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Texts FROM THE HEART

Translated by the author with Paul Allain



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Dedicated to Marta Steiner – theatre anthropologist
and expert on Chinese classical theatre, who has been
courageously fighting Guillain-Barré syndrome which
paralyzed her in December 2012

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Introduction

True words are not beautiful
Beautiful words are not true.

Laozi: *Tao Te Ching*, 81.1

This book contains a handful of reflections which create the intellectual background for STUDIO || ROSA's training and performance work and which are its specific extensions. These thoughts – included in the ten 'texts for nothing' – emerged as if from under the floor, 'from the underground' and took shape in anticipation of the practice, during its course and during its aftermath. Hopefully they may turn out to be useful for others and help them to see more clearly their own pathways. Since these texts owe their existence to the practice, they are preceded here by basic information about STUDIO || ROSA and its theatrical duet. As a postscript I share a poem written at a time when everything seemed to be possible...

STUDIO || ROSA is a space between people that serves long-term work on oneself and research into the relationship between actor training and theatre creation.

The work is focused on awareness and the harmonization of breath, body and voice. At its heart is a quality of lightness, sought in the flow of actions and dialogues with oneself, an environment, a partner, a group. We strive to make this present in training and improvisations, understood as a space for being playful. Improvisations help to build a bridge between training and the spheres of the imagination, composition and creation. It is in this domain where performances appear – created by a common effort.

Rosa is Polish for *dew*. The Studio is called ‘Pracownia Rzemiosła oraz Sztuki Aktorskiej’ in Polish, which literally means: a place of work for the craft and art of acting.

Since September 2012 STUDIO || ROSA has been carrying out the Acting Techniques Intensive Seminar ATIS at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

ATIS is of a highly practical and exploratory nature and is dedicated to the study of the performer’s elementary and advanced skills, such as the ability to:

- be open to dialogue and sharing with others
- integrate action, silence, sound, speech and song

- react swiftly and precisely to impulses which come from partners, literary and other texts, images, music, space and nature as well as from the inner sphere of associations, the imagination and from memories.

The seminar – rooted in an anthropological approach – is addressed to those international artists, researchers and students who wish to study acting and theatre as well as to those who would like to deepen, in a practical way, their understanding of human creativity and expression.

Between 2012 and 2015 nine seminars have been held in Poznań and Brzezinka for forty people (with some of them participating several times) from the following countries: Armenia, Catalonia, Cyprus, England, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Spain, Turkey, and the United States.

Duet ON SILENCE

Who's going to mobilise darkness and silence?

Caryl Churchill: *Far Away*

The Duet ON SILENCE, composed of STUDIO || ROSA's twin performances: TAZM *Silence of Light* and HEART *Silence of Polygon*, is an attempt to confront the paradox of speaking about what cannot be put into words. And not just because when you pronounce this 'oddest' of words – *silence* – you destroy it, as the poet Wisława Szymborska would say. Although it is often impossible to speak about human and animal suffering because it is too far from words and paralyzing, one must not be silent about it. But then – to utilize Samuel Beckett's question – 'what is the Word'?



TAZM *Silence of Light* depicts attempts to find an internal vertical axis in a situation of extreme, inhumane, or perhaps – unfortunately – arch-human oppression. It raises questions about what a person's source of strength is that helps him or her survive in extreme conditions which destroy the body and heart-mind.

The performance is based on Tahar Ben Jelloun's *This Blinding Absence of Light*. The book is a literary adaptation of an account by a former prisoner of a dungeon in Morocco, who survived eighteen years (from the 1970s till the beginning of the 1990s) in the darkness of TAZMAMART.

Maciej Zakrzewski and Maria Bohdziewicz during a rehearsal of *TAZM Silence of Light*,
26 April 2014, Theatre Studio in Collegium Maius of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań,
photo. Jakub Wittchen

