

WIND AND ROCKS

I have always been taught never to speak about theater work in words. When Ana asked me to make these comments, I immediately understood why. Words are not capable of transmitting all that happens in this kind of work, and they will contain only part of what was there. Later, you will remember only the words and their half-truths.

What I came to Transit for, and what was the most valuable experience of this workshop for me, was to see the work of young teachers, who are not "Odin Monsters" (see Leo Sykes' article in Issue 5 of The Open Page) and are still extremely effective and successful. That was the kind of hope I needed the most now.

What I noticed in the work of the new generation, and I mean both Ana and Hisako, was a search for enjoyment in the work. Ana's salsa and Hisako's work with the "egg of energy" are like spring flowers grown on the soil of the suffering faces from the old training films.

Another important thing their workshop reminded me of was that the best way to learn and teach was not the conscious one, instead of comments using a grasping rhythm and the power of a group being together in the work, and changing the quality of energy of the consecutive ways of working according to what you hear in the room.

That made a few miracles possible. One was the first day of Ana's salsa training - how everyone immediately "got it" from the very beginning. Another was the misunderstanding of "sole" and "soul" in Hisako's instructions - when she said "touch the floor with your sole" and everybody understood "flow with your soul" - they did exactly what was needed and the energy in the room suddenly became very pure. The last miracle happened when Hisako kept the salsa music for her classical Japanese dance walk, followed by individual singing while still keeping the walk.

Ana also asked me to write about my own associations and any ideas this work might induce in me. Two things came to my mind during the workshop. One was about generations in theater. I remembered a session of the "Academy of Theater Practice" run by "Gardzienice" Theater in Poland. The Academy is a two-year course with five-day sessions once a month. Most of the students are in their twenties and only one of them is an actor. One day they rebelled and demanded to be told exactly where the Academy work is leading to, what is the expected result, whether there will be auditions to the Gardzienice ensemble afterwards, and so on. The Gardzienice actors were listening to it not believing and not understanding. Especially when one student said "I want to know what I am investing in". Interesting clash of "new Poland" with the "old Grot".

The other is about women. When we were asked to say what for us "theater", "woman" and "generations" are, one of the answers was that a woman is something very soft, but also very contained, strong in the sense of perseverance. It made me think of an epileptic girl who came to one of the workshop sessions our group (Remus Theater) is running in

North-Eastern Poland, in a community of unemployed farm workers. She said she couldn't participate in most of the work we were doing because of her illness, and then clung to me seeking physical contact for the rest of the session. I guess her illness makes it impossible for her to reach for that mysterious source of feminine strength.

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