

# Editorial

Angelika Göken died soon after I made the interview with her for this issue of *The Open Page*. The openness and courage of her words are an example for all of us in our everyday struggles. But she died - and death is too real and final to deal with. It transforms struggle into a question of how to continue living despite a reality which is just too harsh. The answer I found for myself is in letting Angelika live on through the interview, allowing her words also to give courage to her family and theatre group so that they continue the work that she was not able to finish.

Different is the reality of the macho culture of Venezuela for Lali Armengol, the cruelty of Pol Pot's government for Em Theay, the shock of her rape for Franca Rame. Despite many articles talking of illness, repression, insurmountable obstacles, unfavourable conditions, insecurities and a feeling of rejection by history, this issue of *The Open Page* exudes a general attitude of determination, optimism, authority, energy and strength. The authors were encouraged to think of struggle in a constructive and active way and the result points towards an understanding of struggle as being at the very heart of our theatre work as women, be it social, political, cultural, personal or professional.

Talent is very rarely something we can rely on, and many women have built their technique and approach autonomously to find, master, change and renew themselves. Step by step, their paths are filled with hurdles and emptiness, with insurmountable walls and vast deserts, with disagreements and solitude, with the desire and frustration of collective work. The list of professional challenges that need to be surmounted in order to acquire experience, for actors and dancers who struggle with their bodies and voices, for directors who struggle with the ability to concretise their visions, is completed by many articles referring to battles with words, meetings and power. As women practitioners we also struggle to document our work and be more present in theatre history.

In order to continue, we need to find a new meaning in our actions, so as not to repeat ourselves or take shortcuts. We need to make choices which involve challenge and risk, to follow unexplored directions, and to remain faithful to the original motivation although confronting all the necessary dimensions that our theatre activity simultaneously requires.

The eternal struggle is to invent ways of making theatre that will take a position and leave a trace, influence our surroundings and give us the strength to face the future.

JuliaVarley  
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