

International Theatre Conference:
The Actor and Characters

**Lithuanian Academy of Music
and Theatre Vilnius, Lithuania**

6th - 7th - 8th September 2019

P r o g r a m

Friday 6th September

9.30 AM: Opening Speech Dr. Ramune Balevičiūtė – Dr. Kiki Selioni

10.00 AM: Vladimir Mirodan Emeritus Professor of Theatre, University of the Arts London.

Double Agents: Actors, Characters and the Challenges of the New Psychology

Speaking of the great Brechtian actor Ekkehard Schall, Joseph Chaikin once wrote: “I never believe he is the character by name. Nor do I believe that he is playing himself. He performs like a double agent who has infiltrated the two worlds”.

In the introductory talk of the conference, Vladimir Mirodan examines from the perspective of recent findings in psychology the complex ways in which the personalities of individual actors and directors interact with the process of bringing fictional characters to life as well as with their interpretations of the dramatic material. He asks: How is it that in the crucible of the rehearsal room certain decisions ‘feel right’ and others do not? Where does our ‘visceral’ sensation that something ‘will work’ come from? What are the forces that shape these pre-reflexive processes? Are they rooted in our personalities?

Focusing on one of the key arguments developed in his recent book, *The Actor and the Character*, Mirodan outlines certain, influential psychological models which describe the considerable effect genetic and epigenetic factors have on the formation of personality. This view considers personalities, including those of actors, to be in large measure ‘set’, and thus gives strong support to contemporary practitioners writing about acting in the Stanislavskian tradition, such as Mike Alfreds, Declan Donnellan or Katie Mitchell, who argue against the notion of a character independent of the actor and deny the very possibility of ‘transformation’. At the same time, Mirodan explains, very recent research has been revisiting the notion of the unalterable personality and may thus be opening the door to a scientific explanation of the phenomenon of transformation. Can the practices of our rehearsal rooms renew themselves to reflect these latest discoveries? Informed by science, should we look again at the actor as a ‘double agent’?

Vladimir Mirodan, PhD, FRSA is Emeritus Professor of Theatre, University of the Arts London. Trained on the Directors Course at Drama Centre London, he has directed over 50 productions in the UK as well as internationally and has taught and directed in most leading drama schools in the UK. He was Vice-Principal and Director of Drama at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Principal of Drama Centre London and Director of Development and Research Leader, Drama and Performance, Central Saint Martins. He is a former Chairman of the Conference of Drama Schools and a Deputy Chair of the National Council for Drama Training. He is currently the Chair of the Directors Guild of Great Britain Trust and of the Directors Charitable Foundation.

Professor Mirodan’s research interests revolve around issues of acting psychology, in particular as this relates to the neuropsychology of gesture and posture. *The Actor and the Character*, his book on the psychology of transformation in acting, was published by Routledge in November 2018. Together with neuroscientists from University College London, Professor Mirodan is engaged in a research project on emotional contagion funded by the Leverhulme Foundation. Professor Mirodan is a member of the Editorial Board of the journal *Stanislavski Studies* and Review Editor of the journal *Frontiers in Performance Science*.

11.00: Frank Pecquet, Associate Professor at the “Sorbonne Art School”, Paris1 University, Researcher at the ACTE Institute (Art Creation Theory Esthetic): Team “design-art-media”, director of 3TP (The Trans Team Project) involving art and artificial intelligence.

Acting/Music Performance and Theatre

Music performance results from the psychophysical work that requires playing music: an intellectual investment related to music either read or improvised and practicing the instrument, working out on the instrumental body - body parts among fingers. The same thing could be said about acting in theatre, although acting is not playing music, but performing a character without any external instrument, except your own body. However, by referring to the basic meaning of acting, “to play a part”, there are distinctive meanings in theatre and music. To begin, there will be the discussion of the characteristics of each from the standpoint of a “character”. Comparison of the two will then bring the analysis of specific properties on performing theatre and music. We will comment on creative practices to enhance the work of a character in both domains, theatre and music. Finally, the possibility to enhance performing with Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications will be considered, such as an augmented instrument in music with the help of technology as an opportunity for the initial performer, by stimulating samples, to replay his own recorded samples, “real time processes” them, or what we define as performing/controlling AI.

Frank Pecquet is a composer, musicologist, author of works in acoustic and electronic music and articles on contemporary music. Working in the field of sound design, acoustical ecology and interactive music composition. Teacher/Researcher in computer arts at the University of Paris1, Pantheon-Sorbonne. Member of ACTE and Ircam (Research Institute Coordination and Music). PhD(s) in musicology/composition Paris (1985) and San Diego Universities (UCSD, 1992). Last publications : “Sound or musical design: provisory problematic : Afterthoughts on the “Subway Symphony” from James Murphy”, (SQRM, [Société Québécoise de Recherche en Musique], Canada, N°22, 2019); “Performing with sound samples-controlled gloves and light-controlled arms”, (SMC 2019 [Sound and Music Computing N°15], Malaga, Spain, 2019)), “Analysis of sound design practices [ASDP] : Research methodology” (CIM 2018 acts [Colloquio di Informatica Musicale XXII, Udine, Italy, 2018]. To be published in 2020 a handbook on “Sound design” (Publication Delatour, France). Last music & multimedia creations: “Piamenca” for augmented piano and computer (SMC - Sound and Music Computing 16 - 2019, Malaga, Spain sponsored by the SACEM), “Transpiano”, augmented piano and computer (SMC 2018 N°15, Limassol, Cyprus). Currently working on a digital opera.

11.30: Dr. Ben Spatz, Senior Lecturer in Drama, Theatre and Performance, School of Music, Humanities & Media, University of Huddersfield

From “Actor and Characters” to “Identity and Technique” (multimedia talk)

This talk will address the relationship of actors to characters through the lens of audiovisual embodied research, questioning the assumptions of Eurocentric dramatic realism by linking theatrical performance to the performativity of identities. In embodied research (a variant of artistic research, practice as research, and performance as research that foregrounds embodiment at the methodological level), it is increasingly clear that — far

from being two clearly separate entities — identity and technique continually intermingle and mutually construct each other in every moment of practice. In other words, while actors may work consciously to construct characters, practices of characterization and training also materially (re)construct the actor's identity, often in gendered, racialized, and other deeply sedimenting ways that may be neither intentional nor well understood within dominant paradigms of performance analysis.

To understand the complex relationship between performer and role, we need to develop new research methods that can dig deeply into specific moments of emergent performance. I argue that audiovisual embodied research has the potential to do this, illustrating my talk with examples from both the videographic *Journal of Embodied Research* and the UK-funded project “Judaica: An Embodied Laboratory for Songwork” (2016-2018). Drawing on social epistemology, queer theory, and new materialism, I will conduct a close reading of selected audiovisual moments to show how role and performer are interwoven in practice. Along the way, I will offer concrete techniques and strategies for developing new critical approaches to embodied research.

Ben Spatz (Senior Lecturer in Drama, Theatre and Performance at the University of Huddersfield) is a non-binary researcher and theorist of embodied practice. They are the author of *What a Body Can Do: Technique as Knowledge, Practice as Research* (Routledge 2015) and *Blue Sky Body: Thresholds for Embodied Research* (Routledge 2020), as well as an AHRC Leadership Fellow with the project “Judaica: An Embodied Laboratory for Songwork” (2016-2018). Ben is also the founding editor of the videographic *Journal of Embodied Research*, from Open Library of Humanities, and the *Advanced Methods* imprint, published by Punctum Books; and a founder and co-convenor of the Embodied Research Working Group within the International Federation for Theatre Research. They have more than two decades of experience as a performer and director of contemporary performance, working mainly in New York City from 2001 to 2013. For more information, please visit: www.urbanresearchtheater.com.

12.00 PM: Andromachi Salacha, MD, Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine, General Hospital of Elef-
sis «THRIASIO», Athens, GREECE

Vilnius Conference abstract

‘Embodied Cognition: the primacy of human movement in perception, action and human intersubjectivity’

Contemporary Training of the Human Organism still remains a unique and mysterious phenomenon (although we do train people in our everyday practice be it patient's in Rehabilitation practice, dancers, or during actor's or even elite athlete's training. What we lack is the establishment of a unified world-wide accepted scientific methodology of human organism training, i.e., a systematic, theoretical analysis of methods and principles of human organism training. It seems that evidence from Embodied cognition theories should constitute a basic chapter of this approach. So, in this paper, I try to briefly outline embodied cognition theories as a basis towards an early translational theoretical model of the unique and principal role of movement for human cognition. Cognition, things like perception and action and human intersubjectivity are deeply and strictly embodied. It is through bodily movement that we are able to perceive objects, place and the world, gestures and faces, we construct our own body schema and the notion of self. How the body interacts with the environment, physical or social, ultimately plays a constitutive part in what we understand to be cognition and human mind intelligence.

I hold a medical degree from Medical School of Patras University. I am currently working as a Rehabilitation Physician at General Hospital of Elefsis « THRIASIO » in Athens, Greece. As a Rehab physician my interests through these years followed my work at Electrophysiology Studies of Peripheral nerves, pain and spasticity. Currently, after attending the two years course of “European Master in Stroke” at Krems, Austria, I am focused on therapeutic rehab of movement after Nervous System lesions. More precisely, I am interested in the development of a theoretically embedded systematic articulation of approaching methods, procedures and techniques of human organism movement and action, in order to obtain a more effective, scientifically grounded therapeutic movement rehab. So, this paper is part of a project of my own systematic study of neuroscience evidence along with continuous philosophical studies for the last eleven years now. It is a time consuming, hard and ever-evolving process, which apart from the ongoing pleasures and the joy of the new knowledge, has totally reformed the way I perceive and articulate and model my everyday practice in rehab therapeutics.

12.30 PM: Dr. Despina Kosmopoulou, Post-doctoral researcher of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens, department of Theater Studies, author.

Title: The actor and the ‘other’; debating the creation of dramatic characters.

In the present study, we focus on the relationship between the actor and the other, that is, the performer of a theatrical entity and the entity which the image and the propriety rules. Through the schemas suggested by the semiotics, we will try to approach the hero’s path to the actor and the opposite, of the actor in search of a hero. The actantial model largely highlights the range of sign polyphony that seals the bakhtinian voices and, more generally, the polyphony as Roland Barthes perceives it. The theater as a reflection of the society, from which it is fed with living examples, validates action and influence as well as the relation of the character to the other.

Dr Despina Kosmopoulou was born in Athens and studied French Literature at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She holds a PhD and she is a post-doctoral researcher in the Department of Theater Studies of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens. Despina Kosmopoulou examines theater further through the philosophy proposed by Semiology. She is a member and researcher of the Theater Semiology Center and collaborates with universities and research centers in Greece and abroad . She has written four books that are published by the ‘Dromon’ publications. 1.Pirandello and Genet, a ‘meeting’ in the tragic and the absurd, 2017, Dromon 2. Space Dialectics and Enclosure to the Theater, 2018, Dromon 3 monograph under publication : Giorgos Kimoulis, the actor and director: with the eyes of theory. 4.mono-graph under publication : Theatrical creation issues.

13.00 - 14.00 PM: Break

Teaching/Demonstration

14.00 - 15.30: Sarah Davey-Hull, Course Leader MA Acting, Contemporary strand, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London

Teaching: How to create character

In this teaching demonstration I will share with you some 'slices' of the techniques that I currently use to train the MA Acting Contemporary students at RCSSD to create character.

In our way of working, we enter a text through the body. We never sit around and discuss...

Lecoq, *The Moving Body*

Movement is all. Keep moving and yet slow down simultaneously

Anne Bogart, *And Then You Act*

Actors need time to build their characters and to practice what they have to do in the scenes....Actors often talk about 'finding the character', as if the character were a suit of clothes sitting in a room somewhere just waiting for the actor to open the right door and put it on....it takes time for any actor to construct a credible character.

Katie Mitchell, *The Director's Craft*

Using a combination of Anne Bogart's Viewpoints, Lecoq's elements and Katie Mitchell's Stanislavski derived processes alongside my 30 years experience as a director and teacher, I teach actors to create characters through a psychophysical practice.

Sarah Davey-Hull is Course Leader for the MA Acting Contemporary at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama, teaching acting and devising and directing student productions and showcases. Here she has commissioned and directed new plays *I Do Believe In Monsters* by Melissa Bubnic, *A Serious Case of the F**kits* by Anna Jordan, *Scenes From The End of the World* by Chris Bush at The Yard Theatre and most recently she co-directed *The Herd* devised with the students. She is also Artistic Director of the bold & saucy theatre company, for whom she has directed and produced 22 shows including Shakespeare, devised shows and new writing, most recently *Reared*, a new play by John Fitzpatrick at Theatre503 and *In Passing* a series of devised pieces performed in non theatre settings. As a freelance director, highlights have included directing new writing at Shakespeare's Globe, the Lyric Hammersmith Main House and for the British Council in New Zealand alongside work with companies such as Kilter, Terra Nova and the Oxford Shakespeare Company. Later this month, sdh will be directing a new play by Chloe Todd Fordham for the Kensington Karavan festival, performed in a caravan on Portobello Road, London.

Workshop

16.00 - 19.00: Dr. Ben Spatz, Senior Lecturer in Drama, Theatre and Performance, School of Music, Humanities & Media, University of Huddersfield

Making a Laboratory: Embodied Research and the Audiovisual Body (two-day workshop) Part I

This two-part workshop will introduce a set of new practical techniques for short-circuiting embodiment and audiovisuality, which may be useful to anyone conducting practice research in actor and performer training, creative devising, or postdramatic performance. The techniques are adapted from an audiovisual embodied research method called “Dynamic Configurations with Transversal Video” (DCTV), which crystallized in 2017 during an embodied laboratory research project that I led with Nazlıhan Eda Erçin and Agnieszka Mendel.

In this workshop, DCTV techniques will be simplified and introduced as a set of four crucial relationships that can be used to structure a new kind of theatre laboratory: 1) the relation of a practitioner to embodied material; 2) the relation between practitioners; 3) the “directorial” relation; and 4) the videographic relation. Participants will explore each of these relations separately and then begin to experiment with the generation of new kinds of research data that emerge from these “configurations.” Please bring a video camera with you if possible. A mobile phone with video recording capacity is fine; more advanced devices are also welcome.

Saturday 16.00 - 18.00 PM:

Making a Laboratory: Dynamic Configurations with Transversal Video part II

Saturday 7th September

10.00 - 11.00: Dr. Roger Smart, Freelance Director and Actor Trainer; Visiting Lecturer and Guest Director at the University of Northampton

Vladimir Mirodan, in *The Actor And The Character*, begins with the assertion that the ‘actor-in-action’ approach to the creation of a theatrical character works from a premise, quoting Declan Donnellan, that “the question ‘Who am I?’ should be avoided at all costs, as its ‘paralyzing aesthetic’ freezes an actor’s impulses.” (Mirodan, 2019). In an actor-in-action approach, it is argued, key qualities of the character that are stated or implied in the dramatic text are of minimal importance and are not translated into the “imaginary body” of the character on-stage (Mirodan, *ibid.*). Maria Knebel, Knebel, however, cautions that “even the most magnificent characterization” can induce boredom, for “[w]ithout the living, original, passionate thoughts and feelings of the actor, everything on stage becomes dead.” (Knebel, 2016).

In response to the apparent dilemma of marrying key qualities of the character contained in the play text with the actor's authentic impulses, I propose a method of developing a character that draws upon emotion-laden resources (e.g. image research) and phantasy exercises as a precursor to psychophysical explorations (e.g., Viewpoints, Suzuki, Active Analysis).

As a foundation for this process, I argue that what is considered as an actor's lived experience can be expanded to include vicarious, empathetic experiences, such as those derived from emotion-laden research. This contention is supported by contemporary research into the nature and function of the human mirror mechanism (MM). While the existence of a human MM remains contentious, based on the research of those such as Vittorio Gallese (e.g. 1997, 2001), I propose that the human MM facilitates not only an actor's capacity for empathy and 'mind reading', which allows an actor to share others' experiences 'as if' they are her own, but also — drawing on the field of neuroaesthetics (e.g., Gallese, 2017, 2009) — offers support to Michael Chekhov's (1991) belief that "images are living beings, as real to [actors'] minds' eyes as things around us are visible to our physical eyes" (Chekhov, 1991).

Further support for this process can be found in Leder's (1990) thesis that memory is subject to significant distortions — especially its proneness to source confusion, suggestibility and imagination inflation. "Memory's fragile power" (Leder, 1990) allows a char-actor's emotion-laden, implicit (i.e., unconscious) memories of vicarious life experiences, which are expressed as behaviors during études, to be experienced as their own. Implicit memories inform the 'thoughts and feelings of the actor' and can inspire, rather than 'freeze', their impulses during the process of character development.

Bio: rogersmart@mac.com Originally from the UK, I have worked for the past 30 years as a director and trainer of actors, primarily in the USA. I teach and direct collegiate and professional actors. I have an MFA in Directing from the University of California, Irvine and a PhD from Goldsmiths College, University of London. In addition to university appointments, I served as Director of Education and Training at Court Theatre, Chicago and Artistic Director of Shattered Globe Theatre, Chicago. I currently work as a freelance director and trainer in the UK and as a visiting lecturer and guest director at the University of Northampton (UK).

Teaching/Demonstrations

11.00 - 12.30: Morwenna Rowe, lecturer in voice at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama and voice and text tutor for Rutgers at the Globe Theatre, London.

Character and Voice: Creating Idiosyncrasy

The way the voice works, and what it expresses to us, depends upon the inner landscape of the body expressing it. Typically the initial stages of voice training remove idiosyncrasies from the voice in search of vocal completeness by resolving tensions within this inner landscape. The idiosyncratic ways in which an actor compresses or reduces or forces or avoids full release of their voice are eased out of the system in exchange for emotional openness, availability and the ability to project. The voice becomes easier and the struggle to communicate is reduced.

However we can lose something in the process. How our body is imprinted with life experience, and how this makes self-expression incomplete, is deeply revealing of character. A voice with such struggles removed could therefore read as actorly, even bland, even if it is professionally effective. We still need to hear and see in the actor's body and voice the authenticity of a lived life. Only now we want that of the character.

For an actor character must go beyond the page. Not who, but how. Not facts about background and identity, but a specific physical and vocal embodiment of those facts. Often vocal transformation is seen only as speech transformation (such as accent), from the neck up. Or it responds to differences of function, such as pitch, tempo, tonal quality, speech muscular setting. But there is a deeper level of transformation which echoes the way the voice is before it's trained. The inner landscape of the body can be transformed to create a different experience of the emotional body and a different experience of using the voice, so that a character's voice and speech is uniquely expressed.

Working on this inner form – using imaginative work with the organs as well as gestural patterns and physical chains to find ways to uncover the structural imprinting of the character on the body, can transform the inner experience of the actor and create a new vocal expression and unique emotional body for the character.

This demonstration session will explore some of the ways in which I am currently exploring re-patterning the inner vocal body in order to create character.

Morwenna Rowe teaches voice, text and accent on MA Acting and MA Acting for Screen at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. She is an Associate teacher at RADA, and voice and text tutor for Rutgers at the Globe Theatre, London. In a 20 year career she has been voice coach and performance director for the BBC and for West End, regional and fringe theatre. Credits include *The Tempest*, BBC; *Wars of the Roses*, Rose Theatre, Kingston, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich; *Matilda*, RSC West End; *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, Sherman Theatre, Cardiff.

12.30 - 14.00: Dr. Gareth Somers, Director, Actor, Writer, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Director, Actor, Writer
<http://www.garethsomers.com/>

The Character's Pain and the Actor's Joy

Pain Body : “an accumulation of painful life experience that was not fully faced and accepted in the moment it arose. It leaves behind an energy form of emotional pain. It comes together with other energy forms from other instances, and so after some years you have a “painbody,” an energy entity consisting of old emotion” Ekhardt Tolle.

This work stems from a notion that “Character” in acting is, in part, a process of rendering the pain body of a character legible as it pertains to the relationships inherent in a performance or play text. Micheal Chekhov describes the creative state of the actor as energetic and joyful: We might suggest that there is a “Joy Body” that is a fully integrated and joyful physicality that is unimpeded by emotional blocks and trauma.

My work on character extends the notion of Chekhov's Body Centre into emotional holding centres that contribute to the physicalisation of personal history. It stems from a bio-spiritual approach to emotion. And references character work from Laban, Stanislavski, Chekhov, Decroux, Grotowski and others. It valorises observation, imagination and empathy.

The pain body is a source of conflict and conflicting behaviour. Healthy work on developing the characters pain depends upon developing a process of emotional neutrality in the actor where energy is accessible and joyful. As a preliminary introduction this somatic workshop will work on emotional clearing to put participants in touch with their Joy Body. This workshop acts as a precursor to understanding approaches to observation of human symptoms displayed by different characters. We might also have time to examine some triggers held in the body which the dramatic situation instigates through embodied action.

Gareth is an Actor, Director and Writer he has performed and directed internationally. He is a specialist in Daoist energy work and emotional. He studied acting and directing in the UK, in Denmark, the US and in the Czech Republic. He has met and collaborated with performers and spiritual practitioners from around the world. He runs the Actor's Foundation, and is a senior tutor in acting at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

He has a PhD in performance and ecology and co-runs the theatre company Transatlantyk2 whose show 1616 the secrets and passion of William Shakespeare recently toured in England (as a part of 400 celebrations), Europe and the US. He is soon to work internationally on a number of devised projects including in Germany and India and on a three year international project in trauma and performance.

He has taught and directed in The Netherlands, Italy, Poland and The Czech Republic and at the Czech Theatre School JAMU. He has directed over 40 professional performances, he has worked with performers of all types, from performers with the Belgrade National Ballet to Perrier award-winning comedians and members of the RSC.

Reviewers have described his acting roles as 'splendid' and 'beautifully menacing', (What's on London) "measured: raw, yet contained" (The stage) and it has been written about in academic publications.

He directed in the Czech Republic for three years and ran Naked Theatre at the Tobacco Factory in Bristol an international company of performers had trained in the UK, Argentina, Moscow, Belgrade and Poland.

14.30 - 16.00: Break

Saturday 16.00-18.00 PM:

Making a Laboratory: Dynamic Configurations with Transversal Video part II

Sunday 8th September

Teaching/Demonstration

10.00 - 11.30 PM: Dr. Roger Smart, Freelance Director and Actor Trainer; Visiting Lecturer and Guest Director at the University of Northampton

Workshop: Derived from my practice-led research as a professional theatre director and trainer of actors, the workshop affords the opportunity for a practical exploration of a synthesis of Active Analysis, Viewpoints and a technique I term 'Quilting the Text' — derived from the Lacanian notion of floating signifiers — while working on Flow state (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991, 1996). The process fosters an actor's embodied and personalized understanding of text and circumstance through improvisation, imagination and intuition.

Contemporary theories of emotion, memory, embodied and situated cognition, and social neuroscience afford a lens through which to derive a better understanding of the human processes implicit in Stanislavski's method of Active Analysis, as developed by Maria Knebel.

Social neuroscience, characterized by the work of Vittorio Gallese, suggests the key role played by the human mirror mechanism (systems of mirror neurons) in facilitating social cognition, alive communication and co-regulated behavior between actors and between characters.

Theories of embodied and situated cognition (e.g., Gibbs, 2006; Barsalou, 2008; Robbins and Aydede, 2009; Uithol and Gallese, 2015) reject notions of cognition as an embrained process. Embodied and situated cognition "is in the arms and legs, on the lips and tongue, and in the head. [...] It is not entirely inside us, since part of cognition is our perception of the world around us." (Fogel, 1993:119): meaning (or possible meanings) are revealed by the affordances of the relational and architectural dynamics of the space in which an actor is improvising.

Alive communication "focuses on the dynamically changing aspects of communication." (Fogel & Garvey, 2007). During co-regulated relationships "there is a continuous unfolding of individual action that is susceptible to being continuously modified by the continuously changing actions of the partner." (Fogel, 1993).

This work necessitates the actor working in Flow state. Flow occurs in the "delicate zone between boredom and anxiety." (Csikszentmihalyi qtd. in Goleman, 1996). As a consequence, it is the facilitator of learning or Director's task to ensure that there is a degree of balance between the skills of an individual actor and the demands of the situation. When working with text-based drama, Quilting the Text allows actors to improvise with random fragments of not only their own text, but also that of their scene partner(s). Working in this manner, actors focus on alive communication and their co-regulated relationships, not on remembering their lines. As actors need more text, they add it on impulse — hence creating a balance between the 'skills' of the actor and the demands of the situation.

As Gendlin (1997) observes: "We cannot even know what a concept 'means' or use it meaningfully without the 'feel' of its meaning." (ibid.). During this process, actors can develop a 'felt' and personalized (Gendlin, 1997) meaning of text and circumstance which eludes articulation.

In this workshop we will be working with a very short 'contentless scene'

Bio: rogersmart@mac.com Originally from the UK, I have worked for the past 30 years as a director and trainer of actors, primarily in the USA. I teach and direct collegiate and professional actors. I have an MFA in Directing from the University of California, Irvine and a PhD from Goldsmiths College, University of London. In addition to university appointments, I served as Director of Education and Training at Court Theatre, Chicago and Artistic Director of Shattered Globe Theatre, Chicago. I currently work as a freelance director and trainer in the UK and as a visiting lecturer and guest director at the University of Northampton (UK).

Teaching/Demonstration

11.30 - 13.00 PM: Jake Harders, Community Drama and Diploma Manager Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London

Title: The Effective Objective

Working on building a character using the tools of Stanislavski's early and later 'system' always involves understanding that the 'given circumstances' of the situation impel the character into 'action'. Interlinked with given circumstances and action is the fundamental question of the 'motivation' of the character to take action.

Various loosely similar words can be used to describe motivation, e.g. why, intention, task, problem, impulse, reason, goal. My preferred term is 'objective', but at any rate all this terminology seeks to understand 'why' the character is impelled by the given circumstances to take action.

In this teaching demonstration, I will explore practically with actors some different formulations of the objective that I work on with students at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. We will work on a short, famous moment in Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, Act Two, where Vershinin declares that he is in love with Masha. The given circumstances are relatively fixed if we decide to play the scene in a realistic way. The text is certainly fixed if we decide to play in accordance with the wishes of the playwright-creator. However, the opportunity for the actor-creator to create art is in the choice of objective to motivate the action – motivation which is implied in the text but is not fixed.

We will explore what happens to the same scene under different objectives for Vershinin and Masha - the differences between objectives that are wants, needs, or drives; objectives that explore what the character wants to do or how he wants to change his partner; objectives that are good for the actor but bad for the character, and vice versa; conscious and subconscious/subtextual objectives; the role of justification for behaviour; the role of the superobjective and through-line of action; obstacle/counter-objective; and most of all, through physical and verbal improvisation and observation of real life, how to utilize the expressive power of the body, which includes speech as a part of a matrix of means to express our inner self and to achieve our objectives in life. Often we discover that what is persuasive to another is not what we intended, and as such actors need to be highly observant of the reactions of his or her scene partner in order to be flexible in the here, today, now of interaction.

Jake Harders holds undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from the University of Cambridge, as well being a fully qualified teacher and CELTA trainer. He read BA Acting at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, where he graduated with a Distinction. Jake also studied with and has been profoundly influenced by the actors of Jerzy Grotowski's legendary Theatre Laboratory in Poland.

Since graduating from Central he has travelled the world working as an award winning professional actor in theatre, television, film and radio. He also works as a theatre director, acting coach and course manager at Royal Central, coordinating the teaching syllabuses and taking the lead teaching on the Diplomas and Evening Courses.

Participants should be familiar with the plot of Three Sisters.

Teaching Demonstration

13.00 - 14.30 PM: Dr. Kiki Selioni, Affiliate Research Fellow at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama University of London

Dimiourgos in theatre praxis: Enargeia as a way of structuring different characters

Continuing my research regarding the connection between Aristotle and Laban my current investigation places particular emphasis on a link they share in common: synthesis in art. They insist that there must exist a very specific way of *τάξις* (order) in speech and movement, just like in the art of dance. This *τάξις* (order) is necessary so that a specific meaning is communicable to the audience, since any change in *order* affects the final meaning: ‘the most natural is the best organised’ (Ramfos 2008 lecture, 31-01-08). As such, *λογική τάξις* (logical order) leads to a synthesis which Aristotle defines as *πράξις* (*praxis*) and is perfect and important (Ramfos 1991: 151). According to Ramfos, the character’s actions will eventually reveal his character.

This coincides with Laban’s idea that inner life is revealed through actions and their effort qualities that are structured in a specific way, in order to be transformed into symbolic actions that create a significant human *praxis*. The main goal of *praxis* is *peripeteia* (*anastrophe, reversal*). Thus, for Aristotle, a *πράξις* (*praxis*) is not informed by necessity (*αναγκαίον*), which would make it determined, but by *probability* (*εικός*), thus suggesting some measure of unexpectedness and contingency in both speech and movement. Similarly, Laban gives the example of playing the role of Eve when she picks the apple and implies that there are a lot of ways to execute this action. In terms of necessity (*αναγκαίον*) the action is that she picks the apple; in terms of probability, this action must be embodied in a way that must be chosen among a spectrum of different ways of picking the fruit in order to reveal a certain character and his intentions. Actually, in reality there is a vast number of combinations of picking an apple. The selection of actions does not consist in a ‘fact-finding device’; it is an artistic activity: the character’s creator must find the best combination of actions in order to convey the meaning he has in mind.

Following this line of thought, *πράξις* (*praxis*) must be structured in contra-distinction to the conventional approach to acting that until recently calls for ‘natural’ action. What I mean by ‘natural action’ is the action that stems from *αναγκαίον* (necessity) and not *εικός*, (probability). Usually this sort of action is produced not as a carefully chosen action, but from the spontaneous reaction of the actor to given circumstances. Aristotle stands opposed to this type of ‘naturalism’ for three reasons: firstly, because it is produced spontaneously and therefore relies on a non-artistic capacity; secondly, it relies on psychological implication; and thirdly, it does not produce a new reality. What Aristotle proposes as an alternative is that the structure of an action be logical instead of

spontaneous; understanding the logic of action is the main requirement for the character's creator. It is important to note that the standard translation of *praxis* as 'action' does not allow for such a refined understanding of the concept.

According to Aristotle *mimesis* is a presentation of a completely new reality; *a world per se*. According to Ramfos, 'demiourgos, does not repeat the circumstances. Therefore, in order to recreate these actions a detailed observation of reality is necessary. He states: 'movement can, however, be named and described, and those who are able to read such descriptions and reproduce them might get the feel of the moods expressed by them' (Laban 1950: 98). The idea of this detailed description of action is to be found in Aristotle's notion of *ενάργεια* (*enargeia*) as well:

When constructing plots and working them out [in the original text 'συναπεργάζεσθαι' means to elaborate] complete with their linguistic expression, one should so far as possible visualize [in the original text Aristotle writes that one should have the facts before his eyes 'προ ομμάτων τιθέμενον'] what is happening. By envisaging things very vividly in this way, as if one were actually present at the events themselves [in the original text 'ούτω γαρ αν εναργέστατα ορών'], one can find out what is appropriate, and inconsistencies are least likely to be overlooked (*Aristotle Poetics*, (1996) (trans. M. Heath) London, Penguin Book p: 27)

For Aristotle a good artist must be able to witness the facts and examine what is happening in detail. The artist must therefore have the conscious ability to examine the events as if he had witnessed them in person. In Laban's term 'thinking in terms of movement'. This vividness is conveyed through speech and movement. Ramfos explains that Aristotle demands the phrase to be structured in such a way as to enable a visualization of the presented events (Ramfos 1993: 365). Laban also requests an examination of movement sequences, including voice, and suggests a systematic observation of human behaviour. In order to succeed in this, the artist must classify, describe and name each movement through movement study. This process, which Aristotle calls 'συναπεργάζεσθαι', happens in the artist's *nous* (mind) through *sylogism*. During the creation process, syllogisms maintain the ephemeral time of the performance, thus creating, as Ramfos says, a *latent time*; this is how the artist is transformed into a *demiourgos*, since he creates space and time and hence produces a new world. This means that the *demiourgos* stands above the structure of the performance and possesses the absolute mastery of its creation. In other words, he masters time and space. This is the first time that man creates time and space and does not solely live inside them.

The teaching/ demonstrations will present the theoretical basis of this research and actors **Ksenia Strelets** and **Aleksander Khaliuta**, MA students Pr. Sergei Tcherkasski Studio at the Russian State Institute of Performing Arts St. Petersburg, will demonstrate the main principles of the methodology practically.

Dr. Kiki Selioni is a movement teacher and acting coach in various Drama Schools and Institutions internationally. She has completed her studies in Dance Theatre at the Laban in London (BA and MA, City University). She holds a doctorate in Movement Training for Actors and in Acting (RCSSD). She is currently Affiliate Research Fellow at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in a post-doc research project (The British Acting School: Biophysical Acting) regarding a complete acting method based on Laban's work and Aristotle's theory. Currently she is creating an International Practice Centre for Acting as part of her post doc research.

14.30-15.30 PM: Break

Workshops

15.30 - 17.30 PM: Vesta Grabškaitė, movement director, actress, teacher, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

Suzuki Training Workshop

17.30 - 19.30 PM: Dr. Brigita Bublytė, a singer, actress, artistic director and educator from Vilnius, Lithuania.

The Mask of the Voice Workshop

This workshop is one of the outcomes of Brigita's Bublytė's artistic research "Transformations of vocal timbre: practices of ethnic traditional singing and impact on the contemporary performer" carried out during the doctoral studies in Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. The concept of The Mask of the Voice will be presented in the workshop. This concept derives from the special vocal quality which distinguishes the vocal phenomenon from other musical instruments – an ability to transform one's vocal timbre. What is unique to any vocal expression? How an actor can put on Vocal Mask or Masks? What is behind the Mask of the Voice? How this concept can function creating character? Seeking to answer these questions practically and theoretically the notions of the Vocal Body, the *Pre-expressivity* of the Vocal Timbre will be presented. The emphasis will be on the main psychoacoustic parameters of the vocal timbre: vocal attack, fading out, formant and *vibrato*.

Attempting to open wider perception of vocal expression, participants will be invited to explore the concept of The Mask of the Voice using different cultural artefacts based on different ethnic cultural experiences - *Sutartinės* (Lithuanian polyphonic sings), Spanish – Andalusian flamenco named *cante jondo* and Mongolian throat singing so called *khoomei* and also create their own Vocal Masks.

Dr. Brigita Bublytė (b. 1977) studied guitar and singing at the Balys Dvarionas Music School in Vilnius. She finished a two-year foundation course of classical singing with Prof. R. Maciūtė at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LMTA). In 2001 Bublytė received a Bachelor's degree in Acting under the direction of Prof. V. Bagdonas, and in 2005 she successfully finished her Master's degree in Acting under Prof. J. Vaitkus, both at the LMTA. Bublytė is renowned for her singing and acting work in music, theatre and cinema, in collaboration with famous Lithuanian theatre directors E. Nekrošius, J. Vaitkus and O. Koršunovas, jazz musician and composer V. Čekasin, pianist P. Geniušas and many others. She has participated in many international music and theatre projects in, amongst others, Japan, Spain and Germany. Since 2008, she has been developing her individual creative approach and form of expression along with her cultural research. She has an in-depth knowledge of Mongolian throat singing (canto difonico) and Indian (dhrupad de canto) singing traditions. Since 2010 she has been deepening her knowledge of flamenco singing (cante jondo) and dance in "Fundacion Cristina Heeren de Arte Flamenco" Spain, Seville. This allowed her to develop an individual artistic style focused on a modern interpretation of Lithuanian ethnic tradition in the context of intercultural experience. Her creative work and research culminated in the international project *Flamenco meets Sutartinė* (2015), documentary film

Sutarmenko (directed by A. Rudaitis) (2016), music performance Circle of Rasas (2016) and music solo performance What a Heart Desires (2018). Since 2011 Bublytė has been teaching Singing, Rhythmic, Principles of Voice Expression, and Coordination of Voice and Movement in the department of Theatre and Cinema at the LMTA. From 2015 onwards, she took part in various international conferences as an artistic researcher. Bublytė has published articles in conference publications and academic journals of art and culture. In the year 2018 she defended her doctorate in art. The theme of the defended research is “Transformations of the vocal timbre: the influence of ethnic traditions’ practice on the contemporary performer”(supervisors - dr. doc. R. Balevičiūtė, prof. N. Savičenko, consultant - prof. hab.dr. D. Vyčiniėnė).

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