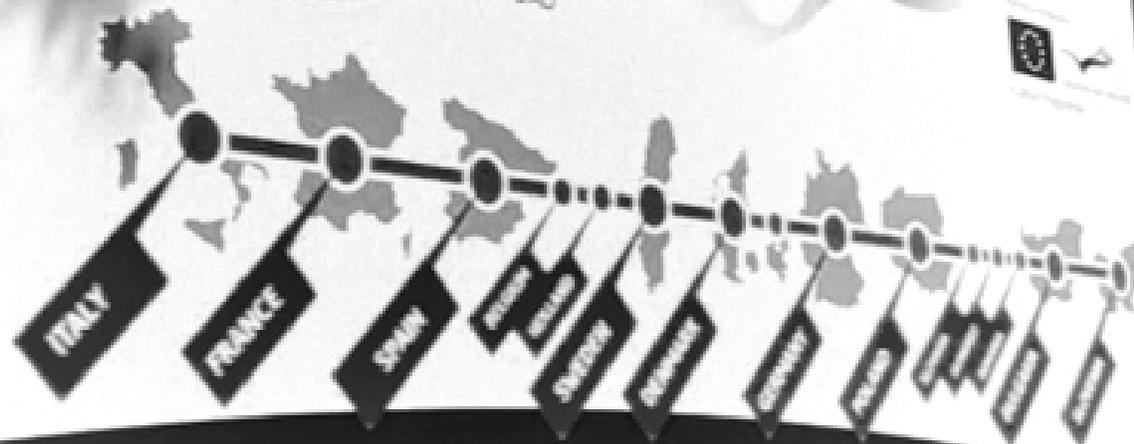


RISING FROM THE CRISIS

"CARAVAN"
PROJECT OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

Caravan

ARTISTS ON THE ROAD



IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD GET A MOVE ON

www.projectcaravan.eu

RISING FROM THE CRISIS



2014

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Project partners

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Project leader and coordinator of the project:

Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio Torino - Fondazione CRT (Italy)

Responsible partner for overseeing the project and artistic and methodical monitoring of the performance achieved in all activities:

Master in Social and Community Theatre of the Faculty of Education - DAMS University of Turin (Italy)

European partners

International Centre

for Theatre Research Atalaya-TNT (Spain)

Theatre Spira (Sweden)

Association for Culture
and Education KIBLA (Slovenia)

Nordic Theatre Laboratory / Odin Teatret (Denmark)

Projects, Action, Art, Theater

P.A.K.T. registered association (Germany)

Faculty of Fine Arts School
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50

EUROPEAN CITIES

1

TRAVELLING THEATRE ACROSS 15 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

1

EUROPEAN PROJECT OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY THEATRE

1000

VOLUNTEERS

70.000

PARTICIPANTS

18

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

42

MONTHS OF PROJECT

1

VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

11

CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS FROM 9 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

370

CULTURAL WORKERS

10

DISSEMINATION CONFERENCES

European partners

FONDAZIONE CRT

Lead partner

Italy



Spain



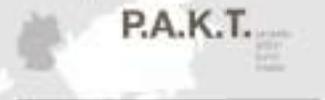
Sweden



Denmark



Germany



Poland



France



Slovenia



Bulgaria





STARTING POINT

**If you want
to change
the world
get a move on**

Alberto Pagliarino

Ideator and Artistic Director Caravan Project

Caravan. Artists on the Road If you want to change the world, get a move on

Do you remember where you were on September 11th 2001? I am sure you do and I bet someone called you or you called someone that day, and you still remember exactly who this “someone” is. We all remember it.

Very often when we receive shocking news, or when we discover something big we feel may somehow change our lives, we feel the urge to tell it to somebody. To say it. To share it. We do this not because we simply want to inform others, we do this because we feel the need to narrate what happened to us, being aware that at the moment of telling that fact, that fact becomes true, it is real. Giving voice to a fact to make it real. That’s why the theatre was created; to allow the community to narrate its tragedies and its comedies, to describe the values that the community believes in, to show the members of the community their own roots, and to share the collective emotions and sentiments. In this way the community builds its own identity. In the ancient Greece of the fifth century B.C., the war among the cities had intervals in order to allow the citizens to go to Athens and watch the theatre plays.

But today what needs to be given a voice? What is the news worthy of being pronounced, to which we need to give a space? The Project “*Caravan. Artists on the Road*” was originated from a challenge: to talk about revival in a time of crisis. We started with this spirit: to give a possibility to the communities in Europe to express their revival through collective theatrical activities, to create occasions of arts and poems through an exchange between artists and citizens, to pull down the walls that separate children, young, old, rich, poor, foreign people... The Project “*Caravan. Artist on the Road*” was born to give a unique voice to the whole community: **Rising from the crisis.**

Caravan. Artists on the road was born from a collaboration among the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Torino and the Master di Teatro Sociale e di Comunità, University of Turin (today: Social and Community Center Unito) and a network of 9 international partners. *Caravan* is a European project promoting the Social and Community Theatre in throughout Europe.

The Social and Community Theatre aims at carrying out theatrical activities through the work of artists and professionals that promote the art, the culture, the empowerment of people, groups and communities in the territory, in the prospective of an enduring social transformation and innovation of cultural productions.

Through the languages of the performing arts – such as interviews and dramaturgy of experiences, parades, theatre festivals, square performances, workshops, visual installations in town, etc. – culture was reconsidered as a process of high professional quality shared with the community residents and not solely as a product. In such process, the community is not a consumer or a mere audience, but is involved in a participatory project where it becomes the co-author and co-actor of the artistic creation, thus forming a strong alliance in the course of cultural and social innovation.

In a 42-month period of activity, Caravan travelled across Europe realizing more than 50 events of Community Theatre with about 370 cultural workers and 1000 volunteers. The stages of such artistic and community activities were the cities, the squares, the markets and courtyards together with the habitants’ homes, hospitals, universities, schools, multi-purpose centres, rest-homes, and so on. Each place involved in these activities has regained a civil and cultural dimension that was typical, like the squares in medieval times or the ancient theatres.

Caravan project is based on a simple idea that every person of the theatre would have sooner or later in his or her life: to have travelling theatre. Our “Caravan” has travelled around the Europe to meet communities and collect inhabitant’s stories, promoting common actions of art and civilization.

We would like to have different teams of international artists who, helped by people of the place, will succeed in creating a shared community tale; the Caravan shifts from country to country, passing from an artist team to another. It’s a multimodal structure: you can open its side and get an open-air theatre or a small cinema, and the roof can become a platform for live music. We would like it to become a stage open to all.

We constantly asked people whom we met along the Caravan tour: “what does revival mean to you today?” and transformed their answers into art events and social sharing. We have collaborated with numerous associations, volunteers’ networks, theatre companies, youth centers, universities, groups of elderly, schools and families, driven by the necessity of producing a common language through art – it is a necessity that has moved and involved the entire community together with the artists. Along with such awareness, the central question that stirred us when realizing the participating artistic events was not “what is” the event – which may have led to the risk of confining oneself into a plain category such as a show, a parade, a lecture, etc. – but “what does it do”, in other words, how do the different artistic, social and cultural languages work together and affect the people present at the event? And transform them.

Why did you love to listen to and invent stories when you were a child? Why did you get so excited with your mouth wide open when you saw a soap bubble? Why did you love to play with your peers?

You were learning to stay in the world. Do these three things have anything to do with theatre? Yes, they do a lot: the wonder, the story and the ritual

are the three principles of a enjoying a show. The wonder predisposes an open and receptive view, the story allows you to organize the complexity of the world in a narration, and the ritual makes it possible to share such knowledge. Every artistic language combines one or more of these principles. The methodology of Social and Community Theatre – developed by the Master di Teatro Sociale di Comunità of the University of Turin – is able to integrate various languages by way of meeting all these principles, in order to bring to people a more complete comprehension of the world. Not more profound, but more complete. And I mean “comprehension” as the possibility of finding one’s place in the world. The theatrical category of “audience” then is replaced by a public which is integrated into the event and becomes part of the cultural production. That’s why we do not talk about “audience” but we turn to involve a whole community.

We went to La Spezia, where the whole district community realized theatrical events and where a group of young boys making rap was considered as rogues by the community. Well, that group of rappers got on the Caravan stage and began to sing their music successfully, in front of those same people who had never understood them before.

For a group of elderly in San Giovanni Rotondo, Caravan became a place where they could tell stories. In a small town in the northern-Denmark, we organized a circus with circus artists and the farm animals in collaboration with the local farmers. In Hostelbrø we welcomed 45.000 boy scout.

We visited Europe’s oldest Romani camp in Seville, the Vacje. There, we brought theatre for the first time with our Caravan and a matron performed an extract from “House of Bernarda Alba” in front of her sons, relatives and the whole gypsy community.

In Sofia, Bulgaria, we worked to break a huge taboo when we brought theatrical events on the road to denounce the violence against women. We discussed it with the citizens and University students.

In Turin, where the Caravan started, we worked with hundreds of young people who told us their ideas and opened social and cultural centers in desolated areas of the city.

In a small town in the south of Italy with huge problems with *Camorra*, Mafia, where the 95% of shopkeepers pay the “pizzo” – money that people are forced to give to the Mafia – we organized a parade among the town streets. Young and elderly, associations and shopkeepers joined it to make the city alive and to talk about freedom and brotherhood.

In a children’s hospital, we received, as a present, shoes by the little patients, parents, and health care professionals, to create some installations inside the hospital. We were told their stories and travel desires; then we wrote the stories on slips of papers and threaded into the shoes like boats on a river.

... and there is a lot more of what we did, told, heard and shared.

For the business world, the crisis began on the September 15th 2008, with the bankruptcy of a big American bank. Today in Europe we see a certain crisis: redundancy, credit drought, enterprises closing, youth unemployment at 50% high ... all sadly true. However, along our travels we have learned that the crisis has another face. Maria Flores of the Los Miragles quarter in Albacete told us that the crisis in our minds sometimes is more tremendous than the outer crisis in which we really live, and that the revival is when you finally find something for which it is truly worthy of living intensely.



Caravan workshop Turin (IT), 2011

Massimo Lapucci

Secretary General, Fondazione CRT

Stefania Coni

International Project Coordinator, Fondazione CRT

Culture Being At Service of Solidarity

The commitment of the Fondazione CRT to support and accompany a European project in the field of culture, was born at the height of the global crisis, in 2010, from the desire to open up new horizons, incentives and avenues for cultural planning in the Piedmont area and together to provide excellence in our area for the opportunity to collaborate in the process of international planning.

We were driven by the idea of joining the vocation of the Foundation in supporting the local area, with the possibility of crossing national borders and of giving life to a deep exchange of activities between real and transverse vocations - from theatre to community work, from scientific research to cultural production. The spirit of each European project, as it has been and still is for Caravan, is in essence to improve the local environment in a global perspective, with "osmosis" of expertise that goes beyond the confines of singular actions.

Although foundations of banking origin, like the Fondazione CRT, are focused on the territory of its own traditional activities, over the years there has been in fact a reinforcement of the belief that the comparison with Europe and with the international dimension is essential in order to give the territory a real opportunity for growth.

European project is the gateway to a valuable network and our efforts in this direction are based primarily on the recognition of the affinity of objectives between the Fondazione CRT and Europe: social utility and development of the territory, passing through, among others, the support and promotion of art and culture.

It is possible to identify an even stronger convergence with respect to the objectives of this new season of European investments, as presented for example by the new program Creative Europe: a greater attention to creativity, in particular of young people, social and cultural innovation, identifying financing options to accompany the provision of grants.

For the Fondazione CRT, providing assistance to organizations from its own territory during the planning process constitutes a way to help the organizations to become stronger through the comparison with Europe, with European Institutions, and also through the comparison with partner organizations and potential partners from other countries. In order to create proper development the excellence of the territory is taken outside

the territory itself, making it known to the world, and the territory is simultaneously enriched by the "importing" of ideas, best practices and resources of excellence from elsewhere.

This is a task that the Foundation chose to undertake and arises from this basic idea of the successful collaboration with the Master of Social and Community Theatre of University of Turin (now formed as the Social and Community Center, with a vocation for international research and innovation in the field of community and social theatre research), an organisation that has developed and innovated the methodology of Social and Community Theatre.

When the University of Turin approached us about this idea, the element that convinced us the most was culture being at the service of solidarity, of the growth of the people and of the community. Not just culture for a few, a niche culture, but culture as a tool for the growth of people, who are no longer just spectators but who become the protagonists of the artistic and creative processes: inclusive culture.

To operate in culture for the Foundation does not simply mean delivering financial resources - this is certainly one of the ways and means - but it more about the creation of desirable conditions so that, with the use of those funds, together with other resources provided by the system, you are able to build a culture that gives the best of itself, that gives discussion with citizens, that helps you address the major issues of our times and is also sustainable over time.

A culture that involves the local people and makes them participants in a common pathway towards the development of civilization. A culture capable of creating networks, of exploiting dormant resources and communicating them outside the confines of the local territory.

Caravan Artists on the Road immediately outlined itself as an innovative project, developed thanks to the transversal skills in the field of theatre, research and management, and the capacity to understand and justly measure the value of excellence in the Piedmont territory.

The pride of the project has been the average age of the team: 30 years old, which is why Caravan has earned the patronage of the Ministry of Youth Affairs from the Italian Government.

It is also noted that since the beginning Caravan has been characterized as a sustainable project, another reason why the Fondazione CRT was convinced to fully commit to the project.

The element of sustainability in itself inherent in the methodology of social and community theatre - artistic and community interventions are "taught" by professionals to individuals and local communities so that they can implement them themselves over time - is further confirmed in the birth of the European network of Social and Community Theatre, coordinated by the team of the Social and Community Center, and designed and developed

from their own experience of Caravan. The network is already thinking about a new European project that takes to heart the experience gained with Caravan, embracing its strengths and overcoming its weaknesses.

In the future, the Fondazione CRT will continue to perform the role of facilitator in the creation of networks that enhance the excellence of the territory and support their growth at an international level. With extensive and established experience in key areas of culture, education and welfare, the Foundation can implement and use its ability to manage large projects, putting organizations of its own territory in contact with organisations of other countries and carrying out dissemination, by leveraging on its established network of stakeholders.

Coordinating a European project, for us as a leading partner, has meant a continued commitment of supervision of the activities of all partners, not only purely technical but also in the commitment to contribute in cultural terms to the construction of a common way of life in Europe.

Carlo Lingua

Project Manager

Project Management's Competence and Methods

The European Union is putting more and more importance on the cultural and creative sectors as a key element for the development of our continent. Project "CARAVAN. Artists on the road" is indeed co-financed by the funds made available by the EU to support cultural cooperation across Europe through the "Culture Programme 2007-2013".

Unlike small-scale local projects that maybe last for only one single season or a year or so, EU-funded multi-annual cooperation projects – such as the Project CARAVAN – often involve a dozen partners from several different countries, may last for a long duration up to five years, with a relatively big budget that may reach a maximum of five million in some cases. All these factors considerably complicate the project process and, as a consequence, demand for a very attentive management in order to guarantee the correct implementation of the action and generate good quality and impact in a long run. In fact, the EU, when evaluating the funded projects, has been increasingly emphasizing on sound management (the present), and sustainability of the project (the future).

Carried out by 11 partners from 9 countries, Project CARAVAN lasted 42 months with a budget of nearly 3 million Euro, involving over one hundred professionals and thousands of citizens. Moreover, the Project travelled more than 22,000 kilometers throughout Europe with an itinerant "caravan theatre", presenting over 50 performances to the public. These figures reveal the complexity of organizing people and resources to ensure that all aspects of the Project are completed within the budget, according to the action description, and in line with the timeframe as all approved (thus requested) by the EU in its grant decision.

Project CARAVAN distinguishes itself as one of the first European projects in the cultural sector which attach great importance on project management and achieve satisfactory results by introducing management methods which are usually applied in the ambit of industry and business. This is largely attributable to the fact that the Project's Leading Partner – the Fondazione CRT – is among the most important banking foundations in Italy, having rich experiences and tested methods in selecting, funding and evaluating projects in the social and cultural fields.

The core management team of Project CARAVAN is a "Project Management Board" consisting of four members each with specific competences to take charge of the various facts of a complex interdisciplinary project. As a project manager I assumed overall coordination and executive work, the Board

comprises the Vice Project Manager & Administrative Director (Barbara Manighetti) responsible for the whole project's financial management and reporting, the Artistic Director (Alberto Pagliarino) who oversees the development of all community and artistic activities, and the Cooperation & Organization Director (Martina Beria) who plays a fundamental role in ensuring a motivated, seamless and effective collaboration among the Project's 11 partners from 9 countries. All of the four Board members are young people under 35 years, and for this reason the Project was honoured by receiving the patronage from the Italian government's Ministry of Youth in 2011.

The Board is further supported by personnel from various departments of the Fondazione CRT to take care of certain aspects of the Project, such as accounting, communication, human resource and so on. Their valuable support is indispensable for the smooth implementation of the activities and has greatly contributed to the success of the Project.

Another feature that characterizes the management of Project CARAVAN is the Steering Committee which is formed by the representatives duly nominated by each partner. Being the Project's coordination and supervision organ, the Steering Committee regularly meet to exchange the experiences gained during the implementation, to judge on the Board's work, to monitor the progress and to determine corrective measures when necessary, all in view of risk management and control. The Steering Committee provides a place to reconcile the diversities of the Project's partnership – from banking foundation to theatre companies, from universities to civil associations – making it possible for a fruitful crosscutting cooperation that link up the cultural, social, civil and philanthropic spheres.

Technological instruments are greatly helpful in modern project management. In a very innovative way, Project CARAVAN – although being a culture project – has introduced some methods and tools of enterprise resource planning (ERP). Thanks to a simple but very functional platform based on cloud computing, we put into practice the real-time documents and information sharing and co-working, which significantly facilitate the internal communication and collaboration among the 11 partners, ensure an uninterrupted and timely work updates even during long travels of the Caravan tour.

Last but not of less importance is the relation with the granting agency – in the Culture Programme, this is the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Such relation is a key factor to keep an EU-funded project on track. During the implementation of Project CARAVAN, we constantly maintain a dialogue with the Project Officer designated by the EACEA, to report the project progress and to ask for clarifications on every doubt that we have with regard to the management and use of grant funds. From the very beginning of Project CARAVAN we put great emphasis on the compliance with EU rules, and make every endeavour to implement the Project in accordance with the plan and description contemplated at



Caravan in front of a town hall in Marinaleda (ES), 2012

the time of funds application. However, a project is not something static and inevitably the reality may present unforeseen circumstances which require changes of plan. Project CARAVAN encountered several times such situation, and every time the matter was duly communicated to the EACEA, then alternative solutions were adopted with their approval. In our opinion this is the most responsible and safest way to use EU funds, which is public money, and a truly constructive channel to get actively involved in the European affairs. For many partners of Project CARAVAN, it is the first time to take part in a European project, and we are very proud and glad to have risen to the challenge with rigour and freshness.

To conclude this brief review, I would like to thank everyone who has worked to make this initially seemingly crazy project come into reality, a wonderful reality! Special thanks to Fondazione CRT, for its confidence to entrust the guide of the Project to me and my young team, who has demonstrated courage, force, competence and excellence in these years. Hearty thanks to all partners for their efforts and patient cooperation – never short of artists' creativity and humour – in fulfilling the "tedious" management tasks. In the end, also thanks to those with whom we have divergences – always with respect and faithfulness to what we believe in, I have learned from them how to see the problems as "masked masters".



Protests in Sofia (BG), 2013

Martina Beria

Cooperation Manager and Organization Director

Cooperation Between Partners

“It’s a cooperation’ matter!” is probably the sentence I’ve been using most frequently since I began to work within the CARAVAN Project’s partnership. In fact I think it’s the most valid answer to many questions that may arise fostering a common path with 11 organisations from across Europe. Whenever something was difficult to decide, the suggestion has always been: the best choice is the one to promote cooperation between the partners.

Intercultural diversity in terms of geography and socio-cultural background is a significant characteristic and quality of this European cooperation project. There are two Universities (Poland and Italy); a Master on Social and Community Theatre (Italy); a Municipal Theatre (Bulgaria); a Theatre Laboratorium (Denmark) and a Research and Production Centre (Spain); cultural and social associations (Germany, France, Italy, Sweden, Slovenia); and a Foundation (Italy). Each organization has been in charge to support one particular aspect of the Project in order to promote an interdisciplinary approach and stimulate exchange of best practices.

Since the very beginning of the Project’s implementation, I remember I saw the potential of the different voices and identities blowing in partners’ meeting, conference call and other gatherings. One step to another all of us - artists, managers, European citizens, persons – we have known each other professionally and somehow we have been empowering one another as human being.

To describe European cooperation added value I decided to recall one specific partners meeting: Sofia, June 2013.

First of all, the CARAVAN symbol, I and beating heart of the project, was presented in a significant spot of the local community. The multifunctional Caravan Vehicle was in fact arriving from the third tour that departed from the northern Europe, has crossed the central Europe and the Balkans and finally has arrived to Bulgaria’s capital. Danish artistic crew – the Jasonites – performed in an outdoor market place in the suburb. Children, families, homeless and farmers attended actively the performance laughing and playing with those strange actors using ten languages simultaneously and speak up for renaissance from the crisis.

Afterwards all partners gathered from all over to participate to Theatre Vazrajdana’s symposium and community event and to attend the Steering Committee meeting. Summer was coming by and the city was still chilly thanks to a constant cold wind blowing everywhere. Citizens were protesting

against the corruption of new government, strikes were all over the streets. Students and youth movement were participating to the fight by dancing in circle in the institutional area and we couldn't stop ourselves to go and dance with them in traditional Bulgarian collective rhythms. We all spent some hour together in the crowd of a European capital debating about citizenship, politics and culture as a mean of collective expression.

Thanks to those factors the partners meeting was particularly intense. We were all in the Municipal Theatre Vazarajdane, sitting in a room with voices from the strikes entering through the windows. Important issues arisen from the very beginning. For the first time all organizations have had the opportunity to host the CARAVAN on their local level, they have all been direct promoters of activities for their communities. They concretely experienced the same conditions and they shared something with a great value: an opportunity.

It was a great day to exchange point of view, evaluate and rethink the whole experience in a very pragmatic and creative way. It was a day of cooperation.

It is certain that cooperation needs time and occasions but more than everything it needs goals to tackle together, experience to share, relation to build.

ALDA

Active Citizens In Spite Of The Crisis – The Power Of Community Theatre



First meeting of the associations involved with Caravan in Torino

The European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA) was responsible for the organisation of a part of the Caravan tour, and for dissemination of the project results. Three years of working together with the team of researchers and practitioners, whose beliefs are firmly integrated in the concept of empowering the community and the individual through (inter) cultural expression and intervention, have been more than just a learning process and implementing a European project.

Cultural expression as a therapeutic remedy for human body and soul, cultural interaction between the layers and sub-layers of behaviour patterns and the perceptions that we have been witnessing in different corners of Europe were more than a learning opportunity: seeing the crisis that has so many faces but one shared hope for renewal. Hope for the better in Roma cardboard settlement in Seville has exactly the same nuance as the energy for rebirth of a small rural community in Dimitrovgrad in a mountainous

border area between Serbia and Bulgaria. Or even more so, the shared cultural traits in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina where enjoyment of the human right to having art seems to have become a shared cultural pattern capable to bring forward a new vision for peace and prosperity.

Cultural encounters taking place over the past three years during the Caravan tour have also shown that many local communities all across Europe are learning how to live with the crisis. Large scale programmes for economic recovery and harmonisation did not seem to have reached the ground floor of the building Europe. Euroscepticism, lack of confidence, ethnically motivated prejudices, lack of solidarity are only some of the reactions received from the participants in local debates. Solely economic solutions for the crisis do not seem to be sufficient. Visioning of the integrative potential for the EU needs profoundly new and innovative cultural solutions and approaches, capable of building trust, hope, and a shared sense of belonging to a common house.

On the other hand, citizens' response to the performances and events of Caravan from Sofia, Bulgaria, to Vicenza, Italy, were extremely encouraging – and not only in quantitative terms: all those who had the chance to be part of it had the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts, reflect and put on stage common issues, and go home with a smile on their face. Not only is there a need to have art in our lives, especially during crisis, but we are ready to make it ours as a powerful social tool.

Therefore, perhaps one of the main strengths of this project is exactly in its integrative potential combining artistic expression capable of generating the will for intercultural interaction, making it much more than a pilot project. Caravan has the potential of becoming a part of a much larger imminent mosaic, still unexplored by pragmatic programmers: building Europe from bottom-up, through forging a collective culture and making art become the cure.

For almost fifteen years now, ALDA has worked hard to promote citizens participation at the local level in Europe and its Neighborhood through a variety of projects and activities. Caravan was our most valuable experience with community theatre, and we definitely think we have to build on its achievements.

Atalaya, TNT

“AWAKE”

As one of the participants of Caravan, TNT developed a pedagogical program of social intervention composed by workshops and activities with a program of social intervention aimed to the integration of a group of participants, in order to make them being more self-confident and give them tools to face their own fears, turning their personal experiences into learning processes. Therefore, to us, the crisis turned into an instructive tool in order to face it with dignity and fight it by moving on.



Workshop with students Murcia (ES), 2012

In the second phase of the project, TNT organized social intervention workshops through which we wanted to spread our message of rebirth and we were pleased to see how people shared what they learned with other people and we gained awareness that our name is a cultural reference for Seville and surroundings.

We also organized some concrete social intervention defending some causes in Seville; we intervened in Los Pajaritos, a working class neighborhood especially affected by the crisis and organized an intercultural festival in the Victoria Díez Public School. We also supported Corral Utopía, a group of people in urgent need of home, which due to the crisis lost their home.

In order to support them, Atalaya organized a parade and an act of Musical theatre supporting Corral Utopía and capturing the social media attention and people's solidarity, obtaining the relocation of 32 families. Additionally, on the 29th of May TNT Center organized an Intercultural Festival inviting all the groups that took part to the Project. The meeting was thought as a day of co-existence among different cultures and social backgrounds, including as well the gypsy community of El Vacie.

As third phase of the project; during the second week of May the Italian caravan arrived in Seville and performed "Precipito" (Falling) in El Vacie settlement and after that the Italian Caravan passed the baton to the Spanish one, TNT started touring to Holstebro performing "Despertamos", starting the fourth part of the project.

If you want to change the world get a move on

Inspired by the Project's slogan, TNT produced and later staged "Despertamos" (Awake), directed by Juana Casado and performed by four professional actors. The play, inspired by the 15M movement, investigates through the personal stories of four characters that are stuck in the drama of unemployment, domestic violence, immigration and abuse of power, how to escape from the crisis we are living in. The performance crosses the human desperation by suggesting a hope message. It teaches to the audience how to fight for a better world offering reflections about words such as solidarity, emotional support and participation. The artists involved in the Project together with a Caravan equipped with multimedia artistic fittings traveled from June to July touring from Spain to Denmark (Holstebro), crossing France, Belgium and Germany with a total of 10 performances completely for free. In total we performed for 30 days crossing European cities, small villages, universities and districts, involving young and adults, artists and children. One month of performances and workshops in which Spanish Artists transmitted their origins, the joy of playing without a microphone and the satisfaction of seeing the audience pleased. Once arrived in Holstebro, Atalaya TNT handed the European Caravan to the Odin Teatret.

From November to December 2012, TNT Center also held some conferences facing the crisis and giving possible solution to escape from it. TNT Center tried to do its best to make people understand, reflect and to transmit that through cooperation and solidarity people have the unique power to fight against injustice and that at first we need to change ourselves in order things start changing.

To sum it up, Project Caravan Artists on the Road, has been an innovative initiative and a different way to empower people, giving them adequate tools to think, reflect and being critic about what is currently happening to our society.

To us the project has been a great opportunity to work on community theatre, an artistic genre that already suits our artistic philosophy. Caravan has been totally coherent with our trajectory, as we already worked and developed



El Vacie district in Sevilla (ES), 2012

projects including issues of social exclusion, for example by working with a collective of women from the Seville gypsy community of El Vacie.

In the project development we intervened in different ways: performances, workshops, events and conferences. Although the approaches we adopted were different, at the basis they shared the same belief: thanks to a direct intervention, by using theatre languages and the performing art tools, we got a direct contact with people communities, especially the ones that at most have been affected by the crisis. Through cultural interventions, the places of crisis are supposed to gain more visibility and can be converted into examples to follow to rebirth from recession.

As crisis brings poverty, not only economically but also culturally and socially, it generates a loop in which people are focused on a basic survival that leads them to individualism, therefore the project aimed to increase people's participation and solidarity through culture, in the attempt to enrich and sensitize the communities on the present situation.

We believed in a cultural empowerment and in integration by working in team. Team means sharing, working together to reach common objectives; adopting the different points of view of the participants to share worries, doubts and emotions without being judged. Also travelling throughout Europe contributed broadening the share among different Countries. All the projects that have been developed were exported in different cities and communities. The match between the different interventions generated a melting pot where participants, professionals and artists were there at same time, same place, sharing the same expectations and hopes.

We are aware that the project is not able to solve all the problems that our society is living in, but we are aware that empowering people and making them communicate favor solidarity. If you feel the only affected by the crisis and do not confront yourself with any other except you, it is also automatic that you could not be aware that there are thousands of people in the European countries living even worst situations. Therefore being aware, that still there is a collective unease, makes it easier to share experiences without shame, in order to fight for an adequate common solution.

We hope and believe that such projects should be repeated in the future. Empowering people is an alternative but effective methodology to increase people's consciousness; to give them tools and alternative methodologies to arise from hard times we are going through.

WSINF

Caravan in Poland

In Poland we held two great events: International Conference and Performance where the conference took place on 4th of June, 2013 in the Campus of The Faculty of Fine Arts – School of Computer, Design Wyzszej hosting prof. Marek Herbig – “The apotheosis of life in the art – the changeability of the canon”, dr. Marcin Dziomdziora “Mutlimedia – a new player in the quality of life and art” and prof. Rita Maria Farbis – “Project Caravan, Co. dance and beyond. New perspectives on Community Theatre Methodologies”. The conference met with a big interest of participation.



Performance, Lodz (PL), 2013

WHAT IS SOCIAL AND
COMMUNITY THEATRE

**“Never before
a so much
apparently
theatrical age
was far from
theatre.”**

Alessandro Pontremoli



Alessandro Pontremoli

Introduction to Social and Community Theatre

Never before this age, theatre working and operation have been so well acknowledged by social groups and community; never as in this society of spectacle, roles and representations pervade every moment of public and private life; as never before, I believe, performance, media and new communication technologies turn out to be built on fictional mechanisms, that are derivations that betray the matrix. Nevertheless this fascination of fiction and mediated presentation of self is only a reflection of a matrix which has almost irretrievably lost the original coordinates.

Never before a so much apparently theatrical age was far from the theatre.

The paradox could be explained by an essential distinction, which today only few people do take into account: theatre and theatrical experience do not match.

In order to better understand why we tend to forget the second of these factors supporting the absolutization of the first, it is important to note that today the source of subjectivity, the real and unavoidable body experience, is overlooked in its complexity and reduced to a mere random situatedness of existence.

But if it is undeniable that we are situated, it is also undeniable that even without the numerous techno-biological implants that we continually graft, we spend our lives trying to understand why we are there and where we are going.

Our official theatre companies, fueled by plenty of public money, perpetuate an old and traditional representation model, already mirror of attitudes, values and asphyxiated aspiration of the European bourgeoisie in the nineteenth and twentieth century, that incorporated, without excessive shocks, elitist impulses of avant-garde and neo-avant-garde. The artists of the so-called theatre research, claimed by the younger generation after the failure of proposals in the eighties of the last century, travel along already traveled paths, of which, however, they are not aware, ignoring historical depth of certain styles and certain attitudes that they believe new and never experienced.

Most people do not go to the theater, even the ruling class, in order to participate in a social ritual of small and privileged community, who prefers mediatic coverage of other "premieres", those of film festivals, gala of the TV drama with great audience, fashion shows etc.



Digital commune, Ljubljana (SI), 2007

Major theater events fill the billboards of the metropolis: as in Olympic marathons, famous directors get tired in staging classical texts or extravagant productions of extra-dramaturgical texts.

After the war, the didactic impetus, which has been informing the Grassi/Strehler season, and the mythical decentralization, experiences based on the Marxist ideology, finished; today only an aesthetic of a theater 'to pursuit personal ghosts' remains, exasperating that devilish mechanism of delegation, which is the main cause of the distance that the "archeological, cemetery and dying theater" of the present day puts between itself and the actual society, no longer represented (the term should be read in its deep and complex polysemy) by the prevailing model.

Theater, as a community rite of a society that, through it, was looking to make true itself and then to mutate itself by accepting the progressive and inevitable changes of time, relations and institutional structures, doesn't exist anymore, at least in dedicated places in the city centers, and is slowly dying its voice even in those places that the peripherality and marginality

partly preserved from the operations of globalizing marketing. Even the feasts, the orgiastic moments of role changing into the groups, and the collective expression of the strong times, specific to outlying communities, tend to be more and more boxed in the category of folk and watched through that contempt that only who claims the right to call him/herself an artist of the professional drama succeeds so well to manifest, causing those "inferiority complex" that in the theater world is the cause of progressive approval of all the centers and subjects.

Anyway, the theatrical experience is something else, is another thing par excellence: it is a performative body in relation with other bodies, it is the body that takes, creates and transforms languages, is self-representation gratuitousness within a limited and recognized scope, it is the question about sense of being there and of being in a particular situation.

If we don't look at the existential dimension of theatricality widespread, we can't understand the reason that pushes people from disparate social backgrounds and different ages to want to perform" rather than go to watch" a performance.

The history of recent years has clearly stressed that the processes of social transformation, urban planning, cultural development of our cities were more easily endorsed by residents and groups when the sense and direction of these changes could be metabolized by similar experiences of relationship and proximity.

The social and community theater, started shyly as an experiment, has become gradually the model of a needful theater. The need of the theater is not an extrinsic factor to the body of man, but a consequence of its statutes: just like you can not live without eating, there is no real quality of life without the mechanisms of representation - underlying the cognitive, affective and relational processes - are fed by the experience.

Performance is this food, the place of discovery of ourselves, of our history, of our own dimension of living subjects and of our role in the world we inhabit.

New skills are required for this so delicate course, which deals with people's lives, with their hearts and with their affections. We need new professionals that could be present and create presence. People who may live intensely theatrical affiliations, but that does not make those affiliations a tool of distinction and division. Actors / conductors who know how to exploit the narcissism of theater to introduce people to the experience of theater, accompanying them to venture to "lands", which the professional "representatives" have felt compelled to withdraw from the community who had begotten them, in order to appropriate unduly exclusively.

By metaphor: it can fail to see that perhaps the time has come to make a land reform.

Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione

Caravan Project Supervisor

Director of Social and Community Theatre Center | Unito

The Power Of Art In Human Regeneration. Social And Community Theatre Approach To Cultural Diversity And Plural Communities

The social and community theater was born in a place of crisis. Mirafiori, historical suburb of the city of Turin, in 2001.

Here, in the fifties and sixties, men and women from poor lands of the southern part of Italy and from mountain villages of Piedmont came to seek a job in the large Factory, Fiat. The municipal administration built condos of many floors for them, some schools, a few services. Men and women got their residence there, many found a job as workers, beyond the gates of the Factory. They created families and changed the face of this discreet and gray Savoy city. Then again, at the end of the eighties, from Albania, the Maghreb, and Africa other women and men came to look for another possible life, for a job. Some of them went to dwell in Mirafiori, others in other suburbs. They also changed the face of the city. Clubs, bars, public squares, cultural associations, food, music, clothing, stories, prayers, languages.

In 2001, when the Municipality of Turin launched the project "Theater and Suburbs", it had in mind an intervention for the urban redeveloping in which the theater, as it was in Turin during the animation theater in the seventies, would create opportunities to regenerate people who lived in the most disadvantaged areas.

I was coming from Milan, where together with the group that since the end of the eighties was a leader at the Research Center for the Theater, directed by Sisto Dalla Palma, used to share a path of theatrical research for a theater, which while remaining a real theater, i.e. art action beauty creation, would also be able to regenerate the human being and give them back dignity and well-being. We used to go through the great teachers of the Twentieth Century from Copeau to Stanislavkij; used to meet the masters of that time from Grotowski to Barba, from Breat and Puppet to Living Theatre, from Ariane Mnouchkine to Peter Brook; we used to actively follow the creative processes and the performances of Italian and foreign acting companies that were innovating the contemporary scene.

We had a finger in every pie, first as students and then as interns, in the work of artists that were very different among them, we went to see performances in theaters, in factories, in the stations, parades, festivals, traditional rituals in the countryside and cities. We wanted to understand how to draw from

**"I see the transforming power
of the theatre, its amazing
andragogical strength."**

Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione





Caravan installation in children hospital, Torino (IT), 2011

all those experiences of art working, the principles that were effective even with the common people, so that we could create that Social Theater that we felt like the true theater, needed to respond to the crisis of bonds and the identity dispersion, which we dragged along in the lighthearted Eighties and Nineties. Working with the body - the training- to get in touch the different parts of a person and to train an open state of presence and creativity; working on the ensemble to build the feeling of being a single organism among the people and thus knowing to build creative actions together; the free and guided improvisation as main method to create a group, to explore the imaginary, the transformation of what is inside - feelings and thoughts of the actor- in concrete, physical actions and at the same time strongly universal and symbolic; the writing done together with the actors, which improvises to weave live, embodied words, deeply linked to the physical action; the dramaturgy as cross cutting research in the texts, in traditions and in the imagination of sense lines, of fractures to fill and in the construction starting from these scores of words and actions which

are to be challenged by the actor; the performance as scenic writing that defines itself in not necessarily classic spaces such as those of the Italian-style-theater, and in not-random-periods but dense of symbolic significance, as can be a solstice; the equal dignity of each material - word, body, light, color, objects, music- in theater creation. I started experimenting with all this theater knowledge within groups and people who were not theater professionals, but who recognized in the theater an opportunity to nourish themselves and their relationships. Healthy relationships, those within the person among the various composing parts - mind, heart, gut - and those between the people in a group, were the main focus of attention which steered our work, together with the desire to create a beautiful theater.

In the meanwhile, I personally continued to do "normal" theater as a playwright with various Italian artists – such as Marco Paolini , Marco Baliani, Pippo Delbono - exploring the narrative theater and the thin boundary between theater and discomfort. What made me decide about the Social Theater, was a work with some refugee women and Kosovo, where after the war, I did a theatrical work for the International Organization for Migration. The beauty created by working with those men and women, each of them marked in a different way by so much pain but also by a lot of strength, was particularly intense. The theatrical process was slower, but at each step the human and artistic progression was stronger. The creative challenge was increasingly interesting: I see the transforming power of the theater, its amazing andragogical strength. The splendor of lives was also a splendor of art and humanity. In a continuous and close dialog, in a subtle balance between closeness and distance, between listening and artistic relaunch, I was looking for the possibility to transform the identity and wishes of ordinary people in a theatrical act that would speak a universal language and would tell a story or a situation recognized by everyone. Listening is everything. An artistic listening, not one by a counselor or a psychologist: to see the sentiment and shape in which it's shown and observe that shape in the gestures, in the voice tone and volume, on the contents of a memory, on the chosen words and the sentence syntax, in the way of walking, sitting down, bending the head. You need empathy and detachment at the same time: be there with her while doing a training or an improvisation exercise, while she shares a memory or a dream, and then be immediately to another part to understand two things: 1) What to suggest as the next theatrical exercise so that what is now happening can be developed and directed towards a positive transformation of the person and the group (pay attention to the person's well-being) and grow theatrically; 2) browse your own catalog of shapes and memories to find out how 'her own particular way of bending the head while singing with a nasal voice" revokes another shape, not individual but a universal one, that perhaps many have seen in a painting, in a rite, in a film, in the text of a song, in the pages of a book, or even simpler in those archetypal gestures which mark the most important moments of our life - birth, loss, love, and death. And do the same for each member of the group and for the collective work. And so you get

to the end of the path - usually after a theatrical laboratory - and carefully choose the shape of the performance: time, space, the relationship with the audience, so that the show is also "a nice and good action" and not only a "beautiful vision", therefore, a transformative action for all those who take part in it. There's all of this because this theater is both "a journey through the theatre": towards a deeper truth deeper of oneself and its links and a human dignity claimed in front of the rest of the society; as well as "a journey towards the theater": as a final community act of artistic gifting and celebration of what was discovered, in the laboratory and theatrical path, to be true about life - dramatic and comical, light and profound- by passing through oneself and one's links with the group.

The Social and Community Theater, is all of this, and furthermore, everything I discovered by moving from Milan to Turin. I met the city in Mirafiori. And its inhabitants. Former Fiat workers and young Albanians. All residents in that historical suburb of the city. The dialog between them was not so easy. Old and new immigrations, old and new forms of discrimination. Personal stories, but also stories of a place and a time, between the past and the future. Without those houses, those parishes where they were welcomed, without the dancing rooms to dance a bit after the hours at the assembly line, without the circles on the Sangone River, without the walls and gates of Fiat, none of those people would have been equal. Their lives and their stories were intrinsically linked to the city of Turin and to the district Mirafiori.

The personal and collective memory linked to times and places, the dramatic size of the relationships, practiced through living and working in certain times and places became a fundamental part of the theatrical work with the community, as well as the need to build, together with the theatre, a community play-writing, and not a group one. This way you can tell the plurality, the contradictions, conflicts between reality and imagination and thus set in motion the community as a whole - so that it can see and read itself in a different way - celebrate collective rituals and start the pathway of rebirth. The show that was born from that first work of the social and community theater was called *Oltre la fabbrica* (Beyond the factory): it was about the crisis and rebirth of those people, it showed the living crisis and the desired rebirth of a metropolitan suburb and of a city, Turin, seen by some of its inhabitants. It got together groups of inhabitants who didn't recognize themselves as part of the same community. Years later, with the Caravan Artist on the road we made once again, but on a larger scale and with more in-depth theatrical and social knowledge, what was born in Mirafiori: do social theater with the inhabitants to redevelop the city communities, to develop the participation and well-being of individuals and communities through art, as well as to grow the culture of a city.

In this 13 years that have passed between that first artistic experience at Mirafiori and the design and realization of the European project Caravan, together with Alessandro Pontremoli and with a group of young collaborators - including Alberto Pagliarino – we've created a partnership of research, study, artistic experimentation and training. Numerous

artists, professionals and teachers, who have taught in the four editions of Master of Social and Community Theater of the University of Turin, have contributed over the years in this work of innovation, which was designed in 2004. Many youngsters, who were first students and then professionals and collaborators, have worked side by side in the projects, as well as those in charge of the city's cultural institutions as well as regional public and private sector.

The meeting and the latest theatrical projects with those who work in the health care sector, at a local and international level, with those in charge of the cultural heritage and landscape, with those who lead paths of development in international cooperation, the extraordinary experience of European Caravan have led me to think that the differences between art and health, culture and welfare, between well-being and development are only conceptual illusions of a historical period which the crisis, not only the economic one but the global crisis, has shown to be over. Art, and the Social and Community Theater in a particularly effective and powerful way, it's art only if it is public art: art with people, in a creative process of common human and cultural regeneration where everyone plays their identity and personal and professional differences - artists and citizens- with a single goal: to give man a chance to see, to desire and start practicing a really human existence.



Rita Maria Fabris

University of Turin

The Project Caravan In Turin: Poetics And Drama In Social And Community Theatre **(From an Interview With Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione)**



Caravan, Turin (IT), community of Pietra Alta, 2011

The very beginning of Project Caravan took place in Turin, in August 2011, with the mapping of the places and communities interested in giving testimony of their rebirth experience in the suburbs. A great collective ritual was imagined for the New Years Eve, through the coordination of 22 events, a travelling stage, 52 associations and more than 5000 spectators involved. Since October stories and pictures have been collected meeting the communities, the very first canvas for the Caravan performance "Precipito – Rush", whose debut on the 5th April 2012 at the House of District in San Salvario, was directed by Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione. The actors were Alberto Pagliarino, Aldo Rendina, Fabrizio Stasia and Federica Tripodi.

In the poetics of the Caravan Turin the leading idea was to find out a drama dispositif able to focus the theme of crisis and rebirth. In the perspective of the dramaturg, Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione, the festive time of the New Year seems to be in the collective imagination and tradition, because of everyday rituals involved, a good point to speak of the crisis and rebirth. The second question was: what does it mean crisis and rebirth for everyday life in Turin? Turin went often through crisis because of the recurrent reduction of the FIAT factory and a number of historic buildings also, previously artisan workshops, public baths, post offices were then restored and re-signified within the social dimension: they became houses of district, libraries, social housing and so on. These buildings themselves had this symbolic meaning of rebirth. Therefore the community drama imagined a physical journey on buses transformed into an extraordinary trip through extraordinary places, wonderful places without losing their original meaning. Every bus stop, a daily moment of transition,

was turned theatrically into a time for small transformation, so that everyone could perceive that the transformation is always possible and it is made mostly of small actions, small but intense experiences.

The Caravan Turin events started on November, when lots of certificates of renaissance were signed in the box offices (the Renaissance Acts Bureau) set up near the Caravan. We can read on them what people wish to do for a new life, a document paving the way to put into effect an intention: the very first public action is a written performance, a signature which engages personally everyone to realize a private desire. As you write down a certificate, you make a promise in front of your friends, relatives, community or institutions. A jump into a new life would confirm the certificate.

The Caravan's trip through the suburbs was the welcome stage for common people invited to be protagonist, as in Pietra Alta in the north site of Turin, where the social housing experience Sharing organized local group of dancing people. On December the city centre was lightened by artists and the Caravan joined the festivities of the 150th anniversary of Italian Unification with a luminous installation by Maurizio Agostinetto, entitled "E adesso usciremo a rivedere le stelle – And now we will emerge to gaze upon the stars again", inspired by the last verse of the "Inferno – Hell" by Dante Alighieri.

The New Years Night Eve started in the afternoon with a trip of the Caravan and two buses hijacked for this occasion in order to bring 200 participants in five places and communities, symbols of rebirth. The first one was the pediatric hospital "Regina Margherita" where a theatre reading about the life in the hospital was performed by the community chorus of nurses, inhabitants, health workers, volunteers and an unforgettable path made of shoes was decorated by patients and educators. The second place visited by the tour was Sharing where a video installation wished "Happy New Year" in all the languages spoken in the district and a bonfire of all things was burned in the street, while the White Lady of Rebirth, the symbolic personification of the theme as suggested by the children, was coming. The third stage was +Spazio Quattro organized by the Moldavian community for welcoming people with traditional music, dance and bread. The fourth stage was the Cecchi Point – Multicultural Hub where the Caravan travellers could enjoy a frugal dinner among exhibitions, video projections, spectacular moments about rebirth carried out with street children, primary school kids and elderly people. At midnight the Caravan light up the fireworks, wishing a human and social renaissance. In the late night the last stop was the House of District in San Salvario, the multicultural place where a ritual of propitiatory dances was performed by twenty people of different ages directed by Doriana Crema, who in the final community dance included all the participants. The spell of hope was cast on the Caravan Project.

The methodology of Social and Community Theatre aims to figure out what are the natural forms that people already uses or those other forms that can be understood by them from the perspective they have. The SCT artist tries to shape the people imagination, the language they use, the movements

"The SCT artist tries to shape the people imagination, the language they use, the movements they do, the places they are living in."

Rita Maria Fabris



they do, the places they are living in. It is a co-construction process, where the artist is always open to the dynamics of dialogue and also to the possibility to move people to another point of view, thanks to a maieutical process. It means not only shaping what exists, but also growing what exists. By a poetic perspective it means to accept a plurality of signs, taking the risk, trying to compose artistically high and low materials, popular and not popular: the question is how to compose all this multiplicity, if the SCT dramaturgy wants to value the forms of the people she met.

The creative process of the community drama - performed for instance in the Pietra Alta event - involved theatre workshops with children and interviews with people of the district, both new immigrants and social workers, teen-agers and kids. The two high towers also, built in this suburb, inspired a new perspective to the drama, because from this place everyone could see all the city by another point of view, the story-telling of the suburb could give a new meaning to the crisis.

From all these experiences, the theme of the youth condition was selected to create the Italian Caravan performance "Precipito - Rush", as it could affect not only Italian spectators in these years of economic crisis. The action-research process underlined that the job crisis was not the main question: the problem was that you cannot build a life, have children, have a family. The director Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione aimed also to tell the story of Turin with three young characters inspired by people met in the suburbs and a middle age one, the dead business man, whose life was a piece of news. In short, a yuppie estate seller is not able to do his job and he meets a dead business man in the flat he lives: the middle-age dead man becomes the trainer of the young along the way of life by supporting his energy to face the crisis. As a business man in crisis he committed suicide but as a ghost he can now protect the young generation with their dreams and fears. The only one who could survive seems to be the young pregnant lady, deeply connected with the roots of life and minding not too much the context of crisis. The style of the performance was inspired by the fantastic realism of the Fifties movies or by the more recent "Amelie", especially in the prologue where a voice over tells a fantastic story of real Turin places.

After the debut of " " in Turin, the Caravan tour stopped in Asti, Cuneo, Girona, Castellon de la Plana, Vilareal, Albacete, Murcia, Marinaleda, Sevilla, La Rinconada and the chorus of spectators was very talkative. A guy said after the performance: "Probably the message to keep on dreaming even if we live inside a more difficult reality, this idea seems to be an important aim, which has affected us". Moreover, a lady said: "The transformation of the crisis into joy, this message of the crisis we feel, the difficulty of young people... To fall but changing it into happiness, it is a positive imagery".

If the aim of a Social and Community Theater project is to ensure that the audience go out after the performance with a power to transform their life, "Precipito" and the Turin event seem to achieve this goal. Sometimes you need a slap to start up again your life and make sense of this "Rush".



Caravan, San Giovanni Rotondo (IT), 2012

An interview with Julia Varley

(an actress of the famous Danish Odin Teatret, director, educator and writer)

by Melita Forstnerič Hajnšek

(Journalist, writing for Vecer (SI) newspaper)

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A Theater Of Foreigners In A Country Full Of Foreigners

Native Londoner Julia Varley joined the famous multicultural theater phenomenon called Odin Teatret in 1976 at the age of twenty-two, after moving from the Danish town of Holstebro. Odin Teatret was founded a half a century ago in Oslo by the renowned Italian director Eugenio Barba, and is, among other things, home to the International School of Theater Anthropology – ISTA, founded in 1979, as well as the Center for Theater Laboratory Studies since 2002.

Julia is the heart and soul of the center. At the early age of three she moved with her parents to Milan, studied philosophy, but was tempted by the underground theater. After moving to Denmark, i. e. to Odin Teatret, she achieved recognition as an actress in the legendary performances of Eugenio Barba. Since 1990 she has been engaged with the International School of Theater Anthropology and the University of Eurasian Theater. Since 1986 she is also an active member of the Magdalena project, a network of women in contemporary theater. Her productions as a director have been staged in Germany, Argentina, Japan and Italy. Her book *Notes from an Odin Actress* was published in Milan, Mexico, Cuba, Peru, France and England.

She visited Maribor in response to an invitation from KIBLA, as part of the international CARAVAN project, which will happen over a total period of 42 months and is worth three million euros. With “Reviving from crises” as its main subject, CARAVAN forms the foundation of an upcoming European festival that will unite the collaborative efforts of leading agents from nine European countries.

Is your name a proper one or artistic? Julia Varley was the famous English suffragette and syndicalist, born in Bradford in 1871.

No, no, it's my proper name. It was only this year that I found out that I shared the same name with this memorable women's rights fighter. My friends sent me a link to that Julia, but I honestly didn't know about her before that.

Italy is your second or almost your first home? It is there that you entered the world of theater and met with Odin Teatret for the first time?

I was born in an English family, in my early childhood years we moved to Italy together. My father found work there and I stayed, and went to Italian schools. I often say that Italian is my first language, but after so many years in Denmark things have become slightly different. I started doing theater in Italy, because I was bored by school. I tried lots of things before I decided that I wanted to do underground theater. I once went to see a rehearsal, and by the next time they already put a mask into my hands and told me to – do something. There was nothing sophisticated about it, nothing I would choose intentionally; it just happened. I worked in squatted social centers in Milan. They organized schools of theater, graphic design, film. Odin Teatret came to visit there once. One of the members of our Italian group knew some people from Odin and invited their actors to one of our workshops. After that, I instantly decided to spend some time in Denmark. My idea was that I would learn everything there and then come back to Italy. But after three months in Holstebro I realized that I still didn't know anything. It was impossible for me to return back home and take on the responsibility of so many people. I stayed to this day.

Were you, like Eugenio Barba, also heavily influenced by Jerzy Grotowski and his “poor theater”?

No, to me personally Grotowski is not as fundamental as he is to Barba, who spent three years with the Pole in Opole, in his *Theater of 13 Rows*. It was before he (Barba) started Odin Teatret. The Polish government wouldn't allow him to return to Poland. He stayed in Norway, but his Odin Teatret moved from Oslo, where it had been founded in 1964, to Danish Holstebro. During the first few years, the connection to Grotowski's theater laboratory was strong, many teachers came from Poland. However, Grotowski wondered a little away from theater in the following years; he stopped creating performances, while Odin Teatret grew more autonomous in its development.

Are Italian roots crucial to you? You experienced intercultural patterns long before multiculturalism became a political platitude?

I'd rather speak of an international than an intercultural element regarding those long-gone times. Eugenio Barba is a native Italian, today he is a Dane. He began creating a theater that wasn't supposed to be treated as Italian, emigrant, immigrant – but considered as artistic and different, and accepted as such. When I was growing up in Italy, I was always, perhaps because I moved there from England, considered a foreigner. But I always felt foreignness to be a privilege rather than a stigma. Mine was a different experience than the one Eugenio had in Norway, where Italians were being humiliated. His experience of immigration was fundamentally different than my own. When I was still in school, my teachers always used to tell me that I was better in writing than the others, because I was a foreigner. This sort of exotic element was always helpful to me. A part of my origin was always

based in England, but my education, my political activities, my friends – belonged to Italy. For my entire life I have felt a strong presence of both of these cultures. When I left for Denmark, the opportunity occurred for me to connect my English and my Italian world. They got the chance to be productively joined in the work in Odin Teatret.

Did the proverbial Scandinavian receptiveness help with your “integration”?

No, it was more due to the fact that the country is full of foreigners.

Could Odin Teatret make it just as successfully in this intercultural sense in, for example, New Delhi or Tokyo?

Yes, probably. But Europeans are more curious, and that is specific to Odin Teatret. That is, curiosity, and the mixture of the north and the south, the passion and the energy that we find in southern Europe, and the rationalism and organization of the north. Both of these are very much present in Odin. It is why I was able to put all of my scattered ethnicities to good use inside the group. Today the group is recognized as part of the Danish culture, but is really made up of all foreigners. They come from twelve countries and three continents. Even more so, because at the moment of Odin’s move from Norway to Denmark, everyone in the group lost their language.

Why did the transfer of Odin to Denmark happen in the first place?

A nurse from Holstebro saw one of Odin’s performances in Oslo. She found out that the city council in Holstebro was trying to raise the level of culture in the town. She went to see the mayor and told him about this interesting Norwegian theater group. He should invite them permanently, that was her suggestion. The mayor contacted Odin and offered his hospitality.

The town had no theater before that?

No. In the time when Odin moved there permanently, they also built a gallery and a music school. From the very beginning, Odin Teatret was searching for a town in the province as their domicile; Oslo as a capital was not convenient. Holstebro, with its 25.000 inhabitants, was the perfect choice. It provided an opportunity for sharper concentration, without all the interruptions and temptations of a big city. It gave us the chance to build from scratch. The town offered us a place of a former farm, and covered the expenses of a single salary. By moving to Holstebro, the group lost its language. In Norway, we performed in Norwegian; Danish may come from the same language family, but it’s not the same. Initially, because of our lack of knowledge of the language, our performances had to resort to a different type of communication with the audience. At first, our work in the theater was not founded on language, but more on physicality, dance, music; the words were used more according to their tonality and intonation than their meaning. This was laid in the foundations of our theater group. It is for this very reason that it became possible for foreigners to become part of Odin.



Interview Julia Varley by Melita Forstnerič Hajnšek, Večer, Maribor (SI), 2014

It wasn’t a theater based on text and starting from the language, instead, various other languages played a central role – motoric, vocal, physical.

And everyone from the group contributed a part of their own tradition?

What is a country’s tradition anyway? If you’re from Slovenia, what is Slovenian tradition in the first place? The folklore, the music, the poetry? Your personal tradition originates from a big city, which is very different from the traditional culture of a Slovenian living in the countryside. Someone with a university degree in humanities belongs to an entirely different culture than someone who studied technical sciences. Even a single nation is a co-existence of many different traditions and cultures. It is therefore not a question of what nation you belong to, but rather what culture you belong to as an individual; what your individual background is. All of this merges with everything you come across in a new environment. So, when we speak about Odin Teatret and how it consists of foreigners, you need to realize that we are foreigners even in relation to our own country. We have a “land” of our own, which belongs to our theater group. The way we do theater, the way we travel the world, the way we work as a group, the way in which every one of us has the same salary, the way we all contribute to the cleaning of the theater, the way we take care of our costumes ourselves – it is in this way that we are shaping our own culture, which is very different from The Royal Theater in Copenhagen that belongs to the same nation, but with an utterly different tradition and culture.

To describe one of your working principles in the theater, you invented the term “barter”, which stands for “the trading of goods”. Is it a social interaction in theater?

Most probably the expression originates from Latin. I actually started using this idea in Italy in 1972, in Barba’s project *My Father’s House*. Odin Teatret was visiting Sardinia and the performance took place in the little village of Cosolo. We invited the entire village to see the show. After we finished our performance, the villagers said to us, we heard you, and now it’s time for us introduce ourselves to you. So this is the barter that occurred so spontaneously among us. When Odin travelled to Carpignano, the locals wanted us to show them what we were doing when we weren’t performing. They came to see our rehearsals, the preparations. And then as a form of barter we were presented with songs and dances, literary performances by the townspeople who showed us how they prepared food, how they taped films. In the places that we visit and where we are invited to, young people will often tell us that they don’t know any traditional dances or songs, then we “threaten” them that we are not coming. It is our way of achieving that the young connect to the old and study their past, their heritage. We trigger an intergenerational dialog in an environment; our achievement is that they get to know each other better. And that is more important than getting to know us. The barter is an argument in favor of our group coming in the first place. But what matters is what we leave behind in the local community.

With your visit and with everything you present in a new environment, you encourage solidarity and dialog?

That’s right. Extreme situations have occurred; Odin Teatret had a chance to visit the Yanomami, an indigenous people living in the Venezuelan rainforests. The only white people the Yanomami met before us were the missionaries. Our theater group came to them; we recorded a film, a story about the shamans. The practice of barter is also alive in Holstebro, where we try to produce performances that involve all the activities of the town. We do performances with firemen, people dance, the music schools students create music for these events; the police and the army also collaborate, uniforms are exchanged. Local confectioners bake giant cakes; our theater makes sure the entire town population is involved in such events. We make them visible. Even those who remain practically unnoticed in the course of everyday life, become the stars of our shows. We place them inside the framework of the theater. Sometimes we attract hunters with dogs and horns, and place them side by side with ballet dancers or children dancing. By connecting what appears incompatible and with the activities that become interesting as opposed to the everyday routine, the theater is given a new, different dimension. So this is the barter we have developed in our home town of Holstebro. Us Odin people know from our own valuable experiences that amateur theater is one of the most successful and most effective means of integrating, developing and strengthening relationships between members of any community.

You developed the concept of “theater anthropology”. What does it mean?

In Odin Teatret we developed our own method of work, special trainings that help an actor discover his or her special presence on stage. We teach them how to use the energy and how to modulate their own physical energy. We have met, often first-hand, with countless theater forms and genres, especially Asian traditional theater practices like the Indian kathakali or Japanese kabuki and Noh, and we found out that in all these different forms, the principles of an actor’s behavior are the same. Though the esthetic forms vary considerably, the principles guiding the actor’s behavior on stage are identical. Theater anthropology is the study of an actor’s behavior during the organization (preparation) of a performance or show. Our interest within the International School of Theater Anthropology – ISTA is therefore the research and comparison of various performing techniques and genres. These may also originate from European traditions, like classical ballet. The personal approach, which we foster in Odin Teatret, shows, for example, what improvisation means in the form of kabuki or kathakali. What does improvisation mean in the first place? We present different ways of improvisation, which can be fixed, or we can improvise with time, space or by creating new forms. We can also improvise just with little details, for example with sounds, with voice. Theater anthropology has nothing to do with cultural anthropology, which studies the cultures of nations, but it does have a lot to do with theater tradition, which can establish a link between many diverse practices, such as the kathakali, odissi, Noh drama – which is what I do as director on the basis of the great European dramatic texts. In this way our performances were created in the cycle *Theatrum Mundi: Ur-Hamlet, Ego Faust ...* I am much better equipped for communication and dialog even with distant worlds and civilizations.

How do you manage to do that? The audience at Kibla’s Portal in Maribor was fascinated by your performance.

The dialog runs along physical impulses. You’re not creating a dialog that would have anything to do with meaning or some sort of story, or any kind of narrative. If you see a cat entering a space where there’s already another cat, the cat is going to react. But if the other cat is on television, it will not react. It is therefore a matter of communication between living beings, something to do with physical impulses. The energy you transmit through your body is the essence of theater and is paramount. It is much more important than the meaning of words. If I open up to you, if I scream in your face, you will receive a piece of information that is far more revealing than if I told you about how I was born in Milan. The energy by means which I communicate with you through my body will provide you with so much more information on the emotional, sensorial level. Which is not necessarily the irrational level. There are 90% of animals among all living creatures, and this is something very important in theater. If people were fascinated by my performance at Portal, it was not because I would tell them something really smart. They were fascinated because I was using my energy, my body,



Julia Varley, performance, Caravan conference "WE-FOR-GET", Maribor (SI), 2014

my eyes, my voice, and showed them a sense of some other possible world, which is not the prevailing world of words. This is what theater anthropology is founded on.

Last year I participated in a caravan across seven professional European theaters, organized by the European Theater Convention. They tried to establish the inconceivable common denominator of present-day European theater. What do you consider to be the "European theater today"?

There are only very different tendencies, experiences and esthetics in contemporary theater. One of the things we worry about is that so many theaters have become too "intelligent" and conceptual. They have become just some sort of idea. This is not only true of theaters, it is also happening in the field of visual art. It's like they are losing blood, flesh and nerves. But there are also lots of other types of theaters. There is great diversity in the contemporary European theater of today: we have the perfectionistic-cold conceptualist theater, and also the kind that is inviting, not boring to intellectuals, and also to people who have never been in contact with the stage. The question of motivation is fundamental for doing theater. Personally I discovered that the best model for us is the type of theater that

exists in Latin America. There is an immense motivation and passion in those theaters. Whenever I see European theater groups, my first question is always why they are doing theater; what is it that excites them. Many times I am faced with a terrible distance on their behalf, which results in nothing but an esthetic rehearsal on stage. But there is another problem: highly motivated actors sometimes place too much attention on their emotions, and forget about the spectator. If you concentrate too much on your own emotions, you forget that they are essentially different from the spectator's. How you establish communication is very important. If you're highly motivated, you need to have a technique, so that you are able to communicate. What are the problems? Many young generations of theatricals are losing the craft knowledge of theater. They use externalized technology to help them and forget about what it is that an actor has to learn primarily, which is how to use his or her body, voice, how to work on details, how to master the space.

But the spectators themselves also contribute to the lowering of standards and trivialization of culture in general?

Of course, spectators are becoming less and less demanding, because of television, sports, the banalization of culture. The richness of theater, its highest value is that you have two human beings who present themselves to each other at the same time. It's what makes theater so special. Theater may well be the only remaining place of encounter, of dialog and of genuine contact. In this day and age, you can even conceive a child without necessarily having two people. Theater is the only thing that is not possible to do, if you don't have at least two people involved. It is our responsibility to keep this connection alive. In a society that is becoming increasingly isolated, detached, individualized, and where contact is disappearing, the safekeeping of our profession is all the more important. That is why we have to do it well, the best we can.

Is it possible to avoid the all-embracing commercialization in theater?

Television is the main culprit. On one hand it is generating a culture of success; today's imperative is to be famous, on the other it's about the number of "likes" on facebook. It is more important to have a thousand people know you superficially, than to have one person who knows you really well. And there is also the problem of money: many actors are leaving the more interesting and research-work in theaters due to material reasons. Then they find themselves trapped in this pattern, because they no longer have the time for a different, in-depth kind of work. We cannot fight against this. We have to maintain the integrity of our work and the values of a personal relationship. No human being can live entirely superficially, they have to fall in love, have children, take care of them and experience something deeper, after all, we are all human. At some point people will get tired from the shallow, superficial, externalized life. This is why we need to have at least enough money that we don't have to sell our souls to the devil like Faust. Odin Teatret is so important to so many theater groups precisely because we show them that it's possible.

Does the Danish government support Odin Teatret? Are you dependent on the state?

Yes, of course there's a subsidy, but it's one third of what we need to endure. We forced the government to change the law. At some point it appeared that we were going to have to shut down our theater, so we initiated a solidarity movement with Odin. Other theaters, groups and artists helped us in creating a new law designed especially for theater laboratories like our own. Then the subsidies were granted, this was decades ago. Today we are faced again with substantial cuts and reduction of state funds. We have a strong and exemplary relationship with the city officials, who defend us before the state. In Odin Teatret we start to work at 7 am, like any worker, it is what has earned us the respect. We want to be equal to all other workers. Our manager Eugenio Barba received the great Sonning Prize for outstanding contributions to European culture, which is almost on the level of the Nobel Prize. Some right-wing Holstebro politician congratulated him, and even though he said that he didn't agree with a lot of things that we did in our theater, he would still support us, because he saw Eugenio driving in his car, and stopping to pick up a piece of garbage lying on the road. So, it is gestures like this that help to form a reputation in the town, much more than any kind of prize. It is not only about making fantastic performances. It is, of course, important to have international recognition as well. Many theaters envy us our fame, but it's not really so much about the artistic reputation, as it is about something else, for what we are respected by the politicians and the townspeople. There's no doubt our primary interest lies in the artistic work, but the question of creating a survival strategy in the environment doesn't have a lot to do with artistic creation, but also with networking and with how we present our projects around the world. Why do we receive invitations from international festivals? Because we systematically maintain contacts with the people who are fascinated with our projects. Such invitations are the result of hard work with various individuals, we refer to them as Odin's "mystery people", but they are our friends. They are our friends even outside the scope of our performances, and they can take the credit for our economic survival. In our theater courses around the world we teach not only acting, but also management, directing, scriptwriting, filming. Our way of doing theater is to take responsibility for every possible aspect of the stage.

Denmark is famous for being a country that is not hostile towards foreigners. Scandinavian countries used to count as the least xenophobic countries in Europe. A stereotype?

Oh, make no mistake, Denmark is very xenophobic. Don't idealize it, it's horrible. We have been dealing with these issues for years. Denmark has a few disastrous foreigner policies. A couple of years ago, we invited a group from Brazil to Holstebro. In the group were children of the street, from the slums; they were black, of course. First we saw some prejudice, but when the locals saw the black children playing the drums, they felt empathy. They

wanted to protect them. We introduced a foreign element in the way that we knew would be accepted. The people of Holstebro are used to seeing foreigners in our theater. Today this city has the lowest level of ethnic issues in the whole of Denmark. The credit for that goes to Odin, who has spent half a century inviting foreign groups from all continents to visit. They perform in churches, schools. It's all about creating a terrain for this line of communication and acceptance. Otherwise there are major problems in Denmark regarding xenophobia. But the responsibility of people working in the field of culture is to confront these problems, not to run away from them to some other, friendlier country.

Central Europeans are still enchanted by the Scandinavian social state. Rightfully so?

By no means. Things have changed significantly; crisis has left its mark. Health care, educational, cultural funds – they are all being cut here as well. But the question is how to create a more responsible society? Recently we invited to Holstebro groups from Bali, Kenya, Brazil. We asked the nearby schools to accommodate and feed our guests. If we asked the government for money, they would definitely refuse us. But if we try in environments that consider the guests and their projects an enrichment, their willingness is great. There are different ways to activate the population. The problem with Scandinavian countries is that everything was always given to them. Today this is gone, even the suicide rates among the young have escalated. The fifteen-year-olds of today are exhausted before they even tasted work. This is a problem of the teachers of our generation; the youth of today doesn't know anymore what it means to fight for something. The people of today need to be revitalized, and we need to start doing that from the bottom, which is of course the exact opposite of what we see on television, the fame and glory, the success and the Big Brother that haunts all around the world.

What is Norway like after Breivik?

This catastrophe was very much felt throughout Norway; it is the richest Scandinavian country, rich with oil. It used to be a very open country, much more than Sweden and Denmark. The trouble with Norwegian communication is partly due to the mountainous landscape; Denmark is different, it is flat and it takes a mere four-hour ride to drive through the whole country. A similar tragedy happened in Norway than it did in the USA in 2001. Suddenly the entire country became nationalistic. I remember when I visited the USA shortly after the catastrophe, there were flags everywhere, the country changed overnight. After such tragedies you need to start very slowly, building from the bottom and creating the conditions for acceptance, which doesn't mean that we all have to be the same. Our politicians often speak about integration, but it's not working. We need to foster diversity, as well as the possibility to communicate within that diversity.

This sounds like anti-globalization in the theater? Everything is too much the same in the world today, we wear the same clothes, eat the same food, watch the same TV programs...

That's true. We are losing colors, tastes, our individual possibility of choice. The key is how to find them again. Young people need to rely more on themselves, not to look for role models far away.

If you compare the reception of Odin in, for example, Asia or Latin America...

The reception can be very different, or similar, anywhere between Australia and Canada. It has to refer to the individual. To us in Odin it doesn't matter if our shows deliver a certain message to a foreign environment. What matters is that we create the possibility for experience, and that each spectator feels us from their own point of view. It is our greatest reward to hear people say that their lives have changed after seeing our performance. We find that in very different countries, but the question is, how to create a show where the relationship between the spectator and the actor will be an intimate one. Theater shouldn't even attempt to be like television or football. It is the closeness that matters, not the distance. You don't have to put on shows for 3000 people and keep them all close to you. But for 150 to 200 people you can make certain that each spectator will feel the performance on the same level and in the same quality. One of theater's specialties is to maintain this value. When you send your children to school for the first time, you don't want them to be in a class of forty, you want them to be in a class of fifteen, because that increases the quality of learning. They used to call us elitists. But even with only ten spectators, you can achieve a greater impact on society than with a show for 3000 people, that leaves everybody cold.

You are also active in feminist art movements. The Magdalena project is concerned with women in theater? Is this a vulnerable group?

We launched the Magdalena network in 1986. We organized a festival of women in theater in Cardiff. Numerous participating authors were included in the network, which stretches around the globe today and has grown to incredible proportions. In Denmark I am also organizing the biennial festival Transit, which offers performances, workshops, discussions to female creators. The theme of the last edition was "Risk, Crisis, Invention". Violence was the leading subject of the festival, not only violence against women, but violence in general. The festival was dedicated to an Italian actress named Erica Ferazza, who was killed by her husband. Violence is also present in the artistic milieu. Over the years of acting as a women's rights fighter I discovered that women have come to realize the power of their vulnerability. They realize that they don't have to become men, if they want to be equal to men. They can remain women, but the autonomy that we created has caused an imbalance in the society. Women are gaining roles, and men are losing them, and that causes violence. Men have no answer to this process. A whole new subject is the question of how women will deal with this violent

response to the imbalance. In theater, women carry a great responsibility, because we know the language of the body. We have a different mindset, which is intuitive; we possess the ability to think about different things at the same time, and to do more than one thing at a time. This opposition is intriguing, it makes life interesting; the contrast is a drama, we don't have to get rid of it. How to transform the violence into a creative, not devastating force is a question that women in theater can answer with their experience.

Women on stage are still a minority; repertory theaters never provide enough roles for them, particularly not the leading ones. World dramatics still suffers from the lack of female roles.

This is why we need our own space to make the change happen. In one of the editions of Transit, a Brazilian played Ophelia, who says the following words: "If you were born a woman, you better learn to swim." How can we as women change the historical legacy without inventing something new? We can turn it into our own advantage. Many women give up too soon.

General lexicons still do not include a lot of actresses, female composers, conductresses.

In this sense I always like to joke about the word 'master', which in the original Latin form 'maestro' means someone eminent and distinguished, and then you have 'maestra', which means an elementary school teacher. It's even worse with English: 'master' is someone of the highest accomplishment, while 'the mistress' is a whore. There are big battles to be fought in terms of language. A new language has to be discovered, and the traditional academic, machismo language needs to be renounced. The people that do nothing but defend themselves have no energy; the ones that discover new things possess the energy. Now is our historic moment.

CARAVAN TOUR

“There is no relationship without drama and there is no drama without relationship.”

Julia Varley





From Turin to Sevilla, 2012, 1858T km

PRECIPITO (I'm plunging)

Dramaturgy and Art director: Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione
 With Alberto Pagliarino, Aldo Rendina, Fabrizio Stasia, Federica Tripodi
Narrator: Esther Ruggiero
Movements: Doriana Crema
Original music: Davide Sgorlon
Caravan's equipments and graphics: Maurizio Agostinnetto
Video editing: Fabrizio Giuliano
Assistant director: Thea Dellavalle
Head scenography artist, light board and sound operator: Claudio Albano
Trainee stage assistant: Andrea Barzaghi
Organization: Teatro Popolare Europeo for Caravan. Artists on the road
Organization coordinator and producer: Elena de Pascale
Production manager: Giorgia Nordio
 Supported by Regione Piemonte – Culture Commission Department
 Thanks to: Mario Brusa e Telecittà Studio, EspressEdizioni, Sabrina Rosa, Sole Querido, Roberta Cipriani – Scuola ZUM, Cecchi Point, Casa del Quartiere di San Salvario.

The performance Precipito tells the story of three young and a dead from Turin. It's an Italian story, but in some way it's speak about a more widely European situation. During the four months theatre community work

in Turin, we met a lot of young people: teenagers, young in their twenties and thirties. As with other citizen belonging to different city districts, we both interviewed them and did theatre workshops on our topic "crisis and rebirth". It had been sometimes physical workshop, sometimes more narrative theatre work. We had interviews where they worked or where they played and meet friends: football fields, discos, streets, cafès, schools, shops, factories, university. It was and it is still a hot period for young people's life in Italy, specially because of unemployment and the difficulties to rent a house and live by their own. It was quite interesting the difference between the teenagers and those who were studying at university or already working (or actually mainly training to find a job). The first felt no special worries about crisis, as they told us "That's the world we are born in", for the others it was completely different. They were angry, as if something -they should had had at that age- it had been stolen away by the crisis: job, house, love, family, the feeling that there is a future. They had plenty of energy, but had nothing to do except trying to survive. Some of them were even getting used to such a precarious way of life. On the other hand, in those days on the Italian main newspapers news came out about businessmen, who committed suicide. Getting deeply into the topic and the life experience of it, we realized that there was an important difference between man and women. We came along a lot of stories about women who lost their job but were able to cope with the difficult situation and tried to find out -even with a lot of creativity- a way to survive.

Specially in the outskirts we were surprised at running into a lot of people who were not afraid or resigned, but willingly to do something to overcome the difficult situation. That happened mostly where people had relationship or became member of cultural or social association, sharing common civil aims. While working with them, we noticed that people were very eager to tell and listen to stories about crisis and renassaince much more than to talk about the topic, as if the narrative way were a better way to understand and even to stimulate reaction and give to move on. Clearly a narrative theatre language with a story and characters would have talked directly to the heart and the mind of the people. There was also a city, Torino, to be told in its differences. And the emotions and the feelings of the people we met: energy, anger, friendship, hope, desperation, conflicts, irony, etc. It has to be a comedy but with dramatic aspects, full of the energy of the young, but also with tears and tenderness. Once we started working on the performance, we created four different characters, none of them was exactly a person we met, but they all included specific elements of the dozen of young people we met: gestures, words, behavior. Even during rehearsal, we felt sometimes the need to go back to people and have more conversations. Eventually Precipito turned out to be the story of Fabio Biella, Erika De Rosa, Luca Schillaci. The fourth character is a dead, Dante Riccomagni. Fabio Biella: a young estate agent, graduated in economics, ex-winner, he lives in the flats he should rent out. Erika de Rosa: a young woman, pregnant, she lost her job because of it, but she doesn't give up. Luca Schillaci, educationalist,

he works as a waiter; he dreams to be a football trainer, but doesn't do anything to achieve his goal. Dante "the dead", one of the first businessmen who committed suicide, enter into their lives. He is an ironic deadman, who provokes and helps them in an impossible dialogue between generations.

Surrealistic, grotesque, comic and dramatic, with a lot of physical language, dance and music, the performance tells the story of a change in the young's life, when they have to decide what to do: whether to stay or to leave, to marry or not, to have a child or to be alone, to wait for something to happen or to make a change and do something on their own. Photos and video and a recorded ironic woman voice evoke the background of this stories: a geometric and mysterious city with its artistic winter lights, the river, the closed factories, the outskirts, the multicultural markets. This city and its stories is the symbol of Italy in a period when it's more and more difficult for the young to have great dreams or even only to have dreams "da grandi", that's to say the dreams that any adult makes.

Asti – 57 km from Turin

The first stop of our tour was not very far from Turin, we started to warm up for our journey but we took it easy in order to live every single moments of that new context. Asti is a small town, famous all over the world for its "spumante" (sparkling wine). It has an excellent gastronomic tradition and also a lot of cultural activities that distinguish it among other cities in Piedmont. The Caravan passed in the Week of Culture in collaboration with the City Government of Asti, Vedogiovane Asti and Casa degli Alfieri. Unfortunately, even though we were on April, it rained and it was very cold, so all the organization was suspended until the last moment when we chose the small Auditorium of the Centro Giovani as location. For a moment all seemed to go wrong but Caravan spirit is... "We get by"!

While the Caravan was parked on display in a downtown square and Elena went forward and backward in order to improve this new show communication, in Asti all we started to realized that we had to adapt to any situation in that tour... to change place at the last minute because of the rain, to change the entries and the exits stage, to face every time a different audience, to modify some passages of the show... but in the end, this is the beautiful part of the work... to be always prepared for any change and keep on anyway! The people reached us also in that hidden place, dried themselves from the rain and started to take place. The atmosphere was intimate and intense in that small hall...here was where the show started. This Asti replication allowed us to try the show in a theatre version, a useful occasion for future dates. Even though the space was smaller and the rain discouraged the audience, the replication went well... the crowd was glad and commented with the actors about what they had just seen ... and we were ready to start our Spanish adventure.

Cuneo – 98 km from Turin

And so, after the debut in Asti, we arrived in Cuneo, where the journey kept on developing itself, holding us outside Turin for the first night. Cuneo is a triangle-shaped city, enclosed between the river Stura and the ravine Gesso. It's a little centre enriched by the elegant and residential arcades of Via Roma, with its cafés and shops we overlooked during our afternoon of rehearsals. The company Melarancio works in Cuneo since almost 30 years, they realize shows, formation projects, festivals and social theatre paths. They are our local partners and since the beginning they showed their enthusiasm and interest for Caravan, by setting for us a meeting with the students of the institute for the higher education "Grandis".

In the morning we held a workshop in a school. The partakers to the workshop were all girls attending the last year. During the three hours of work they shared with us their vision of the woman of the future: aggressive, similar to a panther, or organized and efficient, able to deal with the challenges related to family, work, leisure time... a winner, apparently. Too bad, time is never enough. Do you want to hear a description of the husband? Sitting in the armchair, drinking a beer or sitting cross-legged in front of the television broadcasting football. Their images gave us food for thought and inevitably reminded us of our characters, characters that within a few hours would have been presented on stage to the girls... Picture their welcome!

It was really cold that night in Cuneo. The original idea was to bring our travelling stage in the marketplace, but in the last 48 hours the temperature had a sudden drop and so we went to the Toselli Theatre. This theatre, hidden in a tiny street of the city centre, is a little jewel dating back to the 1400s. It made us feel strange to be in an Italian-style theatre with a sloped stage, red stalls and perfect acoustics. Among the audience there were the students met at the workshop. During the applause Elena and Biagio recorded fresh impressions: "I like the idea of thinking about the crisis with cheerfulness", "Thanks! We needed it!", "It's important to keep in mind you always have to keep on dreaming, especially in this moment.."

Girona – 776 km from Turin

A white statue in the middle of a square puts his arms a light angel, soft and brittle that is about to fall to the ground asking for help.

A sweet and poetic image created by Sonia and Federica during a work in couple at the theatre workshop held in Girona at the Youth Centre. Sonia is a Spanish girl who lived in Turin for two years. "If the great love that had brought me there wouldn't have finished ... I would have stayed in Italy," she says with blue shiny eyes. "Youth Centre", "House of Culture", "E la Nave Va", are the first Spanish realities with which we have faced, not very different from ours. Thirty and forty-year-olds, concerned about the cuts



on culture, about the lack of money, about the effort to continue to work in theatre.

During the work of Image theatre by David these themes come all out, but in them I find a great vitality, enthusiasm and lightness.

Their ascent from crisis and oppression? Having many people around willing to help, willing to broaden our vision. There is a need for community, brotherhood, solidarity to come out of this situation.

As Indignados writes: "NADIE GANA SI NO GANAMOS TODOS" (Nobody wins if we don't all win).

We read on Wikipedia that Gerona is a city crushed by both sides, wedged between France and Castile. Entire centuries to defend its borders, to establish who's in and who's out. The borders are signs of closing, but also places for meetings and indeed the inhabitants of Gerona are naturally predisposed to meeting new people. The people here are wonderfully hospitable and, as we discover during the workshops and community relations, also very generous.

Gerona is beautiful, comes along a river and reminds us a little of Florence, but more simple. A beautiful simplicity, on a human scale.

Here we have worked with Quim Nogera, director of the Training Centre Theatre El Galliner, housed in the Casa de Cultura of Girona. Quim has supported us in working with young people that are close to the centre. We like the idea of offering a workshop, but also an opportunity for an open debate on the issues mentioned in the performance: the crisis, the rebirth, the lack of work, the desire to start a family. We will do both.

"Reborn from the crisis" in Spanish, is "salir de la crisis". Coming out like coming up. Reborn then here is a bit like getting up after a fall? But after having fallen, are we still the same? The fall and rise: this will be the theme of our laboratory. After all, our performance has a very significant title: "Precipito -Rush" ...

We meet the group of Joanmiquel Ferran's boys, the meeting is straightforward: an opportunity that we seized suddenly. The work develops with a pleasing naturalness. We offer many exercises, some funny, some are very technical, but the theme is always the same: to learn how to fall to find out how to get up. Work for 3 hours, very intense. It's nice to discover each time that theatre gives you the chance to make an encounter that in life would seem almost impossible: there is no need for many words, just seeing a falling body, another that supports it, the way that these bodies and those persons find a simple movement to get up together. Sometimes falling is like taking a knock on the head, some others is more like a light sleep or a romance. And when those bodies get up – they reborn! – They have a different quality, are lighter and laugh a lot. Finally words come: all sat in a circle. There is much more to say, then we invite everyone to see the show: we will make it become an opportunity for open discussion.



Our first show in Spanish will be indoor and not on the caravan: too windy and too many technical problems. The caravan is still proudly displayed outside the House of Culture of Girona, where we are to go on stage. Tonight we'll try an experiment. We met David from the organisation "La nave va". David deals both with Social and Art Theatre: very close to the theatrical vision of Caravan. We ask him if he wants to help us to lead the after performance discussion with the audience as if it was a moment of Forum Theatre: the audience commenting on the scenes, taking the stage, taking the place of actors. David finds himself on Caravan's stage.

The performance is already very involving, but when we ask people to talk it is a choir of points of view, personal experiences, visions of the crisis, of emotion. No one has trouble getting on stage and showing their solution for a rebirth. They make us work a lot.

I believe that everything that was said can be summarized as following: the crisis is not just around us, but inside our heads. We must begin to look with new eyes, but above all, we must start to move together. Tonight we have



Caravan performance, Percipito, 2012

discovered that "Precipito" has also this possibility: it is not only a sight to behold, but it can become a place of strong participation and interaction.

Then an impression. We met citizens, students, institutions, the director of a theatre and it seems that the crisis brings out the best part of people. Will all Spain be like this?

Castellon de la Plana – 1139 km from Turin

We arrived in Castellon around May 1st holiday. The university was almost empty. The wide spaces and the brand new buildings were standing out under that light, that silence and that heat.

During our first visit to the Campus Jaume I, while wandering around the tangled parking lots of the University, we were greeted by Toni Valesa, the Campus Theater director and coordinator of the social-cultural activities of the SASC (Social-cultural Activities Service).

It is fascinating how the 15 years-old University is built up as a "city in a city" and how it played an important role for all the young students that had to move to Valencia or to Barcelona before, in order to study at university. Now they can go to university in their own city, instead.

Toni, Nati and Rosabel told us about their activities, about the time when the city was razed to the ground but it was then rebuilt in a modern and efficient way, about the excellence of the ceramic production and the life on campus, which was exciting and difficult at the same time.

Later on, Carmen Maria told us that in the last ten years there'd been a decreasing participation and interest in the activities amongst young people, in respect with sometime before. But even if they were still figuring out what their lives could be like, they had always done it with that joy and light heart that seemed to be typical of the Spaniards.

Even though the cutbacks to education had been pretty heavy and led to many difficulties, their being an against-the-stream team, based on the people work, on the social cooperation and the common goals, helped them not to loose grip of the situation.

"We are not regular people" they said, "but this is our opinion about making culture going".

In the university plaza there is the Caravan, and us, and the television with the intrevistadora cotonada, the backcombed interviewer, and the radio. *Donde estan los estudiantes por el taller?! Where are the students for the workshop?*

No estan.... There is nobody.

I mean, they are just not here. They're in some cafes, lying down on the grass, in the library studying for the exams since we are in the middle of the session now.

The organizers and the cameraman are pressing about doing something to get the students involved, to have them participate in the workshop. We have to do something and we have to provoke a reaction...

What are we going to do?

We approached a group of young people; somebody left, somebody stayed. We took out three pictures, representing respectively a moment of everyday life, a moment of crisis and one of recovery. Many of them reacted. Someone lied down, someone assumed strange positions, and others that used their best dramatic expressions to represent the crisis, showing their moneyless pockets or wallets. As we went through the groups, more and more people gathered around and we reach a hundred people: clenched fists to the sky, the raised arms in the air to show the rebellion and the strength to come out of the crisis, "la salida".

In the afternoon, we performed in "Precipito" and some new considerations started to spread around our young audience; then, the appointment was on again for the next day.

We experienced new meetings and new exchanges and we gathered those impressions that arose from the show and from the characters' stories. The last group we met seemed very into our propositions and in the end we even managed to put up a brief show that represented the overtaking of the status of crisis. The students were very excited, they accepted the challenge and they even added some music to the performance: it was about school, the study and desire of freedom.

We were sitting on the grass and impressions and opinions started to arise. The students felt lonely; they were convinced that society didn't understand their problems and aspirations. They complained about the majority of the private idea in respect with the community one. They felt powerless, without any tool to help them be active, but nonetheless they kept on talking and proposing, even the slightest one. Rosabel is the most talkative; she said that if everybody did his/her job right, things could change. And then Andrea concluded the meeting with a conclusion that had everybody satisfied: he said that projects such as ours contribute to make people talk. At first nobody knew anyone, but then yes and it was not irrelevant.

We thank Rosabel's insistence, the bulky TVs, the students that were not there or were hard to get.

A crisis can be a good thing if it forces you out of your certainties and pushes you to explore the territories of doubt and uncertainty.

Vila Real – 1156 km from Turin

The unexpected stop.

The stop in Vila Real was not programmed; we had to go right to Albacete, but a journey becomes real only if you make detours, if your curiosity and passion drive you to modify your schedule. Mr Toni Valesa, our referring person in Castellon, told us that in that period an International Festival of Street Theatre in a nearby small town was interested in our project. After a call, that opportunity came true. Artistic director of the festival, Mr Pau Ayet, immediately invited us to take part in it when he learnt we were working on a project about crisis and difficulties in young people. That time the journey was shorter than the usual one, not much longer than 10 km. When we entered the small town, a funny subdivision among males and females predominated inside the caravan. Females were indifferent to the town, with a bit of disappointment they looked at this big village that apparently seemed insignificant. On the other side, males buzzed like a swarm of flying bees, mumbled excited. "Vila Real, of course, unbelievable, do you remember it... bzzz, bzzz, bzzz". Soon the mystery is solved. Vila Real has one of the strongest football club in Spain and Europe. A celebrity totally based on men's world.



Performance at the International Festival of Street Theatre, Vilareal (ES), 2012

25th International Festival of Street Theatre in Vila Real is amazing. The big village that looked insignificant was filled with lights and people. The organization was so perfect to not be perceived. Everything seemed to happen in the right place at the right time. High-level and experienced artists. We asked them to make interviews and they happily accepted it. Musicians, clowns, acrobats and audience proved to be interested and able to reply to all of our questions about the space for culture in time of crisis. The leading role of culture was concretely clear to everyone, with resolution and without rhetoric.

We were worried about the fact that "Precipito" probably wouldn't have worked in a street theatre contest. "It will be a disaster" "Audience will leave us!" "It will leave us in the middle of the show and we will remain alone on the caravan, in an empty square!", we thought. And what was more, that night Vila Real played against Seville and one of the two would be demoted to Liga 2. Let's speak clearly, there was no way out: championship against theatre, championship wins! In that contest we believed that people would have expected to be impressed by us as they were impressed by aerial dance artists, who leapt out from the town hall creating acrobatic trajectory, or that the audience would like to be directly involved on the scene, as in the show of the Spanish clown: simply, poetic, captivating, suitable for all ages. And then, we went on stage... with a surprising effect. Children were caught by colours, scenic movements and small special effects, like EriKa's belly that suddenly blew up. Adults were involved too, particularly by stories and characters they somewhat identify in. The tendency to ask people to become small holder of VAT number, also for those professions in which is not required, exists here too. In this way, the employer is relieved of liabilities, taxes, contributions creating working relationship poorly defended. That is called "False Self-Employment". When Mr Fabio Biella raised this problem in one of the scene, the young-adults among the audience got excited, starting a discussion.

Many images of Vila Real we will carry with us: clowns, acrobats, people in the street, the ability in receiving us at the last minute in a programme that was already organized for months. The stop in Vila Real was a meeting, a comparison among artists. An enriching experience for everyone. Among all the images, in particular one stuck our minds: Mr Alberto Ibanez, Councilor for Culture. He is twenty years old (non-standard in Spain too) and he proudly spoke about his co-citizens. We asked Alberto the same questions made to the street artists. The Councilor was very friendly and professional. Vila Real, with its 50626 inhabitant (like Rho or Battipaglia in Italy) hosts many other dance, cinema and music festivals. Concreteness does not exclude ideals and Alberto simply said that culture is one of the few things that can change the world. He is satisfied with the cultural and artistic activities of his town, which he supports with all his strength, serenity and cleverness.

Albacete – 1405 km from Turin

The hotel and the school on the road to Albacete is very nice. The weather is sunny and cloudy. Through the window we can see fields, meadows and rock hills. We cannot find the hotel. We were given the address, but it must be wrong. We drive around for a while, but the only place that we can find is a day care centre for homeless people. There is no shadow of a hotel. In Albacete, we are guests at the boarding school "La Paz", in collaboration with the Universidad popular de Albacete, run by Ricardo Beléndez, situated within the city's House of Culture. The Albergue Municipal is a day care centre for homeless people, for families waiting for a housing project and for men and women addicted to alcohol and drugs. Into the centre, it is forbidden to smoke, drink alcohol and use drugs. The hotel has five floors, each of them giving hospitality to people with different situations. At 8.30 pm the centre closes. Just after the entrance, there are a metal detector, two security guards, some security cabinets and a coffee vending machine. After 10.00 pm nobody can leave his or her floor, or the alarm system will ring. The rooms have no door lock and there are no electric sockets. In the morning, wake-up time is 8.00 for everybody. This is also a place of rebirth: if you do not know where to go, you can come here. In Spanish, "albergue" means "place of shelter". It is here that we are going to eat and sleep tonight.

*"What's the most important place in your district, for you?" "School!"
Answer of Juan*

A fifteen-year-old boy, showing his smile below his black eyes. We wonder what would have answered a boy of the same age living in Turin. Juan is a big and pleasant-gazed gypsy. "Because it's here that we build our future! We learn here! ...and there's a lot of girls!". Mrs. Rosa is the headmistress of Juan's boarding school, "La Paz". The school is situated in the most difficult district of the whole city: La Milagrosa, the district of miracles. Once, here it was necessary to frisk the students, one could not walk alone and the teachers were always threatened. For some years, the school has been adopting an experimental education method: a more active participation of the students' families. And the results are extraordinary. There is a car, out of the school, upon whose dashboard someone wrote "Nobody can judge me, apart from God". A nice sentence, a sentence to remember. Here we met Juan and his school friends: in all, two classes of the institute. What strikes us is the noise coming from everywhere: people shouting, hands clapping, doors slamming. There is a great energy with bots and children of all ages. We wonder how we will manage to put 20 boys in one room to do acting. It is going to be very, very difficult if we want to reach the results that we expected or that we planned before meeting the group. We will have to use our listening skills. The two classes are mixed classes: boys and girls of different ages from 10 to 15 years old. It is self-evident that they do not like listening to someone talking. We cannot explain an exercise for more than one minute, or they will start dancing their flamenco -a very popular version



Interaction between Caravan team and local participants, Albacete (ES), 2012



The audience met with the actors at the end of an emotional show, Murcia (ES), 2012

and we will lose them. So we decide to show the theatre. We do not explain exercises, we just show them, going on stage ourselves first. And the silence comes. They are charmed by how we handle an invisible ball, we make it grow out of all proportions, communicate its weight by bending our knees, transform it in an umbrella or a flower. The exercise goes on by itself: the imaginary ball goes from hand to hand, turns into something else, creates connections. Right then, we make our question: "What's the most important place in your district?" The school, the street market, the square. All places of rebirth, places where the futures are planned, where people meet and make exchanges. The crisis here is lived in a different way. "For me, it is like having nothing that is worth living for", says Lorena, a mother in the district.

In the evening, the small square is crowded with families, those of the gypsies in the district of Milagrosa and those of the neighbouring districts. It is a good mix. The kids are in the front row. There are the families met the day before and the boys and girls of the school. Juan smiles at us from behind a tree. This show is a very particular experience: moments of absolute silence alternate with moments of excited involvement. If something falls down from the stage, it is immediately grabbed. The scene of the flying newspapers becomes a party for the kids, that rush to take the paper balls and play in front of the stage. The women are very attentive. In the end, a storm of applause. Three really intense days.

"The strong, gritty gaze of a woman of Milagrosa, with her little daughter sitting next to her, that identifies herself in the character of Erika. Gypsy kids that, during the show, came and said hello to us, asking Federica whether she was really pregnant or not. Albacete was the place of disorientation. A cold shower, sudden and unexpected. This small town puts us in crisis, because you can touch and see the crisis here. A crisis much more important than the economic one, the bank one. A crisis that has maybe always existed: the crisis of poverty, of exclusion, of the hard issue of coexistence between different ethnic and cultural realities. What we take with us from Albacete is the effort to establish a connection with thirteen-year-old agitated kids that seem more cunning than us, thirty-year-old men. Strong and intense eyes and very, very much noise. The noise of young voices, shouts and singing on flamenco rhythms that suddenly outburst by hand clapping, while we are proposing an acting exercise. We also take with us some of their gazes and laughs of the next evening when, at the end of the show, they were in the front row and called us by our names."

Fabrizio and Federica (actors)

Murcia – 1445 km away from Turin

Open-mindedness, curiosity and warm welcomes are the highlights of the time I spent in Murcia, which is a beautiful city where modernity meets antiquity. It was funded by Carthaginians, glorified by Arabs and then

conquered by Christians, the city is full of baroque art and is home to three university which attract students from all over Spain and Erasmus students from every corner of Europe. The presence of students in our audience was very significant for our show. They followed every single act with laughter and silences dense of emotional involvement. There was an extraordinary energy.

We worked with some students, mostly boys, of the Murcia School of Dramatic Arts and Stagecraft, who watched Precipito and then welcomed us with trust and excitement. After a first step of training and warm up exercises, they worked in couple creating positions that could represent the financial crisis, where one person could model the other's body. Then the guys showed their positions and explained which feelings they evoked. We divided the guys in three groups and each one created a short act whose subject was "recovery from the crisis".

Three impressive, clear and significant choreographies.

Three titles: the will, the power, the flight.

The Italian stories of the show "Precipito" found correspondences among Spanish people, they revealed similar problems and trends which the two countries share: the strong cuts to health service, education and culture, the rampant spread of privatization and the myth of businessmen, who are apparently free but actually deprived of their basic rights. The meeting between our show and a group of students of a High School raised discussions about social concerns but it also generated energies, energies by concerned but determined young people and by teachers who believe in changes. Contagious energies.

"The day before the show we met Antonia, a teacher of the School of Dramatic Arts and Stagecraft, her eyes were sparkling with excitement and curiosity. She participated in the workshop with her students. The guys were very excited both for the workshop and the show "Precipito", they had a remarkable expressive intensity and a great ability to live these experiences with their bodies. I am very impressed by the teachers who are able to involve deeply their students."

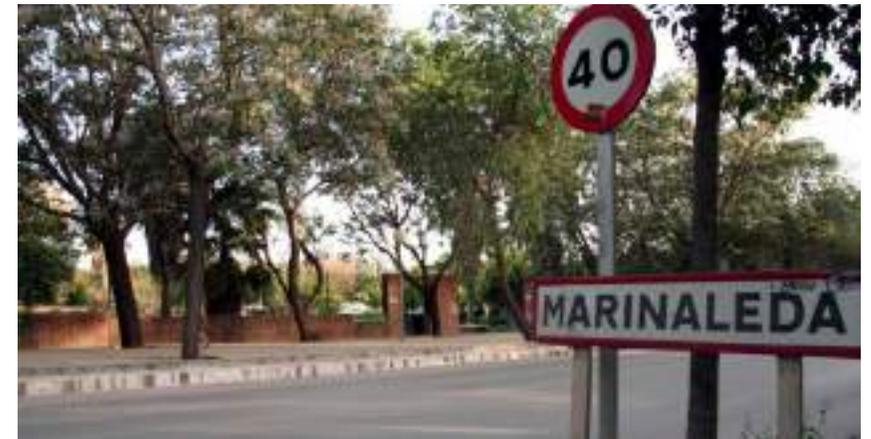
Aldo (actor)

"What I will always remember of Murcia are the majestic trees, the clear sky, the hot weather in spring, but most of all I will remember that group of young guys, concerned about their future but full of excitement, determination and desires. I am now on the way to Granada and I am thinking about them, about their looks, so pure and so full of life. Young people who decide to invest their future in acting, dancing and music with optimism, determination and courage make me feel reassured and thanks to them the world will go on."

Federica (actress)

Marinaleda – 1804 km away from Turin

We visited Granada shortly, then we arrived in Marinaleda. After the shopping crowds we were astonished by the lonely and sunny landscapes that surrounded this little village in Andalusia. If it wasn't for our partners in Seville we would never get here. It was a torrid Sunday afternoon (almost 40°C) and we were welcomed by Esperanza, a young woman who told us



the story of the little village while she was constantly looking after her little child. Marinaleda is the oldest example of communist utopia ever realized in Spain after General Franco's dictatorship; it is a small village with little more than 1200 inhabitants, most of them are farmers, who created a collective organization to defend the right to own land, to have social services, health care and work for women. Today Marinaleda is a community based on a co-operative association that guarantees jobs and services to most of its members. "Paz, pan y trabajo" (Peace, bread and work) is what you read on a colored graffiti entering the village.

There is no better place to prepare a fruit salad than a village surrounded by fields. In the morning, with the help of Esperanza we went to the houses, the school and the factory asking for fruits in exchange for our show. Todo el mundo lo sabe si pasa la megafonía. When in Spain, do as the spaniards do. We fitted our van with a megaphone and drove through the village to announce our show. The factory was established by the co-operative association to give women a job that was less hard than working in the fields. An important step which gave women the opportunity to be self-sufficient and not to get necessarily married. It is a can and tomato sauce factory and as we entered the noise of the machineries mingled powerfully with a song by Ricky Martin. Women laughed and joked around. We waited for their break to invite them to the show. We met the workers in the factory. They made jokes on the show. We told them about Erika and they looked at us astonished: "Young, pregnant, without a husband? there is nothing



Visitors, Marinaleda (ES), 2012



Children in El Vacie district, Sevilla (ES), 2012

strange about it!". They would come and watch Precipito, they were curious but some of them did not want to stand in front of the video camera. They ran away. In the village we met older retired women, we introduced us and offered our show in exchange for fruits, then we asked them to join us for the fruit salad preparation.

The performance in Marinaleda has been the most difficult to organize, particularly for the hot weather that drained our energies. Before the show we prepared the fruit salad, it was amazing to see the old women arrive with sacks full of fruits and knives in their hands: they were ready to peel. Then we performed the play in the town hall square, the place where everyone meet at night: old and young people, moms with pushchairs, boys riding their Enduro. We know that the world of the young characters of the show is pretty far from the life in this village, but they enjoyed the performance and paid attention to it. At the end we talked, discussed and ate the fruit salad.

Sevilla – about 1858 km from Turin

Arrival and the first meeting Finally we arrived in Seville to meet our partners of Atalaya TNT (Centre for Theatre Research, Spanish partner of Caravan project) with whom we have been in constant contact for a month. We gave them our bulky witness: the Caravan, for the second tour toward Denmark. It made a strange impression meeting them personally after so many phone calls and emails. They ran out to see our very special truck/ stage, with enthusiasm and curiosity, but there was no time to waste, our next tour was far away and we had to get ready to work. The technician Alejandro offered to bring us to see the extraordinary location where the show would take place: the Barrio Vacie, a huge gypsy camp which has been collaborating with Atalaya for a long time. At the entrance of the TNT centre in fact, stood a huge poster of a gypsy woman: it was Rocio, the matron of the Barrio, who accepted to collaborate to a great stage production of Atalaya, La casa di Bernarda Alba (The House of Bernarda Alba) of Garcia Lorca. Our friends partners of Seville have already been working together with Vacie citizens for a couple of years, with patience and constancy and they have already managed to involve them in projects with Casear Brie



Performance of Percipito in El Vacie district, Sevilla (ES), 2012

and l’Odin Theatre in as well as their projects. Thanks to them, we had the possibility to finish our theatrical journey with a unique experience: bringing the Caravan and the show inside the gypsy camp.

El Vacie was in fact a really special place, a whole district, “un mundo en el mundo” as they say here in Seville. For them was “Un pueblo chabolista”, for us was just a shantytown. So, how could we present precipito in this context? They told us that gypsies would not understand the concept of “fourth wall”, and they might interrupt the performance with comments and suggestions at anytime. We had to be ready for anything: to interrupt or change the scheduled programs or to proceed step by step. Obviously, we were a bit worried; when we went into the camp, men, but above all women and children looked at us and they smiled intrigued and amused. Obviously, there were not used to receiving guests, we were a novelty for them. We treasured the experience in Albacete where we met a community which was very close to this one of Vacie. Erika, “la chica embarazada” presented the most interesting and famous story, as her inflatable baby bump covered with glitters had a shattering and cross-cultural power, that caught all ages. The choice of our theatre proposal was up to her. And fortunately, this was great idea. The small benches covered by red velvet, filled the space in front of the Caravan. Women and children listened with interest and amazement, while men watched from a distance, with a cigarette on their month and a wry smile on their face. A strong and statuesque female figure watched solemnly with her muscular arms crossed across her chest. She was Rocio, the matron who collaborated with the TNT; if she accepted us, than the

whole camp would. After the show, when children met the actors and jumped into the camper van, Rocio invited us to her home/shack for a fresh beer. We heaved a sigh of relief, everything went well and we would like to stay longer with all that children who were screaming “Yes you worth”.

“Gypsy children of El Vacie district, make our weariness (after the tour of thirty days) lighter. The audience of the 17 may in Seville was wonderful, a very big surprise and it was a great pleasure be there with the Caravan. They told us that it was the first time that a real, small theatre entered inside the Barrio and this filled us with joy. It’s wonderful to be able to bring this theatre everywhere, inside a shantytown, with unpaved roads, tin roofs and barefoot children who run around. What I felt after getting into that community was a mixed of pleasure, curiosity and astonishment. How could we talk about working problems, rents and money in a shantytown, how could we bring our story and for what purpose? These were our doubts before the start. Fortunately it took just a few seconds to realize that we were in the right place with the right show. The children chorus that shouted in the end “otra vez...todo el día” erased all our uncertainty. We felt joy, beauty, strength, spontaneity and lack of judgment. The warmth, the cheerfulness and uniqueness of that audience will be unforgettable. Thank you Seville.”

Federica (actress)

La Rinconada – 1862 km from Torino

La Rinconada is a city located in the suburbs of Seville; it is very similar to many other cities we visited and enjoyed during this Spanish tour, marked by wide urban spaces, small coffee bars at the corner of the streets, wide skies and, without fail, the house of culture, or the theatre. It's amazing how here, in Spain, every urban centre, even the tiniest and the most remote, has got its own house of culture: they are all active and ready to offer the citizens (young ones and adult ones) meeting and arts experimentation spaces. The feeling is that here, unlike in Italy, the house of culture is an essential element for the composition of the Spanish municipalities, much like the City Hall. In La Rinconada we are guests at a very nice theatre, where we are waited by a workshop group for the show of the evening... "Precipito"!

The people involved in the last workshop of the Spanish tour were grown-up actors, already familiar with theatre: some were dancers, some were singers, some were flamenco dancers. It was a great pleasure to work with them. Fabrizio started the warm-up with music, free movements, introductions. It was all very cheerful and spontaneous, and everybody wanted put themselves on the line. The workshop went on with the already suggested to other groups body work in pairs and critical positions suggested by the partner. Aldo made them focus on the listening this time, suggesting them to linger in that position a little bit longer, so that they could feel which emotions arouse, and notice and have consciousness of every body part as well. From the work in pairs we shifted very fluently to group activities. A dance originated, it was a mix of crossed, sped up and slowed down movements that eventually acquired a meaning. The most interesting thing was how their looks changed during the work and the fluidity of their bodies – something sparked. It's something ineffable in the field of theatre, but it gives you a wider perspective and makes everything more real. Time was running out and we had to end our activities quickly. We suggested the final ritual again, it was successful in Murcia. The ritual consists of thinking of five words that can describe the emotions felt while working and here it is, peacefulness, fantasy, life-giving, puppet and safety. The second step of the ritual involves representing with the body these five words through five very simple movements, in a repeated sequence by all of us one time, two times, three times, four times, five times, six times... ten times. Thanks to the original "ritual dance" we said them goodbye with joy and fullness.

It was hard to put on the show on the same evening of the workshop. We performed "Precipito" many times and in many different places by then, and it seemed hard to find a profound motivation and enthusiasm again. The fear was that we could influence our rerun with our weariness. But we thought that those were the times in which you have to trust the audience and seek your motivation in its involvement and in its warmth. We made their curiosities ours, we felt the waiting, we got carried away by their involvement... and it worked that time too.



"The gap between the passion showed by the citizens with accepting and renewing the cues suggested by the workshop and our difficulties in renewing the show after so many reruns, got me thinking. For me, La Rincorada was a step that really gave me food for thought about the strange, great job I chose. The good actor's arts and crafts lie in the ability of repetition. A good actor must in every rerun, every time, find again a naturalness and a truth that could give life to what he is doing and that could make it plausible to the audience, thus sparking an emotional bond between the audience and the actor. Improvisation, fundamental medium for the making of a show and on which the workshops are based upon, is more immediate. It carries truth on its own: the struggle of the research, the emotions, the fear of taking the leap, the wonder when you find something unexpected... and a scene is born. The show, on the other hand, is an attempt of reproposing every time something that could get closer to the original naturalness experimented during the production work and that's when...it gets hard. Sometimes a miracle happens and everything flows, involving both actors and audience and everything comes natural; some other times the magic is not immediate and for the spell to work it takes hard thinking and persistent work. La Rinconada was a step of this kind, where the repetition put to the test me and my character. But then again, actors are hypercritical-towards-themselves animals and the audience of La Rinconada appreciated the results without knowing of our personal uneasiness. I think that, considering the actorial aspect, this adventure gave me the great opportunity of making a stab at and confronting myself with the hard art of repetition, art that I can now frankly number among my bitter enemies, followed by my evil Piedmontese accent. But since the show was played in Spanish none could notice, I'll fight it next time."

Fabrizio (actor)



From Sevilla to Holstebro, 2012, 3126 km

Despertamos (Wake up)

Script and playwriting: María Cabrera y Juana Casado

With Joaquín Galán, Jonas Fröberg, Beatriz Ortega y Guillermo Leal.

Choreography: Juana Casado y Victoria Alarik

Scenography: Sergio Bellido

Technical coordination: Alejandro Conesa

Sound: Emilio Morales

Communication: Patricia Aguilera y Javier Prieto

Executive production: Rocío de los Reyes

Distribution: Masé Moreno

Production secretary: Elena Gordillo

Songs and Chorus: Esperanza Abad

Drama Director and Scenography assistance: Pepa Gamboa

Music director: Luis Navarro

Director: Juana Casado

TNT's Director: Ricardo Iniesta

Inspired by the 15M movement, "Wake Up" searches through personal stories about the causes that have led to the current crisis. Four characters stuck in the drama of unemployment, domestic violence, illegal immigration and the abuse of power. As a desperate race to the bottom, the characters are driven by complex circumstances to the limits of their strength and understanding. Through choreographed protest and songs of petition, the act proposes a break and a change for a society that no longer works. Despertamos meaning "Wake Up" is an act of protest of the reality in which we live. How do we find a way to escape our poverty, without putting ourselves in distress? Are we able to speak out without fear? From despair to hope and to fight perhaps, for a better way of life.

Puertollano – 287 km from Sevilla

It is our first stop of the tour and we are finally going to present the project to those people that it is really aimed at – people on the street. We have all worked with an aim in mind and we have all had an idea of how it should work and how we wanted the show to work, but it is now that we have to put it into practice. We have left with the hope of making social work and that people will not see all of this as a mere performance of a show; our intention is to get them to participate as much as possible. This dream started to become reality in our first show, since when it finished there were quite a few members of the audience that approached us to congratulate us for

SEVILLA

PUERTOLLANO

HIGUERUELA

VILLARREAL

TARREGA

STRASBOURG

BAUDOUR

SCHWERTE

HAMBURG

RINGKOBING

BOVBJERG

HOLSTEBRO



Performance by a social movement platform "15M", Puertollano (ES), 2013

our work and above all to appreciate the message. They felt that they were able to identify with the problem that we proposed and praised the fact that the theatre echoes the difficult situation that we see ourselves involved in. It was very pleasing for us to see from the truck how the ever growing audience was approaching until each of them had chosen their place, some sat on the floor and others stood up and they all ended up following the show attentively. This audience mainly consisted of young people that were hanging around the promenade making the most of the cool night air and they conveyed their gratitude to us for this unexpected gift with their glances and later their words.

The first contact we had with the group of residents that attended the workshop through the coordination of the council was very pleasant. They were mainly housewives and parents. They all knew each other because

they were all from the same theatre group in town, which helped to create a relaxed, close and funny atmosphere from the start. They all had a very participative attitude and freely expressed their concerns on the subject of the current economic crisis, sharing their personal experiences without any shame and completely naturally.

On the day of the show we were lucky to meet a group of youngsters from the social movement platform "15M" in Puertollano. It excited us to hear how they helped to raise awareness of our show, as well as the initiative of the project. With our support they also told us how they felt about the current crisis.

After they spoke to us about the situation in the town, they told us about the success of a demonstration that they held some weeks before, since more residents had attended than ever before; some ten thousand people took to the streets to demand the town hall to take responsibility for the situation of precariousness caused by the recession: lots of unemployment and many funds being used for improvements in the town that were being unjustifiably wasted. They told us about Pepe, a friend who was unemployed and was camping on the other side of the promenade and had been on hunger strike for ten days.

The next morning, we approached the promenade and met Pepe and showed him our support. He was pleased to meet us and was very grateful for our visit. He spoke to us about his situation and excitedly told about all of the support he was receiving, which he said was the food that gave him the strength to carry on and not lose hope, but we felt more grateful to have had the opportunity to have come across a fighting hero, a great example of sacrifice and generosity.

"There are good men who fight for a day, better men who fight for a year, and even better men who fight for several years. But the ones who fight all their lives are indispensable".

Bertolt Brecht

Higueruela – 301 km from Puertollano

At 8pm, in one of the town's parks, we perform the show in front of a diverse audience of all ages, with the logical concern on our part that there are a considerable number of small children that the show is not aimed at, but that surprisingly follow it attentively and respectfully.

It is a nice place and we are sorry that we are unable to use lights to deliver our gift in all its splendour, but still, and although there is a UEFA Cup match, people stay until the end and take part in the game that we propose in order to approach us to speak to us and the option that we offer to leave messages in a blank book that we provide. Higueruela is a small town with

only 1,300 residents and has the welcoming and hospitable character that is typical of this type of town centre.

We stayed in the only hostel in the town and the night before the show we had the opportunity to celebrate Spain's victory against Portugal in the UEFA Cup with the local people, in a bar which is the social centre of the town.

Villarreal – 230 km from Higuera

In a park full of grandparents playing *pétanque* and in front of another park full of children playing on the swings, we interviewed William Gundini, in his role as head of the 'Espai Jove' centre, an institution belonging to the council and which is above all a meeting place where they attempt to accommodate all of the concerns of young people. It is designed to hold continuous workshops and other intensive workshops which are attempting to unleash young potential, all year round. William tells us that it continues to be a successful centre in terms of the number of students and the flow of ideas that they propose, but a change of attitude in young people towards the recession is also evident. A high level of hopelessness, apathy and insecurity is detected in them and above all the awareness of a problem that they still do not feel to be directly part of their lives, affects much of society.

It was a little more difficult to secure an interview with Miriam Caravaca, President of the 'Barrio del Hospital' Residents' Association, given that the camera makes her very nervous and it is not her usual medium; but we soon managed to relax her and she told us all about her delivery of humanity and unpaid work to the others working in this association, and that she and the rest of the team are supporting, by using many hours of their spare time. She tells us that in total there are twelve residents' associations in Villarreal and some of course have a greater delivery and infrastructure than others, but generally, there is a friendly relationship and mutual support between them. These associations are also subsidised by the council and to summarise, the project which they are now attempting to support would be: to recruit a chef to teach cookery, to involve department stores that are able to provide food, and the people that take part in the workshop, who would be people in need, would learn to cook economically and would also be able to take home the food that they have cooked.

We say goodbye to William and Miriam uplifted by the humanity and generosity that both of them give off.

As well as these two meetings, we were lucky enough to go for a few beers with Pau Ayet, the person responsible for the Caravan Project parking up in Villarreal. Apart from working for the council as a planner, this charming youngster is an actor, mainly in street theatre and, in the organisation he is also responsible for several festivals that have been held in town for years. He updated us on the cultural situation in the Valencia region, of the lack of interest and support from government and politics, and of how

the cuts made due to the economic crisis were affecting theatre companies. The interesting thing is that he is the pioneer of an action plan with regard to the recession, that interested us a lot, and that is based on the motto, 'united we stand, divided we fall', the union of the majority of companies in this case, fed up of the fact that it is always 'the same companies' that receive aid and those that proceed to be featured in catalogues, and that it is always, above all, a question of taking to the streets to deliver shows directly to the audience, so that they have the right to speak and vote at the time of choosing a schedule for the festivals, tours, etc. and not always leave it in the hands of a single planner that, unfortunately, in many cases, does not even have the training or knowledge to decide what is best for the people.

The reception that we received from the students that attended our workshop in Villarreal exceeded all of our expectations. They were theatre



Performance *Despertamos*



loving adolescents, and there was even one that was considering studying in order to professionally engage in performing arts. They welcomed us with great expectation and were very willing to play and learn. We found it very easy as they felt comfortable and participated in all of the proposed activities with lots of dedication. They all expressed what affected their lives more directly and deeply in the current economic crisis. As adolescents eager to go out into the world and blend in without having to hold back their own identity, the majority expressed their disagreement with social discrimination in general. The subject that we chose to work on in the last part of the workshop was 'Homophobia'. The students finished by improvising a conflict based around this problem and they were very involved at the time of proposing possible solutions. At the end we did an evaluation on the workshop in which everybody expressed their satisfaction. It pleased them to be able to express their concerns without being stopped and we were very grateful for the fact that we were able to remind them that we are all part of this fight towards a better world.

On 30th July at 9:30pm, we performed "Despertamos" in the main square in Villarreal, a large, but not so busy square, since, as they told us, in summer there is not much ambiance in Villarreal because a lot of people have gone to spend their holidays at the beach. Even so, when the show started people were already arriving, and in the end it would appear that there was a good audience interested in the show and its message. There were mostly youngsters and adolescents, the majority of which had taken part in the workshop that we held the previous day. Some of them had even come from their towns and cities to Villarreal just to see the show. It was a great surprise to see how almost all of them participated, since this secured the success of our workshop with them.

After the show we were chatting with the students about the show and the tour. As some of them want to study performing arts, they also wanted us to talk to them about our experiences as actors. This chat made us realise how fortunate to be part of a project in which, as well as doing theatre, the message is direct and gives rise to the fact that the public debates about it, and reflects on its situation. This work is also bringing us to reflect as actors: Is it always necessary to say what we think or what we feel motivates us to get on a stage? Are we forgetting that initial need to communicate? That adolescent dream in which we believe that we can change the world through art, and also a reflection on, how the recession is affecting us as artists.

Perhaps deciding to be an artist already entails living in difficulty... And perhaps, what helps us to survive is not forgetting why one day we decide to become artists. "Dream the impossible dream..."

Tárrega – 257 km from Villareal

We took advantage of the amount of people in a central square close to the place, where the workshop was going to be held, by deciding to carry out interviews about the different situations created by the recession. Speaking with many different kinds of people: young people, elderly people, immigrants, etc. The responses were as diverse as those interviewed.

The young people saw the recession as a social concern, but it did not affect them directly, the elderly people were living the recession of their descendants and the immigrants were feeling the effects of it, and there were some that told us that they even contemplated moving back to their country of origin.

Not many people participated in the workshop that we held in the 'Centre D'Entitas' in Tárrega, but the few that were there (two young people, a child of around ten years old with his mother, and two older ladies), they totally committed themselves to the game from the start and really enjoyed themselves. They all knew each other as they had spent a year attending a very interesting body expression workshop, which according to what they told us, consisted of free movement from city ambient sounds. This was a point in our favour when connecting with them, since they were already familiar with the world of expression.

On the other hand, the fact that we found ourselves in a workshop with three generations of people at the same time, was quite difficult for us at the start, but it was later compensated by the wealth of their different contributions. In this way, it is necessary to highlight the child's attitude, totally disinhibited in the improvisation games, and how it made all of us to lose any bit of embarrassment.

After the workshop we were chatting with them. They were pleased with the work and the improvisation exercise in which they had to represent a conflict which is the fruitful result of the recession, to later propose solutions for this conflict amongst them, seemed very interesting to them. They praised the therapeutic aspect of expression in general and of our dramatic expression workshop in particular. They told us that they still wanted more, which gave rise to the fact that they told us how Tárrega, being the venue for Spain's most important Theatre Fair, paradoxically does not create much theatrical movement.

In Tárrega we enjoyed the show a lot. The street lamps on the square where we parked the stage were switched off in order to give centre stage to our lighting. The night was cool and the ambiance was welcoming. The audience, familiar with street theatre appeared to be very participative.

After the show, like other times, we invited the people to come onto the stage and write in our book. Like in previous places, it was the children that populated the stage of the caravan and the older people who shared their opinions with us. Some 'angry' young people showed us their gratitude for the tribute to the movement and for having conveyed the message of hope to what they call 'Deep



Catalonia'. On the other hand, they complained about the lack of advertising for the performance that took place in town. In fact, they were there because they passed by chance. They were not aware of it.

A family of gypsies waited for the show to end to congratulate us and to praise our courage and the flamenco art with which they said we were acting.

Strasbourg – 1222 km from Tárrega

At 2pm the Caravan was guided to the square, near the Victor Schoelcher Socio- Cultural Centre of the Cronenbourg neighbourhood, where they set up the Stage. While in the process of doing so a crowd of many children and their parents gathered to ask why they were there. However the show had to be put back from 4:00 to 6:00 to allow the children to enjoy the activities and the workshops. This was received immensely.

The organisers asked us to start with the workshop so we left the stage outside ready for later and came into the centre. It was the first time for us doing the workshop both with children and abroad. It was hard to believe how easy it was to communicate with them even with the language barrier. It turned out to be an amusing experience.

Before they could start the show, a short storm had passed and forced the team to have to wait whilst everything dried. Not a total loss it seemed,

because they were treated to several traditional performances from dancers and musicians of different countries. 6pm came and went and the team was forced to set up the show in the social centre by another torrent of rain.

Cancelled

In the end the team decided to pack up and leave without performing. The children and families had already started leaving due to the strict times. This was the only regret of this stop, in spite of this; they were still pleased with the reception of the tour and of the success of the workshops. The bonus being that they were able to see the significance of the community service and the organisers of the Socio- Cultural Centre.

Baudour – 454 km from Strasburg

At 10pm two members of the Copion Theatre Company met us in the town centre and took us to the assembly room, the place in which they had planned to hold the performance. It was not possible to act in the street as it was raining constantly.

Alba Izzo, the manager of the Copion Theatre arrived later and explained to us that they had included the sample of our show in an event that was very important to them: a welcome party for adolescents from developing countries that came to spend two weeks living with a group of adolescents from Baudour that the company had held a drama workshop with for the past eight months.

The act also included the final sample of the workshop with the Belgian students and a performance by a local dance studio called Takapa.

Despite the fact that the performance time was delayed somewhat (it was planned for 18:00 and started at 22:00), that there were technical complications during the set-up, that we did not find a slot between the activities and performances of the other groups to be able to do a private rehearsal in this area which is new to us, and our nerves due it being the first time that we included a translation of some of the texts into French, we managed to enjoy the show. The public played a large part in our enjoyment they showed interest from the start and gave us a big round of applause at the end.

We spent the whole day in the facilities of the Town Centre with the Takapa students and the organisers of the party – who were actors or technicians and all members of the Copion Theatre Company. After our performance quite a few members of the public added to this social gathering, eager to congratulate us and to share their thoughts on the show with us.

It was a long rainy day, but we were surrounded by very interesting people that made us feel at home and that showed us (as Arnaud, one of

the technicians already told us) “that the sun is in your heart”. To bring the day to end, we were singing and dancing to celebrate the meeting, and to bid us farewell.

Schwerte – 331 km from Baudour

It was 13:00 on 15th July and we arrived at the Markplatz where we had met with Cristoph Falke, who was responsible for welcoming us on our first stop in Germany. When we say ‘welcome us’, Cristoph took it to the next level, because for all the time we were together we only received demonstrations of kindness and his wish to make us feel comfortable whilst we were developing our work. We had a lovely lunch with him that was served in a Spanish bar on the square where we would later perform, and during that time he showed us in his work in the world of theatre in Schwerte and in his efforts to advertise our tour, with posters with information in German, small leaflets to distribute, press releases, etc.

At 6pm in the afternoon, the start time for the show, we bared witness to the fact that his efforts had been worth it, and we found ourselves with a considerable audience that were waiting for our gift, a very pleasant surprise for Cristoph, since he told us about his doubts about the possibility of there not being much of an audience. This doubt was soon dispelled and we found ourselves with a fantastic audience that followed the whole show attentively, laughing and devoting themselves with their gaze into what was happening on the truck.

The magical point for us came almost at the end of the show, when it started to rain with certain intensity and the people did not leave their seats, and those that did went to take shelter under the pillars that were next to the bar where we had eaten a few hours ago and that at that time was providing us with the electrical outlet for the music and where we would later eat with Cristoph, his family and some of his work colleagues. One of these people participated with us in the show reading a text from Bertold Brecht in German that we used. We also had the opportunity to chat with people in this bar, many of them Spanish, all part of the audience, and to receive praise from them for our work. At the end of the night, this became a stage and witness to an exchange of songs between Spanish and Germans, with which, both the square and the bar stood out a lot on our stop.

The square and its people accepted our gift and savouring it until the end. That enjoyment was mutual and they also made us savour very enchanting moments. “This is a square and here there is hope.”

We enjoyed this workshop more than any other, since for us it was the last of the tour. The place was also very inviting and the group was very interesting and very interested in our work proposals. All were artists:

actors, musicians, a playwright, etc. All of which were friends and therefore a climax of confidence was created from the start.

The main purpose of our dramatic expression workshop has been for the participants to express their ideas or their experiences on the subject of the crisis in Europe and promote their creativity at the time of imagining solutions to this problem. For this reason we have divided the workshop into two parts: the first in which we have included warm-up and body and vocal training exercises, and disinhibiting, flexibility, concentration, creativity exercises, and games; the second part we dedicated to the exposure and reflection of the subject in question using improvisation proposal games in which the whole group participated. Each time, the result of the workshop has been very positive; therefore we are able to feel satisfied.

Hamburg – 426 km from Schwerte

It was a rare show for us in Hamburg due to the weather, since we had to perform it in the entrance to a shopping centre to protect ourselves from the threat of rain. This idea, which seemed a little foolish to us at first or that we had not anticipated, turned out to be quite a strange experience to add to our knowledge as actors. Given the place's characteristics and being a circulation area, it gave the opportunity to the existing public, not very many people, but loyal from start to finish, and situated in front of a counter with a wide selection of meals to taste, being a different show to those that they had seen up until now. In this new version, as well as three actors and an actress who developed a proposal, they were able to consider the people in the street that were passing with bags or shopping trollies and for a few seconds were part of the story we were hoping to tell. We are trying to convey a message to normal people that are living the crisis and unintentionally, those people that we were attempting to tell our story to become participants and were also narrators. Also, for us an actor, feeling those presences was something new, improvised and enriching, that in the beginning may seem to have attempted to invade our space, but in the end it became clear that it was also their space. Perhaps we have to reflect and convince ourselves that life is a thoroughfare in which, with or without the crisis, we all have the right to a path on which we are able to move, attempting not to bump into anybody.

After this show-experience, which until now is the closest we have been to the audience and in which shook us to contemplate the tears in the eyes of a lady when Joaquin gave her a false €50 note. People, as before, came back to leave their written impressions in our book. The lady that we mentioned before, who also turned out to be an actress, told us that we had touched her heart and she left a lovely message: *"Today, the stars in the sky stopped to look at you. You opened your hands and they all fell into them. You have the power to convert these stars into gold and continue giving wherever you go"*. It was a very emotional moment for everybody.



When we had packed everything up we had the opportunity to get to know the theatre managed by Andreas, the coordinator for our stop in Hamburg, and who showed us very affectionately. To bring the day to an end, we had a few beers with him and some of his friends in the San Pauli neighbourhood where we also stayed and which nostalgically reminded us of the Alameda de Hercules in Seville.

Bovbjerg Fyr – 426 km from Hamburg

The biggest square and the most beautiful place (without comparing it unfavourably with the previous ones) in which we have acted until now. In Bovbjerg Fyr, we parked the truck facing the sea and in front of a lighthouse. Between the stage and the sea was a mound of grass that became a natural platform where people were sitting quietly waiting for the show to start. There are horses surrounding it that are either running freely or being led by riders. Our first stop in Denmark takes place in this relaxing environment where, at first sight, it seems that the problem of the crisis that we address in the show has not made an impression or it is only advertising. This is how this country receives us on our first stop with the Caravan Project and the show starts with a sun that contributes towards making this uncertain summer day become a magical experience for us. The message seems to have been conveyed and the audience attentively follows its development and in the applause they surprise us when we discover that there are people that raise their hands as



Boy scouts meeting festival, Holstebro (DK), 2013



Performance of Banana Revival, Holstebro (DK), 2013

evidence of victory. People approach us again to show us their gratitude and to write their messages in our book.

The inside of the lighthouse now becomes a stage and is a marvellous place that a group of pensioners have reopened to convert into a place of cultural movement in the area. In its dining room where they welcomed us with many of the members of this group and associates. The act of having dinner becomes a type of ritual in which they insert interventions of people talking and songs that continue with songbooks shared between them, between courses, all of which are exquisite. Before the dessert we decide to take a pleasant stroll along the beach, and to close and say goodbye we also give a song that they accept with the tranquillity and the delivery that they have shown for the whole day and that has made us return to the hotel with a smile on our faces.

Enjoying small things is something that we talk about in our show as a possible way of recovering from the crisis, and we feel that these people have given us a practical class on our theory.

Holstebro – 45 km from Bovjerg

On Saturday 21st we performed the last full show of “Despertamos” in the park of an immigrant neighbourhood in Holstebro. Whilst we were setting

up we were able to have fun with a group of children that came up onto the stage excited to take part in our warm-up. Perhaps the fact that we let them to come up before, and not just after the show, was a mistake on our part, since later, during the performance they took the liberty to continue trying to attract our attention. Apart from them, there were not many people there. Just five minutes before the performance was due to start the public started to arrive and sit on the green grass in front of the truck.

This was a very emotional show for us and not only because it was the last, but because the audience on that day were special. The actors from the Odin Theatre were there with a group of at least fifty students from their workshops; the four actors that will take over the tour next year were also there, as well as the directors and promoters of the Caravan Project, who had travelled there from Turin. The best thing was Victoria, the choreographer for “Despertamos” was unable to appear at the opening of the play in Seville, however she had travelled from her home in Sweden to Holstebro with her daughter in order to see the closing of the show.

Everybody appreciated the performance and some even shared their opinions with us. One girl said that it excited her to see theatre “theatre”, with its stage and its fourth wall in the middle of the street, which reminded her of the theatre from the time of Shakespeare.

On Sunday 22nd we took part in the theatrical activities with the caravan which were organised by the Odin theatre for a boy scouts meeting festival



that took place on the outskirts of the town and in which at least 30,000 boys and young people participated. We did not perform the whole show, but chose several highly dynamic parts, with the aim of repeating them for 40 minutes, since the stage was set up in an area of circulation and it is planned for them to act as a shop window. It was a very entertaining and almost surreal experience. We were able to have a laugh and enjoy ourselves, to say goodbye to each other.

In Holstebro, the Odin Theatre opened the doors of their centre to us and made us feel at home. They invited us to eat with them, to take part in Julia's birthday party and in the party to mark the end of some intensive workshops

that they had been holding there for two months before we arrived. We were lucky to attend several sample activities from these workshops in the street and the performance of a monologue by one of the actors from the company. They were five days of theatre, surprises and spending time with amazing people.

It was also important to share the last days of the tour and say goodbye to the caravan with just the creators of the project, since we were able to chat more thoroughly about the subject and share experiences and, thank them in person to have been able to be a part of the unforgettable (for us) Caravan Project.



From Holstebro to Sofia, 2013, 2301 km

The tour from Holstebro to Sofia included two performances made for the project Caravan, Banana Revival, which was played through out the tour and The Cronic of Life, that was made in Freiburg.

"The economical and political crises. In Spain, unemployment is greater than 25 %, youth unemployment 50 %. People are angry, and afraid. How can we artists shoulder the responsibility for the crises of society? How can we dare do inclusion, when people are so critical? They are too angry, too sad. Artists are afraid of losing their jobs too, when we have one. In Seville, all actors and project managers I met, were afraid. No one dares tell the truth. Instead, we did entertaining art. One only spoke out. The fear was real."

Jonas Froberg

Banana Revival

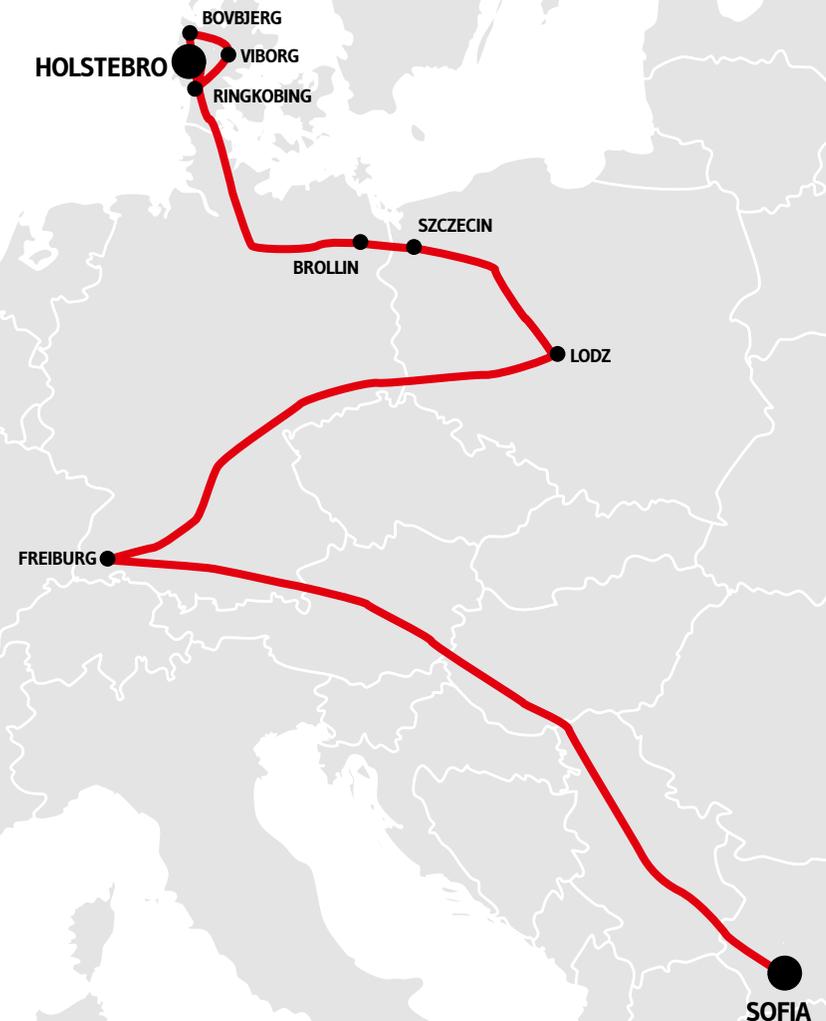
The point of departure to develop this family performance was an article about emigration between Portugal and Uganda. Before people would emigrate from Africa to Europe in search of work while now the opposite happens: people leave Portugal for Uganda in search of opportunity and prospects. Prejudices are turned upside down, as the third world becomes first and vice-versa. As crisis pervades the so-called rich countries, it could be that the direction people take in search of homes

and jobs might change. Hope, fighting spirit, social connection and empathy is what is needed for renaissance, which is to say to be born again. What values do we build upon?

The performance comes about within the European Caravan Project, Artists on the road, community theatre in places of crisis and renaissance. Workshops were held at Odin Teatret, Holstebro, Denmark, in North West Jutland, a region which is regarded to be on the outskirts, and where hospitals, schools and airports are being closed down. Here people make their living far away from the centres of power and

economy. Together with the participants of the workshops, the actors - who come from Italy, Spain and Brazil - developed a scenario around the themes of crisis and renaissance, realising barbers and interventions at schools, community centres and old people's homes.

The performance which resulted from this period of research uses bananas to present the richness of an exotic country, the 'Banana Land', where people dress in vivid silk colours. Work, love, children, cultural values, education, national songs, sports, violence, borders, measurements, and meditation: all this happens in the name of bananas.





The story is one that we all know: an outsider arrives to the 'Banana Land'. He has given up finding what he wants in other countries pervaded by crisis. He strives to be admitted and accepted. By chance he finds himself inside. Then he tries to seduce the locals exchanging his dance with theirs and by learning the musical language of the place. He is put to work, he is made fun of, and eventually given recognition and a medal.



Performance of Banana Revival, Lodz (PL), 2013

He experiences the death of a banana and its revival as part of his trials. Finally he will be able to transform his sober clothes to flashing red ones. Renaissance takes the form of a happy song and a sweet taste: banana chocolates are shared with the spectators. And everybody will live happily ever after. But we should always remember that we can still slip on a banana skin.

The Chronic Life

Dedicated to Anna Politkovskaya and Natalia Estemirova, Russian writers and human right activists, murdered by anonymous thugs in 2006 and 2009 for their opposition to the Chechen conflict.

Characters: a Black Madonna, the widow of a Basque fighter, a Chechen refugee, a Rumanian housewife, a Danish lawyer, a rock musician from the Faroe Islands, a Colombian boy searching for his father disappeared in Europe, an Italian street violinist, two mercenaries.

The action of the performance takes places simultaneously in different countries of Europe in 2031, after the third civil war.

Individuals and groups with different backgrounds come together and challenge each other driven by uprooting, war, unemployment and financial crises. What happens when newcomers want to implant themselves on foreign soil and be part of a society that thinks it has solid cultural roots? What misunderstandings and discoveries arise from this confrontation? How do people live in a country at war in which soldiers become visible only when they return from afar in coffins?

A boy arrives from Latin America to the feverish carnival of the civilised regions of Europe. He is searching for his father who has inexplicably disappeared. Little more than a child, he ignores what everybody knows: that life is a chronic disease from which our planet with its history is unable to free itself. Everybody knows that a thousand doors lead to freedom, and everybody nourishes this knowledge by eating without hunger and drinking without thirst. Everybody knows that they have a great past, and from this greatness each cuts out his own shred of honour and identity.

They answer the foreign boy's questions, teaching him to avoid that worst of all vices - Hope. "Stop searching for your father" they whisper, while escorting him from one door to another among the wreckage of fables that they call their history.

It is neither knowledge nor innocence that saves the boy. A new ignorance helps him to discover his door. Amid the bewilderment of all of us who no longer believe in the unbelievable: that just one victim is worth more than any value. More than God.





From Sofia to Turin, 2013, 1893 km

Summer-night Awakening, performance of Theatre Vazrajdana (Bulgaria)

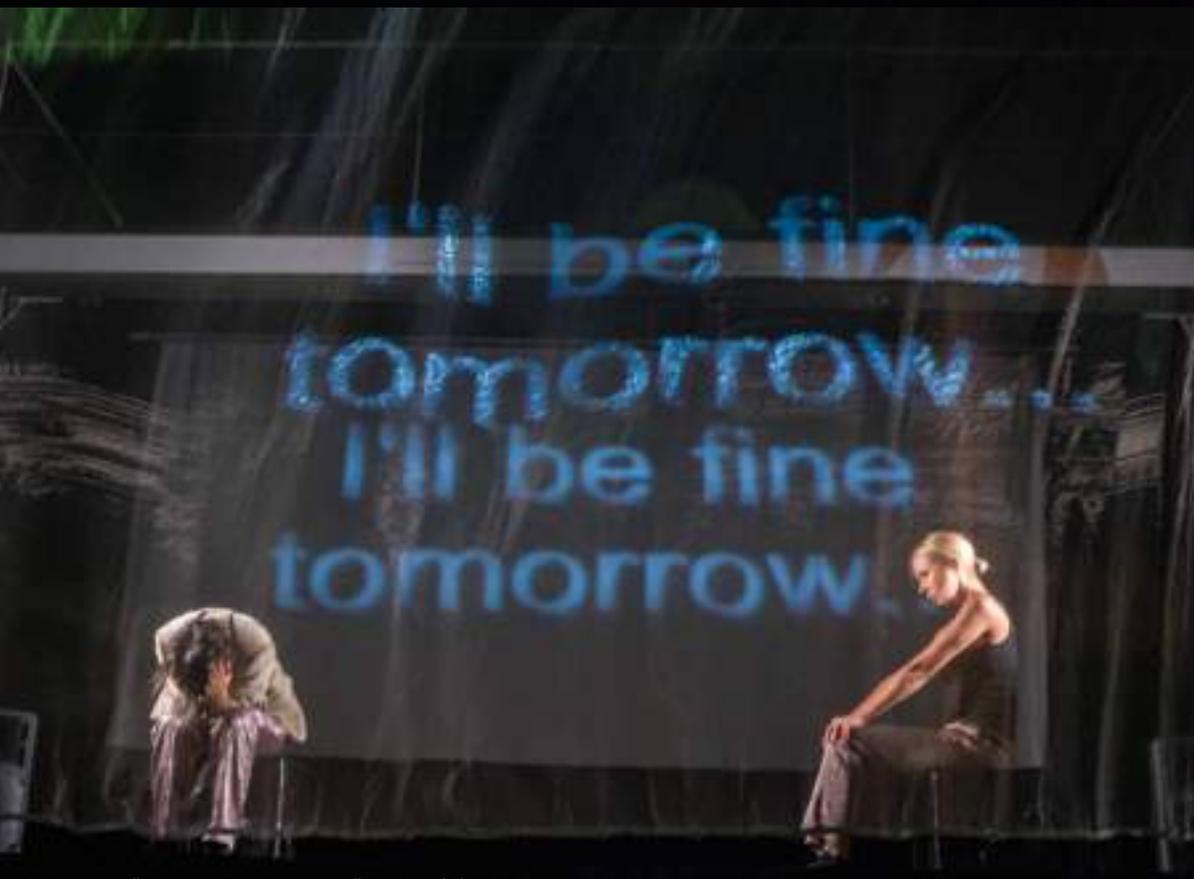
“Summer-night Awakening” aimed to be a messenger of hope and strength. It is a positive story of rising from the ashes of the Crisis and spreading new wings towards the better future, following the true spirit of the Caravan Project.

The idea of “Summer-night Awakening” was born after we looked deeper into the world we are living in and we realized that it is not only Crisis of poverty that we are suffering from, our society is going through inner Crisis of communication and morality values. With the exceeding number of acts of aggression anywhere around us, Theatre Vazrajdana’s decided to dedicate its work on the multinational Project Caravan to the social issue of domestic violence and to create this special performance, dedicated to those who have been direct and indirect victims of its consequences.

Our first show was held in Dmitrovgrad (Serbia) on 7th of September 2013. The town is small and just across the borderline with Bulgaria, where we had the first performance. The performance and the responses from the audience worked out to be an evidence of good neighbourly relations and

the communities sharing common cultural heritage. It was an exciting start of the Balkan tour.

Day after we continued our tour in Niš (Serbia) on 8th of September 2013. The magic started right away in the main city square, where more and more people were gathering and moving around. So many young people joined us in writing messages together with us. The tour continued to Ruma (Serbia) on 10th of September 2013, a small picturesque town where we enjoyed great hospitality by the local organisers. After Ruma we came to Sisak in Croatia on 12th of September 2013 where in our official announcement of the topic of our show - violence in society, we created a poster that was inspired by the story of Scheherazade. The tour later on continued to Novo Mesto (Slovenia) on 16th of September 2013, Maribor (Slovenia) on the 18th of September 2013, continuing to Venice (Italy) on 21st of September 2013, Vicenza (Italy) on 28th of September) and the last stop in Brescia (Italy) on 28th of September 2013.



Psychiatrist: So you left your parents long time ago, young boxer, fighter, married, not close with your wife's family, with no job and completely relying on your wife's salary. She threatens to leave you if you do not control your anger?

Man: I need to take a valium! My head is killing me and I feel terrible!

...

Psychiatrist: Breathe! Breathe! You got a hit that will cost you 25 stiches, you will die if you go back to the ring!

Man: I'm going! I will fight! I fight for my life! My father told me I'm nothing. He is not right! I will accomplish nothing. He is not right!... I'm good for nothing. He is not right! Not right! I'm fighting to provide everything for my family ... Even if I have to break my two hands...

...

Mother: I preserve the relationships in the family and the family in general.

Daughter: Regardless of what personal price I have to pay to do it.

...

Mother: I measure my value as a person with my success or failure to connect and establish a bond with the others.

Daughter: I measure my value as a person with my success or failure to take care and reach out to others.

...

Mother: I remained by his side for 20 years although on the first week I felt it was mistake, because I believed that it is up to the woman to make things go on for better.

Daughter: The need to stay means the confirmation of woman's pride and self-respect.

...

Extracts of the script Summer-night Awakening – The Angry Bull

What we didn't plan was the stop in Biha (Bosna and Hercegovina) on the 14th of September 2013 where we had the most intense performance in the whole tour. It felt like it became real, when two women from the audience shared with us their painfully sincere testimony, as they were victims of domestic violence themselves.

Filipa's Story

When I met my husband I felt indescribable calmness and security. He is much older than me, I grew up with my mother and my brother and I always felt the lack of my father. In the beginning our marriage was going smoothly. But with the time passing my husband started drinking but it was not the alcohol that triggered his aggression, he was evil when he was sober. At the beginning I thought the change was provoked of the fact that we didn't have children and our big age difference. I had problems to get pregnant and it was not later than our 5th year together that I finally got pregnant. The baby though didn't change the things. I got my first slap when I forgot to put a certain spice in the meal I cooked.

From this moment on he started to beat me systematically. Summer last year I was wearing only blouses with long sleeves so people won't see my bruises. My jaw was bruised because he would grab my head and start smashing it to the wall. Not only he beat me up but he would rape me as well. And then he continued to systematically beat me up.

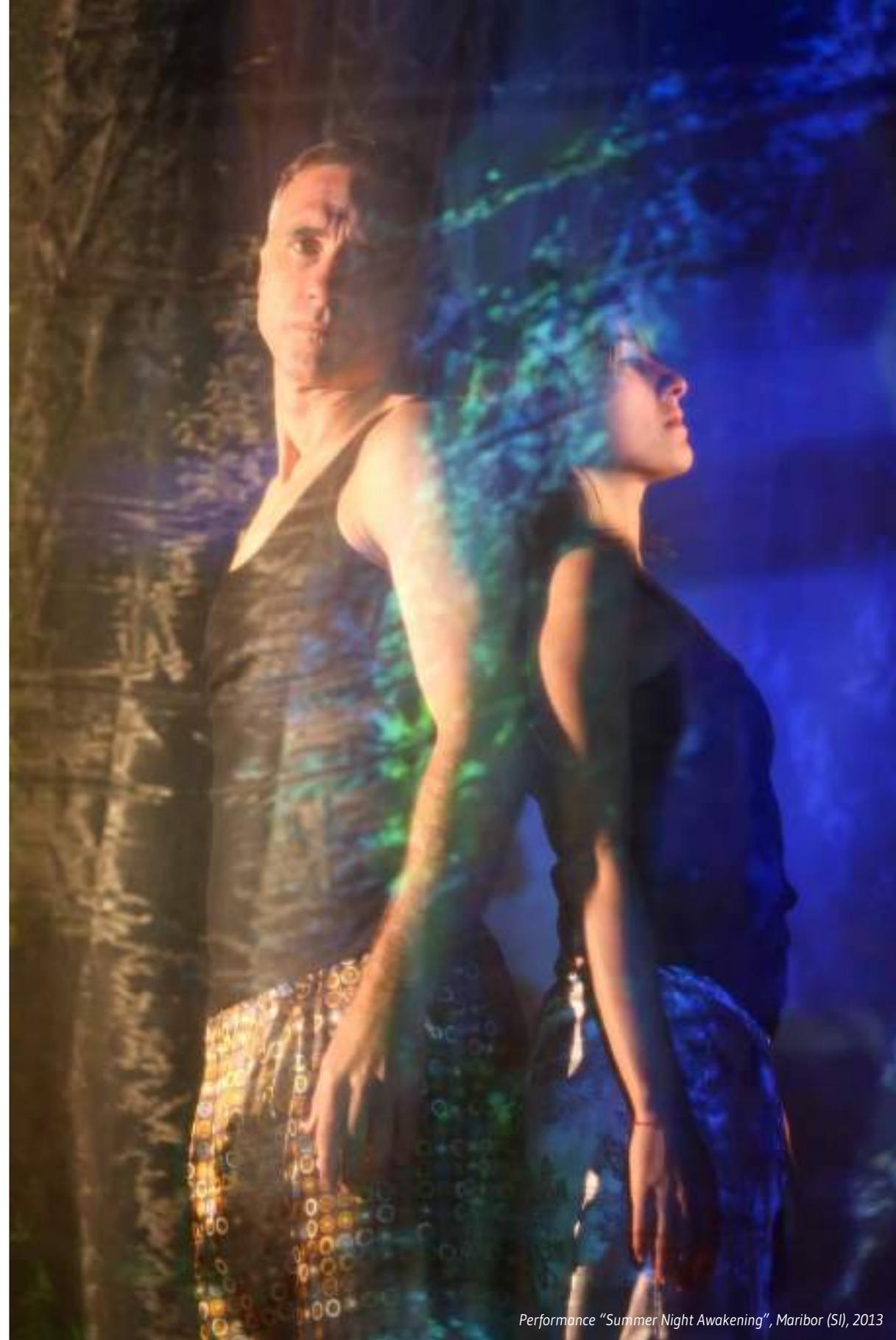
I decided to seek help when I felt dizzy because I was with a broken skull, hiding in the back yard of our neighbours. I didn't want my child to be a witness to all of this.

Lily's Story

My story began just like in the fairy-tales. We fell in love when we were in high-school and not long after we graduated we got married. Soon after that I got pregnant and gave birth to our first son. Day by day our relationship became more and more distant. Two years later I got pregnant again. I think he didn't want that child, he started to become ruder to me and when I was pregnant in the 5th month he started to assault me physically and to beat me. my child was born with severe disabilities.

My children grew up in a house full of screams, swearing, shouts and beatings. I would often call my parents and tell them that I can't go on like this any longer. They helped me with what they could but they never, not even once, told me – come back home. He would feel ashamed if I got a divorce, for them that was greater misfortune than me being beaten up, they always used to say – what about the children.

With the years passing my husband got more violent and aggressive towards me. he didn't have much of a professional success, although he had a good education, and that made him even more cruel. My fear of being alone with two children, one of which very ill, kept me with this man but that left a mark on my children that will probably never go away.



Things got unbearable when my son became the same violent man like his father... he started beating me too... first when we were alone and then in front of his father who would watch and not say a word. I can't describe you what it feel like your own child to beat you up. When he calls you a whore and says that it is your fault he doesn't have a normal family. For that he might be right ...

Three years ago my daughter and I left and started living in a flat. My daughter, although a child with special needs, has a talent for drawing and I hope one day that talent turns into profession. I got divorced, I met another man who helped me get away from the nightmare.

"I would like to say something to all women in such position. Dear women, this is not the life you've been dreaming for, this is not something you should tolerate, you should not waste any of your precious time, don't waste your youth and most of all – your children."



Performance "Summer Night Awakening", Maribor (SI), 2013



Conference "WE-FOR-GET" performance of Theatre School "Prva gimnazija: "The Sketch" after Samuel Beckett's short plays: Play, Eh Joe and What Where, Maribor (SI), 2014

CARAVAN ended the tour back in Turin



Dejan Pestotnik

Let's move together!

CARAVAN - Artists on the road represents a strategic methodological approach to achieve local - global social change in the sphere of human rights and social justice through innovative solutions and visions for the realisation of a more equitable world. This is the imperative of the project CARAVAN which in its essence embodies the ideal of a just world. The emphasis is placed on the ideal which is necessary start of forming a vision, without which strategies cannot be put on solid ground. Without them, there is no possibility for an effective solution for a fairer world!

At one point a CARAVAN artist said to me: "There's a need for the system to trust an artist saying 'This is right'".

At the practical level of our project, artistic value was seen as necessary to keep the attention of the participants and to protect the artist from burnout and boredom. Some, though not all, believed there was a gap between communities, organisations and artists where an appreciation of artistic quality should have been considered the most important. Of course, this is a difficult matter to measure, but simply acknowledging it in a subjective way was seen by many as a potential step forward. This was simultaneously tied to three overlapping areas: the quality of the art performances, the quality of experience for the participants, and the experience the community got out of it. It was strongly linked to artistic skill since, for some participants the artistic quality of their performance could cause the wider community to consider them in a different way. The aesthetic value of their art was itself part of the social impact.

The distinctive value of aesthetic work was also advanced as part of its appeal. Community theatre is to talk about emotion and character. It was described as a transformative experience, connected to the ways people experience themselves and the people around them. There were a lot of frustrations in being treated by funding bodies as a social impact provider who happened to use artistic methods rather than as a group delivering a valuable artistic experience.

During the project process there was continuing interest in what artistic practice actually is, and how to bring questions to the community. It was, however, asserted that this is a very different matter from that of asking what an artistic product or experience for participants might be, and we need to not blur these lines. This was connected to the wider notion of 'integrity', in both artistic and ethical terms of the project.

A strong emphasis was also put on the importance of local knowledge, and the value of community theatre in a location which might no longer have a pub or a shop to act as a social space. The diversity of 'communities' was an



Conference "WE-FOR-GET", Barbara Polajner, Maribor (SI), 2014



Conference "WE-FOR-GET", Prvi oder, Prva gimnazija, Maribor (SI), 2014

important issue to focus on: using the term vaguely meant that sometimes it was unclear for us how to interact with the communities. The term 'community' appears across both arts and social science research, and its ubiquity may obscure the different assumptions underpinning it in different contexts. The need to unpack this term – and illuminate the ideological baggage which the term carries in various arenas – is essential in social, cultural, political and government rhetoric.

Cooperation

Dear European nations' representatives, project CARAVAN is one of those projects which can easily be classified amongst exceptionally successful or the so-called examples of good practice of international co-productions. Proven! Evaluation is an important part of every project. Especially when its realisation is supported by tax contributions of EU citizens! The project CARAVAN has undoubtedly had a positive impact on various communities at more than 50 events organised in 14 EU countries. Art performances, international conferences, symposiums and workshops have taken place in Turin, Asti, Cuneo, Girona, Castalon de la Plana, Vilareal, Albacete, Murcia, Marinaleda, Seville, La Rinconada, Puertollano, Higuera, Tárrega, Strasbourg, Baudour, Schwerte, Hamburg, Gothenburg, Bovbjerg Fyr, Brussels, Holstebro, Ringkøbing, Viborg, Bröllin, Szczecin, Lodz, Freiburg, Staufen, Sofia, Dimitrovgrad, Ruma, Niš, Sisak, Bihac, Maribor, Novo Mesto, Mestre, Venice, Brescia, Rome... Over 100 artists, scientists, producers, pedagogues, professors and other experts were involved in the production of events, which have been visited by nearly half a million visitors in four years.

We draw the imperative, which often stems from the need to justify financial support, from financial and statistical data. Quantitative results (number of events, participants, visitors, press releases, promotional campaigns, website visits, online social communities, 'likes', 'tweets'...) impress funding bodies focused on summative results. Allow me, however, to present the methods of success evaluation, or the so-called methods of project execution evaluation. The roughest outline of success evaluation and accounting for the effects can be split into two components: tangible and non-tangible results/effects. At this point I cannot omit an appeal to the representatives of the EU people, that it is necessary to take into full consideration the nature of art practice and the focus on the project's execution process from the angle of aesthetics, reverberation of events, the heritage of performed content in local milieu and the impact on an exceptionally large number of people.

The project mission CARAVAN, embodying the development of new, interactive and contemporary mobile art production in form of the Community Theatre and artists on the road, has been designed by a consortium of partnering institutions and collectives from nine European

countries, ranging from amateur theatres, universities and faculties to highly professional institutions that set global standards in the relevant genre across the world or work in the field of cultural and artistic production at the international level: International Centre for Theatre Research Atalaya-TNT / Spain, Theatre Spira / Sweden, Nordic Theatre Laboratory Odin Teatret / Denmark, Projects, Action, Art, Theatre P.A.K.T. / Germany, Faculty of Fine Arts School of Computer Design Wyzsej / Poland, Movements of Voluntary Associations Italian Onus / Italy, Association of Local Democracy Agencies / France, Multimedia Centre KIBLA / Slovenia, Municipal Theatre Vazrajdana / Bulgaria, Master in Social and Community Theatre of the Faculty of Education – DAMS University of Turin / Italy, and the project's coordinator CRT Foundation / Italy.

CARAVAN's priceless value is contained in the five parameters; justice, solidarity, respect, tolerance and cooperation. The main, connecting element is mobility, which is the basis for successful cooperation at the international level. CARAVAN is unique due to its extraordinary flow of knowledge and experience, and above all due to its artistic content, and by realising that integration and cooperation act as a global model of the future and are thus necessary for local coexistence. Depending on each other will become ever more pleasant once we realise that together, we are a whole. Not EU, but a true Europe of PEOPLES and COMMUNITIES!



Caravan partners meeting, ACE KIBLA, Maribor (SI), 2014



“Whatever hidden, personal motives led you to the theatre now that you have entered that profession you must find there a sense which goes beyond your proper person and fixes you socially in the sight of others... If the fact of being an actor means all that to you, then a new theatre will be born.”

*Eugenio Barba
Director of Odin Theatre (DK)*

