

## Working Texts

### For workshops and projects

### Advice, comments, examples, suggestions

Latest texts at the end of document. Latest update : 24 July 2021

If you are looking for a text, and like one of those commented here, do not hesitate to take it on as a working text.

These pages are in PDF format for printing (A4 European settings)  
<http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-textos.pdf> (español)  
<http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-textes.pdf> (français)

Classic request:

- 1 Participants are asked to choose and bring at least one text of minimum 300 words or more, learnt by heart. (For weekends the text can be 150 to 200 words.) For longer workshops it is good to have a long text : the day a big improvisation is set up you will enjoy the long perspective - otherwise you might have to loop back to the beginning: a pity!
- 2 The work starts with the fantasies and realities of this choice - the text you chose is in many ways your **working artistic contract**, the challenge you give yourself and bring to the work.
- 3 The choice of text is free: it does not have to be a theatre text. Best in English or French for general comprehension (but also Spanish and Italian.) Avoid texts that are too poetically condensed or linguistically complex. We encourage contemporary texts. (Enrique Pardo's especial request : please refrain from Shakespeare – see below.)
- 4 If you decide to bring more than one working text, be cunning about the contrasts between them. For example: genre (maybe bring a theatre monologue and a piece of prose); dramatics (one, full of exclamation marks, the other, dispassionate); cadence (one, written in short percussive phrases, the other in rhetorical prose, etc.)
- 5 Finally: The better one knows one's text 'by heart', the freer one is... to free the text, to let it play. Also, you will have your hands full while on the floor, so it is essential to be free of memory struggles.

Do not hesitate to consult us on these matters.

#### TEXT CHOICE ADVICE (by Enrique Pardo)

Text advice : I tend to refrain from too much advice for, "the choice is yours and the work starts with your choice". I would encourage greed (ambition) and whim (cunning) in choosing. Mind you, some people chose by casting lots! - like in the old days, when one would open at random Virgil's Ennead (the I Ching was not around). But there again, such a procedure implies a library, with choices. I include a compilation of technical responses to texts proposals. It might help.

"What is contemporary?": here again, I must let you decide. I hear in the question more than 'chronology', possibly also questions of "modernity", "avantgarde", in other words artistic criteria (coherence, emotion, narrative, etc.)

Dada poems: the danger with a 'dada' text (whatever that means to you) is an a priori attitude that can void the text of content (logical, psychological & sentimental) by using a metalanguage which gives you, as an actress, little emotional feedback.... But I like surprises: dada texts certainly have humour, and usually great rhythm.

Shakespeare: the density, complexity and archaic nature of Shakespeare's language does not lend itself to choreographic theatre work – plus, being a 'foreigner', my Shakespeare is as good (or as bad) as my German. This might not be the case for Linda Wise's projects (consult her directly for projects she directs.)

Extracts from comments for the Workshop cum Cabaret Project at Cambridge Drama Centre: choices are influenced by 'cabaret' performing framework: they tend to be shorter than for experimental / pedagogical workshops.

Example 1

Requiem - Kathy Acker, from "Euridice in the Underworld" 1994(?)

Electra's monologue reporting her reactions to learning she has cancer, including a reported dialogue (in actual dialogue form) with George, her woman healer.

Very strong text (plus the author died very recently of breast cancer). Sad, rebellious, serious. In terms of the "Shadow Boxing" project, you are facing a heavyweight confrontation (I am all for it) - your opponents will be Death and Breast Cancer - large shadows! You, me and all the participants will need lucid courage on this one! The text is long (too long) for the project. You must do the editing, it is part of your work in the project. I would advice you edit and halve its length. I look forwards to seeing what you decided. The final decision to chose this text is also yours - I will fight right along you.

#### Example 2

"I put down my rifle and climbed out of the trench. The Greeks did not shoot at me. I reached Francesco and saw that the side of his head had been blown away. The pieces of skull looked grey and were coated in membrane and thick blood. Some of the fluid was bright red, and some of it was crimson. He was still alive. I looked down at him and my eyes were blinded with tears. I knelt and gathered him into my arms. He was so emaciated from the winter and the hardship that he was as light as a sparrow. I stood up and faced the Greeks. I was offering myself to their guns. There was a silence, and then a cheer came from their lines. One of them shouted hoarsely, 'Bravissimo.' I turned and carried the limp bundle back to my lines. In the trench Francesco took two hours to die. His gore soaked into the sleeves and flanks of my tunic. His shattered head was cradled in my arms like a little child and his mouth formed words that only he could hear. Tears began to follow each other down his cheeks. I gathered his tears on my fingers and drank them. I bent down and whispered into his ear, Francesco, I have always loved you. His eyes rolled up and met mine. He fixed my gaze. He cleared his throat with difficulty and said, I know.

I said, I never told you until now. He smiled that slow laconic smile and said, "Life's a bitch, Carlo." I felt good with you. I saw the light grow dim in his eyes and he began the long slow journey into death. There was no morphia. His agony must have been indescribable. He did not ask me to shoot him; perhaps at the very end he loved his vanishing life."

From Louis de Bernihre's "Captain Corelli's Mandolin" - Comment : the text is great - very poignant - a deep dive, like Francesco's "long slow journey into death" . It is also a good length (for a cabaret piece - maybe short for a training context). With such a text the onus will be on everyone around you (including me) to come up with substantial 'contexts', and lets see if we can live up to the beautiful glimpse of humour in the last exchange between Francesco and Carlo!

#### Example 3

"A Woman's Guide to Adultery" by Carol Clewlow (1992?)

First : the "adult / adultery / adulteration" trilogy is one of my favourite working ones; it is a tough one, and definitely adult. Second, a warning: be ready to be betrayed in your very choice! In other words, we are likely to subvert the comedy tone with which the text presents itself. You might end up in tragedy because shadows take over. This is only a warning, especially since we are using the "cabaret" model, which might too easily suggest light and hermetic humour, or stand-up comedy.

Conclusions, after these warnings: you send me 14 paragraphs in all, each an autonomous vignette on the theme. Each one on its own is a bit short. They are difficult to stick together. Each one is a joke of sorts, and has a comic point built into its structure, usually appearing at the end of the paragraph. These are drawbacks: the 'author' (I mean the text authority, the cultural figure speaking the text, 'voicing' it) is trying to pull you into its literary rhetoric, quite tyrannically (as is usually the case.)

#### Example 4

"Tale of the Two Dreams", from the Thousand and One Nights.

A well-known, good-humoured story. To describe it technically I would say: "a text built as a morality fable, with a surprise finale, narrated by a relatively 'cool' and 'knowing' character. Most of the grammar is in the 3rd person (detached) with only 3 or 4 direct 1st person quotes. It has religious references to another character, Allah. Its 'cliché rendering' would call for a 'cunning orientalisising rendering', with lots of funny impersonations and slightly irreverent references to Allah. Too easy!

So, because of this charming veneer of light and well-behaved humour, it will probably be difficult to pin down its 'deeper' shadows Allah's Shadows! which one might see for instance, and to be quite brutal, in today's Algerian throat slitting?

You can guess what strategies might emerge from your text choice: are you ready to go at "the brutal shadow of Allah's charm, and the corresponding 'shiftiness' of the narrator's tone"?

## Example 5 (3 choices - participant finally chose the first proposal)

1 Roddy Doyle, "The Woman Who Walked Into Doors" (238 words) - Good working text good length directly interesting from a dramatic delivery (1st person "I" and "them", and rhythmic repetitive rhetoric). Plus ghost ("nobody saw me") and shadow overlap ironies. An interesting challenge: a man saying a woman's text, especially this one involving an 'effaced' woman... In all these aspects there can be interesting "shadow" work.

2 Jack Kerouac, Poem (82 words) - I also like this poem a lot its condensed impact can make up for it being short only 82 words. Here Kerouac takes a shadow stand, challenging 'humanity' as it were. And we might, on the other hand, end up exploring the shadow of this projected shadow, Kerouac's loneliness, vulnerability, despair...

3 George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia (201 words). - A very reflective text reflecting about an enforced reflective time: when force to wait (Orwell was expecting immediate war action...). Reflective syntax: longish phrases, with forms of reflective double subjects almost like in dreams when one says "I dreamt that I..." (2 subjects, one person). A guess of course would be that shadows (and ghosts) would rise precisely out of his being stalled in his wish for action (what he calls his "interregnum"). Encounters he might have been running away from, or into (though not those he expected the outside enemy fascists.)

## Example 6

Archy and Meluhabel (sp?) by Don Marquis the observations of a poet reincarnated as a cockroach. It is a great text (especially because of its free verse nonpunctuation speed and colloquial slangy tone.) It will be quite demanding to perform, to do justice to both its ranting quality and its precision of imagery to get one's tongue round the words will imply good corporal discipline.

listen to me i have  
 been mobbed almost  
 there s an old simp cockroach  
 here who thinks he has  
 been to hell and all  
 the young cockroaches make a  
 hero out of him and admire him  
 and he sits and runs his front  
 feet through his long white  
 beard and tells the story one  
 day he says he crawled into a yawning  
 cavern and suddenly came on a  
 vast abyss full of whirling  
 smoke there was a light at the bottom billows  
 and billows of yellow smoke  
 swirled up at him and  
 through the horrid gloom he  
 saw things with wings flying  
 and dropping and dying they veered  
 and fluttered like damned  
 spirits through that sulphurous mist  
 listen i says to him  
 old man you ve never been to hell  
 at all there isn t any hell  
 transmigration is the game i  
 used to be a human vers libre  
 poet and i died and went  
 into a cockroach s body if  
 there was a hell id know  
 it wouldn t i you re  
 irreligious says the old simp  
 combing his whiskers excitedly

ancient one i says to him  
 while all those other  
 cockroaches gathered into a  
 ring around us what you  
 beheld was not hell all that

was natural someone was fumigating  
 a room and you blundered  
 into it through a crack  
 in the wall atheist he cries  
 and all those young  
 cockroaches cried atheist  
 and made for me if it  
 had not been for freddy  
 the rat i would now be  
 on my way once more i mean  
 killed as a cockroach and transmigrating  
 into something else well  
 that old whitebearded devil is  
 laying for me with his  
 gang he is jealous  
 because i took his glory away  
 from him don t ever tell me  
 insects are any more liberal  
 than humans  
     archy

I NEED, I NEED poem by Theodore Roethke (19081963)

As a first text to work with in a "choreographic theatre" context I would not recommend it. The text's "caprice" is so enormous that it will be a fickle partner, very difficult to keep up with. It uses so much "capricious" disjunction, dislocation, tripping and changing. It will either exhaust you (and make YOU feel heavy and numb), or it will draw you into its style and rhetoric : i.e. turn you into the free light child of caprice and interstellar freedom philosophies. The danger is in the free genius of the flying philosopher's child soul, in the un-catchable volatile elusive Pierrot, hinting at everything but fixing nothing, ungraspable, flighty and melancholic (because un-rooted), refusing to collaborate in any form of stability of meaning or emotion. (You see it already turns me into a conservative commentator!) The work in the workshop will be a lot about the problem of "freedom". At first I tend to say "the sooner you, as actor, lose your freedom, the better!" And this text is archetypally about poetic freedom. Yet, as always, I tend to say the choice is yours and challenge is what we are in this business for!

Extract (opening verses)

1.

A deep dish. Lumps in it.  
 I can't taste my mother.  
 Hoo. I know the spoon.  
 Sit in my mouth.

A sneeze can't sleep.  
 Diddle we care.  
 Couldly.

Went down cellar,  
 Talked to a faucet;  
 The drippy water  
 Had nothing to say.

Whisper me over,  
 Why don't you, begonia,  
 There's no alas  
 Where I live.

Scratched the wind with a stick.  
 The leaves liked it.  
 Do the dead bite?  
 Mamma, she's a sad fat.

A dove said dove all day.  
 A hat is a house.  
 I hid in his.

December 2004

Advice to a young actor about to engage in the 7 weeks 2005 professional workshop. A friend recommended Ezra Pound or Charles Olson. Enrique's response:

"Your choices are too complex. No poetry – its too condensed. My advice: Sam Shepard - there is a monologue in one of his plays, very funny and poignant: a young man listens to the sounds of the country (the sleeping tractor in the field among the coyotes) and then his father's car returning (he beats everyone etc.) It is colloquial, psychological, emotional, etc. Excellent for a young actor. He should learn a long one (300 words absolute minimum.) Tell him to do some contemporary theatre searching - and maybe he will come across something that hooks him. He should start nearer Marlon Brando than Ezra Pound!"

October 2005

Text proposals / consultation by Annouchka Bayley – for the PANTHEATRE ACTS training programme.  
Responses from Enrique Pardo (EP)

All words composed by Annouchka Bayley apart from *Zarathustra* which includes excerpts from *Ecce Homo* by F. Nietzsche.

### **Zarathustra**

I prefer to be a satyr rather than a saint. The last thing I would promise would be to improve mankind. I erect no new idols. Perhaps, if I may venture to indicate it, because I possess an uncanny sense of smell. I have in this sensitivity invisible antennae with which I touch and take hold of every secret- all the concealed dirt at the bottom of many a nature. The smell- the proximity- to the point of entrails. The last thing I would promise would be to improve mankind. Let the old idols learn what it means to have feet of clay. To overthrow idols rather, now that is my business. To overthrow the Emperor himself! All sickness and sinews, his skin green and gold and smooth, like the inside of a shell robbed of its jewel, and its bed and its other half now falling 50,000 leagues away! The smell of Emperors cannot be hidden by incense. Oh how I could reek of havoc! A kind of kitchen viciousness, a female insensitivity, all scrambled eggs and birthday parties. The cannibalism that is English cuisine.

I do not refute ideals, I merely- draw gloves on in their presence. I live on my own credit. It is perhaps merely a prejudice that I am alive at all.

Ah- you men! I see an image sleeping in stone, the image of all my visions, of my youth. That it must sleep in the ugliest, hardest stone! I want to take a hammer to the icons, smash the lightbulb that pulses you into being, drown the mirror that has made me invisible, turn my tears into an oil that burns forever!

You say you believe in Zarathustra? But of what importance is Zarathustra? Oh go away from me, lose me and find yourselves and only, only when you have denied me will I return. Go away and guard yourselves from Zarathustra- perhaps he has deceived you.

EP: terrific text to work with, not only because of the satyr's presence (one of my favorite creatures), but because of the mixture of image and philosophical language – i.e. the presence of ideas. Pity it is a bit short for a long term project. In a big improvisation you might find yourself arriving at the end too quickly. On the other hand, it could be the basis for a great "cabaret" sketch. Anyway (and we tested it already), it's a great text for you.

The following texts all have great qualities, but maybe too short on their own. Maybe you can learn those you prefer and start stringing them together, or create an edited collage (especially since some start with strong person location; "my body", "you", "there is", "The Emperors"...). If you did that, and if these writings hold your attention and can channel what you want to express at the moment, I would encourage you to start thinking of a performance-cabaret piece with them. Long term – for next summer. The project could also have the

discipline of keeping them all in and in sequence (could also be a methodological starting point – ambitious – why not?)

My advice on moving towards a piece would be to establish different starting points. You have the texts and their images. Other starting points, which need not be related directly to the texts: costume, objects, musics (sang and recorded.) Get the fantasies of all these elements going and then put them together. You might also find colleagues to help you (or work with) at all levels.

### **The Ship**

My body is a windmill all made of hooks  
 Jealousy cuts in like a shard of ice  
 Digs deep like a thumb pressed into the heart.  
 I thrive on the inward turning circle  
 Like a long thought traced out as far as heaven  
 Winding backwards in  
 On this spool all made of wire and turmoil.  
 Somewhere inside me  
 There is a boat long moored up  
 White as a milktooth  
 Polished as a new penny-copper.  
 The rope loosens slack  
 Frays like the edges of heaven  
 That fall down into this world  
 In a fibre of saints  
 The prow rises  
 Opens to the dawn  
 That pulls the water towards it  
 In a frenzy of pinks  
 The tide turns its face away  
 And sinks deep into the opposite pillow  
 The sails breathe in  
 And billow into fleece.

### **Paper**

You have turned my heart into paper  
 Not flesh and blood,  
 All red and strong  
 Just paper.  
 That falls down quick  
 That lights up the dawn like a terrible sun  
 Undulating and exposed like a snake crossing the curtain.  
 Just paper  
 That folds into a footnote.  
 Whose diamond spine creases like water in a wall  
 Or like the shell of a walnut  
 Sweetening from the inside.  
 Just paper  
 That traces meaning like a fisherman's line after nightfall

Trembling like a glove  
 Or a ghost before the dawn.  
 Just paper  
 That sits in my body like a square moon in the dark  
 Brittle as a bright white porcelain  
 Before the stain of speech moves on.  
 Just paper  
 That rises like a zeppelin  
 And falls like a garland of stones  
 All pulped and tarnished and bitter  
 Expectant as yellow dough.  
 Just paper  
 Whose edges are endings  
 Curling back into the promise of love  
 Sinking further into the floor crease  
 Beating like a broken, silver fish.

### **The River Bed**

There is a river of regret  
 That winds away  
 From the soft blue bowl of childhood  
 Like a long gold snake in the heather  
 Its eyes glittering like crystal in chipped rock.  
 Its belly knows the smell of earth  
 Which cracks and falls  
 Like ancient walls  
 Lying forgotten  
 Like depleted balloons  
 Weighed down by too much ribbon.  
 The grasses sigh,  
 And the sunlight bleaches the day like crumpled linen  
 Wound out from under my rib- thread by thread.  
 Silence slips from my fingers  
 in a hush of ashes  
 and somewhere  
 deep in the past  
 a little girl with sad brown eyes  
 dreams of nothing  
 but brightly coloured candy.

### **The Emperors**

The Emperors are dying.  
 Their skin, green and gold and smooth  
 Like the inside of a shell  
 Robbed of its jewel and its bed and its other half now falling  
 Fifty-thousand leagues away.

Their beards have been shorn  
 Their crowns hung up  
 Their lips kissed raw and red and moist  
 By a procession of princely kisses  
 Still resistant.  
 Now the oil pours down its musk  
 Their listless bodies  
 crackle and hiss.

### Small Words

Small words bite  
 Zig-zagging on invisible ladder rungs  
 That move and choke  
 Like a pair of agitated hands  
 Rolling around and around  
 Word upon word.  
 Tonight I will crack  
 Tonight I will send myself up like red smoke.  
 Into this small blue sky  
 Whose highest hope is to perforate its edhes  
 And lose itself to the stinging meat of dawn.  
 The grass is wet  
 And full of small things  
 Crawling in small worlds  
 Knowing at the ankles of bare-broken summer.  
 There is no room for breath.  
 No puncture in the thick side of night  
 that holds heaven close like a black stitch in the skin.  
 The heather sings shrill,  
 The air is inert  
 The humpbacked houses stink like hospitals  
 The darkening streets lengthen and fill with yellow teeth.

### Icons

If I write about you once more  
 I think my heart will stop  
 I don't dare risk it.  
 The door handle is your right eyebrow  
 The line of the table- your straight jaw  
 The linen hanging on the line is your back  
 The curve in the corridor  
 Your inner thigh.  
 I want to take a hammer to the icons  
 Burn the page that shapes you in ink  
 Drown the mirror that has made me invisible  
 Turn my tears into an oil that burns forever.



*Homo* by F. Nietzsche.

December 2005

Text proposals / consultation by Steven Levine – for the PANTHEATRE ACTS 2006 Professional Workshop.  
 Response from Enrique Pardo (EP) after the poem.

## DEATH FUGUE

Paul Celan

Black milk of daybreak we drink it at evening  
 we drink it at midday we drink it at night  
 we drink and we drink  
 we shovel a grave in the air there you won't lie too cramped  
 A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes  
 he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland your golden hair  
 Marguerite  
 he writes it and steps out of doors and the stars are all sparkling  
     he whistles his hounds to come close  
 he whistles his Jews into rows has them shovel a grave in the ground  
 he orders us strike up and play for the dance

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night  
 we drink you at morning and midday we drink you at evening  
 we drink and we drink  
 A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes  
 he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland your golden hair  
 Marguerite  
 your ashen hair Shulamith we shovel a grave in the air  
     there you won't lie too cramped  
 He shouts jab this earth deeper you lot there you others sing up and  
 play  
 he grabs for the rod in his belt and swings it his eyes are blue  
 jab your spades deeper you lot there you others play on for the  
 dancing

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night  
 we drink you at midday and morning we drink you at evening  
 we drink and we drink  
 a man lives in the house your goldenes Haar Marguerite  
 your aschenes Haar Shulamith he plays with his vipers  
 He shouts play death more sweetly Death is a master from  
 Deutschland  
 He shouts scrape your strings darker you'll rise then in smoke to the  
 sky  
 you'll have a grave then in the clouds there you won't lie too cramped

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night  
 we drink you at midday Death is a master aus Deutschland  
 we drink you at evening and morning we drink and we drink  
 this Death is ein Meister aus Deutschland his eye it is blue  
 he shoots you with shot made of lead shoots you level and true  
 a man lives in the house your goldenes Haar Margerite  
 he looses his hounds on us grants us a grave in the air  
 he plays with his vipers and daydreams  
     der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland

dein goldenes Haar Margarete  
dein aschenes Haar Shulamith

tr. John Felstiner

EP: Dear Steven – it is a great challenge to have Celan come into the work – the “black master”. One is tempted to say that one does not have to seek for the shadows of such a text since it is all shadows; and yet... such an impression is itself probably full of shadows and blind spots. The text’s authority challenges our mobility, and the danger is that we are frozen into the black ice of its monumentality, or fall into its broken shifts and crevasses. Get ready for some strange moves! It will also be hard work to make the poem explicit, to make it speak and say what it is saying. Its syntax is shadowy and elusive, with overlaps, strange cuts, holes, etc. I look forwards to the challenge!

March 2006

Choice for Farnham workshop (Arts Council UK) – exchange with Beth Sheldon.

> For the first text I was planning to put the poems ‘Medusa’  
> and ‘Yearn On’  
> together to work with as one piece. Is this alright to do?  
>  
> The second piece is non-fiction and may be a little long so I was  
> considering cutting at ‘...the mirror steamed over, reflected nothing.’  
>  
> Text 1.

> ‘Medusa’ – Carol Ann Duffy  
>  
> A suspicion, a doubt, a jealousy  
> grew in my mind,  
> which turned the hairs on my head to filthy snakes, as though my  
> thoughts hissed and spat on my scalp.  
>  
> My bride’s breath soured, stank  
> in the grey bags of my lungs,  
> i’m foul mouthed now, foul tongued,  
> yellow fanged.  
> There are bullet tears in my eyes.  
> Are you terrified?  
>  
> Be terrified.  
> It’s you I love.  
>  
> And here you come  
> with a shield for a heart  
> and a sword for a tongue  
> and your girls, your girls.  
> Wasn’t I beautiful?  
> Wasn’t I fragrant and young?  
>  
>  
> ‘Yearn On’ – Katie Donovan  
>  
> I want you to feel  
> the unbearable lack of me.  
> I want your skin  
> to yearn for the soft lure of mine;  
> I want those hints of red  
> on your canvas  
> to deepen in passion for me:  
> carmine, burgundy.  
> I want you to keep  
> stubbing your toe  
> on the memory of me;

> I want your head to be dizzy  
 > and your stomach in a spin;  
 > I want you to hear my voice  
 > in your ear, to touch your face  
 > imagining it is my hand.  
 > I want your body to shiver and quiver  
 > at the mere idea of mine.  
 > I want you to feel as though  
 > life after me is dull, and pointless,  
 > and very, very aggravating;  
 > that with me you were lifted  
 > on a current you waited all your life to find, and had despaired of  
 > finding, as though you wading through a soggy swill of inanity and  
 > ugliness every minute we are apart.  
 > I want you to drive yourself crazy  
 > with the fantasy of me,  
 > and how we will meet again, against all odds, and there will be tears  
 > and flowers, and the vast relief of not I, but us.  
 > I am haunting your dreams,  
 > conducting these fevers  
 > from a distance,  
 > a distance that leaves me weeping,  
 > and storming,  
 > and bereft.

(307 words)

Main plus : passion, and in first person singular (especially second poem - first one is more "you and I") Work-wise second poem is written simpler (less poetical aliterations.) Good choice and good for tragic work. We'll tell some Medusa stories...

>  
 > Text 2.  
 >  
 > 'Once in a house of fire' -  
 > Andrea Ashworth  
 >  
 >  
 > My mother loved to dance, swirling her skirt in circles, sashaying  
 > over the  
 > carpet: shy hip swings and clever, hopping toes. She led me by the  
 > tips of her fingers, whirling me under the arch of her arm like a  
 > tree, a weeping willow whose branches sway down to meet you.  
 > 'Lorraine' My stepfather called my mother away to refill people's  
 > glasses.  
 >  
 > By now, I was hot behind the ears and down my back, twisting my hips  
 > into small, smooth circles like my mother's.  
 > 'That's enough dancing, Andrea' my stepfather told me.  
 > 'Oh, let her twist Pete' Auntie Doris laughed, tipsy. 'She's doing no  
 > harm.'  
 >  
 > The Music was still playing; people's feet were tapping in time; my  
 > sandals twisted and shuffled against the carpet's dull green until hot  
 > breath whispered into my ear: 'Upstairs!'  
 > My stepfather's anger was hidden from the party under the music, the  
 > flushed chatter and clinking glasses.  
 >  
 > On the stairs, he pressed a large, cold hand against my back, shoving  
 > me up into the bedroom. Inside, he locked the door and twisted the  
 > taps until the water gushed into the sink and was sucked belching,  
 > down the plughole. The cascade drowned out the sound when his hand  
 > came down to slap my face.  
 >  
 > 'Don't you dare defy me!' My stepfather's lips moved while my ears  
 > rang full of the slap and the water and the party downstairs. Behind  
 > his head, I saw my own face in the bathroom mirror, red and blotted

> where steam was rising from the taps to mist over the reflection. I  
 > went to say, 'I won't Dad' but the words were muffled under his hand,  
 > pressing down to stifle my tears.  
 > Faint petroleum seeped from his palm, choking me.  
 >  
 > When my eyes bulged, my stepfather peeled back his palm and washed his  
 > hands before twisting the taps shut. Everything stood still in the  
 > bathroom. The mirror steamed over, reflected nothing.  
 >  
 > He took a flannel and wiped my face with a shaking hand.  
 > 'Now then, go on downstairs to the party.'  
 > The party was still brimming with smoke and chatter and spilling  
 > drinks.  
 > Bubbling with wine, people asked me to twist for them. I pressed my  
 > back against the wall, smiling out of sore eyes.  
 > 'I'm tired of dancing,' I told them. The music sounded flat and tinny.  
 > I stayed close to the wall.  
 >

(391 words)

This is a much more descriptive text - with a central narrator, and some direct quotes.  
 More complex to perform, different challenge.  
 Choice is yours: for instance whether you want more of a direct passionate challenge, or  
 one switching modes and levels of rethorics.

See you soon  
 Enrique

September 2006

Choice for the Paris Professional Workshop (October 2006) – A poem by Sylvia Plath, proposed by Elisa Matula.

Dear Elisa,

Two things. First, you know now well the text work we do – how we work with meaning, against literature, breaking patterns, syntaxes, etc. Second: you admit a fascination with this text of Plath's – not an easy one at all, especially because of its fragmentation. Breaking a "fragmented" text is obviously a sort of mad task. To make "choreographic theatre sense" with this text, out of this text, will be tough. My question is : are you sure? Do you think it will be worth it? I would not only respect your choice (based presumably on some kind of necessity – the best thing to have! an obsession) but I will enter the fight gleefully (we might be defeated, mind you!) I think there is also a fight to have with Sylvia Plath herself : the pathos she is surrounded with, Ted Hughes, her suicide, and all the gossip. We must include maybe those who cannot stand her aura and poetry – I have a couple of friends... You decide, as always! Enrique

Sylvia Plath

"Fever 103degrees"  
 Pure? what does it mean?  
 The tongues of hell  
 are dull, dull as the triple

Tongues of dull, fat cerebrus  
 who weezes at the gate. incapable  
 of licking clean

the aguey tendon, the sin, the sin.  
 The tinder cries.  
 The indelible smell

Of a snuffed candle!  
 Love,love the low smokes roll  
 From me like isadora's scarves. I'm in a fright

One scarf will catch and anchor in the wheel.  
 such yellow sullen smokes

make their own element. They will not rise,

But trundle around the globe  
Choking the aged and the meek,  
The weak

Hot house baby in its crib,  
The ghastly orchid  
hanging in its hanging garden in the air,

Devilish leopard!  
Radiation turned it white and killed it in an hour.

Greasing the bodies of adulterers  
like hiroshima ash and eating in.  
The sin. the sin.

Darling, all night  
i have been flickering off, on, off, on.  
The sheets grow heavy as a lecher's kiss.

Three days. Three nights.  
Lemon water, chicken  
Water, water make me wretch.

I am too pure for you or anyone.  
Your body  
hurts me as the world hurts God. I am a lantern--

My head a moon  
of japanese paper, my gold beaten skin  
infinitely delicate and expensive.

Does not my heat astound you. And my light.  
All by myself i am a huge camellia  
Glowing and coming and going, flush on flush.

I think i am going up,  
I think i may rise--  
the beads of hot metal fly, and I, love, I

am a pure acetylene  
Virgin  
Attended by roses,

By kisses, by cherubim,  
By whatever these pink things mean.  
Not you, nor him  
Not him, nor him  
(my selves dissolving old whore petticoats)--  
To Paradise.

September 2006

Choice for the Paris Professional Workshop (October 2006) – A text by Anaïs Nin, 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal by Elisa Matula.

Dear Elisa,

This is the opposite of the Plath text in many ways, though it has its moments of compact surrealistic metaphores. But it is talkative, almost chatty. And it gives you two characters, the narrator and the ragpicker, and interesting switches from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> person. It also has a very direct, defiant way of addressing the reader/ spectator. Ambitious. At this stage, if you have not already started learning it, I would chose it. Learn it by pieces so that you make sure you know a good chunck for the beginning of the workshop. We should assemble a “work in progress” with this piece during the workshop and present it at the end. And maybe later

you develop it. Enrique.

"Ragtime" Anais Nin

The city was asleep on its right side and shaking with violent nightmares. Long puffs of snoring came out of the chimneys. Its feet were sticking out because the clouds did not cover it altogether. There was a hole in them and white feathers were falling out. The city had untied all the bridges like so many buttons to feel at ease. Wherever there was a lamplight the city scratched itself until it went out. The ragpicker walked among the roots, the cellars, the breathing sewers, the open pipe works, looking for odds and ends, for remnants, for rags, broken bottles, paper, tin, and old bread. The ragpicker walked in and out of the pockets of the sleeping city with his ragpicker's pick.

His bag was swelling. ..

The ragpicker looks at me with his one leaking eye. I pick a basket without bottom. The rim of a hat. The lining of a coat. Touch myself. Am I complete?

Arms? Legs? Hair? Eyes? Where is the sole of my foot? I take off my shoe to see, to feel. Laugh. Glued to my shoe is a blue rag. Ragged but blue like cobalt dust. The rain falls. I pick up the skeleton of an umbrella. Sit on a hill of corks perfumed by wine. A ragpicker passes, the handle of a knife in his hand. With it he points to a path of dead oysters. At the end of the path is my blue dress. I had wept over its death. I had danced with it when I was seventeen, danced until it fell to pieces. I try to put it on and come out the other side. I cannot stay inside of it. Here I am, and there the dress, and I forever out of the blue dress I had loved, and I dance right through air, and fall on the floor because one of my heels came off, the heel I lost on a rainy night walking up a hill kissing my loved one deliriously.

Where are all the other things, I say, where are all the other things I thought dead?

The ragpicker gave me a wisdom tooth, and my long hair which I had cut off.

Then he sinks into a pile of rags and when I try to pick him up, I find a scarecrow and a high top hat with a bullet hole through it.

The ragpickers are sitting around a fire made of broken shutters, window frames, artificial beards, chestnuts, horses' tails, last year's holy palm leaves. The cripple sits on the stump of his torso with his stilts beside him. Out of the shacks and the gypsy carts come the women and the brats.

Can't one throw anything away forever? I asked.

The ragpicker laughs out of the corner of his mouth, half a laugh, a fragment of a laugh, and they all begin to sing...

Nothing is lost but it changes

Into the new string old string

In the new bag old bag

In the new pan old tin

In the new shoe old leather

In the new silk old hair

In the new man the child

And the new not new

The new not new

The new not new

All night the ragpicker sang the new not new the new not new until I fell asleep and they picked me up and put me in a bag.

September 2006

3 propositions for the Paris Professional Workshop (October 2006) – by Jacklyn Bassanelli.

Dear Jacklyn – all three texts have 'performative' qualities. The first two are a bit short (at least for the substantial set-up / improvisations we are likely to reach after some weeks' work - they would be fine for a short workshop.) You could envisage bridging the two Duras texts.

I notice, of course, that all three texts include the voice, mainly laughter. This is an interesting point since we work mainly with disassociation (i.e. avoid vocal illustration.) In this sense Kundera's small parable-like text would be fun to work with (two vocalisers!) I hope you can learn them all. Maybe start with the first Duras which presents the biggest varieties of tempo and dynamics. But also Kundera's, a text that will present a nice challenge to all involved with it (not just you as the speaker.) Great. Enrique

**Suggestion 1**

**From Milan Kundera – *The book of laughter and forgetting*****(On Two Kinds of Laughter)**

The first time an angel heard the Devil's laughter, she was horrified. It was the middle of a feast with lots of people around, and one after the other they joined in the Devil's laughter. It was terribly contagious. The angel was all too aware the laughter was aimed against God and the wonder of His works. She knew she had to act fast, but felt weak and defenceless. And unable to fabricate anything of her own, she simply turned her enemy's tactics against him. She opened her mouth and let out a wobbly, breathy sound in the upper reaches of her vocal register and endowed it with the opposite meaning. Whereas the Devil's laughter pointed up the meaninglessness of things, the angel's shout rejoiced in how rationally organized, well conceived, beautiful, good and sensible everything on earth was.

There they stood, Devil and angel, face to face, mouths open, both making more or less the same sound, but each expressing themselves in a unique timbre – absolute opposites. And seeing the angel laughing, the Devil laughed all the harder, all the louder, all the more openly, because the laughing angel was infinitely laughable.

**From Marguerite Duras - *The Lover***

It's one of the long avenues in Vinh Long that lead down to the Mekong. It's always deserted in the evening. That evening, like most evenings, the electricity breaks down. That's what starts it all off. As soon as I reach the street and the gate shuts behind me, the lights go off. I run. I run because I'm afraid of the dark. I run faster and faster. And suddenly I think I hear running behind me, and suddenly I'm sure there's someone after me. Still running, I look round, and I see. It's a very tall woman, very thin, thin as death, laughing and running. She's barefoot, and she's running after me to catch me. I recognise her, she's the local lunatic, the mad-woman of Vinh Long. I hear her for the first time, she talks at night, during the day she sleeps, often here in the avenue, outside the garden. She runs, shouting in a language I don't understand. My fear's so great I can't call out. I must be eight years old. I can hear her shrieks of laughter and cries of delight, she's certainly playing with me. My memory is of a central fear. To say it's beyond my understanding, beyond my strength, is inadequate. What's sure is the memory of whole being's certainty that if the woman touches me, even lightly, with her hand, I too will enter into a state much worse than death, the state of madness. I manage to get into the neighbours' garden, as far as the house, I run up the steps and fall in the doorway. For several days I can't say anything at all about what happened.

I forget everything, and I forgot to say this, that I was a child who laughed, laughed fit to burst, fit to die.

**Suggestion 2****From Marguerite Duras - *The Lover***

She's on the banks of the rice fields on either side of the track, shouting and laughing at the top of her voice. She has a golden laugh, fit to wake the dead, to wake anyone who listens to children's laughter. She stays outside the bungalow for days and days, there are white people in the bungalow, she remembers they give food to beggars. And then, one day, lo and behold, she wakes up at daybreak and starts to walk, one day she goes, who can tell why, she turns off towards the mountains, goes up through the forest, follows the path running along the tops of the mountains of Siam. Having seen, perhaps, seen a yellow and green sky on the other side of the plain, she crosses over. At last begins to descend to the sea. With her great gaunt step she descends the slopes of the forest. On, on. They're forests full of pestilence. Regions of great heat. There's no healthy wind from the sea. There's the stagnant din of mosquitos, dead children, rain every day. And there here are the deltas. The biggest deltas in the world. Made of black slime. Stretching towards Chittagong. She's left the tracks, the forests, the tea rounds, the red suns, behind, and she goes forwards over the estuary of the deltas. She goes in the same direction as the world, towards the engulfing, always distant east. One day she comes face to face with the sea. She lets out a cry, laughs her miraculous bird-like coo. Because of her laugh she finds a junk in Chittagong, the fishermen are willing to take her, she crosses with them the Bay of Bengal.

Then, then she starts to be seen near the rubbish dumps of the outskirts of Calcutta.

And then she's lost sight of. And then later found again behind the French embassy in the same city. She sleeps in the garden, replete with endless food.

She's there during the night. Then in the Ganges at sunrise. Always laughing, mocking. She doesn't go on this time. Here she can eat, sleep, it's quiet at night, she stays there in the garden with the oleanders.

One day I come, pass by. I'm seventeen. It's the English quarter, the embassy gardens, the monsoon

season, the tennis courts are deserted. Along the Ganges the lepers laugh.

We're stopping over in Calcutta. The boat broke down. We're visiting the town to pass the time. We leave the following evening.

January 2007

Choice of a text for a performance piece – by Benedicte Blix

From **"The volcano lover"** by **Susan Sontag**

It's a dinner party – sophisticated people who have dressed up in handsome and revealing clothes are enjoying themselves in the atmosphere in which such dedicated partygoers enjoy themselves best – something of both brothel and salon, minus the exertions or risks of either. The food, whether chewy or delicate, is bountiful; the wine and champagne are costly, the lighting is muted and flattering; the music, and the aromas of flowers on the table, enveloping and suffusing; some sexual tomfoolery is taking place, both of the wanted and of the other kind; the servants are efficient and smile, hoping to get a good tip. The chairs are yielding, and the guests profoundly enjoy the sensation of being seated. There are treats for all five senses. And mirth and glibness and flattery and genuine sexual interest. The music soothes and goads. For once, the gods of pleasure are getting their due.

And in comes this guest, this alien presence, who is not here to have fun at all. He comes to break up the party and have the chief reveler down to hell. You saw him at the graveyard, atop a marble mausoleum. Being drunk with self confidence, and also a little nervous about finding yourself in this cemetery, you made a joke to your sidekick. Then you halloed up to him. You invited him to the party. It was a morbid joke. And now he's here. He's grizzled, perhaps bearded, with a very deep voice and a lumbering, arthritic gait, not just because he is old, but because he is made of stone; his joints don't bend when he walks. A huge, granite, forbidding father. He comes to execute judgement, a judgement that you thought outmoded or that didn't apply to you. No, you cannot live for pleasure. No. No.

He reaches out and dares you to shake his hand. The earth below rumbles, the floor of the partying room gapes open, flames start to rise –

Perhaps you are having a dream and you wake up. Or perhaps, you are experiencing this in a more modern way.

He enters, the stony guest. But he is not going to kill you, and he's probably younger, even young. He is not coming to take revenge. He even thinks that he wanted to go to a party ( he can't be a monument all the time) and he is not above wanting to enjoy himself. But he can't help being himself, which means bringing along his higher idea, his better standards. He, the stony guest, reminds the revelers of the existence of another, more serious way of experiencing. And this, of course, will interfere with their pleasures.

You did invite him, but now you wish you hadn't, and if you don't take the necessary precautions, he will break up the party.

After meeting a few of your guests, he starts giving up on the evening. Too quickly, perhaps. But he's used to scything through such matters. He doesn't think your party is that much fun. He doesn't dissemble – mingle. He keeps to corners of the room. Perhaps he looks at the books, or fingers the art. He doesn't resonate with the party. It doesn't resonate with him. He has too much on his mind. Bored, he asks himself why he came. His answer now: he was curious. He enjoys experiencing his own superiority. His own difference. He looks at his watch. His every gesture is a reproach.

You, one of the guests – or, better, the host – make light of this scowling presence. You try to be charming. He refuses to be charmed. He excuses himself and goes for something to drink. (Is he moping or getting ready to denounce you?) He returns, sipping a glass of water. You turn away and make common cause with the others. You make fun of him – he's easy to make fun of. What a prig. What an egotist. How pompous. Doesn't he know how to have a good time. Lighten up, stony guest!

He continues to contradict what is said to him, to make plain that he is not amused. And he cant really get your attention. You flit from guest to guest. For a party is not a tête-a-tête. A party is supposed to reconcile its



participants, to conceal their differences. And he has the bad manners to want to expose them. Doesn't he know about the civilizing practice of hypocrisy?

You can't both be right. The fact is that he is right, you are wrong. Your life is revealed as shallow, your standards as opportunistic.

He wants to kidnap your mind. You won't let him. You tell yourself that frivolity is a noble pursuit. That a party, too, is an ideal world.

Sooner or later he leaves. He shakes your hand. It's chilling. You settle back. The music is louder again. What a relief. You like your life. You're not going to change. He is pretentious, overbearing, humorless, aggressive, condescending. A monster of egotism. Alas, he's also the real thing.

### Response from Enrique

Sontag. A kind of pompous Pan crashing into a party. The first thing I ask myself is how are we going to create his presence. It is this confrontation which I find most interesting: will you impersonate him? You know how I say that caricature is hard work because you have to get into someone else's body. There is also the woman / man exchanges, a strange Eros that Sontag ends up calling "the real thing." Is "The Volcano Lover" a book of hers? Volcano, of course, brings in Hephaestus and his strange lover's behaviours (most known is his gigantic jealousy fit against Aphrodite.) In a strange way the piece, if transferred to theatre, has "socialite" theatre connotations, Chekhov, Ibsen even. Party fantasies. Maybe we should explore other parts of the book - after establishing a central fantasy (I would propose this character.) If you go for this text, and I would encourage you to, I would like to read the book. Let me know. Enrique

October 2007

Choice of a text for the Paris professional workshop – by Audrey Pernel

Prologue  
Audre Lorde

Haunted by poems beginning with I  
seek out those whom I love who are deaf  
to whatever does not destroy  
or curse the old ways that did not serve us  
while history falters and our poets are dying  
choked into silence by icy distinction  
their death rattles blind curses  
and I hear even my own voice becoming  
a pale strident whisper  
At night sleep locks me into an echoless coffin  
sometimes at noon I dream  
there is nothing to fear  
now standing up in the light of my father sun  
without shadow  
I speak without concern for the accusations  
that I am too much or too little woman  
that I am too black or too white  
or too much myself  
and through the lips come the voices  
of the ghosts of our ancestors  
living and moving among us  
Hear my heart's voice as it darkens  
pulling old rhythms out of the earth  
that will receive this piece of me  
and a piece of each one of you  
when our part in history quickens again  
and is over:

Hear  
the old ways are going away

and coming back pretending change  
 masked as denunciation and lament  
 masked as a choice  
 between eager mirrors that blur and distort  
 us in easy definitions  
 until our image  
 shatters along its fault  
 while the other half of that choice  
 speaks to our hidden fears with a promise  
 that our eyes need not seek any truer shape –  
 a face at high noon particular and unadorned –  
 for we have learned to fear  
 the light from clear water might destroy us  
 with reflected emptiness or a face without tongue  
 with no love or with terrible penalties  
 for any difference  
 and even as I speak remembered pain is moving  
 shadows over my face, my own voice fades and  
 my brothers and sisters are leaving;

Yet when I was a child  
 whatever my mother thought would mean survival  
 made her try to beat me whiter every day  
 and even now the colour of her bleached ambition  
 still forks throughout my words  
 but I survived  
 and didn't I survive confirmed  
 to teach my children where her errors lay  
 etched across their faces between the kisses  
 that she pinned me with sleep  
 and my mother beating me  
 as white as snow melts in the sunlight  
 loving me into her bloods black bone –

the home of all her secret hopes and fears  
 and my dead father whose great hands  
 weakened in my judgement  
 whose image broke inside of me  
 beneath the weight of failure  
 helps me to know who I am not  
 weak or mistaken  
 my father loved me alive  
 to grow and hate him  
 and now his grave voice joins hers  
 within my words rising and falling  
 are my sisters and brothers listening?

The children remain  
 like blades of grass over the earth and  
 all the children are singing  
 louder than mourning  
 all their different voices sound like a raucous question  
 but they do not fear the blank and empty mirrors  
 they have seen their faces defined in a hydrants puddle  
 before the rainbows of oil obscured them.  
 The time of lamentation and curses is passing.

My mother survives now  
 through more than chance or token.  
 Although she will read what I write with embarrassment  
 or anger  
 and a small understanding  
 my children do not need to relive my past  
 in strength nor in confusion  
 nor care that their holy fires  
 may destroy  
 more than my failures

Somewhere in the landscape past noon  
 I shall leave a dark point  
 of the me that I am  
 and who I am not  
 etched in a shadow of angry and remembered loving  
 and their ghosts will move  
 whispering through them  
 with me none the wiser  
 for they will have buried me  
 either in shame  
 or in peace.

And the grasses will still be  
 Singing.

Outside  
 Audre Lorde

In the center of a harsh and spectrumed city  
 all things natural are strange.  
 I grew up in a genuine confusion  
 between grass and weeds and flowers  
 and what coloured meant  
 except for clothes you couldn't bleach  
 and nobody called me nigger  
 until I was thirteen.  
 Nobody lynched my momma  
 but what she'd never been  
 had bleached her face of everything  
 but very private furies  
 and made the other children  
 call me yellow snot at school.  
 And how many times have I called myself back  
 through my bones confusion  
 black  
 like marrow meaning meat  
 for my soul's hunger  
 and how many times have you cut me  
 and run in the streets  
 my own blood  
 who do you think me to be  
 that you are terrified of becoming  
 or what do you see in my face  
 you have not already discarded  
 in your own mirror  
 what face do you see in my eyes  
 what you will someday  
 come to  
 acknowledge as your own?

Who shall I curse that I grew up  
 believing in my mother's face  
 or that I lived in fear of the potent darkenss  
 that wore my father's shape  
 they have both marked me  
 with their blindness and terrible love  
 and I am lustful now for my own name.

Between the canyons of my parent's silences  
 mother bright and father brown  
 I seek my own shapes now  
 for they never spoke of me  
 except as theirs  
 and the pieces that I stumble and fall over  
 I still record as proof

that I am beautiful  
 twice  
 blessed with the images  
 of who they were  
 and who I thought them once  
 to be  
 of what I move  
 toward and through  
 and what I need  
 to leave behind me  
 for most of all I am  
 blessed with my selves  
 who are come to make our shattered faces  
 whole.

### Response from Enrique

Prologue (first text) : some 640 words of a dense meditation, that arrives on first reading/hearing as sets of explicit, dense but gentle waves on the sand of our attention, each one depositing a layer of an overall review, assessment and judgement of her heritage, especially through the persons who hand down that heritage, her parents. Each wave feels clearly demarcated and makes its own point: it is received with its sediment of information, complex and poetic, which takes time to filter and work out.

The prologue is long – too long for workshop exploratory work only. But, of course, not too long if it is part of some kind of performing project, beyond the pedagogical experimentation of a workshop. I would say it is enough for a full performance !

Nota: you must dialogue with Naima Phillips who assembled, with me, a very special and strong 25 minutes performance this July, along similar content lines. See her overall comments on <http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-commentaires-projects-gb.pdf>

Now for the rhetoric : to 'master' this text will be quite a work. Thoughts are complex and come in complex waves, with quite a lot of poetical grammatical inversions, allowing conclusions to assemble in layered assemblages. Conveying the thinking to an audience in choreographic theatre will be very demanding, require a strong build-up of craft (projection, elocution, syntactic control, timbre, etc.) and modesty in acting (part of the 'protagonist' work in choreographic theatre.)

Conclusion : as always, it is your choice now. Measure your ambitions and go for it if you want to climb, not Mount Everest, but a nearby peak. For me this text is all the more interesting because of the question of judgment of one's parents. My own mother died some days ago, and I have had so many thoughts on the question of judgment of one's parents, and one's parents 'society'. I hope to write more on this soon.

"Outside"

Much more direct text – including the shock of the sudden "you" (when she addresses "you" in full second person, which does not happen in the prologue, although the addressee is there all the time.) Both texts have a 'sermon' aspect which we will have to work carefully (and probably go totally against – against all the 'authorities' of these texts, all the politically correct reactions that stifle theatre..

Learning both? Maybe, but if you are to learn 2 working texts I would put you in front of a real artistic alternative : chose a second text which would be the *opposite* of Audre Lorde's.

Looking forwards to working with you and your choices. Enrique – Paris September 7, 2007

Exchange and text proposals by Lainie Hart (Australia) for the 2007 Paris Professional Workshop.

(from Lainie Hart) : I did want to let you know, that one of the things I hope to experience and learn through the workshop is a way to find opportunities to meaningfully and powerfully integrate movement, voice, text on stage. However, I am

also seeking (personally, theatrically, professionally) a dynamic balance between and integration of body, mind and soul..., leaving nothing out. It is important to me that the piece (and the working of the piece) does not leave behind my soul.

[EP] Dear Lainie, I take good note of your words and wishes. In an adult professional context like ours, I have often said that Psyche is my main interest - her logos, her logic, her insights... I look forwards to dialogues on this, in and out of the work.

Regarding texts: they must come in as working partners: it is important to set them free, to give them autonomy, to allow them to rebel against us (against what we want them to say) so that they can take their part in the 'part-nership' - even to the point of divorce ! They must not be made acolytes to our manifestos, confirmations of our convictions - 'subjected'. This is what I have sometimes called "shadow boxing" - shadow work. It can be awkward, deranging, but also incredibly exhilarating and full of insights. I say all this because sometimes it is difficult to let go of texts which are very close to our heart - especially texts written by us. Difficult to be iconoclastic with them. It can also be the most revealing work, the best theatre.

All three texts you propose make a point - round up a point, maybe a bit briefly for the work. I would suggest you take one or two and know them fully by heart - ready for real experimentation. And maybe look around for an alternative in terms of rhetoric's (style, dynamics, ways of presenting ideas, etc...) This need not be immediately. Maybe someone else's text might intrigue you and you might ask to work with it !

Here are my suggestions.

### **The Wattle-Tree**

Judith Wright

The tree knows four truths -  
earth, water, air, and the fire of the sun.  
The tree holds four truths in one.  
Root, limb and leaf unfold  
out of the seed, and these rejoice  
till the tree dreams it has a voice  
to join four truths in one great word of gold.

- Oh, that I knew that word!  
I should cry loud, louder than any bird.  
O let me live for ever, I would cry.  
For that word makes immortal what would wordless die;  
and perfectly, and passionately,  
welds love and time into the seed,  
till tree renews itself and is for ever tree -

Then upward from the earth and from the water,  
then inward from the air and the cascading light  
poured gold, till the tree trembled with its flood.

Now from the worlds four elements I make  
my immortality; it shapes within the bud.  
Yes, now I bud, and now at last I break  
into the truth I had no voice to speak:  
into a million images of the Sun, my God.

### **4 Beds**

Eleni Fourtouni

On the night of wash-days  
my mother would line my quilt  
with a freshly laundered sheet.  
Squatting in front of the blazing hearth  
she'd fold the edges of the sheet over  
the sides of the quilt, then  
with large stitches quickly  
baste the two together.

I'd hover next to her  
 drowsy with heat, handing her  
 lengths of thread  
 watching her deft hands  
 folding the corners.

When I was a married woman  
 daily I'd spread fresh sheets  
 on the king-size bed -  
 fine percale, printed  
 with silver birch trees  
 with fields where monarch butterflies hovered  
 over blood-red poppies.

Nights  
 I'd choose the thickest book  
 or start an intricate pattern  
 on my loom.

Our bed -  
 a mattress on the marble floor  
 in the centre of a white room  
 Our quilt -  
 patches of gold-spun cloth  
 and old velvet, blood red  
 and midnight blue -  
 a spiral bordered  
 in sky blue brocade.

Your breath on my face  
 like sunlight.

My mother  
 her bones stacked neatly  
 lies inside a velvet-lined 2 x 4 tin box  
 kept in a sanctified hut  
 among hundreds of identical tine boxes  
 containing the bones of those  
 who have no plot of their own  
 at the southeast corner of the old cemetery  
 on Repose Street  
 3rd lane, 5th row  
 to the left.

One her name-day  
 I light a candle  
 I pay the Town Hall  
 a small fee each Spring.

Pandora  
 Diane Fahey

From her comes all the race of womankind,  
 The deadly female race and tribe of wives  
 Who live with mortal men and bring them harm...  
 Hesiod in *Theogony*

What is it about her?

Her first breath provokes slander,  
 then the slanderer accuses her of slander...  
 Scapegoating seems, by comparison,  
 an innocent affair.  
 So all the ills of men  
 originate from her?  
 Naturally, she will need to be  
 stoned and mutilated and confined and silenced  
 as often as possible...  
 till all the ills of women  
 seem to originate from him?

It is, to say the least,  
 a recipe for mutual paranoia.  
 She suggests - very tentatively, of course -  
 that there may have been  
 some misunderstanding... He agrees,  
 meaning something quite different.

What, then, can Pandora do  
 but step into the gulf between them  
 becoming wisdom-seeker, self-healer,  
 iconoclast, mythographer?  
 In one of her moods, mother wit  
 surrounds here like a halo of wasps;  
 in another, she draws into herself  
 the image of light radiating  
 from depthless water in a well...

She is the one who will not live  
 captive to another's fear, disgust.  
 She is the maker and shaper,  
 dreamer and breaker,  
     and she is the one  
     who is holding the mirror.

October 2007

Proposal of a text for the Paris professional workshop – by Brenda Armendia (Mexico)

## 2. Fairly-Land [!]

Dim vales - and shadowy floods -  
 And cloudy -looking woods,  
 Whose forms we can't discover  
 For the tears that drip all over.  
 Huge moons there wax an wane -  
 Again - again - again -  
 Every moment of the night -  
 Forever changing places -  
 And they put out the star-light  
 With the breath from their pale faces.  
 About twelve by the moon-dial  
 One more filmy than the rest  
 (A kind which, upon trial,  
 They have found to be the best)  
 Comes down -still down- and down  
 With its centre on the crown  
 Of a mountain's eminence,  
 While its wide circumference  
 In easy drapery falls  
 Over hamlets, over halls,  
 Wherever they may be -  
 O'er the strange woods -o'er the sea-

Over spirits on the wing-  
 Over every drowsy thing -  
 And buries them up quite  
 In a labyrinth of light-  
 And then, how deep! - O, deep!  
 Is the passion of their sleep.  
 In the morning they arise,  
 And their moony coverering  
 Is soaring in the skies,  
 With the tempests as they toss,  
 Like -almost any thing-  
 Or a yellow Albatross.  
 They use that moon no more  
 For the same end as before-  
 Videlicet a tent-  
 Which I think extravagant:  
 Its atomies, however,  
 Into a shower dissever,  
 Of which those butterflies,  
 Of Earth, who seek the skies,  
 And so come down again  
 (Never-contented things!)  
 Have brought a specimen  
 Upon their quivering wings.

Edgar Allan Poe

EP : a long and calm description (calm even though it has some exclamation marks) of a marked water / mist poetic landscape. Like with your Coranic text on the devil (in Spanish) it has a grand deployment rhetoric. This text is much more complex, and condensed in its language. Complex English; a bit archaic: not easy to manoeuvre to achieve clear communication with an audience – it has the danger of a river-like reverie, of grand flow poetry. Big challenge in that sense (how to make the river leave its rhetorical 'bed' and go elsewhere?)

October 2007

Proposal of a text for the Paris professional workshop – by Debora Balardini (Brezil / USA)

### **Death and the Maiden**

by Ariel Dorfman  
 1991

I suggest we reach a compromise. Compromise, an agreement, a negotiation. Everything in this country is done by consensus, isn't it. Isn't that what this transition is all about? They let you have democracy, but they keep control of the economy and of the armed forces? The Commission can investigate the crimes but nobody is punished for them? There's freedom to say anything you want as long as you don't say everything you want? So you can see that I'm not that irresponsible or emotional or...sick, I propose that we reach an agreement. You want this man freed without bodily harm and I want – would you like to know what I want?

When I heard his voice last night, the first thing that rushed through my head, what I've been thinking all these years, when you would catch me with a look that you said was – abstract, fleeting, right? – you know what I was thinking of? Doing to them, systematically, minute by minute, instrument by instrument, what they did to me. Specifically to him, to the doctor... Because the others were so vulgar, so...but he would play Schubert, he would talk about science, he even quoted Nietzsche once. It's his voice. I recognized as soon as he came in here last night. The way he laughs, certain phrases he uses. During all these years not an hour has passed that I haven't heard it, that same voice, next to me, next to my ear, that voice mixed with saliva, you think I'd forget a voice like this?

I was terrified at myself. That I should have so much hatred inside – but it was the only way to fall a sleep at night, the only way of going out with you to cocktail parties in spite the fact that I couldn't help asking myself if one of the people there wasn't – perhaps not the exact same man, but one of those people might be... and so as not to go completely off my rocker and be able to deliver that Tavelli smile you say I'm going to have to continue to deliver – well, I would imagine pushing their heads into a bucket of their own shit, or electricity, or when we would be making love and I could feel the possibility of an orgasm building, the very currents going through my body would remind me and then – and then I had to fake it, fake it, so you wouldn't know what I was thinking, so you wouldn't feel that it was your failure.

So when I heard his voice, I thought the only thing I want is to have him raped, that's what I thought, that he should know just once what it is to...and as I can't rape him – I thought that it was a sentence that you would have to carry out. But then I told myself it would be difficult for you to collaborate in that scheme, after all you do need to have certain degree of



enthusiasm to – So I asked myself if we couldn't use a broomstick. But I began to realize that wasn't what I really wanted – something that physical. And you know what conclusion I came to, the only thing I really want?

I want him to confess. I want him to sit in front of that cassette recorder and tell me what he did – not just to me, everything, to everybody – and then have him write it out in his own handwriting and sign it and I would keep a copy forever – with all the information, the names and data, all the details. That's what I want.

I can speak - it's been years since I murmured even a word, I haven't opened my mouth to even whisper a breath of what I'm thinking, years living in terror of my own... but I'm not dead, I thought I was but I'm not and I can speak, damn it – so for god's sake let me have my say and you go ahead with your Commission and believe me when I tell you that none of this is going to be made public.

The only way to dissuade me is for him to confess. Tell him if he doesn't confess, I'll kill him. If he is innocent? Then he is really screwed.

I was mad because I stayed silent and now I'm mad because I can speak.

**EP : Strong text ! To take it on as a working text is brave and stirring. It has all a text can offer, especially in choreographic theatre: starts with direct address, folds into reflection, addresses someone else there but not hearing, etc. In this sense it is full of 'spirits', haunting memories – and seeming madness – never 'solo' ! Plus, it has a great underlying reflection on the voice – the voice in its real human dimension. Big challenge – I look forwards to it.**

**Nota : in PANTHEATRE's recommended bibliography there are two books that relate to "the voice politics" – both very philosophical (quite a bit of jargon) but superb books. Adriana Cavarero's and Mladen Dolar's. Check on <http://www.pantheatre.com/6-reading-list-gb.html>**

#### June 2008 - proposal for the Paris Professional Workshop / by Nate Spears

This first selection is from *The Woods* by David Mamet. I interpret it as a young man struggling to connect with his lover; using a dream to share his innermost thoughts and feelings because he's been suffering from a kind of emotional impotence:

"I sit here. Wait. I sit here. It gets dark. I cannot read. I need you to be up here. I need time. Do you hear me? I need time. Down in the city everything is vicious. I need time to be up here. Everything is *filthy* down there. *You* know that. I come up here, I see things. I cannot sleep. I have these dreams at night. I dream. No, wait. I'll tell you. I see the window, and the shades are blowing. There has come a breeze and all the curtains blow. They are on fire. It laps around the window. On all sides. Someone is calling my name. Nicholas. I hear them in a voice unlike a man or a woman. When I look, I do not want to know. I know there is something there. I look I see a bear. A bear has come back. Do you hear me, Ruth? Do you know what this is? To crawl beneath my house. This house is mine now. In its hole it calls me. In the earth. Nicholas. He is standing upright on his legs. He has a huge erection. I am singed. He speaks a human language, Ruth. I know. He has these thoughts and they are trapped inside his mouth. His jaws cannot move. He has thoughts and feelings, BUT HE CANNOT SPEAK. If only he could speak. If only he could say the thing that he wants."

This next one is from *Hamletmachine*. A final monologue given to Ophelia (very short):

"This is Electra speaking. In the heart of darkness. Under the sun of torture. To the capitals of the world. In the name of the victims. I eject all the sperm I received. I turn the milk of my breasts into lethal poison. I take back the world I gave birth to. I choke between my thighs the world I gave birth to. I bury it on my womb. Down with the happiness of submission. Long live hate and contempt, rebellion and death. When she walks through your bedrooms carrying butcher knives you'll know the truth."

I will begin to look outside of theatrical texts, but this should give you an idea of where my search is heading.

**EP : Both Müller and Mamet are great writers for contemporary theatre – and I'm only referring to style, rhythm and 'talking psychology'. Both texts you chose have powerful sexual anxiety, full of ghosts and schisms. Great stuff. Yes, they are a bit short for working in a long workshop – you will be frustrated after a few weeks and want a longer perspective of text (at least double Mamet's.) But, sure, this kind of text fits totally into the work.**

#### September 2008 - proposal for the Paris Professional Workshop / by Carissa Toro (USA)

**The Story of Us**  
written by Alan Zweibel & Jessie Nelson

**Katie:** I think we should go to Chow Fun's.  
**(Ben stops.)**

**Ben (sotto):** Chow Fun's? I thought we agreed we couldn't really talk at Chow Fun's.

**(Katie looking deep into his eyes, responds.)**

**Katie:** I know.

**(Ben crosses over to her.)**

**Ben:** What are you saying?

**Katie: (with resolve)** I'm saying Chow Fun's.

**Ben:** Are you saying Chow Fun's because you don't want to face telling the kids? Because if that's why you're saying Chow Fun's, don't say Chow Fun's.

**Katie:** That's not why I'm saying Chow Fun's. I'm saying Chow Fun's because we're an "us". There's a history and histories don't happen overnight. In Mesopotamia or Ancient Troy or somewhere back there, there were cities built on top of other cities, but I don't want to build another city. I like this city. I know where we keep the Bactine, and what kind of mood you're in when you wake up by which eyebrow is higher. And you always know that I'm a little quiet in the morning and compensate accordingly. That's a dance you perfect over time. And it's hard, it's much harder than I thought it would be, but there's more good than bad. And you don't just give up. And it's not for the sake of the children, but they're great kids aren't they? And we made them - I mean think about that - there were no people there and then there were people - two of them. And they grew. And I won't be able to say to some stranger, "Josh has your hands" or "Remember how Erin threw up at the Lincoln Memorial?" So what if that stranger listens to me? I mean, Lucas Adler listens but then he always says "between you and I" and it should be "between you and me" because "between" is a preposition. And it's not that there's not a charming part about you not remembering the washer fluid - which I don't understand why you can't - but that's not ultimately important. I'll try to remember that those things can be mildly endearing at times and really not worth not having sex over. And I'll try to relax. I mean is it the end of the world to have sex when you don't totally feel like it? There are all kinds of sex, aren't there? Comfort sex, tender sex, relief sex, "I'm not in the mood, but you are" sex...And let's face it, anybody is going to have traits that get on your nerves, why shouldn't it be your annoying traits? I'm no day at the beach, but I do have a good sense of direction so at least I can find the beach, but that's not a criticism of you, it's just a strength of mine. And you're a good friend and good friends are hard to find. Charlotte in "Charlotte's Web" said that and I love the way you read that to Erin - when you take on the voice of Wilbur the pig with such commitment even when you're bone tired. It speaks volumes about character. And ultimately isn't that what it comes down to? What a person's made of at the end of the day? Because that pith helmet girl is still in here - "BEE-BOO, BEE-BOO!" And I didn't even know she existed until I met you. And if you leave, I may never see her again - even though I said at times you beat her out of me - Isn't that the paradox? Haven't we hit the essential paradox? Give and take, push and pull, yin and yang, the best of times, the worst of times. I think Dickens said it best. It's the Jack Sprat of it, he could eat no fat, his wife could eat no lean, but that doesn't really apply here. Does it? I mean I guess what I'm trying to say is - I'm saying Chow Fun's because I love you.

**(After a beat, Ben explodes with sheer joy, grabs Katie and kisses her passionately. We see Josh and Erin watching their parents stunned at their behavior.)**

**(Ben and Katie start getting into the car, as do the kids.)**

**EP :** Dear Carissa – I'm all for this text, but in terms of the 7 weeks workshop and knowing something of where you come from, I would compensate / complement it with a very differently styled text. Let me give my impressions in an obviously descriptive manner : the text is a 'domestic' loving text (couple, children, restaurant, marriage & sex, etc.) in very contemporary American realistic style. We are likely to tear it apart and away from its setting and drag it into 'otherworldly' renderings. Nevertheless I would advice you find a second text – non-realistic, maybe non-theatrical in terms of contemporary theatre realistic style (especially American prosaic street pop-psychology.) I was thinking of something baroque, poetically more elaborate and dense (though not too much.) Just back from Haiti, I've been immersed in French Creole Carribean poetry. Epic, exotic, baroque, mythic. Maybe you know of something that links with Puerto Rico or Cuba (the 'father' of it all for me is José Lezama Lima – but no – don't take a text of his, too baroque!) Maybe something like Ted Hughes' Tales of Ovid which are very popular for the quality of their language and images (see comments to Adrienne on Hughes.) Or Garcia Marquez? Or Derek Walcott?

**September 2008 - proposals for the Paris Professional Workshop / by Adrienne Mackey (USA)**

1) From Phaedre (Racine trans. Ted Hughes)

They love each other!

What sort of witchcraft did they use  
To delude me?  
How long have they loved each other?  
Where have they been meeting? How often?  
You knew! You knew it! Oenone,  
Why did you let me be fooled?  
Couldn't you breathe one whisper of their secret?  
Wasn't it plain?  
Weren't they forever  
Running around looking for each other?  
Heads together in corners, thinking themselves unnoticed  
In plain view of everybody?  
Ah! They were free!  
Heaven was pleased with their innocent affection.  
Wherever their love led, they went light-hearted.  
For them the days dawned calm.  
But for me, rejected by nature,  
I dreaded every sunbeam.  
I buried myself.  
Daylight was a horror to me.  
Death was the only god I prayed to.  
I waited only for death.  
Nothing but gall sustained me, and tears.  
Surrounded by spies  
I did not even dare  
To unburden my grief.  
I concealed it.  
I sank  
Into the horrible secret luxury of it.  
My sobbing was soundless.  
My weeping was dry.  
I trembled with calm.

You say their love is futureless.  
You say it has come to nothing.  
You say they will never meet again.

Yes, but their love exists.  
It exists. And it will last.  
I cannot bear to imagine it.  
Even this moment, as I speak,  
They have not a thought for me,  
They are heedless  
Of the fury of my love -  
It is meaningless to them.  
But I have to endure it -  
I have to burn in it.  
Banishment may separate them  
But it cannot injure their love,

Only intensify their million vows  
 To love each other forever.  
 No, it's their happiness - it's their hope  
 That torments me.  
 Oenone, I am going mad with jealousy.  
 Aricia must die.  
 Theseus must be made to kill her.  
 No punishment is enough.  
 She has outdone her criminal brothers.  
 I'll use every bit of rage in my body  
 To persuade him to kill her.  
 Oh God, what am I doing? What am I saying?  
 I think I'm losing my senses.  
 Me jealous? Me beg Theseus  
 To avenge my jealousy? Implore my husband  
 To remove my rival  
 From my monstrous passion for his son?  
 Everything I say makes my hair stand up.  
 My life is so bloated with my crimes  
 There's no room for another. I stink  
 Of incest and deceit. An worse -  
 My own hands are twitching  
 To squeeze the life out of that woman,  
 To empty that innocent blood out of her carcass  
 And smash her to nothing.  
 Yet I stand here facing the sun.  
 The light of heaven, my greatest ancestor,  
 Is the father and ruler of the gods.  
 The whole universe is full of my forebears.

**EP : Certainly a superb text – both classic and contemporary (sometimes translations fit the work better than originals: I would plead against a French actor bringing the original Racine to choreographic theatre!) Perfect.**

2) From Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte:

I had forgotten to draw my curtain, which I usually did, and also to let down my window-blind. The consequence was, that when the moon, which was full and bright (for the night was fine), came in her course to that space in the sky opposite my casement, and looked in at me through the unveiled panes, her glorious gaze roused me. Awaking in the dead of night, I opened my eyes on her disk—silver- white and crystal clear. It was beautiful, but too solemn; I half rose, and stretched my arm to draw the curtain.

Good God! What a cry!

The night—its silence—its rest, was rent in twain by a savage, a sharp, a shrilly sound that ran from end to end of Thornfield Hall.

My pulse stopped: my heart stood still; my stretched arm was paralysed. The cry died, and was not renewed. Indeed, whatever being uttered that fearful shriek could not soon repeat it: not the widest-winged condor on the Andes could, twice in succession, send out such a yell from the cloud shrouding his eyrie. The thing delivering

such utterance must rest ere it could repeat the effort.

It came out of the third storey; for it passed overhead. And overhead—yes, in the room just above my chamber-ceiling—I now heard a struggle: a deadly one it seemed from the noise; and a half-smothered voice shouted - "Help! help! help!" three times rapidly.

"Will no one come?" it cried; and then, while the staggering and stamping went on wildly, I distinguished through plank and plaster:-

"Rochester! Rochester! for God's sake, come!"

A chamber-door opened: some one ran, or rushed, along the gallery. Another step stamped on the flooring above and something fell; and there was silence.

EP : Given the 'perfect' dramatic quality of the Hughes' Phaedra, I'm not sure you need a second dramatic text (though it is an interesting moment cameo to experiment with – at the same time descriptive and subjectively dramatic.) You might (like I've advised Carissa Toro) "compensate" the Hughes translation with a totally different text – especially non first-person dramatic. Maybe something poetically soft in its tense, person and rhythm. American romantics ? Emerson, Thoreau, Dickinson? I am not sure this appeals to you. Only a suggestion: it must absolutely be your choice, either by liking or calculation.

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### January 2008 - proposals for ACTS winter training / by Corianna Moffat (USA)

EP : Corianna : two superb texts. I comment more in detail below. No, they are not too long for your 10 week training. Yes, learn them both. Maybe the Anaïs Nin text you might want to edit a bit, but not really necessary.

The death of the chamberlain Christoph Detlev Brigge at Ulsgaard  
By Rilke from *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*

The few servants who had remained inside sometimes stole a glance at the big darkening heap in the middle, wishing that it were nothing more than a large suit covering some ruined thing.

But it was still something. It was a voice, the voice that seven weeks before no one had recognized: for it was not the voice of the chamberlain. It was not Christoph Deltev to whom this voice belonged, it was Christoph Deltev's death.

Christoph Deltev's death had now been living for many, many days at Ulsgaard, and spoke with everyone and demanded. Demanded to be carried around, demanded the blue room, demanded the small salon, demanded the large hall. Demanded the dogs, demanded that people laugh, speak, play, and be silent, and all at the same time. Demanded to see friends, women, those who had died, and demanded himself to die: demanded. Demanded and screamed.

Christoph Detlev's death screamed, screamed and moaned, roared so long and incessantly that the dogs, who at first howled along, fell silent and did not dare lie down but, standing on their long, slender, quivering legs, were afraid. And when those in the village heard him roaring through the far, silver, Danish summer night, they got up as for a thunder storm, dressed, and sat around the lamp without saying a word until it was over. And the women who were near to giving birth were put in the most remote rooms and the most shielded bedcupboards; but they heard it, heard it as if it were in their own bodies, and they pleaded to get up too and came, broad and pale, and sat down among the others with their blurred faces. And the cows that were calving at this time were helpless and withdrawn, and the dead fruit was torn out of the body with all the entrails and it wouldn't come

EP : the challenge from this text will likely come from the dispassionate tone of the narrator, with the ominous massive repetition in the 2nd paragraph and the use of “screaming” words and apocalyptic events in the third. It’s the challenge in dealing with the density of implied emotions, without lapsing into expressionistic sensationalism, while surrounded with the potential of panic. I like the highly qualified nature of the text, the quality of its specifics, and its underlying rhythmic rhetorics. Good challenge – especially given the 2009 theme of “emotion” ...

Anais Nin from Diary, Volume II (660 words)

I love the world so much, it moves me deeply, even the ordinary world, the daily world, even at the bar table, the tinkling ice in the glasses, the water, the dog tied in the coat room...

Levels and levels. It is as if I were in an elevator, shooting up and down, hundreds of floors, hundreds of lives. Up to heaven, terraces and planetariums, gardens, fountains, clouds, the sun. On the next to the last floor, dance halls and restaurants, and music. In the rooms, bars of shadows on the walls from the casement windows. A bower. A confessional. A couch to lie on. Something to lie on, to rest on, to cling to. Faith. Red lights! Down! Down! The telephone operator announces: a man who limps, a man who is paralyzed, a man in love with his mother, a man who cannot write the book he wants to write, a woman deserted, a woman blocked by guilt, a woman crying with shame for her love of another woman, a girl trembling with fear of a man. Free the slaves of incubi, of ghosts and anguish. Listen to their crying. A tough political partisan says "I feel soft and iridescent." Another one says "It is a weakness to listen to the complaints of the child within us." I say: "It will never cease lamenting until it is consoled, answered, understood. Only then will it lie in us, like our fears. It will die in peace and leave us what the child leaves to the man - the sense of wonder." The telephone announces: "A cable for you, shall I send it up?" "Yes, yes" "Happy birthday, happy birthday, love." Red lights! Down! White lights! Going up! Playing at being God, but a god not tired of listening, all the while wondering how the other god can watch people suffer. Music, the solace. Through music we rise in swift noiseless elevators to the heavens, breaking through the roof. Red Lights! Down! At the drug store I buy stamps, mail letters, ask for a coffee. Physically I am cracking. It is not the change in the floors, the sudden rise and descents which make me dizzy, but the giving. Parts of my life, parts of my energy are passing into others. I feel what they feel. I identify with them. Their anguish tightens my throat. My tongue feels heavy. I wonder whether I can go on. I have no objectivity, no indifference. I pass into them to illuminate, to reveal, but I cannot remain apart from them, be indifferent to their bad nights, or their hopes, or their cries, or even their happiness. I look out my window as Rank looked out of his window. People are skating in the Park. The band is playing. It is Sunday. I could be walking through the streets of Paris, joyous, lively streets where people are in love with life and even with their tragedies. I could be walking along the human and beautiful Seine. I did not recognize my happiness then. I yearned for adventure. The children's laughter rises to the twenty-fifth floor, to the window at which I stand. Red lights! Down! All the way down I am thinking of the problem of emotional symmetry. People's needs of retaliation, revenge, need to balance anger against anger, humiliation against humiliation, indifference against indifference.

EP : Beautiful piece of writing – Anaïs Nin does not get the adulation she gets for nothing, nor the writer-lovers ! It reminds me of a film I liked a lot: “So far, so close” by Wim Wenders (it was the sequel to the highly successful “The Wings of Desire”, and I liked it even better... Angelology and hot coffee trivia.) Pulling this text off in choreographic theatre is almost a virtuose task. Learn it inside out, in rhythm, against rhythm (never breathe of punctuation for instance, break the tonic inflections, etc. – mechanical excises, so that when you work with it you can easily get out of its syntactic rhetorical grooves.)

Now, a study challenge - a quote from a recent email exchange with Kristin Linklater : “The participants I aim for are professionals, or truly risk-taking students. I've

been somewhat dissapointed recently with USA students: 'insecurely' sure of themselves, off the mark culturally. I asked some a curricula: "from Schoenberg to Janov's Primal Scream." They knew neither."

I send you this to sting your cultural curiosity and because the bridge span from Schoenberg to Janov could be considered an ideal cross-cultural background curricula for choreographic theatre in the voice / music / therapy landscape. It does not include iconography though.

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Kyuja Bae, first year student from NAT, Norway – March 2010 Training Programme

monologue for an onion by suji kwock kim

**I don't mean to make you cry.  
I mean nothing, but this has not kept you  
From peeling away my body, layer by layer,**

**The tears clouding your eyes as the table fills  
With husks, cut flesh, all the debris of pursuit.  
Poor deluded human: you seek my heart.**

**Hunt all you want. Beneath each skin of mine  
Lies another skin: I am pure onion--pure onion  
Of outside and in, surface and secret core.**

**Look at you, chopping and weeping. Idiot.  
Is this the way you go through life, your mind  
A stopless knife, driven by your fantasy of truth,**

**Of lasting union--slashing away skin after skin  
From things, ruin and tears your only signs  
Of progress? Enough is enough.**

**You must not grieve that the world is glimpsed  
Through veils. How else can it be seen?  
How will you rip away the veil of the eye, the veil**

**That you are, you who want to grasp the heart  
Of things, hungry to know where meaning  
Lies. Taste what you hold in your hands: onion-juice,**

**Yellow peels, my stinging shreds. You are the one  
In pieces. Whatever you meant to love, in meaning to  
You changed yourself: you are not who you are,**

**Your soul cut moment to moment by a blade  
Of fresh desire, the ground sown with abandoned skins.  
And at your inmost circle, what? A core that is**

**Not one. Poor fool, you are divided at the heart,  
Lost in its maze of chambers, blood, and love,  
A heart that will one day beat you to death**

EP : I would call this a morality poem – in the tradition of VANITAS. Strangely, Korean baroque ! There is a great show (I hope it is) just opened in Paris on the theme of Vanity, including Damian Hirst's diamond studded skull. It is a favorite theme of baroque aesthetics – and of mine. I like the poem. But let me describe the obvious in order to help you chose. First, the main voice: it's the onion speaking, giving a massive baroque nihilistic lesson to the optimist, romantic spectator lover cook. It puts you as performer in a weird place; again, this is interesting. You are the performer speaking for the onion, describing the action that the spectator is supposed to be doing (peeling-cooking-romantic-loving.) So what are YOU doing - in terms of acting, action, acting out?



Interesting freedom, again – like “what is the choreography of the actor speaking for the onion?” The subject (the onion) has big moral authority – which in my work means massive danger for the actor: the danger that she/he becomes a cynical philosopher peeling away the supposedly romantic spectator. I certainly do not like performers who throw contempt at the audience – as if the audience were deluded idiots and the performer had moral superiority. I would probably start looking for the onion’s shadow, its regrets, its rancour, its lost or impossible romantic desires... This is where the interest probably lies for me. But of course it depends on you, your ambitions, the challenges you want to give yourself. Are you, or do you wish to be, more of an onion than, say, a peach, or as the French say “une poire” (a pear, meaning a naïve round gullible optimist...)?

An association on peeling, peeling the skin, flaying, almost the opposite of the disasubsed onion. *The Flaying of Marsyas*, a mythological theme I particularly like, full of blood and passion – and music. If you chose this poem I will include Marsyas in one of the mythology talks. Check out the painting by Titian on Marsyas (its in Prague) – to me one of the greatest paintings of all time. Esthetically (i.e. ethically) between Suji Kwock Kim’s poem and Titian painting you have a great gap for performative reflection. Its where I would go risk my performance. Afterthought: I would not mind dying beaten by my heart - & maybe will. If you like philosophy check out James Hillman’s “The thought of the heart”.

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**Sent:** Tuesday, February 09, 2010 12:07 AM

dear enrique,

thank you very much for your answer.

it took some time to think and research about your tips .

i do really agree with most of your opinions about the text i sent last time.

but i still can't decide if i really want to work with the text; monologue for an onion.

i got an other text which i am interested as well.

it is a part of book; the unbearable lightness of being by milan kundera.

i read this book (translated in korean) a few years ago and i like it a lot.

luckily i found the part i would like to use in english on the internet

so i am sending it to get some feedback on it from you.

if i choose this one,

i would like to try to change " sabina" and " franz" into " i" and "he".

because i observed myself that i felt much more connected with the text to say "I" than " sabina".

it seems fine in english version but the korean version, it sounds strange to change the point of view from "she/ he" into "i" in a way.

what do you think about it?

again, i have not made my mind yet:)

i will read and read both of texts so i can remember,while i keep searching some other if i can find.

thank you for reading this.

best regards,

kyuja

The unbearable lightness of being by Milan Kundera

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Living for Sabina meant seeing. Seeing is limited by two borders: strong light, which blinds, and total darkness. Perhaps that was what motivated Sabina's distaste for all extremism. Extremes mean borders beyond which life ends, and a passion for extremism, in art and in politics, is a veiled longing for death.

In Franz the word light did not evoke the picture of a landscape basking in the soft glow of day; it evoked the source of light itself: the sun, a light bulb, a spotlight. Franz's associations were familiar metaphors: the sun of righteousness, the lambent flame of the intellect, and so on.

Darkness attracted him as much as light. He knew that these days turning out the light before making love was considered laughable, and so he always left a small lamp burning over the bed. At the moment he penetrated Sabina, however, he closed his eyes. The pleasure suffusing his body called for darkness. That darkness was pure, perfect, thoughtless, visionless; that darkness was without end, without borders; that darkness was the infinite we each carry within us. (Yes, if you're looking for infinity, just close your eyes!)

And at the moment he felt pleasure suffusing his body, Franz himself disintegrated and dissolved into the infinity of his darkness, himself becoming infinite. But the larger a man grows in his own inner darkness, the more his outer form diminishes. A man with closed eyes is a wreck of a man. Then, Sabina found the sight of Franz distasteful, and to avoid looking at him she too closed her eyes. But for her, darkness did not mean infinity; for her, it meant a disagreement with what she saw, the negation of what was seen, the refusal to see.

Hello Kyuja

The decision is yours. You might want to do both. We have four weeks and you could try both texts. My thoughts on Kundera's extract: it's not that different from the "monologue for an onion by suji kwock kim - in its rhetorical philosophical tone. Kundera's is more straight, you could say, also in my view more psychologically complex (mature, deeper?) Quite calm also, which brings up the question of passions (and "Sabina's distaste for all extremism" ...) A probable move of mine (this is telling speculation on my part) will be to make you say it from the point of view of an uncontrollably passionate woman who hates Sabina's composure... for instance. This anti-Sabina character will probably go for sarcasm, and nasty irony, as well as suffering (she cannot protect herself by distancing like Sabina.) Sabina's 'superiority' will still be there - it is in the text and quite beautifully - but the danger is again the moral lesson. I tend to be allergic to any moralizing in theatre.

Josephine Kylén-Collins, first year student from NAT, Norway – March 2010 Training Programme. 2 proposals

Roberta II monologue from Eugene Ionesco's play "JACK OR THE SUBMISSION".

**I am by nature very gay. You could see it if you wanted to...I am eccentric...I am the gaiety in sorrow...in travail...in ruin...in desolation...AH! AH! AH!...bread, peace, liberty, mourning and gaiety... They used to call me gaiety ready to hand..the gay distress... Are you reflecting? Me too, at times. But in a mirror. I am the gaiety of death in life... the joy of living, of dying. They used to call me also gaiety the elder... It's because I'm taller than my sister...sir,**

**In all the world there's not another like me.  
I'm light, frivolous, I'm very serious.  
I'm not so serious, nor very frivolous,  
I know all about making hay,  
And there is other kinds of work I can do  
Less well, as well, or even better  
I'm just the tonic for you.  
I'm honest, but don't trust me,  
With me your life will be a ball.  
I can play the piano,**

I can arch my back,  
I've been properly housebroke.  
I've had a solid bringing up...

Ah! I understand you, you're not like the others. You're a superior being. Everything I told you was false, yes. Here is something that will interest you.

Once I felt like taking a bath. In the bathtub which was full almost to the brim, I saw a white guinea-pig who had made himself at home there. He was breathing under water. I leaned up in order to see him close up: I saw his snout quiver a little. He was very still. I wanted to plunge my arm into the water in order to seize him, but I was too afraid that he would bite me. They say that these little animals don't bite, but one can never be sure! He clearly saw me, he was watching me, he was on the alert. He had half-opened a tiny eye, and was looking at me, motionless. He didn't appear to be living, but he was though. I saw him in profile. I wanted to see him full face. He lifted his little head with his tiny eyes towards me, without moving his body. Since the water was very clear, I was able to see on his forehead two dark spots, chestnut colored, perhaps. When I had a good look at them, I saw that they were swelling gently, two excrescences...two very tiny guinea pigs, wet and soft, his little ones were coming out there...

EP - We will be using these texts to train in "choreographic theatre", which is a militantly particular approach to theatre and texts. Interestingly the word "submission" plays a very important role : finding the sub-mission, the mission 'under' - as opposed to the heroic 'missionary' declamations one finds in much theatre... Ionesco operates this subversion in his genius nasty pseudo-naïve way. So: great text and very interesting confrontation with Ionesco's 'authority' (what he wants as an author... or what we think he wants - and his authoritarian anti-authoritarianism...) We will also be confronting Ionesco's satire of French Boulevard theatre - with characters and their overdone (sur)realism.

The extract you propose, for our purposes, contains two separate pieces, and styles - with a very abrupt introduction "Here is something..." Also a challenge.

Check out if you can a piece of writing I did (in French...) on The Rhinoceros and Ionesco (which I saw by mistake!) on <http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/6-reading-list-rhinoceros-fr.pdf>

A part of " The shared patio" in the book " No one belongs here more than you" by Miranda July.

*If you are sad ask yourself why you are sad. Then pick up the phone and call someone and tell him or her the answer to the question. If you don't know anyone, call the operator and tell him or her. Most people don't know that the operator has to listen, it is a law. Also, the postman is not allowed to go into your house, but you can talk to him on public property for up to four minutes or until he wants to go, whichever comes first.*

Vincent was on the shared patio. I'll tell you about this patio. It's shared. If you look at it, you'll think it is only Helena and Vincent's patio, because their back door opens to it. But when I moved in, the landlord said that it was the patio for both the upstairs and the downstairs units. I'm upstairs. He said, Don't be shy about using it, because you pay just as much rent as they do. What I don't know is if he told Vincent and Helena that it is a shared patio. I have tried to demonstrate ownership by occasionally leaving something down there, like my shoes, or one time I left an Easter flag. I also try to spend exactly the same amount of time on the patio as they do. That way I know we are each getting our value. Every time I see them out there, I put a little mark on my calendar. The next time the patio is empty, I go sit on it. Then I cross off the mark. Sometimes I lag behind and have to sit out there a lot toward the end of the month to catch up.

Vincent was on the shared patio. I'll tell you about Vincent. He is an example of a New

Man. You might of read the article about the New Men in True Magazine last month. New Men are more in touch with their feelings than even women, and New Men cry. New Men want to have children, they long to give birth, so sometimes when they cry, it is because they can't do this; there is just nowhere for a baby to come out. New Men just give and give and give. Vincent is like that. Once I saw him give Helena a massage on the shared patio. This is kind of ironic, because it is Vincent who needs the massage. He has a mild form of epilepsy. My landlord told me this when I moved in, as a safety precaution. New Men are often a little frail, and also Vincent's job is art director, and that is very New Man. He told me this one day when we were both leaving the building at the same time. He is the art director of a magazine called *PUNT*. This is an unusual coincident because I am the floor manager of a printer, and we sometimes print magazines. We don't print *PUNT*, but we print a magazine with a similar name, *POSITIVE*. It's actually more like a newsletter; it's for people who are HIV-positive.

*Are you angry? Punch a pillow. Was it satisfying? Not hardly. These days people are too angry for punching. What you might try is stabbing . Take an old pillow and lay it on the front lawn. Stab it with a big pointy knife. Again and again and again. Stab hard enough for the point of the knife to go into the ground. stab until the pillow is gone and you are stabbing the earth again and again, as if you want to kill it for continuing to spin, as if you are getting revenge for having to live on this planet day after day, alone.*

EP - This is a sort of 'flow' piece – flow-narration. Framed, as an extract, by the two italic paragraphs. Not knowing the book (we word out of literary context) I take them as a psychological voice. Its quite an enterprise to take on something like this as a training text. I mean that it's a long 'flow' text with two framing statements. Given that we have four weeks and that we are a small number, it could be very interesting to take it on. I'm not sure you can productively do both (this text and the Ionesco) but maybe. My advice : chose one to learn thoroughly for the beginning of the project and prepare the other one (if you want to do both) parallel and gradually. To work with these texts in choreographic theatre requires knowing them 'by heart' (otherwise you will lose your energy with memory problems – which will be there anyway...) Your choice.

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Maja Clementsen Hansen - first year student from NAT, Norway – March 2010 Training Programme.  
3 proposals

SUN DRIED

by Edna Ferber

adapted for the stage by Walter Wykes

**MARY LOUISE:** I don't know. I don't know what the problem is. I've been trying to write about the city, you know, my experiences here. Then I decided to write a love story, but that's not working out either. My hero sounds more like a clothing store dummy than a real live human being, and, from what I hear, editors aren't fond of black-mustachioed figures nowadays. I've been fighting with him for a week now, the stubborn mule. He won't make love to my heroine. He refuses. I've tried to put red blood in his veins, but the two of them just won't get together—they're as far apart as they were the day I sat down to write. I'm at my wit's end. I've bitten off nearly half of my fingernails—look—see? There's nothing wrong with my heroine—I'm sure of that. She's a fascinating, mysterious, graceful creature, full of wit and passion and adventure, but not once has he clasped her to him fiercely or pressed his lips to her hair, her eyes, her cheeks. He hasn't even had the guts to "devour her with his gaze" as we writers like to say. This morning I thought he might be showing some signs of life. He was developing possibilities. But nothing came of it. He wimped out. That's why I decided to wash my hair and come out here—to get away from him for a little while. Back home? I taught school—and hated it. But I kept on teaching until I'd saved five hundred dollars. All the other girls teach until they've saved

five hundred dollars—then they pack two suit-cases and go to Europe for the summer. But I saved my five hundred for New York . I've been here six months now, and the five hundred has shrunk to almost nothing, and if I don't break into the magazines pretty soon ... Then, I'll have to go back and teach thirty-seven young devils that six times five is thirty, put down the naught and carry six, that a rhetorical question requires no answer, and that the French are a gay people, fond of dancing and light wines. But I'll scrimp on everything from hairpins to shoes, and back again until I've saved up another five hundred, and then I'll try it all over again, because I—can—write. I'm going to make it! I'm going to make this town count me in as the four million and oneth! Sometimes I get so tired of being nobody at all, with not even enough cleverness to wrest a living from this big city, that I want to stand out at the edge of the curb and just scream! Take off my hat, and wave, and shout, “Hey, you four million self-absorbed, uncaring people, I'm Mary Louise Moss, and I like your town, and I want to stay here! Won't you please pay some attention to me! Just a little bit!” No one even knows I'm here except ... well ... myself and the rent collector!

EP 1 - Chatty funny meanderings - with ghost characters appearing in the first half. In the work we will do we will manoeuvre to cut across the text's predicted styles (here a sort of TV casual confessional with a bit of the “dumb blonde” take) - and we will often call on opposites (I call them “contra-dictions”). The opposite of “chatty funny meanderings” ... sour salted hot rancour for instance - hating the “dumb blonde” syndrome and sentimental seduction. The text is well written in its bouncy everyday rhythm so it will surely cooperate with us in searching ways of going ‘underworld’ with it...

#### MATERNITY

##### A monologue from the play by Eugène Brieux

**ANNETTE:** First he pretended not to understand me: he forced me to say it quite plainly: he did it on purpose--either to torture me, or to give himself time to think. You'll never guess what he said--that it wasn't true. Yes, that it wasn't true! He got angry, and he began to abuse me. He said he guessed what I was up to; that I wanted to make a scandal to force him to marry me--oh, he spared me nothing--to force him to marry me because he was rich. And when that made me furious, he threatened to call the police! I ought to have left him, run away, come home, oughtn't I? But I couldn't believe it of him all at once like that! And I couldn't go away while I had any hope. You see, as long as I was with him, nothing was settled: as long as I was holding to his arm it was as if I was engaged. When he was gone I should only be a miserable ruined girl, like dozens of others. Then--I was afraid of making him angry: my life was at stake: and to save myself I went down into the very lowest depths of vileness and cowardice. I cried, I implored. I lost all shame and I offered to go with him to a doctor tomorrow to prove that what I told him was true. And what he said then I cannot tell you--not even you--it was too much--*too* much--I didn't understand at first. It was only afterwards, coming back, going over all his words, that I made out what he meant. He didn't believe what he said. He *couldn't* have believed what he said. At any rate he knows that I am not a girl out of the streets. But at first I didn't understand. Then--at last--he looked at his watch and said he had only just time to catch the train. He said goodbye and started off at a great pace to the station. I followed him imploring and crying. I was so ashamed of my cowardice. It was horrible and absurd! I couldn't believe it was the end of everything. I was all out of breath--almost running--and I prayed him for the sake of his child, for the sake of my love, of my misery, of my very life; and I took hold of his arm to keep him back. My God! what must I have looked like! At the station entrance he said, "Let go your hold of me." I said, "You shall *not* go." Then he rushed to the train, and jumped into a carriage, and almost crushed my fingers in the door; and he went and hid behind his mother, and she threatened to have me arrested. And Gabrielle sat there looking white and pretending not to know me. I came back. I haven't had courage enough to kill myself, but I wish I was dead!

EP 2 - Harsh humiliation text - emotional, pathetic, human, engaged... As such it brings strong substance to the laboratory. I like also the fact that she tells a friend. One tack I tend to train in is a neurotic approach : here it is full of regret (another salty business) to the point of wishing she was dead. Great heavy soap. I'll tell an amazing neurotic “acting out” scene I saw once - not as “horrible” as this one - pregnancy is no joke. Neurotic in this case is basically running the original film (in which she is humiliated) and playing out all the alternatives - what she could, should, might have done. Scenarios. Good & mature challenge.

**Knut Hamsun : "Hunger", part IV (1890)**

"Picking my way over the uneven cobbles in the yard, I still felt uncertain and very nearly turned around at the door. I clenched my teeth. NO! None of your misplaced pride now! If worst came to worst, I could always give the excuse that I had dropped in to say goodbye, take proper leave, and to come to an agreement concerning my small debt to the house. I opened the door to the hall.

Once inside, I remained stock-still. Right in front of me, two steps away, stood the landlord himself, without hat and coat,, peeping through the keyhole into the family room. He made mute gestures with his hand to make me stay quiet and peeped through the peephole again. He was laughing.

"Come over here", he said in a whisper.

I approached on tiptoe.

"Just look", he said, laughing with quiet, excited laughter. "Take a peep! Hee-Hee! There they lie! Look at the old man. Can you see the old man?!"

In the bed, right below Christ's oleograph and directly opposite me, I could see two figures, the landlady and the strange mate; her legs gleamed white against the dark quilt. And on the bed by the other wall sat her father, the paralyzed greybeard, looking on, hunched over his hands and curled up as usual, without being able to move.

I turned around to my landlord. He had the greatest difficulty keepin from laughing out loud. He was holding his hand over his nose. "Did you see the old man?" He whispered. " Oh lord, did you see the old man? The way he sits there looking on!" He put his face to the keyhole again.

I went over to the window and sat down. This spectacle had thrown all my thoughts into merciless confusion and upset my rich mood. Why, what was it to me? When the husband himself put up with it, was even greatly amused by it, there was no reason why I should take it to heart. As far as the old man was concerned, the old man was an old man. Maybe he didn't even see it, maybe he just sat there sleeping; God knows, he might even be dead. It wouldn't surprise me if he was dead sitting there. He could have died this morning around four.

I got up and hurried to the door without heeding the landlord's furious signs to me to step lightly

EP 3 - Interesting vein of choices you have done - actually all 3 proposals are in similar rhetorical territory. Here there is a sort of indignation from the speaker. One of the challenges is the voyeuristic keyhole, the visual "eye of the needle", through which the other scene takes place. This will be interesting to take on - how and where can the audience "see" the room, the old man and the wife. I like the "voyeur" problem. I look forwards to finding out which text you chose. All three are interesting.

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**Liv Pflug** - first year student from NAT, Norway - March 2010 Training Programme. 2 proposals

**"Falling In Like" by Niel LaBute**

...but he can be ... there are times when he's a bit late. Or ...yes, late. There' s not really another name for it . He's late.Tardy, at least . Isn't it called th at, "tardy," when a persondoes arrive for something but they're late for it? I think that'sit . They used to say th at in school, and it 's what I always tookit to mean. That some student was late. Tardy. For classes.(Beat.) And he's always so nice about it, and flushed fromrunning down the st reet , and he'll explain it all and it'll maketotal sense, complete and absolute , since thi s is a crazy townfor traffic

and the public transportation is awful, so I know what it can be like ... I really, really do know. It's just that this is a, you know, special day - did I mention that? - so I'm hoping that he'll be ... once or twice he just didn't show up. At all. No. I've sat at the movies before, waiting, and seen the whole film, and he's come in at the end, over the ... you know, with the words up on the screen and the music, and been so sorry but work got in the way or that kind of thing, but that's very rare. It seems to happen less and less these days, so that's fine; as embarrassing as it can be, it's still fine. Because we're ... we are in like. That's what he calls it. "In like." (*Smiles again.*) Isn't that sweet? I told you he's ... he says things, some things at times that just about take your breath away, or break your heart ... and that's where the phrase came from, "in like," because he wanted us to be sure that we knew what we were doing - we're not two kids running around the yard out back, chasing each other at recess ... we are adults and we should do this right. How it's meant to be done. Like people have done it for thousands of years ... through the ages. (*Beat.*) You meet someone, you connect or you don't, and if you do, if it's meant to be, then you fall ... fall toward each other in a steady and true way. First in like. Then in ... well, you know; I don't need to tell you how it goes. Or feels. And that's where we are right now ... firmly and utterly in like. (*Lets out a loud sigh.*) Goodness! To even talk about it is, well, it's ... yes. That. Amazing ...

*Studies her watch again. Starts to talk, then checks it one more time.*

**WOMAN** He said on the phone that ... he was quiet, whispering almost, and said he might be a touch late but that I should ... and it is our anniversary, so I'm going to sit here and wait for him. Because I know he will. He *will*, absolutely and without question. (*Beat.*) You see? I have faith in him. As a man and a friend and as a person that I'm beginning to give myself to. Not because I feel good around him or that he has accepted Timmy - that's my son, Timothy, but he just hates it when I call him that, so it has to be "Timmy" - not for any reasons like that. No. It's because I trust him. Feel like I can actually trust a man again and I do, I do trust him and care for him and just, I just ... well, it's true. I do like him. I am in like with him. I like him so very, very much ... and that's why I'm here right now, waiting for him. Because I am in like with the man. I am ... (*Beat.*) I mean, just in case you were wondering ... that's why I'm ... Yes. I *am*. So ...

*She smiles at us again - turns slightly to watch the door.*

**WOMAN** I'll tell you what I'm going to do: this. I'm going to give him another two minutes before I go - signal for my check and use that time to give him a chance. And he'll come, that's the thing of it, I *know* that he'll come! He always does - two minutes and he'll be here, you watch. (*Signals to the waiter.*) Well, we'll say three. Three just to be safe, and it'll take that long for them to organize the bill ... three minutes and he will come skipping in through that door, you mark my words. Starting now ... (*Glances at watch.*) No, wait until we're straight up and down. All right ... and *now*. There. Three minutes. I'm serious. This is like clockwork, it is ... here we go. I'll count it out, on the half minutes, just so you know that I'm not - you watch. Watch and learn ... He's on his way right now ... he's just about here. I know it. I can feel it. He is ... he's coming ... yes.

*She continues her vigil as the lights slowly fade. Silence. Darkness.*

EP 1 - This comment builds on the ones already sent to Kyuja, Josephine and Maja. The work we are going to train in and research with - choreographic theatre - is not protagonist-based i.e. psychological realism, like in most cinema today, i.e. filming the protagonist as subject carrying the 'subjective' emotions. In the case of a text like this one, by Niel LaBute (very much a cinema maker), we will research into what counter-actions (and contradictions) we can explore. These actions will be the artistic choice of another performer (not your's as the protagonist) - and often searching an antagonistic counterpoint (antagonizing your - or the text's - protagonistizing...) The question is not to be contrary for oppositional sake - too easy - but to bring out the undercurrents, mainly emotional, of the text and of your position (and in a special way of your acting.) For instance, maybe "he" does turn up but she is actually hiding. In terms of working with words - and the text is "chatty" (again) - it's an interesting enterprise, but a tough one. Not an easy text to learn by heart I would guess, and then not easy to pull it away of the book / film - its inherent style and its wish to rule acting and have its rethoric enacted. Clearly we will train in something like "anti-illustration", in pulling the texts into something like an "after-death" to hear its depth and repercussions its reflections from the other side.

**"This Person" by Miranda July**

They are all waiting by a picnic table in a park this person has driven past many times before. There they are, it's everyone. There are balloons taped to the benches, and the girl this person used to stand next to at the bus stop is waving a streamer. Everyone is smiling. For a moment this person is almost creeped out by the scene, but it would be so like this person to become depressed on the happiest day ever, and so this person bucks up and joins the crowd.

Teachers of subjects that this person wasn't even good at are kissing this person and renouncing the very subjects they taught. Math teachers are saying that math was just a funny way of saying "I love you." But now they are simply saying it, I love you, and the chemistry and PE teachers are also saying it and this person can tell they really mean it. It's totally amazing. Certain jerks and idiots and assholes appear from time to time, and it is as if they have had plastic surgery, their faces are disfigured with love. The handsome assholes are plain and kind, and the ugly jerks are sweet, and they are folding this person's sweater and putting it somewhere where it won't get dirty. Best of all, every person this person has ever loved is there. Even the ones who got away. They hold this person's hand and tell this person how hard it was to pretend to get mad and drive off and never come back. This person almost can't believe it, it seemed so real, this person's heart was broken and has healed and now this person hardly knows what to think. This person is almost mad. But everyone soothes this person. Everyone explains that it was absolutely necessary to know how strong this person was. Oh, look, there's the doctor who prescribed the medicine that made this person temporarily blind. And the man who paid this person two thousand dollars to have sex with him three times when this person was very broke. Both of these men are in attendance, they seem to know each other. They both have little medals that they are pinning on this person; they are badges of great honor and strength. The badges sparkle in the sunlight, and everyone cheers.

This person suddenly feels the need to check her postoffice box . It is an old habit, and even if everything is going to be terrific from now on, this person still wants mail. This person says she will be right back and everyone this person has ever known says, Fine, take your time. This person gets in her car and drives to the post office and opens the box and there is nothing. Even though it is a Tuesday, which is famously a good day for mail. This person is so disappointed, this person gets back in the car and, having completely forgotten about the picnic, drives home and checks the voicemail and there are no new messages, just the old one about "passing the test" and "life being better." There are no e-mails, either, probably because everyone is at the picnic. This person can't seem to go back to the picnic. This person realizes that staying home means blowing off everyone this person has ever known. But the desire to stay in is very strong. This person wants to run a bath and then read in bed.

In the bathtub this person pushes the bubbles around and listens to the sound of millions of them popping at once. It almost makes one smooth sound instead of many tiny sounds. This person's breasts barely jut out of the water. This person pushes the bubbles onto the breasts and makes weird shapes with the foam. By now everyone must have realized that this person is not coming back to the picnic. Everyone was wrong; this person is not who they thought this person was. This person plunges underwater and moves her hair around like a sea anemone. This person can stay underwater for an impressively long time but only in a bathtub. This person wonders if there will ever be an Olympic contest for holding your breath under bathwater. If there were such a contest, this person would surely win it. An Olympic medal might redeem this person in the eyes of everyone this person has ever known. But no such contest exists, so there will be no redeeming. This person mourns the fact that she has ruined her one chance to be loved by everyone; as this person climbs into bed, the weight of this tragedy seems to bear down upon this person's chest. And it is a comforting weight, almost human in heft. This person sighs. This person's eyes begin to close, this person sleeps.

EP 2 - A second proposal of a text by Miranda July. The stylistic device of using "this person" which then turns out to be a "she" compasses the text, and will be a great landmark to train with - i.e. repetition, leitmotif - which I like. It is incisive and loaded. But, check what I wrote to Josephine: chose one text first - and learn it so that you get rid of memory problems as much as possible, and are free to explore all sorts of renderings and 'versions' (subversions, perversions, etc.) of the text. Later you might bring in your second choice.



**Elfriede Jelinek** THE ELEGANT YOUNG WOMAN: The woodcutters are ready. They consider their work, work on nature. But there are people sitting in front and on top of the trees to put them out of work. And those national park sitters have the greater task. They establish the space in which the wetlands actually become reality. Really. It is they who ultimately make the landscape, those New Age sitting bullies in their designer sweats. [Their timeshare cabins are nice and comfy.] They cast themselves upon the land and the sky is also overcast. After all, that is where those who have passed on are joined in seclusion. And those down below pass judgement on good and bad pollution. How do I avoid the paths traveled by other wanderers? Would we have ever experienced our nativeness without those nature guards, who have planted themselves firmly in everything they own? And for our wholesome offspring we, the wet nurses of the wetlands, claim everything that should no longer be claimed: Spring water! Rain forests! Moors! The rivers that run through! Virgin woods and peckers! Tufa tortes; peat pies! Isn't it the tourists who create our foreign countries, without which we would always be at home? Only by going away and finding the same everywhere do we arrive back home again. We want to be in foreign lands to be lifted beyond us, to stretch across the unknown. Every place we go is worth our reflective gaze. Avoid what's close, and distance will call. It would also be possible to stay at home and create the foreign right there, but no, we have to get away to create a home for ourselves.

But I ask myself: Do we mourn the death of nature just to make her into something alien right here in our native land? Two solitary distant farms, if they still exist, still consider themselves neighbors, while in the city the closeness of door to door can mean a vast foreign territory. The closeness of neighbors does not depend on space and time. It is space and time that prevent closeness. If we want closeness, we have to carry it within ourselves. Yet we tear into each other with tender teeth and destroy what's home to the other. And the wilderness always is too wild, and sameness is always too much the same. The land greets us with gestures in the shape of monuments, lighthouses, citadels, cloisters, but the reason we understand them is that we know them from back home and can claim them as our home abroad. And all that foreign space keeps turning us away. Therefore we construct the foreign among ourselves everywhere; concrete injected into the swaying soil. Not at home, yet home. We stay inside ourselves. Who can deny us what? Where does nature get her power to always be more than those who live in her? Healthier, more beautiful than they. She is our environment. It is her function to serve as our backdrop, which sets us off as the stranger ones. But our might is man-made. Nature is everything that makes itself. What are we doing there? She is everything there is. She excludes conflict because she is in everything. Why should we now fight for her intactness. That fight will also be tracelessly absorbed by nature. The place under the apple tree where we used to rest has become much more open since we cleared it. What if that landscape didn't exist anymore? Even the result of complete destruction would still be nature, because nature is always all there is. And it is precisely this unity of contradictions within nature that propels us outside of nature, because we want to sit outside in our damaged, jagged places, so that we don't have to be nature, but rather: pacified, satisfied *in* nature. I say, the visitor wants to appear as mere appearance, an apparition apparently, while nature must be absolutely real. So that the visitor can let himself be embraced by reality, which in turn illuminates him as an illusion. And everything thus illuminated is already rendered obsolete by what we know. We don't look. We know! We know! Is it out of selfishness that we still want to go into the woods? The enormous star-studded heavens and a storm outside. Shouldn't we rather stop all our experiments and view the world as it is, in its exemplary greatness?

EP - Hi Jessica, I had a glance at your text.

The thing now (3 days before we start) is to learn it by heart - at least the first part, or the first paragraphs.

It is long. And its not a 'theatrical' text - ok by me. Its thinking is quite accute, with what seems like an uncanny irony. This gives entrance into 'voices' - who is speaking? - some kind of cutting-edge nature new nymph ?

You will have to work hard to get the ideas through. Good training - the balance between theatricality and complex ideas is not an easy one, especially in the 'new' territories of eco-political utopias.

Check out the material on Pastoral and Ecology I am proposing.

<http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-PW10-gb.html>

<http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-MT-gb.html>

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Patricia Sanz – proposal for the 2011 Paris Professional workshop.

LAST OF THE RED-HOT LOVERS. Neil Simon.

You hypocrite! You soul-searching, finger smelling, hypocritical son of a bitch!  
Who are you to tell anybody how to go through life? What would you have done if I came in here all fluttery and blushing and “Ooh, Mr.Cashman, don’t put your hand there, I’m a married woman”? Were you going to tell me how much you respect me, admire me, and, at the moment of truth, even love me? You know damn well tomorrow you’d be back behind that counter opening clams and praying to Christ I’d never come back in your restaurant. And you know something? That’s the way it should be.

Forgive me for the terrible, sinful thing I’m about to say but I happen to like the pure physical act of making love. It warms me, it stimulates me and it makes me feel like a woman - but that’s another ugly story. That’s why I came up here for and that’s what you were expecting. But don’t give me, “When I was nine years old my mother ran off with the butcher and I’ve been looking for someone to love me ever since”. I don’t know your problems and I don’t really care. Keep you seafood stories to yourself. No one really cares about anything or anyone in this world except himself, and there’s only one way to get through with your sanity. If you can’t taste it, touch it or smell it, forget it! If you want a copy of that speech, send fifty cents and self-addressed envelope. (.....)

Look, I’m forty-seven years old and for the first time in my life I think about dying. The thought of death has now become a part of my life. It's going to happen someday, maybe sooner than I think.

And I ask myself, "Have you enjoyed it Barbara? Was it a really terrific forty-seven years?" And you know what my answer is? "Well, I wouldn't say terrific. It was nice." ...The sum total of my existence is nice. I will go to my grave having led a nice life. And I will have a nice funeral and they will bury me in my nice blue dress. And my husband will weep for me and mourn for me and in six months he will marry another nice woman...maybe even give her my brown, favourite coat. And I wouldn't condemn him for it. It's the natural order of things, life must go on...But while it's going on, shouldn't it be better than just "nice"? Can't I just from time to time give in to my fantasies, my secret dreams, experiencing things, emotions, stimulants, and then go back to my daily routine - but knowing that for one brief afternoon, I have changed the pattern of my life. And feel that I don't just exist - I live!!

EP - Patricia: this is the ultimate “confessional” psychological-realistic speech – at the perfect moment for a mid-life crisis, 47. There is, on the other hand, no ‘perfect’ text for choreographic theatre, where the point is the challenge a text presents. And if you take this text on, I look forwards very much to the challenge. It opens a door to death, and in that sense, it is movingly tragic. My current research I call “post-tragic”, and this text leans towards that possibility, that kind of melancholy. In some ways I like this text better than the Camus you proposed (in French) – but that is my own psychological preference. Great choices both.

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One of the texts proposed and commented by Anna Griève during the 2012 Myth and Theatre

**"before the law"**  
by franz kafka

BEFORE THE LAW stands a doorkeeper. To this door-keeper there comes a man from the country and prays for admittance to the Law. But the doorkeeper says that he cannot grant admittance at the moment. The man thinks it over and then asks if he will be allowed in later. "It is possible," says the doorkeeper, "but not at the moment." Since the gate stands open, as usual, and the doorkeeper steps to one side, the man stoops to peer through the gateway into the interior. Observing that, the doorkeeper laughs and says: "If you are so drawn to it, just try to go in despite my veto. But take note: I am powerful. And I am only the least of the door-keepers. From hall to hall there is one doorkeeper after another, each more powerful than the last. The third doorkeeper is already so terrible that even I cannot bear to look at him." These are difficulties the man from the country has not expected; the Law, he thinks, should surely be accessible at all times and to everyone, but as he now takes a closer look at the doorkeeper in his fur coat, with his big sharp nose and long, thin, black Tartar beard, he decides that it is better to wait until he gets permission to enter. The doorkeeper gives him a stool and lets him sit down at one side of the door. There he sits for days and years. He makes many at-tempts to be admitted, and wearies the doorkeeper by his importunity. The doorkeeper frequently has little interviews with him, asking him questions about his home and many other things, but the questions are put indifferently, as great lords put them, and always finish with the statement that he cannot be let in yet. The man, who has furnished himself with many things for his journey, sacrifices all he has, however valuable, to bribe the doorkeeper. The doorkeeper accepts everything, but always with the remark: "I am only taking it to keep you from thinking you have omitted anything." During these many years the man fixes his at-tention almost continuously on the doorkeeper. He for- gets the other doorkeepers, and this first one seems to him the sole obstacle preventing access to the Law. He curses his bad luck, in his early years boldly and loudly, later, as he grows old, he only grumbles to himself. He becomes childish, and since in his yearlong contempla-tion of the doorkeeper he has come to know even the fleas in his fur collar, he begs the fleas as well to help him and to change the doorkeeper's mind. At length his eyesight begins to fail, and he does not know whether the world is really darker or whether his eyes are only deceiving him. Yet in his darkness he is now aware t of a radiance that streams inextinguishably from the gateway of the Law. Now he has not very long to live. Before he dies, all his experiences in these long years gather themselves in his head to one point, a ques-tion he has not yet asked the doorkeeper. He waves him nearer, since he can no longer raise his stiffening body. The doorkeeper has to bend low towards him, for the difference in height between them has altered much to the man's disadvantage. "What do you want to know now?" asks the doorkeeper; "you are insati-able." "Everyone strives to reach the Law," says the man, "so how does it happen that for all these many years no one but myself has ever begged for admit-tance?" The doorkeeper recognizes that the man has reached his end, and to let his failing senses catch the words roars in his ear: "No one else could ever be admitted here, since this gate was made only for you. I am now going to shut it."

Text proposed by Pernille Rübner-Petersen for the 2012 Myth and Theatre Workshop Festival.

**Soldier** / Music: L.Y. Lyrics: P.R-P.

- A1     When I was a soldier  
           I was very immortal  
           I could never die  
           I endured everything  
           I was sure     I was a king     to survive
- A2     Then there was a bomb  
           I could not – see it  
           Suddenly it just exploded

Out of control  
 Very strange everything has change in the world

B1 A lot of things in the air  
 Drifting, falling everywhere  
 A stroke of smoke  
 A sweet smell of hell  
 People shouting as death was crowding

But I could not hear anything  
 What they said, was I dead?  
 Or somehow out of my head  
 And into my legs lying on the other side

A3 I am in a room  
 Very white and – dust free  
 Voices making' choices  
 With hands on my body  
 I cannot feel it I cannot breathe on my own

A4 Looking' up the ceiling  
 They say I am – healing  
 Boredom and pain  
 Fight over my brain  
 I'm distressed and depressed a fuckin' mess

B2 I have a lot a pain to kill  
 Then I have to take a lot of pills  
 Makes me tired  
 And forever fired  
 And some of the pain will always remain

I will not hear anything  
 What they say I feel dead  
 Or at least very out of my head  
 And into my legs, lying on the other side

A5 Now I am home  
 They're very glad – I am sad  
 Then I make jokes  
 I started to smoke  
 Very strange, everything has changed, in my life

A6 I moved into the woods  
 Because of funny – moods  
 Keeping weeping  
 I stopped eating  
 When I sleep I run in my dreams I wake up and scream aahhhhh

- B3 I don't wanna sleep anymore  
 Just listen to the silence outdoor  
 But moaning and wailing  
 And images too  
 Come out of the blue and stick like glue
- I just wanna to jump off board  
 Get a super gun and kill God  
 I don't miss to kiss  
 I just have a wish  
 Rest from my legs, lying on the other side
- C1 War is a drug  
 Better than sex  
 War is a hug  
 Of life and death                    together
- The dice is cast  
 We're dealing with God  
 How long can we last?  
 In this flesh and blood            together
- C2 When we're are hit  
 We don't understand  
 How this kind of shit  
 Leaves every man                    on his own
- It's such a shame  
 To have to give up  
 And stop the game  
 That's never enough    on your own

EP : As mentioned in the introduction to this collection of texts, there are several reasons for which I recommend not to use texts of songs. It is very difficult, practically impossible, to get the diction out of the "groove" of a song, especially if you know it well and have a sang version in your head. The ultimate horror is Jacques Brel's *Amsterdam*! Also, songs usually fit metrics, like this one, and rimes. Normally it is made worse if you are the author of the music and/or words. But in your case, and given the somewhat last-minute emergency, go for it. But, start learning the Kafka on the side, at least a chunk, or another text, in case of emergency.

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Exchange with Sarah Quintana – and her proposal of an edited text from William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. For the 2012 Myth and Theatre Festival.

Bonjour Enrique,  
 Thank you in advance for your guidance.

I am working on William Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying*. The book is written in 52 chapters, stream of consciousness, from 15 different points of view.

I am looking at Vardaman, the youngest son... a child, who believes his mother is a fish. The hilarious and ridiculous characters and how they handle Addie's death, The coffin, coffee cups and other containers are awesome... I am thinking about the idea of entrapment to embrace from James Hillmans lecture, Myths of the Family, hatred and the animal pride-- betrayal of the family-- cultural therapy...? yes.

Here is a quote:

**p488**  
**Now there are seven of them in little black circles.**  
**"Look, Darl." I say. "See?"**  
**He looks up. We watch them in tall black circles of not moving.**  
**"Yesterday there were just four," I say.**  
**There were more than four on the barn.**  
**"Do you know what I'd do if he tries to light on the wagon again?" I say.**  
**"What would you do?" Darl says.**  
**"I wouldn't let him light on her, I say." " I wouldn't let him light on her Cash, either."**  
**Cash is sick. He is sick on the Box. But my mother is a Fish.**  
**"We got to get some medicine in mottson," Pa says, I recon we'll just have to."**  
**"How do you Feel, Cash?" Darl says.**  
**"It dont bother none," Cash says.**  
**"Do you want it propped a little higher?" darl says.**  
**Cash has a broken leg. He has had two broken legs. He lies on the box with a quilt rolled under his head and a piece of wood under his knee.**  
**"I reckon we ought to left him at Amstids," Pa says.**  
**I haven't got a broken leg and pa hasn't and Darl hasn't and**  
**"it's just the bumps." Cash says... "It kind of grinds together a little on the bumps. It dont bother none."**

*Jewel has gone away. He and his horse went away one supper time. "It's because she wouldn't have us beholden," pa says. "Fore God, I do the best that ere a man. Is it because Jewel's mother is a Horse, Darl?*

*"Maybe I can draw the ropes a little tighter," Darl Says.*

*That is why Jewel and I were both in the shed and she was in the wagon because the horse lives in the barn and I had to keep on runnin the buzzard away from*

*"If you just would," Cash says. And Dewey Dell hasn't got a broken leg and I haven;t. Cash is my brother.*

*We stop. When Darl loosens the rope Cash begins to sweat again. His teeth look out.*

*"Hurt?" Darl Says.*

*"I reckon you better but it back." Cash says.*

*"Hurt?" Darl says.*

*"It dont bother none," Cash says.*

*"Do you want pa to drive slower?" Darl says.*

*"NO." Cash says, "Aint no time to hang back, it dont bother me none."*

*"Well have t get some medicine at Mottson," Pa asays, "I reckon well have to.*

*"Tell him go on." We go on. Dewey Dell leans back and wipes Cash's face. Cash is my brother.*

*But, Jewel's mother is a horse. My mother is a fish. Darl says that when we come to the water again I might see her and Dewey Dell sayd. She's in the box: how could she have got out? She got out through the holes I*

*bored, into the water, I said, and when we come to the water again I am going to see her. My mother is not in the box. My Mother does not smell like that. My mother is a fish.*

There is a lot of narration going on, lots of "He said, she said" language.

If you allow me to, I will select Vardaman's thoughts from a few different chapters... of 250 words.

If you prefer, I could stick to a chapter like this one or try another chapter because there are some other options.

Thank you so much for any comments or advice!

Sincerely

Sarah Quintana

Text proposed by Claudia Baumgarten for the 2014 Myth and Theatre Workshop Festival.

Three poems by RUMI.

EP: Dear Claudia. Texts during the Myth and Theatre Festival will be worked on in MASTER CLASSES by me, in the afternoons. The setting therefore has changed since previous Festivals. I will concentrate on texts and choreographic theatre. In such a context, any of the Rumi texts you send me will work (chose one.) And it will be "exemplary" to work with such a format and content – I mean a good example of how to "paradox" such a text, and not fall for a pious philosophical rendering. At the same time we will have to live up to the quality of what he says, Rumi's own spiritual paradoxes, even humour! You cannot simply 'mess about' with Rumi! I look forwards to this. Make your choice of poem also on its English (translations here are uneven in English flow.)

See you soon. Enrique

### **The Source of Joy**

No one knows what makes the soul

wake up so happy!

Maybe a dawn breeze has blown the veil

from the face of God.

A thousand new moons appear.

Roses open laughing.

Hearts become perfect rubies

like those from Badakshan.

The body turns entirely spirit.

Leaves become branches in the wind!

Why is it now so easy to surrender,

even for those already surrendered?

There's no answer to any of this.

No one knows the source of joy.

A poet breathes into a reed flute,

and the tip of every hair makes music.

Shams sails down clods of dirt from the roof,

and we take jobs as doorkeepers for him.

## **THE GUEST HOUSE**

This being human is a guest house.

Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,

some momentary awareness comes

as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!

Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,



who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still,

treat each guest honorably.

He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice.

meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.

Be grateful for whatever comes.

because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

## LOVE DOGS

“Love Dogs

One night a man was crying,  
Allah! Allah!

His lips grew sweet with the praising,

until a cynic said,  
"So!  
I have heard you  
calling out,  
but have you ever  
gotten any response?"

The man had no answer to that.

He quit praying and fell into a confused sleep.

He dreamed he saw Khidr, the guide of souls,  
in a thick, green foliage.

"Why did you stop praising?"

"Because I've never heard anything back."

"This longing  
you express is the return message."

The grief you cry out from  
draws you toward union.

Your pure sadness  
that wants help  
is the secret cup.

Listen to the moan of a dog for its master.

That whining is the connection.

There are love dogs  
no one knows the names of.

Give your life  
to be one of them."

## **THE SILENT ARTICULATION OF A FACE- Rumi**

Love comes with a knife, not some

shy question, and not with fears  
 for its reputation! I say  
 these things disinterestedly. Accept them  
 in kind. Love is a madman,

working his wild schemes, tearing off his clothes,  
 running through the mountains, drinking poison,  
 and now quietly choosing annihilation.

A tiny spider tries to wrap an enormous wasp.  
 Think of the spiderweb woven across the cave  
 where Muhammad slept! There are love stories,  
 and there is obliteration into love.

You've been walking the ocean's edge,  
 holding up your robes to keep them dry.

You must dive naked under and deeper under,  
 a thousand times deeper! Love flows down.

The ground submits to the sky and suffers  
 what comes. Tell me, is the earth worse  
 for giving in like that?

Don't put blankets over the drum!  
 Open completely. Let your spirit-ear  
 listen to the green dome's passionate murmur.

Let the cords of your robe be untied.  
 Shiver in this new love beyond all  
 above and below. The sun rises, but which way  
 does night go? I have no more words.

Let soul speak with the silent  
 articulation of a face.

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Exchange with Jenny MacDonald – towards the Paris 2014 Professional Workshop.  
 The texts proposed are below the exchanges.

Hi Enrique,

I have been reading through the text conversations you have online and also collecting texts I have grappled with or would like to grapple with.

EP: “have grappled with”: have you already worked on them? Because it can set grooves and make it difficult to get out of them or refresh the approach. It needs consideration as to why one wants to rework a text. I'm not against it if the reasons are valid. I also warn very much how difficult it can be to work with texts one has written. But also what a great challenge it can be.

A few initial questions:

For theatre texts, should I be thinking as a traditional actor in this text selection in terms of the suitability of the "character" for me, in terms, for example, of age and gender. There are several texts spoken by male characters that I am drawn to. I know we are not going to be traditional, but didn't know how far that extends.

EP All the way. But in fact what matters is the quality of challenge you give yourself. At any level. I'm not against "classic" psychological realism (age, accent, typology etc – all the stuff cinema stole from realistic theatre – they ran away with it, and it gave us, live performance people, even more freedom! Why not take on a male character, full on, and see how you 'vert' it – pervert, invert, subvert etc. That is the work. What I call making Orpheus sweat.

Similarly, should I be learning the text in the accent of the character or just let my own voice speak it (a few are texts that tend to have strong accents-Northern English, American South etc.) My natural accent is Canadian with some Irish inflections!

EP Again, the more the merrier. Performance is re-presentation, i.e. quoting. My current work is on "possession", so I'm likely to want to see how you "possess" your text, how it "possesses" you, and what spirits turn up...

For a prose text, should it be in the voice of one character or from the perspective of one character. Does it need to be written in first person?

EP Dialogue is more the problem because it is taken as the basis for realistic psychology communication: two persons in a living room talking to and with each other. If that is the case, I want to hear all the other voices floating around, commenting (cum mens – the echoes of mind.) On the other hand direct first person renderings can be a great integrity challenge – and desintegration challenge...

So, you and your Psyche have to make choices now...

Thank you in advance. I plan to take some texts to the studio this weekend for a bit of wrestling!

EP May some tough angels take you on! And playfull ones too.  
I look forwards to your choices.

All good wishes,

Jenny

EP and to you.  
Enrique

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Hello Enrique,

I am attaching three texts. Really, at the moment, I think I am deciding between the first two: "The Weir" and "Death and the Maiden". Both have ghosts and hauntings within. When I began the text search, I noticed I was drawn to engagements with ghosts of many kinds. "The Weir" is very long and might need to be cut? Though, it is great to have an opportunity to work with such a long piece. (There is an empty page in the middle of the photoshop-ed script, but it continues after that.) I enjoy the challenge of its storytelling style. She is speaking to a few strangers in a pub. It can seem very literal and indirect, but when I read it out, I found many energies present beneath the surface. For me, the piece initially deceives. Not so simple as it may first appear. "Death

and the Maiden" (I notice you have worked with it before on the stage), has a more direct and confrontational style. It has great power, energy, clarity. I like the preoccupation with truth and confession. In both pieces, so many other characters/voices are present. The two make a strong contrast perhaps. A reflective piece from a woman who feels lost in "The Weir" and an enlivened piece from a woman who believes she has found what she wants in "Death and the Maiden". Both trying to make sense of unimagineable pasts.

Finally, I attach "Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen". I initially thought I would work with this. I love the poetry of it. The way it possesses as it is spoken. But now, the other two are preoccupying me more. Still, if you feel either of them is not suitable, this remains an option. I have always wanted to do something with it. And with Tennessee Williams, there is always much to do.

You will see that somehow the male characters I was initially drawn to fell away in the studio. The mystery of it all!

EP:

Hello Jenny

It's your choice, clearly - any of the three texts. They are actually relatively similar - brittle psychic psychology. The ghosts in both your main choices have traumatic echoes and forebodings: one has to watch it with such ghosts, but then the motto when we did our Festival on EMOTION was: "Watch Out!" ... and not only "look in". What this implies is that with such 'psychic' texts the framing will be all important, which is the basis of choreographic theatre, following what I wrote to you on "psychological realism" and cinema... This will be a valuable challenge and probably take us to very unforeseen places, disciplines and acting philosophies - probably relativising, while including subjective 'methods' of trauma acting.

The length of the texts will be an advantage in the latter part of the workshop since we will work more intensely on texts and be fewer participants. Now I look forwards to meeting the person who chose these texts!

PS since you wrote your reflections on the process of choosing these texts, I encourage you to keep on writing: keep a full log-book, on choosing, learning, on the fantasies of enactment, on the fantasies of the workshop, and then on the realities of the work, etc.

I recently discovered the Spanish word *bitacora* (used in Chile mainly). Its contemporary usage corresponds to log-book, originally the one kept on sailing ships in the waterproof cubicle under the compass and navigation instruments. *Binnacle* - from the dictionary...

Death and the Maiden

by Ariel Dorfman

Paulina:

I suggest we reach a compromise. Compromise, an agreement, a negotiation. Everything in this country is done by consensus, isn't it. Isn't that what this transition is all about? They let you have democracy, but they keep control of the economy and of the armed forces? The Commission can investigate the crimes but nobody is punished for them? There's freedom to say anything you want as long as you don't say everything you want? So you can see that I'm not that irresponsible or emotional or...sick, I propose that we reach an agreement. You want this man freed without bodily harm and I want - would you like to know what I want?

When I heard his voice last night, the first thing that rushed through my head, what I've been thinking all these years, when you would catch me with a look that you said was - abstract, fleeting, right? - you know what I was thinking of? Doing to them, systematically, minute by minute, instrument by instrument, what they did to

me. Specifically to him, to the doctor... Because the others were so vulgar, so...but he would play Schubert, he would talk about science, he even quoted Nietzsche once. It's his voice. I recognized as soon as he came in here last night. The way he laughs, certain phrases he uses. During all these years not an hour has passed that I haven't heard it, that same voice, next to me, next to my ear, that voice mixed with saliva, you think I'd forget a voice like this?

I was terrified at myself. That I should have so much hatred inside – but it was the only way to fall a sleep at night, the only way of going out with you to cocktail parties in spite the fact that I couldn't help asking myself if one of the people there wasn't – perhaps not the exact same man, but one of those people might be... and so as not to go completely off my rocker and be able to deliver that Tavelli smile you say I'm going to have to continue to deliver –well, I would imagine pushing their heads into a bucket of their own shit, or electricity, or when we would be making love and I could feel the possibility of an orgasm building, the very currents going through my body would remind me and then – and then I had to fake it, fake it, so you wouldn't know what I was thinking, so you wouldn't feel that it was your failure.

So when I heard his voice, I thought the only thing I want is to have him raped, that's what I thought, that he should know just once what it is to...and as I can't rape him –I thought that it was a sentence that you would have to carry out. But then I told myself it would be difficult for you to collaborate in that scheme, after all you do need to have certain degree of enthusiasm to – So I asked myself if we couldn't use a broomstick. But I began to realize that wasn't hat I really wanted – something that physical. And you know what conclusion I came to, the only thing I really want?

I want him to confess. I want him to sit in front of that cassette recorder and tell me what he did – not just to me, everything, to everybody – and then have him write it out in his own handwriting and sign it and I would keep a copy forever – with all the information, the names and data, all the details. That's what I want.

I can speak - it's been years since I murmured even a word, I haven't opened my mouth to even whisper a breath of what I'm thinking, years living in terror of my own... but I'm not dead, I thought I was but I'm not and I can speak, damn it – so for god's sake let me have my say and you go ahead with your Commission and believe me when I tell you that none of this is going to be made public. The only way to dissuade me is for him to confess. Tell him if he doesn't confess, I'll kill him. If he is innocent? Then he is really screwed.

I was mad because I stayed silent and now I'm mad because I can speak.

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### Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen Tennessee Williams

WOMAN. I want to go away.

MAN. You do?

WOMAN. *I want to go away!*

MAN. How?

WOMAN. *Alone!* [*She returns to window*] I'll register under a made-up name at a little hotel on the coast ...

MAN. What name?

WOMAN. Anna — Jones ... The chambermaid will be a little old lady who has a grandson that she talks about ... I'll sit in the chair while the old lady makes the bed, my arms will hang over the — sides, and — her voice will be — peaceful ... She'll tell me what her grandson had for supper! — tapioca and — cream ... [*The Woman sits by the window and sips the water*] — The room will be shadowy, cool, and filled with the murmur of —

MAN. Rain?

WOMAN. Yes. Rain.

MAN. And?

WOMAN. Anxiety will — pass — over!

MAN. Yes ...

WOMAN. After a while the little old woman will say, Your bed is made up, Miss, and I'll say — Thank you ... Take a dollar out of my pocketbook. The door will close. And I'll be alone again. The windows will be tall with long blue shutters and it will be a season of rain — rain — rain ... My life will be like the room, cool — shadowy cool and — filled with the murmur of —

MAN. Rain....

WOMAN. I will receive a check in the mail every week that I can count on. The little old lady will cash the checks for me and get me books from a library and pick up — laundry ... I'll always have clean things! — I'll dress in white. I'll never be very strong or have much energy left, but have enough after a while to walk on the — esplanade — to walk on the beach without effort ... In the evening I'll walk on the esplanade along the beach. I'll have a certain beach where I go to sit, a little way from the pavillion where the band plays Victor Herberg selections while it gets dark ... I'll have a big room with shutters on the windows. There will be a season of rain, rain, rain. And I will be so exhausted after my life in the city that I won't mind just listening to the rain. I'll be so quiet. The lines will disappear from my face. My eyes won't be inflamed at all any more. I'll have no friends. I'll have no acquaintances even. When I get sleepy, I'll walk slowly back to the little hotel. The clerk will say, Good evening, Miss Jones, and I'll just barely smile and take my key. I won't ever look at a newspaper or hear a radio; I won't have any idea what's going on in the world. I will not be conscious of time passing at all ... One day I will look in the mirror and I will see that my hair is beginning to turn grey and for the first time I will realize that I have been living in this little hotel under a made-up name without any friends or acquaintances or any kind of connections for twenty-five years. It will surprise me a little bit but it won't bother me any. I will be glad that time has passed as easily as that. Once in a while I may go out to the movies. I will sit in the back row with all that darkness around me and figures sitting motionless on each side not conscious of me. Watching the screen. Imaginary people. People in stories. I will read long books and the journals of dead writers. I will feel closer to them than I ever felt to people I used to know before I withdrew from the world. It will be sweet and cool this friendship of mine with dead poets, for I won't have to touch them or answer their questions. They will talk to me and not expect me to answer. And I'll get sleepy listening to their voices explaining the mysteries to me. I'll fall asleep with the book still in my fingers, and it will rain. I'll wake up and hear the rain and go back to sleep. A season of rain, rain, rain ... Then one day, when I have closed a book or come home alone from the movies at eleven o'clock at night — I will look in the mirror and see that my hair has turned white. White, absolutely white. As white as the foam on the waves. [*She gets up and moves about the room as she continues*] I'll run my hands down my body and feel how amazingly light and thin I have grown. Oh, my, how thin I will be. Almost transparent. Not hardly real any more. Then I will realize, I will know, sort of dimly, that I have been staying on here in this little hotel, without any — social connections, responsibilities, anxieties or disturbances of any kind — for just about fifty years. Half a century. Practically a lifetime. I won't even remember the names of the people I knew before I came here nor how it feels to be someone waiting for someone that — may not come ... Then I will know — looking in the mirror — the first time has come for me to walk out alone once more on the esplanade with the strong wind beating on me, the white clean wind that blows from the edge of the world, from even further than that, from the cool outer edges of space, from even beyond whatever there is beyond the edges of space ... [*She sits down again unsteadily by the window*] — Then I'll go out and walk on the esplanade. I'll walk alone and be blown thinner and thinner.

MAN. Baby. Come back to bed.

WOMAN. And thinner and thinner and thinner and thinner and thinner! [*He crosses to her and raises her forcibly from the chair*] — Till finally I won't have any body at all, and the wind picks me up in its cool white arms forever, and takes me away!

MAN. [*presses his mouth to her throat*] Come on back to bed with me!

WOMAN. *I want to go away, I want to go away!* [*He releases her and she crosses to center of room sobbing uncontrollably. She sits down on the bed. He sighs and leans out the window, the light flickering beyond him, the rain coming down harder. The Woman shivers and crosses her arms against her breasts. Her sobbing dies*

out but she breathes with effort. Light flickers and wind whines coldly. The Man remains leaning out. At last she says to him softly --] Come back to bed. Come on back to bed, baby ... [He turns his lost face to her as --]

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Comments on a text (in Spanish) for the “The Place of Text” workshop  
(Stories take place!) Malérargues, August 2016  
Proposal of Soraia Sanchez.

The text is a short poem by 17<sup>th</sup> century Spanish mystic Saint John of the Cross.  
See Spanish version on [www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-textos.pdf](http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-textos.pdf)

EP: Dear Soraia: I should have guessed that you were going to chose a text of this kind: passionate and "mystical" - as you are! Especially given your leanings (and desire) to *Bolar* (fly) “so high, so high”. And if I can, one day, I'll keep you company in one of your *buelos* (flights / performances).

I will tell you an anecdote: it is about the "black sheep" cousin of the Colombaioni brothers - great Italian clowns. This cousin is one of the greatest “bad tempered” clowns I have seen: he taught wearing a kepi (the old-style French police hat, and a whistle, which he would blow and blow while screaming non-stop: "Manuel manuel!" And occasionally: “More manuel!” What he meant was: “manual, manual”: that we should be more manual, manual workers, farmers, and not *boladores* floating artists and poets. I have something of the same feeling about you – but certainly no shouting or whistling because I have a lot of respect for your *buelos* (flights) and your *abuelos* (ancestor/grandparents).

I will make a proposal: you must rewrite the poem in your everyday street Spanish – including jargon and all, and expand the text – do not contract it. Twice as many words: paraphrase, reiterate, explain, gloss, even include tangential fantasies. Minimum twice as many words. And put it down on paper, so that you do not spend time improvising. And above all put it in prosaic Bilbao street language of today. Spoken Spanish, without any metric-poetic reference. So you can talk it like ordinary speech. And change the gender to a woman’s position. Unless you want to give the subject a turn-about and make it male (we could try later – not complicated practically.)

Otherwise, my nasty police clown is bound to flag you down and not let you cross the border. Why? It is a laboratory (work *labor*) for spoken texts (we might even do a "manual" exercise with texts). It seems a waste to try and anchor and ground Saint John of the Cross. That would be another job – not unlike the piece you presented with Marianke at the piano. Such work could be done later, once you have anchored your acting/speaking on stage. I recommend that you take advantage of this workshop to delve into acting work and speech, even psychological realism!

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Text proposed by Grace McLean, for the August 2016  
*The Place of Texts* workshop, Malérargues.  
Scivias by Hildegard von Bingen



Grace: “Here's some text I'm thinking of using. I think it is too long right now, but I present it to you unedited to hear your initial thoughts. It is from Hildegard von Bingen's Scivias - I am working on a piece about her, and thought it would be useful to explore her words in the context of this workshop. Let me know what you think! »

Alas for me a pilgrim! How can I survive among these dangers? And what happens when the Devil's persuasion invades me saying 'Is a thing good which you do not know and cannot see and cannot do?' and again 'Why forsake what you do know and do understand and can do?' What shall I do then? Full of sorrow I will answer "Ach miserable for me! for harmful poisons were instilled into me through Adam when he disobeyed God and was cast out into the world and joined his tabernacle to carnal things. For in the taste of the fruit he knew by disobedience a harmful sweetness poured itself into his blood and flesh, producing the corruption of vice. And therefore I feel the sin of the flesh in me, and intoxicated by this sin, I neglect the Most Pure God. But I must not follow the taste my tabernacle has in it. For since Adam was pure and honest when God created him and he first appeared, I fear God, knowing that I too was created pure and honest. But now, through the evil habits of vice, I dwell in disquietude. Oh in all these ways I am a pilgrim!

Therefore the whirlwinds tell me lies in many voices, which rise up within me saying 'Who are you? and what are you doing? and what are these battles you are fighting? You are indeed unhappy, for you do not know whether your work is good or bad. Where will you go? and who will save you? and what are these errors that are driving you to madness? Are you doing what delights you? Are you escaping what distresses you? Oh what will you do when you know this and are ignorant of that? For what delights you is not lawful for you, and what distresses you God's precept compels you to do. And how do you know whether these things are so? It would be better for you if you did not exist!' And after these whirlwinds have risen up thus within me, I begin to tread another path that is hard for my flesh to bear, for I begin to practice righteousness. But then I doubt as to whether or not the Holy Spirit has given this to me and I say 'This is useless.' And I wish to fly above the clouds. How? I wish to fly above my faculties and start things I cannot finish. But when I try to do these things, I only stir up great sadness in myself, so that I do no works, either on the heights of sanctity or on the plains of good will; but I bear within me the disquietude of doubt, desperation, sadness, and oppression in all things. And when the Devil's persuasion disturbs me then, oh, how great calamity overtakes me! For I am overcome in my unhappiness by all the evils that are or can be in blame, malediction, mortification of the body and soul and shameful words against the purity, healing and loftiness that are in God. And then wickedness suggests to me that all the felicity and all the good which is in Man as well as God will be to me harmful and oppressive, offering me death rather than life. Ach! How unhappy is this struggle, which forces me from labor to labor, from sorrow to sorrow, from discord to discord, depriving me of all happiness.

EP : First of all: if you are working on a project on Hildegard von Bingen this workshop could indeed be an excellent context to explore one of her texts – I would say here “her voice”. There are warnings, though, regarding the question of authority (i.e. in this case authorship.). It is not unlike artists who come to work with texts they have written. You are implicitly the author of your project on Hildegard von Bingen. This work often puts into question “implicit implications” (to implicate: to fold in – the ideas and values that are folded into a project, sometimes stow-aways.) In a reply to Anne Ostergaard on her proposal of a text of Primo Levy ( In French on <http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-textes.pdf>), I commented:

EP: You write: “*Your online writings and documents confirm that this workshop is going to be a discovery for me! With curiosity, interest and a share of... apprehension: will I be up to it or will I disturb the work of the group.*” I would say that in a choreographic theater workshop which brings

together voice / movement / texts (and music), we all venture into uncharted territory. Me too, hence the notion of *experimental* laboratory ... So be not be afraid of your fear! In fact use it! Stage fright can be a wonderful emotional tool - if we can make use of it and recycle it (recycling was - already! - an alchemical operations!)

Primo Levi is always poignant, and makes us anxious. If I am afraid of something it is not to be at the height (or depth) of his experience and writing, and his awesome proximity to suicide, to letting go. In any case, it's magnificent seriousness, and therefore a gift and a challenge for us all.

Learn it well by heart - to be able to say it apparently without emotion, detached - but listening intently to the meanings that emerge. Or roll around on the ground in a forest speaking it with a maximum of pathos (let the text roll you about on the floor, despair you. Primo Levi can be despairing. Take note of the stops, where you are dumbstruck, speechless, amazed, where memory lapses appear too, etc. And break the syntax, break the breathing (never breathe on the punctuation, on cue... etc.) We likely will begin by such inter-ruption work: ruptures that tear (break in, out, down) the flow of the text.

So you can guess what a confrontation with Hildegard von Bingen might imply... Having tea with her in the shade, in the shadows - or smoking a joint with her and listening further down into her doubts... Saint John of the Cross might join in!

PS: it is long but then this is a workshop on texts, so I would say the more the better. Maybe we will get to do it all.

Text proposed by Sophie Verschuur, for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Online Professional Program, February 2021

... I was wondering whether Cafavy's poem 'Ithaca' might be a possibility. I really love this poem and it has traveled with me to so many places.

*When you set out for Ithaca  
ask that your way be long  
full of adventure, full of instruction.  
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,  
angry Poseidon - do not fear them:  
such as these you will never find  
as long as your thought is lofty,  
as long as a rare emotion touches your spirit and your body.  
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,  
angry Poseidon - you will not meet them  
unless you carry them in your soul,  
unless your soul raise them up before you.*

*Ask that your way be long.  
At many a summer dawn to enter  
with what gratitude, what joy -  
ports seen for the first time;  
to stop at Phoenician trading centers*

*and to buy good merchandise:  
 mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony  
 and sensuous perfumes of every kind.  
 Buy sensuous perfumes as lavishly as you can,  
 visit many Egyptian cities  
 and learn and learn from those who have knowledge.*

*Always keep Ithaca in your mind.  
 Your arrival there is what you are destined for,  
 but do not in the least hurry the journey.  
 Better that it last for years,  
 so that when you reach the island you are old  
 rich with all that you have gained on your way,  
 not expecting Ithaca to give you wealth.  
 Ithaca gave you the splendid journey.  
 Without her you would never have set out,  
 but she has nothing more to give you.*

*And if you find her poor, Ithaca has not deceived you;  
 so wise have you become, of such experience  
 that already you will have understood what these Ithacas mean.*

*Constantine P. Cavafy*

Dear Sophie. I know that Cavafy has an adoring, Middle-Eastern exotic following. And I personally 'adore' Alexandria and Egypt (I actually met Laurence Durrell !). But I must say I am astonished by Cavafy not mentioning Penelope. So, my comments here do not address the poem, but the poet, the man, and the absence of Penelope. And I would probably work on anti-Cavafy moods. I had two great friends.

Liza Mayer, who adored Greece and who introduced me to the god Pan - through literate references, similar to Cavafy's. Here, we are of course talking about Odysseus - who else? Who lingered - was it fifteen years? - before returning to Penelope (sorry, to Ithaca... !!) And what a murderous mess he did on arrival. But Liza Mayer was his friend, and saw the murders as metaphors, as allegories of his passionate character. He never killed anyone. Hmmm? Or, in those days, murders were part of life. Yes? She had a great liking for Ulysses / Odysseus: how he 'handled' Athena... Great psychological cunning; his famous *metis*.

The other great friend was probably my greatest mythology teacher, a scholar. Charles Boer. For him Odysseus was a psychopath: ALL his friends died for the sake of his 'experience' (middle-age marital crisis?) He hated Odysseus and wrote an amazing introduction to an English scholar's 'old boys' take. "The Ulysses Theme". Demolished the book, and made you want to read it!! I shall recover the references and share them. 40 pages introduction, 500 pages book; or so.

I understand the poetry of Cavafy's, original in Greek (?), charms everyone... Hmm. Get ready!

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Exchanges with **Astrid Birgitta Cyrus**, Online Professional Program Cycles and 2021 Summer Master Classes - A sequence of exchanges as part of a project of Astrid's on *Five Venuses*. There are a lot of Venuses, basically following her qualifications. Astrid wants to work on five of them. This one es based on **Anaïs Nin**.

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Le 11 juin 2021

Exchange #1

(..or the multilayerd-ness of theatrical being:)  
Messieure Pardo.....Enrique.

IS it allowed to have fragments of different textes , in the Performance?

I find myself wanting to bring together what has been cooking in my head, these last weeks, where i couldn't participate live-on-screen, due to all the evening-work i had to do for the work with a group ,making an mix of Rock-consert and my pictures, premiering the nineteenth of june.

Yours now-in-present-time-student, Astrid.

EP : Dear Astrid. I appreciate and respect your wish (and proven capacity) for multilayered-ness ARTISTRY. Especially in your combinations of graphics and performance. At that level do I have anything to 'teach' you, « now-in-present-time-student » mode, or, more modestly, anything to add to your artistic dominium? I fear we might find ourselves in a cross-purposes situation, and missing a common objective.

To be practical. If you wish to work with a collection of texts, what is the 'over-text'? What is the narrative that brought them together? Theme, motif, story, or other. I am interested in hearing you tell me this - or better, reading you articulate it (another text therefore). And then we can work together, in « under-standing », with the 'under-text' that emerges.

That is how I see it - and look forwards to it. I hope this time round (not the first time we try) we find matter and motif for collaboration, and twosome madness.

Yours, Enrique

Le 23 juil. 2021 Astrid Birgitta Cyrus (on Anaïs Nin)

Exchange #2

I had the pleasure to listen to the "Delta of Venus", after class yeasterday,...while searching for a suitable performance-learned-by-heart-text..(Anais Nin, which you mentioned..),which I haven't read since i was a teenager....wow!!

Some of it is extremely in the land of dark-sexual-fantasies,...an incredible sensuality, though....and at least one of my Venusés ,would like to talk like that.(They are 3, in the performance:)

EP : Well, it seems clear to me: you DO IT !

On the other hand,...what room is there for choreographic-play?

EP : It is the other way round: what room can choreographic theatre **make** for it?

Making that room is our job = creating a CONTEXT for the text to land in.

and DO I dare?..(probably yes), what you think ,using her writing,for a text?

EP : YES ABSOLUTELY.

When you talked about physical EX-pression, yeasterday,...the " Roy Hart-way", about ENERGY...I got very sad....feeling inadequat...with my aging body....and all the "holding -back-of-expression", I have done through Life....

EP : « Ah, but you were soooooo much older then, you're younger than that nowwww  
» (Paraphrasing Bob Dylan)

BUT, then early this morning , my morning-courage was awake...and i thought that , of course I have Energy...to make my art -ideas come trough....to my dying day,(I wish:)

EP : YES ABSOLUTELY.

EP : I put this exchange in TEXTS. Too valuable. Send me the Anaïs Non text when chosen. I am a super fan of her's. (I may ask you to read it un next Thursday's class - get ready - you must laugh with Anaïs (that is the title of the reading: « Laughing with Anaïs »).

Hug

Enrique

Le 29 juil. 2021 à 18:20, Astrid Birgitta Cyrus :

The text by Anaïs Non :

## Mathilde

Mathilde was a hat maker in Paris and barely twenty when she was seduced by the Baron. Although the affair did not last more than two weeks, somehow in that short time she became, by contagion, imbued with his philosophy of life and his seven -leagued way of solving problems. She was intrigued by something the Baron had told her casually one night: that Parisian women were highly prized in South America because of their expertness in matters of love, their vivaciousness and wit, which was quite a contrast to many of the South

American wives, who still cherished a tradition of self-effacement and obedience, which diluted their personalities and was due, possibly, to men's reluctance to make mistresses out of their wives.

Like the Baron, Mathilde developed a formula for acting out life as a series of roles - that is by saying to herself in the morning while brushing her blond hair, « Today I want to become this or that person », and the proceeding to be that person.

One day she decided that she would like to be an elegant representative of a well-known Parisian modiste and go to Peru.

All she had to do was to act the role. So she dressed with care, presented herself with extraordinary assurance at the house of the modiste, was engaged to be her representative and given a boat ticket to Lima.

Aboard ship, she behaved like a French missionary of elegance. Her innate talent for recognizing good wines, good perfumes, good dressmaking, marked her as a lady of refinement. Her palate was that of a gourmet.

Mathilde had piquant charms to enhance this role. She laughed perpetually, no matter what happened to her. When a valise was mislaid, she laughed. When her toe was stepped on, she laughed.

It was her laugh that attracted the Spanish Line representative, Dalvedo, who invited her to sit at the captain's table. Dalvedo looked suave in his evening suit, carried himself like a captain, and had many anecdotes to share. The next night he took her to a dance. He was fully aware that the trip was not long enough for the usual courtship. So he immediately began to court the little mole on Mathilde's chin. At midnight he asked if she liked cactus figs. She had never tasted them. He said that he had some in his cabin.

But Mathilde wanted to heighten her value by resistance, and she was on her guard when they entered the cabin. She had easily rebuffed the audacious hands of the men she brushed against when marketing, the sly buttock pats by the husbands of her clients, the pinching of her nipples by male friends who invited her to the movies. None of this stirred her. She had a vague, but idea of what could stir her. She wanted to be courted with mysterious language. This had been determined by her first adventure, as a girl of sixteen.

A writer, who was a celebrity in Paris, had entered her shop one day. He was not looking for a hat. He asked if she sold luminous flowers that he had heard about, flowers which shone in the dark. He wanted them, he said, for a woman who shone in the dark. He could swear that when he took her to the theatre and she sat back in the dark loges in her evening dress, her skin was as luminous as the finest of sea shells, with a pale, pink glow to it. And he wanted these flowers for her to wear in her hair.

Mathilde did not have them. But as soon as the man left she went to look at herself in the mirror. This was the kind of feeling she wanted to inspire. Could she? Her glow was not of that nature. She was much more like fire than light. Her eyes were ardent, violet in color. Her hair was dyed blond but it shed a copper shadow around her. Her skin was copper-toned, too, firm and not at all transparent. Her body filled her dresses tightly, richly. She did not wear a corset, but her body had the shape of the women who did. She arched so as to throw the breasts forward and the buttocks high.

The man had come back. But this time he was not asking anything to buy. He stood looking at her, his elegant gestures making a ritual out of lighting a cigarette, and said, "This time I came back just to see you."

Mathilde's heart beat so swiftly that she felt as if this were the moment she had expected for years. She almost stood up on her toes to hear the rest of his words. She felt as if she were the luminous woman sitting back in the dark box receiving the unusual flowers.

But what the polished gray-haired writer said in his aristocratic voice was, "As soon as I saw you, I was stiff in my pants."

The crudity of the words was like an insult. She reddened and struck at him.

This scene was repeated on several occasions. Mathilde found that when she appeared, men were usually speechless, deprived of all inclination for romantic courtship. Such words as these fell from them each time at the mere sight of her. Her effect was so direct that all they could express was their physical disturbance. Instead of accepting this as a tribute, she resented it.

EP : So now we have the full text proposal. It is very good prose literature, Anaïs at her best. It is long-flow prose, (and 'long-dress'); its seemingly innocent « piquant » is beautifully slow.

I would guess that a choreographic theatre approach would require two things:

- Very good and clear elocution (not necessarily in Anaïs' high-society mode. This we must try - and it is your job (to be articulate with the text's information.)
- It will require complex forms of counterpoint. That is more my job (something like Johnny Doh, last night, moving in on Eloïse's text, and turning her performance into an initiation ritual.)

EP : I said in the class that this text might be too 'young' for you. Now I see and hear other perspectives. But, it is a danger and it will probably take time to inverse (perverse) its bright 'debutante' style. Now it is up to you to decide and do lots of homework with it.