

# TRACING ROADS ACROSS

A PROJECT BY WORKCENTER OF JERZY GROTOWSKI AND THOMAS RICHARDS



Education and Culture

Culture 2000

“Tracing Roads Across” has been made possible by persons who over the years have become near friends of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards. I wish to mention here Gül Gürses who first came to see our work in 1999 and after invited our team on different occasions to Vienna. During one of our visits, we talked with her about the never-ending “material question”, and she said that if we articulated a solid proposal to the “Culture 2000” Programme of the European Union outlining the Workcenter’s artistic dreams for the next years, she was sure that we would receive support. With drive she accompanied us through the year of application preparation, never abandoning her initial optimism and, to our surprise, her intuition proved right. I am happy that our friendship, based on common artistic sensibilities and intentions, will find its development within “Tracing Roads Across”.

**WORKCENTER OF  
JERZY GROTOWSKI  
AND  
THOMAS RICHARDS**

Pontedera/Italy  
Via Manzoni 22, 56025

I also wish to mention here our long-lasting bond with “Fondazione Pontedera Teatro”, its Director Roberto Bacci and Co-director Carla Pollastrelli. They and their team gave the Workcenter its chance to exist from the very beginning. The support we have received from them through-out the last seventeen years has been solid and continuous; they gave Jerzy Grotowski “carte blanche” to work with us in his way and in his time, so that, day by day, we could move towards a heightening in quality in the work. Born long time before “Tracing Roads Across”, this friendship extends naturally into our present project.

In “Tracing Roads Across” we have articulated all elements of our present research, from practical to theoretical. Herein we will trace links with those outside the work through open events, exchanges of work, meetings, etc.; and also trace links inside the team – there where the content of the work goes towards what is more essential in us and between us; and address a question for the individual: the development of the craft for the human being and the human being in the craft.

Thomas Richards  
Pontedera, Italy, May 2003

## IMPRINT

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Edited by Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards  
Translations: Dr. Gabriele Pfeiffer (German), Aysegül Yüksel / Prof. Aysin Candan (Turkish),  
Mario Biagini / Brigitte Kasslatter (Italian), Marie De Clerck / Virgil Segal (French),  
Agorita Bakali / Dionysios Stathakopoulos (Greek), Iassen Zahariev (Bulgarian)  
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April 2003 – April 2006

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During the twentieth century, Western theatre culture has undergone major and deep transformations and revolutions, adapting itself to historical and social changes and developments and, in certain cases, acting as a powerful yeast and catalyst. Some of these fundamental transformations have been later regarded as sudden revolutions – violent breaks and cuts with the past – in the technical, methodological, aesthetic and dramaturgic terrains, often forgetting the strong but at times invisible threads of continuity that carry through such transformations. Modern theatre culture often stresses the elements of rupture with the past, neglecting to consider such “*quanta*” in theatre history as having been prepared by previous, complex circumstances, and as potentially carrying an extension or development of a practical knowledge. If compared to other theatre cultures (for instance, Asiatic theatre traditions), twentieth century Western theatre milieu has often privileged art works and creation processes that apparently contain seeds of novelty and surprise, without necessarily recognizing the possible hidden roots of continuity. The long-term effects of the lack of consideration for the potential value of continuity and consistency in art development – the invisible threads – have contributed to a deep and extensive uprooting of *living* artistic practices. These circumstances at times reflect in the works of the individual artist: a searching for generic, standard “newness” can replace a true and personal quest for quality and discovery. Many artists and theatre professionals do feel a need to recognize and connect the working techniques, resources and processes hidden in the lives and works of those who have come before them and have conquered a “know how” – they often ask themselves how to do so, what can serve them today, how to move forward in their own way with such techniques. They struggle with a not so simple task, some falling into the trap of empty veneration, or mechanical systematization of techniques, others going forward and arriving at true and new discoveries, nourished by their individual potentialities and unique visions.

Jerzy Grotowski, one of the greatest revolutionaries of twentieth century theatre, was deeply concerned with a possible living continuity in relation to his own research, which was also related to his deeper interests. He wrote in his last text:

*What can one transmit? How and to whom to transmit? These are questions that every person who has inherited from the tradition asks himself, because he inherits at the same time a kind of duty: to transmit that which he has himself received.<sup>1</sup>*

1) Jerzy Grotowski, “Untitled text”, in *The Drama Review*, 43, 2 (T162), Summer 1999.

Jerzy Grotowski dedicated the last thirteen years of his life to the transmission of his practical knowledge. For this purpose, the **Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski** was founded in 1986 at the invitation of the “Centro per la Sperimentazione e la Ricerca Teatrale” (now: “Fondazione Pontedera Teatro”), its director Roberto Bacci and Carla Pollastrelli, with the support from the University of California, Irvine, in collaboration with Peter Brook and his “Centre International de Créations Théâtrales” (Paris, France), and “Académie Expérimentale des Théâtres” (Paris, France), with contributions and grants from various sources, including the Rockefeller Foundation.

Thomas Richards arrived in Italy in 1986 with Grotowski from the University of California, Irvine, where he had participated in Grotowski’s “Focused Research Program in Objective Drama”. In Italy, at first Mr. Richards worked as Grotowski’s assistant, but soon he became the leader of one of the work teams, and then Grotowski’s “essential collaborator”. Eventually, Mr. Richards became Director of the Research Program on Performing Arts at the Workcenter. Richards was a fundamental driving force in the research developed at the Workcenter which has come to be known as “art as vehicle”. The term “art as vehicle” was first utilized by Peter Brook in a conference in Florence in 1987 when speaking of Grotowski’s research at the Workcenter.<sup>2</sup> In 1996, Grotowski decided to change the name of the Workcenter to **Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards**, because, as he specified, the direction of the practical work already concentrated itself in the hands of Thomas Richards. Between these two dates, Jerzy Grotowski realized with Thomas Richards the process of transmission in the ancient, traditional sense of the word.<sup>3</sup>

After the death of Mr. Grotowski in 1999, the direction of the Workcenter, and its artistic drive toward the future has been in the hands of Mr. Richards, who is deepening and developing the research and the Workcenter’s creative exploration.

Since the foundation of the Workcenter in 1986, Mario Biagini has been a key and central member of the practical research team on “art as vehicle” working alongside Thomas Richards. Mr. Biagini is a principal doer in the present performative opus at the Workcenter in the domain of “art as vehicle”, *Action*, a leader in Project *The Bridge: Developing Theatre Arts*—a new branch

2) Later published as: Peter Brook, “Grotowski, Art as Vehicle”, in: Richard Schechner and Lisa Wolford, Eds. *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, London: Routledge, 407–29.

3) See in *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions*, Preface by Jerzy Grotowski, London: Routledge, 1995. Italian Ed.: Ubulibri (1993). French Ed.: Actes Sud (1995). German Ed.: Alexander Verlag Berlin (1996). Greek Ed.: Ekdoseis “Dodone” (1998).

of the Workcenter research, and a director of the performative opus created therein entitled *One breath left*. Within the Workcenter, Mr. Biagini works in creative tandem with Thomas Richards as Associate Director.

The Workcenter presently develops its research along the following lines:

#### **I. Art as vehicle:**

*At work on an alternative potentiality of performing arts*

This research has always articulated itself in the creation of precise performative opuses that are repeatable down to the minutest detail. The opuses in the domain of "art as vehicle" have come to be known as "Actions". Many different Actions have been created throughout the years. For example: *Main Action*, *Downstairs Action* (filmed by Mercedes Gregory in 1989), *Action* – an opus in the domain of "art as vehicle" presently done at the Workcenter (filmed in 2000, production A.C.C.A.A.N. – Atelier Cinéma de Normandie and Centre Dramatique National de Normandie), and the presently emerging opus, *The Twin: an Action in creation*.

#### *Action*

From 1994, Thomas Richards directs *Action*, an opus which he created and on which he carries on a continuous work. *Action* structures, in a material linked to performing arts, the work on oneself of the doers. The opus is composed of lines of actions elaborated in detail, constructed with and around ancient vibratory songs. Most of these songs are African and Afro-Caribbean in origin, and therefore are in the languages practiced by those cultures. In *Action*, there also appear, often under the form of incantations, fragments of a text in English translated word by word from Coptic. This text comes from a very remote source of the Judeo-Christian tradition; one cannot say anything with certitude about its arising.

In theatrical performances strictly speaking, that is in art as presentation, normally one of the indispensable elements is the story, the narration. A story is told, even if the essential may be something else. For the observer of *Action*, however, it would be more pertinent not to look for a story—the analogy would be rather poetry than narrative prose.

The fact is that in *Action* we do not look to tell a story. It's not an opus in the domain of art as presentation, but in the domain of "art as vehicle". Since we can see the performing arts as a chain with numerous links, where at one extremity one finds art as presentation (theatre in the strict sense), and at the other extremity, "art as vehicle".

It's something very ancient, rather forgotten. In "art as vehicle" there are opuses, but they do not necessarily demand the presence of exterior observers, since this work does not orient itself towards the spectator as an objective. Because of that, witnesses may be present or not.

For the persons doing, the doers, the opus is a kind of vehicle for the work on oneself, in the sense that, as in certain old traditions, the attention for art goes together with the approach of the interiority of the human being.

From the point of view of technical elements everything in "art as vehicle" is almost as in a normal theatre work of long duration. We essentially work on the songs, but we also work on the impulses, the score of reactions, the logic of the minutest actions, archaic models of movement, the word, so ancient that it's almost always anonymous. Everything depends on the artisanal competence with which we are able to work, on the quality of the details, the quality of the actions and rhythm, on the order of elements. So, we look to be impeccable from the point of view of craft. In *Action* as much as in a performance of art theatre, the structure is repeatable; it has a beginning, a development and an end, where each element should have its technically necessary logical place.

Fairly often exterior observers are invited to see *Action*. In the beginning, this involved a very small number of people, but now after all these years there have been in total thousands of witnesses—but always in little groups. And when someone witnesses, even though the work of art is not existing for them, they do have the opportunity to perceive the underlying aspects which give life to the creative opus.

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

In the field of "art as vehicle" the Workcenter team has begun to develop a new opus, *The Twin: an Action in creation*. This new structure, based on ancient vibratory songs and on an anonymous ancient text of the Western tradition, is being developed in the form of a "Work-in-creation". For the first time in the history of the Workcenter, an opus is being elaborated not uniquely in isolation and far from exterior observers, but, periodically, in close proximity with small groups of witnesses. In the initial editing phases, the creative material of *The Twin: an Action in creation* is organized in "modular segments"; fundamental units of structured explorations in action, repeatable and rigorous, always with a clear beginning, development and end. The reciprocal order and the final montage of these "modular segments" will be elaborated during the working years to come.

The text, which together with ancient vibratory songs is an integral part

of this new opus, has a narrative nature. The gist of the story – a story of a journey, of a task forgotten and then remembered and fulfilled – can be found in several versions throughout the whole Eastern Mediterranean area. The dramaturgic approach to the story in the ongoing "Work-in-creation" is not one of narration: as in certain old traditions, the story is rather re-enacted than re-presented.

## 2. Project *The Bridge*:

### *Developing Theatre Arts*

Since May 1998, the Workcenter is developing a new branch in its research, a branch that is evolving and maturing next to the research on "art as vehicle", Project *The Bridge: Developing Theatre Arts*. Therein, a bridge is being sculpted in the material of performing arts, which stretches from the world of the theatre to the investigations on "art as vehicle". What is appearing in Project *The Bridge* is neither theatre in the strict sense, nor "art as vehicle". Rather, a performance/non-performance is emerging. *One breath left*, directed by Mario Biagini and Thomas Richards.

In Project *The Bridge* we are searching for efficacious ways of dialogue in two seemingly opposite directions. Unlike the opuses in the domain of "art as vehicle", with *One breath left* we have consciously created both an arrow of intention that stretches toward those present, watching, and the other essential vector of intention related to those doing. Herein, we are moving towards a level of objectivity related to these two vectors of intention which exist in, and are supported by, alive and precise structures of action. We are penetrating a territory of active exploration on the relation between "art as vehicle" and performative event – deepening the research on the creative possibilities of the human being in action.

*One breath left* has been publicly presented on many occasions, from 1998 until now. To the present date, there have existed different versions – six to be exact – and each of them was stemming from the previous one, moving forward towards our intuited objective. We have presented *One breath left* every time that a certain level was reached, when the professional impeccability was solid and, at the same time, when the work itself started to indicate to us what the next step might be – the unexplored creative possibilities. What is appearing now is a door toward another possibility, a further possibility. A certain stage has been reached, but something unknown is tempting us, and we are going toward this temptation. Throughout the upcoming years, *One breath left* will enter an entirely new phase of elaboration and development.

## TRACING ROADS ACROSS: THE PROJECT

The ongoing creative development of the **Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards**, from April 2003 to April 2006, will be housed within the project **Tracing Roads Across**, supported by the "Culture 2000" Programme of the European Union, and made possible by a network of cultural operators from six different countries. Standing out among them is "Fondazione Pontedera Teatro" which heads the group of co-organizers by hosting the "Main Work". Gülsen Gürses, Artistic Director of "Theater des Augenblicks" in Austria, is project-organizer.

**Tracing Roads Across**, as well as directly concerning the Workcenter's practical research, will periodically focus the artistic team's attention towards selected young theatre groups, performance artists and students, and also give the Workcenter team the opportunity to address topics related to creative analysis with theatre experts and scholars. The project will create the circumstances in which the works and creative processes of young artists and scholars can be analyzed from the point of view of performance craft.

A three-year traveling cultural dialogue will be fostered between chosen theatre groups, organizations and cultural operators from eleven nations. The participating individual artists, theatre groups and intellectuals will delve at different levels and in different stages into the practical aspects of the overall three-year project.

**Tracing Roads Across** will be realized by the Workcenter team. The project will be conducted by an artistic core group, Workcenter researchers who have all already taken active part in the performative researches at the Workcenter for at least three full years, and will include project stagiaires, who are the young artists entering into the performative research, full time for a minimum period of one year.

**Tracing Roads Across** will also create the opportunity for non-professionals and theatre-lovers of all participating countries to come in contact with the artistic research and performative opuses of the Workcenter. Interested individuals will also be contacted through the numerous open conferences, projections of documentary films, and public discussions held in the participating countries.

### a) **Main Work**

The "Main Work" will take place in Pontedera, Italy, led by the artistic core group. Rehearsals, practical research and artistic preparation of the project's endeavors will take place therein. Here the creative center is shaped from

which all specific undertakings will spring. Within the "Main Work" there will also unfold the specific activity entitled "Tradition and Performance".

"Tradition and Performance" is one way of tracing access to, and contact with the researches of the Workcenter, for specific groups but also for interested individuals. Each year, young theatre groups will be chosen for in-depth extended meetings and exchanges-in-work with the Workcenter team: during the first year two groups from France, two from Bulgaria, two from Greece and one from Cyprus; during the second year two from the UK, two from Russia, two from Poland, one from Tunisia and one from Cyprus; during the third year, two from Greece, two from Bulgaria and two from France. Each group will be invited to Pontedera for a period of one week, on some occasions together with another group from a different country.

Throughout the three years theatre groups and ensembles from all the participating countries will be involved in "Tradition and Performance": these groups will be researched and selected by co-organizers and partners in collaboration with the project's artistic leaders prior to the realization of each one of the three phases of the said activity.

Within "Tradition and Performance", aside from these in-depth extended meetings and exchanges-in-work with and between chosen groups, events will take place which, due to their nature, will contact individual artists, professionals, scholars and experts from participating countries, as well as non-professionals and theatre-lovers. Most of the larger events in "Tradition and Performance" throughout the three years will be hosted in the locals of "Fondazione Pontedera Teatro": public meetings and conferences, public projections of film documentaries, performances. All events that presuppose a different environment will take place in the locals of the "Main Work".

#### **b) Frame Work**

The "Frame Work" will take place in Vienna, Austria mainly inside the "Theater des Augenblicks" locals. Here the Workcenter team will be in residence for a designated period each year and, including its practical artistic work and research, conduct "Opening Doors", in three separate phases. The "Frame Work" will find its body in this activity, creating an alternative center acting also as a bridge towards Central and Northern Europe. "Opening Doors" will present characteristics similar to those of "Tradition and Performance", on a smaller scale, accepting the visits of groups from Vienna during the first year, from Austria and Germany during the second, and from Central, Northern and Eastern Europe during the third and last year. During the first "Opening Doors", theatre University students from Austria and the UK will be invited

to Vienna as participants in seminar activities as well. Some of the theater groups taking part in "Opening Doors", will have in-depth extended meetings and exchanges-in-work with the Workcenter team. Other groups and also individuals will take part as witnesses or spectators in the open activities, such as seminars, projections, conferences and performances.

#### **c) Focal Points**

"Crossroads in Istanbul" – Turkey

"Southern Cradle" – Tunisia

"Bridging through Mediterranean Sea" – Heraklion, Greece

"Anatolian Gate" – South Turkey

During the different "Focal Points" the project will bring its investigations to selected countries of the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean area. Each year, one country has been chosen as the "Focal Point": first Turkey for the activity "Crossroads in Istanbul", then Tunisia for "Southern Cradle", and the following year Greece for "Bridging through Mediterranean Sea". In the third and final year, there will also be a second "Focal Point" in Southern Turkey with the activity entitled "Anatolian Gate".

At the "Focal Point" of the given year there will be an extended residency of the Workcenter team. "Focal Points" will include performances, Actions, showings of films, conferences, and exchanges of work with young theatre groups of the given "Focal Point" country.

In the "Focal Points" the artistic work will be done in buildings of the highest possible quality of architectural design - non-conventional spaces, mostly of ancient construction - that correspond to the artistic necessities of each specific performative opus. Places with the appropriate sonic resonance, for instance, for the work on ancient songs of tradition, in which the Workcenter is specialized, will be identified and selected in the different "Focal Points".

Moreover, within the frame of the first three "Focal Points", the program called "Yearly Triangle" will unfold.

#### *"Yearly Triangle"*

Each year, during the "Focal Points" in Istanbul, Tunis and Heraklion, a meeting in work between the Workcenter team and a Turkish, a Tunisian and a Greek theatre group will take place. The groups that take part in the "Yearly Triangle" will be the same for the three years, allowing thus a substantial confrontation on the development of the artistic and creative line of each group.



#### d) Exploration

Each year, the “Focal Point” of the upcoming year will be explored by the “Exploration team”, who will find and document the work spaces that will potentially be inhabited by performances, demonstrations and the practical work of the “Focal Point” of the upcoming year. The material created by the “Exploration team” will be reviewed by the artistic leaders to judge the merits of the potential spaces for the “Focal Point” of the following year. The “Exploration team” will also find and document the young theatre groups, individual artists, cultural operators, organizers, scholars and intellectuals from the “Focal Point” country who wish to participate actively in the “Focal Point” of the following year, and also document young theatre groups, individual artists and scholars from the “Focal Point” country who wish to participate in the various projects, seminars, meetings in work that will take place *outside* of the “Focal Point” country, for example in the countries of the “Main Work”, the “Frame Work”, or the “Eastern Meeting-place” (see below).

#### e) Impulses

An “Impulse” is an activity that the Workcenter team will conduct with the duration of approximately one month, and which will include performances, Actions and seminars. “Impulses” are designed to bring to three co-organizing countries (France, Cyprus and Bulgaria), the work of the Workcenter team once in each country during the three years. In one month **Tracing Roads Across** will unfold all of its possibilities of interaction: seminars, exchanges of work with young theatre groups and ensembles, public projections of documentary films, public conferences, demonstrations of Actions, and public performances.

One of the main intentions of “Impulse” in these three countries will go towards the co-organizing institutions themselves, the “Centre Dramatique National de Normandie – Comédie de Caen” (Caen, France), the “University of Cyprus” (Nicosia, Cyprus) and the “For a New Bulgarian University” Foundation (Sophia, Bulgaria). These co-organizing institutions will propose the groups, individuals, spectators, and participants who will be engaged in the activities: their students, actors, organizers, other individuals etc. During “Impulse” in Caen, for example, a contact will be established with the students of C.D.N.’s “C.R.E.T., Centre de Recherche et d’Expérimentation Théâtrale”. This contact will be deepened in the frame of the “Intervention” (see below) in Caen in July 2005. In Cyprus, a professional contact will be established with several theatre groups, among which there will be the Cypriot National Theatre ensemble. Impulses will generate, in the time-span of one month,

a strong and intense confrontation between the local creative and organizing reality and the project’s artistic team.

#### f) Interventions

“Interventions” will be held by Thomas Richards and Mario Biagini and will consist of conferences and short seminars of a theoretical nature. Occasionally, however, “Intervention” activities will also include performances of the Workcenter team and practical seminars.

#### g) Eastern Meeting-place

“Eastern Meeting-place” will take place in Moscow at Anatoli Vasiliev’s “School of Dramatic Art” at the end of each year of the overall project – fifteen days the first and second year, and one month in the third. This large and intensive yearly seminar will be led by the Workcenter team and will include twenty-five to thirty-five selected young individual artists or scholars coming from Italy, Austria, Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, France, Turkey, Great Britain, Poland, Tunisia and Russia. The principal objective is to gather in Moscow the motivated individuals who, having met during the year’s activities or during the year’s documentary work, might profit in a practical and simple way from the working capacities of the core artistic team, in terms of: acting and singing skills, directing capacities, montage techniques, and/or intellectual analysis and dramaturgic elaboration.

Anatoli Vasiliev will provide his new theatre building, which will be, for the whole duration of “Eastern Meeting-place”, inhabited by the Workcenter team and by the participants. This building offers unique possibilities from the point of view of simultaneous working sessions, its spaces are designed in a way that suits acoustically the project’s artistic team’s needs, and can provide accommodation for all participants.

The participants will work among themselves under the leadership of the Workcenter team. The young theatre artists will engage in analysis together concerning each other’s creative work, and its relation to performance techniques. During “Eastern Meeting-place” there will also be exchanges in work with young Russian theatre groups.

During the three years, individual participants and groups in “Eastern Meeting-place” will change, even if, in some exceptional cases, certain participants or groups might be asked to come back the following year.

#### h) Documentation

An integral and substantial aspect of the overall project will be consecrated to the creation of a body of documentation, in written texts as well as on video. A "Documentation team" has been created specifically destined to this task. The "team" is made up of a group of scholars, artists, cultural operators and a chosen video team. Some of the "Documentation team" members come from Universities, and others are artists and professionals interested in deepening their understanding of the Workcenter research. The video team is supported by "A.C.C.A.A.N. – L'Atelier Cinéma de Normandie".

The "Documentation team" will regularly take part in the main activities of **Tracing Roads Across**. A continuous monitoring and witnessing of the overall project will unfold, mainly on the occasions of public and semi-public events. Written documentation once edited and elaborated, will be openly available on-line to all interested readers. While some "Documentation team" members will be present during certain phases of the main endeavors of the project, other members will take charge of editing and organizing the collected material. The "Documentation team" who will utilize video recording will do so when the presence of video cameras will not create a disturbance to the unfolding of the event. The final form that the video documentation shall take will be discovered after all the material has been collected.

#### i) Symposia

*Opening International Symposium: "Performing Through – Tradition as Research at the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards"*  
The launching of **Tracing Roads Across** is to take place in Vienna, Austria, at "Theater des Augenblicks" in June of 2003 in the context of an International Symposium on the researches to date conducted at the **Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards**.

The Speakers at the International Symposium, theatre scholars and practitioners, critics, professors and historians, coming from Italy, France, UK, Austria, Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Poland, Russia, Turkey and Tunisia are invited on the basis of their specific knowledge of theatrical and/or anthropological fields of investigation. The majority of them have been in contact with the researches of the Workcenter for many years. Some of them will be at their first meeting with this specific terrain of research. All of them, before the opening of **Tracing Roads Across**, have been invited to the Workcenter in Pontedera, Italy for a two days seminar on the actual perspectives of its creative investigations, on its pedagogical intercultural activities and on the upcoming three-year project.

At the Opening Symposium, Thomas Richards and Mario Biagini of the Workcenter will be the dialogue partners within the roundtable conversations.

The Symposium will be open to the public, and translation from and in different languages will be provided. Some of the Speakers have been asked to monitor the overall project in its three years duration, and will be part the "Documentation team". These scholars will also take part in the Closing International Symposium in April 2006 in Pontedera, Italy (see below).

Specific scholars and theatre experts actively involved in the Symposia have been asked to co-operate in the compilation of an updated bibliography related to the work and life of Jerzy Grotowski, bridging also into the Workcenter history. This bibliography will be made available on-line as it is being compiled.

*Closing International Symposium:*

*"Living Traces – Performing as a Shared Reality"*

The Closing Symposium will be hosted by "Fondazione Pontedera Teatro" in Pontedera, Italy in April of 2006, with Speakers and participants selected throughout the entire three-year project.

Throughout **Tracing Roads Across**, the Workcenter team, and the "Documentation" and "Exploration" teams have been in touch with numerous individual artists, theatre groups, cultural operators, theatre scholars and critics, intellectuals and social workers from all countries involved in the overall project. Some of them have been asked to keep some sort of collaboration during the events unfolding in the frame of the project. The ones who have been following – in some way, monitoring – the overall project, will be invited to the Closing International Symposium as Speakers. They will come from Italy, Austria, France, Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Poland, UK, Turkey, Tunisia and Russia. The Speakers will be asked to analyze, in their individual addresses, the artistic phenomena generated and developed within the overall project, and the way in which they were realized within the different environments and places, different cultures and societies. The Speakers will also take part in public roundtable discussions with Thomas Richards and Mario Biagini of the Workcenter. All co-organizers and main partners will send their representatives to the Symposium, as to delineate in their view the arc of **Tracing Roads Across** during the three years of working cooperation.

## PROJECT ORGANIZATION, CO-ORGANIZATION AND PARTNERS

## PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND CO-IDEATION

### Theater des Augenblicks

The Theater des Augenblicks was founded by Gül Gürses in 1987. The theater's opening marked the creation of a space specifically designed for intercultural encounters and extensive work on experimental and innovative theatre.

Theater des Augenblicks' own productions have had and still have a strong "laboratory character", where much emphasis has been placed on artistic research – on exploring the limits of physical representation. Over the years, numerous international theatre-makers have been invited to take part at a process of experience exchange, through sharing their profound knowledge with other participants during work in progress organized by the theatre, creating a dialogue between the artists.

Theater des Augenblicks' unique sense for the arts has resulted in artistic programs of a demanding level that have repeatedly confirmed the fact that artwork's true creative catalyst does not lie in commercialized theatres.

Throughout the years, Theater des Augenblicks has increasingly become a center for international collaborative network, inviting several artists and directors, such as Gao Xingjian (recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2000) with the premiere piece "JA und/oder NEIN".

Since 1987 Theater des Augenblicks has been mainly funded by four institutions: Stadt Wien – MA 7 Kultur; BKA, Sektion II, Kunstangelegenheiten; Europäische Kommission, Kulturkontakt Austria, Wien.

#### Artistic Director: Gülsen Gürses

Producer and/or director of several projects: "Briefe an Taranta Babu" (1985, on tour in 1988 – Southern Tyrol), "Guernica" (1989, on tour in 1990 – International Theatre Festival Istanbul and Festival Musica 900), "Niemand auf Reisen" (1991 – invitation to the theatre festival in Avignon). Artistic director of Theater des Augenblicks since its foundation in 1987; creating the first International Theatre Laboratory (ITL) in 1990, artistic director of the ITL (1991–93).

Conception, production and co-direction of the International Dance Laboratory – "Jahre der Einsamkeit" (1996) and International Dance Laboratory – "Spuren der Einsamkeit" (1997). Artistic director and co-director of "The Third International Dance Laboratory", cycle 1 ("Gender is Performance") and cycle 2 ("Turning Talks" including the symposium "Trans-identity in comparison: the cultures of Europe, Turkey, and India") in 1998/99. Conception and artistic direction of the festivals "context : europe – theatre impulses

from Poland, Russia, Slovenia and Czech Republic" (2000), "context : europe 2001 – theatre impulses from Scandinavia" and "context : europe 2002 – artistic impulses from south-eastern europe"

**Team:** Elfriede Karner (Administration); Karl Grünböck (Administration); Özlem Sümerol (Production-Assistance, Coordination); Brigitte Kasslatter (Production-Assistance, Coordination); Gül Yılmaz (Assistance); Technical Team: Helmut Raninger; Gerhard Bauernfeind, Ernst Pohn.

*Theater des Augenblicks*

*Edelhofgasse 10, 1180 Wien, Austria*

*Phone: (+43-1) 479 68 87, Fax: (+43-1) 479 68 86*

*www.theaterdesaugenblicks.net, email: office@theaterdesaugenblicks.net*

## CO-ORGANIZERS

### Fondazione Pontedera Teatro

The Centro per la Sperimentazione e la Ricerca Teatrale was born in 1974 in Pontedera, and has been recognized as a new model for cultural and artistic institutions. It was created as a place for theatre creation and education, aiding the artistic development of groups, and creating a common working place for scholars, artists and theatre professionals.

Since 1999 the Centro has become Fondazione Pontedera Teatro. It is acknowledged by the Ministry of Culture and the Region of Tuscany. The Fondazione is active in the field of theatre productions, educational projects, and theatre festivals on the regional, national and international level.

Fondazione Pontedera Teatro works in a systematic and organic way with artists and groups from Tuscany, and with national and international theatres; with scholars, theatre historians and University theatre and anthropology programs. It also carries out activities with local institutions, collaborating with high schools and with the University of the Elderly.

Since 1986 Fondazione Pontedera Teatro has been hosting the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski, which in 1996 Grotowski re-named the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards.

The history of Fondazione Pontedera Teatro is associated with two of the most important theatre festivals in Italy, Santarcangelo and Volterrateatro. Since 1997 the Fondazione has been producing its own annual international festival called "Generations, International Meeting of Theatres".

The Director of the Fondazione is Roberto Bacci. Luca Dini and Carla Pollastrelli are the Co-directors.

Fondazione Pontedera Teatro is supported by the Ministry of Culture, the Region of Tuscany, the Province of Pisa and the Municipality of Pontedera.

**Artistic Director: Roberto Bacci**

He finished his studies in 1972 at the University of Pisa, with a dissertation called "Teatro e Alchimia". The presentation of "Min Fars Hus", directed by Eugenio Barba with the Odin Theatre, is a subject on which his theses is based.

In 1973 he followed an invitation of the Piccolo Teatro di Pontedera and went to Pontedera, where he founded in 1974 the Centro per la Sperimentazione e la Ricerca Teatrale (Center for Theatrical Experiment and Research). Since its foundation he has been Artistic Director of the Center with which he has organized numerous projects in Italy and abroad, coming into contact with artists such as Jerzy Grotowski, Eugenio Barba, Peter Brook, Anatoli Vasiliev, Raul Ruiz, Julian Beck and Judith Malina, Sanjukta Panigrahi and others. Between 1978 and 1987 he was Artistic Director for seven editions of the "Festival Internazionale di Teatro di Santarcangelo di Romagna". He was Artistic Director of the International Festival "Volterra Teatro" from 1990 to 1999, and of the Festival "Passaggio a Pontedera", which, from the edition 2000 on, has been called "Generazioni". Since 2002 he has been Artistic Director of the theatre part of the Festival "Fabbrica Europa" in Florence. From 1976 to 2003 he has directed 22 performances presented in Italy, in Europe, in Latin America and in the Middle East, first with the Piccolo Teatro di Pontedera, and then with the Compagnia Laboratorio di Pontedera. Some of these performances have received prizes and recognition from critics.

*Fondazione Pontedera Teatro*

*Via Manzoni 22, 56025 Pontedera, Italy*

*Tel.: +39 0587 55720-57034, Fax: +39 0587 213631*

*Website: [www.pontederateatro.it](http://www.pontederateatro.it), Email: [teatro@pontederateatro.it](mailto:teatro@pontederateatro.it)*

**Centre Dramatique National de Normandie – Comédie de Caen**

The Centre Dramatique National de Normandie – Comédie de Caen, created in 1972, fulfils a mission of theatrical creation of public interest. Directed by Eric Lacascade since January 1997, it is presently composed of a permanent team of 35 persons. It is supported by the Ministère de la Culture/DRAC de Basse Normandie, the Municipalities of Caen and Hérouville Saint-Claire, the Conseil Régional de Basse Normandie and the Conseil Général du Calvados.

The artistic project is constructed on: research and theatrical experimentation (CRET); creation and diffusion of performances produced by the

CDN team; production and reception of national and international theatrical works; and on a structure for basic and continuing professional formation.

**Artistic Director: Eric Lacascade**

Actor and director, Eric Lacascade has been at the head of the Centre Dramatique National de Normandie – Comédie de Caen since 1997. His art for direction favours the relationship actor-space, places an emphasis on laboratory and research work, and proceeds by long periods dedicated to one work. Giving witness to this process are: the Chekhov trilogy ("La Mouette", "Cercle de famille pour trois sœurs", "Ivanov"), presented at Avignon Festival 2000, or the triptych "A la vie, à l'amour, à la mort" (1997/98), which brings together Racine, Claudel and Durif ("Phèdre", "L'Echange", and "Frôler les pylons"). He directs the Sonnets team, a "Shakespearean concert", presented at Avignon Festival 2001. And in Avignon Festival 2002, Eric Lacascade presented "Platonov" by Chekhov, in the Court d'Honneur du Palais des Papes. At the CDN de Normandie, besides his activities as director and creator, Eric Lacascade has opened a centre for theatrical exploration and reflection, dedicated to research and training: the Centre for Theatrical Research and Experimentation (CRET).

*Centre Dramatique National de Normandie – Comédie de Caen*

*32, rue des Cordes – BP 224 – 14012 Caen Cedex, France*

*Tel.: +33 (0)2 31 46 27 27, Fax: +33 (0)2 31 46 27 28*

*Website: [www.cdn-normandie.com](http://www.cdn-normandie.com), e-mail: [info@cdncaen.com](mailto:info@cdncaen.com)*

**Public Agency for Culture, Tourism and Development of Heraklion City (Municipality of Heraklion) – D.E.P.T.A.I., Crete, Greece**

D.E.P.T.A.I. is an organization belonging to the Municipality of Heraklion and is responsible for the organization of the cultural events in the town. Among these events one must mention: the annual three-month international "Summer Festival", which is one of the three largest festivals of Greece; "Politistiki Agones", an exchange and competition between young, amateur artists from all over Crete, during which there also takes place seminars, exhibitions, and other cultural events by professional groups; and, "Polykentro Neolaias" (Youth Center of the Municipality – D.E.P.T.A.I.), a center where young people can express themselves artistically, read books, have discussions, surf the internet – officially a year-round "Information Center for Young People" with free access to every citizen, where all computers are connected twenty-four hours a day to special web sites of the Ministry of Culture and of the European Union for new programs concerning young people. Since January 2001, the "Polykentro Neolaias"

has the financial support of the Ministry of Culture and the Department for the Young Generation.

Mr. Nontas Sarris, President of D.E.P.T.A.I.

Mr. Nikos Matzapetakis, President of the Cultural Committee

Mr. Yiorgos Antonakis, Artistic Director of D.E.P.T.A.I.

Androgeo 2, 71202 Heraklion, Crete, Greece

Tel.: +30 28 10 39 92 11, Fax: +30 2810 22 92 07

e-mail: neolaia@herklion-city.gr

#### **University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus**

The University of Cyprus is a new, state University enrolling its first students in September 2002. It has currently 3800 undergraduate and post graduate students with an academic staff of about 300 and administrative staff of 250. It has five faculties, Humanities and Social Sciences, Pure and Applied Sciences, Economics and Management Sciences, Letters and Engineering. There are 17 Academic departments distributed between the five faculties. The University has also three research units and a Cultural Centre, which plays a major role in the cultural life of the country and will play a similar role in the Culture 2000 project, "Tracing Roads Across". The University is actively involved in European Programmes such as the Sixth Framework programme, SOCRATES, LEONARDO, MEDA and others. It has established exchanges of both staff and students with many European Universities, mainly through ERASMUS but also through Bilateral collaborative agreements. The University's aim is to become a high calibre research university and a leader in the Mediterranean, in both research and teaching. As part of its mission it also aspires to have a substantial social and cultural intervention in the life of the community. It is currently building up its infrastructure, both human and physical, so as to meet the challenges foreseen by the European Research and Educational Space, which are planned by 2010. It is also in the stage of planning its e-learning intervention as well as applying fully the Bologna Process. The University is still in a state of expansion and has as its final goal to become a comprehensive university in the following ten years, covering a wide variety of disciplines, including medicine and the arts.

*The University's address is:*

75 Kallipoleos Avenue, PO Box 20537

CY-1678 Nicosia, Cyprus

#### **"For a New Bulgarian University" Foundation**

"For a New Bulgarian University" Foundation is a non-profit organization established on September 27th, 2000, in Sofia, by Professor Bogdan Bogdanov, D.Sc., led by his desire to contribute to the consolidation of civil society values and the development of science and education in Bulgaria. The Foundation's mission is also to support the process of reformation and modernization of the educational system in Bulgaria in accordance with contemporary trends in education and science. Among the articulated goals of the Foundation are: to support the democratic and social economic development of Bulgaria; to validate a new type of education in Bulgaria; to support the development of New Bulgarian University; to stimulate scientific research and to support the Bulgarian academic community; to support students with unfortunate social status; and to initiate effective collaboration with governmental, non-governmental and private organizations, educational and academic institutions.

#### **Head of Theater Department: Vazkressia Vicharova**

Vazkressia Vicharova was born in 1957. In 1983 she graduated in theatre directing and acting and in 1990 she received her postgraduate specialization in theatre directing from the National Academy of Theatre and Film Art "Craştju Sarafov", Sofia. Since 1991 she has been a freelance theatre director. In 1991 she created the Theatre Department of New Bulgarian University. Since 1991 she has been the Head of the Theatre Department at New Bulgarian University, Sofia where she is developer and director of Bachelor's and Postgraduate programs. During the theatre season of 1989/90, Vazkressia Vicharova created the very first version of the performance "Customs" which became a base for the program. So far the performance has had its edition each year. For more than 20 years Vazkressia Vicharova has worked in a team with the architect Zarko Uzunov. During this period she directed many performances like "Alpengluhen" by Peter Turini in 1997, "Customs" by Ivan Hadjiiski in 1989-1996, "The House of Bernarda Alba" by Federico Garcia Lorca, "The Mad House Woman" and "The Terrible Parents" by Jean Cocteau, etc. She has also realized the Project "Surrealism".

PARTNERS

- Moscow Theatre "School of Dramatic Art" of Anatoli Vasiliev,**  
Moscow (Russia)
- Turkish National Theatre,** Istanbul-Ankara (Turkey)
- Théâtre National Tunisien – Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Loisirs,**  
Tunis (Tunisia)
- A.C.C.A.A.N. – L'Atelier Cinéma de Normandie,** Caen (France);
- IMEC – Institut mémoires de l'édition contemporaine,** Paris-Caen (France)
- The Centre for Studies on Jerzy Grotowski's Work and of the Cultural and  
Theatrical Research,** Wroclaw (Poland)
- Kent University,** Canterbury (Great Britain)
- University of Perugia,** Perugia (Italy)
- University of Bologna,** Bologna (Italy)
- University of Paris VIII,** Paris (France)
- University of Nice/Sophia Antipolis,** Nice (France)
- University of Vienna,** Vienna (Austria)
- Associazione Grotowski,** Pontedera (Italy)
- "Group de recherche Spettacle vivant et sciences de l'homme"**  
at the **Maison des sciences de l'homme,** Paris (France)
- Omnia Theatre,** Crete (Greece)
- Studium Teatralne,** Warsaw (Poland)
- Polnisches Institut,** Vienna (Austria)
- Groups for Human Encounter,** Naxxar (Malta)
- Malta Council for Culture and the Art, Ministry of Education,**  
Floriana (Malta)
- xHCA – Questioning Human Creativity as Acting,** Naxxar (Malta)
- Theatre Studies Programme of the Mediterranean Institute,**  
**University of Malta,** Msida (Malta)

	MAIN WORK	FRAME WORK	FOCAL POINTS	IMPULSES	INTER-VENTIONS	EASTERN MEETING-PLACE	INTER-NATIONAL SYMPOSIA		
APRIL 03								APRIL 04	APRIL 04
MAY 03					May 11–17, Florence, Italy: Intervention in Fondazione Pontedera Teatro Program			MAY 04	MAY 04
JUNE 03		May 22 – Jul 8, Vienna, Austria: Opening Doors I rehearsals and practical research, exchanges of work with theatre groups, seminars, films and Symposium					Jun 28–29, Vienna, Austria: Opening International Symposium	JUNE 04	JUNE 04
JULY 03			Jul 11 – Aug 31, Istanbul, Turkey, Focal Point: <b>Crossroads in Istanbul</b> Performances, Actions, conference of work with theatre groups, "Yearly Triangle"					JULY 04	JULY 04
AUG 03								AUG 04	AUG 04
SEP 03								SEP 04	SEP 04
OCT 03	Oct 9 – Nov 30, Pontedera, Italy: rehearsals, practical research, preparation for <b>Tradition and Performance</b>				Oct 1–7, Pontedera, Italy: Intervention in Fondazione Pontedera Teatro Program			OCT 04	OCT 04
NOV 03					Nov 21–22, Wroclaw, Poland: Intervention Films, conference			NOV 04	NOV 04
DEC 03	Dec 1 – Jan 31, Pontedera, Italy: <b>Tradition and Performance</b> Performances, Actions, practical research, exchanges of work with theatre groups							DEC 04	DEC 04
JAN 04								JAN 05	JAN 05
FEB 04	Feb 1–26, Pontedera, Italy: rehearsals and preparation for <b>Focal Point</b> in Tunisia		Feb 27 – Mar 31, Tunis, Tunisia, Focal Point: <b>Southern Cradle</b> Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges of work with theatre groups, "Yearly Triangle"					FEB 05	FEB 05
MARCH 04								MARCH 05	MARCH 05
APRIL 04						Apr 1–15, Moscow, Russia: Eastern Meeting-place Practical seminar		APRIL 05	APRIL 05

	MAIN WORK	FRAME WORK	FOCAL POINTS	IMPULSES	INTER-VENTIONS	EASTERN MEETING-PLACE	INTER-NATIONAL SYMPOSIA		MAIN WORK	FRAME WORK	FOCAL POINTS	IMPULSES	INTER-VENTIONS	EASTERN MEETING-PLACE	INTER-NATIONAL SYMPOSIA
APRIL 04	Apr 21 – May 1, Pontedera, Italy: Rehearsals and preparation for <b>Impulse</b> in Bulgaria							APRIL 05	Apr 19 – May 2, Pontedera, Italy: rehearsals and preparation for <b>Intervention</b> in Pontedera, Italy						
MAY 04				May 12 – Jun 10, Sophia, Bulgaria: <b>Impulse</b> Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges of work with theatre groups	May 3 – 9, Pontedera, Italy: <b>Intervention</b> in Fondazione Pontedera Teatro Program			MAY 05	May 11 – Jun 5, Pontedera, Italy: rehearsals and preparation for <b>Intervention</b> in Poland				May 3 – 8, Pontedera, Italy: <b>Intervention</b> in Fondazione Pontedera Teatro Program		
JUNE 04				Jun 11 – Jul 9, Caen, France: <b>Impulse</b>				JUNE 05					Jun 6 – 20, Poland: <b>Intervention</b> Performances		
JULY 04				Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges of work with theatre groups				JULY 05			Jul 1 – 31, South Turkey, Focal Point: <b>Anatolian Gate</b>		Jun 21 – 30, Caen, France: <b>Intervention</b> Seminar with actors		
AUG 04					Jul 10 – Aug 3, Poland: <b>Intervention</b> Actions			AUG 05			Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges of work with theatre groups				
SEP 04								SEP 05			Sep 1 – Oct 19, Heraklion, Greece, Focal Point: <b>Bridging through Mediterranean Sea</b>				
OCT 04				Sep 1 – Oct 13, Nicosia, Cyprus: <b>Impulse</b> Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges of work with theatre groups				OCT 05			Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges with theatre groups, "Yearly Triangle"		Oct 20 – 25, Nicosia, Cyprus: <b>Intervention</b> Lectures in University		
NOV 04	Oct 14 – Dec 22, Vienna, Austria: <b>Opening Doors II</b> rehearsals and practical research, Performances, Actions, exchanges of work with theatre groups, seminar, conference				Nov 4 – 10, Sophia, Bulgaria: <b>Intervention</b> Lectures and films			NOV 05	Oct 20 – Dec 24, Vienna, Austria: <b>Opening Doors III</b> rehearsals and practical research, Performances, Actions, seminars, exchanges of work with theatre groups, conference						
DEC 04								DEC 05							
JAN 05					Jan 4 – 9, Canterbury, Great Britain: <b>Intervention</b> Lectures and films			JAN 06	Jan 1 – Mar 1, Pontedera, Italy: <b>Tradition and Performance</b> Performances, Actions, exchanges of work with theatre groups, films, conference						
FEB 05	Jan 12 – Mar 31, Pontedera, Italy: <b>Tradition and Performance</b> Performances, Actions, conference, films, exchanges of work with theatre groups							FEB 06							
MARCH 05								MARCH 06						Mar 2 – 30, Moscow, Russia: <b>Eastern Meeting-place</b> Practical seminar	
APRIL 05						Apr 1 – 18, Moscow, Russia: <b>Eastern Meeting-place</b> Practical seminar		APRIL 06							Apr 8 – 9, Pontedera, Italy: <b>Closing International Symposium</b>