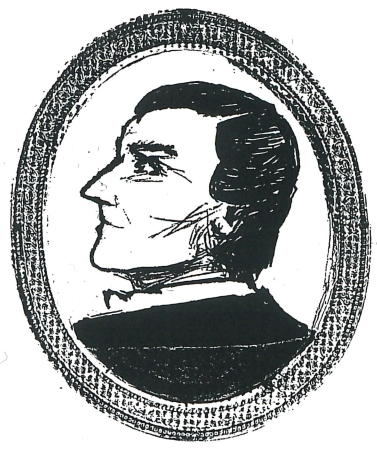
We are invited to a space where you and I will react on a personal level to performative art. Where you and I are not censored by the Editor of conventional reviews. Where we can talk about theater past the superficial event. You and I should not pass up the opportunity, we should exploit the freedom of this conversation. EMERGENCY requires your reactions to what you've seen, your thoughts about making or watching performative art, historical movement/s, your manifestos, essays, dialogues with friends and colleagues, raw footage of ideas. The gazette also reserves a special section for impossible theater : projected theatres of the mind, of the imagination, of tomorrow and yesteryear, of not now and never. Most importantly, send us hasty news of your productions, events, collaborations, open rehearsals, guerilla performances, so that you and I may veni and vidi.



GAZETTE #4

Send submissions, reviews and listing information to:

Bros. Lumiere, eds.

EMERGENCY
733 Amsterdam Ave.
Suite 21H
New York, NY
10025

OCTOBER 27, 1999.

EMERGENCY

*/ we remember theatre #}

Prelude to a New Perspectivalism: or the Frame and the Representation of Nullification.

If one were to approach an object in the world. A rock for instance; a rock which is three feet in diameter and weighs approximately 175 pounds; a rock which is suspended by a rope from an enormous oak in a field.

If I were to stand 15 feet away from the rock, my field of vision would be vast enough to include much of the rock's surroundings. A bright blue, cobalt blue, cloudless sky. A field of ripe clover, or innumerable lavender flowers. Wind is evident in the patterns which emerge from the bobbing of flowers. Great masses of bees swarm in the hot summer air--*their legs already a gaudy version of* pollen yellow--(there will be some very precise dance moves tonight, tonight at the hive). The humidity is high and the clothing of the actors, drenched in sweat, clings to their bodies like horrible skins. But there is a rock hanging from the tree.

It spins slowly. Its action is not the same as the action of the clover in the wind or the arm of the actor which absently rises and falls. Its action is somehow bound by the cord with which it has achieved suspension. Then, as the eye follows the cord that holds the rock—up and over the tree limb and back to the earth where four actors, their veins bulging deep red in their foreheads and forearms—the skin pulsing and a cooling layer of sweat SIERRALEONECONGOMYPRISTINA which is mopped from time to time by a fourth person whose exhaustion is visible in her sighs. Up above there is a small tear and through the tear one can faintly make out a patch of sky.

These four actors, three women and one man, are hoisting a rock up into the air by hauling at the rope. A fifth actor mops their brows and with a cup helps them to drink lest they should let go of the cord. A sixth actor is perilously crawling below the rock, trying to help a seventh actor to move out of the crater that the rock had made in the earth when it crashed down upon him. His head is badly crushed and his fingers twitch a gasp. In Artaud's THEATRE ET SON DOUBLE it is written that the sky can still fall on our heads. And the theatre must teach us that first of all.

But sometimes I imagine this same rock suspended above a stage. Directly below it a young man is sunbathing. To the left of this strange scene a young woman is making a pitcher of raspberry juice. She squeezes and squeezes, handful after handful, this strangely tantalizing fruit. Using a piece of cheesecloth or other sheer fabric to strain out the seeds, her hands, as with the cloth which was white, seem drenched in the bright red juice of the berry. It is a bloodbath, raspberry red. When I see her I think she must be a bloody mess and that the man in the far background who is lying face down in a pool of dark viscous liquid must have something to do with this image. An ambulance lights the scene, barely visible, just the front half of the vehicle extends onto the stage, twirling blue and red and white in crazy combinations. Directly in front of this ambulance a little boy is crying loudly and asking for his father. His is the only sound we hear. It too occasionally cuts out as in a movie soundtrack when the mute button is accidentally pressed. Only his screaming and erratic mouth may be seen gulping the air. And so it is that when one stands far back from the object that the frame too extends back and sucks into its space whatever isn't tied down. Meaning is like this. But if the process is reversed and the rock is approached until ones face is stuck up against it then it is impossible to see the sky or the birds, or the actors hauling at the rope. It is possible that this may be the only way out of the landscape drama which has dominated the avant garde for some time.

Anonymous

LISTINGS

PARADIS [NEW EUROPE FEST]
French dance group Montalvo-Hervieu blend hip-hop and classical dance in front of video images of exuberant animals. Joyce Theater, 175 8th Ave, 242-0800. Oct 26-30 at 8pm, Oct 31 at 7:30, weekend matinees at 2pm. $30.

DO CHINESE POSTMEN RING TWICE TOO? [NEW EUROPE]
Israeli composer Sarah Mandelbut's unfinished work for tapes, voices, pipa, aetherophone, radio wave receiver, tone regulator, information changer and projections. Based on Chinese & Yiddish proverbs. The Kitchen, 512 W.19th St., 255-5793. Oct 26-30 at 8pm, Oct 30 at 3pm. $20.

MORNING SONG [NEW EUROPE]
The acclaimed Needcompany, from Belgium, present a wacky dance-theater piece, including a fully functional kitchen. BAM, 718-636-4100. Oct 27, 29,30 at 7:30, Oct 31 at 3pm. $17-40. Call for details on student rush tickets.

ARIA SPINTA [NEW EUROPE]
A dance-theater collaboration between Czech, Italian, Croatian, Bulgarian, and German dancers and choreographers. Dance Theater Workshop, 219 W.19th St., 924-0077. $15.

HAUTNAH [NEW EUROPE]
Any show that includes two drinks seems spot-on to us. Felix Ruckert choreographs a one-on-one, choose-your-own-dancer café adventure. Oct 26–30th, 7-11pm ongoing event. Joyce Soho, 155 Mercer, 431-9233. $10 cover includes 2 drinks.

THE FALL [NEW EUROPE]
Dutch company does dance-theater with eight men, investigating "the power of attraction and competition." Oct 28-30 at 8:30. Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church, 674-8194, $15.

VOICES [NEW EUROPE}
Dutch company Theatergroep Hollandia presents a one-man show based on text by Passolini. The word is: this is not-to-be-missed. Oct 26-30 at 8:30, Oct 31 at 3pm. PS122, 477-5288, $20.

ODIN THEATER, COPENHAGEN
Last few days to catch Eugenio Barba's Danish theater company, as they perform six works in rep. Thru Oct 31st. La MaMa, 74A E 4th St., 475-7710. $10-$20.

MEREDITH MONK
Monk's latest piece is MAGIC FREQUENCIES: a science fiction chamber opera. Nov 2-6 at 8pm, Nov 6,7 at 2pm. Joyce Theater, 175 8th Ave., 242-0800, $35.

1839
GAle GAtes et al. present a multi-media extravaganza, including sophisticated sound and puppets. Starting Nov 11, Tue-Sat 9pm. 37 Main St., B'klyn (F train to York) 718-522-4597. $15-$25.

I LOVE DICK
Mabou Mines present Chris Kraus' play, adapted and directed by Leslie Mahn. With Jan Wesley Harding, among others. Nov 3-28 at 8pm. PS122 – Mabou Mines Studio, 151 1st Ave, tix 718-398-4882.

SHOWY LADY SLIPPER
1999 OBIE-winner Richard Maxwell's newest, about American girls. Oct 28-31, Nov 4-7, Nov11-14 at 7:30. PS122, 150 1st Ave., 477-5288. $15.

GONER
Brian Parks' dark comedy about a hospital, a wounded president, and a talking tumor. Directed by John Clancy. Thru Nov 6. Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St., 420-8877. $12.

THE PASSION ACCORDING TO G.H.
NaCl presents this solo piece, adapted from the book by Brazilian feminist Clarice Lispector. Nov 3-6 at 8pm. Context Studios, 28 Ave A, 946-5734. $15.

HOUDINI THE GREAT
"A street opera for four singers and six musicians." Composer Andy Pape. Part of the Danish Wave Festival. Oct 29, 30 at 8pm, 31st at 3pm. Miller Theater, 854-1633. $25.

WAR OF THE WORLDS
Your favorite SITI stars present a staged reading of Orson Welles' infamous radio play. Co-directed by Anne Bogart and Darron L. West. Oct 30 at 8pm and 10pm. The Laurie Beachman Theater. 407 W. 42nd St. & 9th Ave, 279-4200. $20.

DISTINGUISHED BEAUTY ELECTRA
Last year, Jenny Schwartz adapted and directed an exquisite Iphiginia. Now, Schwartz is back with the Electra story. Oct 27-30th. Horace Mann Theater, 120th & B'way. 854-3859. $10/$5 students.

CHEAP TALK WITH...
A Theatrical Talkshow Fiction for One Actress and Two Video Monitors, created by Donna Lindeman and Yosi Wananu. Oct 21-31, Thu-Sun at 8pm. HERE, 145 6th Ave, 647-0202. $12.

GREENLAND Y2K
Animation, video and digital effects, and a Y2K bug. Susanna Speier wrote and performs. David Cote directs. Fri and Sat at 10:30pm, thru Nov. 6. HERE 145 6th Ave., 647-0202, $12.

NORTH ATLANTIC
The Wooster Group's latest resurrection. Tue-Sun at 8pm, thru Nov 21st. 33 Wooster St., 966-3651. $25.

If you believe, as we do, that you cannot go on without our little gazette, please rest assured; you can always find EMERGENCY at the following Manhattan locations:

* St. Mark's Bookstore
* The Pink Pony
* The Drama Bookshop
* St. Mark's Church
* Applause Bookstore
* KGB Lounge
* Labyrinth Bookstore

IMPOSSIBLE THEATER

This weekend I did a performance in the elevator at Mobius [an arts space in Boston]. It was open studios, so I did this action that I've done before called BLINDLY HANDING OUT DIRECTIONS. I was seated in a chair in the back corner of this pretty small elevator. I was dressed in white, with a white blindfold, a memo pad and a black pen. As people came in the elevator (they were usually going from first to fifth floor, so we had a little time), I would write them a two-line, simple, usually mundane direction to follow. For example:

BREATHE IN. BREATHE OUT.

LOOK AT THE DOOR. HUM A TUNE.

LOOK AT THE WALL. LISTEN.

TOUCH THE WALL. TOUCH YOUR FRIEND.

GO UP. LOOK DOWN.

TOUCH YOUR STOMACH. WISH IT WELL <I'd been suffering from a really bad stomach ache.>

LOOK AT YOUR HAND. THINK OF YOUR MOTHER.

GO OUTSIDE. LOOK AT THE SKY AND THE BUILDINGS.

Sometimes people would forget to press the button of the elevator, they were quite distracted by me. At that point I got to write: PRESS THE BUTTON. GO UP. People laughed. People laughed in general. It was very pleasant! But the air wasn't so great!

Anyway, that's what I did this weekend. I didn't even have that much fun outside of that. Oh, I did it for almost 3 hours the first day and for about 4 hours the second day. It was fun, but the air ... and I get so sensitive, so if somebody responds weird, I have to really check myself. One woman got in the elevator, I tried to hand her a paper and she says to me, in such a tone of ennui, "no thank you. I'm not interested." I was like ... well...!

What I really did like is when people would enter the space and say, "Hello. How are you?" As if I looked totally normal! It was so touching, really! Generally, people laughed and enjoyed it. Therefore I did.

Donna Coppola

4444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444444

EMERGENCY is a production of the Ugly Duckling Presse, singular books and zines, ugly.duckling@pobox.com
EMERGENCY, 733 Amsterdam Avenue, Apt.#21H, New York City, New York, 10025 emergency@notnow.com

INTERVIEW

ANNE BOGART is the Co-Artistic Director of the Saratoga International Theater Institute (SITI), head of the graduate Directing Program at Columbia University and author of the upcoming VIOLENCE AND ARTICULATION, a series of essays on theater. She developed the Viewpoints, a philosophy of movement used to train performers and create stage composition. Tali Gai, a performer and scholar, recently interrogated Bogart about her art.

Q: In your work and your company's way of training there's a definite sense of language, both physical and intellectual. Would you agree? And why do you find this way of working the most fruitful?

A: It's definitely a language of working and a language of time and space. We use this method of working in order to create work fast, because in this culture you have only 3 to 4 weeks for rehearsal and this is a very effective way for creating work on the stage quickly. I don't have to say things like "cross downstage and turn left." It's a shared philosophy - shared with a group of actors - so that the active culture takes place not in the director's head but where it belongs, on the stage.

Q: Is theater today suffering from a lack of rehearsal time or a lack of rigorously trained actors?

A: The problem is not short rehearsal or lack of training but this reverence of the Method, the misconstrued, misguided use of Stanislavski. Actors feel that they must feel the character before they can "do," which takes an extremely long time. By creating a process in which the actors stand up and create, or "do," from the outset allows us to create things quickly and allows us to create structures that allow emotion to run through them rather than define them.

Q: CABIN PRESSURE, one of your more recent productions, seems to epitomize your fascination with the audience. What do you aim for in an audience and how would you, ideally, like an audience to receive your work?

A: I want the audience to be part of a creative act, so I try to leave as few things as I can in front of them, so that the audience actually does the most. The older I get as a director, the less I want to show. I read this great thing in the Times today: a review of A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE which said that the music failed because the music gave away its secrets to the audience. If you give everything away, there's nothing for the audience to do. So the question is, what is the least you can do on the stage so that the most happens in the audience's head? And that is why I made CABIN PRESSURE...to explore the audience-actor relationship.

Q: I heard that in 1977 you did an MA thesis on Lee Strasberg, Robert Wilson, Andrei Serban, Richard Foreman, and Richard Schechner. What did you draw from each of these directors?

A: From Richard Schechner I learned about balls. From Andrei Serban I learned about improvising with given circumstances. From Richard Foreman I learned about embracing difficulty. From Robert Wilson I learned about time, speed...different kinds of speed. From Lee Strasberg I learned to mistrust him.

Q: Before using Viewpoints, was your directing of actors vastly different?

A: Sometimes I think about the first thing I ever directed when I was 15 - THE BALD SOPRANO - and I think I haven't changed at all: same time, same space, same sense of humor. It's as if all the attempts at training and reading, becoming more articulate are all for naught.

Q: So how do you teach someone to direct? Are people born with it?

A: No, I don't think you can teach anybody to direct. You can give them opportunities to direct and you can describe what they do back at them. You can suggest things that might open their thinking and challenge their assumptions, but you can't teach how to direct.

Q: I remember I once saw you cringe a bit when quoting Peter Brook, who recently remarked that story is the backbone of compelling theater. What have your objections been to story in the past? What power do you see in it now and how do you go about creating story in your own work?

A: Well, I'm a postmodern baby. And I was born in a time and brought up into an environment that encouraged me to deconstruct and to mistrust linearity. And so a lot of my work has been about taking things apart and questioning what a story is. When I read Peter Brook in an interview say, "after all, story is the most powerful thing on stage" I got really upset because, actually, I know it's true. And I also think we're at the end of, not only the century, but an era of postmodernism, and it's the birth of meaning. Physics has proved mathematically that God exists...it's re-finding what stories we need to tell.

Q: As far as SITI Company workshops go, actors, directors, playwrights and designers all undergo the same type of training. Why? How does this unite and/or differentiate each?

A: It's because what we have to offer as a company is our training. If designers and directors came in who didn't do the training while the actors did, they'd be speaking about different things. So the idea is for everybody to go in to do the same thing and yet culling from it different useful aspects of it for their own discipline. I think that the most exciting artwork happens on the boundaries, on the frontiers, like where you don't know if something is dance or theater or you don't know if somebody is singing or speaking. Likewise, you can have a group of people together who come from different areas and you're not sure what is directing...does directing happen offstage or does it happen onstage? Do you take this time to question the assumptions of the boundaries of your profession?

Q: If the next era is that of meaning and of reaching an ever wider audience...do you believe that Viewpoints is the technique that will lead the way?

A: Absolutely not the way, it is A way. There are many, many ways. What's interesting is always the intention behind whatever technique you are using. If it's the Viewpoints, it's not about the Viewpoints but about what you are trying to do with them: bring people together from different backgrounds, different ages, different aesthetic abilities, different aesthetic preferences, whatever, into a room so that they can actually create together.
But you can do that with different things. Viewpoints just happens to be something that I came into contact with...and find very useful.

Q: How do you deal with artists or people in general who clash with your way of working or teaching and what do you glean from that?

A: I am a Taoist. And the essential philosophy behind Taoism is not to meet force with force. So if someone were coming toward you really hard in any way, either physically or aggressively, rather than meeting it with matched force, you allow that force in and in that process through you, it comes out in a different form. So if there's aggression coming toward me I try to, rather than resist the aggression, incorporate it.

Q: In an old issue of TDR you are quoted as describing yourself as gentle but not evasive. More recently I have heard you talk about the need to be violent in art. How can you reconcile being both gentle and violent at the same time and what exactly does violence mean in that case?

A: Cruelty...in the Artaud sense. Or articulation...in the violence and articulation sense. My book is entitled VIOLENCE AND ARTICULATION and the first chapter is called "Violence." it's a violent act...it's extreme...I'm not saying "This is a book about setting things."; that's a less violent way to put it. Or, say a chapter is about stereotype, that's a violent thing to say, it's not saying "this is a chapter about using traditional forms and rekindling them" , you're saying "stereotype"...so putting the word stereotype out causes a lot of reaction. It's like at Trinity [Rep Theater, where Bogart was artistic director for one year], the board hired me because they thought I was very gentle, because I'm a nice person. But in fact, we did very extreme work in that year, work that I'm extremely proud of. I would stand behind that work. They were surprised the work was so extreme...but again, going back to Taoism, the notion of cotton and steel: you can either have steel on the outside and cotton on the inside or you can have cotton on the outside and steel on the inside, but you can't have both.
So, I try to develop myself in the world as steel on the inside, cotton on the outside. Being steel on the outside doesn't allow any strength on the inside.

Q: You're quoted as saying that you like to be in control but consciously try to work against it and let things happen; that you're only comfortable creating when in an ego-less state, where you describe yourself as "playful...listening to this outside voice telling you what is right." How did you discover this way of creating and how do you maintain this contradiction of control and giving up?

A: Well, I learned it because I kept trying to be other people while I was directing. I kept trying to be German. So I went to Germany, and refused to speak English, and made really bad work and I was miserable and unhappy. I had one really huge failure, this really bad production I directed, where people came and threw things on the stage. I was so unhappy that I took a train to a pensione in Italy, in Bolzzano, checked myself in with a couple of bottles of red wine, and stayed there for a week and a half. Then something happened. After that time I was never the same. I went to the next job, which was in Bern, in Switzerland, and I said "I have to make a play right away." "Oh well, you're early, your actors are not here from vacation..." and I said "Well, how many actors are here?" He says "Three." So I got them together and said "Do you want to make a play together really fast...in two days?" And they said "Yeah." And for the first time in rehearsal I felt free. I felt like I didn't have to be German, I didn't have to be someone I wasn't. I felt that I could actually be an American, that I had an American sense of humor, that I had shoulders I could stand on, people I like, and I found three of them. From that time on I "found it" and I was either going to quit doing theater or, I figured, if I could go on, I was still a director. And I went on and found freedom. ✱

LETTERS

The following letter is a response to Mrs. Edna Welthorpe's letter printed in the previous issue, Emergency, No. 3, October 13, 1999.

To Whom It May Concern:

Mrs. Welthorpe, at long last, M'am, have you no decency?

What are "real Americans"? What are "Eastern European Social Agitators"? Are social agitators people who convene to liberate the human soul from its social bondage? People who gather to illuminate terror and attempt to heal its victims, to destroy its sources?

If so, then so be it! We will agitate socially from here to rotting City Hall, to gangrenous Albany, to narcoleptic Washington. I pronounce the end of calm. Now is the moment of danger. Now is the time of theatricals!

O, Angel of History, I call on you. This is the moment of danger. We must remember Walter Benjamin. If accusations such as Mrs. Welthorpe's letter and the Giuliani fiasco in Brooklyn are happening at this late stage in history, it is because history is a constant state of siege.

In the fetal stages of any totalitarian state, one of the first peoples to be persecuted are the artists and intellectuals. If not with a pistol, then with a dollar sign. Perhaps Mrs. Welthorpe fondly recalls Hitler's public book burning. She seems to have in mind just such a fate for EMERGENCY gazettes, to be organized by her and our chubby mayor.

The crime of theater is beautiful. Die to experience it.

Sincerely,

Filip Marinovic

What if

you got a grant. It's gotta be a really big grant. It would have to be a grant from the NEA. Let's say you're an established performer. If you're getting NEA money you must be an artist.
What if you go to a bank and cash the grant. Ask the teller to give it to you in dollar bills. Thousands of one dollar bills. So there you are, an artist with your dollar bills from the NEA.
What if you get up on a tall building or a helicopter and start throwing money. Or you do it in a theater and the money just starts falling from the ceiling onto the audience. People start scrambling for it, maybe a fight breaks out. If you're getting money from the NEA you must be an artist. The talk of the town.
You're giving NEA money back to the taxpayers. Literally. Simple as that. It is completely devoid of any art, so the "I can do that" thing isn't even applicable. It's just about exchanging money.

Matvei Yankelevich

✱

SUBSCRIBE

To receive EMERGENCY at your doorstop, send a check for $15 payable to M. Yankelevich, to:
733 Amsterdam Ave
Suite 21H
NYC 10025
The yearly subscription fee covers postage for 25 bi-weekly issues.