

Editorial

Politics - To keep on making theatre is in itself a political choice: opting for human relationships rather than mechanical, for intimacy rather than mass media, for memory and resistance rather than neglect and success. *Politics* has very different meanings across time and geography, and the meaning is constantly changing. *Politics* can quickly be related to power: a way to keep in power, or a way to criticise, overthrow, counterbalance and take power; a way to live, survive and deal with power or a way of separating from power and of refusing. Women in the world are now feeling a greater political responsibility and are making a point of having their opinions heard. In theatre, women create performances which take a position, denounce or inform; women give new importance to the contents of shows and resolutely take part in social movements and activities. For a long time the form was the content and the stress for change and development was on *how* to make theatre, now it seems that many women are pointing towards giving more consideration to *what* is said with theatre and *where* they place their work.

For the third issue of *The Open Page* dedicated to the theme *Theatre-Women-Politics*, we have gathered articles which give an image of the very different way in which politics affect women's work in theatre. Some women have experienced great changes in their countries, with revolutions, counter-revolutions, dictatorships and new unstable democracies; others have been engaged in political theatre or still are, but in a different way. Some women need to confront contemporary political issues; others prefer to keep a distance between their artistic work and their demonstrations in support of the causes they believe in. Some women have already proved their commitment in the past, but have remained largely obscure; others do not speak of politics, but of funding, censorship, economic pressures, family and village structures.

We have received many articles and we have had to choose amongst them. Judith Malina, Ariane Mnouchkine and Franca Rame had to be part of this issue of *The Open Page*. Their important political engagement in theatre, their struggle which has resisted time, their courage and integrity are certainly an example for many of us. But to leave room for less known theatre practitioners, we decided to print just some quotes from texts by these three women as a reminder of their vision and work. The articles should be read taking into account the context within which the authors are active. We do not necessarily agree with the positions taken, but we value a space where disagreement is possible and where differences can be shared. We wanted to keep a balance, but we are aware that some voices are missing. With the next issue we hope that our horizons will reach out to all corners of the world. The articles could be subdivided into general, historical, interviews and dialogues, particular projects and poetry ... but the words quickly abandon one category to reach out for another. All articles have geographical references, as if the reality of *Politics* keeps us attached to the earth. Going from one article to the next we are reminded of injustice and poverty, of isolation and war, of unemployment and exploitation, but also of hope, joy, dignity and dreams. The written words of these women remind us of the socially active role of theatre today and of the personal sense that each of us must give to our actions, both on stage and in life.

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