



Education and Culture DG

Culture Programme



European Association for Theatre Culture / AKT-ZENT International Theatre Centre

Research Centre of ITI-UNESCO Theatre Education & Training Committee

artistic director : Prof. Dr. Jurij Alschitz

The Art of Dialogue

an intercultural theatre research project

programme director : Christine Schmalor

The year of intercultural dialogue invites to give a thought on the very nature of the Dialogue itself – to look at its different forms and various meanings.

The Art of Dialogue is an inter-cultural theatre research project with workshops, master classes, colloquia, laboratories, and performances. Research, teaching and production form one inseparable unity. The results are meant to be shown and discussed in international colloquia, at the „Schillerjahr 2009“ and at the „Festival of Dialogue“ 2010 in Milan. The European Association for Theatre Culture (EATC) initiated a collaboration of 16 organisations from 10 European countries, who will look at ONE theme from different points of view, under different aspects by using various forms of realisation.

ITI Centre **Cyprus**, DAMU Academy of Performing Arts - **Czech Republic**, KOINE (EATC) - **France**, AKT-ZENT (EATC) - **Germany**, Schiller Festival Marbach - **Germany**, Schloss Bröllin - **Germany**, Hellenic ITI Centre - **Greece**, PROTEI (EATC) - **Italy**, Accademia Civica „Nico Pepe“ - **Italy**, Corte Ospitale - **Italy**, Danza Immobile - **Italy**, Compagnia DARDARO - **Italy**, The Amsterdam School of the Arts - **Netherlands**, Bergen Byspill - **Norway**, Academy of Music and Dramatic Art - **Slovakia**, SCUT (EATC) - **Sweden**.

This two-year project will occur from October 2008 to September 2010 with 150-200 actors, directors, theatre teachers, pedagogues, and scientists in the different countries. The complete project will be conducted by AKT-ZENT International Theatre Centre Berlin, which works as Research Centre of the Theatre Education & Training Committee ITI/ UNESCO since 2006.

The Art of Dialogue is the European contribution to an international study in the next years.

The project is composed of following lines:

Continuous professional education

I. Open Seminars focussing on different methodological aspects of the dialogue.

II: Theatre Summer Academy 2009

“Train the Trainers” – new teaching and rehearsal methods

III. International Masterclasses for young Directors and Trainers

IV. European Theatre Colloquia

distinguished artists of all genres in dialogue

Advanced theatre research

V: European Laboratories - for experienced actors

Plato - Schiller - Pushkin, Dostoevsky

VI. European Festival of Dialogue 2010

Presentation of all Laboratory results

VII. Publication of the book “The Art of Dialogue”

Handbook for actors, directors, and teachers

contact

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The Art of Dialogue

THE IDEA

The year of intercultural dialogue 2008 invited us to give a thought on the very nature of the Dialogue itself – to look at its different forms and various meanings.

Drama is per definition the literary form of dialogue – and theatre is mostly based on different forms of dialogue. But astonishing enough there is not so much practical-scientific work about the Art of Dialogue on-stage, and we cannot find too many books on its stage practice.

Philosophy proposes different principles of dialogue, which were reflected by different authors in their art through all times. Hereby we meet different dimensions of dialogue:

1. me & myself – the dialogue with myself
2. you & me
3. me & the world – the dialogue with society, with social reality
4. me & the absolute – the dialogue with ideas, with god

The starting point of a dialogue is divergency, taking different positions, diversity up to disagreement and conflict. Therefore it seems to be the obvious aim to reach understanding or compromise.

But the Art of Dialogue contains another aspect as well, it is the aspect of Creation: finding and recognising of something new. Recognition is an act of highest creativity – both is inherent in the true dialogue. The root of the word „διά“ („dia“) (through) and „λόγος“ („logos“) (word, sense, meaning) lead to Dia-logos = the flowing of sense.

The dialogue is not an artistic problem itself, but by opening the principles of dialogue through art – through theatre as the art of dialogue – it can support to understand and solve problems in realising **true dialogues**.

The modern art of the last 100 years has broached the issue of the development of individuality up to the loneliness and solitude without words and language. Today in times of loneliness facing a world of hyper-communication – Jean Baudrillard calls it the Ecstasy of Communication – we meet everywhere the wish to learn again the skills of dialogue. This is the point of departure for the project “The Art of Dialogue”.

THE REALISATION

As Research Centre of the Theatre Education and Training Committee of the International Theatre Institute - UNESCO, AKT-ZENT wants to use this unique position to realise a comprehensive but concentrated research with the duration of 2 years, hereby integrating cultural organisations from various countries.

The project “The Art of Dialogue” was presented at the XXXII. World Congress of the International Theatre Institute / UNESCO in September 2008 in Madrid (Spain). It is a project of its Theatre Education & Training Committee.

Prof. Dr. Jurij Alschitz, artistic director of AKT-ZENT and EATC signs responsible for the overall artistic direction, the concept was created and will be realised by Christine Schmalor, president of the theatre education & training committee ITI in co-operation with all partners. The different project parts will be realised artistically with the European Team of Teachers and invited specialists.

The **European Team of Teachers** has been developed through practical theatre research projects of the last 12 years all over Europe, which led to the foundation of EATC. The artistic director Dr. Jurij Alschitz who has his roots in the Russian theatre tradition, developed a new and unique acting method, which was in turn influenced by his own European master students – being themselves experienced actors and directors. Today, the Team of Teachers is working in different countries and form a virtual ensemble.

October 2008 to September 2010

Projectlines / description of the activities

I. Open Seminars on different aspects of dialogue

The line of continuous professional education focusses on methodological aspects of the dialogue. At the same time it serves for the team of directors and pedagogues as preparation for the laboratories. The proposed themes ask for different authors to work with.

Target group: students, young and experienced actors of any European country.

S 1: The art of dialogue – from conflict to understanding, from understanding to creation

Conflict, compromise, initiative, game, dialog of bodies, of voices, of words, images ...

Basics with new points of view.

S 2: The art to speak and the art to be in silence

Research of the pause on stage as tool for the dialogue. The territory of silence as the territory of non-verbal communication and higher understanding. Research beyond words and beyond language as communication between individuals and cultures.

S 3: Dialogue - the art of lie

Understanding the possibility of paradox in the search for truth. The dialogue as game, building and tearing down laws of communication, leading the dialogue from the so-called "playing position".

S 4: The dialogue between actor and personage

(the first step of research was "40 Questions of one Role", published at *ars incognita* Berlin in 2006)

From the dialogue of the actor with the role, we go one step further to the dialogue between the actor and the personage leading to the principle of the centaur: man and horse as inseparable unity and conflict – a physical and a metaphysical paradox.

This special theme "The Theatre of Centaur" is subject of the 4th international Festival for Theatre Training Methods METHODIKA, held in November 2007 in Venice, where it will be discussed for the first time world-wide: Applying the young science *Centaurotics* in theatre. The results form the basis for this seminar.

II. International Theatre Summer Academy 2009

July 2009 at La Corte Ospitale (close to Modena, Italy)

For students, young and professional actors, directors, theatre teachers, and pedagogues, who will work in parallel courses on various aspects of *The Art of Dialogue*.

Theatre practitioners find a calm and concentrated atmosphere to pursue all those questions, which have no room in the daily practice on stage or on the set of TV and film productions. Everyone can check him/herself, where clichés are taking over in one's own practice. The courses want to provoke purposely the system of the actor to wake up the creative potential. Unorthodox approaches will be proposed for seemingly well-known processes.

III. International Masterclasses for Directors and Trainers

The Line "Train the Trainers" mediates new teaching and rehearsal methods. Theatre research in dialog with young and experienced directors and teachers, which leads to a long-term further development of the subject, and which can directly be applied in the collaborating institutions.

The Masterclasses (each 2 weeks per semester) will be held at three academies with three themes, which build upon each other – how to lead and how to teach the Art of Dialog:

VSMU - Academy of Music and Dramatic Art Bratislava: **The training for dialogue**

DAMU – Academy for Performing Arts Prag: **The theory of dialogue and ways of analysis**

AKT-ZENT – Berlin: **The rehearsal practice. Dialogue between director and actor**

The participants will be selected by their academies for the whole line, and will meet once per semester in another country. In the time between, they can already try out and experiment in their daily practice, coming back with enough new questions.

IV. European Theatre Colloquia

Meetings of distinguished artists

(2 - 5 days)

The European Colloquia wish to open the dialogue with renowned artistic personalities of all genres, also inviting philosophers and scientists

All Colloquia have the function to accompany, to discuss, to monitor and to evaluate the on-going work.

Already scheduled: 15 – 16 May 2009 in the frame of ZLOMVAZ the Festival of acting schools in Prague.

V. European Laboratories

The line of advanced research for experienced actors is the core of the project “The Art of Dialogue”:

Actors who are experienced and ready to risk something, who are ready and able to leave their everyday stage-practice by accepting new forms of expression for voice and body will be invited – first for **audition seminars** in different countries.

The selected 20 actors and actresses will all participate in the first introductory “**School of Dialogue**”, an intensive month of rehearsals to create a common stage-language and to communicate basics of the research so far. From there the decision will be made, who will work in which laboratory. Some might be selected for 2 or more.

Different Laboratories will focus on four authors who stand for specific forms and principles of dialogue. Each Laboratory will last 3 weeks and will finish with an open presentation.

August-September 2009: **Schiller**

The Schiller-Laboratory will be held at his place of birth, Marbach am Neckar (Germany) and his one of the main attractions of the “Schillerjahr” on the occasion of his 250th birthday.

October 2009 (Cyprus) : **Dostoevsky / Pushkin**

February 2010 (Berlin) : **Plato**

Parallel to the Laboratories **young actors might be invited to work on a workshop-basis** on the same material. They have the chance to participate in the advanced training, in the analysis and lectures, and will then have their separate course of practical studies and rehearsals. This parallel work provokes the dialogue between younger and older artists, between unexperienced and well-experienced actors and is meant as a playful competition and provocation for both sides.

VI. European Festival of Dialogue

Presentation of all Laboratory results in Milan

The festival “The Art of Dialogue” forms the finish of all laboratories. It will have the form of a work-meeting at the “Teatro Filodrammatici”.

One week of open trainings, lectures, discussions will bring together artists and the interested public.

In the evenings the best dialogues prepared in the Laboratories. will be presented to the public.

All project partners will be invited to see, discuss and evaluate the project. Festival directors and producers will be invited to see works, ready to start their life as independent productions to move through Europe.

VII. Publication of the book “THE ART OF DIALOGUE”

Handbook for actors, directors, and teachers

One central interest of AKT-ZENT as Research Centre of the Theatre Education and Training Committee ITI/UNESCO is, not to leave work results in the “immaterialistic space” of mere experiences and impressions. It is a difficult task of great importance to fix the volatile, untangible results of theatre work. Only the written word, which comes directly out of stage practice will have a practical value for further use and development on stage.

Until now we cannot find a teaching handbook explicitly dedicated to “The Art of Dialogue” in Europe. This publication will be one first beginning, to stimulate other theatre practitioners to follow.