

4 ANTHROPOCOSMIC THEATRE

There is a Sufi story which says that we should leave theories to one side and enter the tea-house of experience. We are convinced that experience is the most efficient channel through which to learn anything.

The difference which we make between a system and a guide lies in the fact that we consider the system to be a strictly rigid mechanism, in which experimentation is relegated, if not totally excluded. The guide, on the other hand, proposes feasible options for reconsidering or transcending with the same direct work. We see the system as a closed process and the guide as an open one. We therefore recognise in the open mechanism a suitable atmosphere to ponder our concerns.

For the performer, true learning does not lie in systems. Systems which make schools, or schools which work with systems do not teach us anything; people who rest exclusively on what they have learned from such schools, are limited and consigned to strengthen their foundation with an unproductive orthodoxy. In other words, they must mechanically praise the schools' values, without questioning them, and without having them as a point of contact of a knowledge which transcends them, because they cannot recognise in the systems and the schools their real space - that is, if what we are interested in is true theatre.

How we can become true performers is via the sole, key concept of having to prove and polish ourselves, and using the sole tool of experimentation as a base.

What, for us, is a performer? It is someone who accepts the commitment of learning, in as much depth as possible, about his psychophysical instrument. If he understands it technically and organically, he becomes a doctor; if he learns about it behaviourally and emotionally, he becomes a psychologist; if he investigates it spiritually, he becomes a mystic; if he recognises it in his sensitive possibilities, he becomes a poet, painter, musician or dancer; if he

discovers it in its entirety, he becomes a performer, a performer in the world which surrounds him, in which existing is being and being is performing. For this phenomenon to take place, the work must be done in a group; this gives forth the possibility of collective confrontation and contribution to individual development.

Each one of us is committed to searching for and developing our personal performance technique, and we will only find it by working in a group. This apparent contradiction of working in a group to find something individually does not exist; there is no contradiction. That is merely what one understands before becoming involved in this type of work.

Groups working in schools are generally de-activated and numbed by academic orthodoxies. Often, groups which get together because they need to, away from the schools, keep alive their growth process in a much more effective way than those who meet in school because they have to. Rather than respecting schools, we should take them by storm, grab hold of the good aspects and get out. We should remember the difference between information and knowledge; many schools for performers have nothing but information, and they offer nothing documentary, but merely gestural, emotional or behavioural information. The true creative process, as we all know, takes place through knowledge, in other words through direct experience, which cancels out any type of information. It exists in its own right, and cannot be transmitted. Direct experience is a long way from being worked on in an institutionalised way or using a system, and hence it is a long way from being used in schools.

Nevertheless, as we look again at the forms through which we learned about theatre, the following question arises: here in Mexico, we have received our theatrical education via systems structured abroad, and this is one of our most serious conflicts. We sometimes see personal interpretations of these systems made by certain professors, that is an interpretation of a system which then becomes another system; this still happens, even today. Most of these interpretations are unsuccessful because they are feeding commerce, preparing

or fabricating people for commercial consumption. However, the good or bad interpretations of our professors are not sufficient; we need a complete process which recognises the performer as a human being in the world.

Few professors look upon the performer as a universal entity; most subordinate him to a series of circumstances which give a particular line to his performance, which generally ends up in commercial theatre. With what line of performance do we, as Mexicans, work? In the area of conventional theatre, people have worked for years in the style or line of the old Spanish school; at another time, with the school of Stanislavski, very much according to the interpretation of the Actor's Studio; there have been other attempts and there will surely be more to come, such as the Brechtian and the Artaudian schools. But we, as present-day Mexican performers, are concerned with investigating and developing our own line of work - it is a commitment common to all of us who work in theatre.

In the area of theatre/festival, the principal orthodoxy adopted has been the catholic one, although there are still some original trends in which rite survives. This means that here in Mexico, within conventional theatre, we are subordinated and manipulated by cultural fashion which imposes a style which generally comes from abroad, and in nonconventional theatre we still have a mechanism which can revitalise us. This is nothing new: Artaud came almost fifty years ago to confirm it, and today we are still tied to the pattern of western culture. Everybody knows that part of the western system is useless, simply because it believes that it is the only one and refuses to recognise nor even to give other types of performance a chance. It is not plural, but closed, childish and dictatorial. It had found it very difficult to open up to the East, and even harder to open up to pre-Hispanic thought.

We, as performers, resent this most directly. The ways of learning theatre here in Mexico generally separate us from our specific reality, bring about a certain type of schizophrenia in us, and divide us, because they oblige us to behave with attitudes, clothes and ways of viewing the world which do not correspond to our reality. We are not European, nor are we fair-haired; we are

dark, and we live in Mexico. How can we avoid the harm that these systems can do to us, and yet at the same time take advantage of them? I think this is possible. The harm lies in their way of disorientating us; the benefit in their particular exercises. Let us imagine that these systems are divided into two circles. On the outside is everything that is said about the system: modes of behaviour of people working with it, rumours, clichés or apparent fashions in everything related to the ideology of the system; all this periphery is what could bring on deterioration, and it must be crossed by those who really want to work and benefit from the contact with the inner circle, that is to say, with the exercises themselves. Graphically, it could be represented like this:

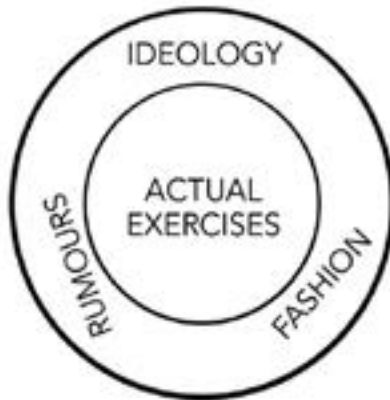


Figure 1

The periphery is localist, classist, semi-stimulating and strictly commercial; the inner circle is universalist, direct and far from the possibility of commercialisation. To benefit, we must dare to get to know these systems and, without paying any attention to the influences of the outer circle, concentrate on the work of the inner one. We must work keeping to that direction and, as time goes by, through experience, allow the development of each of the propositions we find and develop as a personal mechanism there, without falling into the trap of thinking we are inventing a new method, but rather

leaving the work process open. In this way we can benefit from these systems. Our suggestion would be to concentrate exclusively on the inner circle.

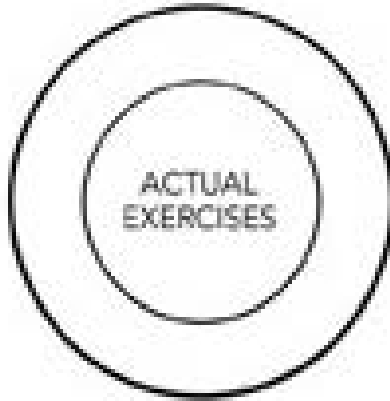


Figure 2

Once we have worked with this circle for long enough, we will surely, without realising hit upon the creation of the second circle, very possibly repeating the aforementioned diversions. The difference is that this time, the atmosphere will correspond directly to us, turning imported affectations into national ones. At this precise moment, we must focus on the struggle we will have on our hands to get rid of these new affectations, although they are ours. Hence, even if the distortions of the outer circle appear, we will have taken a further step towards ourselves, towards recognising our own vices and distortions which, whilst they are still the same as the vices or distortions of any other human being, have their own characteristics, according to our particular geographical, political and historical conditions. It is these conditions which determine our behaviour, which we cannot overlook; this behaviour, be it good or bad, is the one we have, and it is our starting point for genuinely restructuring something. To overlook this behaviour would be to overlook ourselves. Where am I? Who am I? Where am I going? As performers in Mexico we have a desire for global resonance; without nationalism, the

performer's country is his own body, and anybody who is not sufficiently aware of himself, has no country. Our primary identity is our body open to its cosmic resonances; this is the performer's true resonance. This is the guide which we are interested in developing.

We start off from the confidence of knowing that all of us who take part in the work are accomplices in the same adventure, that of recognising our workspace, wherever we seek it and for however long, a special place where the competition is excluded, where nobody has a reason to be afraid of anybody else, and where our only commitment is to give ourselves over to the development of our work, be it individually or in a group, in private or in public, aware that there is no censorship and that we can always rely on the help of our accomplices when our process needs it; knowing that we have the respect and understanding of everyone who is involved in the work. Here, there is no room for destructive criticism or mockery, accepting that an attitude worthy of respect is when somebody gives himself over honestly to researching and developing himself, however grotesque or stupid his attitude may seem to us at first sight. This respect is essential to our work and that of other people.

In principle, we use the following premises, taken from Nahuatlán thought:

We have come to get to know our faces.

It is not by chance that we are here today.

To be a perforated mirror.

To read ourselves like a piece of writing.

To converse with our own hearts.

Here and now to look at the stars.

My heart is a flying bird.

Each of these premises acts, for the performer, as a means of isolated reflection, interconnecting, or as a general sensation which he must develop in field experiments, or in other, specifically designed experiments.

To begin the process of recognising and developing his instrument the performer must work in silence on these premises, accompanying them with physical sensitisation exercises. To make our consideration clearer, let us imagine a performer who is beginning his work with us. Let us suppose that this performer is in the most difficult emotional situation in which we can possibly set a performer capable of working on himself. This performer could be represented like this:

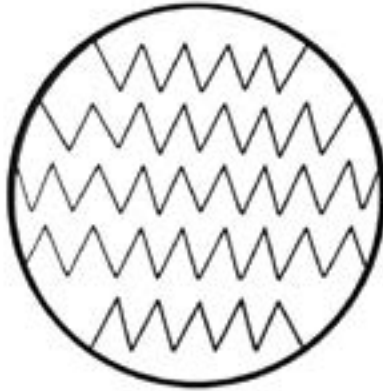


Figure 3

In him, the only movement is of an infinite series of external frequencies which depersonalise him. His self has not evolved, and he is in a *nepantla* state [in the middle; undefined; which is neither on one side nor the other]: he does not know what he is doing, nor why he is doing it, but merely reflects the manipulations exercised upon him from the four cardinal points of his world; he moves, so to speak, without realising. The most suitable process is to formulate our work in such a way that he provokes the coming of his real *self*; when he achieves this, the graphic would change from the first to the second:

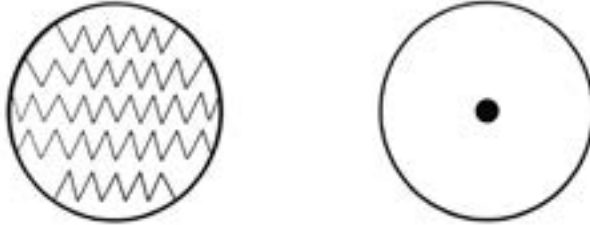


Figure 4

After achieving this starting point (*self*), we find ourselves with work to do so that this *self* can come into contact with the performer's emotions, as it is possible that he may feel isolated from them or not really be aware of them. In other words, he comes into contact with them accidentally, but the representation remains permanently more or less like this:

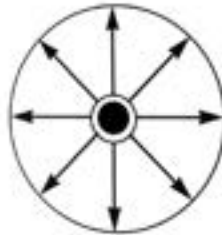


Figure 5

Here we will develop a process of sensitisation which allows the performer to learn to recognise his emotions and structure the path; knowledge which will help him to know what his emotive triggers or blockages are.

Another type of performer is the one who discovers that he has easy access to some emotions and it is harder for him to reach others; we could see him more or less like this:

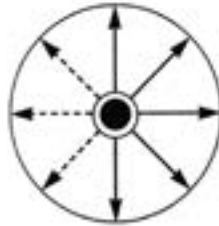


Figure 6

There is also the type of performer who suffers from an emotional structure which is overdeveloped in certain areas - let us remember certain performers' easy access to tears. A graphic representation of this emotional state could be the following:



Figure 7

There are other levels of sensitivity to which a performer can have access on positive ground. If we are seeking the complete development of the performer, bearing in mind that any human being can get to be a performer, the ideal state would be when this performer learns to regulate himself. When he achieves this, he will move from his centre towards the whole range of emotions contained in the structure of the human being; graphically, this would be the representation:



Figure 8

The performer could even come to develop states of energetic eloquence mentioned occasionally by Stanislavski; graphically:



Figure 9

If the limited scheme of these drawings does not help the reader to understand our aim, he will be helped by looking at the windows of certain cathedrals, or studying an oriental tapestry, or any mandala with enough energetic eloquence to transmit the sensation of that flow of energy which, starting from the centre, expands and goes back to the centre, like in the mandalic conception of the Aztec calendar.

The reader will have realised that up to this point, we have only set out the steps which we follow to consider possible states of performers and indicate graphically the evolutive possibilities of their tools. We should make it clear that we know that many internal schemes are not included which could

correspond to a multitude of states of the performer; we have merely intended to offer a brief sample of our approach mechanism, so that the performer can understand, draw, recognise or try to visualise his personal situation.

The next step is to know, precisely, what sort of practical work we need to do so that any type of deficiency in our instrument can be corrected, or reinforced, as far as is possible, in its entirety.

In our work, the performer has the chance, if it is his case, to design his re-education process and a method for getting to know himself, in collaboration with people who have experienced the same needs as he has, that is to say that the practical exercises may be proposed by him and supervised or developed in conjunction with more experienced accomplices.

Where am I? Who am I? Where am I going? What we are trying to do in our work is to answer these questions deeply and organically. One of the triggers we use is the text *Psicología de la posible evolución del hombre* (Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution) by Ouspensky (1973). This text, together with our field exercises, where we work at sensitising our visual, olfactory, auditory, tactile, taste and intuitive areas, along with a few essences of Nahuatl thought, is part of the introduction to our work.

We cannot specify all the exercises we use; nevertheless, we can observe that the exercises with which we work are derived principally from direct work carried out with Grotowski, Schechner and Strasberg, not forgetting other sources such as our contact with theatrical researchers, like Jean Pradier of the University of Paris VII, or the influences of Nahuatl or Tibetan theatre, as well as texts which show us the possibility of developing concentration mechanisms which are necessary for the performer to structure his process. This, added to the research work of our own group, is what joins together the proposition of our exercises.

I shall mention here, so that the reader has an idea, an experiment which we carried out continually for 24 hours. We call this exercise *Nictémero* [from the Greek term *nichthémeron*, meaning a period of twenty-four hours].

We met up at the Sculpture Centre of the National University in Mexico City, on the day of a full moon, just a few minutes before the sun rose. At that precise moment, our work began, and it continued until the sun rose the next day. We must bear in mind that this particular place is in the open air and the only thing it contains is volcanic lava. The space is round and its internal diameter is 92.78m. We observed the following work guidelines:

Silence

Read the sun (with movement)

Read the moon (with movement)

Read ourselves (with movement)

Read the space (with movement)

Clean, both inside and outside

We avoided sexual stimuli as well as any type of drug which would distract us from the central aim of our work. The absence of drugs and sex, during our training, works as a basic rule so that we can concentrate more deeply. Some of our members will now comment briefly on their impressions of this nychthémeron, an experiment which some of them were doing for the first time.

I play my snail shell, so do I therefore exist?

It all seems perfectly clear when we realise we are faced with 24 hours of non-stop work. We believe we have enough experience behind us so as not to be afraid of a nychthémeron (as we were later told was the name for this experience of a day followed by its night). We arrived at the place just before daybreak and imagined that what would happen from then on would be the result of a continuous exercise of consciousness (or self-observation and self-memory, to use the Gurdjieffian terms). The sun emerged from behind some volcanoes and strangely-coloured clouds; from the very outset, it was difficult to believe that we were really 'awake'. The *atecocolli* (sea snail shell) was played to wish for a good day for us all. Then we were faced with the first problem: I play my snail shell, so do I therefore exist?; to try to persuade

ourselves that we had woken up was to listen to our own air turned into the voice of the snail, a voice which did not sound good, which we had to 'work on' impeccably. We went into the sculpture centre with our minds open to the unknown. That mystery of not knowing how long the willingness to work would last was the second problem, because in a way, when we work in conventional theatre, we go to a rehearsal and know at least that there will be a programme of two or three hours in which the guidance of the director will be a determining factor in whether or not we maintain frank attention. But in this type of work, where there is no schedule and certainly no director, we have to find our own motivations to keep the willingness alive to do something which has no laws other than those of Nature herself. The third problem: how do we recognise said laws, since, as we have discovered, to be in order we must be in agreement with ourselves? This is how the work began inside us. But there was always the companion, the other human being who in a way was an accomplice in the 'sacred gang', as one of our members would say. The subsequent work was therefore directed towards contact with the other person. Finally, within this circuit, there was the group itself, who on principle naturally recognised the first two premises of self-recognition.

What exactly happened? We realised that there really was a lot of soot to clean out of our rational chimney, and our house, which is our own being, was in a state of absolute disorder which did not correspond to the order we were trying to recognise. We began by looking for actions which would cover every minute of a cycle which had already begun and which was beginning to get devilishly boring. We realised that there were no useful experiences behind this. The most difficult action was bringing ourselves up to date with the do-nothing, remembering Don Juan we had once read without realising its organic meaning. We knew that outside the circle of dolmens another reality was going ahead in apparent order, where bricklayers were going about their business simply and plainly. Did they have as many problems as we had? Then we caught a glimpse of cosmic order: the bricklayers were there and they looked at me. I was there and I looked at them. Something

was happening between them and us. A mystery. The following day they would have found us right there and been surprised at such a picnic out of time and place. Nobody went against the law. They ‘split their sides’ as the ‘mad-men’ played the snail shell and moved about in a strange way. The sun would have continued along its path (as indeed it did), the moon would have followed it (as was also the case), and the rain would have fallen at dusk to accompany the fullness of the moon. We would all have suffered from the heat, or enjoyed it, as well as the rain, the people, the cold and the constant slapping ourselves on the cheeks to remember ourselves. A month after the experience, we would say: that was quite different from anything else. I tried to be at all costs. I wanted to be in a constant here and now. I did not manage it, but at certain moments I think I existed and I was there. Something within me moved and was still. That is the mystery which I love.

Jaime Soriano

At certain times I felt a connection

I had the feeling, as Brook said, of turning the invisible into the visible. I was quite afraid but wanted to face the risk (individually and collectively). There was a series of premises which were, I feel, the vehicle, not the end itself to get to...

I wanted to energise myself (mistake!). I realised that energy was constantly running through me, and that I was part of that energy without having to want to. I looked, perhaps for the first time, at a microcosm (my body) and a macrocosm (which was over me) and at certain times I felt a connection between the two.

My doubts and questions, such as: what am I doing here? what am I? what will I be? and what will I do? were not felt with the accustomed mundaneness; I think they actually went beyond me. These questions had acquired a deeper, far-reaching strength. The answer I found to these questions is partial and personal, and is only valid for me.

At times I felt like a child, and was ashamed of this.

At a given moment, looking at the sky, I unconsciously exclaimed (to myself) how beautiful life is!

The best moments, and those during which I experienced the above, were at night. When the sun came up the next day, I felt tiny, but at the same time I sensed a huge, internal greatness.

These are fragments of what I can put down in words; the rest, I would find difficult to express.

Juan Maya

A 'nychthémeral' experience

My attitude was good. I wanted to distance useless thoughts and the waste of energy. I wanted to 'be'. Perhaps something happened to me (us). But the reality is harsher than what we imagine, and once more I confronted my level; all I have yet to come across, all I have yet to learn. It is a matter of keeping silent, and knowing how to wait. Things happen differently from how we are expecting, and the reality is richer than we can ever think.

Something happened within me which I cannot express in words, and I still do not know what it is. But there I can see the moon and its entourage of stars, lighting up the night, and the deep blue sky, fired by the sun. And there are we, seeking our place in the Universe.

Helena Guardia

A fish in this flow and movement

*My snail is singing,
I am swimming along in the volcanic sea
heading northwards. My molecules explode
at the epicentre of the sculpture space
and the blood of my grandparents makes me new again.*

*I thrust my obsidian's dagger
into the centre of the sun
and
I am volatile rock
hidden in the cave
of the centre of the earth:
And I saw you
put on your white ankle-socks,
you were the ebb tide of yourself;
then youthful and growing
you showed off your silvery skirt.
Today, my love, you are full,
little moon, little moon
going along with your astral retinue
murdered by the final, well-aimed flint
of your full brother,
naked and crippled
you tumble down the steps of Tenochtitlan.
Whither goes tonight's flame?
Whither creeps the feathered snake?
Whither heads my heart?
To the navel of the world,
to the perfect circle,
the scene of life and death,
my pores and my teeth tremble
this eternal, fleeting day,
a day of sunshine and a full moon
I want to bury myself with my own nails
in Mother Earth,
and recognise my dual father
in the rhythmic blows of the stony rock,*

*I am a castaway on this blue sea,
a fish in this flow and movement,
and I want to reach Mictlan
where my spotted dog awaits me.*

Xaviér Carlos

The luxury of walking barefoot on the earth

Who in this day and age is prepared to re-encounter that womb-nature, our primary origin? Ancient cultures could accept that there are fluids or cosmic currents which, when our bodies and minds are in that flow, make something happen; now is the re-encounter.

The moon, that celestial body which visits us every night, even when it is hidden in the shadows of the earth's body. Meeting the moon at its fullest and most radiant, and scarcely perceiving it, is only part of the real crimes we have committed against our own being.

It is not a question of going to look for new, extraordinary experiences, but merely of re-establishing contact with the cosmos, without striving for more, and accepting what is destined to happen. For 'subsistence' may no longer be so difficult in this small, civilised world in which we have enclosed ourselves and from which we must escape. It is as easy as living with what we have around us, regardless of whether it is just a case of being allowed the 'luxury' of walking barefoot on the earth; perhaps, therefore, we may be allowed to find its rhythm.

The Sun, as the closest source of energy to us, now stops shocking us and it is the beings whom we underestimate most, children and animals, who will be able to teach us to understand it.

I have tried to 'be' with this world, with this universe, for only 24 hours, and if I had to say anything it would be that I have, in these few hours, attempted to 'live'.

Héctor Soriano

Here for just a while

*I throw myself into where the singing is,
I have reached the Earth,
the place of my anguish and my fatigue.
Here for just a while.*

*In your song is the blue water,
the yellow water at daybreak
sings to you, my love,
food of the world.*

Here for just a while!

*We have just come here to play on the Earth.
We have just come here to dream that
we are dreaming that we are on the Earth.*

Here for just a while!

*My snail shell sings,
and in its song lies my joy,
flowers and song.*

*My sorcerer dances,
the dance of life against death.*

Here for just a while!

*My heart is a flying bird,
and in its flight
it sees clean hearts
which are still like jades and turquoises.*

Here for just a while!

*I still do childlike things,
I sing and dance,
I am lying on the grass.
I lose myself in my song,
I play my snail shell,*

its song is my spiral towards myself.
Here for just a while!
On the Earth,
I am carried by the wind
I am carried by water
I am carried by fire
I am buried by the earth.
Here for just a while!
My mouth is like Earth
my face like stone.
Your song is carried by the winds.
The night, the sorcerer, the tlatoani.
Here for just a while!
The skies split in two,
the earth opens up;
you hide in a corner in the darkness.
Here for just a while!
Intoxicate yourself, get drunk on your song
and your dance.
The mirror which makes things appear
Is here now.
I know, at least,
that the corn cob will feed me;
surely my home is here.
Here for just a while!
The affliction is growing now,
smoke and mist,
fame and glory.
Here for just a while!
Are we really dreaming?
Are we really here?

*Certainly
the house where we all live
is not on the Earth.
Here for just a while!
My heart is a jewel
of the wind in the form of a spiral.
My snail shell sings,
my body dances;
it is in the Omeyocan
There is eternal abundance to be enjoyed.
Here for just a while!
You are here,
they are here,
we are here.
Here for just a while.*

Juan Allende

That is the end of the accounts written by some of the members of our group about the nychthémeron held in February 1982 in the aforementioned place. This nychthémeron was designed as part of a gelling process for the work we were doing at the time, *Tloque Nahuaque*, [the God of Closeness and Togetherness].

Once we opened it up to the public, they worked in the same space we used for the nychthémeron, from dusk until well into the night. All the work took from one and a quarter to one and a half hours. We used the first part to tell the myth of Quetzalcóatl, without words, establishing the masculine-feminine duality as the generating sources of our world. In the second part we sensitised ourselves with some physical actions which allowed us to develop a process of active culture which we tried to share.

In the following section, we shall include some accounts written by external participants (i.e. members of the public), so that the reader can relate

them to the comments made by the internal participants and hence get a more complete picture of our work.

My soul was shaken by the sound of the snail shell

Like a phoenix my decadence touched rock-bottom, at a time when I could go no further. I could no longer tolerate living in the tangle of ideologies and philosophies of the twentieth century urban jungle.

So, just like in a children's story, a group of people invited me to meet up with them so that we could see our faces, feel our hearts like a bird on the wing, and relax in a place where natural and cosmic elements are united.

So I went. When they came out to greet the *pirul* tree, it all began for me; there was complete silence: I looked at them, they looked at me, they touched the branches of the tree and stroked its trunk. Several glances made me follow them into the area of dry lava, testimony, life and protection. At certain moments, both inside and outside, my mind asked, why? why? This disappeared due to the time of day: it was dusk, and I was in a 'dangerous' place, full of rocks which I had to jump over and negotiate carefully. When we got to a flat place, they surrounded me; suddenly, they all shook my soul in unison with the sound of their snail shells. There was nothing more to think of; there I was, drifting with them. They were dancing, shouting and tearing around the place like free, fulfilled animals, but they were men, and I was there.

At the end of the magical, fleeting ceremony of the birth of the free, wise and warlike man achieved by the god Quetzalcóatl, a look beckoned me, and the journey began. I was walking behind this look, without fear, over headlands, brushing against shadows, to the rhythm of a drum which invited me to carry on. With the look I touched the earth, and saw an eagle, a face, an altar; with it I stroked the rocks and crawled through tunnels of time; I burst out laughing, and loosened my body in dance; with the look I drew sounds and music out from stones, while it constantly lulled me with its song and its grief.

Then, a call back. We returned, and were met by a Nahuatlan song, a taste, an aroma, a haven of hearts, and once again the sound of the snail shell; once again we looked up to the sky and let ourselves drift through those moments.

Ana Luisa Solís Gil

(This participant later became a member of the *Taller*).

They are telling an ancient myth

This evening I went to an event at the Sculpture Centre, a moving, impressive place comprising 64 gigantic triangular mounds with slight openings at the four cardinal points: Stonehenge, but at the same time on a human scale. The human order surrounding the flow of nature in frozen lava. Nature uncovered, the double meaning of ritual: having order and having fluid. In this place, a paratheatrical piece where sincere people are working.

What is brought together and shared here are basically good feelings, positive feelings: they are telling an ancient myth, but telling it in an up-to-date way. They are doing this through atmosphere, sound, movement and personal contact. I am therefore very grateful to them, and wish them something more than good luck: I wish them truth in their work.

Richard Schechner

Drawn by the sun or by the moon

*Warriors by day or by night,
who seek nothing and at the same time almost everything,
bodies almost float by this space, their space,
our space; they fall slowly on their own hands and on
our very hearts, which after the time has passed
are the same (they are flying birds),
they fly slowly, scarcely moving,
scarcely feeling the strong legs which support all their wisdom. Warriors almost*

are they, are we, almost stone ...

*Sculptures and shadows search and are confused with the earth,
with the song of the earth which is the same for all.*

Drawn by the Sun or by the Moon

or by the Earth

or made by both or all of these things;

green and red warriors

or simply blue like night,

stars. Explainers of life...,

*have reached my heart, and reminded me of what a stretch
of my own life I have forgotten,*

my eyes have reached me,

they have touched my body,

they have met my face,

I have met the face of each one of them.

*And they are still there, as if waiting
for the beautiful new Moon,*

to translate it into a soft Nahuatlan song,

to translate it into sighs sent up to the sky.

Warriors who beckon my heart to fly high,

to find what I have really missed since I first thought I was

a man; now I can say that I am beginning to be a man, after

realising that I want to be a warrior like them,

that I want to fight and strive with my arrow and my heart,

to start to know (simply to know), to be

(simply to be)...

I forget my quotations and my dirty words

and my intolerable verses dampened with lies;

now I want to be a warrior.

Farewell and forever yours, space travellers,

*the experience is not over yet,
the gaps are open as they never were before,
(and their hearts too)
which our souls could not see before.*

*And so I have to ask the heart of the sky to let me
thank it, thank it for being or for trying to be.
Farewell and forever yours, warriors of more than
a thousand nights,
the path is made of earth and has a simple aroma,
the mornings are red
as their own hearts are suns,
the nights are blue and black
just as what we do not yet know.*

*Soon it will be seen at this time, these days, in these hands,
in these hands, in this place: Here and Now.*

Emiliano Gutiérrez Sandoval

Through this, we want to introduce the reader to a general aspect of our work; we can say that we work in forests, in deserts, in the mountains, as well as in enclosed spaces.

We are keen to point out the attitude which is necessary for this type of work since, after all, the exercises are not too difficult to find or make up. The real problem, when the performer detects certain exercises, is the inability to keep to them. They generally get forgotten or fade due to laziness or inconsistency; it is not that the performer does not know exercises, but rather that he cannot keep them active inside him due to a lack of discipline. This is the real problem, not having the discipline to keep the simplest exercise alive. Nevertheless, the performer is interested in more sophisticated exercises, perhaps even just to use up his mechanism and then forget the exercises, declaring his inability to function, without daring to recognise that we

ourselves personify inefficiency, as we overlap, by force of habit, a ramshackle mental structure which is not trained well enough to make something work.

The performer who comes into contact with our work must requestion the idea he has of theatre and accept the seriousness of daily discipline. The romantic idea, or rather the ill-fated practice of a theatrical performer only practising his instrument when he is actually in work, is outdated and useless. The theatrical performer has the same commitment to his instrument as any other artist, such as the dancer or the musician; if he does not practise daily with discipline, he will always get substandard, unexpected results.

Of course, there are thousands of ways of working, and we all know that every head is a world. Remember when Sartre asked, 'Is the colour I see the colour you see?', and the scientific impossibility of answering this question. If there is no scientific mechanism to make us certain that the colour I can see is exactly the colour you can see, if all we can do to relate to each other is rely on an established code which lets us identify red and what both, or all, of us understand by red, without ever being able to ascertain whether red as I feel and understand it is the same as the red you see, then we can talk of the passion of giving ourselves over to work on the growth of the performer, and everybody will have their own point of view. We can understand how important it is to develop a complete structure which allows the performer harmonious access to all his emotions, however he sees or understands them, and it will only be our own personal interpretation. Despite this relativity, however, we can establish an open work device which unites us as performers with a single objective: to investigate our instrument, polish and develop it in keeping with our particular conditions. That is the red which we all agree on in our work, knowing that it is only a relative point from which to start.

This relativity of colours, or of ways of approaching theatre, brings us close to the thinking of Einstein, who helped us to become the conscience of our universe in a more sober, keenly more scientific and unquestionably magical way. As we touch on this point, we could mention the possibility of the performer-magician, the one who once again takes a path to sacrifice as he

acts as a bridge between the sacred and the profane; a performer announced by Einstein, sought by Jung, visualised by Stanislavski, embodied by Artaud, researched by Grotowski and known intuitively by the majority of people who work in theatre. This type of performer is the one that corresponds to our age, the one we must seek in our work. Einstein would surely sympathise with this sort of performer as he was, in my opinion, one of the best performers in recent times, since this type of performer does not necessarily have to live in unbearable circumstances, such as those sustained by Sisyphus. Or if we are consigned to such circumstances, we should not forget the recommendation of Camus - we must try to imagine a happy Sisyphus.

Now, we would like to share with the reader three schemes of participatory theatre.

The first, *Aztlán* (the Lost Paradise), was developed in various parts of the forest of Chapultepec, strictly in the open air. The second, *Tonatiuh* (Sun), was formed exclusively indoors (in a dance studio) at the Casa del Lago, UNAM, in the Chapultepec forest. The third, *Huracán* (Hurricane) we arranged both in the dance studio and in open spaces in the forest. Although we have developed other schemes, in different circumstances, these designs for participatory theatre - open, closed, closed/open - can be representative and illustrate the way in which we do our work. It must be said that when we began our exploration there were no schemes or guidelines to help us work in participatory theatre. In conversations with researchers such as Grotowski, Schechner or Pradier, we could always see the option of participatory theatre as unexplored terrain. In the workshop we took the risk of exploring this terrain. As the years have passed, we have built up, through practice and research, certain models which we have tested in action and which we can now share, in the hope that they can be of some help to anyone who wants to learn about designs for participatory theatre.

***Aztlán* (the Lost Paradise)**

This work was carried out in the Forest of Chapultepec in Mexico City (a sacred forest in pre-Hispanic times).

The participants were called to one of the entrances to the forest (The Roundabout of Flowers) at 5.30 in the morning. They were asked to turn up wearing work clothes (tracksuit) and training shoes.

At exactly 5.30, when it was still dark, the group met up, and the work conditions were briefly explained to them:

1. Anybody who has come in search of a show is in the wrong place and is free to leave.
2. *Aztlán* is a work of participatory theatre. Its structure is designed exclusively for participants, not for observers.
3. We are going to perform in an allegorical way the mythical return journey to *Aztlán*. During the journey, we should sensitise ourselves and charge ourselves up with energy to offer up when we arrive. You will realise where *Aztlán* is and where we have to get to.
4. The conditions which, as participants, we must follow are:
 - a) From this moment onwards, and until the work is done, keep silent and be attentive here and now.
 - b) Be aware that we all form a single body in which, for the duration of the work, social and sexual differences are suspended.
 - c) Do exactly what the monitors do and follow their instructions.
 - d) Try to keep your look open, that is to say, do not focus on anything.
 - e) Let us realise that at this very moment the Earth is spinning at a rare speed in space, generating through its movement a fluid. We must try to get into that fluid through the exercises.

Straight after that, the group was taken into the forest. We made contact with water, we crossed the border between masculine and feminine, and we walked around an ancient tree planted by *Quetzalcóatl*, according to the legend. We sought permission from the entities of the forest by performing a pre-Hispanic dance, and then the 'contemplative trot' began. When the trot began everything was dark. A female voice accompanied the start of the trot,

until the group was lost, trotting round the base of Chapultepec Castle hill. When this exercise was almost over, the light of day was upon us. Then, the participants were shared out among the monitors, who from that moment on directed their own personal action (sensitisation exercises designed and tried out beforehand), each of them heading into the forest in a different direction. We worked for about 40 minutes on this exercise. When the snail shell sounded all the monitors, and the participants in their individual groups, came from wherever they were to a circle drawn on the terrace of the Casa del Lago, UNAM. As the groups arrived, they joined in a communal dance and when we were all together we performed the conchero dance 'of the Sun', which finished just as the latter was rising. At that moment, we allegorically offered our hearts to the Sun, through a fire in the middle of the circle. The work finished with exercises to greet the sun, allowing the participants to reflect in silence, so that each person could reply to himself and decide what point he had reached on the road to Aztlán. On the horizon, the rising sun was growing.

Later on, we specified exercises such as the 'contemplative trot', or some sensitising exercises controlled by our monitors. Hence, with this sketch the reader will get an idea of the work involved in Aztlán, a design for participatory theatre which brings the participants to look over certain luminous areas of themselves and their coordinates with the Sun.

Now, we shall deal with the second scheme:

Tonatiuh (Sun)

Tonatiuh was performed in a closed space, in the dance studio at the Casa del Lago, UNAM, which is in the centre of the forest of Chapultepec, Mexico City.

The participants were called to the entrance to the room at seven in the morning. We had asked them to turn up wearing work clothes (tracksuit), and ready to take part.

At seven on the dot the doors opened. The group formed next to a diagram and the work conditions were explained to them.

1. Anybody who has come with the idea of seeing a theatrical performance, is in the wrong place, and we would ask them to leave, since...
2. *Tonatiuh* is a strictly participatory work, and its design does not allow observation of any type.
3. *Tonatiuh* is an allegorical offering of our hearts to the sun. This allegorical offering which we are interested in recovering, is how the Toltecs did it in ancient times. The specific offering of the heart belongs to another stage of history. Our aim is to try and align our own individual energy with the energy of the sun, and through this allegorical offering, feed ourselves back with its fluid, to make contact with the best of ourselves. The work guidelines are the following:
 - a) From this moment, and until the work is finished, we must remain silent and be attentive in the here and now.
 - b) We must be aware that during the work we form a single body. We will try to suspend social and sexual differences.
 - c) We must fight against physical interferences, in other words our poor attitude or weakness.
 - d) To fight against psychic interferences, i.e. lack of attention to keep ourselves in the here and now, if possible, repeating our internal chant. The internal chant is a word or a sentence which we repeat internally, and which helps us to be present in the here and now. If we do not have an internal chant, this is a good opportunity to be alert to what is happening within us, and to start to look for it.
 - e) To start the work, we must cross the threshold (a poster at the entrance to the room). If, after reading this text, you agree with what it says, you go into the space, take your shoes off and do whatever the monitors do. If you disagree, you can leave at this point, and nobody will be offended. The text, taken from the poem

Piedra de Sol by Octavio Paz (1957)¹⁹ was the following:

*the rotten masks
which separate man from men,
man from himself, fall away
for a huge instant and we glimpse
our lost unity, the helplessness
of being men, the glory of being men
and sharing bread, sun and death,
the forgotten wonder of being alive.*

- f) Once you are in the space, try to be alert to the rhythm of the group, seek to join in with it, do not impose your personal movement or rhythm. Feel it as a river running round, and fuse in with the fluid generated by the Earth as it spins in space.
- g) Just before the end, we need to make a supreme group psychological effort. You will realise when that moment arrives, and then we must offer up our energy and go on to...
- h) *Tonatiuh*. If only one of us makes it, the rest of the group will benefit. That is our intention with this participatory theatre: to align our hearts with the heart of the sky, *Tonatiuh*, Sun, to make contact with the best of ourselves. We get to *Tonatiuh* by offering up our hearts.

Once we were in the space, we did a relaxation exercise divided into four parts: lying down, sitting up, standing still and beginning a slow walk. Then we soberly began the contemplative trot, which we did for 30 minutes. We ended the trot with the 'whirling' exercise, beginning to work on the voice in full whirl, going on to work on the voice with the snail shell. After that, we formed two circles, the inner one basically with monitors and the outer one with participants and monitors. Then we made a chain with one single

¹⁹ This poem, which is quoted frequently by Núñez throughout this book, can be found in an English translation in Paz, 1988.

conchero dance step which gradually gave each circle its own flight. At the critical point of this flight, when the signal was given, we stopped suddenly and worked on the 'cry'. We did an exercise to balance our energy, shared out segments of orange, thanked the participants and ended the work. The whole *Tonatiuh* circuit lasted one and a half hours.

We have set out here the general scheme of *Tonatiuh*, our 'master plan', through which the reader can get an idea, albeit superficial, of what participatory theatre is. For a more complete vision, the reader must get to know and experience some of the tools which we use, like for instance the 'contemplative trot', which is a trot/meditation. The ideal conditions for doing it are the following: we trot floating through the area, relaxing at every step, avoiding the tension in the arms which one gets in a running race, and do not try to advance, since there is nowhere to reach and nobody to beat. We keep our look open, i.e. without focusing, and the same goes for our active internal chant; we must feel that we are hanging by a thread which comes from the crown of our head and is tied to the stars, and flow at our own pace in a constant here and now. The results obtained from this trot, if it is done properly, are tremendous. We know this both from our own personal experience, and from the proof we obtained from our participation in the colloquium 'Theatre and Sciences in Life', held at the University of Paris VII (1984). There we proved that after 20 minutes of this type of locomotion, the organism produces substances called endorphins, which energise the body in a surprising, natural way. That is why the 'contemplative trot' is designed to work with the inner fluids through locomotion and concentration. Even with this explained, the reader is far from understanding something which he can only achieve through action and correction. This is why we deliberately avoid going into our exercises in great detail. We have schematically set out the 'contemplative trot' so as to give merely a sample of the type of tools we use. It took us several years of research to gel a tool like the trot, as was the case for various other exercises, such as the vibration of the snail shell and of the

voice; others are still at the development stage, but they are definitely tools to be shared in practice and not to be talked or written about in abundance.

In the next participatory theatre scheme we shared, *Huracán* (Hurricane), we used a laboratory instrument, an *ascid* (inducer for changing states of consciousness). This mechanical instrument is totally harmless and scientifically proven for transpersonal psychology. Its effectiveness helped us, in our scheme, to get deeply into the exercises. It would be too technical to set out how this device works in conjunction with our exercises, as would a description of the field work we undertook in Yucatan and Quintana Roo to give *Huracán* more substance. We would prefer to invite anyone who is interested, to enter into the practice of our work and then describe our design here, schematically, in order to do so with a greater general understanding.

Huracán (Hurricane - the heart of the sky)

As part of the training for this work, we toured around Yucatán and Quintana Roo, seeking to make contact through our experiences with the essence of places like Chichén Itzá, Uxmal and Tulum. McLuhan says, ‘we are what we behold’ ([1964] 2003:21), and this is true. We contemplated these places from different angles, seeking to give ourselves over to our work by contemplating the processes of these sunny groups of people. We allowed ourselves to drift through our research, to try and discover our ‘self’, as the poet Carlos Pellicer says, ‘treasured by a fixed ray which fulfils my being pore by pore’ (2018).

Before setting out the *Huracán* participatory scheme, I would like to share the impressions of this preparatory experiment of three of our members:

Luminous Auguries

(Yucatán/Quintana Roo)

We set out on a pilgrimage, searching together for the Heart of the Sky which, like the Blue Bird, is in our own homes, inside our hearts. Nevertheless, we must walk the necessary paths to begin to understand that what we desire

has never left us. The paths are like sources of experience which are markers along the road.

Hurricane, Heart of the Sky, immense blue sky. Paradise which expands the look and the soul. Serene centre of balance in contemplation and action. The spirit is near its home.

But for white to exist, black must exist too, just as day and night. So Hurricane, Heart of the Sky, cannot be reached without effort: throughout the journey egos are injured, because they must die. Then comes the challenge to ourselves: do I accept and work on my mistakes, here and now, in the face of such a specific conflict?; am I capable of recognising myself in others and in their growth, as a growth of their own, without suspicion, without envy?; am I really seeking to escape from my own limited person/consciousness so as to expand on the other side?; am I acting without ulterior motives?

To pray, to act as a bridge. To purify the heart, to awaken God in oneself. To grow one's soul and consciousness, to broaden one's horizons and look; to lose one's fear and warm one's heart with love and deep respect. To learn to contain Heaven in our breast. That is the task, step by step, without resting, without forgetting.

Outside - on a path beneath a sun which boils the innards; there are mosquitoes more ferocious than their innocent appearance would suggest; the inevitable personality conflicts emerge. All manner of daily obstacles to work.

Inside - the effort to polarise the attention of the conflict to the overcoming of the conflict = work with oneself and with others.

Outside - luminous auguries, gifts: Sun, sky and deep blue sea, intense white clouds, winds. Glow-worms inundate and light up the path, little stars at arm's reach. A dew out of nowhere presents us with a smile, the rainbow, son of the sun and the rain, burning water. The swallows tell us of flowers in bloom, of the sweet, welcoming fort: Uxmal, source of starry palaces, workplace in the consciousness; Chichén, the geometric, cosmic place, with architecture receptive to the universe; Tulum, its doors open at daybreak - deep, shining night which fuses the stars with the sea, and the

waves with feet, body and sands. Dawn of sun and moon, rocked in the ocean of harmony. We have a shape to cultivate shapes and non-shapes. Infinite presence of presences. Spaces/gates to the heavens. Friends.

Inside - communion.

We are not alone. It is a moment of change, of transition to a new stage in human evolution. Let our work be one of the many 'molecules which begin to change rock to glass'.

'With the invisible God who knows the secret of everything in silence, the sincere man's heart takes communion with the earth'.

Helena Guardia, 1984

***Changa (To all the gang)
(Yucatán/ Quintana Roo)***

*The glow-worms are stars
just as up is down.
Their light is eternal
on this Mayan track,
how I would like to die this dusk,
just like that,
without images
without fallen fruit
naked to the prickings of insects.
Jungle of the great Ceiba,
wavy root in the taste of the Earth.
- We only came to see the stars -
to follow the glow-worms,
pilgrims on ancient paths,
the Giver of Life of the
four corners, blow this
wind rain,*

*this father Sun which loses itself,
 roar of the earth which envelops me,
 which eats upwards
 brilliant constellations,
 which eats downwards
 glow-worms everywhere.*

Mayan Area

*What are we looking for?
 A centre, but what type of centre?
 A divine centre, a catalyst of energy, a polarisation
 of thought-movement-rest. To be
 offerers of our conscious energy, for the
 cosmogonical support of the generating
 nucleus of our solar system which is the red Tonatiuh.
 Comfort is no use in this work, only
 friction, movement, the watchful state, getting out
 of your state of perpetual sleep, your stereotypes,
 your mental weakness, is finding the symbol which operates
 inside you. It is not taking anything for granted; it is
 finding attention in what is invisible in the cosmic rhythm.*

Uxmal

*Uxmal, a luminous point
 facing the soothsayer,
 a symphony of stone
 and Mayan silence.*

*We are clearing our souls
 with the blowing of water and wind,
 a horizon of birds and trees*

*name the unnameable, swallows
guests on sacred pyramids.
I sell my eyes
facing the God Chac,
I say my prayer
- I bring you here my snail shell,
my flute, my bird of black mud,
I bring you here my tenochca, my love
I have climbed your steps,
I have crossed tracks
and wide, sunny rivers,
my feet naked of dust
and greedy ants;
my dark skin
imprinted with the Yucatán sun,
my eyes white with looking so much
at the navel of the Meztli Moon;*

*Here I am with my song,
with the beat of the others;
it is the tinkling river itself
which sings to me.*

*To this great pyramid,
to your liquid eyes of fire,
stone of Chac and birds which
warble to you this morning,
will my heart break in the Sun?
Only the soothsayer's cave knows.*

Xaviér Carlos, 1984

*Sunny Wind***(Yucatán/Quintana Roo)**

In the effervescence of the great cosmic soup in which we are all submerged, if one tries to make a pilgrimage with one's eyes open, prepared to recognise the internal fluids in colours, in the quality of internal and external landscapes, it is not a madness which one discovers while swinging on a rainbow brought by the dawn: rain without clouds which feeds our knowledge.

Finding contact again with the textures of such an utterly blue sea, with an exuberance which saw its own thought gelled in monumental structures of solar celebration, imposing pyramids like modest sunflowers. Bridges of contact with stars which do not lose the rhythm, maintaining their faultlessness of always being on time, with every beat of our own heart of the sky.

Hurricane flies to the full, falls in on itself, amid ever-dissolving tracks, devoured by a rhythm of green palpitations, amid constellations of glow-worms/stars, amid the complicity of silences shared at the thrones in the forest, in the invisible threads which wove the night from the arrival at the port of Tulum tossed by the Hurricane. Wind of sun, sand, looks and wills gazing upon the sea, gazing upon our bodies with sunburnt skin, wills which looked in the 'near' and the 'together' of themselves for the chance to share the rhythm spinning in the dizziness of a group dance which, in a moment of absolute contemplation, presented us with the certainty of being and existing, and made us recognise the thresholds we had passed in the baths of the sacred wells, from where crocodiles watched us as we passed by naked.

Recognising in each of the madresses which were pre-designed by destiny, the 'fields of friction' necessary for the stars inside and outside us to keep their place, is learning to share effort and complicity in growth.

Ali Ehécatl, 1984

Huracán was performed both in an enclosed space (the dance studio of the Casa del Lago/UNAM) and in open spaces in the Forest of Chapultepec in Mexico City.

This is the only open/closed participatory theatre scheme we have performed.

We called the participants to the ground floor room of the Casa del Lago annexe at seven o'clock in the morning. We had asked them to turn up wearing working trousers, sports shoes and a *ficbu* (blindfold).

At exactly seven o'clock the doors were closed and three monitors split the participants into three groups of equal numbers. Then we explained the work conditions:

1. If anyone has come to attend a theatrical show, they are in the wrong place and are free to leave now, as *Huracán* is a work of participatory theatre, and its design does not allow for observers of any type.
2. Through *Huracán* we are going to embark, allegorically, on the mythical journey down to darkness so as to come up into the light. All cultures have this myth. In order to go down into the darkness and come up again into the light, we need, in principle, all your trust.
3. Each of the impacts you are going to experience has been professionally checked; you are in no danger whatsoever. On the strength of this certification, we would ask you to put yourselves in our hands with total trust.
4. *Huracán* is basically a device with impacts to allow you to give yourselves over, through this journey, to your own internal spectacle. It will be as spectacular and gratifying as you are capable of experiencing it. Our aim is to unify the energy of the Hurricane Heart of the sky with the Hurricane-Heart of our internal sky. All the monitors are merely a support to enable you to experience the spectacle which is within you.
5. We are going to ask the participants in the centre to follow, at the appropriate time, the monitors with the green wristband; those on the left should follow the monitors with the red wristband, and those on the right should do whatever the monitors with the white one do. It is important for you to know which group you belong to, so that when we do three interconnected actions, you will know which of these actions you should do.

6. From now until the journey is over, we will keep silent and try to be attentive in the here and now, aware that the Earth, at this precise moment, is moving through space at an incredible speed, generating through this a fluid which we should try to enter fully.
7. During the work, we all form one single organism; we will therefore try, for the next two hours, to suspend social and sexual differences. Any type of contact with a person of the opposite sex you should feel and handle in good faith, as part of yourselves.
8. Try, at the appropriate time, to keep your look open, i.e. do not focus.
9. As soon as we begin, we would recommend that you maintain your internal chant. The internal chant is a phrase or word which we repeat internally; if you do not have an internal chant, this is a good opportunity for you to find it. The internal chant should help us to keep our attention focused on the here and now.
10. Lastly, we are going to ask you to keep this a secret. That is to say after you have undergone our impacts you become, in a way, our accomplices and you should not talk outside about anything which happens to you here. This is so as to keep the impacts fresh. If you know of anyone who is interested in coming, do not spoil their surprise, as that is an important element in the correct performance of this allegorical journey which you are about to begin.

We then called them together straight away outside the dance hall and wrapped around them the fichu which we had asked them to bring. We guided them individually into the hall and sat them down somewhere. We burned resin and asked permission to begin the journey - door to the being, open your being. With these words, said by a monitor and followed by the beating of a *huebuetl* (drum), the adventure really began. We then sang a litany in Nahuatl to accompany the process. Each participant was lifted into the *ascid* (an acronym for an instrument used to achieve an altered state of consciousness), left there for two minutes, and then guided down into a bag made of fabric, where they lay back and relaxed for several minutes. The Nahuatl litany, at this point,

became a murmur, and it was kept going by a single female voice until it was time for silence. The participants began to be revived by a cascade of *ayoyotes* (percussive seed-rattles worn on the ankles), and we lifted them up, got them out of the bag and, still blindfolded, they were put into single file, with their hands on the shoulders of the other participants. They advanced to the rhythm of the *huehuetl*, accompanied by *ayoyotes*, little bells and pre-Hispanic flutes. This human snake danced out of the room and began to wend its way through the forest. The rhythmic ripple carried on until a certain point in the forest, where it curled up into a spiral. There, when the signal was given, the rhythm of the dance ended. We put the participants in a circle, with the monitors inside and the participants facing outwards. We touched various parts of their bodies with the snail shell and, when the signal was given, we took the fichu from their eyes, as up to this moment they had been blindfolded, and each participant had to observe a particular morning angle of the forest. Up to this point, the work had taken a little over an hour. After observing in silence, a monitor said, 'life belongs to nobody, we are all life'. Another signal sounded, and three different physical activities began. Each participant followed his or her monitor: white, red or green. In the centre of the space, a group formed a motionless circle and worked on an energetic Mayan position. From that moment on, it was necessary to keep the look open. Another group formed a circle to move round the first group. This second group faced inwards, and worked on a step from the conchero dance which allowed them to move relatively quickly. The last group circled around the outside, working on the contemplative trot. When the signal was given, we changed activities: the centre group moved to the outside, those from the outside moved to the middle circle, and those from the middle circle moved to form the innermost circle. This change took place several times, until a double signal indicated the beginning of the Dance of the Hurricane. Then we formed a circle of monitors, with another circle outside it comprising participants with a few monitors. We began the Dance of the Hurricane, designed by the *Taller*, using the same body alphabet as the conchero dancers; in other words, this dance in no way alters the conchero

dance body code, but its alphabet is adapted in a different way. We use the conchero dance body alphabet, shall we say, without altering it, so as to weave new designs. Our research into these new conchero dance designs is authorised by representatives from indigenous dance. These representatives understand that our research could bring these tools up to date. The dance finished with work on the cry. Then, four monitors positioned themselves a short distance from the group, at the four cardinal points. The participants were spread out in these four directions and there they received, at a tree, their last impact. After they had received this, we thanked them for taking part in the work, and that was the end.

Some people stayed for a little while longer, reflecting in the forest. Others slowly looked for their way home.

One of the most important factors in participatory theatre is that five minutes of instruction for a participant who has never heard of this type of theatre, will suffice for him to play the starring role in a design two hours long. In other words, with only five minutes' instruction, he takes part in a cultural phenomenon which not only integrates him dynamically, but also sustains him so that he can derive his own experience.

Huracán - Heart of the Sky was dedicated to the memory of Juan Allende, an irreplaceable member of our gang, a researcher into and supporter of anthropocosmic theatre, an accomplice among accomplices, a tireless traveller on a never-ending flight, who by harmonising the beats of his heart with the slow beats of the cosmos, positioned himself in the very centre of his being, and surely fled to the Sun.

The Tempest

In the production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* which we performed at the Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Theatre in 1987, our aim was to harmonise space on stage and its defined dramatic structure with participatory exploration.

There was one formal, and one participatory, theatrical atmosphere, seeking a way to relate to each other positively, seeking to benefit the observer.

Adaptations and readaptations. Adjustments and dangers. In the end we took on the risk of investigating the make-up of this new dramatic structure, and we discovered that the participatory structure is a dynamic which the public readily accepts, and that the possibility of developing a selection of participatory models is a risk which promises to pay significant dividends.

The adjustments made for the participation of the public must respond coherently to the dramatic proposition and become a way of 'opening up' the stage so that the participant also becomes an actor without being forced, manipulated or exploited in the service of the show, but in such a way that he finds in the dramatic/participatory structure a model to sustain his action and involve him dynamically in the theatrical phenomenon.

In his plays, Shakespeare skilfully shows us the analysis and exaltation of human passions, for instance love in *Romeo and Juliet*, power in *Richard III*, jealousy in *Othello*, existential anguish in *Hamlet*, greed in *The Merchant of Venice* etc.

In *The Tempest* he shows us the drive which leads us to improve our spirit, to be aware that 'we are such stuff as dreams are made on' and that if the most sumptuous temples and palaces will dissolve leaving 'not a rack behind' (IV.I. 156-157) what is important is to value how precious human life is and train our thought so as to guide our lives without getting trapped in games of power and glory in which we are dazzled by the 'appearance' of reality. To live in reality, not in its appearance. To develop the capacity to master our passions and hence master the forces of nature, to become magicians and have the power to cause tempests. To have enough inner stature to forgive our enemies and not seek revenge even if fate thrusts them into our hands. To invest all our power in the service of the cosmos and hence develop a form of universal responsibility.

For some experts, *The Tempest* is Shakespeare's deepest play and, being the last, a type of testament. This is true; it is not only a gem of dramatic literature but also a real guide to the magical system in which Shakespeare worked on his heart. The golden thread with which all the structure of celebrating the

sun is woven can be clearly seen in this play. A quality of light with which the flower and the song of all cultures and all times are woven. At the point of the play at which Shakespeare designed the appearance of the earth's energies, we began our participatory area which, without betraying Shakespeare's intention of fantasy, allowed us to transport our observers blindfolded from the middle of the stage of the Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Theatre to the middle of the Sculpture Centre. There, around a fire in silence, we looked at the stars and into each other's eyes, and towards the end of the participatory area, amid the vibrations of snail shells, each person captured his image in a solitary mirror. We walked back to the stage in silence along the university paths, and ended up back in the middle of the stage, as if we were returning from the depths of Prospero's magic grotto where we had found our own action, our own reflection, an open sky and, finally, we had captured the richness of ourselves as the most precious treasure.

It was that audience, leaving the production happy, which was able to resist the deficiencies of certain actors stiffened by competence and success who were unable to understand the research in which they were taking part. Nevertheless, we did all the performances to a full house and the general reaction to the experiment of participation in theatre was magnificent.

Italy

We were invited by Il Centro in Rome, Italy, an institution managed by Carolina Salce, to share with the public there some of our sensitisation techniques. Helena Guardia, Virginia Gómez and I went. In May 1988, in the Institute's country house, a mansion on the outskirts of Bracciano, we performed designs such as *Tonatiuh*, *Huracán*, *Citlalmina*, slow walks in the neighbouring woods, research into shamanic tools, together with various other sensitisation exercises. We worked with more than 500 people, morning, afternoon and night.

We ended our month's work with a half nictémero which, given the circumstances of the place, allowed us to light, and keep going all night, two

enormous fires and perform various exercises around them. We finished at dawn by receiving the first rays of a sun which had been worked on within us through the arduous exercises of the whole month.

At that moment, the possibility of opening up to establish communication through the sun was obvious, and faced with the symptoms of many of the participants, what we picked out was the certainty of performing participatory dynamics which as well as developing the attention, can also bring us up to date with natural rhythms and allow us to receive the benefit of what this represents.

The good faith, discipline and will of all this group of Italians who work essentially under the loving, effective guidance of Carolina, was all the more surprising as they were not only willing to burn themselves in the fire of internal growth, like modern-day warriors - I remember Adelmo, Romano and Patrizia - but they were also generous enough to offer us a fabulous holiday in Venice. The days we spent there served to consolidate our experience and make us realise that the Nahuatlán attention tools which we are bringing up to date in our *Taller* and which we use to train actors, are not only of use to theatre people, but also have a lot to offer anyone who approaches our work.

Peru - Machu Picchu

In November 1988, nine members of our Workshop set off for Peru: Francisco Lerdo de Tejada, Virginia Gómez, Héctor Soriano, Ana Luisa Solís, Julio Gómez, Xaviér Carlos, Gela Manzano, Cecilia Albarrán and I, plus ten other people who sympathised with our designs and were willing to explore with us our inner space, at various important points of this magical country.

There were, in total, 19 of us seeking tools to tune and increase our perspective of dramatic/ritual technique.

Several members of our group had taken part in our research in indigenous communities such as the Huicholans, the Mazatecans, the Mayans and the Nahuatlans, or with groups of people such as the Tibetans, Poles, Turks, Italians and Indians. Now we were to be enriched by the contributions offered by the Inca world.

We were ready to find themes, rhythm, song, dance, visualisations and invocations which would show us the path to our own vitality, so as not to lose our way to the freshness of the moment. In the design of our participatory theatre tools, contact with groups of people who work on attention exercises has always given us feedback.

So we left for Cuzco, where we were awaited by 84-year-old Don Faustino, an expert in the Apu Inca tradition. This professor, recognised by his own people with tears in their eyes - as we witnessed - as a quite extraordinary person, was energetic enough, despite his age and rank, not only to run through with us the spatial code of places such as Ollantaytambo, Sacsayhuamán and share with us some of his secrets, but also to dance with extraordinary energy to the design of the new sacred dance *Citlalmina*. While we were performing this dance, we were surprised by the presence of something strange in the sky, difficult to define. We all shared, at that moment, the certainty that we are not alone in the universe.

Machu Picchu is 110km from Cuzco. The train takes four and a half hours, and its coaches packed with smells, shoves, women, children, hens etc. make the journey quite extraordinary. When we reached the mythical city we continued to explore our exercises and Don Faustino carried on with his teaching and practical guidance by sharing with us some old Inca chants and ritual convocations and guiding our steps though the folds, caverns and secrets which only a life dedicated to Machu Picchu can reveal.

At dawn and dusk he made us take fantastic thermal baths. Submerged in the steaming spring, surrounded by frightening images, with stars in the sky and monumental mountains all around, it made me question the jump/step/process of a theatre closed in on itself, like in a magic box - which is how most people understand it - to the opening of this box so that it can contain real rivers and mountains, with us included, like at that instant, being immersed in the earth's natural vapours, gazing at the stars. It was like tearing off illusion to discover the magic of reality.

Extraterrestrial intuitions, thermal baths, shamans, mythical magic of Peru, personal reflections. It was clear that we were submerged there to investigate, confront and share the tools and designs of rite; to broaden our vision of the dramatic phenomenon so as to find out in depth what theatre is for.

Don Faustino told us that it has been written since ancient times that whoever comes to Machu Picchu is committed to climbing the sacred mountain of Wayna Pijchu. The ascent must be, at the same time, internal and external. It is an 'analogous mountain' with gorges of more than 500m of sheer drop. One false step can literally wipe us off the map, as the bodies of those who fall are seldom found. If you climb it, it is not in order to conquer the external mountain but rather to master our internal ascent, conquering our fears and deformations. Action, theatre/ritual to be done once in a lifetime. We were lucky. At the summit, a series of group looks as we shared the impulse, turn or flight of our actions which in understandable, up-to-date terms, we call participatory theatre.

A delighted Don Faustino, in reply to our concerns, both theatrical and existential, whispered an old Inca prophecy which defines the meaning and reason of our journey: 'When the eagle from the north flies with the condor from the south, She, the spirit of the earth, will wake up'.

Another moment of open theatre. The magic box now included the Andes, the banks of the Urubamba, Machu Picchu and from the summit of Wayna Pijchu, another instant of startling reality.

All the members of the group vouched for how useful our effort had been. We remained silent. Somebody found in the Inca prophecy the very internal meaning of our university crest.

Citlalmina (the female archer shooting arrows at the stars)

Citlalmina is the name of the Tibetan/Mexican dance which we unified through our research.

At the same time, we performed a participatory theatre production at UNAM's Casa del Lago, in 1989, under the same heading.

We shall now talk in principle about the *Citlalmina* dance. The following is a transcription of the little information leaflet which we used to publicise it.

CITLALMINA

Mexican/Tibetan sacred dance

meditation in motion

Blessed by Tensyn Gyatso,

XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet,

as a tool for mental training.

The sun, the sun,

so deep inside of me I feel it

that my thought acquires a taste of light

Citlalmina is the unification of Mexican sacred dance and Tibetan sacred dance. It is the journey made by a warrior to reach Aztlán/ Shambhala. One of the ways of getting to Aztlán/Shambhala is to achieve meditation in motion in *Citlalmina*. For this to happen, we must:

1. Learn the body alphabet of both dances and punctually perform the deprogramming code of its movements.
2. Keep our internal attention alive, tuning it to our breathing, without allowing the mind to wander.
3. Flow with the mandalic design which completes the dance at an organic rhythm which helps us to keep our attention on the here and now.

By basically following these three points, meditation in motion can be achieved.

Citlalmina respects the original structure of both dances which, surprisingly, is very similar. In both Tibet and Mexico, the sacred dance is a battle to conquer a new level of consciousness, and it is therefore a dance performed by warriors. These warriors:

1. Form a circle.

2. Ask permission from the energies to perform the battle.
3. Carry out the dance/battle through a defined body alphabet which deprograms and harmonises the individual.
4. The performer - or warrior - joins his external/internal battle so as to keep himself alert in the instant.

After learning the body alphabet of both dances, the performer learns the visualisation which accompanies them; he mentally evokes the four elements: water, earth, air and fire, and places them inside his body. His dance/battle, therefore, is intended to conquer:

- whatever mineral there is in his body, and eliminate the ego;
- whatever vegetable there is in his body and eliminate the ego;
- whatever animal there is in his body and eliminate the ego;
- whatever human there is in his body and eliminate the ego;
- whatever divine there is in his body and eliminate the ego.

5. At the end of the spiral dance, the warrior offers his conquest to the essences through a cry of rebirth which lines up his organism's vibratory co-ordinates with the rhythms of the cosmos, which will be able to reward him.

The dance is a mandala in motion. As the performer flows with it, he is charged with energy. Certain subtle fluids are activated in our bodies through movement, and these fluids, together with consciously generated endorphine, produce in us a sensation of glowing brightness which purifies and invigorates the organism. These are the benefits of meditation in motion.

Since it has been proved, by people qualified in this particular field, that *Citlalmima* works effectively like a dynamo to raise our energy mentally, physically and spiritually, its teaching, spreading and supervision should be undertaken only by authorised practitioners.

In unifying these dances, both of which are ancestral tools to develop our attention and concentration, we are seeking to collaborate consciously and discreetly with the designs of a new culture.

Origins of *Citlalmina*:

- Mexican dance. Nahuatlan, shell. The four elements, 'Hurricane, Heart of the Sky'. Authorised for this new design by General Teresa. Learned and developed in Mexico City.
- Tibetan dance. 'Black Hat', Lhalhung Pay-dor, belonging to the monastery at Tashi Lhumpo, learned in Dharamsala, India.

These two unified dances form *Citlalmina*, which was blessed as a tool for mental training by Tensyn Gyatso, XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet, on 2nd July 1989, in the Casa Tibet in Mexico. Also formally recognised as an efficient psychophysical technique to develop the attention, by scientists from the Biosphere II project carried out in conjunction with NASA in Tucson, Arizona.

Citlalmina: the female archer shooting arrows at the stars

We dedicated the fruits of *Citlalmina* to all our teachers; particularly to Juan Allende, who taught us how to die with our attention on the sun.

In the participatory theatre production, also called *Citlalmina*, we performed a sensitisation design in which we invited the audience to share an allegorical death and rebirth with us.

We received them in the Rosario Castellanos Theatre in Casa del Lago, UNAM. We asked them to trust our participatory design and brought them up onto the stage. We blindfolded them and took them down through the dressing rooms to the terrace of the Casa del Lago. There we began a sensitisation circuit through the gardens. The participant passed through thresholds of swords in battle, water, fire, questions like who are you?, what is the most important thing for you?

To the rhythm of a drum, they were taken into an open-air stage space and integrated into the stage design of a cosmos from which only heads came out.

We performed a moment of deep vibration with our voices. We then asked them to take off the blindfold, and the dramatic part began when we drank and shared tequila.

We performed critical moments of each of the actors, eager to recognise true reality in a double-sided mirror representing life and death. This mirror, which brought on the visualisation and the performance of the scenes, at the appropriate time, was presented to the audience and at certain times enticed several spectators to share their experiences with us.

When each of the people there, actors and participants, had guessed or confronted his image in the mirror, we did a visual contact exercise in pairs, where a double mirror shot out the sign to learn to see our own face in the other person. Then we went on to perform a circuit of the dance of *Citlalmina*, which ended with a cry of rebirth.

The participation in that production comprised sensitisation throughout the first part; reflective observation of the scenes originating from a mirror in which we all guessed, or contemplated, our own story; and free participation in the dance of *Citlalmina*.

The warmth of the response of the huge number of people who came to all the performances, proved to us once again that participatory theatre is a line of work with a lot to offer contemporary theatre.

Workshop Techniques in a NASA Project

At the beginning of 1990, both the dynamics of sensitisation and the psychophysical dynamics for developing the attention, on which the *Taller* has been working, attracted the attention of scientists involved in the Biosphere II project, taking place in Tucson, Arizona.

The story is simple: in one of our work sessions a scientist turned up, invited by the craziest of our colleagues, and sweated his way through one of our dynamics with the group. He liked both the Tibetan/Mexican synthesis and its body codes, and the results on the body and the mind. He called it an effective process of 'cultural cybernetics'.

I was immediately invited to Tucson, where I worked on a number of our exercises with the members of the project. In these exercises, they found

possibilities for their research, and hence our actor training circuit found communication in a scientific context.

Our contact with the project is open and we know that our *Taller* will benefit as we can, in principle, scientifically redefine our training, and approach in a more solid fashion the process of a scientific culture which, as we all know, is the most serious alternative we have at the moment.

The Biosphere II project is considered to be one of the most promising and costly research projects around. In brief, superficial terms, it unites in a space of 14,000 square metres six different atmospheres: a rainforest, a desert, a savannah, an ocean, a salt marsh and a human habitat with intense farming, together with various farm animals and eight human beings; the community is sealed up, and observations can be made on the development of this whole process of encapsulated life so as to determine countless unknown factors related to ecological balance. On the one hand, it is intended to develop a platform for a series of experiments and analyses which will be of use to ecologists from over the world and hence strengthen the new ecological, or ecotechnical, technology, and on the other hand, it will take the first steps towards establishing self-regulated cells, and hence achieve a chain of life to populate the universe in the future, starting with the Moon and Mars.

It sounds mad, but it is really happening and the first step will be taken in March 1991, when four men and four women are shut away in Biosphere II to live together for two years.

The daily life of these researchers seems to be submerged in a science-fiction story, where the highest levels of scientific technology are mixed with the desert, the sun, starry nights which lend themselves to quiet personal reflection high up above the Golden Canyon.

All this allowed me a peep at the sensitivity and humane quality of a group which, using the highest scientific advances, brings into play its guesses regarding the future and reckons on the conscious expansion of life in the universe.

I was shaken by the voice of a member of the gang, nicknamed 'the ray of Apan', who revealed to me the similarity between the impulse of Biosphere II and that of our Nahuatlán forefathers, who sought to give over their hearts to the sun, which is nothing more than - as Nahuatlán philosophy points out - 'collaborating consciously with the development of the cosmos'. This is a meaning of life inherited, alive in the present and projected towards the future, and it is well worth banking on it.

A Guide

The most important factor for the performer is concentration. One way of helping to develop it is to establish the discipline of self-observation. We have found a very simple exercise which can have good results in heightening the concentration; we call it the *Last Judgement* and its structure is the following: the performer is asked to imagine he is being filmed from all angles, twenty-four hours a day, by certain bodies in charge of making the film of his whole life, which will be shown on the day of the Last Judgement. With this idea, the performer can heighten his self-observation. As we are continually aware, as performers in time with our role, doing whatever we have to do in this life, in the 'here and now', our self-observation increases, as does our power of concentration.

The following scheme - called *getting to know oneself* - is the result of several investigations carried out with the intention of helping the performer to get to know or recognise his psychophysical instrument. Once the performer is clear about the difference between acting technique and interpretative reception technique (bearing in mind the above scheme), we can move him on to the next phase. Six steps must necessarily take place consecutively.

1. Will to work

The performer must define his strict attitude and be committed to the work in order to progress to the next phase. Without this definition of will to work being clearly established, it is futile to attempt anything else. He must take

on the 'good pain'.²⁰

2. Contact with obstacles and distortions

When the performer has to confront certain psychophysical exercises, and we ask him to be constantly aware of his witness to the Last Judgement, he can begin to make contact with some of his obstacles. Here he must begin to develop a form of cartography of his blocks, in other words realise that it is difficult for him to be aware of why the difficulty exists. For instance, when he says 'I am afraid', he must be ready to ascertain why he is afraid.

3. General scheme of our distortions

Once the performer has worked on the majority of his psychophysical areas, his cartography must show him an image of which of his areas have been hurt, sufficiently completely for him largely to contemplate himself. At this point, the performer must do exercises and translate them into his cartography until he can establish the general scheme of his distortions.

4. Greater energy to recognise and overcome our fears and distortions

Once the performer has a general scheme of his distortions, he must begin a restructuring process, aware that in order to change his habits for new ones, he must first have chosen the habit with which he wants to replace the one he wants to remove. To introduce this new habit he must be aware that he must do it at a higher energy level than the previous one; otherwise, no change will occur. In other words, let us imagine that I have a bad habit that I wish to change; it operates in my organism at an energy level of 40. In order to replace it, I must introduce the new one at an energy level of 50. I must do this at the very moment at which the one I want to change appears, and give it a higher energy charge so that the old one is wiped out and the new one imprinted in my consciousness. The time needed to change one habit for another one is relatively short if it is done in the right way and with the correct energy.

20 See p. 274 below for Núñez's discussion of the concept of 'good pain'.

5. Removing other people's stares

At this point, the performer must work on his concentration, so as to get rid willingly of outside interferences, like when you go into a place full of people and get the feeling that everyone is looking at you; all the looks which we think we are receiving are working as interference. If we make the effort to look up and confront what we are imagining with reality, we will realise that the latter is different, and that the main interference lies in the deformed ideas which we have of reality; in other words, I think everyone is looking at me, and that is not the case. In any case, learning to remove other people's stares is avoiding being manipulated by external interferences.

6. Stop staring at ourselves

Here the performer has to focus on his process of fighting against his own self-observation and overcome it, that is, to get back to zero, empty, where external interferences have disappeared and even internal dialogue cannot be heard. This is a state of very high energy.

These six points make a column:

1. Will to work
2. Contact with obstacles and distortions
3. General scheme of our distortions
4. Greater energy to recognise and overcome our fears and distortions.
5. Remove other people's stares
6. Stop staring at ourselves

An arrow can add another point to this column, divided into three phases. The first is *Who am I, where am I, what am I doing*. The second is *here and now*. The third phase is blank so that it can always contain the action we are performing at a particular moment. These premises at the tip of the arrow should become a type of organic shock which allows us to develop the consciousness of who am I, where am I and what am I doing, here and now, in an organic, simultaneous way, more as a sensation in the body than an analytical position. The scheme for getting to know oneself would be represented as follows:

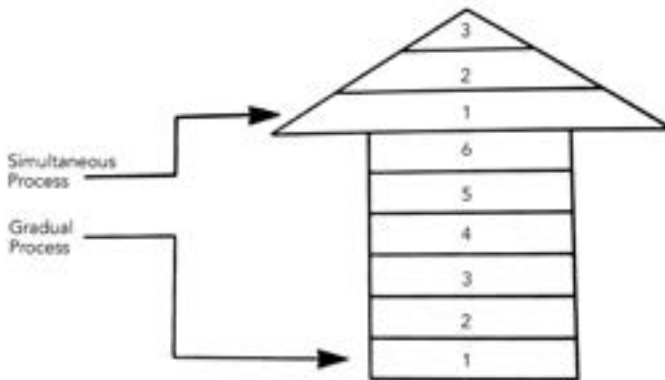


Figure 10

Another clear example of psychophysical work is the lemon exercise, which is divided into two phases:

1. You take one lemon per participant and give it to them in their hands; you emphasise its volume, temperature, weight, colour and smell; a moment later, its taste. The concentration of the exercise aims for the performer to recognise readily the direct effect of a stimulus which he must keep registered in all the fields of his perception. He must memorise these sensations and register all the processes carried out automatically by his instrument, which in this specific case concentrates on the saliva glands.
2. Now, without lemon, we evoke each and every one of the qualities which we registered directly before: volume, temperature, weight, colour, smell, until we reach the moment when we must evoke the lemon's taste; then we will be clearly aware of whether or not our evocation has been correct. As we evoke the taste our glands must respond automatically, secreting saliva as if the lemon really were in our mouth.

With exercises of this type, we can head for a general recognition of our capabilities, working on our five senses, or six for those who have developed a sixth.

Finally, what is the meaning of theatre for those who do it, for those who participate in it and for those who *need* it?

We could say, without fear of being mistaken, that understood as a molecular accelerator,²¹ theatre can liberate us from the stasis and the density of our domesticated spirits. I mean that it can help us to live life to the full; without fear, without resentment, without prejudice or judgements, for it helps us to remove the rigidity of protocols and fundamentalisms, and teaches us how to flow with the natural/universal/cosmic rhythms in which we are immersed.

This is, precisely, the intention of Anthropocosmic Theatre - to make us conscious of the fact that *we are the cosmos*. In this awareness, the rigid paradigms of any belief system begin to dissolve, helping us to be present in the here and now, with innocence.

Who am I?

When we try to answer this archetypal question in an ordinary way, the first impulse is to perform a horizontal movement in order to find the answer. In this movement, the 'Who am I?' attracts, in response, name, address, possessions, credit cards, profession, successes and failures, etc., etc., etc. The recognition of who I am is based on externals.

When I ask myself, within the context of the Anthropocosmic Theatre proposition, 'Who am I?', I make, instead, a *vertical* movement; I go inside myself in order to discover our common roots and the strong rhizomatic connection and interdependence I have with reality as a whole, physically, psychically and spiritually. I discover, then, that *I am the universe*. With the strength of this awareness, my quality of being increases and is transformed, revealing new colors in life.

I no longer look for the answer out there, now I can simply be what I am, and what I am arises from within. The poet says: 'I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space' (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.ii. 253-255).

21 This term is explained in 'Mandala' in Part Two (p. 293 below).

The authentic meaning of theatre reveals to us its relational aspect: this vertical movement inside myself takes me to the roots that connect me with all, and this, necessarily, has to be carried out in the company of accomplices - whom we call the 'sacred gang'. Then the connection to the 'cosmic' appears, along with the consciousness of *being* the universe. There we find love and kindness, peace, serenity and joy, in the acknowledgement that *I am the universe recognizing itself in your gaze.*

To finish, we could stress the need to work on our body, considering it to be the basic genuine instrument of the performer who wants to get more deeply into an anthropocosmic process.

By recognising our body as a basic instrument, we could end our text with this short poem, in which the speaker recognises themselves as an instrument, in three crystal-clear stages. As an open question, I ask the reader by asking myself, in which stage do we recognise ourselves?

Lord, make me an instrument of your song.

*Lord, if I am an instrument of your song,
do not play me too hard, for I fear I will break.*

Lord, play me as hard as you like, what does it matter if I break? (Anon)

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