IS A STAGE A FREE SPACE?

The Second Self of the Organization.

Riot, Elen

URCA

Elen.riot@reims-univ.fr

Abstract

Work in organizations involve clocking in so many working hours as well as less quantifiable dimensions such as playing a part and putting on an act to secure one's position in the group. As has already been documented in management research, attempts to align the organizational stage with the strategic goal of the firms have regularly involved forms of management that deal with common culture and individual commitment in relation to an expected performance. Actors' feelings, their work together and their socialization, the purpose of their work are used for this purpose. This organizational control, in return, can lead to alternative modes of organization and resistance when workers perceive this new mode of subordination and decide to implement alternative ways. However, attempts to limit performance to "fair results" and "actual facts «and to deny the influence of power relations and symbolic representations, often proves deceitful and short-termed. One reason, among others, seems to be that relations and representations are shaped in each and every day act (as part of its meaning) and incorporated to human activities (as part of the collective and its intentions). Reaching an agreement about what they should do and how they should be with each other is more difficult than pointing at what they should not want to do and be. Another attempt at objectivizing control via representations is possibly more radical in nature, or so theatre directors and comedians claim it is. It involves focusing on the representations themselves and their collective production so as to instantiate them by putting them in the spotlight. For such purposes, time and space are required for actors to collectively reflect and imagine. One such "heterotopia", "free space" is described and analysed in this paper: we take the case of the rehearsals of "Lear is in Town", a play first staged in the 2013 Avignon festival. Acknowledging that no work situation is ever free from power relations, we wonder in what ways working on power issues in an artistic stage safeguards actors from domination and favours spontaneous commitment and cooperation.

Key words: theatre, stage, free space, heterotopia, intension

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INTRODUCTION

Social and managerial purposes often create situations of control and domination for individuals. One of the most problematic dimensions of organizations in the "society of organizations" (Stern and Barley, 1996) is that they add up new dimensions to traditional forms of social control (Barley and Kunda, 1992) instead of relieving that pressure by offering more efficient and less constraining forms of collective space. In reference to the "artistic critique" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2000), artists are often presented as exception to this organizational regime, maintaining sort of autonomy. However, at the same time, their self-control and passionate commitment is used as an inspiration for managers in organisations.

Namely, in the so-called "knowledge economy", people are in theory more involved in shaping the norms and rules of control and in practice more vulnerable to less visible but no less obtrusive means of domination. The way they are dominated takes its roots in their level of instruction on the matter and sometimes uses it, discouraging or disarming open resistance and making it difficult to create arenas where power issues can be faced and dealt with. At the centre or at the margin of firms, individual performance is always under scrutiny and forces most actors to play their part or at least to put on an act. Whether you are at the centre or on the margins of organizations, whether the control is exerted by individuals or by means of administrative systems, some control is still exerted on workers and it affects their relations.

Because many actors are aware of this control and resent it, Lukes's question about power relations: *«How do the powerful secure the compliance of those they dominate and more specifically, how do they secure their willing compliance? »*(Lukes, 2005: 17) still remains partly unanswered because it is not so easy to isolate cases of successful resistance to this control. One such form of creative resistance (Courpasson et al, 2011) is possibly found in the avant-garde public theatre world. There, a free zone, openly referred by protagonists as a heterotopia (Hetherington, 2003), can be created and maintained in a more permanent form than a temporary enclave. This has to do with a form of transmission. For ages, the theatre has been the place where power was represented for society to look at and for this very reason, comedians were also set aside and taboo. It can be assumed that both on stage and out of stage, the theatre world still has a specific way of dealing with the collective and social life in general. By describing and interpreting the rehearsals of a play about power, *Lear is Town*, this paper contributes to the debate about the various forms of domination. More specifically, it suggests that working on power issues and their representations teaches people to deal with domination by making them both more self-aware and more open to others.

I. POWER RELATIONS AND FREE SPACE

Constraints at work are part of the organizational frame and social frame in the « society of organizations » (Stern and Barley, 1996) where a great degree of control is exerted, seldom in an overt way. This control corresponds to power relations and it is felt in interactions and in representations (A). It involves a frame that goes beyond obeying orders (B) including impression management. There are different ways of escaping this control: by attempting to obliterate the frame in defining a more acceptable collective

performance (C) or, on the contrary, by focusing on the nature of representations and their production (D) to put them in a distance in a collective "free space" otherwise defined as a "heterotopia". Here, following Boltanski and Chiapello (2000), the question is the possibility for artists to reappropriate these dimensions if (as they claim) it has been appropriated by "the new spirit of capitalism".

1.1. THE SOCIAL STAGE, SELF AT WORK

One of the first appropriation of the artistic critique is the ability, in organizations, to equate what they are with a social stage made of interactions. Organizations can be considered as one among the many arenas where social actors interact. Goffman describes society is also a stage for actors engaged in interactions:"*A status, a position, a social place is not a material thing to be possessed and then displayed; it is a pattern of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished, and well-articulated. Performed with ease or clumsiness, awareness or not, guile or good faith, it is none the less something that must be enacted and portrayed, something that must be realized*. (Goffman, 1959: 75). For instance, Van Maanen(1992) and Boje and Rhodes (2006) show how Disney and Mac Donald's use role play and fictional characters to implement a total service commitment strategy in their organization. Lundin and Söderholm (1995) describe project management and temporary organizations as "stages". In general, organization theory is keenly interested in the stage as a metaphor (Cornelissen, 2004, 2006; Morgan, 1980; Oswick et al., 2002; Strati, 2000), mostly referring back to symbolic interactionism and alluding to Goffman's understanding of the social stage. However, as we shall see, in Goffman's work, the theatre is much more than an imaged allusion to the social world.

Goffman describes the world as a stage because it is a place in which *"reality"* might be *"considerably twisted"* (1961a, 384), full of ready-made representations and conventions: "*Life may not*

be an imitation of art, but ordinary conduct, in a sense, is an imitation of the proprieties, a gesture at the exemplary forms, and the primal realization of these ideals belongs more to make-believe than to reality" (Goffman 1974, 562). This society is the one that shapes « selves »: *"The self, then, as a performed character, is not an organic thing that has a specific location, whose fundamental fate is to be born, to mature, and to die; it is a dramatic effect arising diffusely from a scene that is presented, and the characteristic issue, the crucial concern, is whether it will be credited or discredited"* (Goffman 1959, 252–53). In that regard, Goffman would see the world of art theatre as one specific form of performance with a specific frame with multiple variations. Considering that it is located outside the social world would imply that either there can be social situations where interactions are not framed at all or there are social situations where actors follow only one frame, with a full and open commitment to one and only one group of actors. Although there have been famous cases when comedians fully embraced their part, such situations proved quite problematic and remained quite rare.

As a matter of fact, the dramatic performance of comedians can generally be considered as part of their performance as professional and social actors. From a professional point of view, the notion of performance is related to certain norms and criteria perceived as positive and profitable. With regard to « self », having a role is potentially either a protection or a source of alienation. Still, role distance and secondary arrangements (because *"whenever worlds are laid on, underlives develop"*, 1961: 305) are signs that most individuals look for their « true self » (Goffman, 1974: 294) in contrast with the social codes framing social relations.

For instance actors can cope and escape by limiting their commitment to mostly face-value displays. However, there is no

clear distinction between sincere and insincere performance as if one could choose the right distance to the part one is compelled to play. According to Goffman, all social actors are aware of the artificiality of this role acting and constantly negotiate with the common frame of interactions. For instance during displays of 'normalcy shows' that can be read only in reference to 'normal appearances' (Goffman, 1971: 270–1) individuals often prove mimetic (Riot, 2013) so as to be sheltered from frame breaking (Goffman, 1974: 382). At the same time, for lack of a "ritual equilibrium" (Goffman 1967, 45) disturbed individuals may "seek comfort" in their social role (1952, 461) as some sort of anchoring whereas putting too much into a role may prove destructive (1952: 461). In modern society, people need to constantly adapt and change role (1952, 456): socially, identifying with only one role proves a "false claim" (1952, 461). One may infer that there is no clear cut frontier between roles for individuals who have difficulties separating their personal and professional lives going from stage to stage in a changing environment and that it becomes both an individual and a collective problem.

However, managerial techniques can also take advantage of role-plat and find ways to encourage it by promoting their ingenuity, their free-thinking and sincerity (Lasch, 1991). After all, autonomy and creativity are based on such personalities and they are needed to initiate and implement original projects. In particular, work organizations create specific pressures as a specific social arena with norms of culture and identity as a new type of political performance (Clegg, Courpasson and Philipps, 2006: 18) polyarchy, namely power as soft coercion as opposed to traditional work systems relying on direct authority (Whyte, 1954) based on hierarchy and explicit norms of control. Impression management is at the heart of the modern work system yet it seems that a more fine-grained approach of what is within relations visible in interaction is needed to fully grasp what is at stake for

actors at work in addition to social manoeuvring and tactic negotiations

1.2. MATERIALITY

The second way contemporary organizations can appropriate the artistic critique (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2000) is by borrowing the material components and the types of representations they work with to redesign their methods and environment. In the knowledge economy, specific forms of control have emerged (Kunda, 2003) more focused on trying to introduce soft way to redefine actors' work environment, to influence their representations and sensations and to prompt them to appropriate it and commit. All three dimensions, managers seem to be aware, influence socialization at work:

- Materiality: Physical dimensions of the world are controlled by industrial processes (people work in offices and the internal value chain often limits their activity to a limited, often abstract, sphere of individual responsibility despite difficulty to actually have a direct contact over material things)
- Representations by rituals and symbols are confided to experts of firm culture tend to be in charge of controlling messages (Kunda, 2009). They refer to the history of the firm, its core business and, often, its strategy and its image. At the same time, these representations are often perplexingly standardized, involving a great deal of imitation (Taussig, 1993) in a global age. At the same time, experts and coaches are ambivalent figures, going both ways, from culture and art to management.
- Sensations and Emotions (time and space, boundaries) are shaped by life in the city, often large business districts when work days often correspond to office hour's standards, in a larger scale, most time dimensions correspond to annual budgetary planning as well as external economic cycles. Employees must often adapt to management tools such as

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performance measurement and auto-evaluation yet having a good experience at work is a prerequisite (Gardner and Avolio, 1998; Gardner and Martinko, 1988). Riot (2013) shows that organizing compulsory art and culture activities in parallel to management control similar to help the global team of controllers to bond.

By contrast, these three dimensions (materiality, representations and feelings) exist in human experience outside work, so this could be a way to make professional organizations closer to "real people life". Yet, in an age where personal life and work are often difficult to distinguish (Barley et …REF), the realm of experience often seems influenced by the control exerted by the frame of everyday experience on the professional stage, partly because of others' attempts at controlling them in a context of power relations. Material work conditions, representations and people's feelings need to be in alignment with their role in the organization, this is why relations are shaped by ways of professional socialization within the organization (Van Maanen, 1988) with « initiation periods » and impression management in times of change (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991). Once they are officially taken into account as an important part of people's experience, more and more firms benchmark each other and pride in investing in authentic, sustainable projects as good corporate citizens, for instance as culture providers for employees and their families (Riot, 2015, to be published). Fixed boundaries are also created: exchanges are often bound by status, namely, strategic meetings and skills trainings exclude temporary workers (Barley and Kunda, 2003) as well as « basic » jobs. This category of employees does not so much need to be part of the collective experience (Garsten, 1999). What's more, to fit in, key workers are often compelled to « show the way », that is to over adapt and display a limitless commitment to the firm (Kunda, 2009). However, such rigid grid and such demanding expectations may encourage face-value displays and surges of resistance (Courpasson et al., 2011). Since control has unclear limits in dealing with actors public and private

conduct (Van Gennep, 1909), resistance often also needs to be enacted and accompanied with a clear message to show trespassing. It implies creating a free space.

1.3. WAYS OUT, ENCLAVES OF RÉSISTANCE

Artists are often prompt at identifying and targeting social control and conformism. They are keen in noticing and displaying the recent interest of organizations and management in art and culture. Their reaction is ambivalent (Riot, 2014). As Lukes (2005) point out about more hidden forms of resistance (Scott, 1990), it is always difficult to make the difference between deliberate surges of resistance and imaginary moves. As we have seen, most resistance movements observed within organized systems consists in challenging the way interactions are framed, in particular by attempting to get rid of the frame and sticking to « the reality of things » (materiality, representations and feelings reappropriated) but we observe, since these dimensions are, in turn, invested by work organizations, that Hirschman's (REF) three ways to react to corporate control are possible, namely exit, voice and loyalty.

One option, in the face of a control actors do not accept, is to collectively refuse to stick to one's role and save face by complying, either by creating a very limited free zone of one's own, or by creative an enclave (Courpasson et al., 2011), namely, a temporary free space inside the organization where impression management and boundaries set by management are 'somehow" buffered out by various ways of coping. We identify this option with loyalty, since it involves a reformist view yet an adaptive approach to what there is.

Another option is exit. Independent work in Silicon Valley seem to have opted out of the organization so as to keep control over their profession and their core business (Barley and Kunda, 2003). This is made possible because they are highly skilled, so in theory

they neither need the support of a group or the shelter of an organization. However, the work market is not a free place where talents can offer their value proposition in direct, selecting their own message and their favourite displays. Market is competitive and firms can chose who they want to hire.

The last option involves voicing a concern and taking position about the situation. This can end up in an open conflict, or it can end up creating enclaves of creative/productive resistance within the organization. In organizations, the omnipresence of soft control tends to complexify role and commitment for actors. For instance, in many ways, by taking charge and committing to general goals set by management, actors may try to benefit from the explicit mission they have been given and align their own interests with the strategy as it is implemented. The ground for that claim is that resistance is often hidden, related to micro-practices because organizations are conservative and do not recognize divergences. Besides, the momentum for radical productive resistance is rare (because it is risky and because only people with some weight in the balance of power can engage) (Courpasson et al., 2011) and short-termed. Consequently, the only "realist" actions one may safely observe as a recurrent and widely shared phenomenon are micro-actions of resistance in a general picture where coping is the rule.

It seems that creating a free space for good requires both more distance and more time. « Free spaces » and « free zones » can be described as heterotopias or they can be defined as spaces of alternative orderings (Hetherington, 2003: 9) as opposed to sites of resistance, sites of transgression or just marginal spaces. Orderings means they are not devoid of an order of relations and representations (Ortner, 1995; 1997) that may hurt individual feelings and sensations. Yet free space is characterized by its constant transformation in relation to the actual materiality of

space as it is shared by the collective (Polletta, 1999), and shelters passions, ideas and projects for action (Polletta and Jasper, 2001) in the tradition of social movements (McAdam and Ruecht, 1993; Rose, 1999; Snow and Soule, 2010). To maintain the base and broaden it to new members (McAdam, 1986), the balance between centripetal and centrifugal forces is the object of a collective reflection central to all members' agenda (Della Porta, 2009; Jasper, 1997). It is often related to sharing one's views in relation to one's experience and life story (Della Porta, 1992) as opposed to expert evaluation and more rational considerations as to the organization and its purpose. Consequently, in such space, freedom corresponds to a broad range of possible influences and considerations, and the marginality of such "heterotopias" in society makes it possible to maintain a very open field of power (Foucault, 1986). However, contrary to what Foucault and social movement theorists had in mind, the notion of heterotopia is now hardly confined to "margins" of society as was the case in the 1970s. It is now presented as part of the world of organizations (Stern and Barley, 1996), as consciously produced forms of alternatives (Beyes and Michel, 2011; Kornerger and Clegg, 2004; Hetherington, 1998; 1997) with artists being key protagonists in opening such alternative spaces and staging them. Gielen (2003) and Guillet de Monthoux (2004) take the case of Cittadellarte, Michelangelo Pistoletto's space of creation orchestrating a confrontation between metaphysics and marketing.

The choice of a practical and material approach to « free spaces » can be justified by the fact that such anticonformism should not be mythicized: « *It is not a matter people take lightly. They feel either that deviance is quite wrong and must be done away with or, on the contrary, that it is a thing to be encouraged – an important corrective to the conformity produced by modern society. The characters in the sociological drama of deviance, even more than the characters in other sociological processes,*

seem to be either heroes or villains. ... Both these positions must be guarded against. » (Becker, 1973: 175). One example of such heterotopia, which carefully deals with representations and self-representation is the theatre space as a physical arena of shared interactions and representations.

1.4. FREE SPACE AND STAGE

One very open form of resistance, creating a « heterotopia » and maintaining it as a "free zone", is that associated with the « artistic critique » in the age of the "new spirit of capitalism"(Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999). Instead of trying to get away from the frame of interactions by rejecting dominant representations, artists have the possibility to work directly on those representations and make it their material for collective work. In doing so, they may escape the tragedy of culture (Simmel, 1997), namely the control over individuals by an objectified culture that conflicts with the reality of their life after it provided some form of emancipation when it was being elaborated. Symbolic interactionism, because of its choice of « the social stage » metaphor, may provide a complementary view on the realm of art and culture to semiotics and art history (Didi-Huberman, 2002) because it focused on the socialization of individuals within an organized group.

As we saw, in a symbolic interactionism view, art worlds and artistic fields are not so different from other organizations, one may find little space for actual resistance: Becker (1982) describes art worlds as networks of interdependencies with implicit hierarchies between actors and groups. Conventions, although different from traditional market and firm norms, still provide a frame for the social stage in this realm. These conventions are enforced by prestige and reputation (in reference

to symbolic power based on historical traditions and charismatic figures) but relatively fragile. Becker defines an art work as a production system comprised of producers, distributors and consumers "whose cooperative activity, organized via their joint knowledge of conventional means of doing things, produces the kind of art works that art world is noted for." (Becker, 1982: 10). Similarly, in the logic of fields, conventions and institutions limit revolt and avant-garde to a small portion of artistic activity, and even in their promotion, the status of "curators", "opinion leaders" and "art directors" is crucial in determining influence and success (Bourdieu and Haake, 2001). Bourdieu (1992) shows that the capitals logic is also at play in arts, giving the example of bourgeois family where one of the inheritors is an artist when others reproduce capital in other fields such as business or education. Such combinations are also reflected and perpetuated on a larger scale, with art institutions (Grenfell and Hardy, 2003). Besides, the social power of specialists can also be felt, as in any other industry (Gilmore in Becker and McCall, 1990: 156). For instance, describing the music industry, Negus (in Du Gay and Pryke, 2002: 125) illustrates "the cultural formation of aesthetic economies" by showing the regular firing of cultural intermediaries as cultural trends in music change. These trends in consumption are difficult to predict because "cultural flows" (Appadurai, 1986; Fiske, 1992) seem to be part of the global social frame. Consequently, one could analyse interactions at work as a specific kind of project management where specialists and technicians try to apply recipes to suit the public's taste, the specificity of the projects being that it is especially difficult to grasp. This unpredictability, which grows with the artistic prestige of the discipline and style, involves specific work methods, quite distinct from that of most organizations. This specificity is explained by actors within that field as a deliberately alternative organization of production, corresponding

to "free space" and "heterotopia" and they claim it was always the case, referring to a very long tradition.

In line with this claim, the specific nature of artistic resistance in the theatre world consists in four dimensions:

-it does not alienate work from its more material dimensions and the direct contact with the world: it is a living art including a physical performance (Elam, 1980:2) and a relation to life (Artaud in Derrida, 1978: 237) as opposed to more industrialized processes of production (Benjamin, 2003)

-it is in relation to a tradition but consists in challenging this tradition by inventing a new, living language (Benjamin, 2003). Theatre is a secondary technique evolving with technologies such as the cinema. During rehearsals in contemporary art theatre, work involves processes of montage (Benjamin in Didi-Huberman, 2009) also described as an accretion process (Bates, 1995: 64) quite opposed to « sclerotic forms in a fossilized state ». It is more about inventing patterns of intention (Baxandall, 1985; 1991) than perpetuating traditions by just reproducing them. Tradition is confronted with radical choices, the result of a collective choice.

-collective work and cooperation consists in creating in a collective rhythm (Benjamin, 2003; Didi-Huberman, 2007) as opposed to just sharing ideas and concepts: « *The privileging of the visual, through Western culture's preoccupation with objects and texts, demands rethinking from the perspective of theatre's corporeality, its sensuality and multivocality, and it is in this realm that the work of theatre anthropology has been compiling an innovative inventory.* » (Reed, 1995: 60)

-Work is always reflexive on the political dimensions of actors' interactions within the group as part of society in general. The theatre is often presented as an agora. It allows relations to be inscribed in some kind of history and collective memory where

performance is depersonalized and shared. As Armand Gatti points out: *'it's mostly the place, the architecture that does the writing. The theatre was located not in some kind of Utopian place, but in a historic place, a place with history…These rooms that had known the labour of human beings day after day had their own language, and you either used that language or you didn't say anything.'* (1982: 65).

These four claims, namely putting forward material and physical dimensions (1), inventing a common idiom (2), fully cooperating (3) and being reflexive on the intention in relation to politics(4), are often associated, as if there were spontaneously aligned to produce the "heterotopia" as an organic entity.

However, this process, and the representation of power relations in society is quite difficult to grasp. Besides, the relationship between the theatre and the world outside remains to be described and interpreted if one claims that it actually constitutes a "heterotopia", since the theatre rehearsal period is quite secluded, but the rest of the life of the show (once it is ready) is part of the social life, especially since stable troops are very rare in France. In the following parts of this paper, we shall try to see how and, more precisely, in how many of the four identified ways, the theatre world corresponds to a "heterotopia", presenting a clear alternative to the "new spirit of capitalism" by reinventing its critique.

2. METHODOLOGY

Following the questions of symbolic interactionism, the key issue in analyzing the theatre as a heterotopia is to determine in what ways this space is specifically free and how it translates into a frame of action. The difference has to do with the work people do and the way they do it, namely the life they have together as they share the same «issue », that of staging a play about power. One

of the difficulty is to identify the boundaries between what is happening on stage (with the play as a framework for the characters) and outside the stage (when actors to not interact in the fiction frame). Yet another challenge for the researcher is the participant observer's perspective, with the focus on relations and power issues. For the analysis to be fair to the facts, a proper balance between the chain of events and the variety of possible issues and their specific meaning in terms of power issues is required. Otherwise, the reader might have the feeling that some observations are simply extrapolated and stretched to make a point regarding the initial question (power being staged). At the same time, for the analysis to make sense, it needs to be somehow focused on the power issue and how actors are bound by power relations they can partly see and appreciate for themselves.

Because in the theatre, each gesture is weighted and constitutes the center of work on representations (Benjamin, 1986), a more fine grained analysis than usual was required, combining ethnography and ethnomethodology.

2.1. INTERACTIONISM AND SEMIOTICS

Fieldwork; participant observation

A fine-grained, descriptive approach was selected so as to render *"a constellation of enshrined ideas"* enacted and embodied during work sessions in the theatre and more specifically on stage (Geertz, 1980: 194). After identifying scenes and work sequences for everyday (which represents two half-days called "services" which is the unit of analysis used in the theatre to define the rhythm of work), we focused on "episodes of problem-solving" which were crucial moments in the work. There were 25 of them, and we tried to characterize a general way of problem solving in the course of the elaboration of the frame for the stage, as well as

exceptional moments (such as episode 21, which is quite dramatic because of the weight of the choice involved).

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Art works often involve different methods, expertise and systems values, so one needs to complement symbolic interactionism with semiotics to reach a better understanding of representations: is it so different in the everyday life to work in the theatre than to work in an organization? Is there really less pressure and less influence of status? Does playing a role as an actor and dealing with power on stage changes what happens outside the stage?

2.1. DATA (DURING REHEARSALS)

The author of this paper has a 20-year experience in the theatre world (occasionally working as a translator and an assistant) and, based on this intimate knowledge of the European art theatre, she feels quite confident as to the representativeness of these rehearsals.

Scenes were rehearsed until it was possible to go into the run-through and then the stage in Avignon was available for rehearsals of these run-throughs. Until the very end, recordings of voices and sounds were made to have a better effect.

The schedule followed an intense rhythm of work during about two months, evolving towards a more and more precise work: first days of June were devoted to an in-depth work on specific scenes with comedians (it is called "work at the table"). The month of June consisted of the "green room phase" working on stage in Reims. The first days of July were devoted to going along the play (creating the links) more specifically having run-throughs nearly everyday day. At that point, the frame was ready and the beat became faster as illustrated in the following table.

	Morning Number of sequences	Morning Scenes rehearsed	Afternoon and evening number of sequences	Afternoon and evening Scenes rehearsed
June 20			11	Sc. 2,3,4 (recordings)

June 21	4	Sc. 4	6	Sc. 4
July 1			19	Sc. 1,2,3,4
July 2			9	Sc. 3,4
July 8			17	Sc. 1,2,3 (recordings)
July 9			15	Sc. 2,3,4, 5, 6
July 10			6-linked	Run-through
July 11			10 and 6-linked	SC 1-2 and 5-6 and run-through
July 12			6-linked	Run-through
July 13			5 and 6-linked	Sc. 1 to 6 Run-through
July 17			Only recordings	Only recordings
July 18			15	Sc. 1 to 6 Run-through
July 19			11 & 6-linked	Sc. 1 to 6 Run-through

The table illustrates the similarity between the work patterns and that of temporary organization in project-management, with typical moments of focus alternating with moments of stitching, patching together the various pieces of the production. Besides, since technology is a very important element in that show, another balance exists between real life arrangements on stage and working in the recording studio with machines, so as to achieve a perfect synchronicity between live performance and pre-recorded sounds and voices. We focus on the last stages of this process.

Finally, the second week of July consisted in three days of last rehearsal on site, in the Boulbon Quarry near Avignon. Work was focused on the last details, focusing on "fragilities" in adjusting to the new location. As the following table synthesized, most of the working sessions were similar, they consisted in dealing with multiple interrelated questions. This problem-solving process corresponds to the four key dimensions of the theatre work conceived as a heterotopia: materialism and physicality, ad hoc invention of a common idiom, full cooperation, and intentionality (reflexivity on the political dimensions of the ongoing process).

Problem solving episodes	Specific nature of the	Dimension involved	Specific nature of the solution

		problem		
1.	June 20 (Reims) Before sequences recordings	Sound recordings with actors	Coordination (sound and actors) Sound Interpretation (actors)	Adjustment by all actors with joke (humour)
2.	June 20 (Reims) Sequence 2 Scene 3	Interpretation and intention	Interpretation (actors)	Specify a genre in contrast with tragedy "horror movie"
3.	June 20 (Reims) Sequence 6 Scene 3	4 dimensions need to be fixed in a row	Sound, costume, light and interpretation	Director divides his attention, going step by step with each sub-group
4.	June 20 (Reims) Sequence 7 Scene 3	Conflict of effects and intentions: Clo suggests a realistic approach to the rain	Interpretation and scenography (a new proposition)	Director rules it out (direct no)
5.	June 20(Reims) Sequence 10 Scene 4	Conflict of effects and intentions: Actors suggest to wear wigs to play the parts of Goneril and Reagan	Interpretation and scenography (a new proposition)	Director lets actors try and renounce the idea (indirect no, experience and influence)
6.	June 20 (Reims) Sequence 12 Scene 4	Actors have difficulties coordinating with recorded voices	Interpretation and sound	Trial and error will be continued (satisficing with no actual solution yet)
7.	June 21 (Reims) Sequence 6 Scene 3	Ambiguous implications for the public (Yo and Tom under the tent)	Interpretation and scenography (a structuring element of the setting)	Rule out the solution of going under the tent then (later) suppress the tent
8.	June 21 (Reims) Sequence 13 Scene 3	Interpretation of Lear too tragic	Interpretation	Director talks to the actor about the rage and power of the character (influence and persuasion)
9.	June 21 (Reims) Sequence 17 Scene 3	Invention of a comic effect (pants on the ankles) further symmetry	Interpretation	Director lets the actors suggest the idea (under the influence of a recent incident)
10.	July 1 (Reims) Sequence 1 Scene 4	Lear interpret's acting and one sentence he finds funny	interpretation	Director lets the majority rule out Yo's interpretation
11.	July 1 (Reims) Sequence 8 Scene 4	Reflexion about what is at stake (taking it one step back)	Intention and direction	Stating the importance of "intention" for most choices
12.	July 1 (Reims) Sequence 16 First run through	Transposition in the Boulbon quarry	All dimensions	Imagining and anticipating the general effect (Director's job to work will all sub-groups to keep that in mind)
13.	July 2 (Reims) Sequence 8 Scene 3	Problem of rhythm in action	recording, oral interpretation and text	Ludo's job is to arbitrate between the different possible amendments by consulting sub-groups and going back to the text (feed-back loop)
14.	July 11 (Reims) Before sequence 1	Coexistence of multiple problems in the same scene	light, sound, interpretation	Succession of a series of propositions by individuals (match-up)
15.	July 11 (Reims) Sequence 10 to 12 Scene 6 (final)	Interpretation (register of acting, making it "grand finale")	interpretation	Ludo suggests a series of ideas to "move it up" before to jump in the first run-through
16.	(Reims) July 11 First run-through	General intention and general impression	All dimensions	Combining a positive note in general with micro-elements to correct (mostly focused on actors) Regulation by compromise and joke
17.	July 12 (Reims)	Technical problems between conceptors and interpreters	sound	Ludo arbitrates between the two groups by calling for "an

Scene 2				explanation"
18. July 12 (Reims) Scene 1	The tent creates ambivalence	Interpretation and scenography		Choice to remove the tent (made by Ludo, Antoine and the actors)
19. July 12 (Reims) Run-through (afterward)	Conflict of interpretation about a sentence in last scene	interpretation		Majority wins (Clo, M and Ludo against Yo- text used as a reference)
20. July 17 (Avignon) After sound recording episodes	Sound does not feel right	sound		Near conflict crisis (after the storm and the rain): cooling-off by having the sound people work again the next night (adjustments and satisficing)
21. July 18 (Avignon) After run-through	Problem of distance: monolith ruins all the effects	Miscalculation of distance (all dimensions involved)		Faced with the choice between drastic change and marginal adjustments, Ludo opts for the second solution
22. July 19 (Avignon), before rehearsal	Interpretation (Lear)	Actor's interpretative style		Ludo uses the media and the political reference to change the actor's view on the character (two on two chat at the table, Ludo's initiative)
23. July 19 (Avignon) Sequence 2, scene 2	Inter-related problems	Sound and interpretation		Actor and head of sound say they will provide solutions very soon
24. July 19 (Avignon), sequence 3, scene 3	Coordination of effects	Impression on the audience		Director insists on adapting to the audience (advise and recommendation)
25. July 19 (Avignon), sequences 3-4; scenes 3-4	Coordination of effects	Impression on the audience		Director insists on the same recurrent problem (near crisis this time, sense of urgency, repetition of the same issues) approximation and fixing-up will be the solution

Among all episodes, Episode 21 was exceptional because of its impact on all the rest of the show: the monolith is the central and unique element of the setting, and because of its occurrence in the very end of the cycle of creation. More important even, its emergence is uncharacteristic because of its surprising dimension: it literally appeared out of the blue, in the middle of the night, not more than 30 hours before the opening night.

Possibly because of this final characteristic, the problem-solving situation lasted not more than twenty minutes, although all the group, about 20 people, were involved. Because of the characteristics mentioned prior to this last one, the solution was also different than that usually adopted. It was definitive in nature, whereas during most of the work-in-progress, the problem-solving process corresponded to a trial and error model, with a

satisficing mode of the director, given a more or less explicit consensus within the group.

This data was complemented by in depth interviews with key protagonists as the play was on tour around France. We attended all nights of the show which was back in Reims for about a week, and were able to organize a series of seven non-directive follow-up interviews with key actors about the show.

2.3. ANALYSIS

Dealing with the data involved a finer grained approach than usual in ethnography so as to capture the two dimensions of work: interactions (project management) and production (art creation in process).

We combine symbolic interactionism and semiotics with ethnomethodology. When dealing with the theater, interactionism is to be taken with a distance (Rose, 2002). This is because performativity is central in Goffman's view to describe « the social stage » (Wilshire, 1982). Yet, analyzing the actual theatre world necessarily involves limiting the theatre metaphor (Collins and Makiwsky, 1972; Manning, 1991).

Consequently, this interactionist approach is combined with semiotics. We refer our analysis to both the semiology of theatre (Paris, 1982; Kleir, 1980) and rites and rituals in everyday life (De Certeau, 1988; Ortner, 1995; Favret-Saada and Cullen, 1980) as two sources of representation combined in avant-garde theatre in its effort to reflect the present and invent new forms. Because the limits between the on-stage and out of stage realms is not clear, we use ethnomethodology to understand the stable routines in the making. This collective social construction needs to be traced in detail to be fully understood, as it is especially problematic in reference to everyday life.

In his analysis of the « Agnes case », Garfinkel explains that

social construction by arguing that, *"For Agnes, stable routines of everyday life were 'disengageable' attainments assured by unremitting, Agnes' case instructs us on how intimately tied are "value stability," "object constancy," "impression management," "commitments to compliance with legitimate expectancies," "rationalization," to member's unavoidable work of coming to terms with practical circumstances."* (Garfinkel, 1967a, 185). Garfinkel looks at this process from a situation where it is somehow in jeopardy. In the theatre world, the production of such patterns is put on stage and so is *" the question of how, over the temporal course of their actual engagements, and "knowing" the society only from within, members produce stable, accountable practical activities, i.e., social structures of everyday activities »* (Ibidem). Namely, in the specific case of a theatre production, what seems especially interesting is the unstable nature of practical activities and their increasing stabilization through rehearsals. Along that process, one may observe a constant tension between the intention and its implementation, as is often the case in organizations but is often solved via managerial methods.

Combining interactionism, semiotics and ethnomethodology reveals the interplay of the four dimensions characterizing the « rehearsals of the play » as a heterotopia, namely a space when relations are organized in a different way than in traditional organizations, institutions and generally, where interactions occur and power is at stake:

-materiality/physicality

-idiom invention (form, mimesis)

-coordination

-intention (sensations)

To look at the interplay between these four dimensions components of what may consist in "a heterotopia", the method

consists in isolating key moments in one episode as particularly exemplar and to refer it to the episodes of work during rehearsals. In that way, our coding provides a fine-grained exemplification of theatre work, and is reflexive as to the representativeness of this particular episode.

III. DESCRIPTION

Before offering a specific moment of the rehearsals, a brief contextualization should help situate the event and better understand what is at stake in a public art theatre show in France.

- **CONTEXTUALIZATION**

The rehearsal is taking place in the Boulbon Quarry in Avignon. About a year ago, the heads of the festival decided that one of the most famous directors in France would stage a play there. It was a common decision with the stage director, given the pivot role of directors in determining shows and programs (Brook, 1972, 1977; Bradby and Williams, 1988). The audience in Avignon is traditionally learnt and passionate about the art theatre (Bennett, 1990; Blau, 1990). Generally, achieving to have a show in the « court d'honneur du palais des Papes » or in Boulbon means a director is already very popular among amateurs.

The choice of staging one or another play is also carefully weighted: it is intended as a reflection on society (Duvignard, 1970) and politics (Howard and O'Connor, 2004; Nissely et al, 2004) at the present moment. In the French theatre, choosing to stage Shakespeare shows a deliberate intention to be inscribed in a tradition of « political theatre » involving Brecht's epic tradition and the work of such directors as Peter Brook, Ariane Mnouchkine, and Antoine Vitez famous for their interest in the "world theatre".

In this specific case, the director, Ludovic Lagarde, is quite

confrontational with this tradition. In a pattern he has been experimenting for about 15 years, he worked with two contemporary authors-translators (Olivier Cadiot and Frédéric Boyer) to recreate a totally new play, only partly related to King Lear. It is composed of three actors interpreting a script made of the land scenes in the original version of *King Lear*. The tradition of mixing different registers and using laughter and parody (Dandrey, 1992; Greenblatt, 1988; Montrose, 1996; Speier, 1998) is still present. Yet, the notion of compression (used by the team to describe their work on the play) is quite original: compression was used by sculptor Cesar for his works (towers made of trampled cars). Mixes, cuts and samplings are also methods characteristic of the "secondary technique" used by Bertolt Brecht (Benjamin, 2003) and situationists to mirror the age of radio and cinema. For Ludovic Lagarde, choosing to work in re-distanciating that tradition in the age of screens and Internet imagery techniques means experimentally inventing an approach to the stage and the contemporary theatre. The aesthetics is closely related to minimalism and conceptual art with a very sophisticated work on light and sound. Actors' are at the centre of this live (both physical and virtual) installation and to reach the perfect fit involves a very minute collective work. Technology adds a layer of synchronicity for the team, and as we shall see, it involves a new form of expertise and a great deal of coordination with "artificial life" (digital effects). Although this interplay takes a great importance in this particular case, such practices generalized in all shows with the omnipresence of consoles and technological device.

The rehearsals started in the end of May in Paris (comedians read at the table) then they lasted in June and July in the Comédie de Reims (a theatre headed by Ludovic Lagarde). The crew only had three days to rehearse in the Avignon setting because the Boulbon quarry was used for another play during the festival.

TIME AND PLACE:

The Avignon festival lasts from July 4 to July 26. Lear in town is one of the last shows of this year's festival. It is located in the second most important place in Avignon, after the « court d'honneur » (the stage located in the courtyard of the Papal Palace-Palais des Papes). It is important to note, because all teams are by now very wary. Besides, the carrière Boulbon (quarry) is located 40 miles from Avignon in the wild. It has been nicknamed « Cayenne » (a (n) (in) famous penal colony in French Guyana) by the technicians.

CHARACTERS:

Ludovic Lagarde, « Ludo », is the director, about 50 years old, he is experience, and has been working with most people in the team for many years, head of one of the main theatres in France, called centre dramatique national (CDN) la Comédie de Reims. He is at the head of a team of 30 people, administrative and technical staff. He is also a great friend of the duo who has been at the head of Avignon, Hortense Archambault and Vincent Baudriller. They will be replaced next year and this implies a period of instability for their friends.)
Jean-Luc, « J-Luc », stage manager, permanent staff in Reims, he is the one who moves the setting, deals with the logistics and technical problems. Here in Avignon, he cooperates with his local counterparts, Eric and Eduardo (they have shifts as stage managers) and their team of workers and he still works hand in hand with light and sound teams since Reims. The fact that JLuc has been a part-time worker for years, going from job to job, makes it easier for him to adapt to new environments and new teams. J-Luc, Eric and Eduardo are all about 50, their staff are all in their 30s.

Sébastien, « Seb » in charge of light. He made his arrangements and plans on paper and screen in Reims, his software is a 3-D highly sophisticated tool but he only has a few hours, mostly at night, to settle his composition on situation. He also has to deal with Ludovic's reactions and make necessary changes once Ludovic and him decided. Seb has a local second hand.

Nicolas, « Nico », is the sound wizzard, he works for the movies and art shows generally, here he has been inventing a composition with sounds (magnetic field rains, dogs, frogs, baboon and mental imagery), and his acolytes are Django and Pierrick. They are all dressed « beach fashion » and « stay cool » but they have been making Ludo and David anxious because of the sophistication of their inventions.

David is in charge of operating the sound system (he will still do it when the sound script is determined, and the sound team is gone) and now Géraldine, « G », will be his best hand

The local « light and sound teams » (in French "volant lumière" literally implying that this part of the team flies from one point to the other) is going from site to site, they are « temps » (working only at the time of the festival) and locals. They are about 12, 6 in each team, look like a gang because they move together and sport the same black, grunge style. They sleep on site, in the cabins. As a consequence, Ludo's team and the « locals » do not mix too much (the locals do the hard chores when Eric and Eduardo ask). For instance, as long as Ludo and his team are working on site, they maintain the light and sound system.

The « Ludo sound and light » team are at the back of the house, with the computer programs (each team at one large table) whereas the local team stays in the cabins or on the platforms twenty meter high, where they climbed like wild cats. The « Ludo team » is accessible, but remains 50 meters from the stage, at the top of the amphitheatre, whereas the local team is reach by talkie-walkies and when Eric and Eduardo yell.

Antoine is in charge of the scenery and he works with an assistant, Amandine. She takes picture on location, and complements Antoine, who is quite discrete.

Also here: Céline (assistant to Ludo's, in charge of the planning, organization and coordination, nicknamed « maman »), Marion (in charge of text, dramaturgy, coordinating with Olivier Cadiot and Frédéric Boyer, who made the translation and adaptation of the King Lear play. She represents them because they seldom visit. Olivier Cadiot is one of the « associated artists » of the festival this year, so he is quite an important figure. Ludo has been staging his texts and working with him for more than 20 years).

Yohann, Clothilde and Laurent are the three actors of the play. Yo is 60, Clo 30 and Laurent is about 50.

Fanny is in charge of costumes. She has a local assistant. She deals with costumes and this is quite hard here because they are crumpled and full of sand and soil (at one point, two actors roll down in the move called « breadcrumb »). The cooking staff, a 50ish woman and a young man are long gone, they leave after the evening meal, at 10.30.
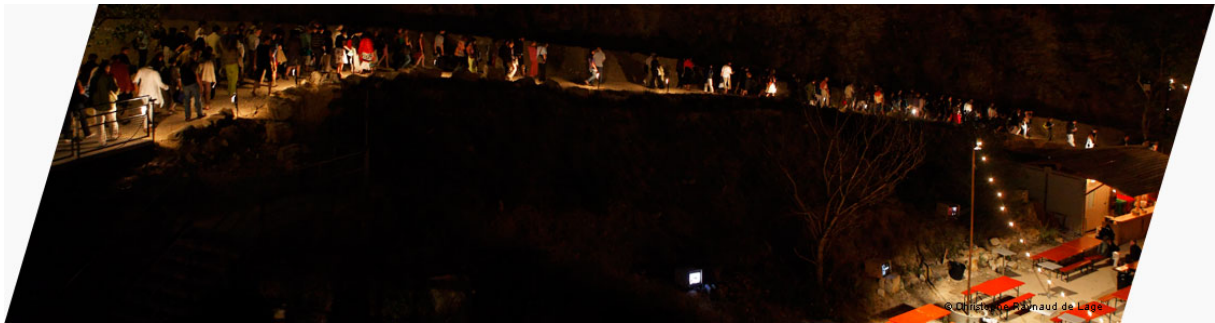
The stage

The house

The quarry at night

EPISODE 21

It is three o' clock Wednesday morning, in the Boulbon quarry, 40 miles from Avignon. Lights are still on in the quarry, the stage is a 100 feet large-80 feet long sand and soil space, rounded by 200 feet high walls of limestone. An amphitheatre of about 1000 sits (blue plastic mounted on steel) is facing it, with light and sound platforms on stilts looking down from right and left sides. Yet another platform is perched above the quarry walls, in the land in front of the house, above the stage, it looks like a pagoda on a Chinese see, especially when it beats down red and blue beams in the night.

Presently, the centre of the quarry is occupied by a black box, 20 feet high, 15 feet large, the only actual scenery element on location with the large block letters « banishment is here »

installed on a narrow headland at half height of the quarry, left side. Actors can hide behind it, there is obviously no backstage. Also, sounds and voices, which are very present, often come out of that central source. The box is connected, under the sand and soil, to the sound and light systems.

The black box looked quite different on stage: it was much more massive, closer to the verge of the stage, so actors' frontal exchanges were quite close from the audience. It added to the violence and made their acting palpable. In the quarry, the black box looks smaller, actors' static positions look more abstract because they are further away.

The « installation » was made yesterday morning by Jluc and his team, before we arrived for the rehearsals. The day before, at about 5 pm, two trucks came with 8 workers in each, sent from the festival, to remove the burnt car and large elements of the setting of the previous play by author and director Dieudonné Nyangouna. It was raining and storming, so JLuc had imagined a clever plastic wrapping for the black box, especially because of the electric installation (cords and cables under the sand for sound and light). To catch up with schedule (two nights to rehearsal on location), the rehearsal has already been lasting 2 hours more than usual.

The rehearsal lasted longer than usual, it has been going on since 6 pm, with a one hour break for diner. The day before, the storm started as we arrived, and so everyone waited for about 1.30. Ludo nearly cancelled the whole rehearsal, and we were quite a few to encourage him to still do it. The same event occurred that same say. There is no knowing if it will happen the next day. A certain tension is palpable, for lack of time in general (30 days of work is a reduced time for such a show) and, more specifically, lack of time to settle in location.

This is the end of the rehearsal: it went on fine so far, Ludo thanks every one. In the last scene, Lear and Cordelia were finally parting, the daughter leaving her father bereft of everything to fight back for his kingdom and her own fate.

Ludovic asks Jluc and Antoine (in charge of scenography) to come, this is unusual.

1. Ludo: What can we do with the black box? I feel it is distant. We must move it closer.

2. JLuc opens wide eyes.

3. Meanwhile, actors are about to leave the stage to change and they interrupt the conversation. Ludo changes subject.

4. Ludo to Yohann (role of Lear): just little things, you bend down again, whereas you need to be upright, this is the idea of the role, plus you will be better heard. You must adress the public, when you talk about your subjects being in awe, pick people in the public.

5. To Clothilde's question about her placement, Ludo answers: « No, no, you are good, this is fine. There is nothing you can do.»

6. Ludo turns back to Jluc and Antoine, who has fetched his assistant, Amandine. They all come closer, creating a quarteron on stage, hands on their hips. (*pause*)

7. Ludo: I have a problem. The dynamic is lost. The stage is way to far from the public.

8. Jluc (who has had time to examine the problem): All the cables are burried underground.

9. Ludo: it makes everything lateral, we calculated wrong. We must find out a solution.

10. Antoine: it might be because of the impression made by the speakers, I was thinking we should cover them, they are too visible.

11. Ludo: no, we are just losing one full meter of stage. He calls at Seb, at the back of the house. Seb ???

12. Seb agrees. However, he does not come down to participate in the discussion.

13. Now Ludovic is standing in front of the black box and says: « It is too far from the house. It flattens the moves,

freezing actors' exchanges. I think it should be moved upfront 10 feet. Can we do this? »

14.   All the team is here, except comedians who went to the little tents about two hundred feet from the quarry, in the flatland. There are about four different rooms, separated from the entrance and the refreshment stall (an old vintage truck, Bagdad café style and its 12 tables (for six). I can tell all they want is go home, getting back will take at least 20 minutes, yesterday, at one in the morning, they really wanted the rest. Now they are even more tired, and the opening night is one night closer.

15.   There is still tomorrow to rehearse, but light and sound trials will go on all night. Ludovic's team stays late and works during meals, it also needs to coordinate with the twelve « locals » more used to the local condition of « Cayenne » (or so Ludovic said the technicians nicknamed Boulbon quarry, in the name of the most famous convict camp in French Guyana where convicts used to die hard).

16.   Jluc is quick to answer: « It took us more than a half day, we need a support team again, it is a hell of a job, we need to call now... »

17.   His local aid, Eric, points out: « It is three in the morning, the team should be there at 6, we need a full brigade »

18.   Ludo: so it is not done

19.   Meanwhile, Jluc converses a little with Eric and other technicians who descended from the upstage platforms as sound and light people are listening carefully from their position, at the top of the house: to them, it means they will not be able to work all that while. JLuc is gathering information from different sources to decide.

20.   Jluc is now calculating the time it will take to do the job (I think he started by this, but puts it later, in a more diplomatic way, when doubt is installed and he knows

Ludovic might be open to relent): It means uprooting the installation will take until past 6, this will shorten the rehearsal tomorrow. Plus there might be rain again, the weather forecast is not good, (mitigating, trying to be as neutral as possible) then again, their predictions are debatable.

21.   I can see Ludo computing the different stakes in his head: this disturbs the actors, light and sound technicians, tomorrow night is their last chance to fix things, he can postpone the opening night, but it makes the event more fragile, especially since getting to the quarry requires a specific planning. Who would be in favour of this change? Stef, who analyses choreography, who is not here, and himself. He turns away to think more, paces a little on stage, calculating the distance, then he announces (not answering JLuc in particular) (*pause*)

22.   -what do you think ? he asks them all, still unsure, displeased that this element freezes the play, makes all moves more distant and at the same time more static.(*pause*)

23.   Eric: I am thinking: maybe we can just uproot it, instead of dismounting.

24.   Jluc (quiet and firm): nooo way, I am not having it uprooted from top, we risk to have it crushed, the material is fragile. (meanwhile, a team of three local technicians are already wrapping up the black box in its tarpaulin), we must dismount entirely, and it means many hours work, desinstall and reinstall.

25.   Ludo: so it is done but you need more men. We won't find them now for tomorrow morning...

26.   Eric and Jluc look at each other. Eric says: « It is possible to find a brigade, here , of all places, it can be done. I have the numbers. You just need to decide now. We

do need every minute if we want to work on the problem, Ludo. (*pause*)

27.   Ludo ponders this.

28.   At this point, Nico comes down from the back of the house where he and his team were working on sound. He mentions to Ludo that they can be arranging the sound by limiting the speakers to three only, the sound diffusion could be different and so they could advance the house.

29.   Nico: if we just move the speakers, sits can be set closer to the stage. It means one meter closer, instead of moving the box, it is easier.

30.   Eric comments: for sure, here, it is not like a stage with its trap doors...

31.   Seb comes down finally (one of the rare moments when he comes down on stage from his booth, sign that the moment is decisive): the distance of the monolith is too big

32.   Ludo: this is exactly the one we computed, though. It just looks different.

33.   Jluc: Ok, well, just look at the domino effect here: we need to have the guy with the earth-mover tomorrow.

34.   Ludo: you need the earth guy ?

35.   Jluc: yes, and he is not part of the staff of the festival, so that means, we will need until 4 pm tomorrow, that is, if we reach them all, the brigade and the earth guy, and it all goes well. But we will eat on rehearsal time, and then again, we may have storm and rain.

36.   Ludo: So once again, the idea would be to move the opening night, it is still possible, but we don't want to do this.

37.   Antoine (who has been exchanging with Nico): we can have less speakers and cover them with beige cloth

38.   People stay quiet. Going back to the initial idea of moving up the monolith, Eric says: « It can be done; it is not impossible » (His team, from Avignon, look like desperados,

all dressed in black, with chains, walking like a gang. Nico pointed that out, and told me to look at the women « tought cookies » he had said. I add « though job » and all the sound people agree. I have the feeling that Eric, who is wiry, dressed in black, with long hair and a beard, wouldn't be against showing what they can do together, the extreme, ultimate prowess. Then again, he is older, and he might need to test his team, especially when Ludo's team is being disturbed by this last minute change.) (*pause*)

39.   Everyone examines the look on Ludo's face now.(*pause*)

40.   Ludovic at this moment is looking down at the plastic carpet before the front row. He stares at Eric and says: « I am not too happy with this thing here, what is it ? It is really ugly. This creates a line, cuts all the effects. »

41.   Eric explains it is mandatory legally for people in wheel chair. Noone says it, but this regulation in France is really applied any old how. Escalators are built but then access is regularly blocked, stairs are complemented by other accesses, which are invisible because signs are unclear. For instance here, since cars cannot access the quarry and must stop in the previous quarry of the row which was transformed in a parking lot, two hundred feet from there; access is a long narrow humpbacked sandy road with stones and holes. If you want to see the play, you need legs or someone strong to carry you. Still they follow the rule in theatre houses, as it is mandatory. So Ludo asks if they could get rid of this black plastic carpet and put chairs instead, advancing the house, changing the proportion and making the black box closer in perspective. JLuc and Eric nod, quite content. Celine, his assistant, who had possibly anticipated some tension, says it should be ok.

42.   Ludo concludes: So let's try this. Can we whiten this black plastic carpet

43.   Eric and JLuc (eager to suggest a way out): we can remove it completely.

44.   Ludo: we can make it up, bleach it.

45.   Meanwhile the actors have changed, and came back on stage seeing that the cars were not ready. They are quietly inquiring about the situation.(*pause*)

46.   Eric: we can get rid of the speaker in the middle, have the central sound only from the monolith, not that when the tier is full, with the perspective, you do not see the black carpet, so take this into account.

47.   Clothilde: when I acted, I came closer than the speaker, I can do it again, get closer.

48.   Ludo nodds: yes, ok. Let's do this.

49.   Taking a step back to examine the actors who have taken their positions on stage, Ludo encourages them to move closer to the public. (*pause*) He reflects, heaving: « Finally, this Boulbon quarry looks smaller and smaller. Now the monolith is wrapped under it tarpaulin.

50.   Ludo talks to Yohann: You must really move closer, you tend to be too far away, this breaks the dynamics, the lines. (Ludo often has problems with Yohann and I notice that, when he is facing a problem, he often asks Yohann to change something in his diction, in his gait, or in his position)

51.   Yohann (mildly, as always): Oh, is that so ? I don't realize, but it is very broad (in fact, the width is about three times that of the large stage in Reims), Stefanie (in charge of helping the actors with the choreography and moves) we should be part of the same picture, all three

52.   Ludo: yes, whereas now, it is a bit like a tennis game, looking right and left.

53.   Meanwhile, Nico went back to the sound system, up the tier, and tried the sound with David at the computer as Django and Pierrick had removed the two frontal speakers. We hear the sound now

54.   Ludo: yes, it works, the balance is good to me. (*pause*)

55.   Clothilde (listening): I think it changed the song...

56.   This maybe true, but no one answers. In fact, Ludo's remark was decisive and consensus has been reached. It is ok. We leave the setting, leaving it for Seb to work on the lights.

57.   On the next day, Thursday July the 18th, when we arrive, the black plastic carpet has been removed and there is a new range of black plastic chairs. The stage looks different. The six large speakers which have been installed on the ground are also covered by beige-coloured cloth, so there are less conspicuous. (*pause*) Ludo stays for a long time on stage, then tries sits left, right, middle, back and forth, finally he says: « Ok. Let's try like this. »

58.   JLuc turns away, no showing any sign of his (very probable) relief. Eric calls his team and says « ok, guys, you can leave it now » and the light gradually goes down. The quarry goes to sleep. The night feels very deep and dark, with bright stars.

The next day, further arrangements are made to adjust the distance when comedians address the public. During the following week, the play received mixed reviews and many comments allude to the role of the monolith and the visual balance of the show (*see annex*). This proves that the issue raised during episode 21 was a very important one. It is also quite representative of the rehearsals and how people worked together.

Consequently, a few questions can be raised as to the specificity of this scene, which we consider characteristic of artwork in relation to the stage:

4. INTERPRETATION

We focus on four dimensions that we defined as essential to characterize power and domination in contrast with a "free space", where people would be physically and mentally free to act according to their preferences thereby constituting, by their collective action, a "heterotopia". It involves a keen attention to material and physical dimensions as experienced by protagonists (1), the elaboration of a common idiom of expression (2), a sound cooperation (3) and a reflexive intention (4). This is what the theatre claims to be, according to its tradition of challenging all forms of power. This is, in the case of the play *Lear is in town*, especially central since the play is about power relations and abusive leadership. The whole show is based on a political critique of absolute power in the age of new technologies.

We first interpret scene 21 in relation to each specific topic, and then refer it to the more general pattern of work during rehearsals, so as to ascertain is scene 21 is in line with it. Generally speaking, we find that episode 21 tends to emphasize a general pattern of work, only in extreme conditions.

4.1. MATERIALITY

During episode 21, all the group working on the play, Lear is in Town, is confronted with an important material problem: the key element in the setting is misplaced, consequently, the impression on the audience is wrong. Namely, actors are not at the right distance from the public. Ludo, the director, is the one in charge of taking care of that general impression, consequently, he blames himself, and the people in charge of scenography, and possibly everyone for not noticing that problem before. He explains why this mistake is detected only a few hours before the opening night: only three rehearsal nights on site were possible, before that, the

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rehearsals took place in the Reims theatre, where all proportions were different. There is some kind of irony in this tension between the extreme sophistication of this minimalist aesthetics and the very basic problem which was missed. However, despite the fact that all have been working hard for about two months now and the stress of the imminent show is raising, most actors seem to deal with the situation. This can be explained by the satisficing solution to the problem: instead of opting for the radical solution (moving the monolith), the satisficing solution consists in having all protagonists be involved in the physical arrangement corresponding to the material problem. Namely, the key question is « what can be done » about the situation, and the answer is that everyone involved can do something about it. Consequently, the collective control over the performance make it possible to « act on the world » and relieves the tension that could have appeared if only a few members of the team had been able to « do something » and others forced to remain passive as is often the case in the knowledge economy where many workers have little control over their material environment and can only act by say (Austin, 1970). However, as we shall see, if all use their senses in relation to their environment, the hierarchy between roles does not really make it as rewarding as it should be.

Episode 21

Ludo is the one requesting some expertise on the feasibility of removing the monolith: L 13, L18, L25-26 and L38: « it is done or it is not done ».

First, technicians who have installed the monolith evaluate if it can be done after being consulted by the director.

Second, locals (who are requested to act on the problem because they would know the local solutions) evaluate if they can find

external help.

Thirdly, all members of the team perceive that the radical solution will be difficult to implement, so they look for changes that could favour minor arrangements through coordination of all dimensions (setting, sound, light, actors).

L 6 Technicians feel free to express their opinion, they evaluate the physical possibilities and they assess the aesthetic problem together by standing close together and by taking measurements (L10 to 13) and asking another expert to assess it, calling Seb, who is in charge of light, so has very precise measurements. Yet logisticians do not have the words for the "general impression" and Seb does not have certainty on feelings that are not related to his console, an impression he would have engineered with it. This might explain why he comes later, and expresses some doubt as to the solution.

Nico, who is in charge of sound, but has also worked on many contemporary visual art shows, comes up with a solution. Because of his multiple experience, he masters both the material and the "abstract" (representation) nature of the issue. His expression is practical, and it first expressed in an exchange with his team (the three guys quietly remove the speakers from backstage), then Antoine and JLuc. L 41 the black plastic carpet can be covered up, the black speakers can be covered with beige cloth, bricolage arrangements are made by people who are expert at keying (evaluation the effects on an audience). They use simple tricks and like to joke about it: for instance, JLuc went to buy a bucket for Clothilde's whig and dress (for fear of the Mistral, the south wind that can be very strong)

Finally, when actors come back, they become part of the solution after some sort of keying went on (the problem was exposed only after they had left, probably to leave them out one more cause for

concern before the opening night). They willingly adapt to the circumstances by marginally modifying their positions and moves on stages. Their feelings are limited to the impression Ludo tells them is right, and they try to do what he says although they ask questions. Contrary to the rest of the team and even Ludo, they are very vocal on their feelings and impressions, but these are of a finer grained than that required by the monolith problem, since it involved taking someone else's position, that of the audience, on a global visual impression of the stage. This is something Ludo, the director, feels but he is incapable of expressing this feeling.

What happens during episode 21 shows that actors' relations to their work environment in its materiality and their sensations are somehow bounded by the role they have to play in its nature and in its style of expression. Referring to the whole duration of the rehearsals, episode 21 is no exception to this rule.

During rehearsals:

Multitasking so as to favour satisficing arrangements and bricolage is also illustrated in episodes 3, 13 and 14 (in Reims) and in Boulbon (episodes 23 and 25).

This shows that during episode 21, most protagonists were active and ready to do something because this was the way they usually worked on problematic situations. They were used to being part of the solution by improvisation and bricolage, while at the same time admitting that a problem had occurred that they could not avoid from dealing with. In the situation, the director's acting as a pivot between all subgroups is both a form of superior influence and a source of vulnerability since a good solution needs to be negotiated with all so as to rely on their involvement. The director refers his sensations and material dimensions to the realm of art, and a series of references, which makes him quite unique,

and superior, in his role. He shares this culture with his scenographer, and the rest of the team (especially those he knows better) are more or less aware of these references, yet, when Ludo shared texts or videos, he would do that in the house, gathering the small group of comedians and scenographers, he did not feel compelled to involve the technical staff. In a similar way, meal times were based on Ludo and the comedians' breaks, during which the technical staff would use the room to make arrangements. This shows also feelings and materiality are officially recognized as central, a social frame exists that defines interactions, and what people feel free to say or do.

4.2. A COMMON LANGUAGE

The problem has a material solution but it is essentially related to the form of representation and figuration. This is why the problem was initially perceived by Ludo. In exposing the problem, he used different forms of expressions that correspond to what most subgroups can refer to easily « tension, dynamics, rhythm, balance » instead of going into more theoretical arguments about the play. This is because there is a more or less equal balance of power between all subgroups (in charge of specific dimension). Calling on everyone's attention and letting experts refer to their specific expertise to find a solution avoids a long talk and groupthink. This puts everyone in charge in dealing with their own representations in relation to the future « ideal » impression on the audience. This also allows for a material solution to be found, since a problem of general impression can be solved by changing the arrangements, whereas going into an « aesthetic dilemma » would have frozen the debate, by giving the impression that it could not be dealt with (something Peter Brook describes a « youth mistake », developing a credo and sticking to it, imposing one's authority on others and at the same time depriving them of

the power to be part of the solution).

Episode 21:

A common idiom is finally found for the problem of the monolith. It is a reflect of the operatic nature of work, involving a setting, sound, light and images in movement as part of a general impression. However, initially, people have a hard time figuring out what the director has in mind when he points at the problem. His expression is quite vague.

L7 Ludovic's vocabulary refers to « the dynamic »; L 40 « the effects »; L 54 the « balance » (for sound)

Logistic technicians (people in charge of « things ») are more specific in measuring distance. This is also the case of Sebastien, who is in charge of light, the equivalent of sculpting space. Sound technicians have a different vocabulary to measure distance (bounce, balance) and rhythm. Actors are the least specific of all: they think in terms of « moves » and oppose « close » and « far » (L 47 and 50). But they argue with their bodies and the gestures they make: they are not only theirs, but the very presence of the characters who must appear on stage. Ludovic changes from one vocabulary to another depending on which group he addresses. In this episode, the homogeneous vision of each subgroup (logistics, sound and light and actors) is reinforced by their perspective: logistic people were all on the spot, sound and light worked from backhouse and actors were changing in their logia. What may have balanced the closeness and the expertise of the logistic people was the influence of actors: they are the performers and they should not be fragilized by a choice they do not approve right before the opening night. However, what takes precedence over everyone's expression is the director's language, one that is very elliptic and allusive, even cryptic and ironic at times. It reflects a situation of power, where the rest of the team is meant to understand and

translate his intention. They are not asked to take a stand. The situation, in episode 21, is not an exception.

During rehearsals:

The director seems to be in charge of deciding of the whole intention of the collective work by expressing strong opinions. Ludovic (the director) can be observed saying no to actors' suggestions (episodes 4 and 5), accepting their improvisations (episode 9), limiting ambivalence (by getting rid of the tent in episodes 7 and 18) and reflecting on intension (episode 11).

During previous rehearsals, all members of the team had been part of the exchange of ideas and images about the general form of the « intention » as described by Baxandall (1991). Their contribution meant that people who were expert in their field were also capable of reaching for their own sources of inspiration and their personal culture to offer solutions. This meant that even the more pragmatic and material dimensions of the show could be treated as an element part of a general intention. By not subsuming the collective creation under the name 'art' thereby creating a hierarchy of status between artistic and non-artistic tasks and professions, rehearsals with Ludovic were a moment of discovery and commitment for members of the team. Yet this also means all the team more or less appropriated Ludo's vocabulary. Since this mode of expression was highly intuitive and based on impression, this led to ambivalences and moments of tension, when no clear solution appeared and where some issues (such as sound) seemed to take too much importance because it was a relatively new territory, but in the end, it was the source of a very original show most protagonists were proud of and stood by, despite its mixed reviews when it was presented to the public.

4.3. COOPERATION

Cooperation during scene 21 is key to come up with a solution to a concern raised by the director, Ludo, but uncontested by the rest of the group. There is, however, a slight problem in determining the nature and the true role of this cooperation as, although it is quite effective, it is not really valued. On the contrary, it can be read as an implicit coalition between all protagonists to convince (without speaking their mind) the director to drop his idea of radical change. Uprooting the monolith would be taking a very great risk a few hours before the opening night. This cooperation takes places with all experts using their specific techniques to reach a compromise and change the general impression. All take measures with their specific instruments (meter, console, devices) to respond to a vague call, given by the director about the "distance". The call for cooperation is not made, on the contrary, the director initially attempts to impose his radical decision by hiding his purpose to the most probable opponents. Instead of exposing the problem and having an open debate about it, the way the problem is dealt with is a series of avoidance moves.

Episode 21:

The whole scene can be sequenced by entrances and exits on the stage of Boulbon defining how the issue is examined.

L 4 and 5: Ludo prefers to let the actors leave and relax a little so as not to stress them (L5) they go back to the relaxing times (L 14-15); technicians know that something is happening because Ludovic never called them before at that point. Feeling that the problem is very important for the whole show, sound and light people get involved. Celine (L 41) feels some tensions may arise and since she has been in charge of keeping people content and making adjustments, she quietly waits for the actors to come back, knowing that their opinion will be decisive.

Different tensions may also exist in the team: actors would

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probably opposed to blocking the last hours to change the setting (when they come back in the end after they changed, they seem quite worried to see the group still debating on stage). Local technicians and Ludovic's team have different views (locals are more used to Boulbon and its harsh conditions, l 38- whereas technicians who installed the box are very minute, therefore, more cautious. (L 23-24). Light and sound experts remained at the back of the house for a while, but they figured they should be part of the solution if they want to secure the last free moments for their arrangements (L 28-29; L 37). In that small battle, permanent staff is more powerful than temps, without even examining the value of their propositions and this order is followed. Technical experts in sound and light are also more hierarchically powerful than logisticians (in charge of hard jobs and moving things). Seb (light) has been working for years with Ludo, whereas Nico is new to the team. Therefore, Seb is more influencial than Nico, who, with his teams, happens to be the key to the final solution. In the end, Seb (in charge of light) remains doubtful about the « satisficing » bricolage solution and expresses his concern (L31). This may be a sign of his displeasure in being secondary for the solution. Comedians are even higher in the implicit hierarchy of status. They have been left out of the whole process, but in the end, they are asked to change their moves, so as to fit in. For the same reasons as Seb, the same ambivalence about the final result is found in Clothilde's remarks: first she suggests minor position changes (L 47-48) then she still worries about the quality of the sound after the change (L 55-56). Others do not support the « doubtful attitude » so it is as if they had not said anything.

There are signs of cooperation, to deal with the problem in a very tense situation when time and uncertainty on the weather make it difficult to know what to do. However, we interpret these signs as quite ambiguous. Once, for instance, to reach consensus, the director decides to ask an open question to all present: « what do

you think » (L 22). Ludovic probably also thinks of the silent voices at this moment: people in charge of public relations and the audience, when he renounces to push back the opening night (L36). Although the weather hardships could justify it, the importance of the social occasion and the tight schedule of « VIPs » makes it risky. This may explain why the question sounds as rhetorical, and no one answers it, leaving it to Ludo to know what to do, as the director. Actors prefer to work out a practical solution on their own, in a tacit way, and then pass it on to the others.

Once the satisficing solution is chosen, actors become involved so as to adjust the spotlight when they move (L 47-L 52) at this point, the box is no longer central, what matters is actors' moves on stage (this is what matters to them and by discussing with them, it seems that Ludovic realizes that there is a general problem of balance because of the frontal exchange between the three actors which is a problem for coordination, it must never become rigid and mechanic (therefore the reference to the tennis game)

Ludovic, the director, is relying on his team's commitment but he also knows that it is difficult to ask much from them, because of the imminence of the representation and because the work conditions in the Boulbon quarry are exceptionnally hard. This does not prevent him for scolding Yohan (the King Lear part) for not doing the right move, a reaction that is consistent with Ludo's ways during the whole rehearsals. He had a specific way of ruling out propositions and solving problems that was more personal than collective.

During rehearsals:

In Scene 12, all the team experienced a different atmosphere when changing setting, from the « dark room » to the quarry under the

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storm (all arrangements need to be adapted).Most exchanges are cooperative, but it is not devoid of tensions: Already tensions were felt between the « creators » and the « interpreters »: between the director and the sound people (scenes 1, 20 and 24), between the director and the actors (scene 8, Ludo finds Lo too tragic) between actors and the adaptors of the text (scene 16 what should be the general intention for actors, after the first run-through) and between the team conceiving the sound partition and the interpreter and d-jay at the console (scene 6)

One very important influence on relations is the inclusiveness of the ties during work: people literally leave with each other. This creates contrasting moods of cooperation and avoidance, following primary and secondary rules of engagement.

These close ties and relations are not altogether located outside the social stage, they are somehow « bracketed » from external influences during rehearsals so as to focus on aesthetics. This involves being quite vocal about power relations and actually, director and comedians regularly referred to the issue during the rehearsals and commented afterwards that the importance of the power theme in the play influenced them (made them more aware of what was at stake during work). What they express is a feeling that political power can be oppressive, as opposed to the freedom they experience thanks to their way of life. If one considers comedians actual work relations, they are not as free as they claim to be, partly because of the intense competition in their profession and the uncertainty of each project. Besides, part of the team –in charge of logistics and technology – was not part of this debate on power, which points at a distinction in roles, quite contrary to an equalitarian cooperative model such a "free space".

4. Intention, Reflexivity and Politics

In art theatre, the art rule takes precedence over all other dimensions. This, in theory, involves the total freedom of creation for artists, for instance, in Avignon, workers crews are supposedly available at all hours of day and night. Practical dimensions and economic means are provided for the best directors to create the best shows once they are selected. However, in the "in" festival (as opposed to the informal "off" festival) directors also take a stand as to the way they use their means. Directors are always politically active in the media, and they like to pose as moral figures, especially in an age they criticize for being ultra-liberal. Art theatre, its public funding since the 1960s, is often alluded to as the most vivid group of artistic critique (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2000), a heterotopia always reinvented.

<u>Episode 21:</u> It presents a key moment when aesthetics is conflicting with practical dimensions. Roles defend both views: the director defends the aesthetics intention, whereas the technicians invoke practical obstacles to changes imposed by the artistic view. The superior status of the director makes him influential in that he has the final call. All wait for his decision and will abide by it. This is illustrated by a series of 9 "pauses" where all stop and watch Ludo pondering and looking at the monolith (Lines 6, 21, 22, 26, 38, 39, 45, 49, 54, 57). The director initiates the tempo for everyone, and he does this when he directs actors but also, when he is part of a collective effort to solve a problem he was the one to detect and he is the only one enabled to solve.

The respect all other actors have for his decision is based on his "eye" but it is not directly related to any kind of technical expertise. The way Ludo expresses his concern is one of "impression management" and, although it is a very clear problem of perspective and measurement, he never describes it as such. His instructions are more or less those of any one describing a

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picture, an aesthetic vocabulary only Antoine (in charge of the scenery) echoes by mentioning the "impression" (L 10): "it flattens the moves, freezes the exchanges" (L13); "it is ugly, it creates a line, it cuts all the effects" (L 40), "This cuts the dynamics, the line" (L50) It is not specific since Ludo uses the same term for the text, the actors' play, and the harmony of space, namely he thinks in terms of "dynamics"(L 57) and "balance" (L54). Because of his definition of perspective and his directions, only a satisficing arrangement could be found.

Finally, a compromise solution is reached when both views find a common ground: other artistic dimensions still need to be worked on, and they should not be sacrificed by shortage of time. However, the director has the "final cut", alone, and no one is in a real position to argue. There is no real reflexivity on the decision making process and the way a collective decision is made, if we go back to the whole process.

L 1- Ludo justifies his position by a general feeling, he is surprised that the general impression is changed (L 32); all have reflexive pauses considering the problem (L 27-L39) and the « aesthetic problem » is identified little by little by Ludo with others suggesting solutions. Only in the end of the episode does Ludo identify the black plastic carpet (L 40-43) as the source of the collective « miscalculation » (it was not there when they visited the quarry, yet this might be a way to save face, and get rid of the responsibility and to find a satisficing arrangement: move the carpet instead of uprooting the monolith.

Besides, the director is also the time-keeper, and he is in a hurry, possibly because of his concern with comedians' fatigue and stress, possibly because of his own tension. As a result, he does not really allow his team to come up with more specific solutions than just an ad hoc "bricolage".

L 19-21 different subgroups share opinions and trade information at this point: on the one hand, the technical group and Ludo. At the consoles and on the stage, two ways of computing time and space take place: the logistic team and the high-tech firm, however, do not have the opportunity to join forces. They are L 34-35, on the other hand, Ludo is thinking of the « inner group » and the final representation, technicians are thinking about other teams they could call (the brigade). They could be called, but Ludo decides not to take a chance. Finally, he reaches a very general conclusion on the whole matter, the next day: "Ok, let's try this." (L 57). At this point, it is very possible he is talking to himself, and talking to himself in such a way that everyone can hear and perceive that him, as a director, is intimately convinced that they have reached the right decision. Yet this can be interpreted as the closure, answering a rhetoric question (he looked at no one, and no one answered): "What do you think?"(L 22) the previous night.

Looking back at the rehearsals, this type of solution in relation to impression management and general intension is no way exceptional (in that it would be caused by urgency).

During rehearsals:

In many episodes, Ludo acted as a director in bringing in a mix of visual art traditions, theatre references and pop culture, to guide actors or to provide as a reference for light and sound technicians.

In Episode 2, he mentioned the atmosphere of a horror movie for sound and light, and reiterated that reference by prompting comedians to act "gore".

In episode 22: Correcting the tempo (when one scene was "feeling lengthy" to him, he mentioned one of his previous plays, one that was familiar only to those who had been part of the project, only two or three people, then he clarified by insisting that in his

theatre, there is no opposition between comic and tragic, whereas often comedians tend to be academic and play tragedy slow. This could also be heard as an indirect criticism of one of the actors' style. In Episodes 8 and 15 he was again asking the actor to intensify his passion and furor so as to avoid the realist cliché. The exclusion from his realm of references was different from just mentioning art works (art theatre) and pop culture (horror movies) people may not know. What was at stake here was more specifically the ability to boldly mix high and low culture, something this actor was not prompt enough to do. Clearly, being in line with Shakespearian style and imagery was a mistake, yet this was never an object of discussion, once the "compression" of the play had been undertaken with author Olivier Cadiot. Yet if avant-garde challenges previous forms as a form of dominating frame, how can it go beyond this supposed conformism if it does not even take this tradition into account?

Episodes 10 and 19 showed that this point could have led to a debate since all three actors had been trained at identifying these traditions and playing with them. At one point, actors' discussions after run-through about how they felt the roles and their expression initiative a very participative move, although such «feed-back moments" did not include the logistic and technical members of the staff. Yet the director only listened, and provided directions and solutions in terms of rhythms and dynamics.

In our view, this shows that the realm of the theatre is that of the director, because he is the one who is legitimate in using the aesthetic language. This aesthetic language, in the case of this particular production, is not really articulated with the three other dimensions (materiality, language inventiveness and coproduction via cooperation). Rather, it encompasses them all, making it difficult to introduce a real exchange between the director and all other collaborators. However, actors seem to find collective

solutions and arrangements by interacting outside of the director's control. However, we see this is done in a low key way, in the background and therefore, it conflicts with the view that the public art theatre world is really a heterotopia, because such an organization dominated by one leader has long been identified in organization theory. This overwhelming role of the creative director is a general rule, and it bears direct consequences in the recognition of all professions in living arts: presently the status of "intermittent workers" might be suppressed by the French government under the pretext that it gives excessive advantages to living artists compared to the general condition of temporary workers.

It has often been argued that such "classic" work methods may not be fully democratic but that they are efficient. In this specific case, as in many others, this remains to be seen.

After the opening night the next day, the peer judgment and the social world took its toll on the project: critiques were not positive (« *Every morning there would be a new negative critique in the paper, this made the atmosphere heavy* »). Once again, this failure in Avignon was widely echoed, and presented as a sign that avant-garde, contemporary theatre in public theatres is not in line with what the general public would find entertaining. Example of more popular shows in private theatres were taken, echoing a more and more general attack by theatre experts on "(over) intellectual art". The fact that Ludovic Lagarde had mixed high and low culture and found his inspiration in pop culture (possibly to please a younger audience) was missed. His choice of famous actors who had appeared on the screen (instead of less famous theatre actors) was not a safeguard either: the actors were an object of pity for having been misled into such as bad show their presence could not even make palatable. Once again, the failure of this show does have direct political implications in that it was a

pretext to launch an attack on the head of the Avignon festival and public art theatre as overly elitist and slightly archaic. Since that time, it is acceptable to make "deals" in line with the official targets and objectives of the Ministry of Culture and Communication. Namely, when signing for a new project, directors are more or less pledging that their show will appeal to a broad audience and fill the theatre.

One must admit that one limit to the freedom of work in art in "the society of organizations" is related to « public success » and the influence of official appreciation by critiques. Possibly, in public art theatre, the « theatocratie » alluded to by Benjamin (2003) is causing some harm, because: *'the modalities of reception and the work of interpreting the performance are very poorly understood.'*(Pavis, 1982: 70). There also is a fierce competition between directors and companies to gain access to the most prominent art theatres. These are causes for concern, balanced by the unprecedented success of theatre in France. However, when one looks at interactions at work, before they even are under the scrutiny of the audience, they do not really correspond to the "free space" directors and some comedians claim it is, using it as a source of legitimacy to take a political stand on many different issues, especially power.

CONCLUSION

Theatre can be described as a "heterotopia" or a "free space", because it creates a specific ordering with different time and space. As such it is not so much "outside the social stage" as a specific form of frame inside the social stage, mirroring it in many different ways. However, in many occasions, theatre people have claimed to be part of a "heterotopia" they build as they work

on shows as a collective. As such, they have a specific role in society.

This claim is only partly supported by the specific nature of theatre work. First, because a great part of actors' life is spent looking for a job and going from one theatre house to another, depending on the audience vote.

Rehearsals are the more intense and intimate moments, when all actors work closely together and adopt a common agenda. They exploit secondary techniques that involve all members of the team to create a unique live performance based on complementary skills and a common lived experience. For actors, this means sharing the same material space and feelings, finding a common idiom, cooperating in creation and share a common intention, involving taking a stand in terms of aesthetics. Art theatre specifically has a tradition of political engagement related to this aesthetic dimension.

As such, it involves commitment and coordination among team members relying on their technical expertise but also their sensations on site as well as a keen understanding of the message conveyed by the play. There is no possibility to industrialize the experience, consequently, making the adjustments proves quite trying for everyone, especially now, since more and more technical fine-tuning is required in addition to dealing with the setting and working on the interpretation of the parts.

This operatic creation, concentrated in no more than two months, creates an atmosphere of intense concentration, combining moments of tension (between the different members of the team), exchanges, and moments of intimacy and tenderness that may allow tensions to fade away. This creates a collective rhythm. When the show is finally exposed to the audience, going from one stage to another, a different type of work is created, more focused on the performance itself and less on the creation. Still, according to most participants, it is the survivance of the rehearsals moments that imprints the show with its specific life and makes it

stand in front of the changing audiences as an allegory of their time. In our view, this cooperation is not necessarily promoted and valued for what it is, it is rather downplayed because of the dominant role of the director, as is the case in many organizations. It can also be added that there are many common features between this type of work and project management, in fact so many that it makes it difficult to oppose theatre work (a heterotopia) and work in more traditional organizations or non-artistic projects.

Although the specific play that was described here is specifically dealing with power, there is not obvious sign that the specific topic of the play reflected on protagonists' work relations and informed the specific work organization. Consequently, we find evidence of a specific nature of power and working on power issues changes the way people work and interact, working on Shakespeare may have made people more reflexive, they become more aware of some issues, but it was not verbalized or enacted that modified the frame of social interactions. The director's word on this specific issue is present in the media, referring to theatre as a "heterotopia", but we see this a the expression of a personal and collective opinion of leaders in the theatre world, not necessarily as a claim based on actual facts.

As a result, power relations in and out the work space called "stage" remain part of a social stage, where all actors have a status and a reputation to maintain, this creates interdependencies and extra-artistic concerns that may, at some point, conflict with artistic preoccupations. Although art theatre productions are expected to take a stand in terms of aesthetics and politics, this stand is not necessarily grasped by the audience, and it is not necessarily a reflect of actual work relations.

-this analysis is specific to one type of art and to one moment in the history of art theatre in France, other work situations should be added so as similarities and differences can help reach a better knowledge of theatre work and its specificities.

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