mine).

⁴¹⁹ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.39 (translation mine).

⁴²⁰ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.242 (translation mine).

also interested me. (...) there was a lot of movement, but differently led—to the immediate effect. There was no searching in deepness.”⁴²¹

Bratršovská and Hrdlička had never seen any performance of Tinderbox.⁴²² In 1990 Martinec wrote: “I am fully aware that till nowadays I live from suggestions and experiments of White Theatre.”⁴²³ The Czech scholar, Ladislava Petišková, mapping amateur scene of theatres in Czechoslovakia, wrote that Tinderbox was definitely the only theatre group inspired by physical acting in the second part of the 1970s. She called it a ‘theatre-workshop’ that invites audience into everyday environment of actors without typical for theatre social etiquette and market relations.⁴²⁴

Quidam, the only Czechoslovak group inspired by similar ideas and exploring physical acting that is known abroad, was based in Brno on Moravia and worked from 1966 until 1972 when it was forced by political authorities to finish its activity.⁴²⁵ Quidam has its roots in the student theatre and surrealist poetic. It concentrated on creating performances based on physical actions only in 1968 when Petr Oslzlý joined the group and they started the research on creativity settled in ‘animalistic side of a human being.’⁴²⁶ While exploring physical acting and collective ability to create a dramatic text during rehearsals, the group achieved spectacular international interest. In 1968, just after the Invasion, they went to the student’s festival in Zagreb to perform *Archimimus* (physical performance based on collective creation) and later on were invited to perform the same production in London. A critic of The Sunday Times wrote after Zagreb’s performance that the political judgment of the audience had nothing to do with the play itself,⁴²⁷ but—regarding the historical circumstances—the physical language of the performance opened up the possibility of such interpretation to the audience. Petr Oslzlý—Quidam’s main actor and ‘spiritus movens’ of its new physical poetic, later on connected to an important, directors’ theatre called Goose on a String (*Husa na Provázku*), and a university professor—called the entire movement of alternative theatre in the 1970s: ‘small islands of relative spiritual freedom.’⁴²⁸ Yet, Quidam was not a laboratory theatre. By exploring physicality Quidam was more interested in expressing the drama and

⁴²¹ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.231 (translation mine).

⁴²² Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

⁴²³ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.225 (translation mine).

⁴²⁴ See: Ladislava Petišková, „Křesadlo,” in *Divadla svítící do tmy* [Theatres Shining in the Darkness] (Praha: NIPOS, 2006), Databáze českého amatérského divadla, accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.amaterskedivadlo.cz/main.php?data=txt&id=6259>.

⁴²⁵ More about Quidam: Martin Pšenička, “Krvácející myšlenka,” *op. cit.*, pp.7-28.

⁴²⁶ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.25.

⁴²⁷ See: Pšenička, “Krvácející myšlenka,” *op. cit.*, p.14.

⁴²⁸ See: Oslzlý, “On Stage with the Velvet Revolution,” *op. cit.*, p.101.

shocking the audience. The physical language of *Archimimus*—which expressed the topic of a ‘visionary’ individual posed against a crowd of ordinary people who are torturing him—was more illustrative (conveying the same meaning with physical actions as in spoken drama). The structure of the group, born in a framework of the student theatres with the fine artist as a leader and theatre director, was also not aspiring to become a ‘laboratory.’

White Theatre, working simultaneously to Quidam and exploring similar theatre language did not overcome the work-in-progress phase.⁴²⁹ While “trying to discover some kind of Esperanto of the movement,”⁴³⁰ the group concentrated on “searching for new paths of self-knowledge and self-expression” and believing that “intensive experience of good and evil could, under specific circumstances, ennoble anybody who is not, a priori, against it”⁴³¹—White Theatre was still more a theatrical experiment. Bratršovská and Hrdlička, asked if they knew about and were interested in the work of Quidam, answered: “Of course we were interested in people and groups that were inspired by similar sources (Tinderbox was not on the list, because V. Martinec had narrowed theatre work to the movement component that for us was not important). Of course we knew about Quidam and observed their work (Bratršovská spend a year at the same university as Petr Oslzlý), we have even suggested that the two groups would meet personally, but Quidam ignored our proposals.”⁴³² Kohutová wrote: “As far as I know [White Theatre] was the first in this republic to become more deeply interested in using such elements in its theatre work as: psychological interactions, work with breathing, music therapy, and the other creative and social experiments in the framework of one community.”⁴³³ In the same time when Grotowski was involving the entire society in an active culture that created strong counterculture effect in Polish society, White Theatre was concentrating on one actor [Boreš] and his life. White Theatre is definitely the most interesting Czechoslovak experiment of ‘laboratory theatre,’ even if its development stayed on the level of trainings, work-in-progress and kind of paratheatrical experience of a small troupe.

Wondering whether a similar project of a theatre community would work in the 1990s, Hrdlička and Bratršovská wrote: “The idea of a poor (holy) theatre, the way Grotowski imagined it, lost its attraction in the new economical circumstances. The new theatre-makers are more interested in individual inventions than sources hidden in the community’s

⁴²⁹ See: Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.86.

⁴³⁰ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.132 (translation mine).

⁴³¹ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, pp.20-21 (translation mine).

⁴³² Interview with Bratršovská and Hrdlička, Prague November 27, 2014 (translation mine).

⁴³³ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.34 (translation mine).

experience. The communities still exist nowadays, but (beyond few exceptions) do not bring together people who want to raise children, farm and create art together; they are created *ad hoc* and do not last long.”⁴³⁴

⁴³⁴ Hrdlička and Bratršovská, *Zpráva...*, *op. cit.*, p.99 (translation mine).

Gardzienice—an Anthropological Inspiration

“The special aesthetic came about during the reconstruction of dances, rituals, songs, and available literary materials infiltrated and transferred into the performer’s body. When Gardzienice’s performers feel free and limitless in their bodies, the situations arise and build up into the form of performance that doesn’t last longer than one hour.”⁴³⁵ Viliam Dočolomanský wrote that as a young Slovak director⁴³⁶ after his visit to Gardzienice’s *Cosmos* in August 2000, one year before he started the *Lorca* project that eventually evolved to become the Farm in the Cave theatre studio. The *Cosmos* means a ‘composed’ theatre event (a marathon⁴³⁷) that Włodzimierz Staniewski, Gardzienice’s founder and leader, introduced as a form in 1999.⁴³⁸ Its aim is to guide the audience into the world of Gardzienice’s theatre practices—a ‘journey to the world of myths’ that consists of performances,⁴³⁹ films, work demonstrations of the acting methods, workshops and gatherings. “The whole event (known as ‘Cosmos’) is built on the importance of encounter not just with performance but with the natural environment in which the work was formed.”⁴⁴⁰ It shows old and new performances in dialogue.⁴⁴¹

As Dočolomanský noted in his essay, Gardzienice is a place in the middle of nowhere,⁴⁴² where the ‘border between making theatre and art disappears.’⁴⁴³ It is visible in hindsight that Dočolomanský paid attention to those characteristics of Gardzienice that would soon become familiar to his own theatre group, where devotion, enthusiasm, creativity, musicality, precision and non-false human experience would become essential elements. Recalling the beginnings of Gardzienice, Dočolomanský presents an image of a students’ group in the 1970s that left their normal lives to live with art; worked in a cold space with neither toilet nor running water where they created, ate and slept,⁴⁴⁴ for whom the process of

⁴³⁵ Viliam Dočolomanský, “Boh býva v Polsku” [God Lives in Poland], *Svět a divadlo* 1 (12)/2001, p.72 (translation mine).

⁴³⁶ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s biography in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—Włodzimierz Staniewski *Gardzienice*, p.555.

⁴³⁷ Expression from Gardzienice’s website, “Aktualności,” OPT Gardzienice, accessed January 14, 2015, <http://gardzienice.org/news/id/1.html>.

⁴³⁸ See: Tadeusz Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski i Ośrodek Praktyk Teatralnych „Gardzienice”* [Włodzimierz Staniewski and Centre for GARDZIENICE Theatre Practices] (Kraków: Homini, 2004), p.246.

⁴³⁹ Dočolomanský had seen three performances from the very different areas of culture during this *Cosmos: The Life of Archpriest Avakum* (1984), *Carmina Burana* (1990) and *Metamorphoses* (1997).

⁴⁴⁰ Alison Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski: Gardzienice and the Naturalised Actor,” in *Actor Training*, ed. Alison Hodge (London/New York: Routledge, 2010), p.270.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴² See: Dočolomanský, “Boh býva v Polsku,” *op. cit.*, p.70.

⁴⁴³ See: Dočolomanský, “Boh býva v Polsku,” *op. cit.*, p.77.

⁴⁴⁴ See: Dočolomanský, “Boh býva v Polsku,” *op. cit.*, p.76.

preparation of one production, presented in the form of a one-hour-long performance, could last as long as eight years.⁴⁴⁵ As Dočolomanský wrote, just long enough to keep the focus of an audience on an art that does not explain and—instead of that—pulls in and fascinates with its musicality, concentration and interplay of performers.⁴⁴⁶

Writing about Gardzienice's productions, Dočolomanský called it 'an extract' from research based on expeditions including traveling (making journeys) and ethnographical, research-like experience. Recalling Staniewski's opinion, he says it introduces a way-out for those who do not want to stage a 'commentary of a commentary' (as in drama theatre), but prefer to search for other sources of theatre inspiration.⁴⁴⁷ The ethnographical research of Gardzienice—connected to the cooperation with musicologists, anthropologists and other scholars—introduces a content of the production where the music is a live dramaturgy (with its rhythms, tones, colors and 'vibrations').⁴⁴⁸ "The form of performance—that guru [Staniewski] calls a 'theatre essay'—provokes innumerate associations; the entire complexes of associations being in context with one another,"⁴⁴⁹ Dočolomanský wrote, foreseeing his own theatre method of composing theatrical material within Farm in the Cave where "each song is a dramatic event."⁴⁵⁰ He also noticed that—"It is the constant changes of arrangements and the never-ending work on situations that preserve life of the performance with such a strong and detailed structure"⁴⁵¹—what soon became his own directing technique.

For Dočolomanský Gardzienice presented a vivid example of the place where an 'actor' was a person in a theatre situation,⁴⁵² an alive being that reacts with its body to the impulses of the others—more than a person that pretends or imitates something. He noted that Gardzienice's performances work with irony or even a primitive form of fun, so that even the theme of romantic love is not 'too sweet.'⁴⁵³ Dočolomanský had seen the eroticism as a main force ruling the world of Gardzienice's performances: "Staniewski's obsession with the erotic is present in every scene. It is present in singing and in the movements of the performers as a source of stamina, never-ending flow of energy."⁴⁵⁴ All the impulses, moves and changes come from the spine. The Gardzienice's actors, copying postures from antique drawings, are

⁴⁴⁵ See: Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁴⁴⁶ See: Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.72.

⁴⁴⁷ See: Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.71.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁹ Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.71 (translation mine).

⁴⁵⁰ Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.74 (translation mine).

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵² See: Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.74.

⁴⁵³ See: Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁴⁵⁴ Dočolomanský, "Boh býva v Polsku," *op. cit.*, p.71 (translation mine).

keeping mainly the line of the spine,⁴⁵⁵ Dočolomanský noted.

In his essay Dočolomanský emphasized that this theatre is based on creating a group art that is achieved by constant communication among all performers. “It is never about a perfect demonstration of any physical element or being more precise, it is not about a physical structure, but about the harmony of the common, the spontaneous; about creating impulses, tuning rhythms and pulses of two hearts. This quality of sensitivity, the *mutuality* is a phenomenon that is achieved by the running together at nights, common singing in the choir, and collective work while building a stage for the performance, and dining together.”⁴⁵⁶ This picture definitely influenced or strengthened Dočolomanský’s idea of his own theatre group. Emphasizing that his experiences with Gardzienice are not extensive, but deep, Dočolomanský said: “I became most interested in the actor’s training while taking part in International Symposium in 2000. What I had experienced, had shown me an excellent method of working with the body and voice, organically developed in connection to the specific poetic of the troupe.”⁴⁵⁷ Dočolomanský—having already had extensive experience with music and musicality—was inspired by Gardzienice’s practice of composing theatre actions, sounds, voices, and breaths: “What I respect the most in the Gardzienice’s performances is the attempt to create a new theatrical language that could be and should be received in the same spontaneous way as music in its expression (the rhythm, dynamic, color, and entire structure of composition).”⁴⁵⁸ Those thoughts, nearly in the same words, would return in the Farm in the Cave’s practices in the director and actors’ self-reflection. Jana Pilátová, a literary adviser of Farm in the Cave, commented on the Dočolomanský’s essay that writing about Gardzienice, he wrote about his own ensemble.⁴⁵⁹

Włodzimierz Staniewski, speaking about the beginnings of Gardzienice, presents a story of searching for the farthest possible place from Grotowski’s paratheatrical actions.⁴⁶⁰ In 1971, having had the experience of being the main performer of politically involved student’s theatre, Staniewski had joined Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre and became his key collaborator⁴⁶¹ creating scenarios for the Special Projects (in Poland, USA and Australia). Five years later, in the moment of the greatest public interest in paratheatre, Staniewski—

⁴⁵⁵ See: Dočolomanský, “Boh býva v Polsku,” *op. cit.*, p.74.

⁴⁵⁶ Dočolomanský, “Boh býva v Polsku,” *op. cit.*, p.74 (translation mine).

⁴⁵⁷ Dočolomanský, “Wypowiedź o Gardzienicach” [Speaking about Gardzienice], in *Konteksty 1-4 (252-255)/2001—Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice, op. cit.*, p.392 (translation mine).

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁹ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského, op. cit.*, p.499.

⁴⁶⁰ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski..., op. cit.*, p.43.

⁴⁶¹ See: Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, p.271.

describing it with words from Dočolomanský's essay—'revolted against father Grotowski'⁴⁶² in order to create theatre performances deep in Poland's countryside. Staniewski recalls an image of himself falling down from a motorbike in Gardzienice, while villagers spontaneously laughed at him.⁴⁶³ There, far from any cultural center, he had found a disused 16th century Arian chapel⁴⁶⁴ and decided to rent it and use it as a theatre space.

The village of Gardzienice as a locality appeared to be a perfect mixture of 'low' and 'high' culture, where vulgarity and spirituality are present at the same time—similarly as in Bakhtin's carnival culture and grotesque realism that deeply inspired Staniewski. It was not a hermetical, 'laboratorial' situation in which one meets only 'the other' who is actually very similar.⁴⁶⁵ Staniewski was interested in 'testing' similar openness and encounters in the very different context of a village, where the beauty of simplicity and nature meets coarseness; where nature is not a metaphor, but is real.⁴⁶⁶

Tadeusz Kornaś, author of the monograph about Gardzienice, wrote that at the beginning it was the semi-official, 'homeless' initiative⁴⁶⁷ that started from wandering about the country in 'expeditions of a few hotspurs to the most remote villages.'⁴⁶⁸ It was a no-name group⁴⁶⁹ of one generation,⁴⁷⁰ which consisted of people who experienced Grotowski's active culture, but understood it in their own way. The people that had a strong need to open up and experience joy, energy and dedication that is not 'wasted' in a hermetic, 'laboratorial'

⁴⁶² See: Dočolomanský, "Wypowiedź o Gardzienicach," *op. cit.*, p.392; Matej Matejka—speaking about Dočolomanský's ending collaboration with Ida Kellarová after eight years working together; that was, coincidentally or not, the same year as Dočolomanský's visit to Gardzienice—called it rebellion as well. Interview with Matej Matejka, Wrocław March 4, 2014.

⁴⁶³ "If we want to build a legend, then I can say that the reason was that the sun had burned my wings. I speak of course of 'Ikar'—the beauty imagined by Breughel, when the distant comes in contact with the grandeur of the earth. I too came face to face with him, in sorrow, in despair of the existential Polish reserve of the east. This was a strong hit in the heart and in the head. Yes, this is an authentic story. My friend from the 'Theater 6' in Lublin—belonged to a group of people, who invited me there—he drove me from Lublin on a motorcycle mark 'Komar.' I sat sideways, in the back, on a metal frame. For over two years I wondered along the 'eastern wall,' in search for an appropriate place to work: at times in 'Sejnenszczyzna,' at times in 'Podlasie,' and at times back in the west. Someone suggested this place to us, they mentioned that it might be appropriate for a summer workshop. And it is true we did come off the bike, in front of the 'milk bar,' and the peasants grinned and laughed, like the 'Zaporozcy' from a 'Riepina' painting." Włodzimierz Staniewski interviewed by Janusz R. Kowalczyk, "Theatre of gesture," *Rzeczypospolita* October 5-6, 2002 (translation by OPT Gardzienice, "Media," accessed March 5, 2015, <http://gardzienice.org/en/MEDIA-ABOUT-US.html>).

⁴⁶⁴ See: Hodge, "Włodzimierz Staniewski...", *op. cit.*, p.271.

⁴⁶⁵ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.68.

⁴⁶⁶ See: Zbigniew Benedyktowicz, "Tajemnicę czynić bliską... Rozmowa z Włodzimierzem Staniewskim" ["Making the Mystery Close..."] Interview with Włodzimierz Staniewski], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁴⁶⁷ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁴⁶⁸ See: *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.20.

⁴⁷⁰ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.16.

situation.⁴⁷¹ It was a group that, under Staniewski's leadership, wanted to make theatre performances, but in connection to the 'true' audience, in a new 'natural environment' for the theatre; in an environment isolated from reality.⁴⁷²

Gardzienice were called a 'weird convent of people who sacrifice life for art.'⁴⁷³ Staniewski had found a form of expeditions, journeys that had a clear scenario and were developing into a theatre practice where so-called *Evening Performance* based on Rabelais was only a culmination point.⁴⁷⁴ The group was formally registered one year after its activities started (in 1978) as the Centre for Theatre Practices 'Gardzienice'—an association; choosing this unique for the theatre at that time form allowed the ensemble to work according to the law from 1932, which was not changed by the Communist regime.⁴⁷⁵ The theatre activities at the beginning were funded from donations of its members and with the financial help of friends.⁴⁷⁶

Staniewski had developed a certain philosophy and practice of theatre ecology which combined artistic and cultural activity. In 1979 he proposed a manifesto entitled *For a New Natural Environment for the Theatre*. The new natural environment of theatre 'rooted' in life meant, in practice: leaving the city (the theatre building, but the streets as well) to find people who are not affected by the 'routine of behaviors' or any learned, modeled way of perceiving things; arriving into a space forgotten or abandoned by theatre to become live participants of the events; to 'travel in' such space that embodies raw, natural folk culture.⁴⁷⁷ Staniewski was interested in the truth of the gesture, the truth in action, in the natural that could be immoral, but was profound. He proclaimed a new natural environment and proposed that the actors would put their 'masks' away acting without make-up (practically and metaphorically); a director would not coquet the audience, but leave his tricks, methods and systems and risk the reconciliation of stage and non-stage realities.⁴⁷⁸

The expedition as a theatre experience introduced an unusual form not only for the performers, but also for the spectators. It was a new idea of participating in culture but also making art. It might look similar to Barba's idea of barter (especially a night celebration

⁴⁷¹ See: Benedyktowicz, "Tajemnicę czynić bliską...", *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁴⁷² See: Benedyktowicz, "Antropologia kultury między nauką a sztuką" [Anthropology of Culture Between Science and Art], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—Włodzimierz Staniewski *Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.4.

⁴⁷³ See: *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁴ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.60.

⁴⁷⁵ In 1990, Gardzienice changed into a state culture institution.

⁴⁷⁶ See: Włodzimierz Staniewski's biography in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—Włodzimierz Staniewski *Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.558.

⁴⁷⁷ See: Włodzimierz Staniewski, "Po nowe środowisko naturalne teatru" [For a New Natural Environment for the Theatre] in *Sztuka otwarta. Parateatr II* (Wrocław: Ośrodek Teatru Otwartego Kalambur, 1982), p.36.

⁴⁷⁸ See: Włodzimierz Staniewski, "Po nowe...", *op. cit.*, p.40.

called ‘gathering’ that continued after the *Evening Performance* where the audience was invited to perform their songs and dances), but perhaps the main difference is that sometimes there were no spectators and no exchanges with other ‘cultural’ groups were happening. Gardzienice’s ‘actors’ were walking and pushing the wagon with the luggage and food through the roads. The aim of this experience, in addition to consolidating the group, was to arrive in the village after a true effort and experiencing a long journey, feeling real tiredness, hunger, etc. Polish theatre critics wrote at the end of the 1970s that Gardzienice’s group had traveled like the poorest Gypsies⁴⁷⁹ that had lost their last horse and it was hard to imagine that it was a theatre of the 20th century.⁴⁸⁰ The group would arrive in the village, invite people to the performance, prepare the stage without hiding anything, start the performance at sunset⁴⁸¹ (in this gap of time, as Staniewski says, when all sounds stop), and later continue the meeting with the villagers during the gatherings—sitting, chatting, dancing and drinking. All that process was understood as a part of the theatre practice.

“When we come to the village for 4-5 days (we called it an EXPEDITION), we know what people would expect and want from us—it is a PRESENCE, the CREATIVE PRESENCE. It is acting without pause, without rest, from the moment of entering the village to the moment of leaving it; day and night, until the village would fall asleep, until there wasn’t anyone to watch us. The prepared spectacle is only a culminating point, not the aim.”⁴⁸² The village was either friendly or not, rarely indifferent. Kornaś says it was hard to name what Staniewski proposed,⁴⁸³ also because the performances were vital, energetic, vulgar, but at the same time highly intellectual, referring to the motifs from the ‘high’ culture. It was not easy to define the spectator of such a performance. A few people from the city (including the scholars) were either invited to take part in this artistic ‘gypsy caravan’ or were coming directly to the village, perceiving it rather as a ‘stage’ and watching both the actors and the villagers reacting to them as a part of the whole performance. Even if the *Evening Performance* was not performed, because of the rain, it was still an expedition understood as a theatre practice.⁴⁸⁴ Before every expedition, research excursions were made (in order to gather information about the village inhabitants, landscape, etc.)⁴⁸⁵ and the scenario was prepared.

⁴⁷⁹ Additional context is that from 1964 Gypsy caravans—typical for Polish villages—were prohibited by the officials, so that in the late 1970s they had disappeared. See: Jerzy Ficowski, *Cyganie w Polsce. Dzieje i obyczaje* (Gdańsk: Tower Press, 2000), p.44.

⁴⁸⁰ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.67.

⁴⁸¹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.71.

⁴⁸² Staniewski, “Po nowe...” *op. cit.*, pp.40-41 (translation mine).

⁴⁸³ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.70.

⁴⁸⁴ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.63.

⁴⁸⁵ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.64.

But the scenario was open to changes depending on the circumstances.⁴⁸⁶ Theatre critics who had a chance to experience those expeditions or made an effort to see the performance in this ‘natural environment’ shared the opinion that—besides true theatrical potential of those actions—no real ‘masterpiece’ could be created under such circumstances,⁴⁸⁷ which—surprisingly—turned out not to be true.

The idea of an expedition changed throughout the years; also because such actions were prohibited after the introduction of Martial Law in Poland. In the 1980s the expeditions started to be undertaken also to bring a ‘material’ to the performance, which meant an inspiration and a human experience.⁴⁸⁸ Many actors were also visiting their elders, who gradually became not only a ‘material’ for inspiration, but also their ‘close’ people—in a human perspective. Since the 1990s the same term ‘expedition’ could be used to signify a number of different activities: a solitary trip to visit an exotic tribe,⁴⁸⁹ a caravan of fifty people arriving at a particular region to meet one ethnic group,⁴⁹⁰ but also a single visit to a neighbor’s house with the intention of singing together.⁴⁹¹ The ethos of the expedition—to ‘naturalize’ the performance,⁴⁹² the purpose of which was to ‘enroot’ the atmosphere in performers, slowly changed into a ‘legend’ and a ‘myth.’⁴⁹³ But it has also introduced an idea of the expedition as a travel undertaken with a special focus, in order to experience the basic differences and the basic similarities between people, an experience and a knowledge that could be turned into an artistic creation.

In the 1970s Staniewski came up with an idea of understanding a single person as a culture⁴⁹⁴ with a constant dialogue, polyphony of layers and culture influences present in man. Staniewski said that his wandering started because of searching for a true ‘Bakhtin’s’ polyphony and laughter, and also music and musicality that is present everywhere, especially in human communities—in the church during the mass while people are coughing;⁴⁹⁵ in the

⁴⁸⁶ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.63.

⁴⁸⁷ Opinion of Zbigniew Osiński from 1983. See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.88.

⁴⁸⁸ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.95.

⁴⁸⁹ Like Włodzimierz Staniewski’s visit of Indians Tarahumara in Mexico in 1987. See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁴⁹⁰ Like Huculszczyzna in Ukraine. See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.98.

⁴⁹¹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.109.

⁴⁹² See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁴⁹³ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.103.

⁴⁹⁴ See: Włodzimierz Staniewski, “Po drugiej w nocy. Notatki” [After 2AM. Notes], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.15.

⁴⁹⁵ See: Zbigniew Taranienko, “Jak pisałem *Gardzienice...*” [When I was writing “*Gardzienice...*”], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.442.

train compartment where people speak, fall asleep, wake up making all kinds of noises,⁴⁹⁶ etc. In one of the interviews Staniewski metaphorically said he would travel to hell, if he would be sure that devils sing.⁴⁹⁷

For Staniewski, the performers of Gardzienice were ‘smugglers’ between the worlds.⁴⁹⁸ Bringing something to the village and mirroring the village in their art. One could define the expedition as a theatrical and research practice.⁴⁹⁹ While speaking about the process of gathering material for the *Avakum* performance, Staniewski said: ‘we slept in their beds,’⁵⁰⁰ which meant the situation of ‘authenticity,’ of getting to know something through the experience of the actor’s own body. Paul Allain, a British researcher who took part in a larger expedition to Ukraine wrote, “They were not searching for organized folk choirs and experts, but hidden and untamed, unofficial aspects of a particular region’s culture.”⁵⁰¹

The theme of the Gardzienice performances has evolved from the inspiration with traditions of Eastern parts of Poland (including the orthodox rite), through the culture of troubadours in the Middle Ages to the interest in the ancient theatre, from which the actors the actors were exploring in particular the ideas of *cheironomy* and *chorea* (where, as Staniewski said, for the first time the inspiration/songs came from the stones.⁵⁰²) “Since the mid-1990s the orientation for Gardzienice’s theatre has shifted significantly from living sources to historical ones,”⁵⁰³ wrote Alison Hodge. Until that time, each performance created a special formula and referred to a different circle of interest, evolving from the base of songs and music.⁵⁰⁴ One of the key actors of Gardzienice, Mariusz Gołaj, said that every project requires a new workshop, new training of the body and voice, new music, new terminology and finally, a new constellation of people.⁵⁰⁵ To the rhetorical question whether all that ‘anthropological’ knowledge is important for an actor, Gołaj answers: yes, it is.⁵⁰⁶ Tomasz

⁴⁹⁶ See: Peter Hulton, “Gardzienice. Włodzimierz Staniewski w rozmowie z Peterem Hultonem” [Gardzienice. Włodzimierz Staniewski interviewed by Peter Hulton], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.432.

⁴⁹⁷ See: Staniewski, “Po drugiej w nocy,” *op. cit.*, p.14.

⁴⁹⁸ See: Hulton, “Gardzienice,” *op. cit.*, p.432.

⁴⁹⁹ See: Piotr Machul, “Mały słownik terminów Ośrodka Praktyk Teatralnych *Gardzienice*” [A Small Dictionary of “Gardzienice”], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.376.

⁵⁰⁰ See: Włodzimierz Staniewski, “Noty reżyserskie. Żywoć protopopa Avakuma, Carmina Burana, Metamorfozy” [Director’s Notes. The Life of Archpriest Avakum, Carmina Burana, Metamorphoses], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.328.

⁵⁰¹ Paul Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), p.108.

⁵⁰² See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.210.

⁵⁰³ Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, p.282.

⁵⁰⁴ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁵⁰⁵ See: Mariusz Gołaj, “*Metamorfozy* – zapiski aktora” [“Metamorphoses”—the actor’s notes], in *Konteksty* 1-4 (252-255)/2001—*Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.41; After *Metamorphosis* Gardzienice concentrated on exploring Ancient Greece, calling it their ‘haven.’

⁵⁰⁶ See: Gołaj, “*Metamorfozy...*,” *op. cit.*, p.43.

Rodowicz, the other founding member of Gardzienice, confirmed that with each performance they started from scratch, never using quotations from the previous work. Staniewski himself stated that as a director he always searched for a new language of the body, new exercises and tone.⁵⁰⁷ Every performance was an essence of many years of work.

Kornaś wrote that in Gardzienice the preparation of a performance was a theatre practice in itself, and it is not possible to write about it from an outsider perspective.⁵⁰⁸ On the contrary to what one might think after Staniewski's 'revolt' against Grotowski, both directors were in contact, observing each other's work, sharing similar interests, but exploring them differently. Allain wrote that according to him "Gardzienice reflects the combination of Grotowski's two main periods of activity, of performance and paratheatre."⁵⁰⁹ Staniewski admitted that he had used a few techniques of Grotowski's directing method in his first performance as a quotation and a 'sign of respect.'⁵¹⁰ But the main sources of his inspiration were songs and music. It was the music and musicality in training that was the key to the "company's rigorous performance technique."⁵¹¹ Allain also noted the influence of Grotowski in the actor's training: "Much of Gardzienice's method of training can be recognized in descriptions of the Laboratory's practice. Continuous, often repetitive and very simple movements would provide a foundation just as Gardzienice using rhythmical ways of walking as common motif."⁵¹² After more than twenty year of Staniewski's refusals to speak about Grotowski, he said it is perhaps time to start admitting his influence.⁵¹³

With the exception of *Evening Performance*, the Gardzienice productions were meant to be performed inside and it was possible to see them not only during the expeditions. The first performing space (the afore-mentioned former chapel with extraordinary acoustics) was small, with an area of 5x7m, and could host up to thirty spectators.⁵¹⁴ If there were more visitors, they literary stood on the stage.⁵¹⁵ The spectators were guided one by one to their places in the audience so—as the actors were already singing—they immediately entered the situation of the performance. As there was no foyer on this 'art farm,'⁵¹⁶ the people were

⁵⁰⁷ See: Hulton, "Gardzienice," *op. cit.*, p.433.

⁵⁰⁸ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

⁵⁰⁹ Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.53.

⁵¹⁰ See: Benedyktowicz, "Tajemnicę czynić bliską..." *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁵¹¹ Hodge, "Włodzimierz Staniewski..." *op. cit.*, p.271.

⁵¹² Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.45.

⁵¹³ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.49.

⁵¹⁴ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.114; For staging his performance outside of Gardzienice, Staniewski rather chooses 'sacred' places, avoiding theatres, see: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.18.

⁵¹⁵ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, pp.168-169.

⁵¹⁶ Małgorzata Dziewulska's expression. See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.110

guided through the meadow during sunset, what already triggered specific atmosphere and behavior⁵¹⁷ (criticized by some visitors as insincere).⁵¹⁸ The entire evening, including additional events like gathering after the performance, was carefully structured and organized to create the spectator's experience. Staniewski used to call the visitors of Gardzienice guests, not spectators or 'witnesses' like in Grotowski's Art as a vehicle.⁵¹⁹

The performances themselves were changing over the years, being 'naturalized' in actors,⁵²⁰ but also responding to the influence of the techniques used in the consequent performances, losing something from their previous quality—sharpness, for instance.⁵²¹ Only natural light was used in the performances, and most of the time the inner structure consisted of the choir and a few 'characters' that appeared as 'solo' voice (actions). Some critics compared it to the musical theatre,⁵²² the difference being that in Gardzienice's singing one could also hear such sounds as dogs' howling or birds' singing, broadening the common idea of what the singing is.⁵²³ Leszek Kolankiewicz called the first performances of Gardzienice ethnooratorio; the next ones were labeled by Staniewski as 'theatre essays,' as they started to appear in the form similar to a 'lecture.' Staniewski (like Tadeusz Kantor) sometimes entered the world of his performances himself, adjusting the tempo or assisting some acrobatic actions. This conjured up an idea of entering Staniewski's imagination.⁵²⁴

Tadeusz Kornaś named Gardzienice's performances cosmic dramas,⁵²⁵ knowing that sometimes out of reading many books and gathering a broad knowledge, only one gesture remained in the final structure.⁵²⁶ He said it is not possible to chase all the inspirations, even if the knowledge of the gesture's origin (as the one taken from a local healer) could significantly change the meaning of a scene.⁵²⁷ This knowledge could reveal other layers of understanding hidden in the piece and also work differently depending on the dramatic line the spectator is following (is the character Christ or Dionysus or both or none?). 40-50 minutes reflects the work of several years.⁵²⁸ After viewing the performances many times, with different casts and with a changed order of the scenes, their description—as Kornaś wrote—must inevitably refer

⁵¹⁷ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.117.

⁵¹⁸ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.118.

⁵¹⁹ See: Włodzimierz Lengauer, "Postscriptum o ofierze krwawej u Greków" [Postscriptum to the Bloody Sacrifice in Greece], in *Konteksty 1-4 (252-255)/2001—Włodzimierz Staniewski Gardzienice*, *op. cit.*, p.242.

⁵²⁰ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.122.

⁵²¹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.128.

⁵²² See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.129.

⁵²³ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.189.

⁵²⁴ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.170.

⁵²⁵ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.133.

⁵²⁶ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.134.

⁵²⁷ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.133.

⁵²⁸ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.135.

to a performance that never happened.⁵²⁹

Mariusz Gołaj said that gestures the actors ‘quote’ from different sources are neither explored for their psychological content, nor are they simply copied.⁵³⁰ Kornaś, describing the Gardzienice’s technique, wrote that the actors don’t copy the villagers’ gestures, but simply know them, sharing—after some years spent in the environment—the same social background.⁵³¹ Thus, the work of Gardzienice is focused on reviving specific topics and is focused on getting the atmosphere under the skin of the performers,⁵³² overcoming the individual fate.⁵³³

Staniewski, being aware of the complexity of many dramatic lines present in the performance, wants the visitors rather to ‘breathe’ an atmosphere of the performance. He tries to achieve a ‘closeness effect’ (referring to an ‘alienation effect’ of Bertold Brecht, also often used in Gardzienice’s performances).⁵³⁴ As Dočolomanský wrote in his essay, the Gardzienice’s performance pulls the audience in, more than appealing to the intellect in the first instance; on the other hand, through the presence of the ‘off-stage’ behavior of the actors, it does not pretend to claim to ‘be’ the reality (of the village, the orthodox community, the Middle Ages’ troubadours or the Ancient Greece actors). It rather tries to have an effect of ‘religious’ ritual, when the audience could see both: the theatre and the reality it refers to.

That ‘closeness effect’ is firstly build between the actors through their training, where trust and mutuality are the most important.⁵³⁵ Many exercises need assurance or require acrobatics, which builds the trust within the group. Hodge, writing about specific actor’s technique, emphasized the spine as a main source of the movement and meaning: “During partnership work the spine becomes the origin of movement for the whole body, and this demands a total physical commitment. The actor is forced to communicate through this often unfamiliar focus, personally challenging and dismantling any preconceived self-image. The flexibility of the spine is maintained.”⁵³⁶ Within the training, the exercises are done in

⁵²⁹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.132.

⁵³⁰ See: Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, p.272.

⁵³¹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.155. On the other hand, Gardzienice’s acting is compared to the Asian tradition: “In many ways the process of the Gardzienice actor’s stylisation is similar to that of Japanese Noh Theatre, in which the performance is based on two potentially opposing forms: the lyricism of song and dance, and the reality of character type. The fluidity of movement complements the articulation of the character.” Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, p.284.

⁵³² See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.207.

⁵³³ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.135.

⁵³⁴ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.124.

⁵³⁵ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.123.

⁵³⁶ Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, p.276.

constant motion, in the same rhythm and tempo for the entire group.⁵³⁷ This creates a specific physical language of the performances, underlying the unity of the group. Hodge wrote: “By engaging in an intimate relationship with a partner, the actor develops subtle ways of communicating meaning beyond verbal language, through musicality, space, touch, gestures, sound, breath, rhythm and energy”⁵³⁸

When there is singing, there is also movement and among others—the singing happens only ‘with somebody’ or ‘to somebody.’⁵³⁹ “Traditional songs, which are treated as living phenomena, are learned orally and through repetition. (...) The training is extended through exploring vocal phenomena such as breathing patterns, an actor’s personal sounds (sighs, cries and shouts), rhythmic exercises based on laughter and ritualistic vocal traditions such as lamentation. The actors explore harmony, polyphony, antiphony and dissonance, rhythm and counterpoint. The work extends the actor’s responsiveness.”⁵⁴⁰ The musicality understood as a phenomena of being in the space and with the others is strengthened by the so-called night runs that result in the union of the runners and serve as a conscious warm-up of the group before the night rehearsals.

The night rehearsals of Gardzienice ensemble create a specific atmosphere and ease concentration, but also create a problem of keeping balance between personal life and company life.⁵⁴¹ Performers of Gardzienice are even now mostly non-professional actors (sometimes called ethno-actors⁵⁴²) who join the group only after an internship period.⁵⁴³ In 1997 Staniewski founded the Academy for Theatre Practices that in two years educate ‘theatre and cultural practitioners.’⁵⁴⁴ Most of the new actors of the ensemble completed the Academy. While being in Gardzienice they are usually not playing anywhere else—it is a constellation gathered for a long-term project that disintegrates later (due to the end of the project or due to the conflicts). Allain wrote: “The actors need to be flexible and tough, both physically and emotionally. (...) The actor must also be prepared to be flexible in the commitments outside work, for a rehearsal session will last as long as necessary. Holidays are taken when they fit into Staniewski’s plans for the group.”⁵⁴⁵ The scholar mentions the pattern

⁵³⁷ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.125.

⁵³⁸ Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, pp.275-276.

⁵³⁹ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.126.

⁵⁴⁰ Hodge, “Włodzimierz Staniewski...,” *op. cit.*, p.275.

⁵⁴¹ See: Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.74.

⁵⁴² See: “Bez oklasków można wyżyć,” *op. cit.*, p.159.

⁵⁴³ See: Kornaś, *Włodzimierz Staniewski...*, *op. cit.*, p.19.

⁵⁴⁴ See: “Academy for Theatre Practices,” OPT Gardzienice, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://gardzienice.org/en/Academy-for-Theatre-Practices.html>.

⁵⁴⁵ Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.75.

of crisis as a visible dynamic ruling the group, and also as Staniewski's 'strategy' of leading the actor: "There is a similar ethos apparent in their training. It is a cliché that breaking through the tiredness barrier can encourage thrilling developments in creative process but this has been frequently evident in their work."⁵⁴⁶ Staniewski, mentioning himself shouting at his actors in director's diaries,⁵⁴⁷ explains that he uses the technique of creating a crisis situation, both physical and psychological, in order to achieve extraordinary results. Allain wrote: "It's not that you got to be tired. But physical effort is necessary in order to become more resistant psychologically, to develop a real sense of togetherness, to prepare you for what is to come."⁵⁴⁸ Not seeing it only as a value, the scholar comments about the dynamic of working in a state of permanent crisis: "This is perhaps valid for short periods but as a permanent state can create severe personal problems and tensions within the group."⁵⁴⁹ This ambivalence of experience (the state of crisis as a value and as a problem in the same time) is perhaps a method of achieving the specific quality of expression. The list of constellations presented on the Gardzienice's website shows the dynamic of constant disintegration of the ensemble.⁵⁵⁰

Maja Jawor, actress of Farm in the Cave, who graduated from the Academy of Theatre Practices in 2003,⁵⁵¹ calls Gardzienice a place of inspiration. She experienced both physical and vocal trainings in the master-pupil relation, where the teaching was concentrated on doing, not on theorizing or explanations.⁵⁵² The Academy (where she studied together with Róbert Nižník, another key actor at the outset of the Farm in the Cave) took place once a month and lasted between four and six days; the working hours were from 10 till 1AM, with breaks. The training a part of nature taking place, depending on the time of the day or night, both inside and outside using minimum verbal expression, which helped to concentrate and open-up actors towards one another and to the musicality of nature.⁵⁵³ The night runs, according to Jawor, helped to achieve integrity; loud breathing allowed the actors to keep a common rhythm. Writing personal notes was part of the training. The songs were taught in the same way, as a collective experience; without using notation and by learning to sing all

⁵⁴⁶ Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.66.

⁵⁴⁷ See: Staniewski, "Po drugiej w nocy," *op. cit.*, p.22.

⁵⁴⁸ Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.75.

⁵⁴⁹ Allain, *Polish Theatre in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p.66.

⁵⁵⁰ See: "Previous Constellations," OPT Gardzienice, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://gardzienice.org/en/Previous-Constellations.html>.

⁵⁵¹ See: Maja Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb. Herecká technika a herecká tvořivost* [Voice and Movement. Acting Technique and Actor's Creativity], trans. Michala Benešová (Praha: KANT, 2010), p.12; Jawor met Dočolomanský during *Cosmos* in 2000, but she joined Farm in the Cave only later, because of the influence of Róbert Nižník. See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁵⁵² That is on the contrary to Academy of Performing Arts in Cracow where Jawor studied traditional acting for one semester. See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.9;

⁵⁵³ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, pp.18-19.

voices of a song.⁵⁵⁴ The voice work in Gardzienice was led, among others, by Mariana Sadovska, who later on cooperated on Farm in the Cave's second performance *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*. Jawor admitted to being under influence of Gardzienice's aesthetic at the beginning of her collaboration with Farm in the Cave in 2003. Even if she did not take part in any of the Gardzienice's expeditions—as they were not happening anymore, remaining more as a kind of myth—she wrote about them as a source of inspiration and personal experience of performers gathering on the road.⁵⁵⁵ That image of expedition is reflected in Jawor's experience with Farm in the Cave and their expedition to the Ruthenian countryside in the framework of the *Sclavi* project.⁵⁵⁶

In 2011 Dočolomanský said that thanks to Staniewski he understood how deep and closely connected music and theatre are.⁵⁵⁷ However, he added that his work with songs was more influenced by Ida Kellarová with whom he collaborated for eight years before he met Staniewski. During Kellarová's workshops Dočolomanský met also Nigel Charnock, a dancer with whom Lloyd Newson started his DV8 Physical Theatre in the 1980s. Charnock, performing in *Dead Dreams of Monochrome Men* (1990), among other performances of DV8, was known for finding inspiration in the philosophies behind jazz music and improvisation.⁵⁵⁸ Matej Matejka, a key actor for Farm in the Cave's beginnings, recalling the first project of the ensemble, acknowledged strong inspiration with Gardzienice, next to the DV8 ensemble.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁴ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb, op. cit.*, p.15; 28.

⁵⁵⁵ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb, op. cit.*, p.55.

⁵⁵⁶ Jawor also says that Farm in the Cave's choice of travelling to Ruthenian minority area was partly inspired by Gardzienice's expeditions to the Lemkos region (a name for Ruthenian minority in Poland). See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb, op. cit.*, pp.55-57.

⁵⁵⁷ Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 5, 2011.

⁵⁵⁸ Lloyd Newson, "Nigel Charnock Obituary," *The Guardian* August 7, 2012, accessed March 3, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2012/aug/07/nigel-charnock>.

⁵⁵⁹ Interview with Matej Matejka, Wrocław March 4, 2015.

Part II: Farm in the Cave

Lorca—a ‘Founding’ Project

Director’s biography

“Everything that I had thought directing should be, failed,”⁵⁶⁰ wrote Viliam Dočolomanský, recalling the process of creating *Dark Love Sonnets*, which came-about as an outgrowth of the *Lorca* project. The project started in 2001 when Viliam Dočolomanský was 26. It was not his first attempt at physical theatre, but it was the one that made a difference and created the foundation for International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave.

Viliam Dočolomanský was born in 1975 in Slovakia⁵⁶¹ of a family with some Romanian roots.⁵⁶² When speaking about his artistic development as a theatre director, he emphasizes the role of music and traveling; indeed, theatre for him began with those two.⁵⁶³ As a child, he played piano and sang in a choir. In many interviews he mentions Alena Komorášová, the piano teacher from the Folk School of Art in Liptovský Mikuláš, giving her a credit for developing his musicality. “I think she taught me to listen to the music. Perhaps this is a basis for how I ‘speak’ in theatre.”⁵⁶⁴ His piano teacher taught him to hear polyphony, work on details as an interpret and ‘experience music with the whole body.’⁵⁶⁵ She also introduced him to Bach and jazz.

As a teenager, Dočolomanský created a jazz band together with his colleague from choir who would later become one of the important collaborators of Farm in the Cave (*Dark Love Sonnets, The Theatre*) known under her artistic name, Miriam Bayle.⁵⁶⁶ Playing jazz, he

⁵⁶⁰ Viliam Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos ľudskej skúsenosti (Reflexia praktik pri práci na inscenáciách Sonety temné lásky a Sclavi – Emigrantova Píseň)* [Expression as a Transmission of Human Experience (A Reflection on Practices During the Work on Sonnets of Dark Love and Sclavi—The Song of an Emigrant Performances), PhD diss., Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2007, p.129 (translation mine).

⁵⁶¹ “I was born in the town of Malacky, but my father was a soldier, so we moved out. First we moved to Komárno and later to Liptovský Mikuláš; from where I left to study in Brno.” (translation mine) See: Viliam Dočolomanský, “Lietame vo vzduchoprazdne” [Flying in a Vacuum], interview by Eva Andrejčáková, accessed January 25, 2015, <http://www.sme.sk/c/3390653/viliam-docolomanskylietame-vo-vzduchoprazdne.html>.

⁵⁶² See: Viliam Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace. Duende jako objektivní fenomén” [The Spanish Inspiration. Duende as a Objective Phenomenon], *DISK 3 (2)/2003*, p.75 and also see: “We traveled [with Roman Horák during the expedition to Romania] in the footsteps of my grandfather who taught kids in the Slovak community there. He was moving with grandmother and kids from village to village in the Bihor region. It looks as though he had been a respected and useful man: a teacher and also sort of a priest... In front of one school he erected a copy of the statue of Jesus Christ from Rio de Janeiro. In Romania he had met my grandmother—a miller's daughter and fell in love.” Dočolomanský, “Lietame vo vzduchoprazdne,” *op. cit.*

⁵⁶³ Based on Viliam Dočolomanský’s biography, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed in January 2011.

⁵⁶⁴ Viliam Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asociálů” [We are a Group of Voluntary Anti-socials], interview by Jan Kerbr, *Divadelní noviny 10 (19)/2010*, p.8 (translation mine).

⁵⁶⁵ See: Viliam Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy” [My Teachers are Women], interview by Michal Drtina, accessed January 29, 2015, <http://www.amaterskascena.cz/clanek/uci-me-zeny-110317235359.html>.

⁵⁶⁶ See: Viliam Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asociálů,” *op. cit.*, p.8.

started composing.⁵⁶⁷ Around the same time he had created an unprofessional physical theatre group Bodea, naming it after the surname of his Romanian grandmother. The first performance was *Kaddish for Naomi Ginsberg*. “At 16 I had ‘discovered’ Ginsberg and the beatniks. I got inspired. It took my breath away and I felt the great need to realize my visions, to which they inspired me.”⁵⁶⁸ This is one specific reason why the group was created. A physical expression that was interesting to young Dočolomanský comes perhaps from his dreams—as he said in one of the interviews—to become an actor and a dancer.⁵⁶⁹

Because of *Kaddish for Naomi Ginsberg*, Dočolomanský met Allen Ginsberg when he was visiting the Czech Republic for the last time. An older amateur actress who played Ginsberg’s mother in Dočolomanský’s adaptation, wrote to the poet a year prior to requesting rights to perform *Kaddish*.⁵⁷⁰ Ginsberg not only answered offering the rights for free, he also invited the young director to interpret his poems on stage with him.⁵⁷¹ “A teenager in Eastern Europe during the fall of Communism, Dočolomanský described his first encounter with Ginsberg’s poetry, and later the poet himself, as ‘an unbelievable experience.’”⁵⁷² *Kaddish for Naomi Ginsberg* was shown at the Marta Studio, the performance space within the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno (JAMU). Just before Dočolomanský had gone there to take his theatre directing exams, he was asked about Ginsberg.⁵⁷³ In 2008 having lecture in Yale, Dočolomanský said, “The beginning of my work in the theatre was influenced by Allen Ginsberg.”⁵⁷⁴

From 1994 to 1999 Viliam Dočolomanský studied theatre directing at Brno's theatre school, JAMU under the tutelage of Arnošt Goldflam and Josef Kovalčuk. He acknowledges that Goldflam’s irony was interesting to him⁵⁷⁵ as this Czech playwright, writer, director, screenwriter, and actor of Jewish roots was known from his tragi-comical character of expression. However, it would appear that his studies had minimal influence upon Dočolomanský’s way of directing. In one of the interviews, he said it is perhaps a pity he did not experiment more during this period. His focus from the very beginning was going towards

⁵⁶⁷ Based on Dočolomanský’s biography, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed in January 2011.

⁵⁶⁸ Viliam Dočolomanský, “S drogami nemám nič spoločné” [I Have Nothing in Common with Drugs], interview by Eva Andrejčáková, accessed January 27, 2015, <http://www.sme.sk/c/1280997/s-drogami-nemam-nic-spolocne.html>, (translation mine).

⁵⁶⁹ See: Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asociálů,” *op. cit.*, p.8.

⁵⁷⁰ See: Dočolomanský, “S drogami nemám nič spoločné,” *op. cit.*

⁵⁷¹ Based on Viliam Dočolomanský’s biography, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed January 2011.

⁵⁷² Derek Tam, “Ginsberg a muse for Docolomansky,” *Yale Daily News* August 3, 2008, accessed November 11, 2014, <http://yaledailynews.com/blog/2008/04/03/ginsberg-a-muse-for-docolomansky/>.

⁵⁷³ See: Dočolomanský, “S drogami nemám nič spoločné,” *op. cit.*

⁵⁷⁴ Tam, “Ginsberg a muse for Docolomansky,” *op. cit.*

⁵⁷⁵ Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asociálů,” *op. cit.*, p.9.

physical theatre. While studying at JAMU he had the opportunity to lead, for one semester, a physical movement class where he had experimented with actor's training. *A Streetcar Named Desire*, directed during studies, was transformed by Dočolomanský into physical theatre.⁵⁷⁶ At JAMU he had met also actresses Gabriela Pyšná and Hana Varadinová who would start Farm in the Cave with him. In 2001—after he had created *The Wizard of Oz*, a musical with some elements of capoeira⁵⁷⁷ in collaboration with British choreographer of Nigerian roots Olu Taiwo—he had met Jana Pilátová, who had criticized the workshop for students led by Taiwo and Dočolomanský as superficial.⁵⁷⁸

At the beginning of his career as a theatre director Viliam Dočolomanský was immediately recognized by the public because of the same surname as his uncle, Michal Dočolomanský, a famous Czechoslovak actor. Just after finishing JAMU, he was working for the mainstream theatres in Czech and Slovak Republics. In total, outside of Farm in the Cave theatre studio, Dočolomanský directed eight performances: *A Party for Boris* by Thomas Bernhard (1998, JAMU/Marta Studio, Brno, Czech premiere), *A Streetcar Named Desire* based on Tennessee Williams (1999, JAMU/Marta Studio, Brno), *The Little Mermaid* by Hans Christian Anderson (1999, Divadlo Na rázcestí, Banská Bystrica), *The Dance of Death* by August Strindberg (2000, HaDivadlo, Brno), *Die Susse Europe* – an adaptation of Thomas Mann's novels (2000, Západočeské divadlo, Cheb), *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum (2001, Marta Studio, Brno), *The Maids* by Jean Genet (2002, Divadlo Na rázcestí, Banská Bystrica), *Portrait of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde (2003, Městské divadlo, Karlovy Vary). He had created as well choreography for *Markéta Lazarová* of Vladislav Vančura (2002, National Theatre, Prague, dir. Jan Antonín Pitínský), for which he had received the *Trojský kůň* Award.

In *Belated Letter* to Jerzy Grotowski,⁵⁷⁹ published in 2005 in the Czech theatre newspaper, Dočolomanský wrote: “Maybe it is a shame that I’ve only read the famous ‘diaries’ of J. Pilátová while studying at JAMU in Brno. Uneasiness of the heart appeared, known to many readers of Grotowski’s books: “This man describes exactly what I can’t describe on my own, something I also feel...”⁵⁸⁰ In the ‘letter,’ Dočolomanský wrote that it

⁵⁷⁶ Based on Dočolomanský's biography, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed in January 2011.

⁵⁷⁷ Matej Matejka—who performed in *The Wizard of Oz* at International Theatre School Festival in Amsterdam, substituting other actor—said the performance was not similar to *Dark Love Sonnets*, interview with Matej Matejka, April 4, 2015.

⁵⁷⁸ Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

⁵⁷⁹ ‘Belated Letters’ is the title of a regular column in *Divadelní noviny*, Czech theatre newspaper. See: Viliam Dočolomanský, „Opožděné dopisy. Viliam Dočolomanský píše Jerzy Grotowskému” [Belated Letters. Viliam Dočolomanský writes to Jerzy Grotowski], *Divadelní noviny* 12 (14)/2005, p.15.

⁵⁸⁰ Dočolomanský, “Opožděné dopisy,” *op. cit.*, p.15 (translation mine).

was his colleague from studies who persuaded him to go to Wrocław to watch videos of Grotowski's performances. Dočolomanský's memories build connections to other directors of laboratory theatres that would appear later on: "In that time I couldn't have known that there would be any Farm in the Cave and that the Laboratory Theatre's space would host its performances (...) that I'd be walking in Prague and running through the forests and groves of Lubelskie region with Włodzimierz Staniewski; that I'd have the privilege of dining with Eugenio Barba and the actors from Odin Teatret and that I'd feel like a part of family."⁵⁸¹ The symbolic confirmation of 'being a part of the family' of the laboratory theatres came in 2009 when Richard Schechner mentioned Farm in the Cave next to Gardzienice in his essay about types of avant-gardes, calling it, next to Gardzienice, a 'traditional seeking avant-garde.'⁵⁸²

What seems exceptional in the biography of Viliam Dočolomanský as a theatre director is his cooperation with Ida Kellarová on her International School for Human Voice that started in 1995 and lasted till 2000. In an article entitled *Wounded Healer* Dočolomanský wrote: "Ida is a phenomenon"⁵⁸³—"a singer, arranger, teacher, choir master, organizer, one of the leading personalities in music, a Roma activist—this could be the enumeration of her activities. This list would make quite a incongruous picture, if we were not aware, what connects all these activities together."⁵⁸⁴ Even though Kellarová was studying piano (and cello later on) in regular music schools since the age of five, she rejected the use of musical notation to teach people singing. She uses her own 'notation' to develop even as much as six voices in a choir. She usually works on Gypsy songs without introducing singers to the literary meaning of lyrics. Dočolomanský wrote: "Her method of work with the voice is sometimes regarded dangerous and incomprehensible. Not only laymen keep asking, what is this woman after, when she asks the participants of her workshops to confess in front of the others their traumatizing experiences with the mother, provokes them not to be afraid and express their maximal anger. And not only that. She covers their eyes for two days with a scarf, forbids them to speak and when these adult, mature people cry just like small children,

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸² See: Richard Schechner, "Five Avant-gardes... or None?" in *Theatre and Humanism in a World of Violence*, ed. Ian Herbert and Kalina Stefanova, XXIV Congress of the International Association of Theatre Critics, St. Klient Ohridsky University Press, Sofia 2009.

⁵⁸³ Viliam Dočolomanský, "Zraněný léčitel: (Osobní revoluce Idy Kellarové)" [Wounded Healer: (The personal revolution of Ida Kellarová)] *DISK* 7 (3)/2004, p.89 (translation: "Wounded Healer," Ida Kellarova, accessed February 10, 2015, <http://kellarova.com/en/wounded-healer>); It was Olu Taiwo who called Kellarová a 'wounded healer.' See: Dočolomanský, "Španělská inspirace," *op. cit.*, p.82.

⁵⁸⁴ Dočolomanský, "Zraněný léčitel," *op. cit.*, p.89 (translation: "Wounded Healer," *op. cit.*).

she considers this to be a success. And what does all this have to do with singing?”⁵⁸⁵ The way Kellarová works with voice influenced Dočolomanský’s method of theatre directing.⁵⁸⁶

In his essay Dočolomanský described Kellarová as a flamenco singer. “Any song, in her rendering, becomes a dramatic situation in the most exalted sense of the word.”⁵⁸⁷ Her workshops, addressed mostly to people who have problem singing, are on the border of therapy, as, according to Kellarová, voice is an emotion and singing is close to crying. Her workshops are designed to open people through the voice—by breathing, moving and feeling the rhythm. “Voice is all the body.”⁵⁸⁸ Dočolomanský wrote: “Her singing often evokes a plea, a cry, a surrender, longing. Her voice opens up in space like fire.”⁵⁸⁹ Kellarová’s voice does not want to sound nice; instead, it brings transformation to personality, as Dočolomanský wrote.

According to Dočolomanský, Ida Kellarová works much like an actor: “Ida, singing *Joj mamó* for the thousandth time works similarly as an actor, embodying identical situation in reruns. The tones and the melody are the same—it is the same bed, but the river running in it is different and new each time. The river of transformed emotion here and now. Thus she heals herself and in this way she can heal also others, who listen to her.”⁵⁹⁰ In this context Dočolomanský recalls Grotowski and finds similarities with his *Action* (known to him from the film *Downstairs Action*).⁵⁹¹ Songs themselves are a specific language, which does not need to be understood intellectually. Kellarová, not explaining participants the literary meaning of songs they sing. She creates an experience that is prepared precisely, starting from food in the morning.⁵⁹² Dočolomanský wrote, it is a ‘laboratorial’ work, but opened as an experience to everybody. In 1999, Igor Chaun made a documentary *With Ida Behind the Mirror*, where Dočolomanský is present as one of the teachers. “This is an individual and sometimes drastic technique of teaching, which she started out as self-taught voice teacher. Over the last twenty years thousands of students from different countries went through her courses at home and abroad.”⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁶ Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

⁵⁸⁷ Dočolomanský, “Zraněný léčitel,” *op. cit.*, p.92 (translation: “Wounded Healer,” *op. cit.*).

⁵⁸⁸ See: *Dílna hlasu a těla* [Workshop of Voice and Body] (dir. Lubomír Kubač), 1998.

⁵⁸⁹ Dočolomanský, “Zraněný léčitel,” *op. cit.*, p.92 (translation: “Wounded Healer,” *op. cit.*).

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹¹ See: Dočolomanský, “Zraněný léčitel,” *op. cit.*, p.93.

⁵⁹² See: Dočolomanský, “Zraněný léčitel,” *op. cit.*, p.94.

⁵⁹³ See: “S Idou za zrcadlem” [With Ida Behind the Mirror], Česko-Slovenská filmová databáze, accessed January 27, 2015, <http://www.csfd.cz/film/347722-s-idou-za-zrcadlem/> (translation mine).

Dočolomanský met Kellarová at 18 as a participant of one such workshop.⁵⁹⁴ Many years after, he said that he learned by this practice how to ‘open a song.’⁵⁹⁵ Observing Kellarová’s way of working with voice expression as well as strategy to push people to their limits, he developed his own way of working.⁵⁹⁶ There were plans to create a performance of physical theatre with Kellarová’s women’s group called Bogoro, but it stayed as a project.⁵⁹⁷ Speaking about his trials to work on physical theatre before Farm in the Cave appeared, Dočolomanský wrote, “All those trials were characterized by strong romantic conviction and vision close to social utopia; pragmatically not rooted in the real circumstances.”⁵⁹⁸

Asked about practical knowledge of directing on the field of physical theatre, Dočolomanský emphasized that he had no teacher and nobody led him regarding theatre directing. Even if he knew the work of Grotowski, Staniewski or Barba as well as Pina Bausch, Wim Vandekeybus or DV8 Physical Theatre, Dočolomanský admitted nobody taught him how to direct.⁵⁹⁹ In a ‘letter’ to Grotowski he wrote: “Even if I do not search for you, I am and I work in the same place as you’ve been”⁶⁰⁰—what rather means interest in physical expression. Dočolomanský credits Pina Bausch for her way of thinking and the way of creating narration, which seems to him very close.⁶⁰¹ About Jana Pilátová, who proposed to work with Farm in the Cave as a literary adviser after she had seen *Dark Love Sonnets*, Dočolomanský said: “She opened for me the horizons of the context and practices of the ‘third theatre,’ which she knew so well and she spoke about them so profoundly.”⁶⁰² As a literary adviser of the ensemble, Pilátová works on the physical text in the similar way as it would be a verbal one. Dočolomanský said she is an adviser with which the ‘generation gap does not exist.’⁶⁰³

Dark Love Sonnets, inspired by Federico García Lorca’s poem, was a ‘founding’ project not only for International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave, but most of all for Viliam Dočolomanský; bringing him new approach towards theatre directing. Asked if creating Farm in the Cave was an impulse or more a systematic plan, he answered, “I had no thought-out plans or artistic program! Since childhood, I instinctively tried to found my own theatre

⁵⁹⁴ See: Dočolomanský, “Zraněný léčitel,” *op. cit.*, p.94.

⁵⁹⁵ See: Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy,” *op. cit.*

⁵⁹⁶ Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 27, 2011.

⁵⁹⁷ The project was called *Die Betrogene* (The Black Swan), archive of Farm in the Cave.

⁵⁹⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.7 (translation mine).

⁵⁹⁹ Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 27, 2011.

⁶⁰⁰ Dočolomanský, “Opožděné dopisy,” *op. cit.*, p.15 (translation mine).

⁶⁰¹ See: Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asocialů,” *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁶⁰² Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

⁶⁰³ See: Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asocialů,” *op. cit.*, p.9.

group. Farm in the Cave was a trial that continued. All previous failed.”⁶⁰⁴ In his doctoral thesis finishing his *scenology* studies⁶⁰⁵ under the leadership of Jaroslav Vostrý at Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (DAMU) in 2007, Dočolomanský stated, “On a deeper level from my side, it was about repeated trials to create a model of a theatre group that works continually in the form of the so-called *third theatre* like Gardzienice, Odin Teatret or Grotowski’s Laboratory Theatre.”⁶⁰⁶ In one interview Dočolomanský mentioned that as he did not react to proposals by the mainstream theatre after he finished the school, suddenly he found himself without job⁶⁰⁷ and that created an opportunity to try independent production. In 2007 Dočolomanský wrote: “To work on a project inspired by Lorca is the first attempt to create a performance away from mainstream theatrical institutions and at the same time to create a continuous ensemble.”⁶⁰⁸ In 2008, Dočolomanský visited Yale and spoke about beginnings of Farm in the Cave studio. One observer to this visit, wrote, “Dočolomanský and several colleagues collaborated on a theater production originally slated to be performed in three months. The production time ultimately stretched eight months, draining away his savings. But Dočolomanský was nevertheless pleased with the outcome. ‘I could not go back to performing Shakespeare in three or four weeks,’ he said.”⁶⁰⁹

Farm in the Cave started as a project not as a plan to create a laboratory theatre ensemble. In August 2001 this no-name group traveled to Andalusia where—after the expedition—the name of the group was chosen based on Lorca’s family farm. Dočolomanský recalled the story in his thesis: “Thanks to the contact with the worker of museum in Valderubia we could sleep at Lorca’s family farm, called *Daimuz* which is Arabic for Farm in the Cave.”⁶¹⁰ The group spent the night speaking poetry of Lorca and singing traditional songs gathered by him. “This place was interesting for me, because the earliest memories of the poet are connected to it.”⁶¹¹ It was Jan Antonín Pitínský—for whose *Markéta Lazarová*,

⁶⁰⁴ Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

⁶⁰⁵ *Scenology* is a concept developed by Czech scholar Jaroslav Vostrý (1931) that examines—like performance studies—contemporary culture for its ‘scenic’/performative elements.

⁶⁰⁶ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.7 (translation mine).

⁶⁰⁷ See: Dočolomanský, “Jsme skupina dobrovolných asociálů,” *op. cit.*, p.8.

⁶⁰⁸ Viliam Dočolomanský, *Resumé. Expression as a Transmission of Human Experience (A Reflection on Practices During the Work on Sonnets of Dark Love and Sclavi—The Song of an Emigrant Performances)*, PhD diss., Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2007, p.29.

⁶⁰⁹ Tam, “Ginsberg a muse for Docolomansky,” *op. cit.*

⁶¹⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.44 (translation mine).

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*

Dočolomanský was working on choreography—who upon hearing the name Farm in the Cave suggested this could a good name for the group.⁶¹²

Hana Varadzinová in her doctoral thesis—also written after her *scenology* studies at DAMU—confirmed that Farm in the Cave as a group was created during the *Lorca* project.⁶¹³ Varadzinová acknowledged that, knowing Dočolomanský from studies, she expected something different than regular performance, keeping in mind singing passages that in performances of Dočolomanský were ‘particularly intense and passionate.’⁶¹⁴ In hindsight, she wrote that Dočolomanský was attracted by the tradition of the third theatre, but in that time she was not very familiar with the topic. As for *Dark Love Sonnets* she thought it would be a performance built around the scenario, with specific elements ‘brought’ from the expedition to enrich it. An expedition was for her a tool to find an atmosphere in which Lorca grew up and which formed him. She did not expect creating a physical theatre performance; none of the actors was experienced in it. From the perspective of time, she wrote, “The problem of ‘how to connect all those sources [materials from the expedition, Lorca’s poetry, his experiences and songs] in a story was a distressful journey.’”⁶¹⁵

Only in 2003, when Dočolomanský started his doctoral studies at DAMU, the group gathered deeper inside into topic of expeditions. After many years, asked about expedition, Dočolomanský answered, “We are calling it with prof. Jaroslav Vostrý basic scenic research.”⁶¹⁶ The expedition is by Farm in the Cave understood as a deliberate rupture of the ensemble from its cultural context confronting another culture that is foreign and mostly can be described as that of a minority. By direct, oral teaching of melody, steps, movement variations the group is able to absorb knowledge passed from generation to generation; something that can’t be learned academically. Dočolomanský explained his way of thinking: “Every small kid learns steps to the samba by observing adults, and when grown up, they are able to vibrate his hips in frantic rhythms. As foreigners we do not attempt to copy or imitate this or to export it as an attractive form to the Czech Republic, but we try to absorb something that is universally human, something re-melted into those steps, something that we all,

⁶¹² See: Viliam Dočolomanský, “Inscenace souboru Farma v jeskyni inspirovaná zločineckými praktikami nadnárodních korporací” [Farm in the Cave’s Performance Inspired by Criminal Practices of Transnational Corporations] *Divadlo žije!*, Česká televize, accessed March 7, 2015, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/1095352674-divadlo-zije/214542158010006/video/332071>.

⁶¹³ See: Hana Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost. Hudební základ hereckého projevu v inscenaci Sclavi (Emigrantova píseň) souboru Farma v jeskyni* [Scenicity and Musicality. Musical Basis of Actor’s Expression in Farm in the Cave’s performance Sclavi (The Song of an Emigrant)], PhD Diss., Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2008, p.151.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁵ Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.152.

⁶¹⁶ Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

regardless of nationality, feel, but that no one can explain. It is a transmission of human experience here and now on the basis of resonance, sonority. And that is how our actors transmit the vibration to the audience during performances. It is not only the interpretation of something, but an effort to transfer something here and now.”⁶¹⁷ The trip to Andalusia brought all those questions of not being able to learn so fast such complex technique built by generations and rooted in the culture. This initial, formative experience influenced Farm in the Cave’s method; direct experience of specific practices of gathering inspiration from reality was eventually transformed into a theatre performance. Moreover, it brought specific training that influenced the physical language of the group.

In his thesis, Dočolomanský recalled the expeditions in detail as part of the description of the troupe's first two performances: *Dark Love Sonnets* and *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*. Since 2003 and from the beginning of his doctoral studies, Dočolomanský admitted constant practical reflection on his theatre creation in the framework of Farm in the Cave studio, what influenced the process of creation.⁶¹⁸ In 2007—when Dočolomanský as well as most of his actors finished studies—Miroslav Ballay, author of the first monograph about Farm in the Cave, proclaimed the end of the studio's first (formative) phase.⁶¹⁹ The fact that director and many actors of Farm in the Cave were continuing post gradual studies in *scenology* at Prague's Academy of Performing Arts (AMU), brought constant self-reflection of the theatre practices, but consequently resulted in many detailed descriptions of this same process.

In a short biography written by Dočolomanský on the occasion of the New Theatrical Realities Award in 2011, the first (*Lorca*) project was described as follows: “In 2001 Dočolomanský went with some actors to Andalusia to research into *cante jondo* singing, torero training and *duende* (resulting in the performance *Dark Love Sonnets*, based on Lorca’s life and poetry). Thus the International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave was created, which soon began touring the world, becoming a multi-award winning ensemble. Its performances (e.g. *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*, *Waiting Room*, *The Theatre*) were created as a direct reflection of reality and not as interpretations of literature. In connection with this, Viliam’s studio focuses on basic scenic research into ‘chosen’ minority fields (the songs and letters of Ruthenian emigrants; the on-site memory of a railway station; dances and rhythms of African

⁶¹⁷ Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy,” *op. cit.*, (translation mine).

⁶¹⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.8.

⁶¹⁹ Eliška Vavříková, Hana Varadinová, Maja Jawor, Roman Horák, Zuzana Pavuková. See: Miroslav Ballay, *Farma v jeskyni* [Farm in the Cave] (Nitra: Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, 2012), p.49.

slaves in Brazil, etc.) as well as on workshops and lectures (Congress *ECUM* in Brazil and *Tisch School* New York).⁶²⁰

The *Lorca* Project

The expedition to Andalusia took place from June 20 until August 7, 2001, and it was the longest expedition undertaken in the history of Farm in the Cave ensemble.⁶²¹ Dočolomanský traveled there together with six actors, a producer, sound designer, and filmmaker.⁶²² The *Lorca* project had already begun earlier with a two-month period of rehearsals that took place in Prague. Actors were chosen after selective workshops; they had different background: some of them studied at JAMU, some—as Dočolomanský said—he had met ‘by accident.’⁶²³ During rehearsals they studied basic rhythms of dances typical for the region (flamenco and sevillana), as well as Lorca’s life and facts from Ian Gibson’s biography of the poet. Dočolomanský wrote, “the basic training was formed from exercises I’ve developed during collaboration on Ida Kellarová’s workshops and from the inspiration of actor’s training, which I had chance to see during Gardzienice’s *Cosmos*.”⁶²⁴ Describing this pre-expedition training, Hana Varadzinová wrote that it contained ‘leader and slave’ exercise and some basic acrobatics.⁶²⁵ She explained the ‘leader and slave’ exercise as “a partner’s training, where you learn to follow and react on impulses from the partner.”⁶²⁶ It would become a very important training exercise for Farm in the Cave that remains as a basis. Roman Horák in his thesis entitled *Actor’s Training* written at the Faculty of Music at Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (HAMU), explained the technique of this exercise: one person leads, the other follows, but the exercise is about sharing common tension. The partner is the most important, “The actor needs to concentrate on the partner’s intention—where he wants to lead him. On the other hand the one who is leading needs to concentrate on the partner’s body-rhythm; how fast he reacts and answers to the impulses sent by the leader. (...) After some time, when communication starts to work better and partners become closer

⁶²⁰ Archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed in January 2011.

⁶²¹ Expedition to the Ruthenian ethnic region, like the Brasil expedition, was divided in two parts—the first one was general (searching for a topic) and the second one was more concentrated on the chosen topic.

⁶²² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.6; Hana Varadzinová, Róbert Nižník and Matej Matejka would continue the collaboration on the other projects of Farm in the Cave, Gabriela Pyšná would leave. In his resume Dočolomanský mentioned that the Australian actress next to the Colombian actor had left the project just after the expedition. See: Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁶²³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.6.

⁶²⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.6 (translation mine).

⁶²⁵ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.152.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*

to common understanding, the role of the leader can change during the movement, without any verbal agreement.”⁶²⁷

Expedition to Andalusia happened without systematic mapping of the field. Dočolomanský wrote, “We were interested in flamenco, toreros, landscape and architecture.”⁶²⁸ The theme of Lorca’s life suggested a concentration on the relationship of the artist to mainstream society; this offered a wide spectrum of possible interests. “Our ‘research’ was focused on direct contact with the culture that created the poet, to deepen facts known about his personal life directly in the place, in cooperation of world-known ‘lorcolog’ Ian Gibson.”⁶²⁹ The expedition was not prepared regarding practical matters such as a place to stay, so—even if such form allowed following things that appeared ‘on the way’—it required constant organization.⁶³⁰ Writing about the expedition, Dočolomanský mentioned that before traveling the group prepared a small repertoire of Czech and Slovak folk songs as possible ‘barter.’⁶³¹ The group was nearly always together and they relied on recommendations (a restaurant-owner passed on a contact for a flamenco singer,⁶³² etc.). They visited an evangelical mass in Fuente Vaqueros (town of Lorca’s childhood) to experience some typical behavior and gather some gestures.⁶³³ Thanks to Ian Gibson, the ensemble was guided to places connected with Lorca (mainly with his birth and death).⁶³⁴ And, very important to Dočolomanský, was their efforts (not always successful⁶³⁵) to obtain access to Gypsy communities, to find ‘alive’ flamenco, singing and rituals.

During the expedition, actors received different tasks for observation—to observe men, women, kids⁶³⁶ or the behavior of bulls⁶³⁷ raised for corrida. “The actor’s research, observing ‘natives,’ does not aim at giving a report of typical Andalusian behavior. Although we observed situations or human behavior which can be encountered in Bohemia as well, by creating ‘over-foreign’ vision we get to discover that which is universal for mankind. While researching, it is important to emphasize, to engage ourselves directly (thanks to the other one

⁶²⁷ Roman Horák, *Herecký trénink* [The Actor’s Training], MA thesis, Hudební a taneční fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2007, p.53 (translation mine).

⁶²⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.8 (translation mine).

⁶²⁹ Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, pp.77-78 (translation mine).

⁶³⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.11.

⁶³¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

⁶³² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.29.

⁶³³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.17.

⁶³⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.45.

⁶³⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, pp.12-13.

⁶³⁶ The task of Matej Matejka, see: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.25.

⁶³⁷ The task of Zuzana Rusznáková, see: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.57.

can identify oneself),”⁶³⁸ Dočolomanský wrote. Another actor’s task was to search for each one’s own *gafe*—a man who brings bad luck, a ‘dark outsider.’⁶³⁹ They tried to follow rhythms of how the people speak and gesticulate (actors made for instance an observation of stop-times⁶⁴⁰ or rhythms recalling 12-beats rhythm of *bulleria*). Dočolomanský admitted that many observations stopped on the surface⁶⁴¹ or could be misunderstood as ‘typical’ (like observed masculinity of Andalusian women⁶⁴²—which however inspired actresses’ intentions in the performance). On the other hand, profiting on being not familiar with the language and cultural context, Dočolomanský sensitized his actors to the musicality present in gestures. “Was it stopping, freezing the movement in the most exposed place?”⁶⁴³

Dočolomanský realized only during rehearsals that the expedition was also very useful tool of directing. It worked as a collective memory that immediately recalled a specific atmosphere, he wanted to achieve on stage for a particular scene or character. “The expedition was for the group a basic unifying experience. It was possible to come back to it, when it was not possible to explain something with words. You could come back and take from it as from the source, which is filtrated by the censorship of human memory,”⁶⁴⁴ Dočolomanský noted. Remembering expedition to Andalusia in 2010, Gabriela Pyšná, an actress who took part in it, said it was “an amazing month full of experiences, perceptions of the landscape, people and their culture. During half a year of rehearsing we were profiting from it.”⁶⁴⁵ On the question how different the performance would be without such experience, Pyšná said that it would not be so honest and authentic.⁶⁴⁶

The materials the troupe gathered made a basis for developing training to create the performance *Dark Love Sonnets*.⁶⁴⁷ From the very beginning it was clear actors couldn’t learn any Andalusian technique in so little time (if it was singing in *cante jondo* technique or dancing flamenco), as even the Spanish musician who is not a Gypsy was told not to be able to catch the real ‘duende’ (supernatural inspiration). “Here, in the Czech Republic we can’t just, like that, start to act as if we have flamenco in our blood. Dancing flamenco is a way of

⁶³⁸ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁶³⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.22.

⁶⁴⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.23.

⁶⁴¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.26.

⁶⁴² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.20.

⁶⁴³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.24 (translation mine).

⁶⁴⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p. 25-26.

⁶⁴⁵ Gabriela Pyšná, “Viděla jsem duši vodopádu” [I Have Seen a Soul of the Waterfall], interview by Richard Erml, *Divadelní noviny* May 30, 2010, accessed January 25, 2015, <http://www.divadelni-noviny.cz/gabriela-pysna-videla-jsem-dusi-vodopadu> (translation mine).

⁶⁴⁶ See: Pyšná, “Viděla jsem duši vodopádu,” *op. cit.*

⁶⁴⁷ See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.78.

living, and this we wanted to learn and get inside of us directly on the spot,”⁶⁴⁸ Pyšná said. That is why the expedition was concentrated more on ‘catching’ the atmosphere and working with imagination. The group, concentrated on few themes (like flamenco and the art of toreros), was ‘catching’ details like compares of flamenco technique to the corrida (breast of flamenco dancer as bull’s horns),⁶⁴⁹ which just strengthen an impression of the same ‘root’ of both techniques.

What Dočolomanský sought for was flamenco being not folklore, but a vivid form that is open to influences of pop, jazz, etc. In *Dark Love Sonnets* he used songs from 19th century (from *Canciones populares antiguas* collected by Lorca and Manuel de Falla),⁶⁵⁰ but in a different harmonization created by Miriam Bayle. Varadzinová comparing *Dark Love Sonnets* to performances of Farm in the Cave created later, wrote: “For *Dark Love Sonnets* essential is connection with Andalusian culture, the culture where the main motive is the relationship to death. *Dark Love Sonnets* are therefore darker; due to specific aesthetics they are more sophisticated; due to the story they are more intimate.”⁶⁵¹ Knowing Lorca’s essay about ‘duende’ Dočolomanský sought this phenomenon during the expedition; he was skeptical at first, but he did ultimately find it at the end, in the corrida. He wrote that Andalusia is a culture of death and encounters with danger.⁶⁵² To express it in *Dark Love Sonnets* he used voice expression of Varadzinová singing *saeta* (religious song that is similar in its expression to flamenco sang in *cante jondo* technique). *Cante jondo* (deep singing) with its ‘erotic tension and frustration’ Dočolomanský found as a perfect tool to express relationship of Lorca and Raptún that went over borders of ‘intellect, age, sexuality and death.’ It is a central theme of *Dark Love Sonnets*.⁶⁵³ Comparing flamenco singer to jazz music, Dočolomanský recalled in his thesis “Grotowski’s vision of elimination between an impulse and embodying it in action”⁶⁵⁴—which brings (as in the case of a ‘flamenco singer’ and a ‘jazz musician’) integration between reproduction and intention, allowing the artist to being an author and interprets in the same time.

⁶⁴⁸ Pyšná, “Viděla jsem duši vodopádu,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

⁶⁴⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

⁶⁵⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁶⁵¹ Hana Varadzinová, *Resumé. Scéničnosť a hudebnosť. Hudební základ hereckého projevu v inscenaci Sclavi* (Emigrantova píseň) *souboru Farma v jeskyni* [Resumé. Scenicity and musicality. Musical Basis of Actor’s Expression in Farm in the Cave’s performance Sclavi (The Song of an Emigrant)], PhD Diss., Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2008, p.25 (translation mine).

⁶⁵² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁶⁵³ See: Dočolomasnký, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.44.

⁶⁵⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.30 (translation mine).

The moment of ‘duende’—just as taken by scholars who include Federico García Lorca and his *Theory and Play of Duende* (1930) among the most inspiring theatre visionaries of the 20th century theatre—is a ‘second of truth,’ a live moment recognized by audience. As Dočolomanský wrote—the audience, recognizing ‘duende,’ by rewarding an artist by clapping (jazz), *Olé* exclamation (corrida, flamenco) or *Allah!* (experienced by Dočolomanský in Gardzienice during liturgical concert of Muslim singers from Morocco⁶⁵⁵). Lorca in his essay explains ‘duende’ recalling words of ‘old guitarist:’ “The duende is not in the throat; the duende climbs up inside you, from the soles of the feet.”⁶⁵⁶ Lorca wrote that ‘duende’ does not repeat itself, is an angel, and a muse of inspiration that heal wounds.⁶⁵⁷ “There are neither maps nor disciplines to help us find the duende.”⁶⁵⁸ But in Spain—‘a country open to death’⁶⁵⁹—you can find it in a dancer as well as in a bullfighter, as Lorca wrote.

Dočolomanský in his essay about ‘duende’ speaks about the present moment, a ‘saintly moment of sudden inspiration,’ and going beyond ‘I’—similarly like in ‘oriental philosophies’⁶⁶⁰—a ‘hypnotic state,’ state of being freed from the ‘cage’ of human personality. Dočolomanský examines acting of Nijinsky, Cieślak and Weigel—saying that there is always a moment of going beyond the technique; an ecstatic moment. He wrote that ‘duende’ does not differentiate between actor, dancer and singer similarly to theatre groups of ‘laboratorial type.’⁶⁶¹ ‘Duende’ is the actor’s presence and energy⁶⁶² and a performer’s body is as a musical instrument. Quoting Grotowski,⁶⁶³ Dočolomanský wrote the performer should be spontaneous and disciplined at the same time. According to him the ‘duende’ appeared when Cieślak managed to go beyond the technique in *The Constant Prince* (Dočolomanský emphasize that it was also a moment of connecting death/on stage with eros/inner intentions of Cieślak).⁶⁶⁴ “The duende comes from pain, border, paradox;”⁶⁶⁵ for Dočolomanský it is ‘duende’—till the end. He wrote: “Since Meyerhold, through his followers in Grotowski or

⁶⁵⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.67.

⁶⁵⁶ Federico García Lorca, “From Play and Theory of the Duende” (1930) in *Twentieth Century Theatre. A sourcebook*, Richard Drain (ed.) (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), p.263.

⁶⁵⁷ See: Lorca, “From Play and Theory of the Duende,” *op. cit.*, p.264.

⁶⁵⁸ Lorca, “From Play and Theory of the Duende,” *op. cit.*, p.263.

⁶⁵⁹ See: Lorca, “From Play and Theory of the Duende,” *op. cit.*, p.264.

⁶⁶⁰ See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶² See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.78.

⁶⁶³ See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.79.

⁶⁶⁴ See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.83.

⁶⁶⁵ Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.83 (translation mine).

Staniewski, there would always be a need to come back to the present moment of theatre—the force of direct effect. Perhaps the same as spontaneous listening to music.”⁶⁶⁶

Continuing his thoughts about the performer, Dočolomanský recalls art he had seen in Gardzienice before the *Lorca* project: “Director of Gardzienice Włodzimierz Staniewski, as the follower of the Grotowski-Meyerhold line, drowns our attention with his performances on the organic musicality of an actor; how the conscious gesticulation can be perceived as music in space. He orchestrates all musical aspects in the actor’s body—phrasing, rhythm, melody, consonance, dynamic scale, colors.”⁶⁶⁷ Dočolomanský highlights however that it can happen only in mutuality, with a partner as an answer. Music with its direct effect is free of meaning, even if it is clear in communicating.⁶⁶⁸ Dočolomanský calls it an ‘alphabet’ for the beginning modern actor who tries to catch a magic of a present moment.⁶⁶⁹ According to Dočolomanský the magic of ‘duende’ present in theatre is about something that is not planned and can’t be caught completely by the viewer; can’t bring only one meaning. This is reminiscent of Grotowski’s technique of directing. Writing about ‘duende,’ Dočolomanský notes the ‘real’ moment he is intent on achieving on stage in order to offer an experience to the audience.

Regarding flamenco, during the expedition, Farm in the Cave took classes in Carmen de las Cuevas school. The actors learned lesser-known sequences and were introduced a quality of flamenco that is based on keeping two different, contradictory tensions—one in the legs and the other in the chest. In one Gypsy village, the ensemble was invited to a *fiesta*, actors had the opportunity to dance and record *Coco roco*, a dance that was recognized by them as a live, ‘street’ flamenco.⁶⁷⁰ *Coco roco* together with singing is quoted in the performance. In this ‘popular’ flamenco women imitate movements of hens, creating funny and erotic dance. Dancers move their legs from the knees to the sides and shake their hands in front of their faces as if having wings. They also imitate the sounds of hens: *cocoroco* and *quiquiriqui*.⁶⁷¹ Both inspirations of flamenco were developed into the actor’s training. But, the real and unexpected discovery of the expedition was the torero’s training. This inspiration transformed into the basis of a newly-born physical language of Farm in the Cave. Dočolomanský wrote: “Even if we did not plan before the expedition to take part in toreros’ training, I realized the meeting with this aesthetic of the movement would be the key to our

⁶⁶⁶ Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.84 (translation mine).

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁸ See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.84.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.36.

⁶⁷¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.33.

future work, and that here lies one of the fundamental basis of our inspiration.”⁶⁷² Varadzinová confirms: “For our physical trainings the most important was a meeting with torero’s training and flamenco.”⁶⁷³

Torero’s training is directly connected to the situation of the corrida, when a bull comes to die surrounded by the crowd of people.⁶⁷⁴ The experience of the corrida was for the ensemble a shocking experience.⁶⁷⁵ The bull recalled them a victim, an ‘outsider’—like Lorca who was killed by society. The experience of the corrida developed into need to become acquainted with the rituals and hidden rules of the corrida; such as, the one in which the torero would kill the bull on the more expensive side of the venue, where people are seated in the shade.⁶⁷⁶ The other ‘inspiration’ was the fact that torero needs to ‘win’ the crowd otherwise the audience—seeing a poor performance—could start laughing at him. The same happens when the torero cannot kill the bull fast enough. Obviously this calls to mind the position of any performer who is surrounded by public. Farm in the Cave’s actors realized that the corrida is driven by the same rules as theatre performance and it can transform into both situations—tragic or comic; the corrida keeps open possibly bringing about both feelings in the spectators. “Torero’s art is a combination of high aesthetic and courage. It is martial art, while also dance and promenade.”⁶⁷⁷

In his thesis, Dočolomanský described the technique of toreros in the way that Farm in the Cave learned at the Escuela Taurina in Ronda. The technique developed organically from the nature of animals, as bulls can’t turn and—being color-blind—are reacting only to the movement. The training is about repeating movement variations; the schema of torero’s actions, which start from provoking the bull to attack. During the sequences toreros practice working with *capote* and *muleta*. The *capote* has a shape of a coat that the torero grasps with both hands—it can cover the torero’s legs. “The *muleta* is smaller, made of lighter material and resembles a flag. Torero works with *muleta* in the final part of the bull-fight; together with *muleta* he carries a bent knife with which he tries to kill the bull by puncturing the spinal cord, in the way a knife would reach the heart.”⁶⁷⁸ In the situation of the torero’s training one partner performs a bull, carrying in hands the bull’s horns. The torero’s work is to visualize a real animal and starts from provoking it with shouts. The partner, who performs the bull, can’t

⁶⁷² Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.58 (translation mine).

⁶⁷³ Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.152 (translation mine).

⁶⁷⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.57.

⁶⁷⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.61.

⁶⁷⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.66.

⁶⁷⁷ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.33.

⁶⁷⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.59 (translation mine).

twist and can only react to the movements just as an animal would.⁶⁷⁹ The training needs commitment from both partners to be useful. All the movements are practiced in slow motion, so that performers could work precisely on the technique and “get it deep to the memory of the body,”⁶⁸⁰ as Dočolomanský explained.

Actors of Farm in the Cave took part in some training and recorded it on the video camera. At the end Dočolomanský mentioned the actors exchanged the actor’s training with students of the torero’s school in the ‘barter.’⁶⁸¹ The first (practical) change of the training done by actors was that they used hands instead of real horns while performing the bull. The other transition was that they exchanged roles—something that does not happen in the real torero’s training.⁶⁸² Dočolomanský reflecting the quality of experienced training, quotes from Barba’s and Savarese’s dictionary *The Secret Art of the Performer*.⁶⁸³ He examines two tensions in the torero’s body: “legs must be fixed, firmly rooted in the ground in connection to lightness and grace in the movement of the spine and arms.”⁶⁸⁴ Unwanted leg movement could cause the death of the real torero that is why the training is very precise. Hana Varadinová wrote, “work on the torero’s training turned into a physical basis. Thanks to the training we learned how to work with tension in the body and how to transmit that energy to the ground, as well as how to work with partners.”⁶⁸⁵

After the return from the expedition, actors worked on the movement of hands and legs separately, and only later on would they concentrate on the coordination of the whole body. They also worked on inner intentions: “To see the bull, feel its full weight at the moment when the bull is passing next to us, feeling the weight of the *capote* in the hands, etc.”⁶⁸⁶ Later on they added some acrobatic elements that were called ‘taking a bull,’⁶⁸⁷ thus provoking the ‘attack.’ Acting “as if the torero was pulling the danger, death or fate—was not at all the intention of the real toreros.”⁶⁸⁸ The development of the torero’s training came also from the inspiration of the ‘leader and slave’ exercise; especially because of the ‘pull and push’ dynamic that is present in this exercise. Working on modulating the quality and

⁶⁷⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.62.

⁶⁸⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.62 (translation mine).

⁶⁸¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.63.

⁶⁸² *Ibid.*

⁶⁸³ See: Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.79. Eugenio Barba and Nicola Savarese, *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology. The Secret Art of the Performer*, trans. Richard Fowler (London/New York: Routledge, 2006).

⁶⁸⁴ Dočolomanský, “Španělská inspirace,” *op. cit.*, p.79 (translation mine).

⁶⁸⁵ Varadinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.152 (translation mine).

⁶⁸⁶ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.114 (translation mine).

⁶⁸⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.116.

⁶⁸⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.117 (translation mine).

intensity, they tested the potential for sharing tension without physical contact. At the end the training changed actors' breathing and introduced 'hidden signals' to the rhythmical connection.⁶⁸⁹ Dočolomanský said the transformed torero's training kept its essence. He admitted that it was a source of many scenes in the performance.⁶⁹⁰ According to Varadzinová torero's training is a source of the aesthetic of the entire performance.⁶⁹¹ "By accepting a particular aesthetic, we acquired the culture of the movement,"⁶⁹² the actress wrote.

Dark Love Sonnets

The rehearsals in Prague started at the end of August 2001. In February 2002 it was presented as a preview and the premiere was held on May 12, 2002. Rehearsals were divided into two main parts: training, which was built of the 'materials' brought from the expedition (forms of old Andalusian culture: songs, rhythmical lines of *bullerías*, dances of sevillana and flamenco, as well as the toreros's training)⁶⁹³ and parallel to it—creation of scenes and working on performance. Dočolomanský wrote about this phase: "Along with the training, we built scenes, the concept and scene's dramaturgy of the performance; without any former experience with similar processes of working—and without any script."⁶⁹⁴ Dočolomanský admitted that many ideas for the situations that came from associations or inspirations to the topic, worked only on paper. The most interesting to the group were quotations and different motives from the earliest memories of Lorca.⁶⁹⁵ As it was not clear who would play which role, everybody was doing everything—learning the same poems, doing the same training 'loosing actor's ego and identity,' as Dočolomanský called it.⁶⁹⁶ Training was the most important part. Actress who had more experience with working with the movement prepared and lead training of toreros and flamenco dance. Miriam Bayle, who was music-arranger for the performance, led the work with voice and songs.⁶⁹⁷ They experienced the torero's posture changing the voice; how breathing while singing is phrasing a movement. "Non-Andalusian harmonizations of these songs'—by an arranger-maker and musical director Miriam Bayle inspired us to seek in essence, the heart of a song without the external imitation. At the outset, song material was a training ground, a challenge, a way to unite the actors in the group. Later

⁶⁸⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.117

⁶⁹⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.118.

⁶⁹¹ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.153.

⁶⁹² Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.152 (translation mine).

⁶⁹³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.81.

⁶⁹⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.73 (translation mine).

⁶⁹⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.74.

⁶⁹⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁶⁹⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.82.

it become a scenic statement—even without the addition of other ingredients as movement and such, the song become an actor’s action,”⁶⁹⁸ Dočolomanský wrote. However, as Varadzinová mentioned, during creating *Dark Love Sonnets* the group had not yet developed a methodological, continuous voice training.⁶⁹⁹

“The training started to form and unify the group leading to results and had more life than created situations that seemed ‘coarse, dead and illustrated,’”⁷⁰⁰ Dočolomanský described observing that the training part of rehearsals interested him more than creating situations. The multi-layered image of the final performance, as Dočolomanský wrote, came about by a distillation of experiments, and mainly thanks to the long period of training: “I was more interested in the actors’ presence; their concentration on the moments when they had no opportunity to use their ‘actor’s skills.’”⁷⁰¹ Speaking about reducing the bad habit of showing ‘actor’s skills,’ Dočolomanský works in the same manner as Grotowski, searching for an honest stage presence that transcends clichés of acting. Seeing potential in developing the training early on Dočolomanský applied more emphasis on it, expecting that such practice with material gathered during the expedition would become organic in the actors.⁷⁰²

The actors practiced those specific techniques to be able to use them beyond merely mimicking their external shape: “We did not copy the outside shape, but infiltrated the actors’ inner impulses reacting to this inspiration.”⁷⁰³ The Andalusian inspiration of songs or movement had no purpose in enriching the performance with ‘special effects,’ as Varadzinová wrote;⁷⁰⁴ but it influenced the entire production, from physical expression to meanings. Thus, one can say that Farm in the Cave’s expression is rooted in martial art and dance. Through the *Lorca* project, the actors’ specific expression evolved from the torero training, which is a martial art for the purpose of bullfighting, as well as from the technique of flamenco dance. Most probably, both come from the same source of experiencing the body—separating the lower part that is grounded from the lighter upper expressive part.

Dočolomanský wrote that it was the musicality and searching for inspiration in musical interpretation that inspired his work as a stage director. Many critics shared this same impression, noting that in *Dark Love Sonnets* physical motifs or images in the scenes tended

⁶⁹⁸ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, pp.36-37.

⁶⁹⁹ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

⁷⁰⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.75 (translation mine).

⁷⁰¹ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.77 (translation mine).

⁷⁰² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.77

⁷⁰³ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.81 (translation mine).

⁷⁰⁴ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.153.

to return with subtle variation just as musical motifs in musical composition.⁷⁰⁵ Dočolomanský wrote: “The director’s work in this process contained the work of a choreographer, composer, conductor, arranger, trainer, observer, critic, scriptwriter, and literary adviser...”⁷⁰⁶ He found that the process was not one of cutting the flow of concentration, but to develop ‘stamina’ and also to direct energy into particular parts of the body, focusing on intention.⁷⁰⁷ This is similar to what Dočolomanský wrote about Gardzienice’s technique. In his thesis Dočolomanský explained the language of such theatre requires collective concentration and synchronization, and he noted that his group while working on *Dark Love Sonnets* had not yet developed such a quality.⁷⁰⁸ Nevertheless, already in May 2003, the ensemble offered a short workshop on toreros’ training in Gardzienice’s Academy. Mariusz Gołaj observed that this training influenced the specific posture of Farm in the Cave’s actors.⁷⁰⁹ They kept bended knees and a lowered center that created grounding. This body-position affected not only the voice, but also the quality of the sound while clapping.⁷¹⁰ Rhythms of *bulleria* were also practiced by breathing (experimenting with inhaling and exhaling on the accents).⁷¹¹ Each actor had the task to work on particular rhythmical mode that characterized his type by specific color of the voice.⁷¹²

Types or characters emerged upon a few months of rehearsing, in November 2001, when Dočolomanský found a ‘model’ that substituted for the absence of script. “It was not a scenario, but more a scheme of relationships among seven actors, who were taking part in the process. I decided to create three constant lines—Poet, Rafael and The Other Women—and four parts, which were changing. (...) It was an egocentric model—all was happening in Poet and because of Poet.”⁷¹³ Types were slightly influenced by the characters of actors. The part of Poet was at the end given to Matej Matejka described by Dočolomanský as ‘fragile and explosive,’⁷¹⁴ even if he had previously been supposed to play Rafael Rodríguez Rapún, a younger lover of Lorca to whom *Dark Love Sonnets* were addressed. Because of that previous assumption Matejka’s task during the expedition was to observe ‘children.’ At the end Rapún was played by Emil Piš. Gabriela Pyšná played The Other Women (also called La Luna), an

⁷⁰⁵ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.500.

⁷⁰⁶ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, pp.82-83 (translation mine).

⁷⁰⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.83.

⁷⁰⁸ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.84.

⁷⁰⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.85; Dočolomanský said it took five more years to create the specific language of Farm in the Cave. See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.100.

⁷¹⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.95.

⁷¹¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.96.

⁷¹² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.98.

⁷¹³ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.78 (translation mine).

⁷¹⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.78.

ambivalent character that was inspired by the first wife of Lorca's father. This character represents a female part of Lorca, a fate, but a painting as well.⁷¹⁵ Varadzinová wrote that *Dark Love Sonnets* are built from pre-set storyline of Lorca's life: "we just shaped situations of his life."⁷¹⁶ Naming main characters Varadzinová calls 'The Other Women'—Death, but as well Luna and Fate.⁷¹⁷ Luna as a 'character' raises Lorca's memories, mocking at him. Luna is dark; hurts Lorca in order to open Poet's heart, so that he can understand love. Luna embraces him while he is dying,⁷¹⁸ as Varadzinová described it.

The rest of the actors play a 'choir' that accompanies three main characters, but their types were inspired, as according to Dočolomanský's labels, by: dogmatic mother, individualist father, disturbing child and flirting women. The choir symbolically represents society. Those four 'characters' were more in the 'line of acting,' and not classical figures. Varadzinová describing her character wrote: "It was the combination of characters' lines inspired by different people from Lorca's life transformed into one that changes face."⁷¹⁹ In each situation she 'played' somebody else—Lorca's mother, nanny, women on the party, homosexual, fascist. The only thing that all those people have in common is a tendency to make Lorca's life difficult, bringing him closer to death. The choir assists Luna (Death) to accomplish that task, as Varadzinová wrote.⁷²⁰ The choir's role is to oppose Lorca.⁷²¹ Depending on the scene the choir performs 'crowd'—people on the party, homosexuals in the bar (scene called *America*) or falangists. "Faces of singing falangists are inspired by faces of Goya's pictures that actors achieved by tearing off particular muscles that transformed their faces into harden masks."⁷²² The choir is a conspirators' observer and commentator.⁷²³ "In *Dark Love Sonnets* the choir enters the situation singing, commenting on the story or creates an atmosphere. By specific aesthetics it evokes the essence of that time and place, by singing (and acting) a choir frames the story of three main characters (who do not sing)."⁷²⁴ During the entire performance women in general act more aggressive, men are like boys, tender and subtle.⁷²⁵ As the choir consist of one man (Róbert Nižník) and three women, in some

⁷¹⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.125, 122.

⁷¹⁶ Hana Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.22 (translation mine).

⁷¹⁷ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁹ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.24 (translation mine).

⁷²⁰ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.156.

⁷²¹ See: Maja Jawor joined Farm in the Cave in 2003 and replaced in *Dark Love Sonnets* the actress that departed. See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.182.

⁷²² Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.112 (translation mine).

⁷²³ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.157.

⁷²⁴ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.23 (translation mine).

⁷²⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.141.

moments he's role is to act like macho and women are 'performing' philistines.⁷²⁶ The choir moves using steps of toreros.

Some of the situations were already built, before the model appeared.⁷²⁷ Dočolomanský described his dramaturgic line: "The sequence of situations didn't want to be and was not a chronological illustration of Lorca's life; it was more an essence."⁷²⁸ It begins when Lorca is a child and it finishes with his death. What is not chronological is for instance the moment Lorca meets his lover. Many scenes can be understood simply as visions or memories of Lorca.⁷²⁹ Dočolomanský wrote that scenes were built from the partner's improvisation, from songs or choreography.⁷³⁰ As a director, he would search for the way to express Lorca's fate without illustrating it.⁷³¹ "Words and intellect were not enough to express Lorca's essence,"⁷³² he wrote. A word is for Dočolomanský just an inspiration, an impulse for the action.⁷³³ He wrote that already in this project they were trying not to concentrate on the word's meaning, but more on a sound and musical quality that created a meaning.⁷³⁴ They were also experimenting on sound as prolongation of the movement.⁷³⁵ However, some parts were spoken. Varadzinová wrote that even if the music in *Dark Love Sonnets* is constantly present and songs are framing the story,⁷³⁶ the work with voice was not yet developed as in the next projects of Farm in the Cave. "We do not work here with sound regardless its real meaning, or we do not work with text that hides real motivation."⁷³⁷ On the contrary, the poems that appear in the performance are uttered in the Czech language and are important because of its literary meaning.⁷³⁸ "In *Dark Love Sonnets* we worked with poems and other texts in a dramaturgical way; this means that we placed them logically in the situations depending on their contents."⁷³⁹ The other reason was also that the ensemble was not yet sufficiently skillful to work with intonations in this project. Varadzinová said: "We were

⁷²⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.103.

⁷²⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.79.

⁷²⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, pp.140-141 (translation mine).

⁷²⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.92.

⁷³⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.85.

⁷³¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.98.

⁷³² Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.92 (translation mine).

⁷³³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.86.

⁷³⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.89.

⁷³⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.92.

⁷³⁶ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.22.

⁷³⁷ Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.155 (translation mine).

⁷³⁸ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.155.

⁷³⁹ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.23 (translation mine).

using audio recordings from the expedition in a minimal way.”⁷⁴⁰ The only ‘quotation’ from expedition comes from the *Coco roco* dance.

The *Lorca* project brought to Dočolomanský a very different approach: “As a director I started to use more the musical thinking, freeing myself from tendency to snare and predetermine all the meanings in advance.”⁷⁴¹ He worked using the ‘intuition of the musician.’ “Rhythmical exercises ceased to have their limited impact in acquainting with another culture, but become a basis for a complex actor’s work with the voice, breath, movement and perception of the time’s tectonics.”⁷⁴² At the end Dočolomanský decided to use steps of flamenco only as a cultural cliché for the choir to present in front of Poet during the party scene,⁷⁴³ even if at the beginning he was concerned with flamenco as a training material only. “By copying the forms and technique of flamenco I noted some kind inner energy being activated—something hitherto unknown to the actors.”⁷⁴⁴ Thus, something that had been a mere training tool transformed into an actor’s expression, because the intention appeared.⁷⁴⁵ Flamenco was perfect to express the theme. In his essay about duende, Dočolomanský wrote that Lorca’s life was like a ‘text written to the crazy melody of *cante jondo*.’⁷⁴⁶

As for the music, Dočolomanský said he did not want to use it as an illustration.⁷⁴⁷ Except traditional Andalusian songs and rhythms, he had used Beethoven Allegretto 7 and jazz standard *Beautiful Love* that returns back a few times during the whole performance—as a motif on piano (‘a la blues’ or ‘a la tango’) to be sang at the very end by Miriam Bayle. Dočolomanský recalled in his paper an opinion of Włodzimierz Staniewski about good orchestrating so many different music motifs in the performance.⁷⁴⁸ Except musical motifs, Dočolomanský also used silence (a stop-time during the noisy party) to make the glances between the Poet and Rapún noticeable by the public.⁷⁴⁹

That director's approach is more reminiscent to film editing and directing techniques in which the attention of the spectator is guided by precise dramaturgy of all the elements contained within the performance itself. Some scenes in *Dark Love Sonnets* came from

⁷⁴⁰ Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.155 (translation mine).

⁷⁴¹ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos ľudskej skúsenosti*, *op. cit.*, p.113 (translation mine).

⁷⁴² Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

⁷⁴³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.103.

⁷⁴⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.101 (translation mine).

⁷⁴⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.105.

⁷⁴⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Španielská inspirácia*, *op. cit.*, p.82.

⁷⁴⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.111.

⁷⁴⁸ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.107.

⁷⁴⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.104.

Lorca's poetic imagery, like the motif of Narcissus. Using toreros' aesthetic (grounded legs, fixed pelvis and movable arms—"Narcissus who is moving arm is a torero with *capote*."⁷⁵⁰) actors experimented on mirroring each other as well as searching for some images that use the water reflection. By those experiments they arrived at the scene of desire for love. "Interpreting the situation of Narcissus, a man who is not able to love the other, we created the situation of the man who loves eagerly. (...) This fact showed us that there is an opportunity to discover an unplanned meaning, which associates with many different layers."⁷⁵¹ Dočolomanský admitted that many improvisations they recorded on video camera to catch the spontaneous action. "Such sharp and fast actions of mutually interleaved bodies without video camera would not be possible to reconstruct. Or at least not in the level of movement memory and consciousness, that we had developed that time."⁷⁵² As Dočolomanský says, it created a narration of the body, which was possible to direct or interpret by trying different meanings or rhythms to see what the structure is offering.⁷⁵³ The scene in *America* (Lorca traveled there in his life) which should represent a place where a person loses identity and where identity is an article you can sell/buy⁷⁵⁴ was inspired by small and spontaneous improvisation of Róbert Nižník, when he made fun during the rehearsal.⁷⁵⁵ This small action gave an impulse to create the entire scene. In this scene actors would also experiment with their center of gravity to move as if on a 'slope.'⁷⁵⁶ *America* is a bar for men possibly located on a boat. Nižník appropriates the gestures of a drunken man he met in bar of Granada,⁷⁵⁷ Matejka as Poet acquired the task to 'say' the poem of Lorca that he wrote about America to himself without using voice, only as an inner intention, which makes his movements interesting.⁷⁵⁸

The prop and set design for *Dark Love Sonnets* are functional, but metaphorical as well. Jana Preková, the set designer, made her own 'expedition' to Andalusia in the summer of 2001.⁷⁵⁹ "Discussions with Jana Preková brought fundamental stimuli in thinking about the whole performance from the actor's action to philosophical background."⁷⁶⁰ At the end, actors marched in a circle recalling the geometry of the corrida, with spectators placed on two sides

⁷⁵⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.120 (translation mine).

⁷⁵¹ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.121 (translation mine).

⁷⁵² Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.130 (translation mine).

⁷⁵³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, pp.130-131.

⁷⁵⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.126.

⁷⁵⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.127.

⁷⁵⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.126.

⁷⁵⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.129.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.134.

⁷⁶⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.136 (translation mine).

of the space. Symbolically, the stage recalls the relation of circle to straight line, which is a principle of relation of bull and torero.

The set design implies a room (that might resemble the hotel room in which Lorca had written most of the love poems). There are three objects within: a chair (oversized for a single person, too small for a couple⁷⁶¹), a sink full of water and hanging glass that could serve as a mirror, picture or window. All the actors are on stage from the beginning to the end; the chair is moved around to open the next scenes. The list of props is very short: a suitcase, red wine and a bottle, a toy gun and a small stool. The idea was to reduce what is not needed.⁷⁶² “At the end in the context of developing work, we realized that the main visual object is in this case a human body. Everything else should develop from it.”⁷⁶³

The *Lorca* project was a founding one, but not yet for the ensemble, as half of the actors departed shortly after the premiere and the rehearsals were continued only just before the performance's reprise.⁷⁶⁴ Interviewed in 2010 Gabriela Pyšná, who took part only in this project of the company, said: “Even if rehearsals with Farm in the Cave were fulfilling, and I admire Viliam for all what he did, the organization of the work was bothering me, or maybe I was too lazy to stay in this ascetic discipline. (...) In the group of the Farm in the Cave type, perhaps you can't do it differently. It must be like that. This type of work requires a total submission and fighting your ego. You are like a little screw in a perfect machine. With the other directors you also need to harmonize, but you are a free individual who can undergo a momentary inspiration on the stage.”⁷⁶⁵ Dočolomanský admitted feeling a significant aversion to any person, who ‘goes a second later or a second earlier.’ His hypersensitivity, as he says, to the synchronization, he explains as a ‘slap’ to the ego of an actor, who can't recognize that the whole is more important.⁷⁶⁶ *Dark Love Sonnets* created already a basis for the ensemble with specific rules of rehearsing and performing.

Dark Love Sonnets inspired researching in development of physical language and the *Lorca* project started specific way of finding an inspiration. And what seems to be the most important, Dočolomanský developed some directing methods for physical theatre that are

⁷⁶¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.137.

⁷⁶² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.135.

⁷⁶³ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.135 (translation mine).

⁷⁶⁴ See: Eliška Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis. Od etnoscénologického výzkumu k hereckému projevu v inscenaci Farmy v jeskyni Sclavi / Emigrantova Píseň* [Mimesis and Poiesis. From the Ethno-Scenological Research to Actor's Expression in Farm in the Cave's Performance Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant] (Praha: KANT 2009), p.12.

⁷⁶⁵ Pyšná, “Viděla jsem duši vodopádu,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

⁷⁶⁶ See: Viliam Dočolomanský's answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

based on training and asks an actor to be co-creator. The entire performance was created from physical improvisations based on the director's intuition of the 'musician.' It is also the only performance where he appears 'on stage' playing percussion. It was after *Dark Love Sonnets* that Jana Pilátová offered to be a literary adviser of the group, which was as well an impulse to continue.

Dark Love Sonnets started a very similar process of creating performances that begin with an expedition and are continued in 'incubation' period, when specific training is developed and the basic 'model' is found. The performance is created by a process of experimenting on scenes and searching for the story-line. Sometimes the performance undergoes larger changes after the premiere (or preview) when the order of scenes is changed or some other scenes are added (it was mainly a case of *Dark Love Sonnets*, *Waiting Room*, *Whistleblowers*).

Already in *Dark Love Sonnets* there are many motives that would appear in the other Dočolomanský's creations like: 'revolving' element or the entire concept of the scene which 'pushes' dramaturgy and opens the next scenes (in *Dark Love Sonnets*—a chair and a movement of the choir; in *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*—a wagon; in *Waiting Room*—a turnstile; in *The Theatre*—smaller elements like two audiences, running in circle, a revolving chair; in *Whistleblowers*—motif of running in circle); the motif of a mirror and mirroring (in *Dark Love Sonnets*—a sink and a pane of glass suspended in space, Poet and his lover as a double; in *Sclavi*—Emigrant and his double/The Other Man; in *Waiting Room*—mirror in the toilets and two women from different times as a double; in *The Theatre*—the motif is present in scenes called *Backstage*, and in general repetitiveness of scenes; in *Whistleblowers*—mirror is a part of scenography); undressing and changing cloths as a of sign of rite of passage as well as unification with the other (in *Dark Love Sonnets*—Poet and his lover; in *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*—a *Wedding* scene, as well as the very last scene of Emigrant with The Other Man dressed in the same coat; in *Waiting Room*—undressing before the 'transport' scene or 'changing a blouse' between two women being with one man; in *The Theatre* in the scene called *I Belong to You*; in *Whistleblowers*—entrance of Spy and changing jackets inside of the group of activists); manipulation of the other as with a puppet (in *Dark Love Sonnets*—Lorca as a boy with his teacher; in *Sclavi*—moving the body of 'dead' Emigrant; in *Waiting Room*—the bodies 'packed' into suitcases; in *The Theatre*—using real puppets, *Puppetry World* scene, an actor who can't walk, etc.; in *Whistleblowers*—'talking heads' of women moved by man), etc.

About the scene of exchanging shirts between the lovers in *Dark Love Sonnets*, Dočolomanský wrote: “the connection continues till exchanging of the skin/shirts. I am you and you are me. Final affirmation. Lives connected.”⁷⁶⁷ *Dark Love Sonnets* starts also a motif of ‘America’ as anti-dream that would continue as a ‘heart’ motive of *Sclavi*, but it would remain along with a gentlemen’s ‘excuse me’ in the *Waiting Room*, when a man is collecting dead bodies of Jews. The same for the scene in bar—the motif of the bar can be clearly found in *Sclavi* or *The Theatre* (bossa-nova bar). But the strongest motif is a general concept of the performance as a vision, dream, hallucination or memories of one of the characters. It repeats in *Sclavi* (through Emigrant’s eyes), *Waiting Room* (through Journalists eyes), but as well in *Whistleblowers* (eyes of a male character who is an activist). In *The Theatre* we have few scenes that are ‘dreams,’ but for the first time there is no clear main character, who is ‘telling’ his story.

In the other performances, most of the time this character confronts a ‘crowd’ and loses (dying in most of the performances); going deeper and deeper into problems and facing disillusion. A variation of this motif is present also in *Waiting Room* and in *Whistleblowers*. In almost every performance an anthem is present or some political slogan from a relevant era (that repeat from *Dark Love Sonnets* where the crowd sing a hymn of Falanga,⁷⁶⁸ or in *The Theatre*, slogans from Brazilian history to *Whistleblowers*—the Swiss National Anthem; in *Waiting Room* actors appropriate politicians' speeches as intonations).

Dočolomanský wrote that after *Dark Love Sonnets* Farm in the Cave studio needed five more years to develop their aesthetic into a physical language.⁷⁶⁹ Already from the *Lorca* project, actors were accustomed video. As Dočolomanský wrote: “Working with video recording of an actor’s improvisation started to be one of the important ways, that we would use in the future”⁷⁷⁰ Searching for ‘truthful impulses’ that emerge spontaneously from actors as well as waiting for the reaction of their personality or ‘off-stage’ behavior would remain as one of the director’s inspirations to build the actions, scenes or the entire dramaturgy (the gesture of Nižník which was an inspiration to build the scene *America* in *Dark Love Sonnets*, continued in *Sclavi*, where Nižník’s spontaneous behavior turned into a character of Emigrant). What appears already in here is an idea of constant working on the scenes of existed performance, developing physical qualities or inner intentions of the actors. In his

⁷⁶⁷ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.110 (translation mine).

⁷⁶⁸ The lyrics of the hymn are written by José Antonio Primero de Rivera. See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.112.

⁷⁶⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.100.

⁷⁷⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.131 (translation mine).

thesis finished in 2007, five years after premiere of *Dark Love Sonnets*, Dočolomanský wrote: “Till now we work on details to make actions and intentions more clear.”⁷⁷¹

Miroslav Ballay wrote that *Dark Love Sonnets* are the most personal of Dočolomanský performances.⁷⁷² Varadzinová comparing it with two next projects, stated: “Story of *Sonnets* is, I would say, the most understandable from our performances. It does not have a complicated structure, drama is happening between three characters and the others merely complement the story in particular scenes and enhancing the ambience of sound.”⁷⁷³ Jana Pilátová wrote that the performance's meanings are not deep, but what she found specific within is the role of silence.⁷⁷⁴ For her the performance *Dark Love Sonnets* simply shows the fate of ‘outsider-genius’⁷⁷⁵ and as a performance it balance on a thin line—between an empty structure and a plasma of emotions. Action is, according to Pilátová, pulsating between ‘astonishment, certainty, awkwardness and tragic’—being distillation of Lorca’s poems, and interplay of contradictory forces.⁷⁷⁶ In March 2003, *Dark Love Sonnets* were staged for the first time abroad, in the Grotowski Institute. Włodzimierz Staniewski seen it and commented positively on it during the public discussion that followed. Jana Pilátová wrote: “this meeting contributed to Farm in the Cave’s existence.”⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷¹ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.145 (translation mine).

⁷⁷² See: Ballay, *Farma v jeskyni*, *op. cit.*, p.66.

⁷⁷³ Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.154 (translation mine).

⁷⁷⁴ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.449.

⁷⁷⁵ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.501.

⁷⁷⁶ See: Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.449.

⁷⁷⁷ Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.274 (translation mine).

Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant—the Ensemble’s Roots

Expeditions

“In the *Sclavi* project nothing was predetermined. We got neither text nor roles; nobody proposed costumes or set design, and characters did not exist. The first ‘reading’ rehearsal was an expedition to Eastern Slovakia, where we researched the scenic expression of Ruthenian ethnicity. We did not know what we were searching for and, thanks to this we were more open to perceive everything that appeared.”⁷⁷⁸ *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant* was premiered in March 2005. Preparation, rehearsals, and first of all expeditions (for inspiration and to gather the material for the performance) were began in July 2003.⁷⁷⁹ The group of actors and collaborators consisted, at the time, of only Slavonic nations (Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ukrainian and Serbian).⁷⁸⁰ The trip to Ruthenian villages in the Eastern Slovakia was a ‘blind’ choice.⁷⁸¹

Viliam Dočolomanský said that Ruthenians were ‘closer to our roots.’⁷⁸² During the symposium in 2014 he admitted this justification was ‘primitive,’ ‘banal’ because they didn't know anything about Ruthenians other than that they ‘sang beautifully.’ An impulse came from two Slovak actors, Matej Matejka and Róbert Nižník who played the character of Emigrant later on. Nižník wrote, “The theme and environment of the performance is intrinsically connected with me. Although I’m not Ruthenian, it is the country of my childhood. I was born here, grew up here and those songs are familiar to me; those people are my neighbors. Even if I do not belong here any more... as I’ve broken away, uprooted.”⁷⁸³

Only there—while sitting in a typical village living room where they heard a traditional song talking about New York—the ensemble realized the theme would be emigration. The theme seemed to have a very long tradition in the region, starting from the short-term emigration of men (tinkers) to sudden departures to America. For Nižník coming back to the Eastern Slovakia because of the expedition brought a theme of godforsaken place with depopulated villages, relocated churches, banned religion, emigration and years of

⁷⁷⁸ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.157 (translation mine).

⁷⁷⁹ There were four expeditions in total. The second expedition took place from October 31 to November 7, 2003, during the third expedition Barbora Erniholdová and Roman Horák collected props, the fourth expedition took place in April 2007 when Jun Wan Kim joined the company.

⁷⁸⁰ The Norwegian actor that supposed to take part in the project left. See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.247 and Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.48.

⁷⁸¹ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁷⁸² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.147.

⁷⁸³ Róbert Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše? Sclavi – Emigrantova Píseň – reflexe hereckého bádání* [How Much Suffering Can the Human Soul Stand? Sclavi-The Song of an Emigrant—Reflection on Actor’s Research], a seminar paper, Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze 2008, p.3 (translation mine).

suppressing of national pride.⁷⁸⁴ Recalling the expedition ten years later Dočolomanský said, “It was also affecting how I felt and how I’m feeling till now, how Farm in the Cave and its members felt—we felt the theme is ‘in the air.’”⁷⁸⁵ Eliška Vavříková, recalling the same moment of hearing songs about New York in the village living room, said that it came just at the very end of the first expedition. She wrote that it caught the troupe also because the singing had incredible artistic qualities regarding vibrations.⁷⁸⁶ Roman Horák writing about joining the *Sclavi* project, stated that it opened up a potential for deep self-reflection, as he was an emigrant who came back to the Czech Republic after many years living abroad.⁷⁸⁷ Maja Jawor, who was moving that time between Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, wrote that emigration was a personal experience for all co-authors of the performance.⁷⁸⁸ “We were migrating and we were cut from regular life,”⁷⁸⁹ Nižník wrote about moving between residencies, where the group was rehearsing the performance. That is why the theme resonated in the whole ensemble. Jawor, writing about the experience of migrating brings an image of the body as a home,⁷⁹⁰ and the ‘body-mind’—Grotowski’s research on memory of the body.⁷⁹¹

At the beginning ideas about Ruthenians and the region were much less specific than during the previous project and the expedition to Andalusia. “We were interested in pastoral and shepherds’ culture and its magic, the culture of tinkers, remains of the animal cults (the bear dance, the cult of snake), the history and legends associated with the place (the legend about monastery and Virgin Mary from Krásnobrod), unusual local customs (female fairs in Krásnobrod), the customs and ceremonies (marriage, death, birth, Christmas and New Year), orthodox mass and the way Icons are made, singing as a dogma, old Slavonic pagan relics in witchcraft...”⁷⁹² Some of those plans were very naïve, as it was only at the location that the troupe came to realize that witchcraft was considered a taboo topic and nobody would guide the strangers to the woman-healer.⁷⁹³ Dočolomanský wrote that the plan was to observe old

⁷⁸⁴ See: Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.3.

⁷⁸⁵ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

⁷⁸⁶ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.29.

⁷⁸⁷ See: Horák, *Herecký trénink*, *op. cit.*, p.40.

⁷⁸⁸ Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁷⁸⁹ Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.11 (translation mine).

⁷⁹⁰ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.41.

⁷⁹¹ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.43.

⁷⁹² Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.147 (translation mine).

⁷⁹³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.153.

people, to hear their stories while watching their photos. The expedition was not aiming to be ethnographical, but in was a ‘travel’ done to meet individual people.⁷⁹⁴

Writing about photos, the ensemble gathered and the practical work with it as a scenic ‘material,’ Dočolomanský noted differences he sees in this practice compared with other theatre directors: “Photos of ‘regular people’ are not a manifestation of a minority culture. But they started to be the material and were taken as something ‘caught’ during the expedition. Our group differed in intention from the program of expeditions of Włodzimierz Staniewski's Gardzienice and the expeditions of Peter Brook. Catching such simple human situations, out of any extreme, is something sufficiently overexcited and authentic in the eyes of our generation and in confrontation with our life.”⁷⁹⁵ It puts the entire practice in a context other than similar practices done in the 1970s. It emphasizes the direct experience with the ‘other’ as something unusual, not practiced in a daily experience. Dočolomanský wrote: “It is a reaction to the world which started to avoid life and direct human experience.”⁷⁹⁶

Acting in such way creates a “medium of transmitting human experience.”⁷⁹⁷ “Accepting ‘the other’ is a chance to get, as to one’s manifestations, beyond so-called self-expression, beyond the borders of self-determination. A theatre can mediate even that which goes beyond the limits of conventional understanding.”⁷⁹⁸ Expeditions in the framework of research were bringing other possibilities to find theatre inspiration “discovering the hidden scenic potency of the movement”⁷⁹⁹ that actor could discover and that changed him into a co-author. “Through ‘narration of the body’ he [the actor] got beyond the borders of conceptual capturing with the help of words; he is a permanent donor of energy, connected in orchestration of the whole into a synchronization with his partner, always aiming at a co-creation and sharing.”⁸⁰⁰ By changes of the ‘material’ from expeditions presented during the process of creating the performance, the performance’s creators get closer to the essence, “to the testimony hidden here,”⁸⁰¹ as Dočolomanský wrote in his thesis.

The group noticed by themselves that thanks to this project they are actually forming a company. Dočolomanský wrote that on the contrary to the work on *Dark Love Sonnets* it was a conscious process.⁸⁰² And the entire project put the group on the much more complicated

⁷⁹⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.148.

⁷⁹⁵ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p. 280 (translation mine).

⁷⁹⁶ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.50.

⁷⁹⁷ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.155 (translation mine).

⁷⁹⁸ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.50.

⁷⁹⁹ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.155 (translation mine).

⁸⁰⁰ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.50.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.241.

path of creating the ensemble. “The activities of the ensemble’s members no longer served just one project for which they were ‘hired.’”⁸⁰³ From July 1, 2003, International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave worked as an association. In the status of the association there is written: “The existence of the studio is related to the path of creation and research of the director, Dočolomanský. It is consequence of his former experiences as director and lecturer.”⁸⁰⁴ From January to June 2004 the ensemble was moving between Beroun in the Czech Republic (residency of DAMU) and Brzezinka (residency of the Grotowski Institute) where they were, as Dočolomanský stressed, not only working, but sleeping, eating and sharing common spaces. “As the company we were in the moment zero, detached from the solid ground.”⁸⁰⁵ The project, relating to Slavonic topic and to actors’ life experience, on the contrary to Andalusian topic, brought unique possibility to create the ensemble.

Thanks to *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*, the group built a strong position in the Czech Republic and abroad—the performance was awarded with seven important prizes, including the prestigious Czech Alfréd Radok Foundation award and three awards gained at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh. To gather an audience for the spectacle in Scotland, actors were passing through the streets in their costumes reminiscent of working suits; women in traditional folk caps on their head—singing Slavonic songs and pushing a part of a wagon that, in the performance represents, a house, boat or pub... *Sclavi*—Slavs and slaves⁸⁰⁶ at the same time—succeeded, gathering a wide audience and publicity. This image of parading through the Western city with the performance that speaks about emigration as a sad and humiliating experience where a myth of ‘America—the Promised Land’ appears to be bitter and disappointed, was resonating in the public. Not only because that time there were so many Slavs (especially Poles) traveling to Great Britain for work, but also because immigration was a global experience everybody could relate to. Dočolomanský mentions meeting a man in Edinburgh, a Kurdish refugee who came to the performance and later on went to the troupe to tell his story: he paid all his money to travel many days under a truck, praying that the screw that is keeping the load over his body would not break during the travel.⁸⁰⁷

⁸⁰³ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.42.

⁸⁰⁴ Farm in the Cave’s annual report (*Výroční zpráva*) 2003, p.1. The formulation was kept until 2012. See: “Výroční zpráva,” *Farma v jeskyni*, accessed April 20, 2015, <http://infarma.info/czlng/vyrocnizpravy> (translation mine).

⁸⁰⁵ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.242 (translation mine).

⁸⁰⁶ Latin word *sclavi* means Slav and slave at the same time—this fact was consciously used while choosing the title for the performance.

⁸⁰⁷ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.163.

The goal of the expedition, as all the creators emphasize, was not to gather ethnographical material, but to embody a physical experience and develop personal associations, find inspiration and search for something archetypical. The main practice was to go to the places (like church or pub) and meet people—to catch an atmosphere that could be recreated or even restored on stage by physical acting. Dočolomanský emphasizes personal answer and engagement that he required from his actors. “It should not be an escape into a different reality (from city to the country) or time—more it is a challenge for confrontation, for a return to oneself through re-assessment, personal ecology.”⁸⁰⁸ Vavříková confirms it was not intended as ethno-research, but a searching for particular people and their stories—which is similar to the technique of the oral history. “Human experience given over through direct transmittal from man to man, from mouth to mouth, crossing the borders of time, space and individual human life,”⁸⁰⁹ was something that Dočolomanský wanted to achieve. During the expedition, actors documented the meetings on video and audio recorder, but all the videos were lost later on with the stolen camera, so the only ‘material’ at the end were the audio recordings and the memory. The memory and experience of the expedition were extremely important for the creation process. The same as with *Dark Love Sonnets* a memory of the expedition worked as a clear idea of the atmosphere or the character.⁸¹⁰

On the contrary to the Andalusian expedition, the troupe decided to divide into smaller groups.⁸¹¹ Vavříková wrote that the expedition started a ‘new’ Farm in the Cave company. She wrote, “After the premiere of this performance [*Dark Love Sonnets*] the group decided to stop for an undefined period. The training was happening only during the rehearsals that preceded performing.”⁸¹² The new group was formed in May 2003. Dočolomanský, Varadzinová, Matejka and Nižník who took part in the *Lorca* project remained. Maja Jawor and Eliška Vavříková substituted already before Gabriela Pyšná and Vendula Prager in *Dark Love Sonnets*. Vavříková wrote: “The new Farm in the Cave did not want to keep *Dark Love Sonnets* on repertoire only, but mainly to develop and to connect to the results of this specific creation.”⁸¹³ She also mentions that with the new project Dočolomanský wanted to unite performers on the contrary to the previous project, when they were divided for the ones who

⁸⁰⁸ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.48.

⁸⁰⁹ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.49.

⁸¹⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.249.

⁸¹¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.150 and Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.15.

⁸¹² Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.12 (translation mine).

⁸¹³ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.13 (translation mine).

sing better and the ones who move better.⁸¹⁴ It meant plan of a general development of actor's skills based on daily training.

The first expedition took place from July 13 till July 24, 2003.⁸¹⁵ Vavříková mentioned that this expedition was for her as well a 'test,' after which it was decided that she could become a member of the company.⁸¹⁶ The actors kept the morning training during the expedition, which—similarly as Odin Teatret in Italy—they were practicing open-air, in the public spaces, such as playgrounds. The expedition started in Prešov where they had an opportunity to ask about Ruthenian ethnic at the university or in the local newspaper. Thanks to the accidental meeting of a student that was writing her paper about tinkers that happened on the corridor of the Prešov University, the group received contact to Anna Derevjaniková, in the living room of whom the troupe had found the topic of emigration. After Prešov, the ensemble went to the villages. As Hana Varadzinová described: “We simply came to the village and asked who sings, if they have any traditions, if there is anything interesting in the area, if anything happened there—any unusual events or stories?”⁸¹⁷

During the meetings actors sometimes would decide to 'sing back' for their interlocutors to 'thank,'⁸¹⁸ which seems to be a natural behavior in the culture of singers. On the other hand it showed the very different approach of actors and Ruthenians to the songs they had sung, as the basic thing for the village singers were words and text that was transmitting their experience. Vavříková gives an example of a very old lady met in one of the villages singing about retirement house and pain she feels in her legs; she sings about her daily experience and not simply recalling songs she learned in her childhood. Ruthenian's singing appeared to be connected to expressing emotional and existential state more than being an artistic practice or entertainment.

“From the expedition we brought: recorded songs and stories, photographs, emigrants' letters, costumes and props, bagpipes, whistles, books, experiences and friendship.”⁸¹⁹ Vavříková, recalling the expedition to Ruthenian villages, compares an actor to a foreigner that pays attention to gestures, laugh in the pub and ordinary movements.⁸²⁰ That is similar to Dočolomanský's thoughts about his actors in Andalusia, who—not understanding Spanish—were more concentrated on abstract (visual and musical) understanding of the reality. During

⁸¹⁴ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁸¹⁵ In the expedition took part: Viliam Dočolomanský, Matej Matejka, Róbert Nižník, Hana Varadzinová, Eliška Vavříková, and Maja Jawor.

⁸¹⁶ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.18.

⁸¹⁷ Varadzinová: *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.48 (translation mine).

⁸¹⁸ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.16.

⁸¹⁹ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p. 18 (translation mine).

⁸²⁰ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.17.

Sclavi it appeared such sensitivity, a special focus of an actor—which is similar to anthropologist’s focus in the fieldwork—was required. The only difference between an actor and an anthropologist is that the ‘product’ of the meeting with the ‘unknown’ and the ‘surprising’ is not a paper, but a performance. Both outcomes are however based on the direct experience.

The process of collecting materials seems to be similar for an actor and anthropologist, but the area of interest is slightly different, as Dočolomanský stresses the interest in individual people and their private story; as well as actor’s personal response to it. The actor in the process of researching the material to the performance is an active co-creator. Acting, according to Dočolomanský, is a medium of transmission, transferring live experience; is a ‘reaction’ to the world; the way of existing and perceiving the world.⁸²¹

Dočolomanský wrote Ruthenians are ‘Gypsies’ of Slovakia and they remind him of ‘slaves’ without homes.⁸²² By speaking with people and gathering materials, Farm in the Cave was able to reconstruct a typical ‘story’ of an ‘Emigrant’—a *jedermensch*. It came from the material of particular songs, stories and letters. The emigration appeared as a strong myth, an archetype.⁸²³ Many people left their homes suddenly (like if it would be a trip to another village) as if cutting symbolically their previous life (in many stories future emigrants are taking an axe and going to the forest; leaving the axe on the border of the village become a ‘sign’ of emigration), not telling anything to their spouse, leaving kids (sometimes only a personal lullaby stayed as a memory of the mother).⁸²⁴ In America the emigrants need to go through the physical tests to be able to enter the country,⁸²⁵ they meet ‘an agent’—who speaks their language and many times uses emigrants to work for him under unfair conditions.⁸²⁶ The emigrant realizes things in different context have different prices, the same as the values. He lives a ‘bare life’ without sufficient social and legal status, in insecurity, fear from future (what to eat, where to sleep, how find the job).⁸²⁷ Their health is their only security for being able to continue such living.⁸²⁸ The emigrant thinks about his (her) spouse who stayed at home if she (he) is faithful.⁸²⁹

⁸²¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.340.

⁸²² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

⁸²³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.158.

⁸²⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.159.

⁸²⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.164.

⁸²⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.163.

⁸²⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.195.

⁸²⁸ See: Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov” [Emigrants’ Letters] *DISK*, 19 (6)/2007, p.83.

⁸²⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.176.

Most of the stories confirmed emigrants were losers whatever happens to them. Success could be as much a ‘curse’ as failure. Even on the way back they could lose all the earned money, so they'd hide them in their clothes, threatening to lose them. At home they are treated as ‘somebody who wanted more than others;’ a deserter who left the family without the protection of the ‘strongest’ one.⁸³⁰ If they decide to bring the rest of the family to America (sending letters with instructions how to behave to go through the ‘checking’ on the Ellis Island), they choose the life of an emigrant for their children. If they decide to stay alone, they cry for loneliness and rootlessness (as too many years passed and the young generation would not recognize and respect them).⁸³¹ What strikes in this ‘typical’ story is that sudden beginning of individual life (the emigration) on the contrary to the previous community life (the village) is understood only as a failure.

There were a few contradictory stories—Vavříková mentioned in her notes from the expedition an opinion of a drunken man that the ones who did not come back to the village found perhaps better lovers abroad, which meant sudden freedom from social rules—this did not get to the main narration of the Farm in the Cave’s performance. In the scene called *Prostitutes* we hear about ‘freedom,’ but—in the context of the main theme of the performance, and also the job the women do—it is not treated as a truthful testimony. The emigration the way Farm in the Cave experienced it among Ruthenians (the ones that stayed in the village) was unequivocally a tragic and sad circumstance.

“If we were to compare today’s stories with those the [Ruthenians] were telling us after few shots of vodka in the village’s pub, with the stories of what their grandfathers endured, we can recognize a similar humiliation, disgrace, chaos, fight for living and temporary loss of social identity. In the case of the old stories, the image is much more picturesque, because it is richer with a ‘clash of civilizations:’ the Slovak who emerges from the second deck of the fourth class of overseas steamer in 1928, staring at the Statue of Liberty and sparks of the industrial movement of Manhattan, is feeling more ‘out of himself’ than a governor of Ruthenian community who steps off a plane in the 1990s by escalator bringing him towards an immigration official.”⁸³² A ‘little man’ from Slovakia did not have enough information (or imagination) to know what to expect in the dream-America in the 1930s.

⁸³⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.181.

⁸³¹ See: Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁸³² Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.74 (translation mine).

Ruthenians are recognized as singers (they have no tradition of playing instruments and usually there are no bands in the villages). They sing to express their daily life, while working or during holidays or celebrations. There are songs to dance as well. During wedding they can sing from morning to the night ‘re-telling’ the entire story of the bride and the ceremony of starting a new life. It is this community natural way.⁸³³ Songs appeared to be something specific from another village or distinguishes families (different technique or another color of the voice). Text plays a more important role than melody. The polyphonic singing as a way of coming together might have roots in the orthodox religion, where the mass is held. Singing of Derevjanky, three women who started to sing about New York in the village living room mentioned before, are described to sing on the border of folk singing and orthodox choral.⁸³⁴ Their particular way of singing has specific technique: a soft start, opening tone that vibrates and keeping it till the end without ‘dropping.’⁸³⁵ The technique resonated in the ensemble as it recalled them director’s requirement of ‘keeping the flow.’ Derevjanky are also taking breath together, even if this happens in the middle of the word. Such method is a typical for Jarabina village.⁸³⁶ To sing like them one needs to develop specific mutuality that recalled the ensemble Gardzienice’s inspiration. Meeting with Derevjanky was so fruitful for Farm in the Cave as well, because the leader, Anna Derevjaniková is a university teacher who can pass on knowledge and self-reflection about technique and the culture's voice. She was also able to answer many questions that deepen the ‘first’ impression the actors had. Derevjaniková explained for example why—except priests—Ruthenian men are not singing, saying it is just a ‘human moment,’⁸³⁷ but did not connect it to the theme of emigration when men (symbolically) lost their voices in the community.

Training

“Working with songs shifted from the previous project into a direct searching for vocal sound quality of voice and movement so that it could be connected to the theme:⁸³⁸ first, the material gathered during the expeditions was selected; the second task was to imitate. But to imitate, actors needed first to learn the technique, get it to the body and understand it through the body, as Vavříková explained.⁸³⁹ Recalling this period of rehearsing *Sclavi* Nižník

⁸³³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.216.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.218.

⁸³⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.234.

⁸³⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.226.

⁸³⁸ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.285.

⁸³⁹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

wrote, “The training becomes independent creative component of the actor’s art. The director is involved in it as a supervisor and sets tasks so that the actors’ potential is pushed and developed.”⁸⁴⁰ The training for *Sclavi* was led by Viliam Dočolomanský, Matej Matejka, Hana Varadzinová and Mariana Sadovska, a former actress of Gardzienice.⁸⁴¹

Dočolomanský wrote that cooperation with Sadovska exceeded the borders of the work of arranger, musical director or voice pedagogue.⁸⁴² It is was her singing exercises—from being material for training the actor’s voice—that became the foundation material for the performance.⁸⁴³ “From the instructions for the singing exercises, the basic dictionary for the entirety of the actor’s technique in our company was derived,”⁸⁴⁴ Dočolomanský stated. As Maja Jawor wrote Sadovska brought unknown—not used by Farm in the Cave before—way of working with songs and music.⁸⁴⁵ By teaching some of the Gardzienice’s exercises she accomplished the goal of getting songs into the actor’s body.⁸⁴⁶ She taught the actors Ukrainian ‘open throat’ technique, which Varadzinová described as light, high (soprano) and easily broadcast⁸⁴⁷ that was different than the ‘throat singing’ from Jarabina.⁸⁴⁸ As the performance is acoustic, actors would learn to project and direct voices to a particular place in space.⁸⁴⁹

With the incorporation of novel harmonies, the songs were not copied directly from ‘folklore,’ but could incorporate the actors’ experience. For the singing practice, Sadovska proposed working with multiple actor’s intentions, such as the conscious decision not to finish words so that a melody could continue across an imaginary horizon.⁸⁵⁰ During four visits Sadovska cooperated with Dočolomanský on selecting songs (mainly with the emigration motif and less popular melody), on teaching songs, but also on teaching singing as some of the actors had no experience with singing before. She had introduced an idea of so-called repetitions—singing the performance acoustically (keeping mentally the timing of the physical actions).⁸⁵¹ Vavříková introduces as an example of working with a song one whose verses are about going to America, and Sadovska’s idea of singing it while walking. At the

⁸⁴⁰ Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.9 (translation mine).

⁸⁴¹ See: Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

⁸⁴² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.282.

⁸⁴³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.283.

⁸⁴⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.282 (translation mine).

⁸⁴⁵ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.90.

⁸⁴⁶ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.95.

⁸⁴⁷ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.41.

⁸⁴⁸ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.126.

⁸⁴⁹ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.40.

⁸⁵⁰ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.138.

⁸⁵¹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.75.

end the song in the performance is sung while actors stand facing the public; the song is sung in a very different harmony and tempo, but as Vavříková wrote—the inner goal to ‘go forward’ was kept in the song as actors’ inner intention.⁸⁵²

After learning the song, there was a moment of searching for another harmony or expression for the song to appear on stage. The goal was not only to mirror the experience of the original singers, but also to create a meaning inside the performance. The gathered material—audio (most of the video was lost with a stolen camera), photos, letters, things, and cloths—were transformed into the scenic material, from which the performance was built. *Sclavi* is not a performance inspired by music or choreography of a particular culture because the work and intention was different. It is not about showing particular culture, but about immersing into it. “Our goal was to find in each song something that would inspire us and to accent the strongest element in it. We tore songs to shreds choosing the most interesting motifs, combining it in different way, adjusting the order, searching for the meanings, which would create new motifs,”⁸⁵³ Varadinová wrote.

Sadovska led the vocal training without pausing so that ‘the energy would flow.’ By singing a particular song in a different way, actors were seeking for its meaning in practice, while singing. The individual task of each actor was to search for the ‘essence’ of the song—what kind of feelings, emotions and images it develops in them; they tried to determine if it could be universal as well. The aim of this deconstruction was not destruction, but more an evaluation of older forms. In some way it was a natural process mirroring (in faster tempo) functioning of the song in oral culture, where each performer in every new generation, depending on his experience, adds meanings, slightly altering the song. In the case of *Sclavi* the main difference was that a ‘new generation’ was not coming from the same culture as songs, but consisted instead a group of actors of different nationalities. Farm in the Cave's aim, during this deconstruction, was to maintain the effect of the Ruthenian songs: the polyphony and vibration that is created by holding a tone while belting out full throttle, as if trying to cover the entire landscape, with the voice. The songs that mirror experience of a culture or a typical landscape were by this process transformed and shown as something alive and authentic. “We are searching in the melody for the emotion: an implicit meaning not uttered literally but one that resonates within; and, depending on how it goes, we continue the work with the song, bring it out into a broader context; we feel the text of a song (as we

⁸⁵² See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.73.

⁸⁵³ Varadinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.12 (translation mine).

understand it anyway) indicates a theme, the moment of its creation, but can't drain the deep meaning encoded in the melody, which is why the song is not illustrated.⁸⁵⁴

Maja Jawor wrote that she started her cooperation with Farm in the Cave being under great influence of Gardzienice and Mariana Sadovska who had just left Staniewski's company.⁸⁵⁵ Jawor emphasizes the personal response of the actor to the topic and material that Dočolomanský was interested in.⁸⁵⁶ She mentions copying the 'life roles' and personal relations of the people that appeared in the work as individual material of the actor, especially in the so-called incubatory phase.⁸⁵⁷ The roles—as with the actors' personal attributes that influenced the creation of *Dark Love Sonnets*—resonate with actors' 'off-stage' personalities. While working with songs, Jawor says Dočolomanský asked for inner feeling—"how does your personal life relate to it?"⁸⁵⁸—asking actor to search for his own voice.⁸⁵⁹ As with the process of *Dark Love Sonnets*, Dočolomanský was more interested in daily work on exploring the exercises; "running, working on songs, rhythms was a space where actors were not 'acting.'"⁸⁶⁰

Some songs inspired Dočolomanský to create an entire scene or the other way around: a song was sought out that could suit the setting or the situation. The *Sclavi* project and the new composition of Farm in the Cave developed the actor's language, influencing the training. At its core, it refers to the earlier inspiration of Andalusian culture that was steeped-in to the newer project.⁸⁶¹ Concentrated on the song-work, the group was simultaneously "experimenting with limits and plasticity of the movements."⁸⁶² Dočolomanský divided three separate but simultaneous training approaches. The first was of the individual—creating individual scores creating "a physical text where one can change both intention and shape"⁸⁶³ with partner exercises that developed actor's skills; the second approach worked with material collected on the expedition; the third approach involved the biography of Vaslav Nijinsky and the music of Igor Stravinsky written for *Rite of Spring* (as performance about Nijinsky was originally the first idea of Dočolomanský for the second performance of his company).⁸⁶⁴ Dočolomanský acknowledges the idea of combining Ruthenians with Nijinsky was

⁸⁵⁴ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.27.

⁸⁵⁵ Sadovska was in Gardzienice 1992-2002. See also: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.44.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁷ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.52.

⁸⁵⁸ Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.96 (translation mine).

⁸⁵⁹ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.98.

⁸⁶⁰ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.339 (translation mine).

⁸⁶¹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.32.

⁸⁶² Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.241 (translation mine).

⁸⁶³ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.265 (translation mine).

⁸⁶⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, pp.242-243.

accidental, but calculated (Nijinsky was also an emigrant, he was ‘exploited’ by his impresario, he’d exploit his own body to earn money⁸⁶⁵)—as such it remained a hidden inspiration. This ‘hybrid’ process of creation, as Dočolomanský called it, incorporated material from three different performances⁸⁶⁶ (in addition to *Sclavi* there was also *Waiting Room*, and later *Reclining Women* that evolved from miniature into not yet finished *Amigas*).

The individual training was inspired by the video recordings of the training developed by Iben Nagel Rasmussen from Odin Teatret.⁸⁶⁷ The training explored movement by following impulses from pelvis, without using hands.⁸⁶⁸ Maja Jawor created a physical score using the principle of this training—waddling on her knees across a white ground-cloth to emulate the character of Emigrant's memory on his small Daughter playing.⁸⁶⁹ “As a director I was touching the ‘unknown terrain’ more on the basis of associations than comment. I gave up on the foreshadowing meanings; I more become their ‘hunter,’ using the intuition of a musician.”⁸⁷⁰ Dočolomanský described his work as that of a composer⁸⁷¹ using his intuition and unconsciously ‘repeating’ motifs—like Emigrant's movements in different scenes—shifting from a standing position to a seated one and stumbling to lie down at the end. Those are moments of disillusion, the ‘heart of a theme,’ as Dočolomanský stated.⁸⁷² Varadinová said: “We want that our movement in space, our action would be understood as music that reaches out to the spectator from within; we try to catch his emotions and we invite him to create his own images.”⁸⁷³

The individual training lasted from 15 to 45 minutes,⁸⁷⁴ as needed, and got shorter during the process, as scenes and situations would come about. Roman Horák, who played a character who always carries an accordion, created a specific exercise to study ways to move while carrying and playing the instrument; changing his perception of the body. He wrote that he needed to divide body-awareness into upper and lower parts in correspondence the music;

⁸⁶⁵ *I was dancing for money*—it is a quotation from Nijinsky’s diaries. See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.276.

⁸⁶⁶ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.245.

⁸⁶⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.259.

⁸⁶⁸ Workshop on creating physical scores took place in July 2007. See: Anna Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi. Význam etnického výskumu v hereckej tvorbe a jeho aplikácia do metodických postupov vo výučbe hereckej výchovy* [Research and its Application in Practice. The Importance of Ethnical Research in Theatre Acting and its Application in Methodological Procedures in Teaching Acting Movement Education]. PhD Diss., Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2010, p.50.

⁸⁶⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.261, Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁸⁷⁰ Dočolomanský, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.50.

⁸⁷¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.257.

⁸⁷² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.275.

⁸⁷³ Varadinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.16 (translation mine).

⁸⁷⁴ See: Varadinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.28.

emphasis should remain contradictory regarding the director's wish.⁸⁷⁵ As Dočolomanský was avoiding illustration in each part, Horák needed to separate the line of movement from the musical line and try to create a contra-rhythm in the body regarding the rhythm he played on accordion.⁸⁷⁶ "For example while accompanying with music I was doing the same action softly, coarsely, fast, slow, in the extraverted or in introverted way, etc. keeping the same quality of the musical accompaniment."⁸⁷⁷ "Training of Farm in the Cave does not create any aesthetic form of expression, but more develops plasticity of the body and the ability to express and develop inner impulses by the physical articulation of emotional process,"⁸⁷⁸ Vavříková wrote. The basis is the pelvis and the grounding—it affects the way the actors move, breath and sing.

Recalling work on *Sclavi*, Nižník wrote, "The rhythm was the key to reconciling the group and to lay out all the activities. The rhythm of songs, of particular exercises, but also a rhythmical structure of the entire block of training-rehearsing, in which we tried not to separate the voice training from the movement, the creation from the training, but more to connect all the components. We rehearsed in long blocks trying to maintain constant concentration for several hours without a break. Rhythm of rehearsal and training had later an influence on the common perception and conduction of rhythm of the performance. We had no problem keeping an hour-long performance on high tempo and tension, because we were accustomed to extremely long rehearsals."⁸⁷⁹ Nižník added that the ensemble always kept a few rules during the training: the first one was to keep energy from 'dropping' (that is why they tried to go over tiredness during rehearsals); a second rule was to concentrate on the situation, partner or detail of the exercise, but not on oneself; a third rule was not to explain verbally what they had wanted to do, but to act; a fourth rule was to always search for intention.⁸⁸⁰

In one of the interviews Dočolomanský speaks about the inner 'heat' he requires from the actors. This state called an 'operational heat' that performers are asked to keep even during the trainings; this inner 'fever' or very concentrated 'activation' is the basic state in which they act. Asked about tiredness that must have come in this way of working, Dočolomanský said: "Sometimes the states of tiredness are kind of technical principle that brings certain way of spontaneity. The body mobilizes itself only to those most fundamental

⁸⁷⁵ See: Horák, *Herecký trénink*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

⁸⁷⁶ See: Horák, *Herecký trénink*, *op. cit.*, p.34.

⁸⁷⁷ Horák, *Herecký trénink*, *op. cit.*, p.35 (translation mine).

⁸⁷⁸ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.160 (translation mine).

⁸⁷⁹ Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.10 (translation mine).

⁸⁸⁰ See: Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

things. Everybody who does theatre knows this principle very intimately. The most interesting ideas very often come from resignation. Something will happen by itself, it is not me who did that.”⁸⁸¹ Nižník wrote about working on *Sclavi* in the paper entitled: *How much suffering can the human soul stand?*, “Over time, this question became my inner monologue. It was a kind of driving force during the process of building the performance, and also later during performing. It helped me to overcome the artistic and human challenges.”⁸⁸²

Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant

This performance was a more complicated scenic composition and more complicated process of creation than the previous *Dark Love Sonnets*,⁸⁸³ Dočolomanský stated. “It was a school of editing in all the aspects.”⁸⁸⁴ Even if the group reconstructed a typical emigration story, for Dočolomanský it was not personalized enough and, because of that it was not inspiring him to create scenes.⁸⁸⁵ At this point, Jana Pilátová proposed *Hordubal* of Karel Čapek because the novel's theme was also about emigration and the story was set in the same geography. Čapek’s novel presented a family type: Emigrant, his unfaithful Wife, their Daughter and The Other Man who took Emigrant’s place. The other characters included a neighbor (a voyeur, a widow or a spinster,⁸⁸⁶ a parasite that watches⁸⁸⁷) and an accordion-toting village fool who'd betray everything.⁸⁸⁸ At the moment *Hordubal* was proposed, many of the scenes had already been prepared,⁸⁸⁹ so we can’t speak about ‘adaptation.’ However, *Hordubal* introduced relations among characters and some situations. For her scenario based on *Hordubal*, Jana Pilátová focused on movement and sounds present in the novel.⁸⁹⁰ “Of course we had no intention of staging Čapek’s *Hordubal*, we preferred to incorporate the novel as background for creating situations. Our characters’ roles were constructed from those in the novel; thus, this drama of four people structured the performance's axis.”⁸⁹¹

The character of Emigrant appeared spontaneously during the rehearsals. Dočolomanský was working on the pub scene when Róbert Nižník spontaneously set himself

⁸⁸¹ See: Viliam Dočolomanský, “Technika? To je, když už mi nic nepřekáží” [Technique? It is When Nothing Restrains Me], interview by Jana Návrátová, *Taneční zóna*, Spring 2007, p.59.

⁸⁸² Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.4 (translation mine).

⁸⁸³ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.245.

⁸⁸⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.246 (translation mine).

⁸⁸⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.244.

⁸⁸⁶ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.150.

⁸⁸⁷ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

⁸⁸⁸ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.52; later on the character of the second village women would be added.

⁸⁸⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.247.

⁸⁹⁰ Scenario to *Sclavi* dated on October 17, 2004, archive of Jana Pilátová.

⁸⁹¹ Varadinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.5 (translation mine).

apart, observing and commenting sparingly at the other characters. Nižník's natural cool posture that steadied the scene was incorporated into the final performance: it crystallized into the character of an individual who speaks in the moment he should remain silent, and on the contrary does not speak or act in the moments that he supposed to.⁸⁹² Emigrant's character is always excluded from the crowd. As Hordubal from Čapek's story took care of the 'cows' and *Manya / The Other Man* who replaced him is a 'horseman'—it introduced a layer of two worlds. The entire culture is in the process of change. Nižník was asked to be heavy and sedate as a cow,⁸⁹³ which referenced the slow and traditional world of the past. Matejka, by contrast, was asked to be fast and impulsive.⁸⁹⁴

Dočolomanský acknowledged the horse as a hidden substance of the performance.⁸⁹⁵ It not only brings images from Čapek's novel, but also from Nijinsky's diaries—as a metaphor of a dancer who has no freedom ('jumps as maestro says'). The relation between Emigrant and *The Other Man* kept the intentions from the story of Nijinsky and his impresario, an agent and his talent/a worker.⁸⁹⁶ This intention attracts spectators as it is ambivalent and not delivered in a straight way that is easy to read. It shows up as hidden tension that is not a 'private' drama, but a clash of values. *The Other Man* is a groom in Emigrant's farm, so it is Emigrant who should be superior, but they had already exchanged places. It isn't just the two main male characters who deal with the 'horse' topic. Each of the actors was asked to create physical actions performing his own horse—from the hard working horse to the circus one. This image would appear also later on in *The Theatre*, when the actor is ruled by the female-spectator as a horse on a string running in circle.

Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant is composed like music. The scenes are not connected by the linear logic, but they present images like motifs in the song. The history of the main character is not presented in a cause-effect relationship. The audience observes the events from the emotional perspective. The common scenes (stop-action 'photography') that portray society as a whole are mixed with more lyrical scenes. Sometimes the main character continues his song, while the choir is singing something different, what makes a dramatic collage, polyphony of songs and meanings. The intonations partly come from original letters from the beginning of the 20th century brought by the ensemble from the expedition. Hana Varadzinová wrote: "*Sclavi* is a dream of a dying man, where the images of reality are mixed

⁸⁹² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.251.

⁸⁹³ See: Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.11.

⁸⁹⁴ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.316; Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.116.

⁸⁹⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.315.

⁸⁹⁶ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.82; Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.317; Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.14.

with the memories on immigration life).”⁸⁹⁷ In many letters a motif is repeated of an emigrant dying in sleep.⁸⁹⁸ Emigrant in *Sclavi* is symbolically ‘dying’ many times; he is ‘falling of the stairs,’ as Jana Pilátová described the progress of his disillusion. He seems to be clung to memories of home while being on emigration and memories of emigration while being at home. The moment he identifies with a place or people the scene is over.⁸⁹⁹ Dočolomanský introduced an image from Jerzy Kosiński’s *The Painted Bird*⁹⁰⁰ to describe how his differences provokes the community. Two dramaturgical lines are present in the performance—a story of a family inspired by the novel of Čapek and collective scenes picturing emigrants inspired by the material from the expedition, *Rite of Spring* and other sources.⁹⁰¹

The transformation of the songs and spoken word recollected real situations. Nearly all the texts spoken by the actors on stage are derived from documentary sources—recordings made during the expedition, found in the original letters of emigrants or in the contemporary speech of Ukrainian prostitutes. Two short sentences are quoted from the story of Karel Čapek (*Dobrý den* / Good morning—Emigrant’s Daughter says to him after his return and *Jdi pryč* / Go away—Emigrant’s Wife shouts after he tries to get closer to her).⁹⁰² One short sentence (*I love future*) spoken in bad English was chosen by Róbert Nižník from modern Czech literature.⁹⁰³ A few sentences were selected from the recordings done during the expedition along with words, laughter or shouts. The intonations of the actors were chosen because they were significant or interesting. Dočolomanský would decide if a rhythm, tone or color of voice would remain or be changed; he’d never choose the intonations; he decided about their ‘expression,’ but not about the first inspiration. The inspiration came from the actors as the intonation needed to resonate in them and become in a way ‘personal.’ During the work with the emigrants’ letters, the actors searched for intonations and rhythms in the handwriting, paying attention to emotions, non-formal (oral) ways of composing the letter (litanies of the greetings), bad punctuation, orthographic mistakes, etc.

The original letters from the beginning of the 20th century send to Slovakia from USA, Argentina and Canada,⁹⁰⁴ Farm in the Cave received from Ján Lazorík, a collector and local

⁸⁹⁷ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.4 (translation mine).

⁸⁹⁸ See: Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.83.

⁸⁹⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos*, *op. cit.*, p.254.

⁹⁰⁰ Reference to *The Painted Bird* by Jerzy Kosiński. See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.189.

⁹⁰¹ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.4.

⁹⁰² See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.117.

⁹⁰³ Josef Škvorecký, *Prima sezóna* [The Swell Season] (Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1975). See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.277.

⁹⁰⁴ See: Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.75.

passionate of folkloric tradition.⁹⁰⁵ Dočolomanský in his essay about emigrants' letters described Lazorík as an outsider in the majority culture as he is one of the very few that insist on keeping the Šariš dialect alive.⁹⁰⁶ The letters introduced to the ensemble personal emigrants' stories. But—what is more important—they were used to create physical structures of movements and the 'intonations:' the soundscape of the performance. The inspiration came from the way the letters were written including all the mistakes—the actors tried to read the emotions from the shaky handwriting⁹⁰⁷ as they believed many feelings were hidden in between the lines.⁹⁰⁸

While working with the letters during the residency in Brzezinka, Róbert Nižník created his physical score copying the capital letters of one emigrant's handwriting. Dočolomanský asked the actor to keep the nervous movement only from the center down, so that he would look like 'writing' with his knees.⁹⁰⁹ Finally the actor was asked to 'put' his score in his pocket.⁹¹⁰ Nižník used this score in the scene called *In the Pub* when Emigrant is observed by his wife; he looks like a drunk gesticulating with his hands in the pockets.⁹¹¹ The spectator could not know that he 'writes' a letter consisting of specific information. For the scene, it is not important to know the information—the physical movements of the actor could look like the inexpressible 'memories' of hard work in America, or visualization of a disappointing meeting with his wife after many years of emigration. It shows a 'line' of Emigrant's role; it is his 'memory of the body'—expressing what he had experienced and with what he returns to his village. The audience, watching the performance, could see that something is 'going on' inside of the Emigrant, even if they do not know what. The movements look like he tries to 'catch something not reachable;' the fists in the pockets could express 'knife in the pocket' as well as 'empty pockets' without money. By 'adding' the way of looking of an old woman met during the expedition, the result is an expression of Emigrant's 'loneliness.'⁹¹² Explaining this scene, Nižník said the first part when he is on stage with the other actors is fixed, but when he stays alone "he listens to the audience like a blind man to the surroundings, developing his inner improvised monolog with the audience, the

⁹⁰⁵ Ján Lazorík from Krivany provided the ensemble with collection of letters from emigration dated from the 1920s to the 1970s of the 20th century.

⁹⁰⁶ See: Dočolomanský, "Listy Emigrantov," *op. cit.*, p.92.

⁹⁰⁷ See: Dočolomanský, "Listy Emigrantov," *op. cit.*, p.76.

⁹⁰⁸ See: Dočolomanský, "Listy Emigrantov," *op. cit.*, p.77.

⁹⁰⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.297.

⁹¹⁰ See: Dočolomanský, "Listy Emigrantov," *op. cit.*, p.86.

⁹¹¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.298.

⁹¹² See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.109.

other characters and Emigrant's memories. This inner action is stopped suddenly by the entrance of Varadzinová's character."⁹¹³

Another letter, Varadzinová 'mumbles' to herself in the scene of pushing her husband's hands away from her body during their first meeting. The original text is a monolog of a woman who tries to persuade somebody that she did not steal something. But in some parts of the letter the woman does admit she had stolen something. This gives some inner intention to Varadzinová's acting, even if the audience would never know what happens 'in her head.' This acting technique recalls the character of Lorca in *Dark Love Sonnets* who 'secretly' repeats for himself a poem during the scene called *America*. Eliška Vavříková, explaining her way of working with a sentence from yet another emigrant letters she'd chosen to work with, wrote that she copied the way it was written (she literally duplicated the handwriting copying the shapes of the letters) to find specific tempo (slower, with difficulties) of quoting the text as intonation during the performance.⁹¹⁴

The inspiration from Nijinsky is concentrated on the Russian choreographer's *Rite of Spring*, the ballet based on the Slavonic ritual in which a girl dances till her death; with Igor Stravinsky's music, the ballet was staged in Paris in 1913, at the beginning of the 20th century. Not insignificantly, that's the same era as the exodus of Ruthenians (and other Slavs) to America. Stravinsky's music and Nijinsky's choreography was considered sexual, primitive and barbarian. The Canadian historian, Modris Eksteins published in 1989 *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of Modernism*, where he stated that Stravinsky and Nijinsky's ballet foresaw the First World War that began modern consciousness. Eksteins wrote: "Many in the audience were exceptionally elegant that evening as they arrived for the 8:45 curtain. All were exited. For weeks rumors had circulated about the artistic delights that the Russian ballet company had prepared for the new Paris season. Advanced publicity spoke of the 'real art,' the 'true art,' and art not confined by space and time, that Paris would experience."⁹¹⁵ The ballet, both music and movement, caused shock and surprise—the audience was whistling and howling. Eksteins wrote: "Personal insults were certainly exchanged; probably some punches too; maybe cards to arrange a semblance of satisfaction."⁹¹⁶ The staging provoked a riot. The ballet was 'ugly,' concentrated more on sending energy downwards to the ground than upwards as expected with conventional ballet. The body pattern in *Rite of*

⁹¹³ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.109 (translation mine).

⁹¹⁴ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.111.

⁹¹⁵ Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of Modernism* (Toronto: Random House, 2012), p.10.

⁹¹⁶ Eksteins, *Rites of Spring...*, *op. cit.*, p.12.

Spring was based on initiating movement from the pelvis and keeping the feet and knees turned inside. The patterned inspired Farm in the Cave actors.⁹¹⁷ Nina Vangeli, after watching *Sclavi* rehearsing in 2005, asked whether poverty is a sister of truth and she asked why it is so interesting for theatre makers. She noted that perhaps we live in the ‘poor’ époque with its never-ending ‘floor-work.’⁹¹⁸ *Sclavi* related to those questions and remarks by quoting movements and rhythms from *Rite of Spring* from the beginning of the 20th century that ‘started’ Modernism and a new era in Western society.

Vavříková said that work with such ballet ‘icons’ as Nijinsky was different than work with photos brought from the expedition. Whereas, the actors tried to extract anything common from the photos, with the icons of dancers they sought out instead individual expressions.⁹¹⁹ Finally, some poses were quoted in *Sclavi*’s choreography, composed with the other elements that appeared in the scene. For Dočolomanský the ‘icons’ were also photos of villagers or *gastarbeiters* on Ellis Island. He was not interested in knowing where a particular posture came from; he cared more for transmitting a powerful image. For the scene, where actors were supposed to work with quotations from the ‘icons’ of *Rite of Spring*, Vavříková adopted the posture of a man that she had seen in a photo from 1902 in the book about emigration. The hunched stoker in the background of the photos carries a barrow on the boat sailing from Marseille to Bombay.⁹²⁰ Dočolomanský calls this posture a ‘visual icon of the performance,’⁹²¹ full of contradictory forces in his body that creates a dramatic tension and makes it look interesting.⁹²²

The training of ‘icons’ from *Rite of Spring* was led by Matej Matejka and it was based on a video of the ballet’s modern reconstruction.⁹²³ The other scene, where the ‘posture’ from Nijinsky’s choreography appears as a quotation, is the scene named *Prostitutes*. Two women are lying on the ground with their pelvises up. The upper part of the body is relaxed, facing the audience; the lower part of the body is acting as violated.⁹²⁴ The text that was added later to this physical score quoting a contemporary documentary and speech of an authentic Ukrainian prostitute.⁹²⁵ The entire text originally spoken by one woman was for the purpose

⁹¹⁷ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb, op. cit.*, p.82.

⁹¹⁸ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.37.

⁹¹⁹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.140.

⁹²⁰ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.130.

⁹²¹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos..., op. cit.*, p.308.

⁹²² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos..., op. cit.*, p.309.

⁹²³ Interview with Matej Matejka, Wrocław March 4, 2015.

⁹²⁴ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, p.116.

⁹²⁵ The speech is quoted from the documentary *Jednoduchá odpověď* [An Easy Answer] directed by Boris Chykulaj in 2004. See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos..., op. cit.*, p.262.

of the scene divided into four actors and composed as a sound collage. Vavříková that is one of the actress performing *Prostitutes* wrote, “In this scene I gaze into the eyes of the spectators, testing my monologue as if it were a river.”⁹²⁶ The way of speaking is not opened for reactions, even if it consisted of questions and is performed as an invitation (eye contact). But the scene starts with a mirror image—Vavříková steps out in front of the audience as if the ‘fourth wall’ were a mirror and she gestures as if putting on an earring and adjusting make-up before leaving. Those gestures came from a task given to the actors by the director to improvise on physical actions: to depart from one space and arrive at another space.⁹²⁷ The entire scene is composed as a collage of voice and movement motifs, and rhythms as well. Many layers of inspirations were juxtaposed in this scene by Dočolomanský to create a thick image open to ambiguous interpretation.

When embedding the rhythm of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* within *Sclavi*, Dočolomanský accelerated its tempo.⁹²⁸ The ensemble worked with the rhythms from Stravinsky's music the same way it worked with the rhythm of *bulleria* in the *Lorca* project, eager to hold on to that as an inner substance of the performance. Those rhythms return a few times during the performance; this rhythm accompanies actors holding posture of the hunched stoker. In the culmination scene the actors pull their shirts over their head; this specific motif was derived not from Stravinsky but from a Ruthenian village festive ritual: in order to dance pretending to be men, women would don a white handkerchief on their face and a black hat. That Ruthenian dance was most popular at times when men were lacking. With *Sclavi*, these hats kept falling off during the rehearsals so the actors and director had to hunt for some other solution, ultimately replacing the Ruthenian veil with shirts pulled over the actors' heads. This simple effect created the image of an emigrant with no face.⁹²⁹ As actresses would be bare-breasted under their shirts, the gesture connected to the *Prostitutes* scene that came later in the narration-line of the performance. That speeded-up Stravinsky tempo, which appears in connection to this posture, evolved to become the leitmotif rhythm of an emigrant—recalling the images of faster heartbeat, a train, a factory, a running horse.⁹³⁰ The same rhythm appears when actors speak the lines of a Czech poem proposed by Jana Pilátová as connected to the topic.⁹³¹ The poem about the land/body—property owned by someone else—‘fits’ with syllables; the actors chanting it by phrasing it in the rhythm of pulsation in the scene called

⁹²⁶ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, op. cit., p.113 (translation mine).

⁹²⁷ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, op. cit., p.264.

⁹²⁸ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, op. cit., p.279.

⁹²⁹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, op. cit., p.132.

⁹³⁰ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, op. cit., p.88; Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, op. cit., p.295.

⁹³¹ A poem of Josef Václav Sládek *Ne, ta moje pole* [No, Those Fields of Mine are not Mine], 1890.

On Board.⁹³² The entire scene develops into a sophisticated vocal-collage of three intonations collected during the expedition—one of the professional weeper, the second quoting an emigrant’s letter and the third one being a story of old Ruthenian woman remembering the war.

The inspiration did not just come from the expedition or the materials about Nijinsky. Vavříková mentions reading sociological studies and researching photos on the Internet about emigration at the beginning of the 20th century. The positions of actors’ hands checking their own teeth originate from the photos found on the Internet that show how control is done on Ellis Island. The postures in *Sclavi* appear as if two parts of the actor’s body could belong to two different people (the gestures are combined with a litany of greetings or instructions from the emigrant’s letter about how to prepare for control). Dočolomanský mentions also the TV news he watched during the rehearsal process that talked about the particular smile of Vietnamese people living in the Czech Republic. The TV journalist explained that the smile does not mean ‘they are laughing at us,’ but rather ‘they are feeling insecure so they smile expressing that they do not know what to do.’ Many spectators of *Sclavi* noticed this light smile—labeled by the director as the ‘Vietnamese smile’—as nearly an ‘off-stage’ expression of the actors, which caused confusion. Thus, the research originated not only from the ‘academic’ or ‘ethnographic’ resources, but it was developed in an associative way (behavior of a foreigner in the Czech Republic could help to define behavior of Slavonic emigrants at the beginning of the 20th century in America, because an ‘emotional’ state of both is the same).

The opening scene, called *Invasion of Emigrants*, included all the above-mentioned sources of inspiration. It has few layers, as Dočolomanský described it: “It shows a society of emigrants. The emigrants address greetings and quotations from the letters about how good they are to the public, but the words are in contrast to the feverish gallop of bodies in blue working suits, and in contrast to the song’s melody as well. The inner dynamic of the scene develops—after a while the emigrants start to shout over each other imposing upon the audience. The spectator finds himself between seeing them show off and running away from something. The short part is about teeth; put out of the context of the letter it sounds absurd. The texts of the letters are banal, but they mean something specific. They identify an emigrant as a lost person trying to confirm his social status and dignity.”⁹³³ Maja Jawor recalling *Invasion of Emigrants* scene, wrote that it contains very complicated elements because actor’s

⁹³² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.303, 305.

⁹³³ Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.92 (translation mine).

legs work with one rhythm and intention but the hands hold to a very different one, and the voice carries a third layer. The actress compares the composition of this scene to mathematics.

Jawor, performing the character of Emigrant's Daughter, got a task to watch photos of kids and to observe them, as essence of her character was described by the director as a 'puppy';⁹³⁴ she is the one who express unexpressed emotions between the other characters. Jawor, describing Dočolomanský's strategy of directing, wrote that he chooses the detail, develops it and edits it.⁹³⁵ She gave an example of her scream that was originally stopping the rhythm chosen from Stravinsky. In the performance the scream comes after Daughter's rape. Thanks to the previous origin it should work not as an illustrative scream of pain or desperation, but as a scream of protest.⁹³⁶ Vavříková wrote: "during editing layers, the most important—as those layers are happening simultaneously—is neither to forget a movement nor a mind intention, because their coexistence is making the final image thick."⁹³⁷ The actress compares developing the physical score by adding new expression to new branches that are developing more to the inside than to the outside.

Hana Varadzinová and Eliška Vavříková, having background in dramatic theatre, explain differences in working on the 'role' in those different genres (dramatic and physical theatre). Vavříková compares the physical score to the language. "The same as you could change the intensity, rhythm or intention of the words, you could change the score."⁹³⁸ She compares her work of copying intonation to learning the text of a dramatic role: at the beginning it is simply technical and it supposed to be learned without any emotional accents (those would come later with the expression requested by the director). Explaining her work with photos of people encountered during the expedition, Vavříková wrote that she tried to recognize which muscles are tensed and which are relaxed, and also where is the center. Later, she tried to copy the pose physically without any idea of how it should look or what it needs to express. By copying and only later experiencing with the body the feelings the particular shape gives, the physical actor—according to Vavříková—is able to find something unexpected or not visible at the first sight.⁹³⁹

Speaking about the style of Farm in the Cave's acting, Hana Varadzinová said that they try to make their expression objective; and they look for 'pure energy' and 'true emotion:' "Because our work is not based on the semantics of the words (as in drama) and in

⁹³⁴ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.162.

⁹³⁵ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.101.

⁹³⁶ See: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.191.

⁹³⁷ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.79 (translation mine).

⁹³⁸ Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.127 (translation mine).

⁹³⁹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.124.

the movement we do not use conventionalized symbols (only sometimes in exceptional cases with the intention to use the convention itself) or explanatory illustrations (such as in pantomime), we do not try to appeal to the spectator's intellect, but more to invite him to be a partner in the process of experiencing. Our acting is expressive. (...) We found the characters, their acting and their nature in ourselves, in our heart, experience and imagination.”⁹⁴⁰ Varadzinová explains, however, that she is not interpreting herself, her private life or behavior. “It's not about the self-presentation.”⁹⁴¹ The physical score that is the basic element originates from both: inside—“growing from the imagination, arising from the inner images, questions and associations to the topic (the researches on the topics are extensive: authentic testimonies, literature, films, photos, we try to be open and seek impulses that resonate within us, all around us)”⁹⁴²—or by quoting the outside shape (like in the case of photography) to search for the inner response as a second step. While creating situations, the actors avoid illustrating conventional shapes, clichés (both general and individual ones) and, on the contrary, they search for unusual, uncommon physical expressions. The meanings of those are discovered only later by the director from the outside perspective, who edits them according to the internal sense he is interested in.⁹⁴³

Varadzinová—explaining her work on building the character of Polana from Čapek's novel (*Emigrant's Wife* in the performance)—mentions getting a task first (from Jana Pilátová) to choose all the words, verbs and phrases that express Polana's movement; any activity or anything that is associated with the action. “I noticed Čapek's Polana in terms of physical characteristics. It was a straight posture, often her arms were crossed over her chest and almost always she was described as having a stone face with a cold gaze.”⁹⁴⁴ Varadzinová wrote she observed situations as Polana, even in the group scenes where she played just an anonymous character of an emigrant.⁹⁴⁵ But Dočolomanský did not want her to hold too much to Čapek's original, “He did not want me to develop a character from the very beginning in a linear way or to fill the character with events and situations, but, on the contrary, he wanted me to build on a situation, use a maximum of what the situation requires; he wanted me to be a new woman in every scene and to appear in a variety of colors and nuances of the role that only then would be combined into the whole character, both from the inside and from the

⁹⁴⁰ Varadzinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.6 (translation mine).

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴² Varadzinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.7 (translation mine).

⁹⁴³ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, pp.7-8.

⁹⁴⁴ Varadzinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.9 (translation mine).

⁹⁴⁵ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.3.

outside of the physical shape.”⁹⁴⁶ As in many situations Polana just observes; Varadzinová said she worked a lot on the inner motivations layering them, so that the character could graduate and develop a conflict: “(...) whether the character would be expressed by physical action, singing or just the gaze, it always has to be explained by deep and strong inner intentions.”⁹⁴⁷ One of the important inspirations for Varadzinová’s character was also a task from Dočolomanský to keep an inner intention of cleaning the space; being a ‘slave’ at home: “Who am I? I’m nothing—but I’m a kind of active nothing that is able to commit a sin.”⁹⁴⁸ The other task given to the actress by the director was to search for an intention in agoraphobia (fear of open spaces), especially in the scene of the first meeting with the Emigrant.⁹⁴⁹ “As a character I need to have a secret: an inner process that accompanies the outside actions, even if it could be different and sometimes a contradictory one. And, besides that, the inner intention must be stronger than the outside movement.”⁹⁵⁰

The last scene—the picture of Emigrant’s death, when the music stops for the first time after an hour of being played in a fast tempo—sends the spectator back to everything he had seen to that point: Emigrant’s arrival to America; his return to his home-village; meeting his the family; meeting the lover of his Wife; meeting old friends in the pub and understanding that they do not accept him any more; an image of Emigrant’s suicide; the common celebration of the holiday; the fight with The Other Man; the decision to give his Daughter to the lover of his Wife; the wedding and rape of the Daughter; the second return home and Emigrant’s death. In the last scene, even if Emigrant is death, the others try to keep him moving, as a marionette.⁹⁵¹ Emigrant and The Other Man are “in the same coat—the same skin.”⁹⁵² The sounds that are accompanying the final song in the closing scene are described as the ‘frog’s sight’ and ‘cracking of the swing’⁹⁵³—which gives an image of the level of sonority developed in the performance.

The set design in *Sclavi* is simple—it is a tin cattle wagon of pale-red color that turns on wheels while actors push it on stage. It is a kinetic object that revolves to open new scenes (like the ‘revolving’ chair in *Dark Love Sonnets*). Jana Pilátová wrote: “It is a cattle wagon that smuggles emigrants, a train car that speeds up, it is a stable, a pub, a barn and a hill from

⁹⁴⁶ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.9 (translation mine).

⁹⁴⁷ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.20 (translation mine).

⁹⁴⁸ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.270 (translation mine).

⁹⁴⁹ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.24.

⁹⁵⁰ Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.105 (translation mine).

⁹⁵¹ Even if the ensemble was interested in funeral rituals among Ruthenians, the last image originates in Henryk Jurkowski’s writings about marionettes. See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.312.

⁹⁵² See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.311.

⁹⁵³ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.70.

where you can look around and fall down, an American pub, a caravan, a shelter with the festive table, where bread falls down from above. The inside and the outside of the wagon play, so that it could be a home, but also the boat that goes to America and to the other world. It serves as partner to the actor's actions, interplaying with them; it is a musical instrument, sounding and pulsing with the story."⁹⁵⁴ The wagon, a simple object, opens many associations and metaphors that could exist simultaneously.

The props that are used on stage in *Sclavi* are there because of the action, but they bring metaphors as well, as Dočolomanský wrote.⁹⁵⁵ It is similar with the costumes—like Wife's apron, which is a fetish for Emigrant. In the story the apron is stolen from him. Starting from *Sclavi* the stealing becomes an important motif in Dočolomanský's performances (in *Waiting Room*—Man steals purses of two women who double for one another; in *The Theatre*—a female-spectator's mask is stolen by Vaqueiro). The motif 'travels' from the performance to performance, developing—the stealing connects a thief with his victim; involves them in an amorous relationship. The costume predestines the future of the character as well. Daughter that appears on stage wearing a traditional wedding cap would be forced to marriage later on. In that sense, the wedding cap is 'photogenic'—transforms reality created on stage⁹⁵⁶ and allows the spectator to predict something the character does not know yet. All the other elements (costumes, props) that did not carry any strong meaning were deleted. Varadzinová wrote that the set designer, Bara Erniholdová brought many things from Slovakia, like covers to rehearse with,⁹⁵⁷ but at the end they used only few things that could add something non illustrative to the story.

All those inspirations add the 'documentary' truth to the performance (not only because of the material gathered during the expeditions). The dramatic line of the story emphasizes a universal theme within the example of minority cultures. The universal topic of *Sclavi* is home, as the director underlined during one meeting with the audience.⁹⁵⁸ After watching the performance, the spectator needs to reconstruct the story by himself. Many layers offer the opportunity to the viewer to follow motifs that resonate or interest him personally; the story he follows depends on his personal experiences. The spectator is in a way challenged to seek a personal answer; this mirrors the process the actors undertook

⁹⁵⁴ Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.33 (translation mine).

⁹⁵⁵ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.337.

⁹⁵⁶ The theory of photogenic describes a similar function in early cinema.

⁹⁵⁷ It was a third expedition, where Erniholdová went with Roman Horák. See: Hana Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudobnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.34.

⁹⁵⁸ The meeting took place in Prague May 31, 2007 at the end of the festival *Farma 2007*. Also see: Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb*, *op. cit.*, p.49.

during the expedition. The actors use physical scores and actions that were developed from associations or copied from some form (such as photography) and only later enriched in an inner sense. The voice intonations (cries or sentences) that create some emotional atmosphere underwent the same process. The scores and intonations of different actors Dočolomanský combined in situations and added external senses.

The performance is constructed as a film where the spectator's attention is guided. The director works with the movement, sound and light. The music played live is a part of the performance. Emigrant plays on a trumpet, the village's fool carries an accordion. The percussionist enters one scene and for the other ones is placed on the side. A child's piano is used, and also the sound of glasses filled with water, but the main musical accent crescendos to the hammering of by a large wooden *rapkáč*—a traditional ceremonial tool originally used to replace a village church bell, which was not permitted during the week before Easter.

The very first reactions of Czech critics to the performance were not enthusiastic. One of the reviews suggested it is an incubatory stage of the young ensemble that searches for their theatre language. For the critic *Sclavi* was more a concert without clear plot than a consistent theatre piece.⁹⁵⁹ After *Farm in the Cave*'s success at the Edinburgh Festival another Czech critic found it necessary to mention that *Sclavi* was not a winner among the 'B'-theatre groups, but among such famous ensembles as *Derevo*.⁹⁶⁰ *Sclavi*, presented at ISTA in Wrocław in 2005, was compared to Gardzienice, Grotowski and ancient theatre; praised for 'truthful' experience, excellent 'organicity' of actors' movement and voice expression that affected spectators' nervous systems.⁹⁶¹

In April 2007, a fourth expedition was organized to introduce the background of the performance to the new members, mainly to South Korean actor Jun Wan Kim who was replacing Matej Matejka in a role of The Other Man that took a 'place' of Emigrant. The performance's structure did not change, but the spectators could see a 'Korean Slav' suddenly.⁹⁶² Even if the theme of migration, leaving the 'homeland' and 'taking place around the other table' is still present, after years of performing, the cultural context slightly shifted, the physical expression created for *Sclavi* was partly devaluated as well. On the other hand, in 2014, nearly ten years after the premiere, the actors were already in their 30s or older; they

⁹⁵⁹ See: Vladimír Hulec, "Inkubační stadium" [The Incubation Stage], *Divadelní noviny* 8 (14)/2005, p.7.

⁹⁶⁰ See: Kateřina Kolářová, "Edinburgh Divadelní zápava" [Edinburgh Theatre Flooding], *Mlada Fronta Dnes* August 12, 2006.

⁹⁶¹ See: Małgorzata Jabłońska, "Natarcie ze wschodu" [The Attack from the East], *Didaskalia* 67-68/2005, pp.78-81.

⁹⁶² It was for instance Helmut Ploebst in his critic entitled *Der koreanische Slawe* [The Korean Slav], *Der Standart* June 21, 2007.

could consequently draw from a deeper well of life experiences to develop different intentions in their physical scores. It is no surprise, therefore, that some spectators found the performance much more truthful than before.⁹⁶³

Nižník—who decided to stop performing the role of Emigrant at the end of 2014⁹⁶⁴—in 2008 wrote: “I do not come on stage to die physically; this production and its theme taught me that whatever energy you give—going beyond your physical capabilities—will always return to you.”⁹⁶⁵ The actor, speaking about refreshing scores (physically and mentally) to keep them alive, stated, “Mental preparation prior to the performance is much more important than the physical part. It is the experience I gained when we were playing the performance daily, when it started to tire me mentally. In that moment I started to create other intentions for the situation on stage, which I'd in use for the preparation of the new performance.”⁹⁶⁶ The new performance, Nižník spoke about was *Waiting Room*.

⁹⁶³ Reactions of the audience, based on my notes, July 25, 2014.

⁹⁶⁴ The last performance Róbert Nižník played on December 6, 2014 labeling the performance ‘one of the strongest experiences in his life,’ based on my notes, December 6, 2014.

⁹⁶⁵ Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.13 (translation mine).

⁹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Waiting Room—Site-Specific, Nostalgia

Journey to the Station

The performance *Waiting Room* that premiered in April 28, 2006 in Prague originates in a site-specific project called *Journey to the Station* held in Žilina-Záriečie in Slovakia three years before the premiere. *Journey to the Station*—a site-specific performance and celebration that Viliam Dočolomanský directed together with Per Spildra Borg, leader of the Norwegian theatre group Stella Polaris—was prepared as the opening of Stanica Culture Centre. The Centre has occupied the old station building of the still operational, Žilina-Záriečie train station. The ‘new’ Farm in the Cave went there just after the first expedition to Ruthenian villages.⁹⁶⁷ Thus the beginnings of the performance started exactly in the same time as the project *Sclavi*, its incubation process was there for partly ‘hidden.’

Eliška Vavříková called *Journey to the Station* a ‘first project of the new Farm in the Cave.’⁹⁶⁸ More than sixty participants from different countries took part in the workshop that transpired September 12-26, 2003. The final performance took place in the building of the station and its closest area. It was played three evenings in a row. “The events in the individual spaces, in exteriors and interiors, were based on historical facts surrounding the station building and its atmosphere. The performance began and also symbolically christened the existence of the new cultural center Stanica.”⁹⁶⁹ Farm in the Cave invited Derevjanky they had just met in Jarabina village, to sing during the opening.⁹⁷⁰ One of the Slovak critics wrote after the event: “Dancers, movement theatre, fire performance, resourceful music, circus—different ethnical and cultural influences fused into one whole during an evening. The creators of the project also included the history of the building, which was inhabited by one family and not far from there was a gathering place for Jews before deportation during The Second World War.”⁹⁷¹ This fact did not influence much the seven minute-long⁹⁷² miniature performed by Farm in the Cave⁹⁷³ in the space of the waiting room of the station Žilina-Záriečie; the same for the rest of the site-specific event. It was more the war that was present in the *Journey to the Station* than Holocaust.

⁹⁶⁷ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.29.

⁹⁶⁸ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁹⁶⁹ “Journey to the Station,” Farma v jeskyni, accessed February 19, 2015, http://infarma.info/projekty_divadlo_mob.php?_project=journey-to-the-station&langs=2.

⁹⁷⁰ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.29.

⁹⁷¹ Oliver Reháč cited in “Journey to the Station,” *op. cit.*

⁹⁷² See for instance: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.160.

⁹⁷³ Róbert Nižník, Matej Matejka, Hana Varadzinová, Eliška Vavříková, Maja Jawor and Cécile Da Costa.

Marek Godovič, the director's assistant and researcher for the *Waiting Room* project, wrote about workshops that took place during *Journey to the Station*: "Per Spildra Borg concentrated on the acrobatics elements, improvisation and circus. His theatre group Stella Polaris takes part in many European street theatre festivals. Dočolomanský (...) led actor's training that consisted of partners' improvisation, work with breath, rhythm, voice, and individual body-work."⁹⁷⁴ The spectators invited to see the site-specific performance at the end of the workshop were divided into four groups and followed their own 'story-teller,' visiting different places inside the station in a different order. Two main inspirations came from the historical circumstances and from the intimate, personal story connected to the building. The personal story was a story of a family residing directly in the station; in the closest neighborhood of travelers and trains that were passing through. The historical inspiration derived from the fact that during the Second World War from this train station all Jews from Slovakia were transported to concentration camps located by Nazis in Poland. However, in the framework of the site-specific event, this circumstance evoked more the danger of war than shock of Holocaust.

The audience of *Journey to the Station* was brought from Žilina by train together with actors wearing historical clothes and carrying old suitcases.⁹⁷⁵ Small theatrical situations happened already on the way—as actors had no tickets, they were thrown out of the train in Žilina-Záriečie. The audience was asked to get out as well. The first situation/image that happened at the station was called *War*; this was expressed by circus acrobatics and fire shows. The interior of the station was divided into four scenes: *Kitchen*, *Basement*, *Loft* and *Waiting Room* that were happening simultaneously until all four groups of spectators had seen each part. *Kitchen* was about the railwayman's family and its 'everyday rituals.'⁹⁷⁶ Father wakes up to go to work, Mother is afraid so she sleeps with an axe, Daughter dreams about the comedian-actor who appears outside and is visible through the window. In the cold *Basement* three women-workers were taking a bath. In *Loft* the audience could see acrobats swinging on a trapeze. Miroslav Ballay, describing the event, emphasizes impressions of fear, and he points-out that the created 'reality' looked more like a dream.⁹⁷⁷ Writing about Farm in the Cave's miniature *Waiting Room*, Ballay noted that the neutral situation of waiting was

⁹⁷⁴ Marek Godovič, "Cesta do stanice" cited in Ballay, *Farma v jeskyni*, *op. cit.*, p.92 (translation mine).

⁹⁷⁵ Description based on chapter "Cesta do stanice" [Journey to the Station] by Miroslav Ballay, see: Ballay, *Farma v jeskyni*, *op. cit.*, pp.92-106 and the interviews with Marek Godovič (February 10, 2015) and Matejka Matejka (Wrocław March 4, 2015).

⁹⁷⁶ Interview with Marek Godovič, February 10, 2015.

⁹⁷⁷ See: Ballay, *Farma v jeskyni*, *op. cit.*, p.98.

slowly transforming into the situation of farewell before the transport.⁹⁷⁸ He mentioned some of the micro-situations: a woman courted by a man ends up abused; two men compete for one woman; another women unable to hold back any longer, gives birth... Physical actions were accompanied by announcing names of deported people from the loudspeaker and the song that a girl who appeared in the door with a suitcase sang in Yiddish, concluded the scene. For Marek Godovič *Waiting Room* was a well-elaborated piece that left the strongest image of the whole event.⁹⁷⁹

The other part of *Journey to the Station* called *Circus* was directed by Per Spildra Borg. As Ballay described, it was also associated with the war. The final scene, called *Wedding*, was accompanied by singing of Derevjanky and the Gypsy band. Daughter of the railwayman from the *Kitchen* scene and the comedian actor that appeared among *Circus* performers were getting married, which transformed the performance into common celebration—the audience was pulled into dancing. Marek Godovič said that at the end the whole performance worked as a consistent piece, even if two original concepts (of Viliam Dočolomanský and Per Spildra Borg) were very different.⁹⁸⁰ The co-author of the entire concept was also Bara Erniholdová, the set designer of *Sclavi*.

Farm in the Cave described the miniature in their annual summary: “The concept of *Waiting Room* miniature addresses the theme of Holocaust only marginally. The performance concentrated on creating and establishing relationships between distinct people within a closed space. Sounds, the rhythm of steps and contact of the body with the wall creates vivid physical language of the actors. Relationships between characters in *Waiting Room* are layered and constantly mutating. Everything accelerates and heads towards an unspecified ‘Orwellian disaster,’ which is outside, but as if we all created it and perhaps even wanted it... as a solution of emotional aridity, life frustrations and stagnation and inability to share relationship.”⁹⁸¹ The performed image was inspired by the space and the activity the space was designed to—to wait. But the ‘waiting’ was understood as a state that is unbearable and people were defined as individuals that prefer ‘war’ than ‘emptiness’ of their lives. A ‘catastrophe’ was defined as something wanted, that is able to ‘clear’ or ‘push forward’ the situation; as if need of a ‘disaster’ was the human’s inner necessity.

The social ‘silence’ of forgotten waiting room made the steps sound loud and put attention to it. Varadzinová experimented with steps reminiscent of tap-dancing to express her

⁹⁷⁸ See: Ballay, *Farma v jeskyni*, *op. cit.*, p.99.

⁹⁷⁹ Interview with Marek Godovič, February 10, 2015.

⁹⁸⁰ Interview with Marek Godovič, February 10, 2015.

⁹⁸¹ See: Farm in the Cave’s annual report 2005, p.3, in “Výroční zprávy,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

character.⁹⁸² She wrote that the miniature addressed the theme of Jews and the Holocaust, but was mainly developed from the idea of the space, where people do not know each other. Matej Matejka said they went to the space to explore it, to react using the imagination—his first reaction was to start to show off. The types the actors experimented with to create were based on the observation of people, but not the specific ones; it was more an intention, asking themselves a question: ‘how they live.’⁹⁸³ For the purpose of the seven minutes-long miniature the actors created clear types and grotesque situations. The same atmosphere was kept in *Waiting Room* premiered in 2006, which was directly connected with developing the miniature.⁹⁸⁴ The waiting room as a metaphorical space in between (in between decision or life and death) is present in both performances. But it was the idea of ‘war’ that is solving personal frustrations that made the connection to the present times. The possibility of ‘history repeating itself’ was enriched in the actual and contemporary theme of emotional atrophy.

The types performing in the miniature, described and developed by Godovič ex-post the performance, were: Boy—little thief and vagabond, whose only contact with the others was from cheating; Girl who is naïve and lonely; an ambitious Man who ‘carries all his experiences in the suitcase;’ a self-confident Lady that involves herself in sort of ‘emotional prostitution’ towards Man; and Woman who sacrifices everything to her family and is nervous from waiting. Woman moves using ‘short steps—discreet deeds that nobody would see.’⁹⁸⁵ The people in the waiting room are observing each other and behaving according to their type. Man taking long steps follows social habits, but his actions are very often embarrassing. Lady is proud and vain, standing. Woman is observing everything with fast glances. Boy is free and sassy; Girl is unsure and scared.

Those five types were the first ‘model’ of micro-situations expressed by steps and glances. The actors would walk in the space of waiting room, watching each other and showing their character by the way they walked, sit, etc. They started having interactions between each other and micro-scenes appeared. One of the situations, in which Man is flirting with both Lady and Woman—at the same time—remained in the *Waiting Room* performance. However, the bench that was real in *Žilina-Záriečie* and was used as a prop at the beginning of rehearsals to the performance at the end ‘remained’ invisible, in the actors’ intentions only.

The types, as the miniature evolves, repeat some movements, but in a deformed way: “The characters at the beginning walk and watch each other; their personage would manifest

⁹⁸² Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

⁹⁸³ Interview with Matej Matejka, Wrocław March 4, 2015.

⁹⁸⁴ See: Hana Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť, op. cit.*, p.160.

⁹⁸⁵ Notes of Marek Godovič about the miniature, archive of Farm in the Cave.

by the way they walk. Interaction—manifestations, inaccessibility, change: repetition in the deformed way; they stay practically the same, but ‘the sameness’ seems different inside and ‘there,’ outside.”⁹⁸⁶ The girl with the suitcase that appears at the end to sing a love song in Yiddish was Cécile Da Costa—the only person who attended the workshop and took part in the miniature with actors of *Farm in the Cave*.⁹⁸⁷ Her ‘character’ was the only ‘memory’ of Jewish context that appeared in the miniature.

The theme of the Holocaust was ‘subconsciously’ present already during creating *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*. Dočolomanský writing his essay about the emigrants’ letters, mentioned one that was especially inspiring for the creators of the *Sclavi* performance, in which the husband was informing his wife how to prepare for the trip to America and was insisting that she will repair her teeth as American officials check it before giving the permission to stay.⁹⁸⁸ The letter was dated 1938. For Dočolomanský this ‘human selection’ on Ellis Island was only one step ‘before’ concentration camps—he wrote: “times were pregnant in humiliating way of ‘checking’ a person.”⁹⁸⁹ In his thesis, Dočolomanský mentions that first period of working on the *Sclavi* project was a ‘hybrid period’ that lasted six months and brought material for two other performances.⁹⁹⁰ One of those was *Waiting Room*.

A physical score that appeared to be crucial for understanding the relationship of two main characters in *Waiting Room* (woman from the present/Journalist and woman from the past/The One Who Returns) comes from the time of rehearsing *Sclavi* during the residency in Poland. Maja Jawor described it in detail in her thesis: “In Brzezinka we were often working with video recording. We were systematically recording the process of training, the key etudes and activities. One evening we were shooting this exercise [‘leader and slave’] in the couples me-Hana and Eliška-Róbert. It was a very fruitful evening. We managed to achieve such level of concentration that it revealed many interesting things. During the improvisation with Hana I was the one who was trying to settle the conflict and she was adding fuel to the fire, stimulating tempo. I was answering by trying to harmonize cooperation. The strongest moments were like a fight, in which you don’t know who is attacking and who is a victim. In one moment I’m fondling Hanka’s head, as if I would like to calm her down. It annoys her evidently, so she tries to do something with my hands. She grabs my palms and wraps her neck with my arms, as if she would like to suffocate herself; at first one arm. I’m letting it and

⁹⁸⁶ Marek Godovič, *Čakáreň*, *Farm in the Cave*’s archive.

⁹⁸⁷ Cécile Da Costa joined *Farm in the Cave* taking over from Maja Jawor the role of the singer in the *Waiting Room* performance.

⁹⁸⁸ See: Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.89.

⁹⁸⁹ Dočolomanský, “Listy Emigrantov,” *op. cit.*, p.91 (translation mine).

⁹⁹⁰ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.245.

continue fondling her, more and more desperately; later on the second arm. I'm letting it and keep fondling her; arm by arm. At the end we fall back, one on the other. Hana is suffocating in my embrace, but it is me who is opening mouth as if I could not breath. Who is suffocating truly? We don't know."⁹⁹¹ From this video recording Dočolomanský had chosen the most interesting parts and ask both actress (Jawor and Varadzinová) to reconstruct it and to create a physical score. The situation that happened during the improvisation between them, in the performance, transpires between Varadzinová who plays Journalist and Vavříková (or later Öfverholm⁹⁹²) who plays the character of The One Who Returns. The composition—the physical score—is a culmination of the relationship of care and conflict that exist between the double of living and dead girl.

A Polish anthropologist invited by Farm in the Cave in 2007 to watch *Waiting Room* in the framework of 'barter' described the scene: "You could not recognize who raises whom, who hangs, rests, holds, suffocate or soothes whom. There is some mirroring here and unification. Like vampires, the dead seek out the living, needing their attention as if they could neither live nor die without that attention. But it doesn't happen until those alive try to get rid of the dead. But the living ones need their dead as well. It is only when someone living accepted someone dead that he could make some connection to him, takes the strength of that un-lived life. (...) At *Waiting Room's* end, we see the dead girl lifting the living one, who succumbing to the weight of experience, would lie on her place—finally she would rest."⁹⁹³

The topic of returning, unexpected and unwelcomed, applies to both performances, *Sclavi* and *Waiting Room*. In the 'scenario' based on *Hordubal* Jana Pilátová quotes also from the writing of Elie Wiesel, who survived the Holocaust and came back to the town where he was born. The parallel between the emigrant and Jew coming back to the hometown, where they are not wanted any more and where the new people took 'their' places, was a permanent context and stayed even as a quotation in *Sclavi* program: "Beware there is a man sleeping in your bed. There is no excuse for you returned alive."⁹⁹⁴ That is why Róbert Nižník (Emigrant in *Sclavi* and Man who is having a relationship with both women in *Waiting Room*) could use

⁹⁹¹ Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb, op. cit.*, pp.80-81 (translation mine).

⁹⁹² It was in November 15, 2013 and Charlotta Öfverholm played a role of The One Who Returns that added to the performance new layers of interpretation (mother-daughter relationship appeared). Öfverholm took role Eliška Vavříková created. When Vavříková came back after pregnancy, she needed to play the opposite role. Dočolomanský, speaking about that change in the cast, speaks about different aspects of creating intentions when the actor plays a role that is for him 'against the grain. See: Dočolomanský's answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

⁹⁹³ Dočolomanský, *Technika?..., op. cit.*, p.55 (translation mine).

⁹⁹⁴ *Waiting Room* program (booklet), undated.

the intentions he developed while playing *Sclavi* in the new project.⁹⁹⁵ The Holocaust was present in *Sclavi* as a sub-context of the emigration topic and that is why the creation of *Waiting Room* went relatively fast, because some physical material and also intentions were already pre-prepared. When the miniature of *Waiting Room* was shown to Pilátová in 2003, she warned that the topic was not an easy one to work with. She proposed the actors would watch *Shoah* first and read Elie Wiesel and other literature that is connected to the Holocaust.⁹⁹⁶

Research

As Hana Varadzinová wrote, the *Sclavi* project was a breakthrough; it formed a company with its own language and ‘style;’ the actors during that period started to create physical scores that came with increased responsibility for the creation.⁹⁹⁷ With the next project (*Waiting Room*), as Varadzinová mentioned, they wanted to develop as an ensemble and not to repeat themselves. They decided to develop more precise work with the scores and concentrate on the physical actions.⁹⁹⁸ Even if at the beginning they had planned to sing similarly as in *Sclavi*, soon they realize it was not possible because of the topic. “In *Waiting Room* we originally wanted to involve more singing, but we found out that we can’t sing; the theme and stories we heard were too strong and not possible to mediate through our voices. Thus, *Waiting Room*’s language is more metaphorical, it works with subtle irony and hyperbole.”⁹⁹⁹ At the end singing appears in *Waiting Room* in the background only and the performance is built entirely on the physical actions.

The actors do not sing while acting (except the opening scene that is an exception as a ‘cabaret number’), but the music is present thanks to the band. As Varadzinová wrote, the band ‘creates an atmosphere.’¹⁰⁰⁰ The cello, violin, percussion and singer accompany situations—in that sense it recalls the structure of *Dark Love Sonnets*—the characters do not sing except for Man played by Róbert Nižník who sings a ‘cabaret number’ at the beginning and joins the band in the closing scene to sing a prayer. Nižník is also playing trumpet as part of his physical actions (recalling a street musician who plays on the railway station to collect money). The difference between the band in *Waiting Room* and the choir in *Dark Love Sonnets* is that the band is not ‘visible’ for the characters. Even if in some moments the

⁹⁹⁵ See: Nižník, *Kolik vydrží lidská duše?*, *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁹⁹⁶ Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

⁹⁹⁷ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, pp.173-174.

⁹⁹⁸ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.160.

⁹⁹⁹ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.25 (translation mine).

¹⁰⁰⁰ Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.164.

musicians enter the space (the opening scene and scene called *Anniversary*), it is more creating a ‘framework’ around the events accompanying the actions.

Eliška Vavříková wrote that *Waiting Room*—on the contrary to *Sclavi* that was very much depending on audio recordings—was very visual. Most of the ‘material’ gathered during the research were documentaries, photos or came from the way the space looked like; how it was designed architectonically.¹⁰⁰¹ Hana Varadzinová mentioned that while developing potentiality of the waiting room space in Žilina, the actors were working mostly with the wall and floor ‘asking’ themselves for its ‘secrets;’ the past that the walls ‘witnessed’—trying to develop a relationship with those elements of the space.¹⁰⁰²

Another task was to work on physical ‘crystallization’ of the types.¹⁰⁰³ The characteristics of types done by Godovič after the miniature (the characters of Boy, Girl, Lady, Man, and Woman) were not shown to the actors, as Jana Pilátová advised, so that they would be free from a mistake of illustrating, instead of developing their original intentions.¹⁰⁰⁴ The characteristics remained for the director’s eyes only. The scenes were developed from very different sources—the miniature, rehearsals to *Sclavi*, etc.—as such different scenes maintained the qualities of different genres, like cabaret, grotesque, irony...¹⁰⁰⁵ As the topic touches on the theme of the Holocaust, the ensemble was interested also in the motifs that are present in broader Jewish culture—its themes and forms, spiritual ones, but also such forms as the cabaret.¹⁰⁰⁶ Humor appears in this performance and many situations are comic that construct a contrast within the framework of the whole structure.

Waiting Room is an important project because for the first time there was no ‘real’ expedition associated; the performance originated in the site-specific inspiration and continued more as a research. The methods and specific focus developed during the previous expeditions were present in this project without real ‘travel.’ Thus *Waiting Room* developed a different physical language than *Sclavi* even if the ideas for those two performances were born at the same time. Most of the research for *Waiting Room* was done ‘at home’—as Varadzinová called it—by reading books, watching films and documentaries.¹⁰⁰⁷

One of the most important inspirations was the 9 1/2 hour long *Shoah* Pilátová advised the ensemble to watch—a documentary shot for eleven years by Claude Lanzmann and

¹⁰⁰¹ See: Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis*, *op. cit.*, p.57.

¹⁰⁰² See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.161.

¹⁰⁰³ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.162.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *K Čekárně* [About *Waiting Room*], archive of Jana Pilátová.

¹⁰⁰⁵ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, pp.161-162.

¹⁰⁰⁶ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.161.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

released in 1985 that treats about death camps. The documentary captures memories of Jews from different countries (the survivors), but also Germans (who took part in the Nazi's crime) and Poles (the neighbors who witness the Shoah). From the film the tiny motifs went to the performance—some intonations (like words in German: *Gebrüll! Gepäck!*, which means ‘Roar! Luggage!’¹⁰⁰⁸), images (bodies falling out after opening large doors of the gas chambers¹⁰⁰⁹) or gestures (the gesture of jugulating made by the Polish train driver was used by Róbert Nižník to build his character¹⁰¹⁰). Nižník said it is difficult to ‘uncover’ the physical inspirations in *Waiting Room*, as they transformed a lot. The actor admitted he worked already during *Sclavi* on the barber's character from *Shoah*,¹⁰¹¹ developing the character of an agent (the agent of Nijinsky and the agent who provided work for emigrants): “I started to develop the motif of the barber during *Sclavi*. It was an agent, a barber. Motifs and physical scores I used in *Waiting Room*, as they were not used in *Sclavi*.”¹⁰¹²

“Close to the Station there were wooden barracks where the Jews would gather during the Slovak State. From this place 18,223 Slovak Jews were exported to concentration camps. Only a few returned (in 1942 in the first wave of deportation 58,000 Jews were taken away from Slovakia, less than 1000 survived). Two ladies, Erika Spirová-Tellemannová (born in Žilina, most of her life lived in Čadca)¹⁰¹³ and Ružena Adamková (most of her life lived in Žilina) were among them.”¹⁰¹⁴ Dočolomanský and some of the actors met those two women—survivals of deportations and concentration camps and recorded their memories.¹⁰¹⁵ The actress would utter some phrases as intonations as they went into the performance.¹⁰¹⁶ One of those recordings was specifically shown to the audience on November 30, 2014 before the *Waiting Room* performed in the framework of Farm in the Cave's 12th year anniversary. The spectators could hear the story of one of the ladies saying that at some point she was too weak to stand by herself, so the other prisoners held her body up between their bodies while they

¹⁰⁰⁸ See: 1:40 min of the part 1, *Shoah* (dir. Claude Lanzmann), 1985.

¹⁰⁰⁹ The image appeared in the description of a Czech man who worked in *Sonderkommando*.

¹⁰¹⁰ See: 52:57 min of the part 1, *Shoah* (dir. Claude Lanzmann), 1985.

¹⁰¹¹ See: 17:20-36:16 min of the part 2, *Shoah* (dir. Claude Lanzmann), 1985.

¹⁰¹² Interview with Róbert Nižník, Prague March 2, 2015.

¹⁰¹³ “When I understood that after three years we are free, I grabbed onto a tree and started to scream like an animal. Because a man was closer to animal than to a human.” (Ružena Adamková). Dočolomanský said on the meeting with Studium Teatrelne in Warsaw in 2009 that in this moment she observed herself as if from above and she got scared on her own scream. “The worst anti-Jewish laws were during the Slovak State. Mr. President, and I'm saying it with capital letter ‘P,’ Tiso paid for each deported Jew 500 marks. They were happy to get rid of Jews...” (Erika Spirová-Tellemannová). See: “Zo zákulisia predstavenia Čakáreň” [From the Backstage of the *Waiting Room* Performance], Stanica, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://www.stanica.sk/2013/11/zakulisie-cakaren/>.

¹⁰¹⁴ “Zo zákulisia predstavenia Čakáreň,” *op. cit.*, (translation mine).

¹⁰¹⁵ See: Varadinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.160.

¹⁰¹⁶ See: Varadinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.161.

were walking to work, so that she would not be killed as too weak to work. In the same excerpt, the woman mentions that as prisoners they sang a lot—an anthem of Slovakia and German songs as well.¹⁰¹⁷ None of those elements appeared however in the performance. Direct presentation of the Holocaust did not appear in *Waiting Room*.

On November 4, 2009, Farm in the Cave visited, in a framework of ‘barter,’ Studium Teatrelne, Piotr Borowski's laboratory theatre in Warsaw to see their performance entitled *The King of Hearts is Off Again* based on the novel by Hanna Krall *An Intense Saga of War and Separation*. After watching the performance, which is also about the Holocaust, performed by the physical theatre, both ensembles exchanged experiences on working on the topic. Borowski's performance is about love. Dočolomanský, after watching it, related the story of Ms. Adamková who said during the interview with the ensemble that after her husband died she had nobody to live for, but she kept living because of a curiosity to see ‘what would come next.’ Driven by need of love in one of the camps (she survived seven of them) she took care about a small French girl, trying to keep her alive. She explained that for stealing potatoes for the girl she was punished by a *kapo*, (a prisoner who was assigned by the SS guards to supervise the other prisoners in the concentration camp). After the war Ms. Adamková met that *kapo* in Prague, but did nothing. Borowski's actors responded, saying it happened to their character as well. Dočolomanský stated this is exactly the reason why Farm in the Cave's performance is not clearly about the Holocaust, because it is not possible to narrate a single person's fate.¹⁰¹⁸

The *Waiting Room* project officially started in June 2005, when the first meeting of the creative team was organized.¹⁰¹⁹ The work of the ensemble on creating the new performance was described in the annual report: “The rehearsals contained improvisations created on the basis of audio and video recordings, and also studies of literature to the theme of the Holocaust. The rehearsals were continuing in November. Single fragments were connected by the director into one piece by the usage of the montage technique and another form of performance was created.”¹⁰²⁰ In January 2006, Farm in the Cave worked at a residency in Stanica Culture Centre primarily exploring physical elements by working with the wall. That

¹⁰¹⁷ Present to the public during the festival *12 years of Farm in the Cave*, Prague November 30, 2014.

¹⁰¹⁸ Based on my notes, Warsaw November 20, 2009.

¹⁰¹⁹ At the meeting there were: Viliam Dočolomanský, Jana Pilátová, Marek Godovič, Róbert Nižník, Hana Varadzinová, Eliška Vavříková, Nast Marrero García, Zuzana Pavuková, Miriam Bayle who was supposed to make arrangements of the music, but left the project due to lack of time and Markéta Sládečková who replaced Barbora Erniholdová. However, the scenography was derived from Žilina-Záriečie's waiting room as well as from Erniholdová's concept.

¹⁰²⁰ Farm in the Cave's annual report 2005, p.3, in “Výroční zprávy,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

was also the time when the interviews with the women who survived transports and concentration camps were recorded.

In February, Marek Godovič recorded an interview with a Slovak nationalist in Ružomberok (town close to Žilina) and later on worked in archives to collect different speeches and slogans from the newspapers that were popular during the war. He researched *Gardista* and *Slovak*, the tendentious newspapers that were “commenting on ‘happy life’ in the Slovak State during fascism.”¹⁰²¹ In his notes, Godovič quotes the reportage of a woman-journalist who visited the station in 1942: “Next to the rich Jewish woman with curly hair and wearing velvet shoes who thought it necessary to take a travel bag on the trip, the poor Jewish family with children is standing. They packed all their belongings into one bag. They departed as they'd arrived; one with the suitcase, others with backpacks. They returned to the places they came from in Slovakia. It is absolutely correct that property that had been left by the Jews in Slovakia would be considered as dishonestly acquired. Because when they arrived, they had nothing, just as now, as they are allowed to take with them.”¹⁰²²

There was considerable research made in the framework of the *Waiting Room* project. Along with the scholarship of Hannah Arendt, Zygmunt Bauman or Carl Gustav Jung (writings about memory and collective unconsciousness), the researchers were interested in contemporary bestsellers about addiction,¹⁰²³ contemporary Internet discussions of nationalists, and the recent problems in the Slovak Republic regarding discrimination (the case of a boy who was killed because of long hair; the case of a handbook to teach history in high schools funded by Phare that contained some anti-Semitist information, the problem of Gypsies' discriminations in Slovakia, etc.).¹⁰²⁴ As one of the actors who collaborated on creating the performance come from Spain (Nast Marrero García), Dočolomanský thought about adding contemporary issue of a terrorist attack on trains in Barcelona (March 11, 2004) as well.¹⁰²⁵ At the end, those topics do not appear in the performance at all (Barcelona's terrorist attack) but appeared only tangentially as actors' intentions or a text collage made of speeches by a contemporary Slovak politician that did not need to be understood (similarly as in *Sclavi*). It does show that the director's interest is to seek the actor's response and for this reason he chooses primarily topics or issues that could also lively resonate in each of the

¹⁰²¹ Interview with Marek Godovič, February 10, 2015.

¹⁰²² Research of Marek Godovič, archive of Jana Pilátová

¹⁰²³ Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More* (Minnesota: The Hanzelden Foundation, 1987).

¹⁰²⁴ Archive of Jana Pilátová.

¹⁰²⁵ Jana Pilátová commented that she strongly opposed the idea, because the Holocaust theme is different than terrorism issue. Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

actors (the case of Marrero García).¹⁰²⁶ It is searching for each actor's 'authentic' behavior that makes the research that broad, as Dočolomanský is interested in inner conflict that the actor would perform on stage.

Some of the texts used in the performance are derived from the recorded interviews and from documentaries—actors maintained the speaker's original vocal melody, rhythm and character.¹⁰²⁷ The other texts that appeared in *Waiting Room* are quotations from contemporary Slovak politician Ján Slota, Žilina mayor, and president of the Slovak National Party known from his xenophobic opinions. On July 4, 2004, Slota unveiled a memorial of the Holocaust victims next to the Stanica Culture Centre (a year after the event *Journey to the Station*). Some of the quotations that would otherwise have come across as absurd-collage were actually easily identified by the Czech and Slovak audience, because were from fresh news items: (...) *príde nejaká Češka, ktorá si hovorí, že je Američanka a dokonca si povie, že je ministerka zahraničných vecí Albrightová (...)* [(...) the Czech would come who says she is an American and a Minister of Foreign Affairs as well, some Albright (...)].¹⁰²⁸ In the scene called *Waiting Room Now*, when actors speak to imaginary mobile phones, they worked with their own words (in Czech, Slovak and German), but as Varadzinová said—in this scene the sound (and its nervous rhythm) is more important than the meaning.¹⁰²⁹

One line of research in the *Waiting Room* project concerned music, especially the topic of Slovak tango popular in between the two World Wars. Thanks to Pavol Zelenay, the Slovakian musician and collector who was a teenager during the fascist Slovak State, the ensemble gathered a lot of information and later on decided to use two tangos in the performance. Varadzinová wrote that the research was done also about Yiddish tango—which used to be very popular in Slovakia. None of the rehearsed Yiddish tangos were used in the performance.¹⁰³⁰ The opening scene of *Waiting Room* contains the Slovak tango *S tebou pod Tatrami* (Under the Tatra Mountains with You),¹⁰³¹ which is sung as a cabaret number. The two other songs—*Nani nani*¹⁰³² and the Jewish Prayer for Peace *Sim Shalom*¹⁰³³—are sung by singers who stand next to the band (outside the stage). Varadzinová wrote that those two

¹⁰²⁶ Similarly to the development of the *Sclavi* project after the Norwegian actor left and it concentrated on Slavs.

¹⁰²⁷ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.162.

¹⁰²⁸ Quotation of Slota's speech from 1999 when the Slovak Republic joined European Union, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹⁰²⁹ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.163.

¹⁰³⁰ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.161.

¹⁰³¹ Music by Gejza Dusík.

¹⁰³² From *Musica de mundos-De boca en boca*, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹⁰³³ From *Hatikva Jewish Sacred Music*, archive of Farm in the Cave.

songs express something larger than words—love and prayer—that is the reason why they appear in the performance.¹⁰³⁴

For the dramaturgic line of the performance an intimate story was sought. Miriam Bayle, who was working with the music arrangement from the outset, proposed the story of two lesbian girls in hiding during the Nazi period. Viliam Dočolomanský proposed Arnošt Lustig's short story about an SS officer and prostitute who are in the flat when the uprising starts—as, according to him, the topic is about life not politics. Jana Pilátová added a tale from the Warsaw ghetto about a building that survived the war. A woman who lived there for a few years after the war committed suicide by jumping from a window because she feared ghosts in the flat.¹⁰³⁵ At the end none of the stories were chosen literary, but all of them inspired actions, situations, improvisations and actors' intentions. Important was the feeling of two spaces—the inside and the outside, and also the metaphor of private and public. The interior space was also considered as a dangerous one, an ambivalent space—a protection and trap at the same time.¹⁰³⁶

During the whole period of rehearsals the ensemble worked with Romanian choreographer Ioana Mona Popovici. She worked with the actors on movement quality and training.¹⁰³⁷ Popovici rehearsed such elements as rhythmical undressing in the scene of 'transport' or putting down suitcases that 'transported' Jews do not want to leave from their hands. She worked also separately with Varadzinová and Vavříková on the movements' details that made the fascination between two women visible.¹⁰³⁸ In April 2006 Charlotta Öfverholm, a former dancer of DV8 Physical Theatre came to lead a short workshop for the actors. The workshop was concentrated on the lifting, quality of the movement and the lightness.¹⁰³⁹ The other training that was developed during the *Waiting Room* project was the training of falling where the actors experiment on how the body falls in different directions. This training was used also in the next project, *The Theatre*.¹⁰⁴⁰

Most of the rehearsals were recorded on video and Dočolomanský worked a lot with editing the movements.¹⁰⁴¹ This is reflected in the editing of the scenes in *Waiting Room*. The transitions between scenes work a lot with rhythm and the illusions are reminiscent of film editing—after the doors would shut concluding one scene (*This is a Mistake!*), and before

¹⁰³⁴ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, op. cit., p.162.

¹⁰³⁵ Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁷ Interview with Nast Marrero García, January 3, 2015.

¹⁰³⁸ Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2015.

¹⁰³⁹ Interview with Nast Marrero García, January 3, 2015.

¹⁰⁴⁰ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, op. cit., p.23.

¹⁰⁴¹ Interview with Marek Godovič, February 10, 2015.

they'd open in the next second starting the new scene (*Anniversary*), the image of what is hidden behind the door would change in the 'blink' of an eye. The tempo of the costume changes for actors is extremely fast as well, giving the spectators a clear image of parallel realities (the present and the past). The use of sound and light design guide the viewer where to watch and what to watch. Speaking about editing, Dočolomanský speaks about the way the memory works—at first you would remember a wallet that was stolen to you, later on the face of the seller, and later on somebody's hand—not following the logic of events.¹⁰⁴² This 'film' quality of the performance developed into the idea of shooting a film adaptation that was however never fulfilled.¹⁰⁴³

During the period of rehearsing *Waiting Room* Farm in the Cave had no stable residency.¹⁰⁴⁴ In the busiest time before the premiere, rehearsals were happening in few different places. In June 2006 it was Strašnické divadlo theatre, later on it was DAMU, during August they had the opportunity to rehearse in the Experimental Space Roxy/NoD, where the premiere was held. NoD, having similar architecture to the waiting room from Žilina-Záriečie with a big door in front of the audience and corridors on both sides, helped to keep the set design similar to the original space as possible. In September, the creating of the performance continued in Preslova 9 rehearsal space of Švandovo divadlo theatre, and later on back in NoD. The period was not easy regarding the organization. Only after the *Waiting Room* project the company was invited to host in Preslova 9 on a daily basis. Soon, from this industrial space, Farm in the Cave tried to create a residency space for alternative theatre.¹⁰⁴⁵

In June 2005, the ensemble for the first time performed *Work Demonstration—Farma for People!*¹⁰⁴⁶ The performance consisting of a presentation of training and working methods took place in Experimental Space Roxy/NoD showing scenes from *Lorca* and *Sclavi* projects; accompanied by live introductions and comments of Viliam Dočolomanský.¹⁰⁴⁷ In the framework of this *Work Demonstration* the *Waiting Room* miniature was shown. From 2005, this form of presentation was developing, changing titles into *Work Demo*¹⁰⁴⁸ and later on *The*

¹⁰⁴² Based on my notes, Warsaw November 20, 2009.

¹⁰⁴³ The project started in 2011 with the producer Čestmír Kopecký (1952) involved, but it not realized at the end.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Interview with Marek Godovič, February 10, 2015.

¹⁰⁴⁵ The idea of the residential space was developed till 2010 when ensemble needed to leave the space, officially because of the bad state of the electrical installation. See: "Farma v jeskyni bez jeskyně" [Farm in the Cave without a Cave], I-Divadlo, last modified August 13, 2010, accessed February 12, 2015, <http://www.i-divadlo.cz/zpravy/zprava/?id=196>.

¹⁰⁴⁶ June 9 and 10, 2005.

¹⁰⁴⁷ See: Farm in the Cave's annual report 2005, p.4, in "Výroční zprávy," *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Work Demo* was for the first time performed in Vienna on February 16, 2006.

Journey;¹⁰⁴⁹ being a ‘tool’ to present parts of the performances in the state of work-in-progress. Some of the scenes shown in the framework of those work demonstrations never appeared in the full version of the performance (like the Yiddish tango sung in the miniature that never appeared in *Waiting Room*). It did create a ‘space’ to present so-called miniatures (performances that never developed into consistent piece) like *Reclining Women*¹⁰⁵⁰ or *Balagan*.¹⁰⁵¹ On March 16, 2006, in the framework of *Work Demonstration* scenes from *Waiting Room* were performed in Žilina-Záriečie.¹⁰⁵² The project was presented as “The toil, expedition and research. The hours spent in archives; collecting contemporary newspapers and historical facts; and later on hours of rehearsals. Part of the rehearsals took place during the residency of Farm in the Cave in Stanica Žilina-Záriečie in the authentic space of waiting room (...) from where the original inspiration came from.”¹⁰⁵³ The whole performance was played in this original space only once, but it was in 2011.

Waiting Room is the performance that over years went under many changes in the cast and thanks to which one can understand how the performance of physical theatre of laboratorial type ‘exists,’ being constantly developed and ‘brushed.’ In that sense the ‘research’ never stops, the same as the actor’s work on intentions. *Waiting Room* is the first performance of Farm in the Cave that was shown many times to the public during the rehearsal process that influenced its development. Half a year after the premiere the performance was shown to Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley in the framework of a ‘barter’ exchange.¹⁰⁵⁴ Barba suggested making few changes in the structure (proposing such things like idea of the band entering the stage¹⁰⁵⁵) or changing a prop that was not ‘talkative’ (the baguette eaten by one of the characters was exchanged for an audiocassette that is destroyed by Man—in both cases The One Who Returns reacts into the ‘destruction’ done to the prop as if it would be her own body). Costumes frequently but subtly changed, or even gestures influencing the meaning of the scene. The last gesture of Journalist, caressing her belly as a

¹⁰⁴⁹ *The Journey* was performed on April 15, 2011 in St Petersburg.

¹⁰⁵⁰ The ‘third’ performance that originates in the period of rehearsing *Sclavi* in 2003 is *Reclining Woman* (solo performances of Varadinová and Vavříková)—performed for the first time as miniatures during the festival *Farma 2007*; later on, it developed into *Amigas*, presented as miniature on April 15, 2011 in St Petersburg; the project remained as work-in-progress recently developed during the *Dramaturgical Workshop* organized by Farm in the Cave in November 2014.

¹⁰⁵¹ More about *Balagan* in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁵² Marek Godovič, “Návrat do čakárne” [Return to the Waiting Room], accessed February 26, 2015, <http://www.stanica.sk/starastranka/main.php?page=INFOZINEcakaren&lang=SK> (translation mine).

¹⁰⁵³ “Zo zákulisia predstavenia Čakáreň,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

¹⁰⁵⁴ The ‘barter’ took place at Preslova 9, Prague October 16, 2006.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Based on my notes, October 16, 2006.

sign of pregnancy, did not appear in the most recent performances.¹⁰⁵⁶ However, the essence of the scene stayed in her ‘look back’ on dead bodies ‘left’ behind.

In 2014, Dočolomanský said that while working on performances at the beginning many times he leaves parts that are improvised, that only later on become fixed in the structure.¹⁰⁵⁷ As *Waiting Room* was also a performance that was mostly played in site-specific venues, it needed to adapt much more than other performances. In the show played on Pilsen railway station the ‘samples’ of the street noise were not necessary as the main door was opening directly to the real street of the city. In Leipzig the audience was brought to the railway depot, where the band needed to be ‘locked’ in the room over the stage and the entrances of the characters needed to be adapted to the space. In that sense the process of working on the performance recalls distillation into its essence.¹⁰⁵⁸

Waiting Room

Waiting Room starts with the sudden entrance of a woman wearing railway uniform whistling loudly. She is a singer. Three musicians who follow her would create a band to comment on the story. They would enter the stage one more time in the scene called *Anniversary* in the second part of the performance. The band would watch the story as if they were spectators as well, the difference being that they know the story very well. After them two men in the elegant white suits enter to sing for the audience: *S tebou najkrajši deň chcem prežívať, do modých diaľav sa dívať, pod našimi Tatrami S tebou v slovenskom raji zablúdiť, do teba len sa zaľúbiť, pod našimi Tatrami* (To live the finest day with you, watch the blue horizon under our Tatra Mountains. To lose ourselves in the Slovak Paradise with you, only to fall in love with you, under our Tatra Mountains). The singing at the beginning is lyrical— young men raise their hands to imitate the gentle line of the Slovak landscape; after a while their movements and facial expression become brutal, their hands would close into fists, words cease sounding lovely any more. The woman in a bright dress enters; she dances with the men as if she could not decide which one to choose. After a while the situation changes: she has nothing to say and is brutally tossed between the two men who play with her. They push her out of the space of the ‘waiting room,’ against metal doors whereupon she falls on the ground and is kicked by men. The woman from the audience stands up and goes towards

¹⁰⁵⁶ It was Hana Varadinová’s character that was giving birth in the miniature performed during *Journey to the Station*. Interview with Matej Matejka, Wrocław March 4, 2015.

¹⁰⁵⁷ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

¹⁰⁵⁸ See: Maja Jawor about performing *Sclavi* on carpet. Jawor, *Hlas a pohyb, op. cit.*, pp.177-178.

the door, as if she would like to react, or only to see better what is going on. Before she reaches the doors, they are shut; the image could have been her dream. Behind the metal door there is an outside, the past; perhaps it is a railway track; sometimes the mirror would appear there to evoke the space of lavatories.

Waiting Room could be understood as a story of a mixed couple—the story of a girl (Journalist) who discovers her Jewish roots. On the other hand, she could only discover ‘news,’ a secret of The One Who Returns. The woman who appeared in the first scene starts to follow Journalist as a ‘ghost’ (as in one version the character of The One Who Returns is played by an older dancer it evokes an image of Journalist’s mother). As the story evolves Journalist finds more ‘dead,’ tries to rescue somebody apparently invisible to the others. She starts-up a relationship (or perhaps is only violated) by the asocial man in the waiting room.¹⁰⁵⁹ Their relationship does not work well. Everything looks like a failure—Journalist’s relationships, job, and the past; something apparently does not work as it should. Perhaps the ‘mother’ comes back to aware the main character. The elegant man dressed in white who puts dead bodies into the suitcase saying *Excuse me* in a way no more elegant than if as a politician he belched starting a speech during an *Anniversary*. He is wearing a railway uniform in this situation and speaks Slovak; he is a politician. The words are ‘modern,’ but the old dead are failing on the ground. What anniversary is it? Who are those politicians? The woman in the bright dress wants to say something during the ceremony, but it is not possible to record her testimony. Apparently she ‘lives’ in the recording as she ‘suffers’ when the audiocassette is getting broken by the asocial Man.

Hana Varadinová, examining differences between *Dark Love Sonnets*, *Sclavi* and *Waiting Room*, wrote that as *Waiting Room*’s topic (transports of Jews from Slovakia) arose from the history of the place (a train station in Žilina-Záriečie)—there was no original story.¹⁰⁶⁰ It was the biggest difference because all the situations arose from improvisations. And most of the inspirations came first of all from the space itself, from the sound of the steps or voice, pure ‘sounds of movement,’¹⁰⁶¹ as Varadinová wrote. “We could see that the development goes from musicality in the voice to searching for musicality in all parts of expression.”¹⁰⁶² Concentrated on music and musicality in comparison between those three performances, Varadinová wrote: “*Waiting Room*’s line of music (an instrumental

¹⁰⁵⁹ Man is called ‘Asocial’ in the scenario written for the film project; it recalls homeless and thief as well. *Čakáreň - filmové libretto* [Waiting Room—a film libretto], archive of Marek Godovič.

¹⁰⁶⁰ See: Varadinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.22.

¹⁰⁶¹ See: Varadinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.23.

¹⁰⁶² Varadinová, *Resumé, op. cit.*, p.23 (translation mine).

accompaniment and singing) is created by the ‘band’ (which sometimes one of the actors join): we had transformed here the musical principles into the physical actions, especially to build their rhythmical precision, detailed synchrony and to incorporate sounds, which are created by actions (like footsteps) into the audio line of the performance.”¹⁰⁶³ What the ensemble tried to achieve is the feeling of music in the movement. They wanted the audience to see the music in the movement, in the line of the movement and in micro-actions.¹⁰⁶⁴ Many scenes of *Waiting Room* are built in the way that they have clear inner dynamic and the atmosphere is changing inside the scene, like: from the soft to the brutal (the opening scene called the *Slovak Tango*) or from comic to tragic (the scene called *Anniversary*), etc. Clear atmospheric changes are also recognizable in the way the scenes are linked in the narration developing from the dramatic into the lyrical (the transition between the scenes *Packing* and *Prayer*).

Except the ‘visual’ musicality, for the first time the sampled sounds were incorporated into the performance to create a specific ‘soundscape.’ There is a recorded sound that underlines the situation called *Return to Lavatories* between Man, Journalist and The One Who Returns—to make the audience ‘pay’ attention to the transformation of the relationship between the characters. There is a ‘radio’ sound playing the Slovak tango from the 1930s *Až naše šťastie odletí* (Once Our Happiness Flies Away)—evoking suddenly a situation of a ‘room’ in the empty space of the waiting room; creating an intimate ‘feeling’ of the scene till the recording would be faded out; the sound gives the impression of memory—a conversation that transpired in the past. A ‘street noise’ in the performance’s final scene brings the audience back to the present as if after watching an hour-long ‘dream.’

The lighting design has also evolved in comparison to the previous productions. Lights in *Waiting Room* specify times—a warm light refers mostly to the past, a cold one brings up the present times. It helps the viewer to understand a story line through the visual. All artistic parts of the performance are supporting the same message that is transmitted in a non-verbal, physical way (parallel realities). Dočolomanský said *Waiting Room* had the most complicated structure comparing to *Dark Love Sonnets* and *Sclavi* as, according to the director, it mirrored the way contemporary man thinks, formulating thoughts and understanding things: in the

¹⁰⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁴ See: Varadinová, *Scéničnost a hudebnost*, *op. cit.*, p.162.

chaotic, fragmentary, discontinuous, 'postmodern' way. "What creates the meaning is an intensity—the vibration; the vibration is a tool of a secret connection with the spectators."¹⁰⁶⁵

As there was no script, creating a character in this project came from the actor's personal approach and it was his personal responsibility, Varadzinová noted.¹⁰⁶⁶ "The narration-line of the character arises and develops gradually in the process of rehearsing, it couldn't be formed in the way that we would pre-think the character's form that we then only advocate while working on situations. The character's contours are generated in a different way from many sources. The basic theme of my character in every performance came from different sources."¹⁰⁶⁷

Nast Marrero García said the opening scene was the most overworked one; a scene where the characters present themselves to the audience: "We were repeating it over and over again during Winter 2005 and Spring 2006."¹⁰⁶⁸ After the opening scene Varadzinová gets up from the audience and enters the stage. In many scenes she just observes being on the margins of the 'events' so her task as an actress is to 'take' a viewer with her, so that he would observe the situations through her eyes, from her perspective.¹⁰⁶⁹ As she gets up from the audience it should be noticed and understood by the spectators. She's Journalist (Investigative Journalist, as it was defined in the program prepared for the performance's audience) who apparently researches something about the Holocaust that opens-up her vulnerability to the topic; perhaps because of her roots, but it might also have no connections with the character personally. Varadzinová, playing the main character, said she prayed every time to be able to 'take' the audience with her through the story.¹⁰⁷⁰ She is the spectator who enters the stage as if it were her own memory, visions, events, etc. The actress wrote that while creating this character she relied on the physical type she had worked before (Woman from the miniature). Except that, "The character was partly determined retrospectively because of the situations and relationships, partly it was the director's idea."¹⁰⁷¹

The character of Investigative Journalist is introduced as a banal type in search of 'hot news' and a relationship. In the world created on stage Journalist is the only one who is alone—'alone with ghosts.'¹⁰⁷² Her interest in the 'Dead One,' The One Who Returns and

¹⁰⁶⁵ Dočolomanský, "Technika?..." *op. cit.*, p.59 (translation mine). Dočolomanský compares only three first performances of *Farm in the Cave*.

¹⁰⁶⁶ See: Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.24.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.24 (translation mine).

¹⁰⁶⁸ Interview with Nast Marrero García, January 3, 2015.

¹⁰⁶⁹ See: Varadzinová, *Scéničnosť a hudebnosť*, *op. cit.*, p.165.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷¹ Varadzinová, *Resumé*, *op. cit.*, p.24 (translation mine).

¹⁰⁷² See: *Čekárna pro Jana Kerbra* [Waiting Room for Jan Kerbr], archive of Jana Pilátová

who carries a secret is not born from virtue, but from frustration. In 2007, Dočolomanský said: “I did not invent this performance. If I'd not been invited to the train station Žilina-Záriečie, I would've probably never visited this place. It was only while working there that I came to the realization that I no longer could avoid the most painful that had happened there. Had I not tried to confront this part of the experience, I wouldn't then be able to come to terms with myself being in this place, and also with the others who stand next to me. Is it possible to feel compassion for something we do not understand till all of a sudden we do, and that can't be expressed in words? Is it possible to empathize with somebody you do not understand? If yes, we are approaching the secret of the unknown regarding historical fact or presence of a random passenger whom we'd met yesterday. We are the part of both.”¹⁰⁷³ The theme of *Waiting Room* is the internalization of history to become one's personal matter in addition to the opposite, when personal frustrations create tragic facts.

In the description written while creating the program (that was not published at the end as too explicit), the creators of the performance, stated: “On the station we are able to understand from where we are coming and where we are going. In the interspace of *Waiting Room* the past meets the present and the future, the tragedy meets banality, the intimacy meets politics. We are in rush to gain our goals; we do not want to stop by what is happening or what had happened. (...) Anxiety and aggression sit on the same branch and would calm down only after finding the guilt of our uneasiness—ethnically, religiously or sexually different beings that we do not understand and we could not forgive them. It is easier to deal with somebody else than with yourself.”¹⁰⁷⁴

Those descriptions of *Waiting Room*—kept in tone of the inner dialog—emphasize the clash of humankind's good and bad sides. Nina Vangeli, writing about the performance, noted particularly the women's life after the war: she needed to choose between loving a victim or a criminal.¹⁰⁷⁵ Leszek Kolankiewicz described the ‘dead’ girl as with whom one could imagine going to bed—except she sleeps with death instead. After watching the performance in 2007, he said during the public lecture for the Farm in the Cave's spectators: “A man returns home and thinks—oh, perhaps those scenes are connected and perhaps I should read something, get to know more about the history of Slovakia, about deporting Jews from Slovakia—all that he could read later so that he could explain and understand better, but the strength of how this art

¹⁰⁷³ Čekárna pro Jana Kerbra, archive of Jana Pilátová (translation mine).

¹⁰⁷⁴ Čekárna pro Jana Kerbra, archive of Jana Pilátová (translation mine).

¹⁰⁷⁵ See: Nina Vangeli, “Farma v jeskyni bolestně konkretizuje násilí” [Farm in the Cave Painfully Specifies Violence], *Hospodářské noviny* May 3, 2006, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://archiv.ihned.cz/c1-18366990-farma-v-jeskyni-bolestne-konkretizuje-nasili>.

works lies in the direct confrontation and entering its rhythm. That is why it is not possible to film the theatre event. Because a theatrical event is engraved into the body. It is an action of the body, a physical action of the actors that resonate in the spectator's body."¹⁰⁷⁶

Sexuality and aggression: spectators noticed these are the spectacle's primary thrust. Piotr Borowski who saw *Waiting Room* in Warsaw in 2009, recognized aggression mostly as the main force and the language Farm in the Cave's actors used to narrate this story. Even if he had recognized an irony or more subtle things that are present in the structure, he considered them less visible, covered by aggression.¹⁰⁷⁷ German critics also saw mostly the violence.¹⁰⁷⁸ It is easy to interpret *Waiting Room* as a 'problem' of Journalist who reveals the past, knows things that nobody wants to remember and her private life complicates it all. A lot of time she spends on the station. Sometime the station 'projects' the images of the past and the girl observes it. At the end she leaves the dead in their suitcases. The history is related entirely in images. Even if the suitcases that appear here could be understood as a cliché, the real symbols of the Holocaust do not appear, but still the spectator could read the story of Jews and honest mourning that is truthful, as is not illustrative.¹⁰⁷⁹ The Holocaust is never mentioned directly (the theatre program talks only about the deportation of the Slovak Jews, but it does not explain where), so the understanding of the performance depends on historical knowledge and cultural associations of the spectator. *Waiting Room* could be understood as a single story of a girl who got pregnant or as a story of a journalist who examines modern politics whose speeches are xenophobic.

The main characters' 'love' triangle is similar to the one that appears in *Dark Love Sonnets* and in *Sclavi*, the difference being that in *Waiting Room* it is *He, She and She* situation. As there was written in one of the descriptions to the performance: "He is a part of both women's lives, but is only a random middleman between two fates that are acting as one."¹⁰⁸⁰ He is a part of both women's lives, but is not able to understand what happened in the past. "He is coming between them with one goal: to get and to have."¹⁰⁸¹ The image of a love triangle (*He, She and She*) in which the situation of the Holocaust was not in the first plan, was stronger at the very beginning of playing the performance. While performing, many

¹⁰⁷⁶ Leszek Kolankiewicz's lecture after projecting film *This is* (dir. Róbert Šveda) 2007, archive of Farm in the Cave (translation mine).

¹⁰⁷⁷ Based on my notes, Warsaw November 20, 2009.

¹⁰⁷⁸ See: Joerg Giese in Maerkische Allgemeine (October 2006) or Thatre der Zeit (December 2006), archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹⁰⁷⁹ See: Eva Stehlíková, "Tak s Vámi pláču, paní Berková" [So, I Cry with You, Mrs. Berkova], *Literární noviny* May 15, 2006.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Description from 2007, archive of Jana Pilátová.

¹⁰⁸¹ Marek Godovič, "Návrat do čakárne," *op. cit.*

things, originally improvised, settled and influenced this ‘first impression.’ The change in the cast when the role of The One Who Returns was given to dancer older than the rest of the actors, changed the image into mother-daughter situation that made the ‘same mistake.’ The performance is opened for the spectators to add their own images and interpretations, also because of the appearance of the contemporary political issues.

In 2007, after *Waiting Room* received the Czech award for the strongest theme in the dance performance, Dočolomanský said it is not only a look back, but also a confrontation with the way we live now, and what is happening in small countries like Slovakia despite globalization. “Slowly we were finding parallels between these persistent chance encounters of passengers, and the potency of violence, human arrogance and evil; and this all happened in the past.”¹⁰⁸² Dočolomanský added that according to him performing ‘anniversaries’ of the catastrophe would not stop evil.¹⁰⁸³ It is more an art that could bring ‘memory’ and raise questions that would otherwise not be asked during official celebrations, like the question of the position from which those ceremonies are performed. Can xenophobic politicians act honestly while revealing the memorial for the Holocaust victims? The question that is asked by the ensemble is formulated as: “meeting the ghosts of those with whom we have not parted,”¹⁰⁸⁴ what puts the actors in the position of ‘neighbors’ that watched and did not react to the violence happening to the others. The story told in *Waiting Room* seen from this angle would be about an uneasiness of a ‘neighbor’ that stayed silent; ‘a viewer of Harlem’ from the Brook’s anecdote.¹⁰⁸⁵ Pilátová recalling Kolankiewicz’s speech, said: “To witness evil demoralize, if we do not reflect on it, it would continue.”¹⁰⁸⁶

The hidden theme of *Waiting Room* is about not being loved, not being accepted—in the historical, but on the personal plane as well. For the characteristic of *Waiting Room* written in 2007, a sentence, “I need to do a lot to be loved,” was added¹⁰⁸⁷ that referred to the topic of Narcissus.¹⁰⁸⁸ The performance—developing the story of the waiting room in the provincial railway station somewhere ‘at the end of the world’—is the story of the place.

¹⁰⁸² Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers in “Respekt tančí,” Týdeník Respekt, accessed February 12, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWriBcqTpPs>, (translation mine).

¹⁰⁸³ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers in “Respekt tančí,” *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁸⁴ “We find ourselves in the place of central-European conscience, where—accompanied by the tones of Slovak tango—we meet the ghosts of those with whom we have not parted.” See: “Waiting Room,” Farma v jeskyni, accessed February 10, 2015, http://infarma.info/projects_farm.php?_project=waiting-room.

¹⁰⁸⁵ See: Peter Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.21.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Jana Pilátová, “Odkaz. Hledání, zachycování, odmítní – a předávání divadlem: Barba, Kolankiewicz a Dočolomanského Čekárna.” [Message. Searching, Capturing, Denying, and Transmitting with Theatre: Barba, Kolankiewicz and Dočolomanský’s Waiting Room] *Taneční zóna* Spring 2007, p.53.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Description from 2007, archive of Jana Pilátová.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Referring to Heinz-Peter Röhr’s book *Narcissus – vnitřní žalář* [Narcissism—Escaping from the Inner Prison] (Praha: Portál, 2001).

“Dreams of passengers, their personal tragedies, loneliness and frustration are reflecting the period from the 1930s to the present. Actors return to this space introducing different times, and seemingly different characters. However, the relations between them ‘karmically’ continues. Mutual wounding and narcissism are discharged in an erotic despair. Unspecified social disaster would appear several times as a danger from the outside. In fact, as if they all secretly wished it and created it... as a solution to their emotional aridity, life's frustrations and stagnation in their inability to share a relationship. The rhythm, sounds of footsteps and physical contact with the wall creates a music of impatience.”¹⁰⁸⁹ Journalist, described as jealous for the relationship, is fighting for attention. The opening scene with the Slovak tango is only a memory of idyllic place, but tango itself is for Dočolomanský a ‘dance of aesthetic aggression.’¹⁰⁹⁰

The scene called *Waiting Room Now* is described by boredom and impatience.¹⁰⁹¹ The *Postcard from March 1942* that could be named ‘Waiting Room in the Past’ on the contrary shows an image of clinging to that boredom as it recalls stability, normality and safety; that is why ‘transported’ people in this scene are ‘desperately’ trying to keep a good mood. “How to recognize that it is already bad? How to postpone it? We are ignoring the moment, grasp our handbags and tranquilize ourselves by walking, the small certainties and uncertainties of the known world that ends. If you would not lose your appeal, you would not lose the most important, even if they’d took us everything.”¹⁰⁹² At the end of the scene a man from the *Postcard* is trying to catch women to the suitcases and bring them back to the space outside the stage—“bringing back his memory. It’s his.”¹⁰⁹³ Kolankiewicz commenting on the performance said a suitcase is one of those most important things to explain the 20th century history of *Mitteleuropa* and constant migrations of people.¹⁰⁹⁴ According to the scholar the suitcase was a memory, roots, home just the same as in the case of the Emigrant from *Sclavi* who dies in the suitcase; with his feet in the suitcase, his only true possession.

The One Who Returns comes back to the ‘present times,’ bringing the others who had disappeared never to return. This motif returns in the creations of Dočolomanský: in *Lorca* it is the political death of the poet; in *The Theatre* the theme of *desaparecidos*, the ones who ‘disappeared’ from political reasons; in *Whistleblowers* names of the ones who were killed secretly are projected on the wall. The other motif that appears in *Waiting Room* and that

¹⁰⁸⁹ Description from 2007, archive of Jana Pilátová.

¹⁰⁹⁰ See: *Čekárna pro Jana Kerbra*, archive of Jana Pilátová.

¹⁰⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹² *Čekárna pro Jana Kerbra*, archive of Jana Pilátová (translation mine).

¹⁰⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁴ See: Pilátová, “Odkaz,” *op. cit.*, p.54.

would develop in *The Theatre* and—on the larger scale—in *Whistleblowers* is recording, making photos and images. Here it is some testimonies (audiocassette) and the ‘banal’ photo from *Anniversary*. In one of the scenes Man destroys the audiocassette: the testimony, the memory is lost. In *The Theatre* a ballerina records a family tragedy at the outset of the *Suicide* scene—the memory would be kept, the question is, what for?; why is it possessed by the stranger? In *Whistleblowers*, the video camera documents live along with an advertisement—an image of manipulation. Working with the video and media, starting from recording the actors’ improvisations for the working use slowly developed into a theme of Dočolomanský’s performances. The recording could be misused as if it would be the very opposite practice the theatre—that ‘transmits the truth through the bodies’¹⁰⁹⁵—should be.

“The scenic composition *Waiting Room* origins from the tragic fate of the place from where Slovak Jews during the Slovak State were deported to concentration camps in Poland. But it also connects a sad and complicated past with the unsuspecting and carefree presence that is unable to name the experienced fact, no matter how tragic it was. The politicians are not able to do that in their speeches that were presented in the Slovakia during unveiling of the memorial for the victims of the Holocaust, by intonations of which actors were inspired to create the performance.”¹⁰⁹⁶ As Marek Godovič wrote in his impressions, the main theme is not historical trauma of the Holocaust, but waiting.¹⁰⁹⁷ Perhaps it is waiting for the ones who were not deported in the first place. “Is it a place, where people would change, if they would wait very long?”¹⁰⁹⁸—asked Godovič. The tragedy that missed Slovaks returns as a bad dream—all the more, considering the Slovak State actually paid Nazis for each deported Jew.

As a metaphor, ‘waiting’ grew from the site-specific approach towards the space of the waiting room at the railway station. The site-specific approach is always connected to reconstructing the past and feeling of nostalgia; recalling the past. In the case of the Žilina-Záriečie train station, the feeling of nostalgia is uneasy; it is connected to the war and sending away some people who were part of society—to the ‘unknown.’ Site-specific as an artistic method emphasizes the importance of the location itself, and describing it as if as a character—with its history, architectural predestination into some function. It is a semiotic reading of the place; connecting to the ‘story’ told by the place. Site-specific artist reading (semantically) a space builds a dialog of the place’s ‘story’ using his own visions,

¹⁰⁹⁵ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe* Prague October 29, 2014.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Marek Godovič, “Návrat do čakárne,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

¹⁰⁹⁷ See: Marek Godovič, “Návrat do čakárne,” *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁹⁸ Marek Godovič, “Návrat do čakárne,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

associations. The viewer would read that; the method is to bring ‘truth’ and ‘authenticity’ of the space.

The artist's body in most of the site-specific actions adjusts to the function of the place ‘respecting’ it, and engages it by ‘adaptation.’ The body set in the site-specific context assists an understanding of a location, a belief in the space, where the authentic is invoked. Theatre actions ‘animate’ the place, recall old rituals and behaviors. The set design of *Waiting Room* mirrors the real waiting room of Žilina-Záriečie. Everything was reconstructed. Characteristic turnstile that was ‘designing’ the queue in Žilina-Záriečie was copied, but its role changed. In the performance it is a desktop of the spokesperson, a movable, turning piece that is used also as a kind of barrow full of ‘bodies.’ In the scene where two ‘workers’ push the turnstile that carry two undressed women, they repeat again words of contemporary politician: *My im tu vytvárame obrovský priestor a preto sa tu tak dobre cítia a preto ich je tu tak veľa. Nech sa nikto nehnevá. Tu ide o kanalizácie, vodovody, plynofikácie, o údržbu ciest. A v konečnom dôsledku o ukončenie... Toto chceme my?* (We have given them such a vast space that they feel so good here, and that's why so many of linger here. Don't get me wrong; the issue is one of sewage, water and gas supply, the issue of road maintenance. And ultimately it is about final... Is this what we want?).¹⁰⁹⁹ “*Waiting Room* develops the motif of transport; the process of traveling not only from the place to place, but also and mainly in time,”¹¹⁰⁰ wrote Marek Godovič. It is a bad dream when the audience recognizes speeches of their politicians traveling in time, being placed in the position of their ancestors who observed and waited.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Collage made of speeches of Ján Šlota from Žilina Radio Station, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹¹⁰⁰ Marek Godovič, “Návrat do čakárne,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

***The Theatre*—a Labyrinth, a Carnival**

Inspiration

The performance called *The Theatre* which premiered February 20, 2010, starts in silence. The audience takes their seats, lights fade out. After a moment of silence, from behind closed doors music starts—drums, trumpets, loud laughter, and shouts—a ‘carnival’—the deafening noise of celebrating ‘street.’ The door opens and in a ray of orange light the first dancers ‘fall’ into the empty space—a procession of women in colorful, airy dresses provokes a single man wearing a uniform who enters just behind them. *Meu papagaio* (My parrot), *meu papagaio, Lora, Lora*¹¹⁰¹—women shout, starting the song in Portuguese¹¹⁰² which lasts until the end of the opening scene. The provoked man utters the sound of a bird, which causes widespread laughter of his ‘troupe.’ The actors diverge around the *nivtec*¹¹⁰³ stage raised above the floor in the height of one meter; they gather around it as around a large table; some of them jump to the ‘false audience’ built of the same *nivtec* boards of the back of the elevated stage. The construction mirrors the one where the real audience of the performance sits.¹¹⁰⁴ The man in uniform shoots at his companions from a trumpet, making them laugh even more (the troupe is literally ‘dying’ from laughter). The women leap onto the raised stage and start to dance and/or fight. Another man joins them. While intoning a phrase: *You are my destiny*, he forces one of the women to move back. He goes to the edge of the stage and pulls out a long metal stick. Using this stick, he breaks through the group (among the general din it is possible to hear a piece of declaration: *According the law of Brazil...*) to come back to the place he fought before. The man places the stick into the hole made in the *nivtec* stage, as if it would be a mast. This creates sudden silence (a ‘stop-time’ similar like in *Sclavi*)—other actors move in tension away from this newly created ‘center.’ Three musicians take positions on the back stage-right part of a podium prepared for a ‘false audience,’ that would mirror the real one.

Shortly after, the silence is broken by sounds of birds, whistles and calls; the song continues. The group divides into two ‘teams’—keeping eye contact with the newly recognized antagonists, one of the groups puts black hats on their heads. After the division,

¹¹⁰¹ The species of parrot that has imitative abilities.

¹¹⁰² The song that actors sing *Meu papagaio (modinha)*—a kind of sentimental love song) was recorded by Mário de Andrade in 1938 in Pomba on the north of Brazil (*Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas / Folklore Research Mission*).

¹¹⁰³ A flexible staging system made of rectangle boards placed on steel legs.

¹¹⁰⁴ Such scene was set at Preslova 9, at PONEC—The Dance Venue, where the performance was ‘moved’ after Farm in the Cave lost its residency space, the scene is a bit different.

the provocation stops being accidental, but has a clear ‘enemy.’ In a moment the song would finish and everybody disappears; the door shuts and the stage is flooded with violet light. After a while, to the sound of drums, swinging up the lid of the trapdoor, two characters in hats hop out from a large hole in the stage. They wear black hats and dark violet suits with patches on their knees and elbows. Capitão (an androgenic character played by the actress with ‘fake’ moustaches) goes out first and pulls out a man much taller than him: Vaqueiro; here, we are introduced to a director with his actor. Their appearance and behavior is comic. This is the first scene of the production.

Dočolomanský, addressing topics associated with *The Theatre*, explained the performance is about freedom and vitality, but it is easier to shift perspectives and say the show is about slavery and dying; it is about masters and slaves: spectators and actors. The division that is made in the first scene establishes the roles in the framework of the performance. The group wearing hats would play ‘actors,’ the second group puts on shiny black masks that hide eyes and play an ‘audience.’ The ‘actors,’ using forms inspired by Brazilian folklore, identifies with slaves. The ‘false audience’ steals the spontaneity of the real audience’s reactions and would become a force that wants an entertainment from the ‘actors.’

The first part of the performance develops in a fast tempo in a kind of spiral repeating the same pattern of events: rehearsals (*Backstage I*), performance for the ‘false audience’ (*Bumba I*) that ends with shooting the ‘actors,’ the second rehearsal (*Backstage II*), performance (*Bumba II* and *Lingua*) that ends with the killing and ‘resurrecting’ of the character called Ox. In that point a woman from the ‘audience’ is pulled onto the stage by the events and is initiated on ‘actress’ (*I Belong to You*). The next one who tries to join the troupe appears in the dark of night as a spy yet be captured by the ‘audience’ and forced by both groups (the ‘actors’ and the ‘audience’) to play the role of an ‘actress’ that would finish with the catastrophe (*Revolution*) and change the world of the performance up side down. The only ‘actor’ that would not ‘disappear underground,’ would not be able to perform in front of the fourth ‘false audience’ created by the ‘puppets’ (the scene is called *Normalization*) and would commit suicide in the closing scene...

The main narrative thread relayed in *The Theatre* is a story of a theatre group that plays the same performance for the next ‘false’ spectators. The real audience of *The Theatre* watches both. To understand what is hidden behind this simple story line, it is necessary to go back in time, around two years before the premiere, to see how the Afro-Brazilian project of

Farm in the Cave started and to examine its anthropological inspirations that transformed into *The Theatre* performance.¹¹⁰⁵

This particular performance has perhaps the richest incubation process with many motifs and influences in a process that was preceded by a variety of workshops by different ‘laboratorial’ artists. The ‘expedition’ to Brazil was divided into two trips, just like the earlier *Sclavi*—the first expedition was more intuitive; the second one was concentrated on specific forms (in the same way that *Sclavi*’s second expedition explored the theme of emigration). In between, the group developed the project parallel with its residency space called Preslova 9. *The Theatre* is also the largest regarding the number of artists performing. In a way it is Farm in the Cave’s most ‘laboratorial’ work—not only because of the topic, but also because of the artists’ network that helped the troupe to find the right people to access, learn and understand unfamiliar techniques that the ensemble was interested in.

In every creation process there is some catalyzing impulse—a picture, person or melody. A situation, image, emotion, intuition... which might ignite a process but be forgotten afterwards. The first impulse for the Afro-Brazilian inspiration was perhaps a lecture by Leszek Kolankiewicz about Brazil delivered during the festival *Farma 2007. Between the Theatre and Another Genre. Between Cultures*.¹¹⁰⁶ The lecture was based on Kolankiewicz’s experience as a theatre anthropologist immersed in a culture of theatrical phenomena: the culture of games and gamblers; of street society and its viewers (and voyers); a society of trance experiences and possession (people possessed by football, by *Orixá*, by dance, by love, etc.). Kolankiewicz described the culture of *axé* and *saudade*—untranslatable terms connected to ritualistic forms of gathering in the Brazilian community, in a society where Indian, African and European motifs are present with the same intensity. He described a strong vital, sexual energy with spirit filling and moving things and beings (*axé*), and the deepest nostalgic longing for something loved and lost such as freedom or the land of one’s ancestors (*saudade*). The Brazilians were presented as a society of performance that lives the theatrical. The lecture was based on Kolankiewicz’s deeper research on trance cults and spirit

¹¹⁰⁵ Most of the information presented in this chapter was gathered during the period of creating the performance. The chapter was partly presented in Greece (*From an anthropological inspiration into a theatre practice. About “The Theatre” – a new performance of the Farm in the Cave Theatre Studio*, Work-in-Progress Forum II, Epidavros July 8-11, 2010), Poland (“*Teatr jako gabinet luster. O inspiracjach antropologicznych Farmy w jaskini*” [‘The Theatre’ as a Hall of Mirrors. On the Anthropological Inspiration of Farm in the Cave], *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 2/2012, pp.127-150) and Czech Republic (“*DIVADLO. O antropologických inspiracích*” *Taneční zóna* 04/2014, translated by Jana Pilátová, pp.38-41).

¹¹⁰⁶ The Festival was organized within the framework of a larger (one year) project entitled *Searching for Messages*.

possession, also in the strictly theatrical meaning of acting (actor-character relationship) explored in his publication *Samba with Gods: An Anthropological Tale*.¹¹⁰⁷

Festival *Farma 2007* was a kind of symbolic turning point for the company. Farm in the Cave presented there two of its three main productions: *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant* and *Waiting Room*. Two new fragments called *Miniatures 'Reclining Woman'* with feminist themes were also presented as solos of two of the main actresses of the company—Hana Varadinová and Eliška Vavříková. At that time the decision had already been made not to develop *Miniatures* into a larger production. Viliam Dočolomanský was searching for other inspiration. This was also the moment when two apprentices came to work with Farm in the Cave—Anna Kršiaková and Patricie Poráková—who would play important roles in the Afro-Brazilian project. Most of the performances were staged in the space Preslova 9, where Farm in the Cave's residency center had been planned.

Already before Kolankiewicz's lecture, Dočolomanský was interested in Cuban culture of movement; a 'rhythmical articulation rooted in the culture.'¹¹⁰⁸ He was interested in making a performance that would be inspired by a culture entirely foreign to the ensemble so that they could search for the 'universal' uniting the cultures. Secondary to the musical interest, the director was also inspired by trance cults and the *Orixás*—gods/spirits who are well-defined characters with their own stories based on Yorùbá mythology, whose individual traditions have their own rhythms, steps, music and songs. Afro-Caribbean cults of Cuba are one possible place for research among others such as Haiti¹¹⁰⁹ with its *Voodoo* ceremonies or Brazil. Rituals and religious systems were brought to these three places by African slaves which then mixed with local Native American beliefs and the Christianity of the 'masters' or ruling class. Cuba was primarily chosen by Dočolomanský as Farm in the Cave's first expedition site.¹¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰⁷ Viliam Dočolomanský said that he started to be interested in Brazil only after *ECUM* (O Encontro Mundial de Artes Cênicas) in 2008. He admitted however that he knew *Samba with Gods* since working on Nijinsky theme in the framework of the *Sclavi* project, but it was not a determining material for *The Theatre*. Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 5, 2011; Leszek Kolankiewicz's book *Samba with Gods* was published in Polish as *Samba z bogami. Opowieść antropologiczna* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo KR, 1995). Excerpts translated into Czech by Jana Pilátová as *Samba s bohy, antropologický příběh* with selected fragments published in *Taneční zóna* magazine in Winter 2001.

¹¹⁰⁸ Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 5, 2011.

¹¹⁰⁹ Haiti was not a specific inspiration for Farm in the Cave, but it is a very important context for Kolankiewicz's research.

¹¹¹⁰ An expedition to Cuba with an established network of contacts and phenomena the company wanted to explore. The expedition was planned for April/May 2008 (based on interviews done with actors, Prague May-August 2010; they have asked to remain anonymous).

Simultaneously to these inspirations, Zuzana Pavuková and Roman Horák developed a project called *Balagan*¹¹¹¹ that is a kind of Russian puppet theatre performed originally on the street also containing circus elements.¹¹¹² The puppet motif was developed here and children's harmonicas used as props appeared for the first time. Small, colorful harmonicas made of paper were treated both as a 'primitive' musical instrument and as puppets—a harmonica which 'breaths.'¹¹¹³ In the end that prop in both its personalized (character) and functional (instrument) roles remained in *The Theatre* performance where it would represent a pregnancy, a phallic object or a tongue—an attribute of three characters played by 'actors: Catarina, Vaqueiro and Ox. Anna Kršiaková explains Dočolomanský's use of puppets in *The Theatre* 'inner necessity.'¹¹¹⁴ The idea evolved into inviting a puppeteer, Karolína Nižníková to introduce the actors to different ways of manipulating various kinds of puppets (marionettes, glove puppets, Javanese puppets, etc.) that later on developed into broader research and would remain one of the main motifs of *The Theatre*.

One of the inspirations included an acrobatics workshop led by Maxim Didenko, an actor of the Derevo Theatre. The workshop was concentrated on different jumps and acrobatics with the partner. Kršiaková wrote, "In the framework of this training it was very important not to be afraid to fall on the floor or to hit a wall. We worked mostly with the falling technique and on 'freezing' in the air during jumps."¹¹¹⁵ The training developed into interest in *parkour* technique that was explored and later on used partly in the scene *Feeding* and it developed into the dominant quality of one of *The Theatre* performance characters (Ox performed by Jun Wan Kim).

The actors began also by exploring melodies, sounds, words, and intonations collected during their travels, such as South Korea (September 2008). One comic element, later coined 'Korean English' was derived from one of Dočolomanský's Korean videos, of a female shaman, which Kršiaková employed as acoustic inspiration. The text's original meaning was a

¹¹¹¹ The project was presented in May 29, 2007 by both actors as their final work for the Department of Non-verbal and Comic Theatre at Music and Dance Faculty of The Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (HAMU). Pavuková described it as the „street actions with the culmination point that also the contemporary world is *balagan*—a mess.” Interview with Zuzana Pavuková, February 17, 2015.

¹¹¹² Interview with Zuzana Pavuková, February 17, 2015.

¹¹¹³ Based on my notes from *Balagan* rehearsals, Prague undated.

¹¹¹⁴ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.21. "I like the most the concentration of the puppet leader in the puppet theatre as he stops showing off and in this moment the center of the universe is for him his puppet. Then I like to watch them [actors], because when the moment of this silent and concentrated affinity appears, paradoxically the human 'behind' reveals the most." See: Viliam Dočolomanský, "Andersenove príbehy majú rozmery až antickej tragédie, říká režisér *Malé mořské vily*," [Andersen's Stories have Dimension of Ancient Tragedy, Says Director of 'The Little Mermaid'], interview by Jitka Martinková, *Scena.cz* June 21, 2001, accessed March 17, 2015, <http://online.scena.cz/mesh/print.php?id=176&t=2> (translation mine).

¹¹¹⁵ Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.17 (translation mine).

mix of the shaman's private chat with her acquaintance about her daughter's disobedience with a sacred text that accompanied a ritual. The text's melody was copied by Kršiaková who interpreted it by feelings of an 'invitation, joy and openness'¹¹¹⁶ that provoked her to create a spontaneous English text: *Welcome everyone. Our show begins, that's great that you are here and fill your glasses with whisky and ice, nobody can't stay alone this night. Do you hear me everyone? Everybody have a fun? Oh, yes. Hey my dear friend, today is the time to say yourself: 'I am here!' Enjoy ya! I go! Oh, yes my dear friend, you are our guest and have a nice time with us!*¹¹¹⁷ The text appears in the performance three times describing situations and character of Capitão. When Kršiaková worked on it she tried to find counter-points between the voice and movement: "When my body was making small movements, my speech would be fast; when the body was acting in a fast tempo, my speech got slower."¹¹¹⁸

Intonations heard by Cécile Da Costa on the streets of Bogota (March 2009) serve as an inspiration for the work that led back to the type of roles performed by her in *The Theatre*.¹¹¹⁹ The actors were tasked to work with remembered words, sentences or just a melody from the reality they experienced (life inspiration) and to transform it into a 'type' (a type of behavior). Another technique that helped the actors to 'find' a type was an exercise to act freely in the rehearsal space and suddenly to 'freeze' in a pose, and only later on discover what kind of feelings or associations this pose aroused in the actor.¹¹²⁰ Types in this production evolved from the movements of a homeless person (interpreted by Roman Horák), a woman (interpreted by Jun Wan Kim) or a drug dealer (interpreted by Patricie Poráková).¹¹²¹ Kršiaková named two of her types as a sumo fighter/snowman and clerk.¹¹²² She also mentioned that the troupe while developing this work, learned 'types' of traditional Korean theatre (Nobleman, Old Woman, Young Woman, Servant and Gnome) introduced to them by Jun Wan Kim. Those types (similarly as *Orixás*) are expressed by steps that have clear beginning and end.¹¹²³ The actors improvised gestures, behaviors and reactions based on sound and movement observations. Many accidental discoveries during this process served as catalysts born of a first impulse-reaction process. From the perspective of their developed

¹¹¹⁶ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.35

¹¹¹⁷ For more details—see the chapter entitled *Intonácie* [Intonations] in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, pp.38-40.

¹¹¹⁸ Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.52 (translation mine).

¹¹¹⁹ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹¹²⁰ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.42.

¹¹²¹ Video archive of Farm in the Cave, material documenting the end of that work was shot in December 5, 2008.

¹¹²² See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.43.

¹¹²³ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.44.

‘type’ the actors then improvised with a partner, and in so doing worked with changing the rhythm of fixed actions or practiced normal daily behavior such as sitting, walking or running.

Working with the ‘character’ this way is rooted in Stanislavsky’s tradition of ‘imitating’ reality.¹¹²⁴ But it also recalls Odin Teatret’s actors who’d develop many actions just to ‘feel’ the type or energy they wanted to perform. In the end only a few developed ‘type’ characteristics remained in the final structure of *The Theatre* performance (primarily in the parts called *Backstage*). Yet these seemingly unimportant characteristics, which had nearly no meaning from the spectators’ point of view, (like Capitão’s slow motion gesture of protecting himself from wasps in the scene called *Play for Us*¹¹²⁵) became critical to the performance as the actor’s hidden intentions. These would spring up during the creation process’s most important strategy: the actors composed physical scores, inverting an entire system of gestures and a canon of types that they subsequently inserted into ‘gaps’ in the physical (both bodily and vocal) rendering of their scenic actions.

This enriched *The Theatre* with a non-Brazilian component within a performance whose ‘choreography’—movements, words and rhythms—was decidedly Brazil-based. This self-developed ‘type’ sub-language helped to express the potency of meanings on different levels, obscuring unnoticed (and mostly unimportant from the director and spectators point of view) meanings within the structure. Kršiaková wrote, “I do not illustrate what happens in the situation. Every movement comes from a diversity of inspirations, and the director composes them, rearranges their order, works rhythmically with them and crafts a story, but my inner story is different.”¹¹²⁶ According to the actress, the inner story needs to be kept secret to keep its tension. In the framework of a precise structure, there is a necessity of inner surprises: “I never know, how it would be.”¹¹²⁷

While working on those types during their trip to Colombia, preparing for deeper research in Cuba, the ensemble was invited to Brazil. Plans changed and Farm in the Cave flew to Brazil to perform *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant*, and to present workshops and lectures in the framework of *ECUM* (Encontro Mundial de Artes Cênicas / Performing Arts World Meeting). With the help of Brazilian student who had been to Prague for Farm in the Cave’s workshop, they had pre-arranged appointments with people practicing and teaching

¹¹²⁴ See: Shomit Mitter, *System of Rehearsal. Stanislavsky, Brecht, Grotowski and Brook* (London/New York: Routledge, 1992), p.9.

¹¹²⁵ An example from Kršiaková acting line. To read more about creating a character see: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, pp.42-51.

¹¹²⁶ Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.50 (translation mine).

¹¹²⁷ Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.52 (translation mine).

the *Orixás* dances.¹¹²⁸ As with Farm in the Cave's previous projects, *The Theatre* carries with it a rich incubation process with the intuitive searching for a plot, for characters and for the main topic. The performance needed to start from physical memory, but to create a consistent 'text,' choose a strong plot among many accidental actions and inspirations the ensemble needed a strong 'Thread of Aradne's' which was finally found in Brazil.

Expedition I¹¹²⁹

From June 20-July 22, 2008 Farm in the Cave (consisting of Viliam Dočolomanský, Roman Horák, Zuzana Pavuková, Patricie Poráková)¹¹³⁰ was in Brazil, starting from the southern town of Londrina. Primarily European with an architecture consisting of skyscrapers and blocks of flats, the place had little inspiration. "There is nothing there, it is a city without spirit," as one actor described.¹¹³¹ Nevertheless, it was there that the troupe first met Augusto Omolú, the Brazilian member of Odin Teatret. In the program prepared for *The Theatre* premiere, Dočolomanský wrote, "Thanks to Augusto Omolú for morning awakening with the *Orixás* dances in a hotel in Londrina, and to Eugenio Barba who, after coffee and breakfast, loaned him to us."¹¹³²

After Londrina the ensemble moved to Belo Horizonte, where from the 26th to the 28th of June they performed *Sclavi*, led a workshop and gave lectures. Due to their previous interest in the Afro-Caribbean *Orixás* dances, the ensemble found its way to *Candomblé* ceremonies and through those to Brazilian folklore and dramatic dances such as *Bumba meu boi* or *frevo* dance. At the very beginning Farm in the Cave was also lucky to meet Suzana Martins, who specialized in *Candomblé* and the *Orixás* dances and who introduced them to her students: Daniela Maria Amoroso who was then researching *samba de roda* and *roda de samba* and Ana Valéria Vincente who is interested in *frevo* dance. Martins also directed the company to the folkloric form called *Bumba meu boi*, which turned out to be a basic ingredient for creating primary dramaturgic threads and performance structures.

The network of people that introduced its work to the company was composed

¹¹²⁸ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹¹²⁹ Descriptions of particular forms Farm in the Cave met in Brazil are constructed using materials from the company's archive and interviews made with participants of the expedition. I decided to avoid using external sources and publications, in an effort to keep the authenticity of the narrative descriptions. Descriptions in addition to the structure of the dance/drama forms are explications of how the form was seen and understood by the creators of the performance.

¹¹³⁰ The other actors who performed *Sclavi* left after the performances to the Czech Republic.

¹¹³¹ Quotation from interviews made with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹¹³² Quotation from a program prepared for the premiere of *The Theatre*, February 10, 2010, unpublished, archive of Farm in the Cave.

contacts from different sources. From Iben Nagel Rasmussen, Farm in the Cave met Rasmussen's students from Oco Theatre Laboratory: Luis Alberto Alonso from Cuba and Rafael Souza Magalhães, an actor and director who cared for the company when in Salvador. Through Alonso and Magalhães, Farm in the Cave was invited to the *Candomblé* ceremony at the *favela* (slums), which was the strongest experience of *Candomblé* trance and the *Orixás* dances the ensemble underwent. Dočolomanský also traveled alone with Patricie Poráková as a translator to gather video and photographic research. In some sites, Poráková, as an actress participated in workshops of different dramatic forms, collecting physical experiences and ways to embody rhythm and form (like dances of the *Orixás* with “*Mestre King*” Raimundo Bispo dos Santos, the teacher of Augusto Omolú or a *frevo* workshop with *mestre* Gil Silva).

In Belo Horizonte, Farm in the Cave's actors took Afro-Brazilian Dance classes with Luciana Matias. These are dances from which *samba de coco* was born—a samba of African origin danced by Blacks with wooden sandals (*tamanco*) on their feet.¹¹³³ The ensemble also visited Outo Preto, a smaller city close to Belo Horizonte known for its history of Black slaves working in gold mines. In Belo Horizonte they took part in a large drumming workshop of more than three hundred people, drumming rhythms of *Tambor Mineiro* (Miners Drum), a celebration that also included singing and dancing. Farm in the Cave performers were recognized as the actors from *Sclavi* by Maurício Tizumba, the leader of the drumming workshop who had seen the performance so they were given special attention. But this was only an ‘introduction’ to the Brazilian percussions. A more important workshop of drumming was undertaken during the second expedition in Recife with Master Chacon from *Maracatu Nação* Porto Rico who introduced Brazilian rhythms and its context to the troupe.¹¹³⁴

In Belo Horizonte, Farm in the Cave also came into contact with *capoeira angola*—the traditional form of *capoeira*,¹¹³⁵ which is more of a dance than a martial art, based on perfect communication between partners and a system that includes techniques of question and answer, attack and protection, and heightened concentration as one never knows when he would be invited to enter within the *roda* (circle); maintaining uninterrupted eye contact with the partner losing neither rhythm nor game. The form consists of surprise or even betrayal of the partner, and is based on repeating a common basic step (*ginga*) to different rhythms which

¹¹³³ All descriptions in this part (if it is not otherwise specified) are based on the archives of Farm in the Cave (mainly on the reports from the expedition prepared by Patricie Poráková) or on the interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹¹³⁴ Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 5, 2011.

¹¹³⁵ Kršiaková describes this form as having less acrobatic parts and less exhibitionism; the practitioners of *capoeira angola* believe it was inspired by the movements of zebra. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, op. cit., p.60.

creates a great sense of balance. It is based on improvisation and changes between relaxation and tension in the body. The game/fight (*jogo*) between two dancers happens surrounded by a circle of musicians and other dancers who sing, led by the *mestre* (the master, the leader) who gives the rhythm to the *roda*. In the fight it is important to read the antagonist by the way he performs *ginga* and to surprise him by his movement, so that he would fall down.¹¹³⁶ In the end the actors added some elements of this martial art to their daily training as both approaches are very similar in keeping constant contact with the partner and using the connection to the ground.

After Belo Horizonte, Farm in the Cave traveled to Salvador da Bahia, a town known as the ‘port of the Blacks’ because it was the first place where slaves from Africa disembarked. Slavery as a topic was ubiquitous throughout this Afro-Brazilian research. As such, the musical instruments and rhythms were of African origin and the genesis of the dance forms themselves arose often from slavery (slave culture). For example, in the *samba de roda* one’s feet do not lose connection with the ground, establishing a movement echoing stumbling with fettered feet. The steps of *samba de roda* came from the movement of legs trampling on coffee. In this form feet transmit rhythm to the upper parts of the body as vibration. All the movement of the rest of the body comes therefore from the ground, shaping the movement that travels up through legs to upper parts of the body. *Samba de roda* is danced in circles (*roda*) wherein the dancer is actively supported by others in the outer circle clapping. It is mainly danced by older women in wide white dresses (if men were participating, they’d also wear the same dresses). Slavery is presented here in the steps or the movement derived from hard work (slavery activity shaping the movement of the body). Slavery culture (not only as the origin of the dance movements) was presented in many forms and inspired the ensemble during its time in Brazil. The central thread to this expedition was that all of the actors, dancers and performers in Brazil could find their ancestral and therefore their artistic roots in slavery, or arising from a history of having been or being enslaved.¹¹³⁷

Salvador was also a key inspirational city for Pierre Fatumbi Verger whose photographs served directly as an impulse for Dočolomanský to begin the Afro-Brazilian project; both in informing the search for new places and movement forms to research, and in inspiring actual scenes for the performance in development. The company met people from the Pierre Verger Foundation (both origins—European and African) who knew the

¹¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹³⁷ The issue of sugarcane workers’ ‘modern slavery’—as they can’t afford tools, they borrow them from the employer getting into debts. Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

photographer and who introduced them to the story of his life: Pierre Verger was born to a rich French family in a house full servants with whom he spent most of his time. After he decided to become a photographer, he traveled extensively around the world, working also as a photo reporter during the Second World War. After the war he did not want to return to Europe. In Africa he was initiated into a trance cult and was given a new name—Fatumbi. In his search for ‘paradise’ he went to Peru, but the indigenous people proved to be a very closed community that did not accept him. He boarded a ship bound for Brazil full of people returning to Salvador. Amidst the energy of those people Verger felt that he found his ‘place on Earth.’ That story was told to Farm in the Cave by Verger’s friend and assistant Dona Cici (Nancy de Souza e Silva). A Verger-inspired character named Vaqueiro, whose life is reflected as if in an inverted mirror, is the main character of *The Theatre*. For Farm in the Cave, Verger (and his pictures) became one of the most important entry points into Brazilian culture. It could be said that the ensemble found a guide and entrance into Brazilian culture through the eyes of Verger, who was himself a stranger to that culture and its forms.

Verger photographed the phenomena of Brazilian culture in the 1970s—ethnicities, workers, street phenomena like sleeping people or performances as illustrations to articles appearing in the *A Cigarra* and *O Cruzeiro* magazines. A few notables are: *mamulengo* puppets and Brazilian puppet theatre; circus with the audience sitting on a wooden benches like birds in cotes; *Los Aztecas* with their characteristic ‘costumes,’ people transporting pianos on their heads (*carregadores de piano*); *frevó* with characteristic umbrellas and *Maracatu* characters acting as king and queen; funeral ceremonies of Blacks; carnival with men dressed as women; and canary fights. Perhaps the most important inspiration for Farm in the Cave’s *The Theatre* was not found during the expedition itself—the canary fights: from the mortal duels between male canaries attracted to one single female and fight one another to the death.¹¹³⁸

Another great inspiration for *The Theatre* performance was a night spent on *roda de samba* at the home of a 92 year-old-lady named Dona Cabocla. *Roda de samba* is circle of musicians who play and sing *bossa novas*. The texts are known by everybody as the songs are a part of the community’s oral heritage. Even if it is possible to dance in that circle, the main element is the music and common singing and expression of *saudade* feelings. The entire night was shaped by collective singing, playing and dancing and by preparing food. The scene of Dona Cabocla singing together with her parrot who was laughing and doing the second

¹¹³⁸ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

voice to her singing, together with Verger's photo showing a kiss between a boy and a parrot, was a great inspiration for the opening scene of the Farm in the Cave's performance called *Meu papagaio* (My parrot).

As previously mentioned, the ensemble was fortunate to be the only visitors at the *Candomblé* ceremony inside of one *favela* in Salvador. *Candomblé* is the name of the Brazilian religion originating from African slaves brought to Brazil. Most spectacular with *Candomblé* are the ceremonies during which some members of the community enter into trance and express the embodied *Orixá* (spirit) through dance. The ceremony in *favela* was devoted to *Caboclo*. *Caboclo* is not actually *Orixá*, because its origins are Indians. He is an *entidad* (entity), half animal half hunter, the one who inhabits both of those emanations. As he coexists easily with the *Orixás*, the ceremony and drums used for summoning *Caboclo* are the same. Despite the fact that *favela* is a very poor area, the ceremonial space was full of gifts/sacrifices—food, fruits, etc.; the ceremony begins with fireworks, all present wear white, and the group is divided into men on the right side and women on the left side of the main space which was left open and prepared for the dancers. Before entering the space, Farm in the Cave members were individually given an induction in order to be able to take part in the ceremony. They were allowed to film preparations for the ceremony, but once the ceremony commenced they were asked to switch off the camera.

The most important person in *terreiro*, who takes care of that sacred space and the particular god/spirit to which the place is devoted was *Babalorixá* (*babalorixá* is an expression for women, *iyalorixá* for man). Observing the ceremony, the actors were able to recognize that the *Orixás* entered individuals through their heads, got into the ground and 'bounced' back up, at which point the individual was embodied. The helpers of the *babalorixá* take such possessed people backstage closed for public where *Orixá* costumes are prepared. They help dress the embodied *Orixá* and give him his props and cigars (dancers smoke those cigars during the dance at the same time). The *babalorixá* walked among the possessed ones making deep 'animal' sounds from her throat and was 'hugging' them. Her arms (her arms only) were constantly shaking and by the 'hug' she gave, that shaking movement was going, like 'electricity,' through the bodies of the possessed ones. The shaking was recognized by actors as made unconsciously by nerves not by muscles, which is why it was impossible to imitate it. Helpers tie the arms of the possessed at the level of biceps. The possessed ones pull their heads down on their chests to keep the *Orixá* inside of their bodies. All those possessed who were now dressed and carrying the props were sat upon on 'thrones' (and suspended there without any movement, like 'hanging marionettes,' to recall expressions

of the actors that witnessed the ceremony) awaiting the drumming rhythm of their *Orixá*. In the moment that particular rhythm comes, they immediately start to dance, as if answering the call of the drum. They dance a particular *Orixá* dance within a community of others who are possessed by the same god.

This situation of the possessed, each participant awaiting his turn, is represented as an intention in *The Theatre* in the *Resurrection* scene at the moment an ‘audience member’ is pulled on stage. Another of Dočolomanský’s inspirations for that scene was one man’s sudden jump through four rows of benches into the circle. He was possessed by the spirit of *Caboclo* who, unlike *Orixás*, was coming through the legs. When the ceremony was over and the common eating started (the food offerings were brought back and left in the ground or pushed into the water, depending on the characteristic element for each particular *Orixá*), the actors hear sudden screams coming from the backstage room where the possessed ones were undressed from their costumes—screams, as they were said, were coming from the *Orixás* who did not want to leave.¹¹³⁹

Perhaps a parallel can be drawn between the *Candomblé* ceremony and the laboratory theatre, relating to Grotowski’s idea of theatre work as a search for ‘wholeness’ of the person. The figure of an actor possessed by the ‘character’ and the director as ‘shaman,’ who must lead the actor back to normal life and society after opening him to the ‘possession’ of being on stage. A so called ‘black legend’ of laboratory theatres is perhaps the problem of unfinished *le rite de passage*, when the actor is left in the place in between—outside of the abandoned social role and outside of the performed character. This mirrors the process with *Vaqueiro*, the character performed by Roman Horák in *The Theatre*, who is abandoned by his theatre director *Capitão*, and in the end left utterly outcast without direction or community. In this sense *The Theatre* developed by Farm in the Cave reflects the problematic aftermath, the ‘in between’ state that was an unexpected by-product of the laboratory theatre as an utopian ideal explored in the 1960s.

In the end, Farm in the Cave visited four different *terreiros* (ceremonial space of *Candomblé*). The first ceremony (opened for tourists) was for the *Orixá* named Xango (the warrior). At the *terreiro* of Augusto Omolú, an actor who worked with and assisted Farm in the Cave in the field, the ensemble’s actors were hosted by Omolú’s mother (the *babalorixá*) who educated them in the costumes of the *Orixás* (the baroque dresses into which the possessed are placed before the drum calls them into the dance ceremony). The ensemble also

¹¹³⁹ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

studied the manner in which the *babalorixá* worked with sea shells to determine which specific deified *Orixá* personas resided with the respective participants.

In Recife, Dočolomanský went with Poráková to meet *mestre* Gil Silva, a master recommended to them by Anna Valéria Vicente who also gave them materials from her research on dance *frevo*,¹¹⁴⁰ which became the last dance form explored by the ensemble in Brazil during the first expedition. *Frevo* was invented in 1912 as a ‘camouflage’ of *capoeira*, which at that time was forbidden. The steps were slowly transformed and changed (the original steps and codification of *frevo* is dated 1950). The *passistas* (the ones who dance *frevo*) were for a long time connected with gang fights and the cult of *los valentones* (gangsters who were dancing *frevo*). The steps were inspired by all kinds of Brazilian forms: *capoeira*, *maracatu*, *fiestas de caboclinhos* through to sport, crafts and even the Russian ballet. Etymologically the word *frevo* means feverish and at the very beginning it was very rough dance. A typical prop for *frevo* is the *sombrinha* (umbrella)—very practical under the Brazilian sun, changing its meaning during the dance and used as a metaphor of a knife (and substitution of that weapon which could be easily changed during the fight), but with an additional primary purpose of helping the *passista* keep his balance.

Most important to the *frevo* form is to be a part of the music, play with the rhythm, move the weight from tips of feet to heels, searching balance and unbalance, constantly passing through the tense and relaxed states of the body, and being very light like a ‘puppet on strings.’ *Frevo* is also a part of carnival movement culture, wherein the *passistas* are surrounded by other people who make a ‘wave,’ catching and imitating the *passista*’s movement, so that the crowd reflects the *passista* passion and the *passista* commands upon the crowd’s behavior.¹¹⁴¹

The same rhythm (of tension and relaxation) develops the first part of *The Theatre*—after the spectacle (*Bumba*) the rehearsal continues (*Backstage*) and after that the next spectacle. In the musical layer the spectacles are accompanied by drums and live music, the soundscape of rehearsals—on the contrary—is created from intonations and the sound of rehearsed steps. Those scenes are also divided by clear changes of lighting design: the spectacles are bright and flashy creating a ‘concert-hall’ atmosphere, the backstage is dim and ‘intimate.’ In that sense the lighting design (similar to *Waiting Room*) strengthen the musical line and helps to create a consistent atmosphere.

¹¹⁴⁰ Ana Valéria Vicente, *Entre a ponta de pé e o calacanhã: reflexões sobre como o frevo encena o povo, a nação e a dança no Recife* [Between the Heel and Tip of a Foot. Reflections on ‘Frevo’ Danced by People in Recife] (Recife: Ed. Universitária UFPE, 2009), archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹¹⁴¹ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

In *The Theatre* it is important to ‘mask’ real intentions. The idea of ‘masking’ is present in *frevo* invented to ‘mask’ the forbidden martial art; the ‘carnival’ parade could be used to practice forbidden religions (*Candomblé* in *Maracatu Nação*). Even the theatre is a form that could ‘mask’ something else, like expression of inner freedom. The performance happens on the border between submission (to play what ‘spectators’ want) and expression (to play what ‘I’ want).¹¹⁴² In 2011, Dočolomanský said the main idea of *The Theatre* is: what truly happens inside is not visible outside—the other form could be used to continue secretly one’s practice even if it is strictly forbidden.¹¹⁴³ The ‘seen’ reality is the same, but whoever is not initiated to ‘see,’ would not recognize signs of the different practice. In 2015 during a meeting with teenagers, Dočolomanský said *The Theatre* speaks in metaphoric, poetic language and does not describe reality realistically. “A man has the power to overcome slavery thanks to something in himself. Somebody would enslave you on the outside, but you still have the power that nobody could take from you”—Dočolomanský explained ensemble’s fascination by vitality of people who work ten hours a day cutting the sugarcane and still have the energy to dance the entire night.¹¹⁴⁴

Farm in the Cave was in Brazil until July 22. Though they were interested in the carnival forms, they were not able to experience it because public rehearsals had not yet begun on the streets. The actors gathered information on more rural representations of carnival which they witnessed in Recife. They were interested mainly in forms like *Maracatu Nação* (a reflection of the Portuguese court with king and queen among the other court characters) in which steps called *lundu* are an imitation of European minuet. Additional dramatic dance forms include *Negro Fujido* (Black Fugitive) and *carnaval dos travestidos*, in which men dress and behave like women. The photographer Pierre Verger documented *carnaval dos travestidos*, and these photos served as an inspiration for the ensemble. They were searching for a story or a legend represented within a carnival theme, but they were told that the last stories based on African legends were represented in the carnivals of the 19th century. In the organic logic of expedition-based ‘laboratorial’ research, more than finding what they were searching for, Farm in the Cave fortunately met instead, for the first time, the tradition of *Bumba meu boi*.

¹¹⁴² Based on my notes from rehearsals, Prague February 26, 2010.

¹¹⁴³ Interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 5, 2011.

¹¹⁴⁴ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s speech to the teenagers after *The Theatre*, Prague March 31, 2015.

Bumba meu boi (*Make Sound, My Ox*¹¹⁴⁵) is one of the most vivid forms of Brazilian folklore, which is based on the oral tradition of the group performing it. It can have from five to tens (even eighty) characters. There are four basic figures who always appear in this dance drama form: Matheus, the black slave who cares for Ox; Catarina, Matheus' pregnant wife;¹¹⁴⁶ the master, Capitão; and Ox. *Caboclos*—Indian hunters and spirits also regularly appear. Farm in the Cave wanted to reconstruct the basic story of *Bumba meu boi*. They collected information on the basic story and many of its variations from the performers who are playing it (only few of these players are actors in the traditional sense). Variations in many cases reflect the history of the specific community or player. The most important character is Ox, who interacts directly with the audience. He is a synonym of vitality, it scares the spectators, flirts and jokes with them, etc.¹¹⁴⁷

The main plot is based on the story of pregnant Catarina who longs to eat Ox's tongue. Her husband Matheus is therefore caught between two obligations—between the love for his wife and respect for his master. In some variations there are only three characters. In that case, Ox is a friend of Matheus. In the *Bumba meu boi* drama such figures as Love, Cowboys, Indians, Healers, fantastic animals and some frighteningly masked players can appear. In any case Ox is killed by Matheus and is then resurrected as it could simply not remain in a state of death. Central to the story is the necessity of the Ox's resurrection, which sometimes intimates a parallel with the figure of Jesus Christ.¹¹⁴⁸

The story itself reflects the cultures of the main ethnic groups present in Brazil—African, Native Indian (represented by the *Caboclo* figures) and European (Christian and colonialist). All characters are costumed (some of them masked), however the most inventive one is the costume of Ox. The body is built from a wooden frame in the shape of a bull and dressed in colorful fabric (very often including flower motifs). The actor playing Ox is inside of this construction moving it up side down, freely exposing himself from under that frame to the audience. The actors are accompanied by drums of African origin, rattles of Indian origin, and perform improvised dialogues. This simple story inspired Dočolomanský perhaps because it simultaneously is able to reflect social and economic problems of the performing

¹¹⁴⁵ See: the interview with André Bueno de Paula in *Appendix* in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, pp.1-5.

¹¹⁴⁶ Sometimes it is an old ex-slave who married a young woman. *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁷ Description based on the film *Bumba meu boi* from the Farm in the Cave's archive and the interview with Viliam Dočolomanský, Prague December 5, 2011.

¹¹⁴⁸ About 'donkey's mass' performed during carnival see: Wojciech Dudzik *Karnawały w kulturze* [Carnivals in Culture], Warszawa: Sic!, p.55; André Bueno de Paula mentions that already the 17th century monks supported those dramatic dances, because thanks to them they could introduce Christian religion to the Blacks. See: *Appendix* in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.2.

community itself, as it is a story based loosely on an oral tradition but which allows wide use of improvisation. Immediately following the first expedition Farm in the Cave actors tried to rehearse with a framework for *Ox*, which as a theatrical concept and prop was later rejected. In *The Theatre*, *Ox* played by Jun Wan Kim looks like the other members of theatre group, whose sole unique prop was a long red tie, representing his tongue.

Maracatu is the other typical dramatic form which is very popular in Recife and Olinda. During the first expedition, Farm in the Cave was able to gather only a little information on this form: that it's origins are strongly connected to the culture of slaves; that dancers of *Maracatu Nação* are imitating the Portuguese Court with Baroque dresses (there is one actress who carries the figure of a doll dressed as the Portuguese queen that dually represents tribal deities); and that in *Maracatu Rural* the characters represent sugarcane workers. A second expedition was planned to allow for deeper research into *Bumba meu boi* and *Maracatu*.

Next to the musical inspiration derived from the rhythms and songs, the most influential impulse for Farm in the Cave was the topic of slave culture. The idea of *roda* (in *roda de samba*, *samba de roda*, *capoeira*, *frevo* and—in specific way—in *Candomblé*) wherein the action takes place within a spectator circle without a defined front and back position of the performers.¹¹⁴⁹ This form has two main aspects. It allows the players to feel, generate and play off of the power of the community/audience, and it holds within it a strong connection to fight/conflict and aggressive behavior. This likely influenced the specific use of division that Farm in the Cave used in *The Theatre* performance. In the first scene *The Theatre* actors divide themselves into two groups—actors and audience—so that a story is taking place between the real audience and the 'false audience' performed by some of the actors. This generates situations in which the real audience is facing the 'false audience' (and their reactions) as in a mirror. On the other hand the audience is witnessing a 'fight' between the two groups of actors (players and played/'false audience').

Fight and competition, and division in the community (two fighting groups as in the *frevo* or *capoeira* forms) are elements that were added to a previous inspiration Farm in the Cave drew while in Colombia while playing football with Colombian technicians, instead of engaging in 'regular' dance or theatrical training. Another element of Brazilian culture which had a meaningful influence on the company is the use the master figure, the *mestre* (master,

¹¹⁴⁹ 'Everybody needs to take part' in *Bumba meu boi* as well, as André Bueno de Paula said. See: *Appendix* in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, op. cit., p.1

leader but also landlord). Research and experiences relating to the *mestre* eventually transformed into Capitão, one of the main figures in *The Theatre*.

Time Killing Activity

After the first Brazil expedition, Farm in the Cave primarily developed two main motifs: the puppet manipulation/qualities (expanding on the concepts of *Balagan*) and bird behavior inspired by Pierre Verger's photos with the motif of canary fights; working also on the piano carriers' technique.

The actors rehearsed the 'birds' quality' during the training based on images of canary fights. They sought photos and videos showing the canaries' behavior during or just after the fight. Kršiaková mentioned her inspiration with the recording presenting a canary that pretends dying in front of the antagonist, to fly away just after the danger is gone.¹¹⁵⁰ Parts of the training consist of specific jumps, movements of the head, turns around one's axis, attacking, etc. The training developed into work with props—long metal sticks. The sticks resembled an obstacle, a cage, but also sugarcane. The actors using sticks worked on 'flying' and the impression of lightness that was performed by specific way of jumping on the stick, gluing to it, climbing on it or turning around.¹¹⁵¹ The physical training on 'birds quality' based on jumps and provocations was connected to the voice one during which the actors experimented with intonations of canaries' sounds.¹¹⁵² Both inspirations (voice and physical quality) were used to reflect the hidden aggression within Brazilian dances. Canaries' fight and bird quality served in *The Theatre* as a metaphor of performance's cruelty where 'artists' are used as entertainment.

Verger's photograph capturing *carregadores de piano* (piano carriers) also evolved into specific training; and even if it did not create a 'motif' it gave a strong visual image additionally defining physically the actors' group. *Carregadores de piano* were originally workers that carried pianos from the port to houses of the piano's owners. Kršiaková in her thesis mentions that while working the carriers sang provocative songs about social injustice.¹¹⁵³ The Verger's photograph of the piano carriers seen by the ensemble in *O Cruzeiro* magazine inspired them to create a training in which four actors carried a heavy desk on their heads in order to feel as a 'one body.' The technique of piano carriers called for

¹¹⁵⁰ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.25.

¹¹⁵¹ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.27.

¹¹⁵² See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.35.

¹¹⁵³ Apparently their songs were recorded in Mário de Andrade's project of collecting the Brazilian's song forms only while the workers put piano on their head (otherwise they could not remember any song). See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.30.

keeping the same length of steps and the same rhythm—that is why the actors during the training experimented on turning, moving and keeping the same height. The piano carriers' posture appears in *The Theatre* few times defining visually the actors' group and served as an image of collective responsibility. In the scene called *End of the Play* the actors' group perform as if they would suddenly need to hold something heavy on their heads; however, their action in the scene is to 'watch' the woman from the 'false audience' running in circle/trying to escape the situation. The pose create a sudden tension that underlies the meanings of the scene by performing two clear opposite forces in the picture – the horizontal force of spinning (an Intruder that runs) is emphasized by the vertical one of grounding (the actor's group).

The puppet motif would appear in *The Theatre* in many layers—the strongest in the one of the last scenes called *Puppet World* where the fourth 'false audience' would behave as 'alive' puppets that enter the space of the 'stage' where there is no actor's group any more to play the performance. The 'puppet motif' was developed by observing possibilities offered by real marionettes and puppets from a puppet factory of Antonín Maloň. Inspired by one of the puppets, actors learned how to open and close their mouths by moving their jaw in a mechanical 'puppet' style that was later used in the *Puppet World* scene. Švňakmajer's *Faust* (1994), for which Maloň was working on puppets, was one of the inspirations to actors' movements. Other inspirations that developed into so-called puppet training came from the science fiction film *Strings* (2004) and strictly pop-culture movie *Team America: World Police* (2004). To achieve the effect of strings the actors worked with imagination using exercises learned from Maxim Didenko.¹¹⁵⁴

Maloň also designed two puppets for the Farm in the Cave production. One marionette for Roman Horák (Vaqueiro) and an identical puppet but with a different movement mechanism (moved by the fingers of one hand) for Zuzana Pavuková who played Catarina. Both puppets had the shape and costume of men in a black suit and hat reminiscent of *tanguero*, a dancer of Argentine tango that Farm in the Cave met in Buenos Aires.¹¹⁵⁵ Those puppets would appear in two scenes called *Dream* and *Suicide*. Both puppets—reaching only to the knees of their 'masters'—wear the black masks on their eyes as the 'false audience,' visually representing the same force of an 'inner' spectator/antagonist. In both scenes puppets lead their masters, not the opposite.

¹¹⁵⁴ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.22.

¹¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

The Theatre performance, so rich in comic (or even gaudy) elements, is perhaps the most pessimistic of Dočolomanský's performances. During one of the meetings with the audience, he said that up until *The Theatre*, the ensemble's closing scenes always left the viewer with the image of two people: togetherness (*Mystical Wedding*'s lovers in *Dark Love Sonnets*, the Emigrant and his double in *Sclavi*, the couple in *Waiting Room*). In *The Theatre* the end is *Suicide*—loneliness with a marionette that brings his 'master' to the border of abyss and jumps first, not leaving him any other solution that to follow.

The puppets' metaphor, especially in the theatre refers to one of the broadest European culture's *topos*: the concept of *theatrum mundi* and confrontation with the mirror of theatre. An actor—a comedian and fool (but also a slave in Ancient Roma) could play a beggar and king 'freely' opposing the hierarchy—to expresses 'fate' of the human condition: a marionette in God's hands. Jana Preková *The Theatre*'s set designer planned with Dočolomanský to create a stage that reminiscent of the Shakespearean Globe, where the spectators would either stand close to the stage raised up by a meter like a bar, keeping on it glasses filled with wine, or they'd sit very high up like a stadium (inspired by Verger's photography presenting the circus' spectators). *The Theatre*'s audience at the end could choose three main perspectives—between a 'king' on a throne and a 'beggar' next to the table—depending on the row spectators could watch actors' legs in the level of their eyes, to confront the actors face to face or 'watch' the play from up. The real audience faces a 'false audience' played by actors.

Another idea that was only partly executed in the production was the idea that everything would happen in front of the eyes of the audience—that actors who finished their part would go next to the stage, change costumes and observe colleagues while getting ready to play their part—the creators wanted to show the backstage, do not hide any trick, show the illusion of the theatre. At the end the actors do not change costume in front of the audience if that is not part of the play, but all the musical instruments and props are placed next to the scene; and part of the performance is called *Backstage*. Dočolomanský was searching for a kind of entertainment quality or association for his production, a less 'artistic' genre such as circus or cabaret. In the end, actors sought through improvisation a quality of cabaret¹¹⁵⁶ as it is a form that can include both the kitsch and the absurd aesthetic remembered from Brazil. This cabaret contrast was expressed in the visual memory-moments which actors recalled from the expedition: plastic garden chairs as thrones for *Orixás* in *terreiro* or sparkling

¹¹⁵⁶ Based on video material shot on December 5, 2008, archive of Farm in the Cave.

costumes combined with sport shoes. They experimented with illusion of what is seen but is also not noticed as important part of the presented reality.¹¹⁵⁷

At the time following the first expedition, the project in development was called *Time Killing Activity*—a metaphor describing the theatre. “People are asking what are you doing in your life and when you are answering that you are making theatre—they do not take it seriously saying that it is a very pleasant, time killing activity.”¹¹⁵⁸ A ‘killing activity’ also relates to very hard work or devotion. ‘Hard work’ together with ‘devotion’ raises the question of ‘slavery’ within the context of laboratory theatre. The title *Time Killing Activity/The Theatre* shows the parallel of slave-master, actor-director in which all involved (including master and director) somehow become enslaved to the larger community/audience within the context of fulfilling their roles within the play. In *The Theatre* there is a scene called *Feeding* where the theatre group (who behave like birds) are given ‘gold confetti’ (in the sense of money and also as something shining but meaningless) by one of the ‘false audience’ members. That member communicates with the real audience saying: first to the actors shaking their head like birds: *Do you like it?* and after to the real audience: *You see, they like it! You need to give them money, but only a little bit.*¹¹⁵⁹ *I don’t have any more*, she says to the ‘birds/actors’ and runs away. Being caught by the actors on the edge of the stage, she presents them to the audience with their real names: *This is Zuzana – she’s just an actress* (Zuzana Pavuková who played Catarina). *This is Wanny – he’s just an actor.* (Jun Wan Kim who plays Ox). *This is... The Theatre.*¹¹⁶⁰ At the end of this scene the actors would build from the sticks their own cage (but also conservation).¹¹⁶¹ As if Dočolomanský would play with the meaning of ‘actor.’ This however is more likely connected to the Brechtian ‘distancing effect’ than to the Brazilian influence and was already used in *Sclavi* in the scene called *In the Pub*. During the rehearsals Dočolomanský sometimes ‘animated’ actors adding ‘voice’—commenting on their actions and adding by those ‘dialogs’ some new intentions to the scenes, like frustrated texts of actors that have no money in the scenes *Feeding* or *Backstage*.¹¹⁶²

The working title *Time Killing Activity* raises an ironic association with the idea of laboratory theatre (hard work), and shines a spotlight on the concept of devotion in this form

¹¹⁵⁷ Because of the reason of creating the illusion only partly, the characters of ‘actors’ who perform *Bumba meu boi* have only one attribute that are distinguish them from the other actors wearing the same uniforms—Catarina has yellow, ‘baroque’ dress, Vaqueiro traditional hat and Ox has very long red tie symbolizing a tongue, Capitão—played by woman—has mustaches.

¹¹⁵⁸ Quotation from the interviews with actors, May-August 2010.

¹¹⁵⁹ Recently the dialog changed into: *Do you like it? You see they like it. I don’t have any more.*

¹¹⁶⁰ In the recent performances, the sentence: *This is the theatre* do not appear.

¹¹⁶¹ Based on my notes from rehearsals, Prague January 2010.

¹¹⁶² Based on my notes, Prague February 2010.

of theatre. It is due to this devotion that some laboratory theatres have been called ‘sects.’ Laboratory theatre as an idea and practice (usually connected with Grotowski’s work) which is highly experimental in that actors are led by a director beyond the borders of society and culture which are otherwise understood as the rules and ethics which keep a person and the community safe. Grotowski tenets/techniques to help in the breakdown of accepted borders included: the search for organic movement as the actor’s main goal in playing a character (theatre period); entering a space in which one can experience the world and nature as an ‘animal’ (paratheatrical experiments); connecting through the body with higher reality (methods and techniques introduced by Theatre of Sources’ project); finding one’s personal connection with world, nature and higher reality (Objective Drama period); organic expression not of the performer performing a character but expressing himself in his wholeness (Grotowski’s Art as vehicle period).

The above created conditions under which the actors as individuals and the theatre group as a whole underwent semi-religious experiences. It is possible however that these techniques were not developed enough to create a safe and sustained way of maintaining, mediating and exiting this state. In some way the utopian searching for the human ‘wholeness’ as a risky practice as entering psychically open states could induce the type of ‘wild trance’ the priests of *Candomblé* aim to avoid by inviting only the initiated to participate in the ceremony. An effect of ‘wild trance’ can be that the dancer is unable to exit the trance state fully and in part continues to stay outside of the collective rules of the culture.

Laboratory theatre removed the border between theatre and reality, in the sense that actors seek a state of being more alive/awake/whole as human beings on the stage that they are in normal life. In this sense the performance experience is like a trance ritual performed to reach higher states of awareness and to experience the divine. It could have happened that for actors, who became complete immersed in their ‘laboratorial’ process life started to be less vivid and less desired than the state they were reaching in their rehearsals, process and performance. While working on the Afro-Brazilian project *Farm in the Cave* was consciously confronted with the issues of theatre making, and those connected with laboratory theatre in particular. While preparing the performance actors found themselves exploring psychologically, emotionally, physically, and spiritually while playing external roles.¹¹⁶³ *Farm in the Cave*, in acting out *The Theatre* was mirroring itself as a laboratory theatre group.

¹¹⁶³ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

They were caught in a mirror within a mirror, a play within a play, a situation that was both beyond them and simultaneously of their own making.

The Afro-Brazilian Conference was organized in Prague on December 6-11, 2008. The ensemble was searching for a clearer line to follow in around which to base the improvisations. The first expedition was a kind of exploratory visit that consisted of information gathering but not yet focused on any particular subject. By inviting two scholars (Eva Stehlíková and Leszek Kolankiewicz) and two practitioners (Augusto Omolú and Jan Ferslev) Farm in the Cave received new inspirations which led them to the focused topics they were to look for in second expedition. Eva Stehlíková gave a lecture entitled *The Role of the Slave—Plautus and Others* about archetypes of slave characters—like cunning slaves wiser than their masters—which explored slavery culture in general, with specific focus on Ancient Rome. This engendered for Dočolomanský the theoretical context for considerations about *Cavalo Marinho*, the dramatic form introduced to him after the *Afro-Brazilian Conference* by Jan Ferslev, which would become one of the most important parts of the second expedition.¹¹⁶⁴

At the same conference Kolankiewicz spoke about *Theatrical Aspects of Afro-Brazilian Culture* which explored the phenomenon of the *Candomblé* religion via comparison with East European cultural history, particularly old, pagan forms of celebrating The Forefathers' Eve and All Souls' Day in Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus which can be useful in understanding the *Candomblé* form. One of the aforementioned practitioners Jan Ferslev gave small workshop on *bossa novas* to the members of Farm in the Cave theatre studio. Another, Augusto Omolú, was also a current member of Odin Teatret who had spent time with the ensemble during the first expedition. Omolú, together with the musician Kleber da Paixão, led an open workshop on the *Orixás* dances. They also led a percussion workshop on the technique of playing *atabaques* (a Brazilian drum of African origin used in *Candomblé* and *capoeira*) and on rhythms specific to each *Orixá*. After the conference the *atabaque* drums remained in Prague as a part of musical equipment for the future performance.

In the *Orixás* dances—each god has it's own rhythm (also hymns, songs) and sequences of movement.¹¹⁶⁵ Some of the movements are nearly illustrative. Xango (a warrior, sky father) is throwing thunderbolts. Oxumare (a rainbow spiral, god of changes, hermaphrodite) is constantly moving his spine like a snake, opening and closing arms in the shape of a cobra's hood. Oxossi (a hunter) is half horse half human. The lower part of his

¹¹⁶⁴ See: Director's diary from the second expedition, Farm in the Cave's archive.

¹¹⁶⁵ Based on my notes from December 2008 and on interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

body keeps the rhythm of a running horse while the upper part of his body is watchful, ready for hunting prey with his bow. An entire sequence in *The Theatre* is inspired by the *Orixá* Omolú—the one so ugly that his face is always covered. He is the *Orixá* which remains between life and death pointing with his fingers to the Sky and to the Earth, and pointing caution to the senses—Eyes (be careful what you see), Ears (be careful what you hear), Mouth (be careful what you say), Head (be careful what you think). He carries a basket full of flowers which he throws up to the sky. In *The Theatre* some of his movements are used in the Ox resurrection scene, bringing the Ox back to life.¹¹⁶⁶ The other gesture which appears in the performance is taken from the sequence of movements belonging to Oxum (the *Orixá* of love and beauty, a feminine figure), that of throwing glances to a hand mirror both on the right and left side of the player (this *Orixá*'s movement pattern is based on the symmetrical repetition of gestures in horizontal line). In *The Theatre* that gesture is made by the actor who plays Vaqueiro in the scene called *Bumba* when he is invited by the 'false audience' to start to play. He presents himself using steps from *Cavalo Marinho*, but makes a gesture 'borrowed' from Oxum in which he is showing himself.

During the conference three different perspectives on *Candomblé* ceremonies and trance experience were presented. One was that of Augusto Omolú, meaning the internal perspective from an initiated practitioner. Omolú described the circular movement of the possessed dancers around a central energy column which appears due to the drumming inside of the ceremonial space. The second perspective was that of Jan Ferslev, an observer of *Candomblé* who relates to the dance more as a choreography, often performed as a tourist attraction instead of as religious ritual. The third perspective was of a scholar, Leszek Kolankiewicz who began exploring the phenomenon of trance in the 1970s in the framework of his cooperation with Grotowski, with a focus on how actors embody character or energy, and the parallel between this type of theatre practice and *Candomblé* and other trance systems.

Kolankiewicz discussed the social techniques which were developed by the *terreiro* communities practicing Brazilian *Candomblé* to make the liminal experience of trance ritual as safe as it is possible. This included ways of ensuring that the spectators/guests did not fall into trance, as the priest who is responsible must be familiar with the participants. Working with the initiated helps to avoid the aforementioned 'wild trance,' into which an uninitiated person can fall, and from which it can be difficult to revive or retrieve them. Kolankiewicz

¹¹⁶⁶ The choreography in the performance—due to the faster tempo—lost those symbolical gestures of particular *Orixá*, but, they are still kept for training. Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague March 31, 2015.

explained the order of the ceremony, and the difference between religious ritual *Candomblé* and theatrically performed *Candomblé* in which the performance of the *Orixás* dances is provided for the audience's visual entertainment. He described *Candomblé* trance, the religious ritual of *Orixás*, as 'pure beauty' which is born from the inner need to connect to the divine. The difference between ritual and theatre according to Kolankiewicz lies in inner emotional relationship of the performer to the embodied entity. He notes the difference between the possessed *Candomblé* dancer who is uniting with the divine by dancing a particular *Orixá* god for the purpose of spiritual awakening of the community, and that of an actor who is taking on the role of a character for the purpose of playing/relating that character to an audience as a difference in the quality of energetic relationship between the dancer/actor, and the 'embodied' god/character. Finally Kolankiewicz notes the uniqueness of the Brazilian *Candomblé* community who interact solely to connect to the divinities in the *Orixás* dances, which stands in contrast other known trance societies in which the community 'catches' their gods in order to put tasks and queries to them.

The event called *Afro-Brazilian Conference* was not a conference in the typical understanding of the term. The conference consisted of workshops with evening discussions, akin to the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA) approach, in which scholars and actors practice particular theatrical techniques together, sharing the experience of both perspectives—the physical and intellectual. *Afro-Brazilian Conference* organized by Farm in the Cave theatre studio was likewise more devoted to physical exploration (understanding through body experience) than it was to verbalizing the technique of the *Orixás* dances. The final presentation (*Afro-Brazilian Work Demonstration*) consisted of a presentation of parts of the *Candomblé* workshop by workshop participants, excerpts of Kolankiewicz's lecture with a photographic slide show, *bossa novas* sang by Jan Ferslev, samba dancing (a spontaneous performance made by Brazilian friend who accompanied Ferslev), and part of Augusto Omolú's performance entitled *Orô de Otelo* (A Dance Ceremony for Othello) combining *Candomblé*, Verdi's opera and Shakespeare. For the first time, during this working demonstration, Farm in the Cave presented two elements being developed for the new project which would become *The Theatre: frevo* dance and the song *Meu papagaio*.¹¹⁶⁷

A key prop, an office chair on wheels used in *The Theatre*, also originated at the conference. That absurdist element (which dovetails with Brazilian reality or sense of

¹¹⁶⁷ Before the premiere of *The Theatre* Farm in the Cave presented parts from the performance three more times (February 27, 2009, May 7, 2009 and May 15, 2009) where those two fragments were presented together with song of Pancararu tribe added after the second expedition.

aesthetic) was a Dočolomanský-inspired idea to have translators into Czech and English moving on such office chairs to make complicated simultaneous translation faster. In the end the chair was a key rehearsal tool used in developing many scenes (from the opening scene called *Meu papagaio* and some of the interactions between Capitão and Vaqueiro) but was not used in the final presentation of those scenes. The chair as prop finally appears in one of the last scenes of *The Theatre* called *Normalization*, when Vaqueiro is not able to walk or dance, and he is placed by the ‘puppet audience’ on that (office) wheel chair.

Expedition II¹¹⁶⁸

After the conference, Jan Ferslev left behind a documentary about *Cavalo Marinho*.¹¹⁶⁹ Interested in it, Farm in the Cave decided to make that dramatic form the main topic of their second ‘scenic research.’ They went to Brazil at Christmas time—the typical time for performing *Cavalo Marinho*. From December 18, 2008 to of January 10, 2009 Viliam Dočolomanský, Anna Kršiaková, Zuzana Pavuková and Roman Horák visited Olinda, Recife, Cidade Tabajara, Nazaré de Mata Norte, Condado, Arcoverde and Tacaratu, the village of Pancararu tribe. From January 11-22 the company performed, led workshops and gave lectures in Campinas, Belo Horizonte, Salvador and Brazilie. The goal for that expedition was to get to know more about *Bumba meu boi* and *Cavalo Marinho* by learning the steps, collecting rhythms, songs, musical instruments and props, and to return with an idea of the main plot and the structure. They also wanted to find an Indian tribe whom Mário de Andrade recorded in 1938 singing a *toada*—a song or a musical form between speaking and singing. The *toada*, called *Chamada de Aricury* (Calling from Aricura), was sung as a part of a longer ritual (*Praia / The Prayer*) in place called *Brejo dos Padres* (Swamp of the Fathers) in Tacaratu, Pernambuco. The song was chosen by Hana Varadinová¹¹⁷⁰ among 279 other recordings of traditional music from north and northeast Brazil entitled *Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas* (Mission for Folklore Research) which also included songs from forms such as *Bumba meu boi*, *samba de coco* or *Candomblé* which were already known to Farm in the Cave. The collection consisting of six CDs was given to the company by Augusto Omolú during their first expedition.¹¹⁷¹

¹¹⁶⁸ Descriptions of the dramatic forms are mostly based on dissertation of Anna Kršiaková and discussed with Juliana Macedo Carneiro in the interview on February 20, 2012.

¹¹⁶⁹ Film directed by Luiz Lourenzo and produced by University of Pernambuco, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹¹⁷⁰ Based on material from video archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹¹⁷¹ Sound and iconographic collection *Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas 1938* edited by Serviço Social do Comércio—SESC-SP e Prefeitura Municipal de São Paulo in August 2006 is the only complete work of Mário de Andrade after his research in 1938.

On site, the research on *Cavalo Marinho* was extremely successful as the company was fortunate to meet Alício Amaral and Juliana Prado who have dedicated their work to the practice and preservation of the old forms of Brazilian dramatic dances. As founders of the Mundu Rodá theatre, Amaral and Prado collect variations of *Cavalo Marinho*, *Marakatu Rural*, *Maracatu Nação*, *batuque* and *frevo*. For fifteen years they have managed to learn the steps, rhythms, stories, songs as well as the production of costumes, masks and props of these various forms. They have made alliances with the families performing and creating the accompanying props and costumes to each of these ritual forms. Thanks to the Brazilian manager of Odin Teatret, Patricia Braga Alves, the company came into contact with Amaral and Prado who then accompanied the ensemble in their research, and introduced them to the families who are the keepers of these traditions. Two other Brazilians accompanied Farm in the Cave during their second expedition—Ludmilla Reis Rolim who assisted with translation and Luiz Augusto Martins who came to Prague afterwards and was present during the creation of the performance. Martins helped contextualize the current history of Brazil (transformation from colonial monarchy to the Empire of Brazil, and from dictatorship to democracy) and added symbolic elements such as Brazilian anthems and well known political slogans (like *Ame ou deixe* / Love or Leave which appears in the scene called *Revolution*).¹¹⁷²

After the second expedition, from March 5-7, 2009, Amaral and Prado were also guests of Farm in the Cave in Prague. They led an open workshop on *Cavalo Marinho*, and performed extracts of other pieces based on various dance forms. They also presented a fragment of their own performance *Donzela Guerreira* (Warrior Maiden) based partly on the traditional story of a girl who dresses like a man to be able to fight in the war and partly on the novel of João Guimarães Rosa *Grande Sertão: Veredas* (The Devil Play in the Backlands).¹¹⁷³ The working demonstration of Mundu Rodá included on-stage costume changes with the actors and actresses dressing and undressing themselves in front of the public. This strengthened Dočolomanský's idea who was interested in cultivating this type of 'street theatre' where the backstage and cloakroom are not hidden.

Changing of costume remained in artistic form as a symbolical change of identity (developing one of the main motifs of Dočolomanský's creations), when a member of the 'false audience' is pulled onto the stage in a dance inspired by *Candomblé*. The scene *I Belong to You* starts with stripping this 'audience' woman and dressing her up with a costume identical to those worn by the rest of the actors' group. This costume change—developing one

¹¹⁷² However, the slogan was not kept in the recent version of the performance.

¹¹⁷³ The novel was written in 1956, translated into English in 1963.

of the main motifs of Farm in the Cave's creations—emphasizes in artistic form a symbolic change in identity. The scene begins with steps called *mergulhão* (immersion) that occurs at the outset within the *Cavalo Marinho* form, when new figures enter the circle (the *roda*). In taking these steps, the players are warming up while simultaneously summoning the audience.¹¹⁷⁴ The players invite one another to present themselves using footwork called *trupés*. They personalize these to express their respective characters.

Juliana Macedo Carneiro, a Brazilian performer who wrote her thesis about Farm in the Cave's *The Theatre*, emphasizes that even if *The Theatre*'s choreography is based on *Cavalo Marinho*, it is recreated and transformed; but it retains the dramaturgical essence. As Carneiro wrote, *mergulhão* is a most popular and playful moment in the game; it is its 'charismatic start.'¹¹⁷⁵ The actors are in a circle (a *roda*) and invite partners from the opposite side to come in—and to leave the center in two rhythmical movements. The rhythm is played by the musicians who sit on the bench. As Carneiro said, for *mergulhão* it is important to keep three elements: the grounding; the direction of the body and arms that need to touch the partners' arms (as an invitation); and eye contact while joining the group. The imaginary circle (*roda*) is maintained in *The Theatre* scene by peripheral relations; the touch of the arms is transformed into hugging. The ensemble performs the acceptance of the stranger, rendering both belonging and not-belonging. Although, as Carneiro wrote, the feeling is more violent than in the original *mergulhão*.¹¹⁷⁶

The shift lies in the intentions. In the scene *I Belong to You* Dočolomanský asked actors to keep similar intention as that performed by DV8 Physical Theatre—when till the very end you could not read what the person would do, if the reaction would be violent or tender (both would however mean the 'initiation' to the group).¹¹⁷⁷ Kršiaková described the *mergulhão* step as the most important is using provocation as intention.¹¹⁷⁸ Quoting of the step by Farm in the Cave is not illustrative, but it carries contradictory meaning. The rhythm—contrary to the original *mergulhão*—is intensified and leads to a kind of climax. The scene is about acceptance but it is performed with aggression and provocation; the hugs are not soft and tender. The initiation of the new member had been performed already by stripping. Changing shirts between the actors while performing *mergulhão* offers a

¹¹⁷⁴ Interview with Juliana Macedo Carneiro, February 20, 2012.

¹¹⁷⁵ Juliana Macedo Carneiro, *Corporalidade e musicalidade na poética do estrangeiro do Farm in the Cave: inspirações brasileiras no espetáculo The Theatre* [Physicality and Musicality in the Poetics of Foreign of Farm in the Cave: Brazilian Inspirations in the Performance *The Theatre*], MA thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte 2013, p.72.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷⁷ Based on my notes, Prague February 2010.

¹¹⁷⁸ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.28.

dramaturgical ‘explanation’ for the straight arms, but it also introduces the metaphor of ‘sharing’ fate. Steps that originally served as a warm-up and the start of the playful game remain as a new beginning for the character who joins the troupe of comedians, but how could anyone join ‘slaves’?—perhaps only by violation of his rights as the ‘family’ of actors (as ‘slaves’) is submissive towards the audience’s desires.

Cavalo Marinho (Sea Horse) is a traditional Brazilian dramatic dance which is a game (*brincadeira* or *sambada*) performed by men¹¹⁷⁹ (*brincantes* or *sambadores*) from sunset to sunrise during the Christmas season. The dance lasts eight to nine hours and is in celebration of Three Kings Day.¹¹⁸⁰ The dance drama can have up to more than ninety characters of all kinds including policemen, wanderers, Black ex-slaves, clowns and *Caboclos* that also appear in other dance forms including *Cavalo Marinho*, *Bumba meu boi* or *Maracatu*. *Caboclo* is a character that represents in the play the person of ‘mixed’ ancestors. He stands for connection with the land, and it’s fauna and flora, as he is connected to the native Indian inhabitants of Brazil. According what actors heard during the expedition, Blacks were fascinated by the natives as they could withstand slavery and therefore could not be enslaved.¹¹⁸¹ They died in captivity or escaped to fight in the jungle, as for the indigenous to Brazil death and battle were preferable and enslavement not an option. *Caboclo* is both hunter and animal (both persecutor and victim, master and slave), and is understood in Brazilian dramatic dances as both a devil and a protector. He is an ambivalent figure who both enslaves and liberates.¹¹⁸²

There are many *Cavalo Marinhos*. Generally this dramatic dance is performed directly on the street by a group of twenty or more people, of whom five are musicians sitting on a bench (*banco*). Spectators stand in a circle around the players and contain performance space. In the group Estrela de Ouro de Condado in Pernambuco—that become familiar to Farm in the Cave—there are four primary (fixed) characters within *Cavalo Marinho*. *Capitão Marinho*, represents the owner of the cane plantation’s mill. He wants to organize a big celebration for Three Kings Day, so he hires characters whom he wants to take part in it. These characters he buys from a man named Ambrosio. The first scene of the *Cavalo Marinho* is a dialogue between Capitão and Ambrosio, in which the former presents each character.

¹¹⁷⁹ Nowadays by men and women. Interview with Juliana Macedo Carneiro, February 20, 2012.

¹¹⁸⁰ Description of *Cavalo Marinho* is based on my notes from March 5, 2009, Anna Kršiaková’s dissertation and on interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹¹⁸¹ Based on interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010; André Bueno de Paula in *Appendix* is saying that only Indians could in *Bumba meu boi* enter into the forest; he said that the confrontation in *Bumba* is not between Whites and Blacks, but Indians and Blacks. See: *Appendix* in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.3

¹¹⁸² Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

This first scene of *Cavalo Marinho* was presented by Mundu Rodá theatre in Prague during their work demonstration. The presentation consisted of the characters' dances and patterns of movement which represented the typical behavior and actions of each. Many of these steps were later incorporated by Farm in the Cave actors in *The Theatre* scenes called *Bumba* in which actors/slaves are performing a play (a variation of *Bumba meu boi*) in front of the 'false audience.' In the traditional play, *Capitão Marinho* is about to depart for a long journey. After he completes the transaction with Ambrosio he leaves the organization of the celebration to two comic figures, two clowns named Matheus and Sebastião. Matheus and Sebastião are the only figures who remain in the performance space for the duration of the play. They are always hiding themselves and trying to escape from the task they have been given. The faces of the actors are painted with black coal, which Dočolomanský connected to the use of black-face in *Negro Fujido* (Black Fugitive), slave characters in the Ancient-Roman comedies of Plautus.¹¹⁸³

I go far, far away!—these are the first words uttered at the outset of *The Theatre*. It is Anna Kršiaková who says them in the role of Capitão. The second scene, when Capitão rehearses Actor's part with Vaqueiro, is incomprehensible to the spectators till the moment the 'false audience' enters the podium and by loud stamping would summon the rest of the actors up from a hole in the stage. Only then the situation is understood. Capitão turns towards the real audience and, in 'Korean English,' introduces the performance. After his speech the leader of the 'false audience,' Man in Uniform, calls out: *Vaqueiro!* who introduces himself to the audience using special steps and gestures characteristic for his role. After Ox jumps in—shaping hands in the gesture of horns. Actions in *The Theatre* develop in the discourse of *Cavalo Marinho*. Later, Man in Uniform calls: Capitão! who enters into the middle speaking: *Sou Capitão, obrigado, sou Capitão. And this is my favorite ox.* Capitão provokes the 'false audience' with a phrase: *This is an ox, not a horse, you stupid!* addressed towards them and not towards Vaqueiro's character. The offended 'false audience' freezes with tension. The strong rhythm of drums accompanies the scene—it is aggressive, the same as gestures of the 'false audience' and tension of comedians' actions.

The real audience comes to understand in the meantime that what they had seen before was a rehearsal, because Capitão and Vaqueiro repeat the same steps and movements they exercised in the previous scene when 'nobody watched them.' Capitão says: *I'll give you my favorite ox, because you are the most responsible to take care of him. I'll go far, far away.*

¹¹⁸³ Presented by Eva Stehliková at Farm in the Cave's Afro-Brazilian Conference, Prague December 6-11, 2008.

The ‘actors’ going aggressively towards the real audience take off their hats as if asking for money after the performance. In this moment the Man in Uniform shoots them in the back (as if rescuing the real audience from the attack of ‘actors’). The scene is finished. ‘Actors’ are dead lying on the stage. The ‘false audience,’ suddenly relaxed, leaves.

The dramatic progression of traditional *Cavalo Marinho* is the following—each character is announced by the musicians who play songs about him before he enters the performance space. The dilemma arises when policemen come to arrest Matheus and Sebastião. The play climaxes with the return of end of a play is when Capitão Marinho (on horseback) accompanied by other characters called Galanteria (wearing typical hats with colorful ribbons). Musicians then sing songs about Jesus Christ and the celebration, which is to last the entire night begins. The play ends with the resurrection of Ox killed by Matheus and Sebastião. Healers and doctors bring Ox back to life, so in the end the scene shifts to communal happiness and the sun rises. It is possible to interpret the metaphoric relating of Jesus Christ with Ox as parallel to the Christian carnival employed in Europe by the Jesuits who were created an ‘reversed order’ in which it was possible to replace the figure of Christ with an animal.

In his diary from the expedition Dočolomanský writes about carnival and non-carnival forms he has seen in Brazil and concludes that carnival forms are less interesting as they are prepared as a choreography for entertainment purposes. Non-carnival forms such as *Cavalo Marinho* offer more possibilities as they are forms based on interactions. Those forms bring a carnival element in the sense of ‘stopped time’ and ‘reversed order’ which is a Bakhtin inspiration. During the ‘carnival time’ one can solve problems he has with the other member of the community by fighting with him and even killing him, as social taboos are abandoned. Thinking about carnival brought Dočolomanský to a kind of variation on the Turner-Schechner model of performance as a social drama, which shows the deeply hidden connection between theatre motifs and conflicts in reality. Dočolomanský asks if the theatre is a carnival. It was this thought that triggered his inspiration to structure the plot of Afro-Brazilian performance around the theatre group themselves as the main characters of the performance. “When does a carnival happen inside of the theatre, where an actor can spit on the director (understood as a master or father figure)? If so, does carnival in the theatre mean catastrophe? Does killing the director, the chief of the company bring the end not only to the play but to the values of the company/community?”¹¹⁸⁴ By asking these questions

¹¹⁸⁴ Director’s diary from the expedition, archive of Farm in the Cave (translation mine).

Dočolomanský is already exploring the concept of *theatrum mundi*. If the theatre is a reflection of the society it should have its carnival. On the other hand, theatre is also understood here as place in which the possibility of manifesting utopia and preserving utopian values, it means a container for the ‘paradise’ of the humanity, despite its artificiality and cheap tricks of illusion. By asking these questions Dočolomanský also questions his role as a director in laboratory theatre.

Cavalo Marinho originates in *Bumba meu boi*. The difference is that many times *Bumba meu boi* is not played in one place but it is repeatedly played in front of each house in the village, recalling Eastern European processions of the Three Kings with Devil and Angel figures. *Bumba meu boi* also is more directly derived from slavery culture. It reflects the reality of slaves working on cane plantations in that the performers keep the same body as one adopts while cutting sugarcane.¹¹⁸⁵ The body is slightly bent, the upper part is relaxed, the hands are freely suspended and do not move if the character is not specifically executing an extra action, and the legs make repeated variations of limited-range steps. In some steps the body leans from the right to the left like waving cane. Each step has a name such as ‘goat,’ ‘cutting the cane,’ ‘climbing the mountain,’ etc.¹¹⁸⁶

As Kršiaková wrote in her thesis, *Cavalo Marinho* was the main movement inspiration for the plot of *The Theatre*.¹¹⁸⁷ The energy of *Cavalo Marinho* is earthy, but light.¹¹⁸⁸ In Cidade Tabajara, in the space called *Casa da Rabeca* that belonged to Salustiano, a great *Cavalo Marinho* master, the ensemble was able to participate in the festival of *Cavalo Marinho* where many groups (consisting mainly of members of the same family) enacting the play. In this large open space, spectators watch different groups performing the same play.

During the festival Farm in the Cave came in contact with *Estrella de Ouro* a performing group led by Biu Alexandre.¹¹⁸⁹ In addition they had the possibility to work with his son Aginaldo, Aginaldo’s nephew Fabio and Martello who plays the role of Matheus. In Recife Farm in the Cave attended a workshop led by Fabio. While learning *Cavalo Marinho* steps they tried to integrate the characteristic posture of cutting cane into the body. The other task for the Farm in the Cave actors was the practicing of eye contact inside the *roda*. In the end the ensemble was inspired to use that technique directly watching and using eye contact

¹¹⁸⁵ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.28.

¹¹⁸⁶ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.70.

¹¹⁸⁷ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.27.

¹¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸⁹ They knew them before from the video left behind by Jan Ferslev, as Anna Kršiaková mentions. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.74.

communication with the real audience in *The Theatre*¹¹⁹⁰ through direct staring and using steps to address the audience, they sent the energy of a movement into a particular spectator, which was very often taken by the audience as an aggressive behavior.¹¹⁹¹ Such behavior as provocation is well known to the audiences of the experimental theatre. In the case of *The Theatre* actors are using direct eye contact which is akin to that used in martial arts. An ‘offensive’ act (in the form of a step, sound, laughter) toward the audience might be register as an attack, as the viewer is unable to react/self-defend in the theatre context. In addition, in the circle/*roda* form viewers surround the actors and are therefore exposed not only to the actions of the theatre group actors but also to those of the ‘false audience’ who are directly engaging with the viewers, thereby multiplying the effect. Kršiaková writes that *roda* was one of the main shapes actors were working in *The Theatre* that evokes for her the symbolic Indian principles of the whirl, tornado, turning around, walking or dancing in circle, etc.¹¹⁹² It recalls also one of the main motif of Dočolomanský’s creations. The ensemble recognized *roda*’s principle not only in *capoeira* and *Candomblé* but also in *lundu* (a dance inspired by European minuet) which appears in *Maracatu*.

After the workshop with Fabio the company traveled to Condado (as the family of *Estrella de Ouro* is originally from there) to spent five days learning from Aginaldo the steps and rhythms of the characters as well as how to construct the masks and costumes. In Condado they also purchased from Martello one of the most important props of *The Theatre* performance, Vaqueiro’s oversized hat.¹¹⁹³ Many gestures inspired by these actors appeared in *The Theatre*, including some gestures of Martello later copied by Kršiaková from video recordings. She also kept his way of walking. “I did not copy the form of specific steps or gestures only, but I wanted to add to my character this huge commitment and unstinting energy that I always feel when I recall this hot night in Recife and all those completely wet, but happy performers of *Cavalo Marinho*.”¹¹⁹⁴ Some obscene gestures which are part of both of the clowns’ characteristic movements were copied and transformed (by adding intonations)

¹¹⁹⁰Anna Kršiaková wrote that the actors realized that previously they were not accustomed to watching one another during the partner training. Inspired, they ‘opened’ their eyes and became more ‘sensitive’ toward people, surrounding, etc. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, pp.69-70.

¹¹⁹¹Reaction of spectators after the premiere, based on my notes, Prague February 2010 and interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹¹⁹²Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.73.

¹¹⁹³Anna Kršiaková writes about problems Roman Horák had with that prop which was extremely visible boasting silver and pink ribbons, and extremely audible. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.82.

¹¹⁹⁴Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, pp.73-74 (translation mine).

by Zuzana Pavuková and incorporated into the role of a woman from the ‘false audience’ who is reacting to Vaqueiro’s appearance in the scene called *Play for Us*.

Reflecting on the play, Dočolomanský writes about the etymological meaning of the Brazilian word *brincadeira*, which means to act and to play, in the sense of playing with toys. This type of playing is not the playing that the actors do for the audience, but that which they do for and among themselves.¹¹⁹⁵ He saw in *Cavalo Marinho* the energy the actors generate when playing the performance for themselves, living the story from inside real-time, not as characters playing for an audience. Herein came an idea toward a scenic solution for the complication that theatre group needs to perform for a ‘false audience,’ wherein the real audience (as the ones who are closing the circle/*roda*) can see all the details of the action. It also explains the dramaturgical line of the scenes which is a type of revolving mirror. *The Theatre* has following actor/audience components: The Theatre Group—actors playing the theatre group; The Actors—actors playing the ‘false audience;’ The Spectators—the audience as voyeurs, watching the theatre group play for the ‘false audience;’ The Audience—the audience as audience, watching the ‘false audience’ who play for them, mirroring the role of being an audience; The Public Players—the audience in their role of watching both the theatre group, the ‘false audience,’ having the full-access view of the interactions (the performance overall), which in turns converts them into active players.

The structure of the inner story is a play within a play wherein the theatre group performs for the ‘false audience’ and rehearses in front of the real Audience. Viewers are Spectators, out-of-play voyeurs for Actors who are playing to the ‘false audience’ comprised of other actors. Viewers are Audience for the ‘false audience’ who are directly performing to them as Audience. Viewers are therefore left in a stretched and shifting reality, becoming Public Players when inhabiting both voyeur (Spectator) and Audience roles for all performers, which in turn makes them Public Players—the audience as complicit performers themselves.

In *The Theatre* the boundary between player and observer breaks down in multiple ways as roles and types of interaction constantly change. The roles of actor (as in implementing an action) and receiver (who is an intended recipient of that action) shift in an interplay that increases in complexity. Finally, the viewer as Spectator voyeuristically watches the Theatre Group actors preparing themselves to perform, with some of these same actors later crossing over into the ‘false audience’ who then watch the performance they had been previously playing. At this point, the viewer becomes Audience, in direct engagement

¹¹⁹⁵ See: Director’s diary from the expedition, archive of Farm in the Cave.

with the ‘false audience’ who are performing not for other actors but for the public. The ‘false audience’ acts as a mirror of the Audience who at this point become Public Players ‘watching’ or conscious of four performances at once—that of the theatre group, that of the ‘false audience,’ that of all players in both of the groups (the performance overall) and that of their role as Public Players to the actors inside the circle.

In his notes Dočolomanský also points out that in *Cavalo Marinho* specific role possession does not exist as some of the performers play the parts of many characters. Two actors may also play the same role (due to the duration of a play and tiredness of older actors). This is incorporated into the structure of *The Theatre* as some actors play both a spectator from the ‘false audience’ and a member of a theatre group. This aspect expanded within the context of *The Theatre* as due to health problems and other life circumstances, some of the Farm in the Cave actors were not able to play their roles, or were only able to do so in part after opening night. The open structure of *The Theatre* influenced by Brazilian dramatic forms allowed Dočolomanský to make changes in roles (adding roles for new members of the company or reducing roles when everyone was not able to participate) and manage to keep the same dynamic of the play.¹¹⁹⁶

The origin of *Cavalo Marinho* comes directly from the times of slavery and is connected with the story of one owner of a mill who asked his slaves to invent a play to entertain his wife. As Dočolomanský writes in his notes from the expedition: “Because of it’s origin in slavery, many of current Brazilians treat *Cavalo Marinho* as something not serious, not well-done, mild.”¹¹⁹⁷ André Bueno de Paula, author of a book about this particular example of *Bumba meu boi*,¹¹⁹⁸ explained to Farm in the Cave the name *Cavalo Marinho*¹¹⁹⁹ by two possible connections: Marinho, a very typical surname in Brazil is the name of Capitão, who is coming back to his home and his planned celebration by horse. The other explanation is that horses were brought to Brazil by Europeans. As they arrived by sea on ships, the Indians called them ‘sea horses.’ There is also a comic figure who appears in *Cavalo Marinho* (perhaps a kind of metaphor of a master, Capitão) who wears a horse mask and who wants to eat everyone (there is a sequence of questions on what and who he will eat

¹¹⁹⁶ After its premiere, *The Theatre* was already played in different cast and role divisions. Some roles divided into three people, parts of the role were taken by the other ‘character.’ On smaller scale it happened already with *Sclavi* (additional female part) and *Waiting Room* (one ‘role’ was for a period played by two actors Nast Marrero Gacia and Roman Horák).

¹¹⁹⁷ Director’s diary from the expedition, archive of Farm in the Cave (translation mine). Anna Kršiaková writes that the father of Fabio prohibited him from participating in *Cavalo Marinho*, because he was treating it as a play for slaves and workers from cane plantations. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.69.

¹¹⁹⁸ *Bumba-boi Maranhense em São Paulo* [Bumba-boi Maranhense in São Paulo] published in 2001.

¹¹⁹⁹ Notes from the expedition by Kršiaková, archive of Farm in the Cave.

and he is shouting only one word: *todo* / everything). As previously mentioned, *Cavalo Marinho* as a play is mainly performed by one family, wherein most of the performers learned the steps directly by watching and imitating other family members. When ready the younger actors take on their roles, though currently some of the members of these family theatre groups are over seventy years old which may signify a lack of interest among the younger generations to follow in the footsteps of their elders. This organic induction of new actors along genetic lines (and age dependent) likely explains why there is no codification of steps or specific learning technique applied. Each performer (as in oral culture) is both preserving the tradition and expanding it by adding new personalized elements, which in turn is passed on to the next generation as the 'traditional' form. Actors adapt the 'form' to their own physical capacities, temperament, and personality.

Performers of *Cavalo Marinho* also perform *Maracatu Rural*, another dramatic dance connected with the celebration of Christmas. Steps, rhythms and meanings of *Maracatu* are also integrated into the choreography of *The Theatre*. *Maracatu* according to explanations provided by practitioners in Brazil, is a name given by slave masters to the combined dancing and singing form employed by their black slaves. The adjective *Rural* was added in 1955 by the carnival federation in order to divide that form from the other forms inspired by forms stemming from indigenous Indian culture. The main characters of *Maracatu Rural* are *Caboclos* (Indians). The main structure of this dramatic dance form is the meeting of two groups of *Maracatu* on the street.¹²⁰⁰ *Caboclos* are dressed in rich costumes which the performers spend all year preparing, and which is very demanding on their limited finances. Usually a new costume is made each year. If a player is too poor to make a new costume and must use the same again, he may not use the same costume longer than three years.

The two groups of *Caboclos* meet and fight. Nowadays the main singer/leader of each group express the problems of society, speak about their traditions, or insult the opposing group with whom they are matched for the *Maracatu Rural*. The songs (*toadas*) are now the main weapon in what has become a duel of words and dance, replacing the knife fights of the past (in which weapons were hidden in the *Caboclos*' wide hats. In *The Theatre* a knife is not hidden in Vaqueiro's hat. He is the character playing the figure of Matheus from *Bumba meu boi* but expressing himself through steps of the *Cavalo Marinho*. It is Catarina that takes knife into her mouth while asking Vaqueiro to bring her the Ox's tongue (a scene with openly

¹²⁰⁰ Description based on material gathered by Kršiaková during the expedition, archive of Farm in the Cave, also see: "Maracatu Rural (baki soltu)" (pp.78-79) and "Cabloclovia" [Caboclos] (pp.79-81) in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*

sexual connotations, ‘vagina with teeth’ as Dočolomanský said¹²⁰¹) and it is the same knife that Vaqueiro eventually kills Ox. With similar knife Capitão would cut out his own tongue just after the Intruder would refuse to kill Ox in the scene called *Revolution*. The knife in this scene is passed between three characters: Vaqueiro, Intruder and Capitão mouth to mouth, by kissing.¹²⁰² Roman Horák who plays Vaqueiro explained the knife is a symbol of initiation (to enter the actors’ group or not) and the decision made by Intruder not to do it, but to pull Vaqueiro out of his group, on the side of the ‘false audience.’¹²⁰³ As Vaqueiro was the only one who played his role in this spectacle (Capitão took a role of Ox and was killed; ‘Catarina’/Intruder took a role of Capitão to rule Vaqueiro), after the *Revolution* he was left in the state in between, not able to find a connection to both of the groups (actors and ‘false audience’)...

Caboclos de lança (steel) that perform *Maracatu Rural* paint their faces red (to imitate Indians) and wear a specific type of bag to which are affixed five large bells.¹²⁰⁴ They must learn to step in the same rhythm as one another in order to create music (not noise). For the whole four days of carnival they carry a white carnation (*cravo*) in their mouth, which is a symbol for funeral celebrations. They also wear black sun glasses which was explained to Farm in the Cave as a necessity born of the need to hide the performers’ red eyes, as many consume strong alcohol mixed with gunpowder to be able to perform.¹²⁰⁵ This explanation is based on notes made by members of the company during the expedition, but the Farm in the Cave actors also noted that performers of these dance drama forms tended not to know the history of the dance, so they’d often invent an answer so as to rid themselves of foreigners’ desired for logic, strict interpretations, or the search for one overarching meaning.¹²⁰⁶ On the other hand it is known that during the carnival the players, taking their role seriously, are prohibited to use alcohol and they abstain from sex.¹²⁰⁷ In *The Theatre*, the ‘false audience’ has white carnations in their mouth when they appear in the end of the *Wedding* scene. In the opening of the *Puppet World* scene, Vaqueiro and Intruder ‘consummate’ their marriage with a loud kiss (well hearable thanks to microphone), and the ‘false audience’ reacts (as

¹²⁰¹ Based on my notes from rehearsals, Prague undated.

¹²⁰² Dočolomanský in his diary from the expedition is writing that according to André Bueno de Paula, for Brazilians everything muted is dead, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹²⁰³ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s speech to the teenagers after *The Theatre*, Prague March 31, 2015.

¹²⁰⁴ Other types of Caboclos (Caboclos de pena /feather/) use feather huts and wear no bells. Interview with Juliana Macedo Carneiro, February 20, 2012.

¹²⁰⁵ Also see: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.80.

¹²⁰⁶ Based on Kršiaková thesis, director’s diary and interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹²⁰⁷ Interview with Juliana Macedo Carneiro, February 20, 2012.

commentary on the kiss, and possibly on the audience/actor or slave/master union) by spitting out the white the flowers in unison.

The first part of *The Theatre* the real audience witnesses a kind of ‘romance’ between Capitão and Vaqueiro who is submissive but also resists. The second rehearsal where Capitão and Vaqueiro train ‘alone’ is interrupted by the loud clapping of Intruder who stayed after the ‘false audience’ left. She tries to join the company showing how she knows their roles, but at the end is not accepted by the ‘actors’ and comes back in the ‘dark of night’ after *Dream* scene. She wakes up Vaqueiro who starts to present her his role (*Sou grande Vaqueiro* / I am a great Vaqueiro). Very soon Vaqueiro run as a horse around her and later steals her the ‘false audience’s’ mask. In this moment the ‘false audience’ appear together with the ‘actors’—they laugh down the couple (Intruder and Vaqueiro). Just like in *Wedding* scene in *Sclavi*, the community ‘knows’ it is not a good match.

All those who perform *Maracatu* fast and abstain from sex¹²⁰⁸ already for the eight days before the performance. When the groups arrive at the place of the *sambada* (the meeting, the play), the leaders of each group (who will be the primary combatants via improvised song and dance) make the sign of the cross as a hand gesture over the place where the *Maracatu* would take place. Making the sign of the cross and the fasting and abstaining from sex could beg a parallel with Christianity, but these are both likely more dated ritualistic gestures performed in preparation of Indian ceremonies.¹²⁰⁹ Farm in the Cave witnessed both of these behaviors as a part of Indian ritual during their visit to the Pankararu tribe at the end of their expedition.

Maracatu Nação was the last form Farm in the Cave met which served as a great inspiration to the ensemble. *Maracatu Nação* is a kind of *Maracatu* which in contrast to the Indian inspired *Maracatu Rural* was instead inspired by Europeans, and incorporates aspects of the Portuguese court. The main figures of *Maracatu Nação* are King and Queen (the same as the characters adapted into the *Maracatu Rural* in the 20th century). According to the accounts of its performers, the origins of the *Maracatu Nação* characters can be traced to a couple who was communicating with the masters on behalf of the slave community. The other important ‘figure’ of this dramatic form is a doll called *calunga* who is dressed as Queen and has a wig made from the hair of the woman who is playing the role of Queen. According to *Estrella de Ouro* group it is a ‘figure’ representing a queen (or princess) who contributed to the end of slavery in Brazil. It was said to the members of the Farm in the Cave that *Maracatu*

¹²⁰⁸ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.79.

¹²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

Nação began due to the ban on practicing *Candomblé* as a religion.¹²¹⁰ The practice of the *Orixás* dances in public ceremonies however was not a part of this ban. *Candomblé* and dances of the *Orixás* emerged as the central departure point for the forms of both the ritual and dramatic dances from which Farm in the Cave would draw their primary inspiration.

Maracatu Nação is performed by people of the same *terreiro* (very often connected to one family). It is performed publicly, and spectators do not need to be initiated to watch it. The motif of a doll dressed in identical manner to the main character is present in *The Theatre* as puppets used by performing actors which are dressed distinctly but wear the same carnival-like black mask on its eyes as does the ‘false audience,’ which provides sufficient visual information to draw the inference between the puppets and the group. The ‘false audience’ don black eye masks as a marker of ‘clan’ division within the actors’ group. The black eye mask motif may have re-emerged from exposure to the black glasses of the *Caboclos*, but was in fact already used by Dočolomanský as an elicitation tool in working with individual Farm in the Cave actors while in Colombia in 2008. The mask turned out to be an obstacle for Kršiaková who was playing Capitão in *The Theatre*, but Dočolomanský then chose to make the black masks a motif of distinction for the ‘false audience’ characters, thereby incorporating the concept of carnival, of ‘gods’ into whose eyes you cannot see, a ‘blind’ justice, etc. as well as that of opposing clan groups among the players of the play. Vavříková who plays Intruder (a role originally created by Cécile Da Costa) said in 2015 that the ‘mask’ gives strength, because you could hide and it makes you anonymous, ‘without a face;’ but it takes strength as well.

In Recife, Farm in the Cave met Chacon, the chief of his group who played the King character in the *Maracatu Nação* of Porto Rico. He explained the origins and meanings of that dramatic form and taught the actors the technique of playing on *atabaques*. As the performers of *Maracatu Nação* are members of one *terreiro* there is a very strong community connection among members. Chacon said that when slaves were performing *Maracatu Nação* they were showing their strength and even now you can feel great of the immense power of freedom the playing of this form brings to its performers. All others beside the king and queen dance the dance of the *Orixá* to whom the particular *terreiro* is devoted. The *terreiro* of Chacon was performing Oxossi, the *Orixá* of hunting). Dancers wear Baroque dresses in the color of the *terreiro*’s *Orixá*. Farm in the Cave took some of the musical motifs (rhythms) and chose

¹²¹⁰ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.83.

musical instruments (except *atabaque* drums called *alfaya*) from *Maracatu Nação* for *The Theatre*.

During the second expedition there was not much time to research *Bumba meu boi*, but Dočolomanský noted that according to André Bueno de Paula thanks to this *brincadeira* (the play) slaves were able to show their power to their masters.¹²¹¹ That perhaps inspired Dočolomanský to choose this dramatic dance as a play which is performed by a group of actors. It gave him the possibility to explore the relationship of actors as slave to the audience (audience as masters). The audience's first relationship to the material is witnessing a play about Brazil. The underlying story is about Farm in the Cave—the actors and the director themselves. It is apparent that Capitão is a Brazilian master in a historical drama, but is also Dočolomanský himself as the director of the company. The story within a story form allowed him to explore Farm in the Cave itself, and actors' position or specific role within the group. According to the power relationship between actors and audience he was also able to encrypt within the story other aspects of Brazil's current history such as the plight of the *desaparecidos*, those who have disappeared, about whom institutions have no information, who were likely killed by the police. At the end of *The Theatre* the character (actor) kills himself as he finds himself without his company/Capitão.

Among all of the Afro-Brazilian inspiration there was only one specifically of Indian origin that Farm in the Cave eventually incorporated into *The Theatre*. This was a song consisting of only four lines of text: *Ai que bonito! D'aonde vem? Venho do mundo, do mundo eu venho. Mestre bonito, d'aonde vem? Venho do mundo, do mundo eu venho.* (How beautiful it is! Where does it come from? I come from the world, from the world I come. Beautiful Master, where do you came from? I come from the world, from the world I come.)¹²¹² The *toada* the ensemble chose from the recordings of Mário de Andrade was used as an acoustic background for the scene called *Dream* where one of the actresses from the theatre group performs a solo with a black-masked puppet who leads the actress more than be led by her.¹²¹³ The puppet was understood by the director as an inner self of the actress.¹²¹⁴

The meeting with the Pankararu tribe occurred at the end of expedition over three days during which Farm in the Cave was allowed to participate in one of the local Indian rituals.

¹²¹¹ See: Director's diary from the expedition, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹²¹² Program of *The Theatre* prepared for the premiere, February 10, 2010.

¹²¹³ Dočolomanský initially interpreted the singing style of this *toada* as an attempt among the male singers to align their voices to the central female voice, and that they were failing to do so. He was corrected by the locals who said that the men were engaging in 'joyful singing.' Video recording from the expedition January 8, 2010, archive of Farm in the Cave.

¹²¹⁴ Based on my notes, Prague February 5, 2010.

Again the recurrent theme of an embodied spirit, who according to the Indians' beliefs, come inside the body of the costumed singer dressed while he is producing sound, appeared which further solidified it as the critical element to the creation of *The Theatre* performance. Specific 'Indian training' was created by the ensemble that consist of special posture of the body, connection with the partners, walk and rhythm of *caracaxa* (the percussion instrument filled with sacred stones) that should remain in constant flow. The actors are lowered on their knees what creates grounding, but relaxed in the upper parts of their bodies what creates a horizontal energy move in a circle connected with their pelvises. One actor starts this 'Indian' exercise and the others join him one-by-one.¹²¹⁵ Parallel to this exercise, the actors worked on songs heard in the tribe.¹²¹⁶ In the scene called *Feeding Kršiaková*, singing one of the songs, firstly rehearsed on *caracaxa*, but at the end she exchanged this musical instrument into violin as singing the song with *caracaxa* she found too 'ritualistic.'¹²¹⁷

From April 16-20, 2009 Farm in the Cave took a workshop with Maud Robart entitled *The Direct Experience of Traditional Vibratory Chant*.¹²¹⁸ Robart, a native Haitian, collaborated with Jerzy Grotowski in the 1970s and together with her artistic group called Saint Soleil was one of the most important parts of the Theatre of the Sources project and other Grotowski's works. She describes her work: "The precise endeavor of this work is founded on the practice of songs whose formal characteristics are governed by the repetitive mode. The intention is to allow the active participants to investigate the conjunction between the objective structure of these elements, fixed by tradition (Afro-Haitian ritual songs) and spontaneity, a personal element belonging to each artist. The spontaneity here is not theatrical in nature. More it engages that which is personal: the artist's intimate reactions, his motivations, his memories. The process of work is constructed through listening, through the adaptation to others and to the space. This process is built not only through the attention applied to the melodic and rhythmic precision of the songs; but also through the attention given to that which is connected to the internal perceptions of the singer. Precision/spontaneity is the type of relation at work in the organic process which these songs tend to mobilize."¹²¹⁹

¹²¹⁵ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.30.

¹²¹⁶ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, pp.36-37.

¹²¹⁷ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.37.

¹²¹⁸ During the public meeting with Maud Robart which took place on April 20, 2009 two documentary films were presented: *Maud Robart: La source du chant* [Maud Robart: the Source of the Chant], produced by Marc Petitjean and *Le silence du chant est un chemin vers le silence du cœur* [The Silence of the Chant is a Path Towards the Silence in the Heart] produced by Michel Boccara.

¹²¹⁹ Maud Robart, Archive of Farm in the Cave.

The workshop, based on deep meditation, helped actors to find a more effective approach to singing the Indian songs from de Andrade recordings.¹²²⁰ They worked on building a connection with the entities ‘present’ in the songs, and treating the words and melodies as something sacred.¹²²¹ The first part of the workshop was led by one of Robart’s assistants and concentrated on the movements of the spine. The second part of the workshop led by Robart herself was based on singing in the circle. The circle again appeared as an important element of change connected to observing the partner, being watchful, being with the community of the others who supports the action. As Kršiaková writes in her thesis quoting Robart: “Concentration is an ability to exist in the present, in the moment. You must be concentrated on the body in the space, on the sounds from outside, to be able to communicate with the space—with bells, birds, to be inspired by them. It is very difficult because it is much easier to let the mind ‘drift’ somewhere and to think about whatever. Do not think. Just be. Exist!”¹²²² The circle helps to connect with partners, to relax and focus upon them.

Robart’s workshop, part of the Afro-Brazilian project, was given to the actors to help them create a quality of lightness which is characteristic to people in trance. The whole of Robart’s work with Farm in the Cave actors was more like to spiritual awakening/inner initiatic work rather than acquisition theatrical technique. This quality of lightness Farm in the Cave was seeking is not common in a theatre work (contrary to ritual). Dočolomanský, grateful for the work and the effect Robart had on his actors, said that for him the form (relaxation/connection) was in many ways meditative and near a zero point energetically (in the sense of catalyzing activity). He longed to take the quality of lightness they were seeking from meditative zero point into the energy of *duende*, the energy of toreadors, as he named it.¹²²³ The circular structure created by Robart did not have the sought energy of tension, fight, conflict, which is characteristic to Dočolomanský’s work. He wanted his actors to keep the quality of lightness—the lightness of *Candomblé* dancers under the influence of trance, but also the lightness of *passista* while dancing *frevo* form which is based on the interplay of extreme tension with relaxation. The same tension-relaxation then transformed into the principle of *The Theatre*’s narrative structure itself.

¹²²⁰ Interviews with actors, Prague May-August 2010.

¹²²¹ On Robart’s teaching see also: Martin Heřman Frys, *Jeden nepodařený projekt? aneb ze stromu divadelní antropologie* [One Project that Failed or from the Tree of Theatre Anthropology], MA thesis, Divadelní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2008, pp.22-24.

¹²²² Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.70 (translation mine).

¹²²³ Based on my notes, Prague September 14, 2009.

The goal of Afro-Brazilian project was not to collect steps and rhythms and to retell a traditional story from an ‘exotic’ part of the world, but to somehow reach the quality (in acting) and variability (in the structure) characteristic in Brazilian trance ritual and dramatic dance culture. Naturally actors of Farm in the Cave may not find such an organic way of performing these forms as Brazilians, but as actors of physical theatre of laboratorial type, they are challenged in incorporating the essential quality of the character/story/ethos within their bodies and minds in such way as to be ‘possessed’ of a lightness and this specific energy.

Through the labyrinth one is arriving into the middle, where he sees the mirror/monster. In the carnival one is able to overwork the crisis. The carnival is not a revolution,¹²²⁴ but more a momentary deconstruction, decomposition.¹²²⁵ *The Theatre* of Farm in the Cave, based on Brazilian commedia dell’ arte,¹²²⁶ allowed the ensemble to present and watch themselves in the same time. As a form of carnival that is understood as communal ‘self-staging’ of society,¹²²⁷ and the carnival-man is performer and viewer in the same time:¹²²⁸ *The Theatre* self-reflect the theatre group. Farm in the Cave as wanderer in the labyrinth or anthropologist in the field, takes a role of a ‘stranger’ that—thanks to meeting unknown forms and cultural phenomena—comes through it to the mirror, itself / description of one’s own culture/community.

¹²²⁴ See: Dudzik *Karnawały w kulturze, op. cit.*, p.108.

¹²²⁵ See: Dudzik *Karnawały w kulturze, op. cit.*, p.104.

¹²²⁶ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s speech to the teenagers after *The Theatre*, Prague March 31, 2015.

¹²²⁷ See: Norbert Schindler cited in Dudzik *Karnawały w kulturze, op. cit.*, p.103.

¹²²⁸ See: Julia Kristeva cited in Dudzik *Karnawały w kulturze, op. cit.*, p.91.

***Whistleblowers*—a Case Study**

Intervention in the casino

On November 3, 2012, Farm in the Cave was invited to take part in 4+4+4 Days in Motion an annual site-specific festival in Prague, to create an event entitled *Intervention* at a location selected by the festival's organizers. As it turned out, the space selected was a former casino on 25 Pařížská Street (a vacant building prior to reconstruction). New themes seem to have emerged as a result: money, hazard, bluffing, addiction, power, manipulation, politics. These are hardly the kind of 'ethnographic' or 'ritualistic' topics familiar to Farm in the Cave's audience. Indeed, it is difficult to access such themes through music and song, but it is not impossible focusing on specific sounds and rhythms. The theme itself brings to mind an image of 'America' from *Dark Love Sonnets* and partly also from *Sclavi*, but the topics are seen through the optic of the wealthy. Site-specific as a method of experiencing and also expressing 'musicality' through movements and composition leads to the *Waiting Room* project based on observations and feelings of how the particular space affect the performer's body. In a way it reflects also the *Puppet World* from *The Theatre* where everything is artificial and lacking authenticity of real relationships. The *Intervention* in the former casino was not connected to the subsequent project, *Lobby*, that started in 2013 and finished in synch with the premiere of *Whistleblowers*, but it could be said that such expressions and topics were of interest to Viliam Dočolomanský. It also gave a strong subtext for the future performance.

There were no obstacles in applying anthropological approach of research, expeditions (or 'scenic research') and physical improvisations. The idea to research casino, hotel lobbies or corporations was similar to the approach of business anthropology that 'symbolically' originates in the 1940s when W. Lloyd Warner was invited to use the ethnographic methods to understand organizations.¹²²⁹ The anthropology of business that developed widely in the 1980s and the 1990s used tools created for understanding cultures and civilizations to examine such fragmentary 'sub-cultures' as the corporations are.

The *Intervention* itself—defined by Farm in the Cave as a 'non-theatre line' of company's activity—introduces the form from the border of performance and visual installation that contains simple actions: "A pair of drowsy Asians, a singer high on cocaine

¹²²⁹ Paweł Krzyworzeka, *Biznes i antropologia – historia Lloyda Warnera* [Business and Anthropology—a story of W. Lloyd Warner], version from August 2014, unpublished.

singing pop hits from all the European nations, and members of the security team who kept on increasing in number, creeping into the space (...) The action makes a metaphor out of the location of the casino, and corresponds to the dismal socio-political situation.”¹²³⁰ From discussions about politics and power the theme of corporations emerged; specifically the topic of food corporations that literary affects everybody without noticing as a sort of ‘invisible infiltration’ of every ‘citizen.’ The research highlighted the topic of human as a ‘citizen’ in the first place. The casino was a physical inspiration, but it was not directly connected to the theme that appeared later. However, the first layer of meaning in creating the new performance originates there.

After the *Intervention*, Farm in the Cave decided embark on an ‘expedition’ to a real casino to observe behaviors of its visitors. The director of the contacted casino allowed the ensemble to come, film (gamblers’ hands only) and play. He was also interviewed, sharing—just as a ‘local informant’ for anthropologists—his observations on what kind of people go to casinos, emphasizing that most of the people come to lose. The casino’s director mentioned two common casino types: people who come to lose believing that one day they would win and people who love to risk and need the adrenaline, excitement—so they are not concentrated on winning, but on playing and losing. The casino is designed to spend money. Everything—from the behavior of croupiers who run the games to waiters whose role is to keep the gamblers’ glasses always full—is subservient to this goal. The gamblers do not need to stand or ask for anything—food and drinks are ‘for free’ and always at their fingertips. The actors, observing hands, choose some gestures to create structures of physical actions. The performance also kept some sounds as a ‘memory’ of this visit—such as repetitive, perpetual sound of the roulette achieved in the performance by the metal ball rolling on the ceramic plate. A culture of ‘fake’ coins used for gambling that are substituting real money served as a metaphor of nowadays economic and business relations.

The *Lobby* project started in January 2013 when Viliam Dočolomanský introduced to the ensemble the idea of researching money and power—corporations and politicians—the lobbyists. Dočolomanský was interested in seeing how lobbying could affect the single person in his daily life. The actors started from developing the physical scores created for the *Intervention*. They were interested in getting rid of movement stylization, discovering the potential of each detail and finding illogical intuitive connections between the movements.¹²³¹

¹²³⁰ “Intervention,” *Farma v jeskyni*, accessed November 16, 2014, http://infarma.info/projekty_divadlo_mob.php?_project=intervention&langs=2.

¹²³¹ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague March 1, 2015.

Casino was a good reference to the corporate themes also because of the obsession with money characteristic to both.

The ensemble had chosen hotel lobbies as direct ‘sites’ of observation. The actors went there (alone or in couples) to observe. They selected a diversity of Prague hotels—mainly modern, well known and expensive—where one could ‘feel money and wealth.’¹²³² Again, as with the casino, they encountered a strong artificial surface, the ‘virtual’ world of hidden rules that the space itself ‘produced’ pre-determining human behavior. The rule was not to interact. The actors behaved more like spectators; ‘making’ theatre not by anonymous actions, but by anonymous observations. They did not interview people, but—observing different groups (workers and guests)—noted a specific hierarchy that was visible in there. They also observed specific details of space like revolving doors and the way different people approached them. Having an expensive coffee, the actors tried to be neutral and ‘invisible.’ Those ‘visits’ in the hotel lobbies were consciously scheduled at different times: mornings, afternoons and evenings. The task was to observe and listen, trying to catch any specific vocabulary, focusing on sounds, words, observing movements and postures. It turned out to be very perpetual and business oriented. Some things repeated in the same structures—even the timing was always similar—the way people ate, walked, sat, laughed, chat, etc. was following very much the same stereotype. From overheard conversations a few sentences were ‘picked’ such as: *Do you have a driver?*—what spoke about the reality hotel lobbies’ guests live in giving to Farm in the Cave’s actors a theme for improvisations.

After ‘research’ in lobbies and gathering some ‘material’ during those direct observations, the actors entered a rehearsal space. The improvisations were based on the rule: one person tells a story from the observed situation that he found interesting and inspiring and the other person—who was not there—improvises a physical movement as a response, ‘reacts.’ As Farm in the Cave actress Minh Hieu Nguyen explained, “The one who was telling the story was excited, full of emotions. The one who improvised reacted to this; in the same time as if it would be fresh and still alive. That was the beginning.”¹²³³ The aim was not to illustrate the story, but to react to the voice and emotions and to confront the physical movement with the spoken word. The narrative story-telling that appeared later on evolved into a ‘voice over’ of the professional speaker that accompanies the actors’ actions in *Whistleblowers*.

¹²³² Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²³³ *Ibid.*

Additionally to those direct experiences, the actors researched in literature and documentaries to understand the background and specific codes of business-oriented places and to see what they could reach through this carefully designed ‘surface.’ Marek Turošík, a research assistant, proposed books in Czech and English. From the broader literature few books turned out to play more important role. It was mostly *Snakes in Suits. When Psychopaths Go to Work*—a book written by psychologist Paul Babiak and psychopathology expert Robert D. Hare that was published in 2006 and *Listen, Little Man!* by Wilhelm Reich.

Mentioning *Snakes in Suits*, Nguyen said, “It was very inspiring for me and for my character, even though at the beginning I didn’t know of course that I would play a spy.” *Snakes in Suits* inspired the actors as it speaks about social chameleons, corporate psychopaths who are ‘cool under fire,’ calm and confident in the chaotic business environment that satisfies their ‘need for excitement.’ Dave, one of the book’s characters, starts work in a new company and slowly changes into cheating and manipulating ‘monster;’ he is a charismatic, charming, flattering, friendly, seducing, unpredictable narcissist—it inspired not only Nguyen, but also Emil Leeger¹²³⁴ for creating his character of an activist who’d been a former corporate employee. Those two are the main characters of *Whistleblowers*.

On the artistic meetings actors discussed books they had read, referring to topics, thoughts and sharing ideas. “Viliam did not read books, but lead the entire process and later on the investigation, choosing the direction.”¹²³⁵ From the book *Listen, Little Man!*¹²³⁶ the drawings and visual expression were more interesting for the actors than the text itself. The book written by Wilhelm Reich—a kind of manifesto to the common man, the ‘little man’ who is afraid of real freedom and clings to some ‘social’ roles—was accompanied by William Steig’s caricatures. Those inspired actors to try some images and postures physically like a posture of a man who ‘goes forward,’ but his hips are blocked by a heavy weight that holds him back by a string tied around his belly. The image from the other drawing of the man ‘hanged’ as a coat on a hanger would ‘return’ in the culmination scene of *Whistleblowers* as a video image of actors’ naked bodies hanged as meat or dead people (the end of the scene called *Doubles*).

Nguyen, speaking about the process of gathering information, said, “There was no time for everybody to read everything. We summarized the books we had read to the others.

¹²³⁴ Artistic name of Emil Piš.

¹²³⁵ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²³⁶ The book evolved between 1943 and 1946 in the Orgone Institute.

Everybody was free to read all, but it was not necessary. (...) *Listen, Little Man!* was about life of the contemporary guy; apparently it was very poetic. Everybody studied mostly the drawings—how fragile and scared by everything the characters looked like. You can read those feelings in the drawings. It was the image of common people in their daily life, their routine; people scared to change and not interested in anything, not activated.”¹²³⁷ On the question: What does the actress mean by the ‘common’ people, Nguyen answered: “When I say ‘common’ people I include myself.”¹²³⁸

From broader research a few films were the key inspiration in the process of the performance’s creation. *The Brussels Business*¹²³⁹ introduced the direct topic of the Lobby industry in the European Union, showing how fragile and easily manipulated the politicians’ decision-making is. As 80% of legislation that influences EU citizens takes place in Brussels, it directly inspired the ensemble to undertake their ‘expedition’ to Brussels as a headquarters of EU.

The film gives a number of 15,000 lobbyists working in Brussels, and adds that only Washington is larger. The main character of this docu-thriller—as the creators of the movie labeled it—is a lobbyist. He explains that the word ‘lobbying’ came from the hotel lobby—making a ‘revolving door person’ a lucrative job, as the other character says in the documentary—where people gather before going to decision-making meetings. The lobbyist says he provokes chances, sees the opportunity and is only networking, exchanging visit cards. He calls lobbying and politics a club—his role as a professional lobbyist is to be a consistent, careful follower of moods and trends as ‘what is right today, might not be right tomorrow.’ *The Brussels Business* presents lobbying landscape of today’s ‘Brussels bubble,’ where many activities as ‘think tanks’ are financed by big corporations that use them to transmit their demands and perspectives; sometimes creating even fake NGOs to pretend having an antagonist towards a public good. The film gave Farm in the Cave an impulse to travel to Brussels where they managed to meet and interviewed Olivier Hoedeman, the activist from Corporation European Observatory who speaks in the documentary.

The Brussels Business introduced also the topic of money behind the politics and business behind European Union’s strategic decisions. Coming back to 1993 when the EU was born, the filmmakers revealed that since the beginning, politics went hand in hand with business; this was kept in secret (an informal ‘secret’ known to all politicians). The

¹²³⁷ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²³⁹ *The Brussels Business* (dir. Friedrich Moser and Matthieu Lietaert), 2012.

documentary, revealing the case of *Reshaping Europe* project of modernization of Europe, discusses a political statement saying, ‘what is good for large corporations is good for everyone’ and speaks about blackmailing governments to move businesses of the ‘biggest tax payers’ in Europe. *Reshaping Europe* publication was written by two important CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) and based on discussions done in the framework of the European Round Table of Industries (the meetings took place in the most expensive venues in Europe) of 45 CEOs of such multinational corporations as Nestlé, Shell, Siemens, etc.— was accepted by politicians nearly without any changes. It caused some ecological problems in a few parts of Europe. The activists that revealed the case copied documents from the early 1980s creating a report about influence of business on EU policy about creating the single market—they sent out a press release hoping to open a public discussion, but realize that none of the journalists took interest in the case.

The second documentary that created an ideological background for the *Whistleblowers* performance was *The Corporation* released in 2003.¹²⁴⁰ The movie speaks about the lack of control over the corporation form that is a paradox created over years, rooted in industrial culture and well protected by law because of many precedent cases. The filmmakers state the organization that was created to produce wealth—on the contrary—creates hidden harm, not only to the people, but also to the environment and is inhuman in its profit orientation. The corporation’s idea—derived from the team sport or family cooperation—turned into a form that is concentrated on competitiveness to make as much profit as possible. The form that does not believe in anything except profit holds the status of a legal ‘person’ with limited liability. If making profit stands behind serving public good, if productivity is the main and only drive—the corporation is a dangerous edge of industrial age thinking, state documentary creators. Noam Chomsky explains in the movie: if corporation as an ‘individual person’ could sell, buy, borrow and sue, it is a member of society, but *What kind of person it is?*—the philosopher asked and answers that is amoral, because has no consequences. That is how law designs the corporation that is psychotic, driven by money and competition only; it is a ‘citizen,’ but has no morality, no soul and no physical body. It has no experience the human is gathering.

The corporation has noble look, is dominant, but as Milton Friedman, a Nobel-Prize winning economist said in the movie: *Can a building have social responsibility?* Creating mindless consumption and ‘wants’ through advertisements, it creates ‘goods’ that are not

¹²⁴⁰ *The Corporation* (dir. Jennifer Abbott and Mark Achbar), 2003.

needed. It manipulates. Chomsky said that the corporation puts a focus on insignificant things in life such as fashion. And he asks: *How many created wants can I satisfy?* The pattern of nowadays world is a ‘desire,’ ‘seduction with illusions.’ Many corporations nowadays produce nothing more than a brand, an image. The corporation for the definition produces no values. Driven by the profit motivation (when never is enough) it creates solutions that bring more money. There is nothing too sacred to be considered as business opportunity, to provoke prosperity. Everything could be a service as well. As one of the corporate-men says: *In devastation there is opportunity* and he speaks about World Trade Centre, war in Iraq and other catastrophes for society or humanity. Directors of the documentary give many examples such as: producing unnecessary chemicals (idea introduced in the 1970s) and, by advertisement, persuading people to use them and addict to them, taking no care for health, environment or ecological aftermath; reshaping genetically modified seeds to give no plants so that there is a need to buy them each year; selling rainwater to people who barely could afford it; manipulation of the information given to mothers persuading them not to breastfeed as it creates a profit on babies; selling trousers with etiquette that the profit would go for children to attract customers not informing them the trousers were actually done by children in Honduras, where the corporation found low cost labor ‘enslaving’ people, etc.¹²⁴¹

The movie introduced the entire background and point of view for the corporation issue, similarly to *Shoah* in *Waiting Room*. By mentioning so-called ‘externalities’—a third party that would solve corporation’s problems so that it takes no responsibility—a corporate spying topic was introduced. The small details recalling *The Corporation* documentary appeared as actor’s intentions—for example the first entrance of Spy in the performance who holds water in a plastic cup that puts on her saying: *It’s raining* to be let inside. It refers to a corporation’s idea to sell basic human needs like water. The filmmakers state that because of the dominance of the corporation way of thinking, human relations started to be commercial as well, and the undercover message (a product placement) happens now not in the movie that we watch, but in the movie that is our life.

Project Lobby

From April, 2013, the work concentrated around the topic of corporation and its power on single people’s daily life. Dočolomanský spoke about it nearly every time presenting the new performance: the project *Lobby* started from the question of what nowadays influences

¹²⁴¹ See: “Synopsis,” *The Corporation*, accessed January 23, 2015, <http://www.thecorporation.com/film/synopsis>.

people's lives the most.¹²⁴² And the answer came to do with issues of lobbyists, politicians and corporations that opened topics of citizen's unconsciousness and human rights. In April 2013 the blog was set that continued to refer about the project's development till the premiere that was held a year after. Theme of the new performance was focused on the issue of political, economical and industry lobbying that is influencing politics and law. Farm in the Cave collaborated on this research with scientists, psychologists, activists and politics, involving much into intellectual process of understanding.

The troupe took part in a demonstration against the Monsanto corporation that was held in Prague on May 25, 2013 to observe how single people oppose the international corporation in practice. The entire event was filmed, so that the actors could select some gestures of this public manifestation including activists, tourists, policemen and 'common people' who took part in this peaceful march. While interviewing people the topic of food as basic human right that is nowadays violated appeared. *People who control the food, control the people*¹²⁴³—said one of the interviewed participants of the march adding he wants to spread awareness, information, sharing, talking and 'making noise.' *I want to know what I'm eating*,¹²⁴⁴ he said explaining he fights for labeling GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms), so that people could choose. The march confronted the regular people with the 'power' that has no face. *We are angry but we need to keep calm and focus*,¹²⁴⁵ added the interviewed man. Having difficulty to name specific enemy that is responsible for global changes that allows corporations such as Monsanto potentially dangerous experiments, made people act powerless 'facing' shut windows of American Embassy in Prague.¹²⁴⁶

In the framework of *Lobby* project the actors studied politicians' public gestures and intonations. The task was to copy it including the hidden background, vibrations, quality, and tone—to create a 'physical twin.'¹²⁴⁷ The actors searched for politicians' behavior in different situations to catch the alive moments of them sleeping, making phone calls, etc. To catch something 'human' of them, not the 'surface'—the moment when the public image is broken, and one can see something behind the public 'mask.' It recalls a task of finding individual expression on the 'icons' from Nijinsky's ballet in the *Sclavi* project. One of the studied politicians was Angela Merkel. Nguyen said, "Anna [Kršiaková/Gromanová] took some of

¹²⁴² Last time during Farm in the Cave's International Symposium *From the research to the performance*, Prague April 23, 2015.

¹²⁴³ See: "Research project by Farm in the Cave International Theatre Studio," *Lobby*, accessed November 15, 2014, <http://infarma.info/lobby/>.

¹²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁷ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague March 1, 2015.

her gestures and worked with it. Like hands or melody of the voice.”¹²⁴⁸ Each of the actors got a task to choose 10-15 politicians and study their way of speaking.

During the symposium that transpired on October 29, 2014 Dočolomanský used the example from the *Lobby* project to explain the way the actor’s score is built: “Working on *Whistleblowers* we just copied movements of Mečiar’s performances, not only to copy Mečiar, but also because we wanted to reach something that is behind. As if copying this context at the beginning was a gate to the cosmos of possibilities that opens behind it.”¹²⁴⁹ Explaining his directing method Dočolomanský added, “I try to deal with the model—if I would take it from the choreographic point of view—that I would say to myself: two against three or one against four or five against two; I need to find some kind of basic numerology first. (...) What happens in the process is an adventure that we like so much; the fact is that we do not know where it would take us; in which point it would touch those people [actors], because they research the topic; each of them through improvisations. They improvise on the topic. Something interests me, and something not. This, which I had previously considered important, suddenly looks like stupidity, drivel, a non important thing.”¹²⁵⁰ Dočolomanský’s explanation recalls the director’s strategy for developing physical theatre language during the *Lorca* project.

The other area of actors’ interests was the stock market and its typical gestures. The actors asked by Dočolomanský worked also a lot with a jacket using it as a prop, experimenting ways of dressing and undressing it—as the jacket served as a ‘symbol’ of politicians.¹²⁵¹ The ensemble researched also cases of union workers and human rights next to advertisements—some of the actors studied voice and songs that appear in commercials. From advertisements the most researched were advertisements about a milk formula as the issue was mentioned in *The Corporation* movie and well described in documentary produced by Philippine UNICEF called *Formula for Disaster*¹²⁵²—presenting specific example of strong advertisement’s manipulation that creates catastrophe among poor people who actually could not afford the milk formula, but believe it would make their child intelligent and successful. As mothers start to use artificial milk, they stop having their own one and as they need to find money to paid the artificial one, many times they start to save on the milk powder adding more water what causes children’s malnutrition.

¹²⁴⁸ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁴⁹ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of *Farm in the Cave*, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵¹ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁵² *Formula for Disaster. Violations on the Philippine Milk Code* (dir. Joseph Forting), 2007.

This issue raised the subject of paying for something so basic for humanity as mother's milk or water. The issue developed into an advertisement scene that concludes *Whistleblowers*. In this scene, the audience watches a 'successful' child doing gymnastics and drinking milk prepared by 'mothers' on stage that is recorded live by the video cameras. Nguyen said: "We came across the issue about owning the patent for mothers' milk—and we asked ourselves: how it is possible that somebody could own the pattern for the mothers' milk—something that belongs to your body. The issue of intellectual property—we got interested in those topics as well." The topic of selling water (including a rainwater) to the inhabitants of Bolivia by its own country was one of the issues raised in *The Corporation* documentary and inspired intentions of Spy entering the group of activist she needs to infiltrate. By the audience it could be read as absurdist excuse or an image of 'purification,' being 'clear as water'—which is untrue.

Dočolomanský, in 2014, explained the expeditions looked at the time: "At the beginning there is an intellectual level, when I could say that it seems significant to me or that I have some understanding. It's always difficult choosing a new topic because I'm the kind of person whose mind depends on experience. I need to go over something that activates me, motivates me. While reading text, listening to music or watching news, I have to have a feeling that it might be this. This is at the beginning: a strong, short *samadhi*, when I feel it. Later a laborious work of intellect begins with gathering information from which I would drawn at the outset, and I dive into it trying to find something within. Here the intellect starts to work very hard, and only later we travel to the location."¹²⁵³ However, understanding the role of the expedition is the effect of three previous expeditions that were all very different (there was also *Waiting Room* interviews and site-specific research). Twelve years after the Andalusian 'expedition,' which was mostly based on observation, ten years after visiting the Ruthenian villages and six years after travels to Brazil—Dočolomanský has come up with a 'method' defining Farm in the Cave's creation process that could be repeated or applied with any topic. Dočolomanský admits the first 'moves' are intuitive; it is more a personal research, a voluntary disintegration and a need to understand something through the experience. From this perspective it is a similar strategy to current-ethnographic research that is less concentrated on describing society as a whole, but more on some phenomena that appear within. During the symposium, Dočolomanský said, "When we start to research something,

¹²⁵³ Viliam Dočolomanský's answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

we like not to have a clear structure, but to get to know the thing in the process, in a field; something that we do not even suspect.”¹²⁵⁴

In the *Lobby* project the ‘expedition’ was planned to Brussels in Belgium as it is the headquarters of the European Union and the largest decision-making point in Europe. It took place during the first week of June 2013 and with five people participating: Viliam Dočolomanský, Marek Turošík, Minh Hieu Nguyen, Hana Varadzinová and Anna Gromanová. The expedition was mainly about interviewing and observing. The meetings were mostly planned in advance and the questions were prepared before as well. The ensemble had visited Parliament and agriculture committee meetings.¹²⁵⁵ They had met decision-makers, politicians, lobbyists, activists, and journalists. As before, going to Brussels the ensemble came across many articles, studies, documents about lobbying and corporate behavior, they shared a general view, but seek a story or a case to build the dramaturgy of performance.

“We found our specific story in Brussels,”¹²⁵⁶ said Dočolomanský, speaking about his recent project during the symposium of 12th years anniversary. “We went to Brussels as an expedition because it is the headquarters for lobbyists in Europe. We figured it out from documentaries. Brussels is main quarter of corporations.”¹²⁵⁷ Farm in the Cave went to Brussels to ‘infiltrate,’ participate in meetings, observe politicians, deputies, lobbyists and Europe Observatories. The theatre group arrived there like a ‘citizen’ with questions to address to somebody. The working title of the performance in that time was *Citizens versus Corporation*.

Dočolomanský said that the field of the European Parliament was also a sociological and psychological experiment for his actors. In the political environment Dočolomanský observed their behavior and reactions concentrating on the physical aspect. “We sit and talked, but before we started we learned something that could be unfair. We had met Ms. Vostárková who started with the vocal analysis, and later on continued her work with the analysis of movement and postures of politicians’ bodies.”¹²⁵⁸ The ensemble—prepared in knowledge of the stereotype politicians’ ‘body language’—asked during the ‘expedition’ specific questions observing carefully interlocutors’ voices and movements. “We asked questions where they felt ‘at home’ and suddenly we asked: *Who did you want to be when you*

¹²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵⁵ Farm in the Cave’s blog *Lobby*, *op. cit.*

¹²⁵⁶ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

were a child? And they were surprised: classically disoriented. Or we asked questions that we knew would make them feel nervous and we observed how one deals with this nervousness, anger, and we simply observed how the ‘snakes in suits’ behave. (...) Brussels was also very interesting, because suddenly those performers, who were used to move, sing—some of them even started to think how good they are in it—were suddenly ‘slapped’ and sit in a chair and needed to listen to some ‘Eurocrat.’ So it was a kind of training for them.” Dočolomanský seemingly examined his own actors with a project about ‘boring,’ repetitive clichés and stereotypes that appeared from the very beginning, trying to get over their cliché of movement, voice and perhaps also thinking.

During the performance, actors speak a lot, and a professional speaker as a ‘guest artist’ makes frequent comments—like a TV speaker—explaining events on stage, at times with a camera filming events live (such as the entrance of the union worker, the face of a child being fed with instant milk). This man is a narrator, a voice of ‘memory,’ of gathered information. In some scenes actors are mute and live improvised jazz accompanies their actions; at times the sound of typing is heard accompanying a projection of words typed-out on the glass wall (*Beginning of Activism*); some scenes are spoken and on rare moments actors sing in the manner familiar from the ‘old’ repertoire known from other creations of Farm in the Cave. And as singing recalls advertisements or anthems it is clearly a ‘quotation’ not a ‘real’ song; as if it was sung in an irony.

“*Whistleblowers*’ research was about directed infiltration of performers into a field that they knew nothing about. From this point of view it must not have looked like such a juicy subject, but more a cruel theme, dry and non-romantic. We needed to absorb a lot of information at the very beginning, so that we could get oriented in this field and understand it. We were lucky that we could debate with excellent political scientists and people who understand this field like Vladimíra Dvořáková, David Ondračka and others. After that we went to Brussels, where we took part in meetings of the European Parliament and we asked more or less provocative questions to lobbyists and activists, ‘Eurocrats’ and members of the Parliament. They were very surprised; everybody was taking us as spies,”¹²⁵⁹ Dočolomanský said interviewed about the project. The feeling of being a ‘spy’ for society empowered them with an ‘activist’ impulse to the ‘expedition’ that suddenly became more like a ‘mission’—to reveal something society ‘does not know’ or ‘does not pay enough attention to,’ has ‘closed

¹²⁵⁹ Viliam Dočolomanský, “Farma je můj život” [Farm in the Cave is my Life], interview by Daniela Zilvarová, accessed March 3, 2015, <http://www.tanecniaktuality.cz/viliam-docolomansky-farma-je-muj-zivot/>, (translation mine).

eyes.’ Or perhaps it gave ‘actors’ a new role in society—of somebody who is ‘brave’ enough to say truth on stage/publicly. In that case Farm in the Cave would take a position of King’s fool saying something, but on stage where it is defined as a locus of non-truth, imagination and artistic vision.

Shortly after returning from Brussels, on July 29, 2013, a seminar entitled *Corporate Behavior Manifestations* was organized. Farm in the Cave invited political scientists, sociologists and experts in body language and voice who teach physical expressions of people who speak in public. On the contrary to the Afro-Brazilian conference, this seminar was very traditional in keeping the structure of lectures and discussions. Organized to share information gathered in Brussels as a part of the project’s outcome, the seminar discussed topics of manipulation and power, next to the situation of nobody taking responsibility for corporation’s actions. David Ondračka from Transparency International stated that everybody who is against today’s world protests against corporations. The corporation is a metaphor of many different problems as common thinking about corporation ‘equals’ thinking about corruption, manipulation and lying. The idea hidden behind Public Relations (PR)—creating positive image of the company using knowledge of ‘manipulative techniques’ in advertisements or hiring lawyers to protect the economical interests as well as the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)—leads to the image of the corporation being a well-protected form that is ready to fight any opposition. As Ondračka said the corporation wants to be “one of us, a good citizen that acts good towards other citizens, doesn’t misuse children; doesn’t act against the rules of the game, is one of us, only bigger; the one that has more economical possibilities.”¹²⁶⁰ On one hand the corporation creates an image of a single person with some personality and even a ‘character,’ on the other hand it is a business partner of governments. From economical reasons it needs to take care about single people, but could blackmail the countries.

David Ondračka as an example of corporate behavior mentioned a person who gets ‘mad’—perhaps because of the tension at work—and brings the information out to the public. Ondračka said the corporation’s reactions in such situations are always consciously exaggerated comparing the act itself in order not to create a ‘tradition’ or an exception that would repeat. Sometimes, as Ondračka explained, corporations use psychological pressure, pay people to spy, blackmail, and kill in the extreme cases. The discussion that continued

¹²⁶⁰ See: David Ondračka’s speech during the Corporate Behavior Manifestations Seminar, “Video from Corporate Behavior Manifestations Seminar,” Lobby, accessed November 17, 2014, <http://infarma.info/lobby/projevy-korporativniho-chovani-seminar-1-cast-uvod/> (translation mine).

after the seminar introduced the question of responsibility—who takes responsibility for the corporation’s behavior?

During the discussion Dočolomanský already revealed the main dramatic inspirations of the future performance. He shared with the public the information about a specific case in which an international food corporation paid a spy to infiltrate a small group of students to gather personal information about them that might be possibly useful. Why such a large and powerful corporation that makes policy with governments is afraid of such a small group of people? Why it thinks its reputation is so important? Dočolomanský spoke about the moment the students discovered that they were spied for 2-3 years, how paranoid they got, going back in time to double check what information could cause what. Only at the court they got to know that there were more spies in their organization over those years so they started to be suspicious towards a past they could not change.¹²⁶¹

In the framework of the seminar Dočolomanský shared also two more stories that would appear in the performance as a hidden inspiration for the opening scene with the coffee machine. The ‘sources’ of the scene comes from articles about the same food corporation that took part in the case mentioned above. In one of the articles it is revealed that the corporation has a ‘war room’ within which the corporation’s employees monitor in real time world social networks on multiple screens to keep up with what people write about them and their products (checking how many percent of respondents are still positive about their chips and chocolate bars). The second article was about a corporation’s reaction to a post regarding a broken coffee machine that appeared with a joke made by the owner of the broken machine—referring to an advertisement, asking if the ‘superhero’ would come to fix it. The corporation, not yet contacted by the owner of the broken machine, sent the workers to fix it; winning (just like a casino ‘losing’ on a gamblers’ wins) broad publicity. The anecdote confirmed how much a large and influential corporation is interested in its reputation, counting even single users that have the power to influence other users with free ‘guerilla’ marketing.

The Case

The case was found during the expedition. “I’ve got to know about the case from one activist that a young woman under the false name had infiltrated the group of activists to pass on information to a gigantic food corporation. She pretended to have similar interests and

¹²⁶¹ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the *Corporate Behavior Manifestations Seminar*, “Video from Corporate Behavior Manifestations Seminar,” Lobby, accessed November 17, 2014, <http://infarma.info/lobby/projevy-korporativniho-chovani-seminar-1-cast-uvod/>.

even took part in writing a book about the hidden practices of this corporation. We started to build the dramaturgy around this story,”¹²⁶² Dočolomanský said. “But as we wanted to inform others about something that happened; at first we needed to try to confront ourselves with it, to be able to share it later on.”¹²⁶³ The case enabled the ensemble to research more about the topic of spying (corporate and other) figuring out there are three main strategies: to be shy and invisible, to be visible and loud, but the best alibi is to have an intimate relationship with a person from the infiltrated group. The strategy—well known also to police¹²⁶⁴—is to enter other people’s intimacy, share as many private moments as possible that create a great ‘cover’ and give the best results, and to disappear suddenly when the mission is complete.

After finding the case and deciding that this would be the main plot of the performance (July 2013), hours of interviews with the activists followed and research concentrated on the trials (the criminal and civil one) and the court documents. As most of the information was in French, it was Minh Hieu Nguyen who researched the case and translated the information for the ensemble. The spy working under a false name Sarah Meylan (this name appears in the performance, even if the name of the corporation is not revealed in any public materials) was around 21 years old while she spied the activists. “That appealed to us, because it was very dramatic. Why she did that? She was so young. The girl’s reports were ridiculous, like those about two clowns who would take part in a happening against the corporation; many unimportant details. Those testimonies are very interesting to read. It shows that she was very excited at the beginning. Excited to be somebody else and to do something in secret. Corporate spying is different.”¹²⁶⁵ The documents show that most probably she was unaware of what she was doing and it was the possibility of transformation that excited her; taking a risk. That also explains why she suddenly decided to stop her mission: the double-life had become unbearable.

“It was in 2003, inside of the working group Attac-Vaud called ‘Globalization and Multinational,’ we had an idea to research this large Swiss multinational corporation to see what was hidden underneath its smooth image,”¹²⁶⁶ one of the activists said during the interview with Farm in the Cave. However, when the first spy was sent among the activists,

¹²⁶² Viliam Dočolomanský, “Míváme strach přijímat provokativní myšlenky” [We are Afraid to Accept Provocative Ideas], interview by Klara Fleyberková, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://magazin.aktualne.cz/kultura/divadlo/docolomansky-mivame-strach-prijimat-provokativni-myslenky/r~8d31f984b4d811e387f2002590604f2e/>, (translation mine).

¹²⁶³ Dočolomanský, “Míváme strach přijímat provokativní myšlenky,” *op. cit.*, (translation mine).

¹²⁶⁴ See: Paul Lewis and Rob Evans, “Police spies: in bed with a fictional character,” *The Guardian* March 1, 2013, accessed February 18, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/mar/01/police-spy-fictional-character>.

¹²⁶⁵ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁶⁶ Archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed January 2015.

the corporation was unaware they were planning to write a book; the corporation was only alarmed because of the G8 summit in France and Attac (an entire network is based there) organized protests and demonstrations. As the group Attac-Vaud was placed in the direct neighborhood as the headquarters of the corporation, it was decided to send a spy without clearer reason, but with the knowledge that through those six people they would probably reach the database of the entire anti-globalization movement. Nguyen contacted the activists shortly after they had won a civil case in the Swiss court and the corporation paid a fine for the illegal infiltration during which the personal rights of the clients were violated. However, the group failed in the more important criminal case that was happening simultaneously.

It was TV journalists who revealed the case in 2008, nearly four years after the spying had happened and contacted the activists who had not known about it. The first spy—using a fake name ‘Sara Meylan’—said in the court that she was never precisely informed about the goal of her mission.¹²⁶⁷ Her task was to become a member of the group; she even took part in the writing process and was one of the authors (under her false name) of the book written against the corporation. She left the group unrevealed asking to quit the mission as she stopped managing two parallel lives. The second spy, also a woman, worked under her real name writing reports to the corporation. She was informed by the corporation that the group’s goal was to prepare violent demonstrations against the corporation and that is the reason why they needed to infiltrate the group. The group was not acting illegal, all its actions were publicly presented on their website. They were students—whistleblowers and critical ‘consumers’—asking questions, digging for information and wanting to ‘inform’ the public. *I don’t want to be a consumer. I want to be a citizen*—this quotation from one of the interviews is said during the performance. Just after saying it, the actress is asking the audience *Do you think it’s too much?*

As for the corporation their protest was very limited. “They were fighting for equal basis. Taking part in demonstrations, interested in topic of globalization. They were six or seven people—the movement was opened. From the very beginning they were open to people who wanted to join them. It was ridiculous because the book they published about the corporation consisted only of facts found on Internet. It was only about digging for information and choosing the ones that were the most valuable. The book is small and in a way ‘amateur.’ It is ridiculous that it was worth spying. It is available only in French and is not even available in bookstores; you could only order it online. It is ridiculous that the

¹²⁶⁷ Testimony of the spy made in 2008, from the court record, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed January 2015.

company invested so many millions and was afraid of six people who were questioning its reputation.”¹²⁶⁸ After the book was published the group split naturally; some of them changed e-mails. And the e-mails turned to be important to prove in the court that ‘Sara Meylan’ existed and that she was a spy. As it was found out later she was not a member (did not create a file and nobody checked it as the membership was based on trust) and as she refused to be in any photo (explaining it as shyness), it was difficult to prove it. According the law her actions were not illegal as she only attended some activities under a false name. The girl worked for the private security agency ‘external’ to the corporation. Farm in the Cave was the most inspired by the situation of cheating. Nguyen, playing Spy character in the performance, said, “What interested us the most in the case was that such large corporation was interested in spying such small group of six people, who only dig for information and they had published a very small book. It was absurd—that they reacted to such small case and organized a long-term spying project.”

The characters of the spy and activists who appear in *Whistleblowers* are developed from the interviews made with the real activists and are based on the information they gave to the actors: a pragmatic man who used to work as an IT employee in the corporation and who claims the corporation needs to have something to hide if they are interested in spying on common people; a naïve and enthusiastic girl that is fighting for better world and human rights; a suspicious woman who does not trust anybody and a radical man; the rebel and union worker. This group was contrasted with the spy who was described as cute and shy. One of the activists said in the interview that writing this book was one of the most beautiful projects she had ever took part in—as it was based on trust and was an organic work of the community. They did not want to refuse anybody only because she was young and shy, they said. The activists divided among each other the topics—the problem of water in Latin America, Colombian union workers, milk powder issue in Philippines, coffee trade, etc.

The spy was very enthusiastic, so she took part in this work; the corporation helped her to write her chapter about coffee. At the beginning she was very excited about the infiltration;¹²⁶⁹ as her activity was ‘legal’ and her only task was to send reports, she was amazed to be given such a mission. In an e-mail she wrote to her boss about quitting the mission after few months—that served as a proof in the court—she wrote she wants to stop because of her ‘ethics and philosophy of life.’¹²⁷⁰ In the performance Sarah Meylan writes a

¹²⁶⁸ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁶⁹ Court record, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed January 2015.

¹²⁷⁰ Court record, archive of Farm in the Cave, accessed January 2015.

sentence on a glass wall *I want to stop my mission*. She informs ‘somebody’ that has no face like the shuttered Embassy windows at the demonstration Farm in the Cave took part in. Apparently after a certain time, ‘Sara Meylan’ started to feel uncomfortable betraying people she was meeting daily. Researching about spying, Nguyen found information that “a spy has no empathy and only mimics the pain of others.”¹²⁷¹ One of the interviewed activists said she does not feel betrayed by Sara, but by the system; she said: “They want to reduce us to consumers.”¹²⁷²

One of the most important documents where the case is present is the investigative documentary film *Fight Nestlé to the Death*¹²⁷³ that deals directly with the topic of a possible aftermath of spying of Attac-Vaud group. The journalists undertook the case of a Colombian union worker’s death who had been expected in Switzerland to testify against the corporation, but was kidnapped and murdered just before. The other link leads to the murder of a union worker in Philippines. The journalists find proof of copied e-mails from a Swiss lawyer that most probably are connected with spying on the Attac-Vaud group, as the corporation gained the access to restricted e-mails. The emotionless expression of the corporation’s representative who speaks in the film inspired the actors to create some intentions for the scene called *Inside the Food Corporation*.

That documentary is also the basis for projecting the actual names of murdered Colombian union workers upon the *Whistleblowers's* glass wall. This is also why the ‘advertisement’ inspired by the Philippines case concludes the performance as a ‘smooth image’ maintained by the corporation (both cases define the dramaturgical framework highlighted by consistent grey and pink costumes). All the issues raised during the performance relate to the book written by the activists: coffee, water, milk formula, deaths of Colombian union workers—the issues raised in the performance as if present a collective imagination of the activists’ group recalling chapters from their book.

Revealing of the spy by the journalists caused paranoia among the activists’ group that was unaware of it. The activists felt their trust was abused and that they’d been cheated. One of the main recurring topics in the interviews by Farm in the Cave was chaos and paranoia. The group stopped its activities, collaboration turn into suspiciousness and distrust towards everybody. They managed to reveal the third spy that was still among them: suddenly a girl in

¹²⁷¹ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague March 1, 2015.

¹²⁷² Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁷³ *Fight Nestlé to the death* (dir. Isabelle Ducret and Mauro Losa), 2012. The film is available on website, “Against Nestlé to the death,” RTS, accessed February 14, 2015, <http://www.rts.ch/video/emissions/temps-present/4920109-against-nestle-to-the-death.html>.

headphones was suspicious only because she might have been recording and not listening to music.

The atmosphere of idealism was quoted in the scene *Writing a Book* where ‘many hands’ write the same thing, being as one organism. The idealism appears also in speeches of the actors in the *Demonstration* scene, even though those quotations are clashed with the Brechtian alienation effect. “They did not know they were spied upon, they were an opened group, did not want to exclude a girl only because she was shy. She got access to restricted emails, through which they were communicating with Colombian union workers. It was about ethics, an access to e-mail gave contacts to Colombians. She stopped by herself. But what happened after she left is the chaos. The group was not able to continue their work.”¹²⁷⁴ The case offered a simple situation to build the dramaturgy around and highlight the topic of the ultra-power of corporations in the globalized world where it is not easy to track actions as they happened away from the country the corporation is based. At the end spying as an abstract acting is reflected by real and dramatic aftermaths.

During the conference Dočolomanský said, “Suddenly it was a great boredom to go through this information [that the ensemble gathered in Brussels]. And this is the level with which we start *Whistleblowers*, that at the beginning activists are cynical, trying to get as much information as possible about criminal practice of the corporation.”¹²⁷⁵ The gathered material was perhaps at the very beginning as abstract for the activist as for the ensemble, said Dočolomanský: “The sensitivity opens in the situation when during your research you meet the person that was truly taking part in it and only after this cynical phase, step by step you understand it is not fun.”¹²⁷⁶ The abstract case transformed into human experience. It was as if Farm in the Cave repeated the story of turning ‘facts from Internet’ into a personal case thanks to direct contact with people who were spied upon and harmed by the ‘system’ on a psychological level. As if the group of students fighting for a ‘better world’ was chosen to play ‘black sheep’ under the ‘state of exception.’ As David Ondračka mentioned during the seminar the ‘absurd’ reactions towards a person who revealed some facts in public. The action of the multinational company to spy on a group of students recalls oppressive behavior of institutions taking care nobody else would repeat the same ‘mistake.’ *Whistleblowers* at the end are described by its creators as a ‘probe on the borders of physical theater, video and

¹²⁷⁴ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁷⁵ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

documentary theater.¹²⁷⁷ Some critics mark this as a shift in Farm in the Cave's poetics.¹²⁷⁸ With *Whistleblowers* Farm in the Cave identifies for the first time strategies associated with political and 'devised' theatre as essential for their examination of systems and human relations reflecting upon the system.¹²⁷⁹ In contrast to *Waiting Room*, the ensemble decided to narrate a specific story of an individual's 'fate.'¹²⁸⁰

The areas interested and researched by Farm in the Cave focused in the *Whistleblowers'* plot were narrowed to a few that transformed into specific settings: the trial of Attac against the corporation; Sara Meylan's infiltration of the activists' group; an 'ideal world,' a community of activists; the feeling of paranoia, distrust, suspiciousness (going back, reading e-mails, feeling someone is following them, etc.)—the feeling of being trapped in a spider's net, as one of the interviewed persons described it; inside the corporation; murders of the union workers. Nguyen researched more about deaths of the Colombian union workers, finding detailed information about the way they died or circumstances they disappeared that are projected as information on the glass wall that is a part of *Whistleblowers'* set design. The actress in a way repeated the process of 'digging' for information on Internet to 'inform' the public about the Colombians, giving other facts than simple statistics.

As one of the activists used to work as an IT employee in the corporation, *Whistleblowers* are present as his story of getting out of the corporation, being involved with activist's group that write a book, meeting Spy, getting distracted by revealing of the case and having nightmares about the killed union worker who was supposed to come to testify against the corporation. In the closing scene Former Employee of the Corporation 'hides' the body of Union Worker under a carpet and watches the final 'advertisement.' Paradoxically, it is not him who undergoes through the transformation, but the character of Spy who 'changes' during the story-line into more sensitive and disappears. The consequences (the dead Union Worker) affect Former Employee of the Corporation, but he cannot transform, hides the problem. In the scene when the activists come to realize their co-worker Spy is a spy, they 'vomit' white gloves which they then put on their hands in reminiscence of 'dirt' swept from under the carpet with which they 'washed' their bodies some scenes before.

¹²⁷⁷ "Whistleblowers," Farma v jeskyni, accessed February 25, 2015,

http://infarma.info/projects_farm.php?_project=citizens-vs-corporation-lobby-project.

¹²⁷⁸ See: Julie Kočí's speech during Farm in the Cave's International Symposium *From the research to the performance*, Prague April 13, 2015.

¹²⁷⁹ See: "Farma v jeskyni se blíží k premiéře" [Farm in the Cave is Approaching the Premiere], Farma v jeskyni, accessed February 23, 2015, <http://ww.infarma.info/view/farma-v-jeskyni-se-blizi-k-premiere-1394982647>.

¹²⁸⁰ One of the activists came to see the premiere.

The speaker (voice over) accompanies the actor's physical actions giving a lot of information. A 'collage'¹²⁸¹ (translated into English) of interviews, quotations from the books, documentaries and articles overwhelm the spectators; very soon the amount of information does not touch the audience any more which is an artists' purpose to make the facts abstract. The speaker 'enters' the performance only once to congratulate a great book; he is a 'fan' of the activists. As if he would be an enthusiastic 'reader' of the book who is fascinated by the revealed crimes of the corporation, not knowing that the infiltration of people's private lives is affecting everybody as the corporations (or the way modern systems are designed) are 'spying' each of us by collecting data that could be misused. Dočolomanský, commenting on the case, said: "Till now the activists do not know what kind of information Sarah Meylan gathered about them."¹²⁸²

Spy appears on the stage with the clear intention to acquire the group's trust. Her behavior is ambivalent. On one hand she is submissive, the weakest in the group and the most excited. On the other hand she knows she is the one who rules the situation and her real task is to 'destroy' their work. The character of Spy is not clearly negative, but perhaps as ambivalent as the character of Investigative Journalist from *Waiting Room*. The 'choir' in *Whistleblowers* is a group of 'good' activists; each of them has its own character based on the 'characters' of the real activists, but is also a 'figure' of any possible reactions towards the activism. In the moment Spy succeeds (she gains the trust): she decides to quit the mission. It is different than with *The Theatre* when the 'victim' of the *Puppetry World* was single, now a single intruder victimizes 'society.'

In *Whistleblowers* Farm in the Cave consciously chose the contemporary topic to examine society and relations we live in. The diversity of how people in different circles (also economical) perceive the contemporary world. Perhaps meeting with Brazilian cane workers who are 'enslaved' by the system of the way they were able to work, opened the perspective that causes post-colonial 'blindness' and introduces the topic of fair-trade and fair-work. *The Theatre* program was prepared already in the time when the *Lobby* project was being developed and that is why the theme of consumption appeared there as a "reaction to the world which had begun to avoid direct, living human experience." As if *Lobby* added the new layer to *The Theatre*: "Theater is a way of searching for human freedom within a social system. Freedom, however gradually becomes merely a game, theatre. (...) The grotesque community of actors with their Capitão and Vaqueiro confront the world of consumption,

¹²⁸¹ See: *Whistleblowers* program, April 1, 2014.

¹²⁸² Dočolomanský, "Míváme strach přijímat provokativní myšlenky," *op. cit.* (translation mine).

which is gradually eating this utopian community from the inside. What happens when people lose their cultural identity and with it their sources of vitality and meaning of life?”¹²⁸³

In the framework of the *Lobby* project a public debate entitled *Who manipulates us?* was held at the Stanica Culture Centre Žilina-Záriečie on December 5, 2013. The theatre company found its role as a ‘citizen’ seeking to know in order to inform the others—spectators—and ‘activate’ them. The dramaturgic structure of *Whistleblowers* starts with the ‘smooth’ image of a corporation.¹²⁸⁴ A man is struggling with his coffee machine; people move repetitively putting on coats (grey on outside and pink on inside) on and taking them off—performing an image of the corporate mundane repetitive routine. It is the story Dočolomanský mentioned during the seminar about the corporation—a coffee machine producer noticed a post going viral in social media complaining about the product asking, if a ‘superhero’ from the advertisement would come to fix it; so he dispatched some workers without even contacting the consumer. This is illustrative of a bizarre situation in which a powerful corporation reacts to single complaint (however, done in public) of a ‘little man.’ Emil Leeger’s physical score—based on improvisation on the topic of a coffee machine—remain as the opening scene also because of the immediate association that overworked people in corporations drink a lot of coffee. On the other hand, coffee is also connected to non-fair trade since the colonial times. The whole situation with the public post in social media is not performed, but remain as an inspiration and actor’s intention.

Dočolomanský commenting on changes in the ensemble’s physical language that appears in *Whistleblowers*, said: “Each time we go on the different path that we had never walked before. With every project, the entire group is reconstituted from scratch. We try to reject the previous aesthetics and infiltrate an entire new cosmos. It serves as a great task, because we’ve been working together twelve years and we have developed our own characteristic language of expression. Yet we do try to get rid of the previous habits which is very hard.”¹²⁸⁵ The topic of money and power researched in casino and hotel lobbies developed into representation and reputation—an image of the corporation and the single story of trust and betrayal.

After this beginning the audience see activists writing with an image of many hands on the table—a collective work which turns into writing with chalk on the floor. A girl appears. She is naked; speaking about the activists’ press release she waits for somebody to

¹²⁸³ *The Theatre* program (booklet), undated.

¹²⁸⁴ Description of the performance refers to the structure that was altered after the premiere on April 1, 2014.

¹²⁸⁵ Dočolomanský, “Míváme strach prijímat provokatívni myšlenky,” *op. cit.* (translation mine).

protect her: she gains their trust—one activist offers her his jacket, but she refuses and carries a shield instead. When she comes for the second time, she brings a vacuum cleaner and inquires about access to e-mails. The third time she appears with plates. All the props are metaphorical as in the previous performances of *Farm in the Cave*. The plates remained after the *Intervention* in the casino, also because of the subject of food—something that concerns everybody (many times an the image of a human head on a plate recurs in the physical scores); and refers clearly to the food corporation.

The actors' task was to 'embody' each prop. Many times simple repetition of body movements with the prop introduces sexual associations and makes the audience laugh (coffee machine, vacuum cleaner). The other props that appear are hair under the carpet and white gloves. The activists are drawn under the carpet by Spy to bring-out hair in the meaning of dirt or murders. It is a metaphor of information 'hidden under the carpet.' But it is Spy who slices it open. The vacuum cleaner she carries in the other scene is to suck the information, not to clean it.¹²⁸⁶ Explaining the meaning of the carpet in *Whistleblowers*, Dočolomanský said people walk on 'dirt' in the same way that products are made misusing cheap labor from 'developing countries.' He referred to the issue of the inability of the individual to refuse supporting corporations.¹²⁸⁷

"Many times Viliam [Dočolomanský] asked for specific quality in the body—the quality of expression like 'etheric'—that you are intense inside, want to shout, but outside you are 'etheric.' That was the intention for the scene with *It's raining* sentence—of course it is symbolic. It refers to the idea of the corporation that wants to sell water, something that belongs to everybody, to the planet. I put water on my head. But inside it is a double focus: I'm excited to met them, I would do everything to get inside to check them, but outside it is different. There are different layers of intensity."¹²⁸⁸ What was important—Nguyen admitted—was the direct, not abstract expression. Some images were referring to the general situation; some concentrated on the case, similarly as in *Sclavi* where the story of the Emigrant/Hordubal was confronted with the anonymous, group images.

However, in case of *Whistleblowers* there was no unified training, but each actor needed to follow an individual one; to search for one's own intentions in the story. The process of creating the performance did not start from specific training. There were common elements like 'running backwards,' but the only unifying 'qualities' used in the performance

¹²⁸⁶ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

¹²⁸⁷ Viliam Dočolomanský's speech during *Farm in the Cave's* International Symposium *From the research to the performance*, Prague April 23, 2015.

¹²⁸⁸ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague May 22, 2014.

were perhaps a ‘reversed quality,’ performed in the scene entitled *Corporation World* and repetitive bouncy gestures used by activists in the scene *Beginning of Activism*; two women are moved (like ‘talking heads’) by men who gesticulate in lieu of them.

The ‘reversed quality’ meant a quality of the movement as it could be observed on the videotape that is put backwards mode. It appears in an opening scene when the actors put on and off the pink jackets that refer to the corporation; the physical technique of this quality is connected to specific rhythm of breathing. It creates an illusion of something that goes forward in time, but backwards in the vision. The spectator has a feeling something is different, unnatural; it is a quality that is not organic and refers to virtual world of images; representing the world of corporation where one has no ‘body’ to copy.¹²⁸⁹ Together with the advertisement shown at the end it gives a framework for the narration about the case. The narration is linear, recalling *Dark Love Sonnets*—also based on the ‘true’ story; in the same way, *Whistleblowers* does not copy the story-line, but alters the true chronology. In the performance, the activists got to know about Spy during a conference; a microphone stops working preventing them from making their point. Many images are simple—a *Joy* from publishing the book turns into ‘flying’ in the room, champagne on the glass wall; frustration is rendered by throwing many books at Speaker when he comes to congratulate—as if using cliché.

In *Whistleblowers* the actors work live with video cameras, which are partly projected upon a glass wall that is a part of the set design. The world/image is duplicated thanks to the medium introducing an illusion—such as in the moment when a recorded ‘empty’ suit resembles a little baby walking. As audience we see both—an actress with the camera and the image that ‘misleads.’ Experimenting on acting together with the recorded video originates in the *Amigas* project where the actors were using videos to create their own doubles; to ‘face’ oneself; ‘confront’ their own double by singing together, meeting, being in contact with an image from the past (previously recorded). The scenes from *Amigas* were presented to public in the framework of *Action 3* in 2011.¹²⁹⁰ In *Whistleblowers* two activists race among four doors of triangular ‘room’ opening and closing them, following their own image in a state of

¹²⁸⁹ “A corporation (derived from Latin *corpus*—a body) is a legal subject, which—in spite of the fact that it is created by more persons—has, from the point of view of law, the position of a single person.” In *Whistleblowers* program, April 1, 2014.

¹²⁹⁰ *Actions* consisted of ‘miniatures’ or physical scores of Farm in the Cave’s actors combined with ‘scenes’ created by participants of the workshop. There were three *Actions* in total: *Action 1* after the workshop *The creation of action and a physical text*, Roxy/NoD December 18, 2010; *Action 2* after the workshop *Specific training and creation of a theatrical language*, Roxy/NoD March 7, 2011; *Action 3* after the workshop *Musicality in the theatre and scenic art in music* Alfréd ve Dvoře December 21, 2011.

paranoia. The Czech critics commented the scene reminds them *laterna magica* principle of acting with a recorded image.¹²⁹¹

The set design of *Whistleblowers* divides scene into outside and inside thanks to triangle 'room' made of mirror/glass wall (the image depends on the light and blinds). The surface of this mirror/glass wall has a hole that could recall an image of 'broken' glass after throwing a stone. The triangular space delineates a private room, but as such one visible to the outside. Within this space there is the same table and red armchair as 'outside,' so displayed is actually the same setting, just doubled, as if a smaller room was inside the bigger one. The *Shower* scene that is a naturalistic image showing 'realistic intimacy' is also very metaphoric. A former Employee of the Corporation (a pragmatic activist who 'narrates' the story) takes a shower when Spy enters the room as an intruder, helping him to 'clean' himself, but also used by him to clean; the presence of Spy is like a bad 'memory,' that transforms into 'her' memory as soon as he exits the shower and Spy tries to 'cleanse' herself with a white ceramic plate.

On the question why Dočolomanský had chosen topic of corporations, he answered: "I feel that we need to get out for a kind of unaware romanticism. In the performance we portrays consequences of lobbying on the human beings. We play with aspects of conscious idealism, or—speaking differently—we consciously play with aspects of human naivety and idealism that try to save the last good thing in the world. Also we work with irony, sarcasm, factuality, austerity, minimalism, what is necessary to communicate the issue on stage."¹²⁹² Dočolomanský explained that is the reason why he did not include singing or cultural elements here. Those appear on stage only as an expression of irony. The singing that appears in the production is the Swiss national anthem or is inspired by advertisements. The jazz music that is partly improvised live by the musician that is placed on side of stage and accompanies it in similar way as the 'voice over' narration of the speaker. "We become apathetic consumers. We can't see reality in broader context and actually we do not live. I see it as problematic that we understand culture in the contemporary world as a product, something that a man would pay for and consume. I'm afraid that we understand like that also our own lives."¹²⁹³

¹²⁹¹ Lucie Kocourková, "Zavazující Informátoři Farmy v jeskyni" [Committed Whistleblowers of Farm in the Cave] *Opera Plus hudba a tanec* April 4, 2014, accessed March 17, 2015, <http://operaplus.cz/zavazujici-informatori-farmy-v-jeskyni/>.

¹²⁹² Dočolomanský, "Farma je můj život," *op. cit.* (translation mine).

¹²⁹³ Dočolomanský, "Farma je můj život," *op. cit.* (translation mine).

Conclusion

“This is no *eintopf* synthesis,” summarized Dočolomanský in 2007. “We do not accumulate skills or dexterity; our work is more an expression for which a convention of a single genre is insufficient. This expression overcomes, liberates and negates the very forms within which it works. I create an exterior structure as a primary strategy in my work: an action (I prefer the word action than choreography) that—together with Farm in the Cave’s actors—includes interior inner action as well carries an intention contrary to the one on the outside. The duel between those parallel flows of concentration creates a specific ‘counter-pressure,’ a ‘counterwind’ that, like a boat, enables the situation to sail. It isn’t only the movement that exists—it is the first layer that we can see; The movement is an expression of something unanticipated underlying, seeping through and seeking to negate that movement. Energy overcomes the form like steam from a pressure cooker,”¹²⁹⁴ Farm in the Cave’s methodology carries specific implications for laboratory theatre in general: their taking inspiration from an anthropological approach using ‘expeditions’—trips undertaken for artistic inspiration; their searching for non-textual strategies for crafting a visual text; their non-linear way of building the story-line composed as a music of physical images and vocal intonations; and their creation of character types based on improvisation. From the very beginning in 2001, Farm in the Cave and Viliam Dočolomanský developed not only specific ways to create theatre, but also clear motifs that recur—very often exploring the persona of the outsider, a person in a liminal situation in confrontation with society.

Up to now, the five performances Farm in the Cave produced have examined love, home, memory, freedom, and trust; but those values have been represented in performance as hatred (of an artist by ‘philistines’ / *Dark Love Sonnets*), rejection (of the one who had emigrated / *Sclavi*), political manipulation (the Holocaust, xenophobia / *Waiting Room*), slavery (historical and modern one, but also metaphorical / *The Theatre*) and betrayal (spying, manipulating with information / *Whistleblowers*). “We always engage topics that provoke us personally and socially—things that anger us. An actor when angered generates his own articulation—rhythmical, tempo-dynamic, spatial—that is not illustrative, but brings up the topic and communicates it.”¹²⁹⁵ In a 2015 interview Dočolomanský reiterates the same strategy and explanation of Farm in the Cave’s interests. He says he searches for a critical, strong intervention that could be transmitted to the spectators; to experience something first in

¹²⁹⁴ Viliam Dočolomanský, “Technika?...,” *op. cit.*, p.58 (translation mine).

¹²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

the unknown place where the actors and himself could understand something new about themselves non-intellectually, but physically in order not to play or illustrate, but also to live something and share it with the spectators.¹²⁹⁶

Typical creation process for Farm in the Cave requires actor's personal involvement (by rhythm, tempo, associations) transferred by physical structure, improvisation. The dramaturgy starts from research into the unknown, unfamiliar, an 'initial disorientation;' and transforming the intellectual into an experience.¹²⁹⁷ Farm in the Cave's actors embody the given culture, seeking to 'understand it' through the body;¹²⁹⁸ learn aspects of a culture by repeating its elements slowly, breaking-down movements to comprehend them.¹²⁹⁹ Frequently, actors will quote an embodied technique to present something authentic energetically. Physical work starts with improvisation. Actors prepare ten different ways of doing something (like walking, swinging, etc.).¹³⁰⁰ Thereupon, the director selects the most interesting examples and develops them. He might propose a different rhythm, musicality, quality or intention. Dočolomanský exploits inner dramas that he finds in actors. Actors adapt such 'dramas' for their stage personas—like Varadzinová's reservation in the context of her assigned role to observe (Polana in *Sclavi*, Journalist in *Waiting Room*, member of an 'audience' in *The Theatre*), or Nižník's asocial behavior when doing something embarrassing but potentially dangerous (Emigrant in *Sclavi*, Man in *Waiting Room*, a leader of an 'audience' in *The Theatre*)—are hard to overcome to find the new ones. This obstacle is similar to the ones Odin Teatret's actors speak about; actor's inner cliché.

During the incubation period the director works with the actors as 'hunter,' researching and seeing things they'd otherwise overlook if not so focused on searching. They create contradictory motifs, ambivalent feelings and counter-tensions trying to be unpredictable for the spectator. "It is important to follow the flow and believe that 'something' will spurt out... The worst is when 'it' would block. The flow would create the material by itself. The material would find its shape. One must not anticipate, and avoid being wiser than the material being worked with; it is important to be in the position of an observer

¹²⁹⁶ See: Viliam Dočolomanský in "Tanec na okraji" [Dance on the Edge], Konfrontace Petra Fischera March 26, 2015, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10899989577-konfrontace-petra-fischera/215562227010009-tanec-na-okraji/>.

¹²⁹⁷ See: Viliam Dočolomanský's answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

¹²⁹⁸ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, op. cit., p.66.

¹²⁹⁹ Kršiaková gives an example of capoeira. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, op. cit., p.60.

¹³⁰⁰ Kršiaková gives an example of ten ways to work with keys as a prop while building the character of Capitão. See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, op. cit., p.57.

who enables things develop independently—to be on guard as a hunter,”¹³⁰¹ Dočolomanský explains. It’s the flow that’s important—that ‘drive’ in the movement and the ‘groove’ in the singing. Moreover, proper physical diction in movement directs the narrative on a physical/visual level that incorporates unifying rhythmical patterns that actors embody. “At that moment the choreographer stops, I continue. A first layer could be the basic inner action; the second layer is a movement’s form that fights with it. That is how the counterwind appears as I’ve mentioned before. The form from the outside stays the same, but thanks to this constant destruction from the inside it would always say something different, I’m always reacting to something different, answering to something different, summoning something.”¹³⁰² Dočolomanský says his art has the potential to purify and heal the spectators; it introduces a direct focus that Dočolomanský compares to a state of meditation—a unique experience in modern culture.¹³⁰³

The concept for the performance derives from the director, the topics are found by the actors through research. The actors read, choose and improvise; then they perform their initial ideas, provoking the director to select, offer direction and edit. The initial layer derives from the actor, his personality, perception, imagination, and body; the second layer comes from the director’s ideas that transforms the creative process into a collective endeavor. Unseen aspects are derived by the actors, their specialties, interests, and different technical backgrounds; into this Dočolomanský seeks out strong images with multiple meanings, specific energy based on highly rhythmical sense of structuring, and specific motifs that could be tracked through Farm in the Cave’s productions.

In every performance there is a private aspect in synch with what the public is shown. Very often Dočolomanský seeks to render an actor’s inner motivations on stage; very often the actor duplicates himself in his stage persona. Dočolomanský said his role as a director is to surprise his actors, to “surround them, jump on their back—sometimes metaphorically, sometimes literally, scare them and later surprise with the opposite.”¹³⁰⁴ The body position of the actors is very particular—the knees are bent so it is easier for the performer be grounded starting from lowering the central pelvis; it is also ‘heavy’ as if the actor were pushing heavy furniture,¹³⁰⁵ but except of this ‘heaviness’ actors are often very sharp and fast/on the border

¹³⁰¹ Dočolomanský, “Technika?...,” *op. cit.*, p.59 (translation mine).

¹³⁰² Dočolomanský, “Technika?...,” *op. cit.*, p.58 (translation mine).

¹³⁰³ See: Dočolomanský in “Tanec na okraji,” *op. cit.*

¹³⁰⁴ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹³⁰⁵ See: Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, *op. cit.*, p.10.

of illusion.¹³⁰⁶ The way of editing movements and scenes recalls film. The spectator of Farm in the Cave's performances is many times captured into fast, accelerating tempo from the beginning till the end with few precisely composed stop-times/freeze (breaks of silence where the energy supposed to 'spread in the space'¹³⁰⁷)—the rhythm of the performance many times reminds a vortex (also because of the revolving elements).

The performances of Farm in the Cave are consciously constructed and run in fast tempo to keep the spectator's attention. Many elements like lighting design, words and movement are edited so as to leave the spectator no space to think; it is designed for the viewer to perceive only, be open towards emotion more than intellectual understanding. The director's idea is to create an opportunity for the spectator to forget himself, and to fully live an event, comprehend the performance only as a memory reflected in tranquility, blended in with the spectator's inner associations. "I'm trying to break conventional perception, so that the spectator would stay in the concentration together with us and would not allow himself to be lulled."¹³⁰⁸ Motifs of mirrors, revolving objects/circular movements, changes of the clothes help to gain this specific rhythm of accelerating in the visual.

Very often the theme is about an outsider, a person excluded from the community. Each main character is unloved and seeks love/acceptance—this is their main drive (Lorca, Emigrant, Journalist, Capitão/Intruder, Spy). All the characters tend to be presented in a dominant/submissive position towards each other. It is rarer in the framework of Dočolomanský's art that relationships are presented with some kind of equilibrium (perhaps only story of Lorca and his lover carries some different 'line'¹³⁰⁹). The feeling of dominance is presented as ambivalent—already experienced physically by the actors in one of Farm in the Cave's most important partner-exercises called 'leader and slave'—as somebody who leads could easily abuse. The relationship of dependence that often creates aggression (sometimes an inner aggression, frustration) also defines the lyrical (intimate) scenes. Each lover or romantic relationship is laughed out by the community—it appears in *Dark Love Sonnets* and it would repeat in a different context in *Sclavi* and *The Theatre*. The female body

¹³⁰⁶ Iben Nagel Rasmussen, after seeing *Waiting Room* during the festival *Farma 2007*, commented that this characteristic body posture caused the same stage expression of all actors. Based on my notes, Prague May 27, 2007.

¹³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰⁸ Dočolomanský, "Technika?...", *op. cit.*, p.58 (translation mine).

¹³⁰⁹ Another relationship that was different from this main pattern was explored by Eliška Vavříková and Róbert Nižník in the framework of rehearsals to *Sclavi* (theme of true love in everyday's life). Even if Vavříková mentions two situations that were built, they were not used in the performance, but transformed and partly used in relationships of Emigrant and Village Fool (Nižník and Roman Horák), The Other Man and Emigrant's Daughter (Matej Matejka and Maja Jawor). See: "Manželé Priganzovi" [Priganz Spouses] in Vavříková, *Mimesis a poiesis, op. cit.*, pp.118-127.

is often portrayed as an object (the character of Emigrant's Wife or Prostitutes in *Sclavi*, breastfeeding 'mothers' in *Whistleblowers*). Many times the stage represents a closed space (a room in *Dark Love Sonnets*, waiting room, stage in *The Theatre*)—that 'limits' the character and makes him follow the 'rules.' Each performance introduces some critic of society (philistines against artist / *Dark Love Sonnets*, the problem of migration / *Sclavi*, xenophobia / *Waiting Room*, art as a market and business / *The Theatre*, consumption and lies / *Whistleblowers*).

Dočolomanský often works with a crisis (physical and psychological). He leads the actors through a crisis to create an 'operational heat' that would liberate truth of expression or bring out something unexpected. "Adding new layers and new stimulus I give to actors new hindrances and new suggestions so that their thoughts would not be distracted by stupidities, but make them alive."¹³¹⁰ Perhaps it is searching for an intensifying experience of living. Dočolomanský works a lot with ambivalence and contradictions—inner intention versus physical actions; intimate story versus the main theme, etc. What is searched in each physical score is contrast, counter-positions; and searching for an essence, reducing the unnecessary.¹³¹¹ Working with video allows the director to choose the most interesting moments from the actor's proposals¹³¹² and shape the initial actor's response. Borderline situations are explored that brings up life itself as a central point. As a laboratory, *Farm in the Cave* is self-reflective, physically interested in extreme positions of the body, strong accents and quoting different genres.

Dočolomanský emphasizes that he works on the frontier of dance and theatre art.¹³¹³ "If there is too much dance, I'm not happy; too much drama as well, I need to be on the border."¹³¹⁴ Nina Vangeli, a Czech dance critic claims Dočolomanský's way of creating choreography is not different than in the dance theatre. She said that from the very beginning the movement he proposed to actors was very inventive, the same for the work of the body in space and the energy of the body in space. The layer that was exceeding the form of dance was for the critic an acoustic layer.¹³¹⁵ It is not the research or expeditions that make *Farm in the Cave*'s work special. Research is particularly necessary in every kind of art, many physical and dance theatres undergo the same process of collecting information, experiencing

¹³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹¹ See: Kršíaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, *op. cit.*, p.45.

¹³¹² See: Kršíaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi*, *op. cit.*, p.49.

¹³¹³ See: Dočolomanský in "Tanec na okraji," *op. cit.*

¹³¹⁴ Dočolomanský, "Technika?...", *op. cit.*, p.60.

¹³¹⁵ See: Nina Vangeli's speech during the symposium of 12th anniversary of *Farm in the Cave*, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

situations and embodying different techniques. Something that is exceptional (except the acoustic layer) is work with an actor's inner intentions. Laboratory theatre in that way is a model, a structure, framework, and specific form of making physical theatre.

As a laboratory is unique within the Czech context¹³¹⁶ Farm in the Cave is categorized among local critics as a dance group. In the broader landscape of site-specific performances, new circus, dance theatre, 'new voice-band' theatre or happenings, Farm in the Cave tries to label itself in the context of 'anthropology.'¹³¹⁷ As an example of dance theatre's principles, Czech choreographer Lenka Vagnerová approaches laboratory 'techniques' by inviting to her dance company performers of varied genres as breakdancing or acting, even asking non-dancers or non-professional dancers to risk other modes of expression. As a choreographer Vagnerová develops inspirations, researches, uses different movement qualities, works with physical 'types' using anthropological inspiration of rituals, traditional games, mythologies, etc. Vagnerová's *Riders*, premiered in 2012, was inspired by birds and the Central Asian traditional game *buzkashi*. Those two layers of inspiration (birds and the game) created a physical performance rooted in motifs derived from diverse mythologies (images of siren or phoenix appears in the physical layer; some movements were inspired by different genres like birds of paradise). *Buzkashi* is a traditional game run on horses from which games like *polo* emerged, in which horse-mounted players carry a goat's body (around 70kg, with head cut off) playing a brutal game of honor to drag a goat's body toward a goal. *Riders* develop similar theme as *The Theatre* where the group is constantly rejecting somebody (the inner fight for the position as in traditional *buzkashi*). *Buzkashi* as a game and a musical motive returns in the Vagnerová's performance few times; one scene is entirely build on this inspiration when a girl 'trapped' in the jacket is treated as an object/goat (visually it is a jacket with head) that man pass between each other. The situation change at the end and it is she who is ruling the men's behavior. *Riders*, developing primarily the topic of birds, has a strong dramaturgic line is about bullying and competition in the group's framework. "With this performance the game *Buzkashi* was an inspiration for the movement material as with the entire mise-en-scène with manipulation, brutality and an anarchy inherent within the regulations. The association with birds is essential; the confrontation among three males over a single body, displaying strength without little care for that person (female) about whom they

¹³¹⁶ Continuo Theatre based in Malovice is sometimes called a 'laboratory,' as it works on a daily basis and far from any cultural center, Jana Pilátová is also a literary adviser of this theatre. Among physical theatres that work in Prague, for instance, Teatr Novogo Fronta could be named.

¹³¹⁷ See: Viliam Dočolomanský's answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

fight; ignorance of what is going on... Two worlds—one above, the other below—that lives simultaneously, but without mutual understanding.”¹³¹⁸ This intellectual layer of *Riders* is unseen as it is mostly expressed by poetic images, and it was not reflected by dance critics.

One difference between dance theatre and theatre of the laboratory type like Farm in the Cave is that Dočolomanský is not himself a dancer; his visions and way of working are different. His directed stage movements consequently are more a display of the quality of movement than movement as would be directed by a choreographer who is a dancer himself; as Dočolomanský doesn't attempt movements himself his directing presses performers towards their physical borders. In one of the interviews Dočolomanský acknowledged how strongly he connects laboratory theatre directors to dance theatre: “I think Barba and Grotowski moved dance theatre which develops according to their principles, but I never studied it. I respect the work of Grotowski and Barba, but I had never been their student, and I would not be able to be.”¹³¹⁹ Contemporary dance that forms the basis of dance theatre—developed in the same period as laboratory theatres—is more of a searching for understanding the dancer's body: the movement and energy of the spine, bones, and joints proposes from anatomical structure. Work with the imagination was concentrated on connecting mind and body so that the body could present a proper form to the thought.¹³²⁰ The dancer was rather trying to build his autonomy, to express oneself through dance—which is a very different approach and objective than in physical theatre where the actor is a ‘glove’ (as in Brook's metaphor)¹³²¹ empty enough to be filled with a role. The origin of actors found in the liminal people who cross borders: thieves, prostitutes, slaves and servants was as well more connected to a critique of the system.

The way Farm in the Cave is developing the ‘model’ of laboratory theatres is transformed and adapted to the present. The process of creating a performance is initiated by travel to an unknown setting with the intention of observing and learning new techniques, the difference being that such cultural exchange (like *fiesta*, ‘barter,’ gathering) is not a theatrical practice. The main objective is a search for inspiration. Farm in the Cave, developing the

¹³¹⁸ Interview with Lenka Vagnerová, April 22, 2015.

¹³¹⁹ Dočolomanský, “Technika?...,” *op. cit.*, p.60.

¹³²⁰ See: Andrea Opavská, „Vymezení pojmu ‚současný tanec‘ a jeho porozumění v kontextu 20. a počátku 21. století“ [Defining the Concept of the ‘Contemporary Dance’ and its Understanding in the Context of the 20th and 21st Century] in Andrea Opavská, *Český současný tanec v devadesátých letech 20. století* [Czech Contemporary Dance in the 1990s of the 20th Century], PhD diss., work-in-progress, Hudební fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, 2015, pp.13-30 and Norbert Servos, “From the mythical era, from the here and now. What dance theatre is about” in Norbert Servos, *Pina Bausch Dance Theatre*, trans. Stephen Morris, Munich: K. Kieser Verlag, 2008, pp.11-16.

¹³²¹ See: Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op. cit.*, p.102.

theme from the inner sources, inner responses of actors, also creates performances that are personal for them, the themes are directly connected, reflecting modern society/culture. What is specific is Dočolomanský's interest in pop culture. Perhaps it could be said that as Staniewski was interested in low culture, Dočolomanský uses pop culture images.¹³²² Many elements are accidental. The themes are developed by association and freely use elements from other cultures (the Korean shaman in *The Theatre* or 'Vietnamese smile' in *Sclavi*). Eugenio Barba, asked about those 'ethnic' inspirations, said that according to him each artist as a cook is free to choose the ingredients from different countries to create a unique menu.¹³²³

In the interview for the Czech theatre newspaper, Barba reiterated that he developed Grotowski's idea of actor's training by himself using different sources like classical ballet, pantomime and acrobatics. "It was a multifarious mix that lacked a system and clear understanding, the main ground of those physical and sound techniques. After years I understood its aims clearer. Today I can say with certainty: it is a path that could alienate actors from their everyday habits and patterns of behavior and create an 'imaginary body' for this that would become an actor's personage."¹³²⁴ Barba emphasized that before Grotowski training was a term associated with gymnastics and that actor's exercises that exist before Grotowski's idea of training were known only to a small coterie of its practitioners. "Even if Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Vakhtangov or Copeau used exercises to prepare their actors, this practice did not spread and get popular in the mainstream theatre,"¹³²⁵ Barba said, contrary to Grotowski's idea of training. Even if laboratory theatres existed before Grotowski, his theatre proposed an actor's method and Barba's theatre group proposed a 'model' that could be repeated. The Czechoslovak White theatre—that was never a context for Farm in the Cave—shows the model to be 'repeated' needs many conditions to develop artistically.

Asked if Farm in the Cave duplicates the 'Grotowski-Barba' line, Barba answered: "Farm in the Cave had never seen Odin Teatret. Perhaps they've read my books, but original performances would not be created because one would read Grotowski's *Towards the Poor Theatre* or the basis of theatre anthropology. When I had seen Farm in the Cave for the first time, I liked it so much that I forgot to judge it. I was caught by the topic, rhythm,

¹³²² Dočolomanský once even made a joke that Farm in the Cave is the 'Michel Jackson' of laboratory theaters. Based on my notes, Prague March 2010.

¹³²³ Eugenio Barba, "Doma se necítím nikde" [I do not Feel at Home Anywhere], interview by Veronika Bednářová, *Divadelní noviny* 12/2007, accessed February 15, 2015.

<http://host.divadlo.cz/noviny/clanek.asp?id=13925>

¹³²⁴ Barba, "Doma se necítím nikde", *op. cit.* (translation mine).

¹³²⁵ *Ibid.*

imagination, images that tease my senses. When I was leaving the theatre, I was happy. And this feeling I do not have that often when I leave the theatre.”¹³²⁶ The Farm in the Cave’s initial situation was in a sense similar to every other theatre group that got inspired by laboratory theatre’s ethos. Since the 1960s ‘laboratory theatre’ found its ‘model’ that contains training (physical and mental), trips and research, the incubatory process of trails based on physical scores, improvisation, editing and performance that is open to change.

The other directors of ‘laboratorial’ type’s theatres who had seen Dočolomanský’s work said they consider it as autonomous. Staniewski after seeing *Dark Love Sonnets* in 2003 said he does not think they repeat any pattern of Gardzienice.¹³²⁷ Eugenio Barba that watched *Waiting Room* in the framework of ‘barter’ in 2009, emphasize Farm in the Cave and Viliam Dočolomanský’s originality. On the question what he thinks about Farm in the Cave’s acting, Barba answered the most important is an effort to create a real company and professional identity, will to be independent. He praised dourness, the great precision of rehearsals, discipline, and the results next to the ‘life force’ and strength of Dočolomanský. “Their work is not built on the knowledge of my technique, but on the personal devotion. You could know all the process of pre-expressivity of the performer by heart, but create a dead performance.”¹³²⁸ The laboratory theatre according to Barba needs to be a company (director plus experienced actors) to exist independently. The laboratory theatre’s director (in a way on the contrary to the choreographer) depends on his actors to develop and transmit his ideas (that was a case of Grotowski, Barba and Staniewski).

Even if over the years, Farm in the Cave managed to develop into a company that—except many external collaborators—consisted of director, manager, five or more actors, technical director, on average two apprentices and assistants, etc., working and performing in their own residency space—it could not be maintained. In 2011 Farm in the Cave reverted to a much smaller company consisting of a director, four actors, manager, and assistant plus the broad group of collaborators (actors, musicians, technicians, etc.) rehearsing in their own space, but performing in many different venues in Prague, and the group is constantly struggling to stay afloat and moreover, to afford professional collaborators. It is one of the very few independent theatre companies in the Czech Republic that work on the daily basis, financed mostly by the state’s granting system. Even if at the beginning the authorities did not want Farm in the Cave to represent the Czech Republic abroad as the topics were found

¹³²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³²⁷ Pilátová, *Hnízdo Grotowského*, *op. cit.*, p.274.

¹³²⁸ Eugenio Barba, “Doma se necítím nikde,” *op. cit.*, (translation mine).

controversial (the case of *Dark Love Sonnets* and topic of homosexual love),¹³²⁹ the international success (measured in awards and foreign invitations) changed this approach. International publicity made Farm in the Cave interesting for the Czech media. The company—that is nowadays recognized among alternative theatre groups as the one that keep a strong media position—constantly fights for the audience and struggles to exist.

Farm in the Cave calls itself a modern laboratory theatre.¹³³⁰ Dočolomanský said, “We are some kind of laboratory, because we search and experiment. We resist dance or musical form, but also drama. The performances are created by selecting a topic or cultural phenomenon hitherto unknown, and we try to learn more about that. (...) This laboratorial strategy of working is more demanding, it is an intense experience. You need a lot of patience, self-overcoming and a lot of effort, so that this kind of theatre could survive. However, what I expect from Farm in the Cave—an experiment, risk, courage and new language.”¹³³¹ But the ‘new’ language of Farm in the Cave is based on exercises inspired and developed by different laboratory theatres (such as segmentation of Ryszard Cieślak, Iben Nagel Rasmussen’s work with impulses derived from the pelvis, Gardzienice’s way of relaxing the spine). Farm in the Cave is a part of the international ‘laboratory theatre’ discourse and community sharing its interests and ethos, as well as the way of working (creative and organizational). “Unfortunately I’m not a direct follower of Grotowski or Barba (...) I’m not the follower, but I feel I am a member of this theatre family.”¹³³²

Dočolomanský says that each member of his theatre group has different responsibilities in addition to acting, helping with management tasks. The form of ‘laboratory’ brings-out a dynamic that is partly understood as spiritual, psychological practice on oneself through the actor’s art. “We are exclusive, like other similar theatre groups, because our goal is not to produce performances, but to research minority cultures as well; because of that, we create a ‘laboratorial space’ for searching the basis of human expression and presence as such. We try to create conditions in which we can grow personally.”¹³³³ Dočolomanský says that while working in Farm in the Cave nobody could hide between each

¹³²⁹ Interview with Jana Pilátová, Prague February 25, 2014.

¹³³⁰ See: “Profil,” *Farma v jeskyni*, accessed March 25, 2015, <http://infarma.info/enlng/profil-en>.

¹³³¹ Viliam Dočolomanský, “Tak jako kanárek v dole varuje Farma v jeskyni diváky před výbuchem” [Like a Canary in a Mine, Farm in the Cave Warns Spectators before Explosion], interview by Tomáš Štáštka, accessed March 20, 2015, http://kultura.idnes.cz/rozhovor-vilium-docolomansky-dks-/divadlo.aspx?c=A141027_102522_divadlo_ts (translation mine).

¹³³² Viliam Dočolomanský, “Mnohokrát jsem vynalézal kolo” [Many Times I Inverted a Wheel], interview by Martina Černá, May 6, 2011, accessed on April 12, 2015, <http://www.novinky.cz/kultura/salon/232239-mnohokrat-jsem-vynalezal-kolo-rika-vilium-docolomansky.html> (translation mine).

¹³³³ *Ibid.*

other: “At the beginning we observe the new members with an irony that they think with this intensive way of working, in this community that is called Farm in the Cave, they could hide their worst aspects. These worst parts of ourselves are pathways that emerge anyway, and they can be opened up for transformations.”¹³³⁴ Dočolomanský says he observes many stages of existence within such groups, labeling them: a stage of resistance, disagreement, doubt, fanaticism, enthusiasm, naivety, hard falls. He defined Farm in the Cave a ‘trainer of thoughts.’¹³³⁵ In 2014, during the 12th year anniversary symposium, Dočolomanský said that participating in this kind of theatre is for everybody (actors, organizers, assistants) a challenge of ego; thanks to suppressing one’s ego the ‘seconds of authenticity’ appear.¹³³⁶

The hierarchical structure present in the company is changeable. About the possibility to create a ‘main’ or leading role in the performance Dočolomanský said: “In Farm in the Cave we have no people who stay in the background, because everybody’s turn would come. Most of the people who are in Farm in the Cave for longer times would not avoid gaining larger space on stage. Sometimes people are unable to endure the process and a lot of them leave after three weeks or four years; there are people who leave and return, so there is a certain continuity between the roles and the people who perform them. If you would watch all the performances in a row, and observe just one actor how he changes, you would see another cosmos and new associations.”¹³³⁷ In the first productions it was the ‘oldest’ members who worked the longest with Dočolomanský that created the leading roles and the apprentices were creating the ‘backstage’ characters (a ‘line of actions’ that could be called a ‘choir’). In the newest productions, the ‘oldest’ members (also because of the pregnancies or health problems) created a ‘choir’ only and the ‘youngest’ members took the leading parts.¹³³⁸ But this development of circulation broke in 2011 with the restructuring of the company.¹³³⁹ In the

¹³³⁴ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹³³⁵ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

¹³³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³³⁷ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹³³⁸ In *Sclavi* the leading role was given to Róbert Nižník and Hana Varadzinová (who played ‘choir’ in *Dark Love Sonnets*), next to Matej Matejka who left the company after the premiere (he played a leading role in *Dark Love Sonnets*). In *Waiting Room* the leading roles were created by Róbert Nižník, Hana Varadzinová and Eliška Vavříková (who played ‘choir’ in *Sclavi* and ‘choir’ in *Dark Love Sonnets*—role taken after the actress that departed). In *The Theatre* Róbert Nižník and Hana Varadzinová were given roles of ‘choir’/‘false audience’ when the leading roles were created by Roman Horák (‘choir’ in *Sclavi*, *Waiting Room*), Cécile Da Costa (‘choir’ in *Sclavi*, *Waiting Room*; roles taken after Maja Jawor), Zuzana Pavuková (‘choir’ in *Waiting Room*), Anna Kršiaková (‘choir’ in *Sclavi*, *Waiting Room*; roles taken after Cécile Da Costa), etc.

¹³³⁹ As only four actors stayed as internal performers (Hana Varadzinová, Anna Gromanová, Jun Wan Kim, Minh Hieu Nguyen; Eliška Vavříková on maternity leave)—they created *Whistleblowers* with Emil Leeger as an external performer (who already played the role of Lorca’s lover in *Dark Love Sonnets*).

recent productions the ensemble decided to open up and to invite ‘external’ performers who would join the company for one project only.¹³⁴⁰ Because of this decision the structure of the company evolved towards the system dance theatre companies work with in the Czech Republic calling auditions for particular projects. Even if it could recall a laboratorial ‘constellation’ system of Staniewski, the difference is that the research (involving ‘expedition’ and searching for the topics in the framework of the given concept) is mostly done by Farm in the Caves members and is transmitted to the collaborators only later on during the rehearsals.¹³⁴¹

According to Dočolomanský the performers’ own concentration focuses the spectator’s thoughts. “Steps and rhythms are a path to different states of mind and a different relationships within society.”¹³⁴² By engaging attention through music (often fast, loud and in a specific dominant rhythm) or meaning of images or development of the dramaturgy, the viewer enters a different state of concentration that makes him able to focus and see something important for his life.¹³⁴³ “It is a ritual that we need and that we lost, because of so much information that surrounds us.”¹³⁴⁴ Dočolomanský says that something transmitted from a Brazilian dancer to the Farm in the Cave actor can transmit to the spectator of the performance and farther to spectator’s wife or children.¹³⁴⁵ His performances Dočolomanský calls an ‘everyday ritual’—a spiritual practice for a small cultivated audience.¹³⁴⁶ Farm in the Cave is for him a theatre that resonates differently with different people depending on their life experience, sensitivity. As such, this kind of theatre fills a communication gap amid the modern world’s feast of virtual relationships and activities that have taken the place of that which was once offered through rituals communal interaction.

In 2015, Dočolomanský explained to teenagers who had seen *The Theatre*: “This theatre needs a secret to fascinate, it tries to connect and pull into a common energy.”¹³⁴⁷ He illustrates this describing discotheques where that rare experience of common dancing’s echoes those previous rituals, holidays and celebrations. Similarly, theatre works with more

¹³⁴⁰ The case of the Japanese project, in 2015 in development.

¹³⁴¹ Most of the time the actors that undertook the expedition trip are developing the leading roles, but recently this rule has many exceptions (such as Emil Leeger in *Whistleblowers* who did not went to Brussels).

¹³⁴² *The Theatre* program (booklet), undated.

¹³⁴³ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

¹³⁴⁴ Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014 (translation mine).

¹³⁴⁵ See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

¹³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁷ Viliam Dočolomanský’s speech to teenagers after the performance *The Theatre*, Prague March 31, 2015.

intensive, more concentrated and dynamic energy that makes also its actors more ‘alive.’¹³⁴⁸ Comparing visiting theatre to visiting cinema, he said that physical theatre would explain nothing to the spectators, as it does not treat them as a consumer that needs to be ‘taken by the hand’ and ‘adjusted for his comfort;’ but would make him active (in thinking, living, etc.).¹³⁴⁹ “We do not deal with the spectator in the way that we give him something to the hand or we endanger him. Thanks to the actors’ concentration on stage and the flow of energy that is more alive than usually it is a partnership that happens; we try to awake something in the spectator. We do treat him as a partner. We do not explain him what the life is about. You can’t explain that. The question is rather if the spectator is afraid of life, because theatre with such energy is often more vivid than the life itself. Especially in the world, where we try so hard to protect ourselves in every possible way, so that the life would not hurt us, would not be alive.”¹³⁵⁰

Laboratory theatre, in the ‘third’ generation after Grotowski, is a ‘new’ genre of theatrical creation with its physical language based on actors training and developing inner intentions, using equally movement and voice expression, undertaking longer periods of creations consisted of ‘expeditions’ that means altered focus on reality and human (animal) behavior as well as research that evolves in an ‘unlimited’ associative way deepening the theme. The plot and story-line of created production is sought-out during rehearsals through improvisation exercises and later fixed into physical scores that are constantly ‘refreshed’ to achieve a ‘truthful’ presence of the performers on stage. The ‘laboratory theatre’ ensemble works on a daily basis that evolves with its members also in other tasks than ‘performing’ to make the running of the company possible.

Laboratory theatres groups are self-sufficient closed communities that somehow replicate the idea of theatre families (it is a modern theatre family). But this isn’t to imply a ‘community’ in the conventional understanding of this word. Asked if Farm in the Cave is a community-based theatre, Dočolomanský retorted: “Community? We do not live together, after rehearsals we do not even go out for beer, in the ensemble there is not even one relationship.”¹³⁵¹ Theatre practice and acting are understood as practice that leads to an utopian goal. Searching for ‘seconds of authenticity’¹³⁵² on stage that could be transmitted to others and possibly change lives is repeated here as an ‘ideal;’ as if a theatre group were a

¹³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵⁰ Dočolomanský, “Mnohokrát jsem vynalézal kolo”, *op.cit.*, (translation mine).

¹³⁵¹ Viliam Dočolomanský, “Učí mě ženy,” *op. cit.*, (translation mine).

¹³⁵² See: Viliam Dočolomanský’s answers during the symposium of 12th anniversary of Farm in the Cave, *Farm in the Cave of Central Europe*, Prague October 29, 2014.

mission-driven ‘activists’ fulfilling the vision of its director. In this sense, Farm in the Cave develops theatre as a ritual and not ‘story-telling’ or ‘games’ (children’s games) what, according to Grotowski, are the sources of theatre as an art form.¹³⁵³

As a ‘laboratory theatre,’ Viliam Dočolomanský’s Farm in the Cave examines the theme of un-acceptance—aggression by society against the individual. Dočolomanský develops specific motifs to speak about dominance, violence, emotional atrophy and the breakdown of personal relationships. In 2002, when he undertook the theme of homosexual love, he did that without emphasizing on any political or sociological context, understanding it as a fact that does not need to be estimated or explained to the public. Subsequently, he engaged with the discourse associated with the *émigré* community returning home, the mendacity of politics, modern slavery (in ‘show-business’) and the influence of business and commerce on daily life. He speaks about taboo subjects currently too controversial for mainstream media—and in doing so aspires to affect social change. As a laboratory theatre, Farm in the Cave communicates best with a small community of dance and physical theatre spectators open to ‘see’ things differently through the lense of art in the language of images and physicality that affects mind-body intelligence and resonates with the spectator’s memory.

Can dance or physical theatre be political?¹³⁵⁴ This question came up most recently during discussion following *Whistleblowers*. For Farm in the Cave, the body is ‘political.’¹³⁵⁵ Just as laboratory theatres are political, challenging the foundation of social structures, existing on the edge of social engagement—in contrast to Ancient Greek theatre that was understood as a social safety valve to purify emotions—creating works that aspire to transcend art’s borders; as everything shown in public is a political statement.¹³⁵⁶

¹³⁵³ Brook, *Teatr jest tylko formą*, *op.cit.*, p.88.

¹³⁵⁴ See: Nina Vangeli, “Tanec whistleblowerů a fízlů” [Dance of Whistleblowers and Snoopers], *Divadelní noviny* April 28, 2014, accessed January 27, 2015, <http://www.divadelni-noviny.cz/tanec-whistlebloweru-a-fizlu>.

¹³⁵⁵ See: Dočolomanský, “Mnohokrát jsem vynalézal kolo”, *op.cit.*

¹³⁵⁶ Discussion after the performance of Akademia Ruchu, Warsaw December 22, 2014.

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The Body Speaks (dir. John Musilli), 1975.

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Shoah (dir. Claude Lanzmann), 1985.

Appendix I: Information about Farm in the Cave's Performances

Dark Love Sonnets (*Sonety temné lásky*)

Concept, script, direction by: Viliam Dočolomanský

Music arranged by: Miriam Bayle

Dramaturgical assistance: Alexandra Berková, Jitka Martinková

Factography and research consultant: Ian Gibson

Set and costume design: Jana Preková, Martina Lukešová

Production: Farm in the Cave

Created by: Viliam Dočolomanský, Matej Matejka, Emil Píš, Gabriela Pyšná, Zuzana Rusznáková, Hana Varadzinová, Róbert Nižník, Vendula Prager

Performed by: Matej Matejka, Emil Píš, Gabriela Pyšná, Hana Varadzinová, Róbert Nižník, Maja Jawor, Eliška Vavříková, Miriam Bayle, Viliam Dočolomanský

Premiere May 12, 2002 at Palác Akropolis, Prague¹³⁵⁷

Dark Love Sonnets was nominated for best performance of 2002 according to the questionnaire of Czech theatre newspaper *Divadelní noviny* and it was nominated as well for the best performance and music by the Alfréd Radok Foundation.

Scenes:¹³⁵⁸

I. *Plowing Memories:*

1. *Plowing the Ground*

2. *Mommy and Daddy*

3. *The Other Woman*

5. *Lullaby*

6. *The Teacher and his Student (Oh You Secret Voice of Dark Love)*

7. *Rafael; the Dog Howls at the Moon*

II. *Hen Party:*

1. *Grand poeta!*

2. *God*

3. *Dressing Up (Wounds of Love)*

¹³⁵⁷ The very last performances of *Dark Love Sonnets* took place in Prague on March 27, 2007. See: Farm in the Cave's annual report 2007, p.6, in "Výroční zprávy," *op. cit.*

¹³⁵⁸ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, pp.142-143.

III. *America*

IV. *Suspecting the Next:*

1. *Return*
2. *Falangists, Revolution, War*
3. *Sonnet about a Garland of Roses*
4. *This is the Bullet that Killed that Red Bastard*
5. *Call of Death, Corrida*
6. *Doubts (Love Sleeps at the Chest of a Poet)*

V. *Connection:*

1. *The Poet Howls at the Luna*
2. *Mystical Wedding*
3. *Connection to Rafael*

Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant (Sclavi / Emigrantova píseň)

Directed by: Viliam Dočolomanský

Musical direction: Mariana Sadovska, Viliam Dočolomanský

Musical dramaturgy, arrangement, vocal arrangement: Mariana Sadovska, Viliam Dočolomanský

Dramaturgy: Jana Pilátová

Movement assistance: Ivana Dukić

Set and costume design: Barbora Erniholdová

Light design: Daniel Tesař

Production: Alena Baňáková

Created by: Viliam Dočolomanský, Roman Horák, Maja Jawor, Matej Matejka, Róbert Nižník, Hana Varadzinová, Eliška Vavříková

Performed by: Róbert Nižník, Hana Varadzinová, Jun Wan Kim, Roman Horák, Eliška Vavříková, Cécile Da Costa, Anna Kršiaková, David Jánský

Premiere March 3, 2005 at Švandovo divadlo, Prague

In 2005 Viliam Dočolomanský, gained an award for the ‘Personality of the Year’ by the Czech festival Next Wave in connection to the performance. The performance itself was awarded with the Prize of the Divadelní noviny newspaper and Sazka for the ‘movement-

based' theatre. In 2006 the performance was awarded with: Total Theatre Award—an award of Total Theatre Magazine; A Fringe First Award—an award of The Scotsman magazine and Fringe Society; A Herald Angel Award—an award of The Herald newspaper, Alfréd Radok Price in the Czech Republic, and Main Award Veljka Maricice at the 13. International Small Scenes Theatre Festival in Rijeka, Croatia. In 2008 the performance was awarded with the Grand Prix Golden Laurel Wreath Award for Best Overall Play at MESS Festival, Sarajevo, Bosnia.

Scenes:¹³⁵⁹

1. *Invasion of Emigrants*
2. *Return*
3. *First Meeting*
4. *Horse*
5. *In the Pub*
6. *Go Away!*
7. *Groom*
8. *Father and Daughter*
9. *Among One's Own*
10. *Prostitutes*
11. *On the Roof*
12. *God with Us*
13. *The Contract*
14. *Wedding*
15. *Rape*
16. *On Board*
17. *Return II*

Waiting Room (Čekárna)

Directed by: Viliam Dočolomanský

Directors' assistant: Marek Godovič

Music (using various motifs): Dan Kyzling, Viliam Dočolomanský

¹³⁵⁹ See: Dočolomanský, *Výraz ako prenos...*, *op. cit.*, p.256.

Musical direction and dramaturgy: Viliam Dočolomanský

Movement assistance: Ioana Mona Popovici

Dramaturgy: Jana Pilátová

Research assistant: Robert Blaško

Set and costume design: Markéta Sládečková

Light design: Pavel Kotlík

Production: Farm in the Cave

Created by: Viliam Dočolomanský, Eliška Vavříková, Hana Varadzinová, Róbert Nižník, Zuzana Pavuková, Nast Marrero García, Maja Jawor

Performed by: Hana Varadzinová, Charlotta Öfverholm, Róbert Nižník, Zuzana Pavuková/Patricie Poráková, Roman Horák, Cécile Da Costa/Anna Kršiaková, David Jánský, Lukáš Kuta, Petr Janek/Tomáš Fingerland

Premiere April 28, 2006 at Roxy/NoD, Prague¹³⁶⁰

In 2007 *Waiting Room* gained the Prize of the Respekt Magazine for the strongest theme in the dance performance; In 2008 Award Veljka Maricice for the best performance at the 15th International Small Scenes Theatre Festival in Rijeka, Croatia.

Scenes:¹³⁶¹

1. *Slovak Tango*
2. *Waiting Room Now*
3. *Somebody Lies in the Lavatories*
4. *Incident*
5. *A Postcard from March 1942*
6. *Back to Reality*
7. *He, She and She*
8. *This is a Mistake!*
9. *Anniversary*
10. *To Have Somebody*
11. *Loneliness*
12. *I've Got You*
13. *Why Don't You Talk to Me?*

¹³⁶⁰ The denier was held at Roxy/NoD on December 8, 2014.

¹³⁶¹ According to *Waiting Room* program, undated.

14. *Return to Lavatories*
15. *A Visit*
16. *What Shat I do With You?*
17. *Packing*
18. *Prayer*
19. *What now?*

The Theatre (DIVADLO)

Directed by, concept, scenic and musical composition: Viliam Dočolomanský

Directors' assistants: Krystyna Mogilnicka, Hana Varadzinová

Movement assistance: Ioana Mona Popovici

Musical dramaturgy and arrangement: Hana Varadzinová, Miriam Bayle, Viliam Dočolomanský

Dramaturgy: Jana Pilátová

Scenography: Jana Preková

Costume design: Barbora Erniholdová

Light design: Pavel Kotlík

Production: Šárka Pavelková

Created by: Viliam Dočolomanský, Roman Horák, Cécile Da Costa, Anna Kršiaková, Zuzana Pavuková, Jun Wan Kim, Patricie Poráková, Hana Varadzinová, Róbert Nižník, Miriam Bayle, Vít Halška, Adrian Ševeček, Kateřina Eva Klimešová, David Jánský

Performed by: Roman Horák, Anna Kršiaková, Eliška Vavříková, Jun Wan Kim, Cecilia Ventriglia, Minh Hieu Nguyen, Hana Varadzinová, Karolína Hejnová, Ivan Jurečka, Vít Halška, Adrian Ševeček, Kateřina Eva Lanči, Petr Beránek

Premiere February 10, 2010 at Preslova 9, Prague

The Theatre was nominated to Performance of the Year 2011 award and Patricie Poráková was nominated for Dancer of the Year 2011 award, Czech Dance Platform.

Scenes:¹³⁶²

1. *Overture / Meu Papagaio*

¹³⁶² See: *Appendix* in Kršiaková, *Výskum a jeho aplikácia v praxi, op. cit.*, p.11; alternative titles are based on my notes.

2. *Come to Play / Backstage I*
3. *Play for Us / Bumba I*
4. *We do not Play / Backstage II*
5. *Play of the Resurrection of a Bull / Bumba II*
6. *We Belong to Each Other / I Belong to You*
7. *Be with Me*
8. *Feeding*
9. *Bar*
10. *Dream*
11. *Intruder*
12. *End of the Play / Revolution*
13. *Wedding*
14. *Puppet World*
15. *Dance! / Normalization*
16. *Suicide*

Whistleblowers (Informátoři)

Directed by, concept, choreography: Viliam Dočolomanský

Director's assistants: Eduard Prokhasko, Eliška Vavříková

Music: Viliam Dočolomanský, Marcel Bárta

Stage design: Lucia Škandíková

Costume design: Markéta Oslzlá

Light design: Felice Ross

Video: Erik Bartoš

Sound design: Eva Hamouzová

Dramaturgy: Petr Michálek

Producer: Jan Valter

Co-production: Tanec Praha/PONEC—the Dance Venue, Truc Sphérique, Žilina

Created by / Performed by: Emil Leeger, Minh Hieu Nguyen, Hana Varadzinová, Anna Gromanová, Jun Wan Kim, Oldřich Smysl

Research and text montage: Minh Hieu Nguyen, Viliam Dočolomanský, Hana Varadzinová, Anna Gromanová

Research assistant: Marek Turošík

Movement research cooperation: Daniel Raček

Premiere April 1, 2014 at PONEC—The Dance Venue, Prague¹³⁶³

Scenes:¹³⁶⁴

1. *Inside the Food Corporation*
2. *Fighting with the Coffee Machine*
3. *Beginning of Activism*
4. *Writing*
5. *Knotting*
6. *Sarah's Entrance I*
7. *Demonstration*
8. *Fighting with the Table*
9. *Plates*
10. *Nightmare*
11. *Sarah, Anna*
12. *Shower*
13. *Digging*
14. *Joy*
15. *Checking*
16. *Doubles*
17. *Speaker Comes to Buy Other Books*
18. *Shadow*
19. *Advertisement*

¹³⁶³ In the *Whistleblower* program (booklet) the date April 1, 2014 is labeled as a preview date, and the premiere is dated on May 20, 2014.

¹³⁶⁴ Interview with Minh Hieu Nguyen, Prague March 1, 2015.

Appendix II: Bios

A

Allain, Paul—British scholar, specializes in actor's training; 1989-1993 collaborated with Gardzienice.

Alonso, Luís Alberto—actor and theatre director born in Cuba; in 2003 founded Oco Laboratory Theatre in Bahia Brazil; member of the international group The Bridge of Winds, directed by founder actress Iben Nagel Rasmussen, Odin Teatret.

Amaral, Alcio—Brazilian performer, in 2000 co-founded (with Juliana Prado) Mundo Rodá Physical and Dance Theatre inspired by traditional Brazilian dramatic dances.

Amoroso, Daniela Maria—Brazilian scholar, researcher of *samba de roda*.

de Andrade, Mário (1893-1945)—Brazilian poet, musicologist and photographer, pioneer of ethnomusicology; in the 1930s recorded songs and other forms of folk and popular music from the interior of Brazil.

Appia, Adolphe (1862-1928)—Swiss theatre revolutionary in stage and light design; best known for staging operas of Richard Wagner.

Arendt, Hannah (1906-1975)—Jewish political theorist and philosopher born in Germany; known from examining the nature of power and totalitarianism.

Ariza, Patricia (1948)—Colombian poet, playwright and actress; co-founded (with Santiago García) Casa de la Cultura and Teatro La Candelaria.

Artaud, Antonin (1896-1948)—French poet, actor and theatre director; inspired by traditional Balinese dance performance published his first manifesto about *Theatre of Cruelty* (1931)—an idea of ritualistic theatre, which he developed in his book *The Theatre and Its Double* (1938).

B

Babiak, Paul—American psychologist; interested in business, psychopaths and the role of personality and integrity on the organization.

Bakhtin, Mikhail (1895-1975)—Russian philosopher, literary critic and semiotician; known from examining Fyodor Dostoyevsky's polyphony and François Rabelais' grotesque and carnival elements.

Ballay, Miroslav (1978)—Slovak theatre scholar; in 2012 published monograph about Farm in the Cave.

Barba, Eugenio (1936)—theatre director born in Italy; 1961-1964 in Poland on internship with Jerzy Grotowski; in 1964 founded Odin Teatret; in 1979 International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA).

Barker, Clive (1931-2005)—British actor, theatre coach and academic, author of *Theatre Games* (1977) that appeared to be very influential for theatre practitioners and teachers.

Bauman, Zygmunt (1925)—Polish sociologist, from 1971 resided in United Kingdom, known from examining the Holocaust and postmodern consumerism.

Bausch, Pina (1940-2009)—German choreographer and dance performer influencing modern dance from the 1970s; founded Tanzteater Wuppertal Pina Bausch that made the term ‘dance theatre’ (*Tanztheater*) famous.

Bayle, Miriam (1979)—jazz singer born in Slovakia, collaborator of Viliam Dočolomanský.

Beck, Julian (1925-1983)—American theatre director, poet and painter, co-founded (with Judith Malina) the Living Theatre.

Berne, Eric (1910-1970)—Canadian born, American psychiatrist and therapist; his *Games People Play* written originally for professional therapists became a bestseller.

Bispo dos Santos, Raimundo (“Mestre King”)—Brazilian choreographer and dancer, leading authority on Afro-Brazilian dance and music forms and traditions; developed Afro-Brazilian modern choreography; teacher of Augusto Omolú, Odin Teatret.

Boreš, Jiří (1948)—Czech actor in New White Theatre 1972-1975; in 1977 signed Charter 77 and immigrated to West Germany where he works as a theatre technician.

Borowski, Piotr—Polish theatre director and actor; in the 1970s took part in Grotowski’s paratheatre; 1977-1983 in Gardzienice; 1985-1993 in Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski in Pontedera; in 1996 founded in Warsaw his laboratory theatre Studio Teatralne.

Braga Alves, Patricia—Brazilian producer and performer; in 1991-2009 in Odin Teatret, Holstebro; in 2009 founded Palipalan Arte e Cultura—a cultural management organization in San Paulo.

Bratršovská, Zdena (1951)—Czech writer in tandem with František Hrdlička; actress of White Theatre, joined the group as a student of sociology and history at Masaryk University in Brno.

Brecht, Bertold (1898-1956)—German poet, playwright and theatre director; creator of Berliner Ensemble that used a principle of ‘alienation effect.’

Brook, Peter (1925)—British theatre and film director, from 1971 based in France, where he had founded International Centre for Theatre Research (three years project which continued later as International Centre for Theatre Creation)—multinational assembly of actors, dancers, musicians and other performers who travelled to Middle East and Africa in early 1970s to research basic theatre situations and create performances. Brook admits inspiration of Joan Littlewood’s theatre and ideas of Edward Gordon Craig.

Buenaventura, Enrique (1924-2003)—Colombian theatre director and actor; in 1955 founded Teatro Experimental de Cali, where he had developed ideas of collective creation.

Bueno, André de Paula—author of a book about particular example of *Bumba meo boi* (*Bumba Boi Maranhense em S. Paulo*).

C

Čapek, Karel (1890-1938)—Czech writer, best known for his science fiction novels (an inventor of a word ‘robot’).

Charmock, Nigel (1960-2012)—British dancer, founder member of DV8 Physical Theatre.

Carreri, Roberta (1953)—Italian born actress of Odin Teatret; joined the group in 1974, while Odin Teatret was staying in Carpignano, Italy. She organizes and leads annual international Odin Week Festival held in Holstebro—an intensive theoretical/practical introduction to Odin Teatret’s trainings and working methods as well as barbers, local and international activities, organization and performances.

Chau, Igor (1963)—Czech documentary director and scenarist.

Chomsky, Noam (1928)—famous American linguist, philosopher and cognitive scientist.

Cieślak, Ryszard (1937-1990)—Polish theatre actor, known for his creation of the title role in Grotowski’s *The Constant Prince* (1965); performed as well in Brook’s *Mahabharata* (1985).

Číhal, Jan—theatre actor and director; in 1970s was traveling to Wrocław to see performances of Grotowski, Barba or Comuna Baires; in 1982 co-founded White Theatre Ostrava (using a name of White Theatre after the group of Bratršovská and Hrdlička).

Copeau, Jacques (1879-1949)—French theatre director and actor; founded Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier in Paris and organized theatre school attached to his theatre, introducing an idea of the actor’s training.

Craig, Edward Gordon (1872-1966)—born in England; actor and theatre director, stage designer and influential visionary interested in masks and puppets.

D

Da Costa, Cécile (1977)—born in France; studied sociology and anthropology and later science of education at University Paris VIII; in Farm in the Cave 2005-2011; nowadays cooperates with Czech dance theatre group Spitfire Company and Studio Matejka in Poland.

Debord, Guy (1931-1994)—French Marxist theorist and filmmaker; as he wrote in preface to the third edition of *The Society of the Spectacle* published in French—it was disturbances of 1968 that made the book known.

Derevjaniková, Anna—Slovakian singer, pedagogue at Faculty of Education at Prešov University and conductor of voice choirs.

Derfler, František (1942)—Czech actor and theatre pedagogue, theatre director in White Theatre; graduated from Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno; signed Charter 77; from 1980 worked in Goose on a String Theatre in Brno.

Didenko, Maxim (1980)—Russian actor, dancer, director and choreographer, 2004-2009 in Derevo—Russian physical theatre based in Germany; departed Derevo and founded his own company after meeting with Farm in the Cave.

Dočolomanký, Michal (1942-2008)—Slovak actor, popular in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and the 1980s; played in many movies and TV series.

Dočolomanský, Viliam (1975)—theatre director born in Slovakia; founder and leader of International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave (2001); in 2011 awarded with New Theatrical Realities Award.

Dvořáková, Vladimíra (1957)—Czech scholar of political science.

E

Eksteins, Modris (1943)—Canadian historian born in Latvia; interested especially in German history and modern culture.

Engelová, Lída (1944)—Czech theatre director; in 1970 she spent six months with the Royal Shakespeare Company in London and Stratford, including the period of Peter Brook's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Erniholdová, Barbora—Czech stage and costume designer; in 1998 graduated from Janaček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno; collaborated with Farm in the Cave on *Cesta do Stanice, Sclavi* and *DIVADLO*.

F

de Falla, Manuel (1876-1946)—Spanish composer, one of the most important Spanish musicians of the 20th century; interested in Andalusian flamenco and *cante jondo* that influenced his compositions.

Ferslev, Jan (1969)—musician, composer and actor born in Denmark; joined Odin Teatret in 1987; one of the instigators of Odins Husorkestr (Odin's House Orchestra) which presents concerts of tango, and Danish and Latin American compositions in Holstebro and the region.

Flaszen, Ludwik (1930)—Polish critic and literary adviser of Jerzy Grotowski's during his theatre of productions phase.

Friedman, Milton (1912-2006)—American economist, in 1976 he received Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences.

G

García, Santiago (1928)—Colombian actor and theatre director, as well a painter; in 1966 founded the culture house *Casa de la Cultura*, which was renamed to *Teatro La Candelaria* later on founder of La Candelaria (1966), politically involved, leftist theatre.

van Gennep, Arnold (1873-1957)—French ethnographer and folklorist, best known for his studies about rites of passage ceremonies.

Gibson, Ian (1939)—Irish Hispanist, known for his biographies of Salvador Dali and—mainly—Federico García Lorca.

Ginsberg, Allen (1926-1997)—American poet, leading figure of the Beat Generation movement and counterculture.

Godovič, Marek (1978)—Slovakian scenarist and theatre critic; researcher and director's assistant for Farm in the Cave's *Waiting Room*; from 2011 in Theatre Institute in Bratislava.

Goffman, Erving (1922-1982)—Canadian born, American sociologist, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* is based on Goffman's ethnographic research done from 1949-1941 on the island of Unst in the Shetland Islands.

Goldflam, Arnošt (1949)—Czech playwright, director, actor and pedagogue of Jewish descendance.

Golaj, Mariusz (1953)—Polish actor; in 1974-1978 in Laboratory Theatre of Jerzy Grotowski; in 1979 joined Włodzimierz Staniewski's Gardzienice where he played the leading roles in all Staniewski's performances.

Grotowski, Jerzy (1933-1999)—Polish theatre director considered as one of the most influential practitioners of the 20th century, whose work can be divided on periods: Theatre of Production (1957-1969), paratheatrical phase of Active Culture (1969-1976), Theatre of Sources (1976-1982), Objective Drama (1983-1986 in USA) and Art as a vehicle (1986-1999 in Italy).

H

Hare, Robert D. (1934)—Canadian researcher in criminal psychology interested in psychopathy.

Hodge, Alison—British scholar, theatre director, actor-trainer and lecturer.

Hoedeman, Olivier—Dutch/Danish activist, coordinator at Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)—a Brussels-based 'civil society group targeting the threats to democracy, equity, social justice and the environment posed by the economic and political power of corporations and their lobby groups.'

Horák, Roman (1979)—Czech actor, mime, clown and pedagogue; in Farm in the Cave 2004-2011; in 2012 co-founded Squadra Sua company of clowns and non-verbal theatre.

Horanský, Miloš (1932)—Czech theatre director and poet of Slovakian roots; a director of White Theatre 1970-1973.

Hrdlička, František (1937)—Czech writer in tandem with Bratřovská, founder, leader and literary director of White Theatre; before White Theatre studied medicine and later on dramaturgy on the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague that he graduated from in 1968 writing about Shakespeare.

Hughes, Ted (1930-1998)—British poet and writer interested in innocent savagery of animals, beauty and violence in the natural world as well as classical and archetypal myths and British bardic tradition, married to American poet Sylvia Plath.

Hulec, Vladimír (1958)—Czech theatre critic; from 1979 he was a member of Nina Vangeli's Studio of Physical Theatre.

J

Jawor, Maja (1977)—born in Poland; graduated from Spanish Philology at Jagiellonian University in Krakow; studied in Academy of Theatre Practices in Gardzienice; gained PhD on the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague; actress of *Farm in the Cave* 2003-2007; from 2008 teaching voice at Hoplein Theater School in Rotterdam, Holland.

Jung, Gustav Carl (1875-1961)—Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist; student of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939); founder of analytical psychology that emphasizes collective unconsciousness, archetypes and symbols for human psychology.

K

Kantor, Tadeusz (1915-1990)—Polish painter and theatre director; in 1955 founded Cricot2; in 1975 staged *Dead Class*, the most famous production of Cricot2 based on Kantor's memories recalling the Holocaust.

Kelarová, Ida (1956)—Czech singer of some Roma roots; in 1971 graduated from Janáčkova Conservatoire in Brno; 1975-1982 worked in Goose on a String theatre as a singer, actress and music director; in 1984 had her first solo concert at Cardiff Chapter Center Wales in the framework of Magdalena project (co-founded by Julia Varley, Odin Teatret); in 1995 founded International School for Human Voice.

Kim, Jun Wan (1972)—born South Korea; 2001-2006 in South Korean Theatre Company Yohngza performing Western classical plays with Korean traditional elements focusing on movement rather than verbal aspects; in *Farm in the Cave* 2008-2015.

Kohutová, Petra—Czech scholar interested in Czech alternative theatre groups such as White Theatre or Quidam.

Kolankiewicz, Leszek (1954)—Polish anthropologist of theatre and performance; collaborated with Jerzy Grotowski 1973-1982.

Komorášová, Alena—Slovakian piano teacher at Liptovský Mikuláš, leader of local choir.

Kornaś, Tadeusz—Polish theatre scholar, interested in theatre of the 20th century and theatre directing.

Kosiński, Jerzy (1933-1991)—American writer born in Poland of Jewish descent, best known for controversial *The Painted Bird* (1965) that treats about brutally cruel experiences of a boy of unknown religious and ethnic background wandering in Eastern Europe villages during the Second World War.

Kott, Jan (1914-2001)—Polish theatre critic, emigrated to United States in 1965; know of his reading of Greek Tragedy and Shakespeare (*Shakespeare, Our Contemporary* published in 1964) in the context of the 20th century history; Peter Brook admits influence of Kott on his reading of Shakespeare.

Kovalčuk, Josef (1948)—Czech scenarist, literary adviser and pedagogue, co-founder of HaDivadlo theatre.

Krall, Hanna (1935)—Polish writer and journalist of Jewish descent, exploring themes of the Holocaust in Poland.

Kršiaková [Gromanová], Anna (1978)—born in Slovakia; studied acting in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia; gained PhD on the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague; from 2006 actress of *Farm in the Cave*.

Kundera, Milan (1929)—Czech writer, from 1971 in exile in France having become a naturalized citizen in 1981; his best-known book *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* treats about ‘normalization.’

L

Lanzmann, Claude (1925)—French filmmaker of Jewish descent, best known for his documentary *Shoah* (1985).

Larsen, Tage (1949)—Danish actor, joined Odin Teatret in 1971 as a ‘helping hand’ and later accepted as an actor; in 1974 he took a break, but returned to the theatre a year later; remained with Odin Teatret until 1987 when he started his own group, Yorick Teatret. During the ten years away from Odin Teatret, Tage also taught at the Nordisk Teater Skole in Århus and worked as a freelance actor; in 1997 he returned to Odin Teatret to be part of the performance *Mythos*.

Lazorík, Ján (1920)—Slovakian folklorist, collector of songs, stories, legends and different artifacts of Šariš region.

Limanowski, Mieczysław (1876-1948)—Polish geologist and theatre artist; at the start of the 20th century he was in Paris, where he became fascinated with non-European theatre, particularly the acting of Sada Yacco and Javan wayang; taking part in rehearsals of the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1916, he adopted many ideas of Stanislavski; in 1919 he co-founded (with Juliusz Osterwa) The Adam Mickiewicz First Studio of Theatrical Arts, which was the foundation of Reduta.

Littlewood, Joan (1914-2002)—British theatre director; known of creating Theatre Workshop group (1945) that lived and worked as a commune (excluding however Littlewood herself) sharing tasks associated with running and maintaining a theatre. The most known production of the group *Oh, What a Lovely War!* (1963) created rave audience reactions.

Lorca, Federico García (1898-1936)—Spanish poet, playwright and theatre visionary.

Lustig, Arnošt (1926-2011)—Czech writer of Jewish descent, involved in writing exploring the Holocaust theme.

M

Macedo Carneiro, Juliana (1973)—Brazilian performer and director (using scenic name: Juliana Pautilla), founder of Teatro da Figura (2004-2014).

Magalhães, Rafael Souza—Brazilian actor, director and producer; in 2003 co-founded Oco Teatro Laboratório.

Malina, Judith (1926-2015)—German-born American theatre actress, writer and director; co-founder (with Julian Beck) of the Living Theatre.

Malinowski, Bronislaw (1884-1942)—one of the most important anthropologists of the 20th century, born in Poland; recognized as a founder of social anthropology.

Maloň, Antonín (1953)—puppet creator; collaborated with Continuo Theatre, Forman Brothers, Jan Švankmajer, etc.

Marrero García, Nast (1981)—performer born in Spain; studied at Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático (RESAD); actor of Farm in the Cave 2005-2007; before joining Farm in the Cave he had participated in few workshops of Odin Teatret and performed on ISTA 2005.

Martinec, Václav (1937)—Czech actor, in White Theatre till 1972; in 1973 founded Křesadlo theatre group.

Martins, Luiz Augusto—Brazilian performer, assistant in Farm in the Cave 2008-2011.

Martins, Suzana—Brazilian scholar interested in dances of the Orixás.

Masgrau, Lluís—Spanish scholar; works for Odin Teatret's Archive; editor of Eugenio Barba's *Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt*.

Matejka, Matej (1978)—born in Slovakia; studied acting at the state Conservatory in Bratislava, Slovakia and on Janaček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, Czech Republic; actor of Farm in the Cave 2001-2006; from 2005 collaborator of the Grotowski Institute in Poland and actor of theatre ZAR; from 2010—founder and leader of Studio Matejka which works under the auspices of the Grotowski Institute.

Mauricová-Kavanová, Radka (1942)—Czech psychologist; former actress of White Theatre.

Meyerhold, Vsevolod (1874-1940)—Russian actor and theatre director; creator of biomechanics—system of actor's training based on poses, gestures and movements thanks to which an actor can portray specific emotions or characters.

Mnouchkine, Ariane (1939)—French theatre director; founded her Teatr du Solei in 1964 in Paris while still being in L'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq.

N

Newson, Lloyd (1957)—Australian born British dancer, graduated from the University of Melbourne (social work and psychology), in 1981 moved to Great Britain, in 1986 founded DV8 Physical Theatre—a project based company of contemporary dance.

Nguyen, Minh Hieu (1983)—born in France to Vietnamese family; studied drama and physical acting in Toulouse, France; in Farm in the Cave from 2011; before joining Farm in the Cave she had worked with Katharina Seyferth (involved in paratheatre and Theatre of Source of Jerzy Grotowski) and with Domenico Castaldo (in Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards 1995-1996).

Nijinsky, Vaslav (1889-1950)—Russian ballet dancer and choreographer acclaimed as the greatest male dancer of the early 20th century.

Nižníková (Rottová), Karolína—Czech puppeteer and actress.

Nižník, Róbert (1975)—actor born in Slovakia; studied Academy of Theatre Practices “Gardzienice;” in Farm in the Cave 2001-2011; currently collaborator of VerTeDance and Teatr Novogo Fronta.

O

Öfverholm, Charlotta—Swedish dancer and choreographer; collaborated with many dance companies including DV8 Physical Theatre; in 1995 founded her own dance company Jus de la vie.

Oida, Yoshi (1933)—Japanese actor and theatre director; trained in Noh theatre; in 1968 moved to France to take part in Peter Brook’s project of International Centre for Theatre Research.

Omolú, Augusto (1962-2013)—Brazilian dancer; ceremonial assistant of Candomblé; studied classical ballet and modern dance; from 1994 collaborated with ISTA; in 2002 joined Odin Teatret; his performance *Orô de Otelo*, directed by Eugenio Barba, brought together his experiences with the Candomblé tradition and techniques learnt at Odin Teatret and ISTA.

Ondračka, David (1976)—Czech activist; from 2008 chairman of Czech branch of Transparency International, an organization monitoring corporate and political corruption.

Oslzlý, Petr (1945)—Czech actor; in 1968 studied on Masaryk University in Brno, main performer of Quidam theatre group; from 1972 literary director of Goose on the String theatre.

Osiński, Zbigniew (1939)—Polish theatre scholar; well known from his publications about Grotowski

Osterwa, Juliusz (1885-1947)—Polish actor and theatre director; played main roles in theatres of Vilnius and Warsaw; in 1915 as Austrian subject was forced to leave to Russia; in 1916 after playing the role of Father Peter in a scene from Polish romantic drama *Forefathers’ Eve* as part of an evening dedicated to Adam Mickiewicz, he was invited by Stanislavski to take part in rehearsals in his Studio; in 1919 co-founded with Limanowski Reduta.

P

Pardeilhan, Francis (1953)—born in America to French immigrants’ family; his acting career begins with a failed audition for San Francisco’s American Conservatory Theater; in 1975 he joined one of the first fringe theatres in London; actor of Odin Teatret 1976-1987; graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a degree in English Literature.

Pavelková, Šárka (1975)—born in Czech Republic; manager of Farm in the Cave 2006-2010; in 2012 founded ProFitArt—a production platform for dance and physical theatre.

Petišková, Ladislava (1943)—Czech scholar and theatre critic interested in pantomime, clownery, circus and alternative theatre.

Pilátová, Jana (1945)—Czech theatre scholar and literary advisor of Czech companies: Farm in the Cave and Continuo Theatre; in 1968 on internship in Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre.

Pitínský, Jan Antonín (1955)—Czech well-known theatre director, poet and playwright.

Piš [Leeger], Emil (1980)—Slovakian actor; after collaborating on *Dark Love Sonnets* (2002) studied in Academy of Theatre Practices „Gardzienice” (2003-2004); in 2005 graduated from Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava.

Popovici, Ioana Mona (1975)—Czech-based Romanian choreographer and performer.

Poráková, Patricie (1979)—born in Czech Republic; actress of Farm in the Cave 2006-2011 (till 2012 external collaborator); performed as a guest artist with Czech dance theatre group Spitfire Company; in 2012 premiered her dance performance *Quilombo* from the border of argentine tango and physical theatre produced by ProFitArt.

Posejpal, Marek—Czech musician who cooperated with New White Theatre.

Prado, Juliana—Brazilian performer; in 2000 co-founded with (Alício Amaral) Mundo Rodá Physical and Dance Theatre inspired by traditional Brazilian dramatic dances.

Prager-Rytířová, Vendula (1972)—Czech actress and dancer; graduated from International School of Jacques Lecoq; in 1999 co-founded in Czech Republic a 'theatre laboratory' to create a physical performance (*Prometheus*, 2000); assistant of choreography in Farm in the Cave's *Dark Love Sonnets* (2002); in 2007 founded in Prague the school of acting.

Pyšná, Gabriela—Czech actress of mainstream theatres and film; collaborated with Farm in the Cave on *Dark Love Sonnets* (2002).

R

Rasmussen, Iben Nagel (1945)—born in Denmark, actress of Odin Teatret from 1966 when the group move to Holstebro; before joining the group she was drug-addicted hitchhiking around the world; in 1983 she founded, parallel to her work at Odin Teatret, a theatre group Farfa.

Reich, Wilhelm (1897-1957)—Austrian psychoanalyst; one of the most radical figures of psychiatry; an author of 'orgasmic potency' concept.

Richards, Thomas (1962)—an American actor and theatre director; student of Jerzy Grotowski and later on his last collaborator on Art as vehicle; from 1999 leader of Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards in Pontedera, Italy.

Richterová-Pavuková, Zuzana (1982)—Czech dancer, graduated from Duncan Centre conservatory in Prague, in Farm in the Cave 2005-2010.

Rodowicz, Tomasz (1951)—Polish actor, musician; participated in paratheatre of Jerzy Grotowski; in Gardzienice 1977-2004, in 2004 co-founded Chorea theatre.

Roszak, Theodore (1933-2011)—American historian; in 1969 published *The Making of a Counter Culture*, where he chronicled and explained Vietnam War protesters, students' revolt and hippie culture in Europe and North America in 1960s calling it counterculture (counter towards industrial culture).

Roubal, Jan (1947)—Czech theatre scholar, interested in alternative theatre and acting.

S

Sadovska, Mariana (1972)—German-based Ukrainian actress, singer and musician; in 1992 involved in Slavic Pilgrim Project in Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski in Pontedera; in Gardzienice 1992-2002.

Savarese, Nicola (1954)—Italian scholar; founding member of ISTA; co-author (with Eugenio Barba) of *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology. The Secret Art of Performer* (2005).

Schechner, Richard (1934)—American theatre director and scholar; known of his controversial stage production *Dionysus in 1969*; one of the founders of Performance Studies.

Schino, Mirella (1956)—Italian scholar; member of scientific staff of ISTA; coordinator of Odin Teatret Archive.

Sedal, Jano (1949)—Slovak actor; from 1972, after White Theatre, in Křesadlo of Martinec; after Křesadlo he graduated from the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.

Sidon, Karol (1942)—Czech writer and rabbi; in 1983 immigrated to West Germany and converted to Judaism; Sidon returned to the Czech Republic in 1992, where he became chief rabbi of Prague.

Silva, Gil—Brazilian dancer of *frevo*.

Spildra Borg, Per (1956)—Norwegian actor and theatre director; in 1985 co-found Stella Polaris, a street theatre group interested in minority cultures that transformed into a cultural institution in 2006.

de Souza e Silva, Nancy (Dona Cici)—Brazilian researcher of Pierre Verger Foundation interested in preservation of historical and spiritual inheritance of Brazil's Black history; she worked for Pierre Verger from the 1960s to the 1980s informing him about Candomblé, compared over 11,000 of Verger's photos, matching legends and stories from North and West Africa and Brazil.

Srba, Bořivoj (1931-2014)—Czech theatre critic, scholar and literary adviser; in 1967 founded in Brno Goose on the String theatre.

Staniewski, Włodzimierz (1950)—Polish theatre director; founder of Centre for Theatre Practices 'Gardzienice' (1977); close collaborator of Jerzy Grotowski in his paratheatrical experiments; admits an influence of Michail Bakhtin's ideas about the carnival on his theatre.

Stanislavski, Constantin (1863-1936)—Russian actor and theatre director; creator of so called ‘Stanislavski system’ that highly influenced Western modern acting.

Stehlíková, Eva (1941)—Czech scholar, specialized in Greek and Roman theatre and the Czech theatre of the 1960s.

Steig, William (1907-2003)—American cartoonist and sculptor, well-known as children’s book illustrator.

Stravinsky, Igor (1882-1971)—one of the most influential composers of the 20th century born in Russia; in 1913 composed *The Rite of Spring* for Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes.

Suzuki, Tadashi (1913-1988)—Japanese theatre director; in 1966 founded in Tokyo Waseda Shogekijo; in 1976 moved with his troupe to remote village in the mountains of Western Japan called Toga, changing group’s name into Suzuki Company of Toga.

T

Taiwo, Oli—British choreographer and theatre scholar of Nigerian roots, interested in street art, physical theatre and martial arts.

Taviani, Ferdinando (1927-2014)—Italian scholar whose one of the field of study is commedia dell’arte; a literary adviser of Odin Teatret.

Tizumba, Maurício—Brazilian musician, singer and drummer popular in Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Topol, Josef (1935-2018)—Czech poet and playwright; in 1977 signed Charter 1977; till 1989 worked as a manual worker.

Turner, Victor (1920-1983)—British cultural anthropologist focused on work researching symbols, rituals and rites de passage.

Turošík, Marek (1958-2018)—Slovakian collaborator of Farm in the Cave with the *Lobby* project.

V

Vagnerová, Lenka (1978)—dancer and choreographer born in Czech Republic; interested in human relationship with animals and environment, next to mythologies and games; in 2012 founded Lenka Vagnerová & Company.

Vakhtangov, Yevgeny (1883-1922)—Russian actor and theatre director of Armenian descent; influenced by Meyerhold and Stanislavski combined avant-garde costumes and stage design with detailed psychological analysis of the plays.

Vandekeybus, Wim (1963)—Belgian choreographer and dancer interested in animals and animalistic behavior and movement; in 1986 founded Ultima Vez dance company.

Vangeli, Nina (1946)—Czech theatre director and critic concentrated on themes of the modern dance, alternative theatre and cross-over; in 1974 co-created Křesadlo; in 1977 founded Studio pohybového divadla.

Varadzinová, Hana (1977)—Czech actress, graduated from Janaček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno (JAMU), from 2001 in *Farm in the Cave*; played already in *Streetcar named Desire*, directed by Viliam Dočolomanský in 1999 at JAMU; shortly in mainstream theatre in Karlový Vary (2002-2003).

Varley, Julia (1954)—British born actress of Odin Teatret; joined the group in 1976; before joining Odin Teatret she worked with theatre in Milano, and earned her living as an assistant film producer; under the umbrella of Odin Teatret she has been active in The Magdalena Project (1986), a network of women in contemporary theatre. She is also artistic director of Transit International Festival, Holstebro, and editor of *The Open Page*, a journal devoted to women's work in theatre.

Vavříková, Eliška (1976)—Czech actress, graduated from the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague; shortly in mainstream theatre in Karlový Vary (2002-2003), from 2003 in *Farm in the Cave* (partly on maternity leave).

Verger, Pierre (1902-1998)—French photographer, traveler to Africa, Asia and Latin America; self-taught ethnographer and anthropologist interested in trance cults; from 1946 in Brazil; in 1988 established Pierre Verger Foundation in Salvador, Brazil.

Vincente, Ana Valéria—Brazilian scholar interested in *frevo*.

Vostárková, Ivana—Czech voice therapist and actress.

Vostrý, Jaroslav (1931)—Czech scholar and theatre director developing concept of *scenology* that—using an approach similar to performance studies—is examining contemporary culture as ‘scenic.’

W

Warner, Lloyd W. (1898-1970)—American anthropologist and sociologist, symbolic ‘father’ of business anthropology; author of socio-anthropological monograph about American ‘Yankee city,’ based on long-term observation of society.

Watson, Ian—American scholar of Performance Studies.

Weigel, Helene (1900-1971)—German actress born in Vienna; wife of Bertolt Brecht, famous from performing in his Berliner Ensemble.

Wethal, Torgeir (1947-2010)—Norwegian born actor of Odin Teatret from its very beginning in 1964; before joining the group, he worked as actor in amateur productions; Wethal was in charge of Odin Teatret Film and directed several films about Odin Teatret’s performances, journeys, training, as well as documentaries.

Wiesel, Elie (1928)—American writer and political activist of Jewish descentance, Nobel Peace Prize in 1986.

Z

Zelenay, Pavol (1928)—Slovakian musician and music critic.

Summary

This thesis, entitled *Farm in the Cave—a Laboratory Theatre*, presents Viliam Dočolomanský's International Theatre Studio Farm in the Cave based in Prague, Czech Republic as an aspect of the discourse of 'laboratory theatres.'

The first part examines the concept of the 'laboratory theatres' that developed in the 1960s as a new 'genre' of theatre practice and a 'method' of creating performances based on physical expression; this is presented as distinct from the 'theatre laboratories' that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century mostly in the framework of institutions as 'schools' for actors. As such, this thesis introduces the changes that came with Jerzy Grotowski's manifestos in connection to his easily adaptable training for actors and idea of 'physical scores.' Laboratory theatres' background and interests are presented as alternative theatre practice that emerged from a need of 'searching for truth' through the body what evolved into counterculture attitude. The first part establishes Eugenio Barba's Odin Teatret as an independent laboratory that developed on the margins of the contemporary theatre community and evolved into an influential culture institution. Odin Teatret's achievements in developing physical acting and original theatre directing are set in confrontation with the Czechoslovak White Theatre that serves as an example of a laboratory that was unable to evolve artistically due to political circumstances. White Theatre introduces Czech (and Slovak) theatre culture, even if it does not serve as reference to Farm in the Cave. It is Włodzimierz Staniewski's Gardzienice that introduces a theatre practice that directly influenced Viliam Dočolomanský. The entire first part serves as a context and introduction to the Farm in the Cave section; for this reason, attention is given to the art of theatre directing and physical acting along with practical circumstances of running a laboratory theatre.

The second part of the thesis presents five projects of Farm in the Cave: *Dark Love Sonnets* (2002), *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant* (2005), *Waiting Room* (2006), *The Theatre* (2010) and *Whistleblowers* (2014) examining not only how those long-term projects based on expeditions (or so-called 'scenic research') and actors' physical improvisations turned into theatre performances, but also how the directing methods of Dočolomanský and scenic language of Farm in the Cave evolved. This part presents five examples of creating stage drama from scratch—building it entirely on actors' 'physical scores'—when a text does not serve as a main theatrical framework. Farm in the Cave, self-defined as a 'modern laboratory,' in an original way fulfills this 'genre' of theatrical creation based on development of actor's inner dramas and intentions. Dočolomanský—interested equally in movement and voice expression—asks his actors to undertake 'expeditions' implying altered focus on reality

and research that evolves in an associative way. Dočolomanský, developing specific motifs, examine theme of un-acceptance, aggression of society towards the individuals; speaks about dominance, violence, emotional atrophy, and failure of relationships. The thesis—presenting Dočolomanský's background with evolvement of his ensemble 2001-2014—could serve as a monograph of Farm in the Cave.

Key words

Laboratory theatre, Farm in the Cave, Viliam Dočolomanský, Odin Teatret, Gardzienice, White Theatre

Resumé

Disertace *Farma v jeskyni – divadlo laboratoř* prezentuje Mezinárodní divadelní studio Farma v jeskyni Viliama Dočolomanského v kontextu diskurzu „divadel laboratoří“.

První část práce zkoumá koncept divadla laboratoře. Rozlišuje přitom „divadla laboratoře“, která se vyvíjejí od 60. let jako nový „žánr“ divadelní praxe, a „metodu“ vytváření představení založených na fyzickém projevu herců od „divadelních laboratoří“, které se objevily na začátku 20. století, zejména v rámci kamenných divadel, jako „školy“ pro herce. Disertace představuje změnu, která přišla s manifesty Jerzy Grotowského a hlavně s jeho snadno aplikovatelným fyzickým tréninkem herce a s ideou práce na principu „fyzických partitur“. Divadla laboratoře jsou prezentována jako alternativní divadelní praxe, která se vynořila z potřeby „hledání pravdy“ skrze tělo, což vyústilo v kontra-kulturní postoj těchto divadelních skupin. První část disertace dále představuje Odin Teatret Eugenia Barby jako nezávislou laboratoř, která se dlouho vyvíjela na hranici zájmu současné divadelní komunity a poté se přetransformovala do vlivné kulturní instituce. Úspěchy Odin Teatret ve vývoji fyzického herectví a autorské režii kontrastují s československým Bílým divadlem, které slouží jako příklad laboratoře, jež v rámci politických okolností neměla možnost se umělecky vyvinout. Bílé divadlo uvádí českou (a slovenskou) divadelní kulturu, i když neslouží jako reference pro Farmu v jeskyni. Je to Centrum divadelních praktik „Gardzienice“ Włodzimierza Staniewského, které zavádí divadelní praxi, jež přímo ovlivnila Viliama Dočolomanského. První část disertace slouží jako úvod a kontext k další části zaměřené na Farmu v jeskyni. Proto je v ní, vedle praktických okolností provozu divadel laboratoří, kladen důraz na umění divadelní režie a na fyzické herectví.

Druhá část disertace představuje pět projektů Mezinárodního divadelního studia Farma v jeskyni: *Sonety temné lásky* (2002), *Sclavi / Emigrantova píseň* (2005), *Čekárna* (2006), *DIVADLO* (2010) a *Informátoři* (2014). Tato část zkoumá nejen to, jak se tyto dlouhodobé projekty založené na expedicích (neboli „scénickém výzkumu“) a fyzické improvizaci herců proměnily v divadelní představení, ale zaměřuje se také na vývoj režijní metody Viliama Dočolomanského a scénický jazyk Farmy v jeskyni. Disertace představuje pět příkladů vytváření divadelního dramatu a jeho budování výhradně na „fyzických partiturách“ herců, kdy text neslouží jako hlavní divadelní materiál. Farma v jeskyni, která se sama definuje jako „moderní laboratoř“, autorským způsobem rozvíjí tento „žánr“ divadelní tvorby založený na vnitřních dramatech a záměrech (intencích) herce. Viliam Dočolomanský, kterého zajímá jak muzikalita hlasu, tak i pohybu, požaduje po svých hercích, aby podnikali „expedice“ (což

znamená specifické zaměření se na realitu) a výzkum, který se vyvíjí „neomezeným“ asociativním způsobem, a získali tímto dramatický materiál k vytvoření divadelního představení. Dočolomanský zkoumá téma nepřijetí, agrese společnosti vůči jednotlivci a rozvíjením specifických motivů hovoří o dominanci, násilí, emocionální atrofii a selhávání vztahů. Disertační práce prezentuje umělecký vývoj Viliama Dočolomanského a jeho souboru v letech 2001–2015 a může se stát základem k budoucí anglické monografii o Mezinárodním divadelním studiu Farma v jeskyni.

Klíčová slova

Divadlo laboratoř, Farma v jeskyni, Viliam Dočolomanský, Odin Teatret, Gardzienice, Bílé divadlo