

MANDALA: THE SACRED ART OF ACTING -
A PLAY IN ONE ACT⁴⁹

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CHARACTERS:

MAESTRO A distinguished theatre teacher, middle-aged
RESEARCHER A doctoral student, engaged in theatre research,
younger than the Maestro

The play begins with an introduction in the theatre lobby, where the spectators are asked to sign a letter of agreement in which they accept the possibility that they might be transformed through the theatre they are about to experience. Those who agree, sign, take off their shoes, and enter the theatre.

*The **RESEARCHER** is onstage. The **MAESTRO** is late and enters the stage in a hurry.*

MAESTRO: (*greeting the **RESEARCHER***) Hi, how are you? Did you have trouble getting here?

RESEARCHER: No, not at all.

MAESTRO: I've just come all the way from Teotihuacan. I was running late, and there was terrible traffic, but I am here now...

*(The **MAESTRO** receives the letter signed by the public).*

MAESTRO: Thank you. I can see that you all entered this space out of your own free will, and I can see that many of you travelled from very far to be here with us, in Tenochtitlan, tonight. Welcome. Splendid! Can we now, please, lock the door?

⁴⁹ This version of the production, adapted for two players, was presented in English in Huddersfield in 2015. Translated by Karoliina Sandström and Helena Guardia.

(On the stage there is a rectangular table with books, notes, a candle, matches, a glass and a bottle of tequila. Next to it, there is an umbrella stand with some rolls of paper in it. Behind the table is a large, old-fashioned rectangular blackboard. To the right of the stage, there is a clothes hanger).

MAESTRO: Thank you. Now, let's finish arriving. What do I mean by this - to finish arriving? Sometimes, I find, the body may be physically in a place, but the mind is somewhere very different, so to finish arriving is to bring all aspects of yourself here - mind and body. Good. So, I assume everyone present is interested in acting, at least for the duration of this session.

In real life, which is the greatest theatre in the world, we are all actors; some of us are good, some of us not so good, and some are ok; but what is sure is that we all have our specific role to play. Some people call this destiny.

Mystics and scientist tell us that there are no accidents, so it is not an accident that we are all here today. For better or worse, in this very instant our destinies come together. Let's begin.

(The MAESTRO draws two big, over-lapping circles on the blackboard. Inside the upper circle, he writes 'Mandala', in the lower one he writes 'Acting'; at the intersection, he writes 'Sacred'. The MAESTRO and the RESEARCHER ceremoniously light the candle).

MAESTRO: Why is acting a sacred art? We would like to begin by sharing with you what is for us a sacred art. One of the best examples of a sacred art is the art of making a Tibetan mandala. But what is the Tibetan mandala?

(The MAESTRO uncovers the Mandala hanging at the center of the stage).

MAESTRO: This is an image of a Tibetan mandala. The Sanskrit word 'mandala' means a sacred cosmogram. You will find that most cultures in the world use some kind of cosmogram.

The origins of the Tibetan mandala, in particular, go back to Tantric Buddhism in India - a tradition that is more than 2500 years old.

Mandalas are tools for the re-consecration of the energies of the world,

and for healing its inhabitants. The iconography is based in sacred geometry and ancestral symbols. Mandalas have an external, internal and a secret level of meaning.

The external level presents the divine form of mother earth. The internal level is a map that traces the journey of how the ordinary human mind can be transformed into an enlightened mind. Through the secret level we discover the perfect balance that exists between the most subtle energies of the body and the enlightened dimension of the mind.

This design teaches us how the circulation of the purifying energies in the universe is transmitted. It contains the four directions - represented by the four gateways which lead toward the centre point - each one represented by a specific colour, depending on the mandala in question, because there are an infinite number of mandalas. It could almost be said that each human being is a living mandala, with some aspects in common but each one completely different to the others.

A mandala can be of a regular size or it can be very large. The circles, lines and particular details of the design are created with strict precision. The colours which are used are directly connected with the subtlest energies of the spirit.

Mandalas are created laboriously and with great patience. Sometimes, fine coloured sand is used; sometimes powders made out of flower petals, herbs and corn. Sometimes they are made out of fine painted stones and sometimes even of gemstones. The time that it takes for making a mandala varies between five to seven days, or even weeks, depending on the size.

To create the mandala, little by little, delicate silver funnels are used. It is almost as if, grain by grain, a miracle is being realised. One false movement and the whole process has to be started all over again.

The monks always begin the construction of the mandala from the centre outwards. During the process, their breathing and their minds are connected to mantras. Mantras are words or phrases with neuronal resonance connected to the Source, the original primal vibration. These mantras help

with maintaining, in the here and now, the presence of unconditional love toward all sentient beings.

As the mandala is finally finished, it is a radiant work of art, so charged and beautiful that it enraptures the eyes and soul of anyone who sees it.

The completion of the mandala is celebrated by offering its beauty and its power to the forces of nature. This moment is a turning point. Immediately afterwards, a farewell ceremony is carried out, and in four large spiralling sweeps, the mandala is destroyed. All the sand is collected into one pile and it is placed into the closest source of water; it may be a river, a stream, a lake, or the sea. It is placed there so that its purifying energies may move through the world healing all its inhabitants.

This sacred design teaches us detachment, impermanence, learning to let go. The monks don't construct the mandalas to last forever, because they know nothing is eternal.

Being able to make a thing of great value and beauty, a work of art, and still to have the capacity to let it go is an astonishing achievement. We learn that this letting go keeps us in the sanity of a cosmos which dances with an unexplainable serenity and joy - an infinite cosmic dance, unable to contain or to define itself. When you see the finished mandala, the first reaction is to say: 'it should stay perfectly as it is, no one should touch it, it should be contained like this forever', but you cannot contain reality. Reality is a living act, in constant motion, like the water in a stream, and this is why the mandala is a sacred art. So, we invite you to drink to that.

(The MAESTRO offers tequila to the audience and, having taken their glasses, they all drink).

Why is acting a sacred art? What is acting

(The MAESTRO picks out one of the rolls of paper in the umbrella stand and opens it).

This actor is called Johnny Depp.

(It is the image of Antonin Artaud. The RESEARCHER laughs).

No, this is not Johnny Depp.

(The MAESTRO hangs Artaud's image from the hanger, and takes out another roll. He shows it).

This is Johnny Depp.

(The MAESTRO hangs Johnny Depp's image from the hanger).

He (*indicating Johnny Depp*) declared that for constructing a character for theatre you need great discipline, patience, studies, and a vast psychophysical training - the result of which is acting with a very high artistic value, which can be appreciated for the fascination it has over the audience.

When it is done well, acting becomes an art that expands consciousness and brings joy to those who see it. All the effort and perseverance that it took to build this character exist only in the moment when the actor is on stage. When the performance is over ... the character disappears, ceases to exist. And at the end of the last performance, that character which was so painstakingly built – by revealing the true colours of the deepest human emotions – must be released by the actor. In order to stay sane, the actor must let go of the character, so it may return to the emptiness out of which it emerged.

Johnny Depp says the actor has to have the capacity for a very rigorous creative process, and the ability for a deep detachment. The art of acting is to create, nourish, offer and vanish; it does not seek eternity - what is sought is the celebration of the present moment.

Harsh work to construct something that nourishes society, hard work to let it go. This is why acting is a sacred art, just as the art of making a mandala.

And it is in that line that, as a Mexican actor, I would like to share with you a couple of synchronicities, which I feel will be interesting for you to know. You see, we have to know as much as we can in our intention to make acting a flourishing mandala.

You might remember that in Ancient Greece, through a very particular ceremony, and by using divine substances - in this case, ambrosia - the actors came into direct contact with the sacred; right? Well, in Tenochtitlan, also

through a particular ceremony, and using the 'enlightened divine' (peyote), and the 'sanctified children' (sacred mushrooms), one would come into direct contact with the sacred. This is the first parallel, or synchronicity: Dionysus in Greece, Xochipilli in Tenochtitlan - big chiefs!

The second parallel - (remember, coincidence doesn't exist!): Those who were chosen to be initiated in the rites of the Eleusis, or in the Tlalocan rites, had to cross the famous three gateways. In Greece, the first one was...

RESEARCHER: 'Know yourself'.

MAESTRO: Exactly. And so, I ask myself - what would be the equivalent in Tenochtitlan? In the Nahuatl wisdom, we find...

RESEARCHER: 'Labra tu cara, trabaja tus facciones, ten un rostro para mirar mi rostro y que te mire, para mirar la vida hasta la muerte' [Work on your face, work on your features, have a face to look at my face and to look at yourself, to look at life until death].

MAESTRO: Very good. The second one in Greece...

RESEARCHER: 'Control yourself'.

MAESTRO: Which in Mexico is...

RESEARCHER: 'Be like a torch which does not leave smoke'.

MAESTRO: That's it. And the third one in Greece is... 'You can do it because you believe you can'.

RESEARCHER: 'My heart is a bird with wings'.

MAESTRO: These are two synchronicities which may be found between two apparently different traditions, both with a strong connection with theatre. So, I ask myself, today, here and now, not only in Greece or in Tenochtitlan but, rather, in any part of the world, what possibility do we have as actors to gain knowledge and understanding, in a deep manner, of our human condition and, at the same time, to touch the sacred? How could we do that?

What could we do, what could we eat or... whatever - in order to cross that threshold?

I have something here... (*The MAESTRO looks for something inside his briefcase, which is on top of the table*).

Please, fear me not!

By my judgement - and this is a very personal point of view, nowadays, I think - one of the best, healthiest options is to... work with Shakespeare. Shakespeare - big chief! He always makes us touch deep into our human condition. Please, be attentive of how it touches you (*indicating the RESEARCHER*).

RESEARCHER: (*playing a scene from Hamlet*).

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

[...] Could force his soul so [...]

That from her working all his visage

wann'd;

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

A broken voice [...]

[...] And all for

nothing!

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her? What would

he do,

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have? He would drown the stage

with tears, [...]

Make mad the guilty, and appal the free [...]

Yet I, [...]

[...] the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and
hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with
words, [...]
[...] Fie upon't! foh!
About, my brains. Hum – [...]
[...] I'll have
these players
Play something like the murder of my
father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick. If 'a do blench,
I know my course [...]
[...] The play's the
thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the
King. (*Hamlet*, II.ii, 542 - 601)

MAESTRO: 'Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King'... where I will catch my own conscience... Working with Shakespeare, we will never stop learning about ourselves. So, what do you say if we share now with these actors the scene where Hamlet gives instructions to the gang of actors? But now, for fun... in Spanish.

RESEARCHER: In Spanish?

MAESTRO: Harsh, isn't it? But... you can because you believe you can.

RESEARCHER: Ok, 'my heart is a bird that flies'.

(*The RESEARCHER plays the scene among the audience*).

Te ruego que recites el pasaje
tal y como lo he declamado yo, con

soltura y naturalidad, pues si lo haces
 a voz en grito, como acostumbran muchos
 de vuestros actores, valdría más
 que diera mis versos a que los voceara
 el pregonero. Guárdate también de ase-
 rrar demasiado el aire, así, con la ma-
 no. Moderación en todo, pues hasta en
 medio del mismo torrente, tempestad y
 aún podría decir torbellino de tu pasión,
 debes tener y mostrar aquella templan-
 za que hace suave y elegante la expre-
 sión. No seas tampoco demasiado tímido;
 en esto tu propia discreción debe guiarte.
 Que la acción responda a la palabra
 Y la palabra a la acción, poniendo un especial
 cuidado en no traspasar los límite de la sen-
 cillez de la naturaleza, porque todo lo que a
 ella se opone se aparta igualmente del
 propio fin del arte dramático,
 cuyo objeto, ha sido y es
 presentar un espejo a la humanidad;
 mostrar a la virtud sus propios rasgos,
 al vicio su verdadera imagen y a cada
 edad y generación su fisonomía y sello
 característico. Y no permitáis que los que
 hacen de graciosos ejecuten más de lo
 que se les esté indicado, porque algunos
 de ellos empiezan a dar risotadas para
 hacer reír a unos cuantos espectadores
 imbéciles, aún cuando en aquel preciso
 momento algún punto esencial de la pieza

reclame la atención. Esto es indigno, y
revela en los insensatos que lo practican
la más estúpida pretensión.
Id a preparaos⁵⁰.

MAESTRO: Thank you, dear; that was very good. (*To the audience*) Sorry, you don't speak very good Spanish? Don't worry, I don't speak very good English, either.

I think that now it might be a very good time to tell our friends what it is exactly that you are investigating here in Mexico.

RESEARCHER: Well, I am currently investigating methods used in Tenochtitlan for the transformation of the actor.

MAESTRO: As you might know, she [*indicating the RESEARCHER*] is doing a transdisciplinary investigation, looking for the internal and external connections between different practices which suggest that everything in the universe is interconnected and, also, in a state of constant transformation.

Transdisciplinarity is a part of quantum theory, and it is through this interconnectedness that we can begin to recognise our own lineage as actors, which is based in a profound connection with the forces of nature; that is to say, we belong to the lineage of the God Pan who, incidentally, suffered in the flesh, through the offices of the Holy Mother Catholic Church, so that his image was transformed into a symbol of the infernal beast, the devil himself, *el diablo*, his religion forbidden and persecuted and his heirs, the actors, that gang of whores and bastards, demonized by excommunication, a label which still today hangs over our head. But anyway, that's another story. We, the actors, are still standing, and continue doing our job of communication, because, essentially, the actor is a communicator. Of course, there are different types of communicators, sacred and...

50 An archaic expression in Spanish, meaning 'Go to prepare yourself'.

(*To the **RESEARCHER***) Would you please help me? Could you respond, through movement, to what I'm saying?

(*The **RESEARCHER** nods, stands up and takes off her shoes. She follows the **MAESTRO'S** speech with bodily expression. The **MAESTRO** writes on the blackboard: 'GOLD' - 'LEAD'*).

MAESTRO: When you give a lead actor 100%, he only transmits 30%, and he swallows 70%; he is a lousy conductor! On the other hand, you have the golden actor, he is given 100% and he delivers 100%; he is an excellent transmitter. Are they different? Of course, one transmits 30 out of 100 and the other 100 out of a 100. Nevertheless, scientists tell us that the material composition of lead and gold is the same, the only difference that exists - and this is an important point for us - is molecular speed; lead has a low molecular speed and gold has a very high one. Hence, we define our techniques for actor training as 'molecular accelerators'. When people realize that our theatre pedagogy is based on molecular acceleration, usually there is a lack of understanding and resistance to this view; the transmutation of lead into gold is perceived as impossible. However, this process of transformation is an ongoing battle in the training of the actor and nobody notices that this is the very same transformation which is sought for in Nahuatl and Buddhist wisdom.

That is to say, what is sought for is the transformation of an ordinary human mind into an awakened mind: that is the work of the actor! This is the correct attitude! This transformation is a powerful work and we inherited this lineage from those who served, with passion, the tradition of theatre.

And there's more for us - reading carefully, we can learn from people like Mircea Eliade, Joseph Campbell, James Frazer, Victor Turner, Arnold Toynbee, among others, that the theatre is the oldest religion of humanity.

To understand this well we will share with you a map which we have followed and worked on for years. Could you please continue helping me, but, please, now let your hair down... flow...

(*The **MAESTRO** erases the writing on the blackboard and writes: 'ENERGY'*).

MAESTRO: In the beginning, say ‘those who know’, the universe was an ocean of undifferentiated energy, which manifested itself as a runaway river, on whose banks the human being was born and performed acts of gratitude and appreciation. These acts of gratitude and appreciation prefigure, and end up initiating, the appearance of the rite.

(The MAESTRO draws, below the word ‘ENERGY’, an undulating wave, below which, he writes ‘Rite’).

Rite/river - the first religion of humanity, which manifested in a seriously theatrical form, served as a structure to celebrate the flow of the Universe. At this stage, the stories of our origins begin to appear: the Bible, the Popol Vuh, the Kalevala and many others.

This rite or rites - because they appear all over the planet, slowly and gently, in very different ways, depending on time and space - bring forth the myth.

Now it is no longer just a celebration and recognition of pure energy; it becomes a celebration of energy manifested as deities, with specific characteristics defined by the group who perceives and constructs them. To some it would be Zeus, to others Wotan, and others still, Quetzalcoatl. In Tenochtitlan, you might know, we are in the domain of the left-handed Hummingbird.

(The MAESTRO writes below ‘Rite’, the word ‘Myth’).

And so, here, the stories and adventures of the gods begin to appear, and ritual and myth intertwine, making a maze like a network of divine relationships that no one really understands ...

And to make these energies, in our reality, more comprehensible to us, we create the epic stage.

(The MAESTRO writes below ‘Myth’, the word ‘Epic’).

At this point, the sagas, the epic adventures and stories of heroes appear; their battles, their victories and decadence ...

And, finally, theatre appears.

(The MAESTRO writes the word ‘Theatre’ below ENERGY - Rite - Myth - Epic).

Here, the passions and desires of ordinary women and men are presented and considered: the wonderful array of lights and shadows of our human condition; our fears, anxieties, pains and jealousy.

All the emotional upheaval that characterizes us is portrayed here, and we are not conscious that this is the lowest level of the original energy. And here we all are, and anyone who says he's not, is lying. And because we are so confused, we are always asking Who am I?, What is this all about? What is important in life? We make a labyrinth of psychological, ideological, political, farcical, tragic, comical, intellectual and pornographic theatre.

RESEARCHER: But also sacred theatre - holy theatre.

MAESTRO: Yes, also sacred actions through theatre. This (*pointing to the diagram on the blackboard*) is the historiographical journey of the oldest religion of humanity and also - at this point - the most prostituted: theatre.

However, it is important to remember that there exists a theatrical lineage which remains connected to the Source. It has survived, and appears, from time to time, in different places - usually in small, isolated and ignored groups, without almost anyone noticing. They move like a sacred gang, and I wonder, what could the purpose of this gang be?

RESEARCHER: To overcome the inertia and restore to the human being, through theatre, her original function.

MAESTRO: Which is?

RESEARCHER: To align us with the Universe.

MAESTRO: But how?

RESEARCHER: From any doorway which theatre might offer to open, in this very moment, I think it is possible to return to our origins. Like they say in Tenochtitlan - Turn our gaze to the sun.

MAESTRO: Turn our gaze to the sun... Saying that, you shine beautifully.

RESEARCHER: But do not stare at me, lest you fall into the abyss I have become!

MAESTRO: Fall into the abyss which you've become ... falling into the abyss which I myself have become... into the abyss which each of us have become.

And there we are, wallowing in the filthy sewer in which our distorted perceptions move...⁵¹

However, there is still hope. Theatre, in its immense generosity, gives us all a gateway through which to become conscious of our own abyss; to ferociously recognize it and move beyond it. Theatre gives us the chance to reclaim ourselves and, if we achieve the energy level required, we may raise our status from humans to the epic level, and become heroes of our own adventure.

And if we want to move forward still more, we raise our energy once again to reach the mythical level and we become our own gods, and if there is some energy still, we can leap, like solar salmons, to reach the point where we are able to make our own personal rite. Can we do this?

RESEARCHER: 'I can do it, because I believe I can do it'.

MAESTRO: To do this, through theatre, is to make your heart fly, and that is a sacred art. And the way society is today, this art is not at all profitable.

RESEARCHER: But Maestro, theatre, as a cultural product, has to be profitable and make money, because if it doesn't, you can't live off it.

MAESTRO: Really, you think that?

RESEARCHER: You can't live off the cosmic banana!

MAESTRO: My Dear, that hurts... So, if it is not profitable it has no right to exist.

RESEARCHER: I think it would be very very difficult for it to survive.

MAESTRO: What are you looking for, Dear, Hollywood?

RESEARCHER: Why not?

MAESTRO: Is there something there for people like us?

51 A reference to Pierre Klossowski's *Roberte ce soir* (1953).

RESEARCHER: Sometimes.

MAESTRO: You are right - sometimes...

RESEARCHER: ... would you allow me...

MAESTRO: Please do.

RESEARCHER: I find it is very easy to forget about proper self-defence. And I'm not talking about martial arts or anything like that; I'm talking about the artist's self-defence against certain politicians, economists, governors and businessmen who use terms such as budgets, overall cost, sales and profit margins, as if that was the purpose of theatre. As we all know, when there are funding cuts, the first thing that is left out is culture. The idea that a nice pair of shoes is better than a good book is outrageous. And so, I ask you, when did you last read Aristotle's *Poetics*? You have read it, right? If one really wants to do theatre, we have to read the *Poetics* of ancient Greece, the *Toltecáyotl* of the Nahuas, because these texts define and justify artistic activity as part of our basic nourishment necessary for our healthy development. Obviously there exist artistic activities that may not be profitable but are essential tools for us to become mature human beings. Why? Because theatre, and art, almost always predicts, senses, sometimes defines very accurately, the most subtle social and spiritual changes taking place. In theatre's interiors our future belief system is prepared and this is invaluable, priceless, it cannot be measured in money or gold. This is why it is necessary to learn proper self-defence... May I?

MAESTRO: Of course...

(The RESEARCHER hangs a sign from the blackboard, which says: 'We will be called enemies of morality, but we will only be inventors of our selves' Nietzsche).

MAESTRO: The thing is - (although it might be out of our reach, I think it is good to mention it) - here, we are talking about the actor and acting with a capital A. The actor sought after by Artaud, Grotowski, Brecht, and, in Mexico, several great masters such as Mendoza, Azar, Gurrola, Valencia,

Darien ... And right here, in this space, now, it is possible that there are among us some who have the necessity and the need to re-invent themselves, to reach the point where 'nothing which is human is alien to us'.

RESEARCHER: If we understand and apply what the Maestro is telling us, we will be using theatre as a vehicle to reconcile our differences - a vehicle of transportation and transformation which allows for the appearance of a cosmic consciousness. (*To the MAESTRO*) And it is a practical way, right? It is a question of doing....

MAESTRO: Yes, and rather than trying to explain this, if you agree, we will try, practically, to touch this register.

(*To the audience*) We are going to do an exercise of sensitization, including physical contact with our partners, and non-rational communication, ok? Please, let us self-observe, and note which is the nucleus of energy with which we came here today. You may be here with your partner, a friend, an acquaintance, or maybe you came here alone. These relationships interweave as a nucleus - a core of energy. Now, please, consciously, move away and detach from this core. Consciously separate yourself, and look for a place in the space where you are by yourself.

I ask you to play fairly - really do the exercise. We need to open up, be really willing to live this process.

So, I move to an area where I am by myself. (*The audience stand up and spread out in the space*).

There, I look at my hands - the palms of my hands. These are mine. And slowly I raise them to my face, closing my eyes, and touch my face, I observe myself, I touch my head, I touch my chest, my belly, my back, my arms, my legs, my knees, my feet, and I become aware of the fact that I am physically here and now.

I am attentive to my interior. All stimuli I receive from outside awakens personal processes. If someone touches my hand, it is not important to find out to whom that particular hand belongs; it is more important to observe

the image, emotions or feelings that that touch awakens within me.

We will cross a space and time, encountering some of the worlds which are within us.

I'm in a group, and I'm safe behind closed doors. I feel the group, but I am aware of myself. I don't make any judgement about the people by my side. I do not know them. I have no idea who they are. I just know that, right now, they are other human beings committed to doing an exercise so as to look inside themselves, and being here together we may help each other to look inside ourselves and so, they are accomplices with good faith.

Please do not open your eyes until I ask you to. Have no temptation to look outwards. Focus on looking inward.

Touching the entire body until we reach the feet and when there, feel how, out of your feet, you grow roots into the ground.

With good faith, kindly start moving in different directions; waving your body like seaweed.

(Silence)

But love, [is] first learned in a lady's eyes [...]
 They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
 They are the books, the arts, the academes,
 That show, contain and nourish all the world,
 Else none at all in ought proves excellent. (*Love's Labour Lost*, IV, iii,
 323-350)

(Silence)

Let's make a circle.

(The audience sits, forming a circle. The paper with the signature of the spectators and the candle are in the centre).

We are converted into that which we contemplate.

(Silence).

RESEARCHER:

...and it is not known, if before or after his death,
He looked into a mirror facing god,
And god told him,
'never stop being an actor,
Because just as me, you are everything and nothing.
And through your dreams Shakespeare exists.
And so do I.⁵²

*(The **RESEARCHER** picks up the lit candle and the page of signatures from the centre of the circle. She gives them to the **MAESTRO**. The **MAESTRO** stands up and together they go towards the blackboard which has transformed into a mirror. They look at each other; both touch the mirror. Darkness. In the darkness, we listen to the sound of the mirror shattering. Immediately afterwards, the lights come up to reveal that the mirror has disappeared and the **MAESTRO** and the **RESEARCHER** are on the other side of the threshold).*

MAESTRO: *(To the **RESEARCHER**)* 'I have crossed oceans of time to find you...'⁵³

RESEARCHER: *(Looking at the audience)* We have crossed oceans of time to find you...

*They walk to the back of the stage. With the candle, the **RESEARCHER** sets fire to the paper with the audience's signatures, and puts it inside a bowl until it is consumed. Music. The **MAESTRO** and the **RESEARCHER** dance for some seconds. Darkness.*

END

52 From the poem 'The Actor' by Jorge Luis Borges, in *Poesía completa* (2009).

53 A reference to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.