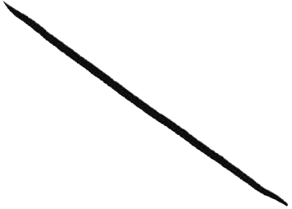


**MAJOR DIRECTORIAL
POETICS.
THE EVOLUTION OF
TIME-SPACE CONCEPTS
IN ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE
FROM AN EXTERIOR
PLACEMENT
TO AN INTERIOR ONE**

ANDRA PANTEA



West University of Timișoara, Romania
andra.pantea@e-uvt.ro

Abstract: Time and space are defining elements of creation in theater and all performing arts. These two concepts are embedded in the elements of the stage situation and were summed up by K.S. Stanislavski into the questions: *When?* and *Where?* The scenic representation of space can include the scenographic vision or it can be integrated through various techniques into a symbolization of it, either through gesture, sound, etc. Theatre theorists have made their contribution to the vision of time specific to theatre, analyzing it and making it visible in directorial poetics. Starting from the directors' vision of the stage, we focused our research on how the performance and the perception of time change in the attempt to make the created scenic world as credible as possible. The concepts of time and space have evolved in directorial poetics from an exterior placement to an interior one. Furthermore, twenty-first-century performance art is developing new conventions of time and space through the most advanced technologies, and creators want the story to be experienced as intensely as possible by the audience. The research is also taking into account the chronological criterion, the period in which the directors in focus created—between the eighteenth and the twenty-first centuries.

Keywords: stage time, stage space, Diderot, Antoine, Craig, Artaud, Mnouchkine, Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Reinhardt, Brecht, Bausch, Kantor, Grotowski, Brook, Donnellan, Wilson, Bogart, Appia, Barba, Lauwers, Lepage.

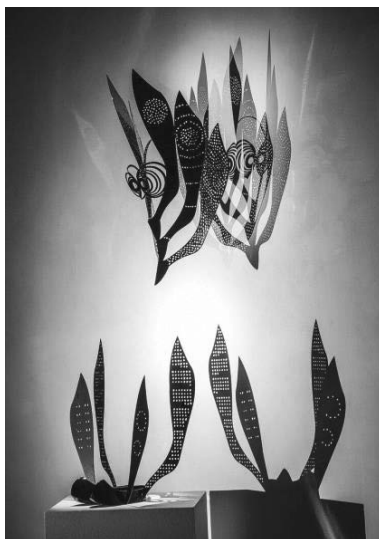
How to cite: Pantea, A. (2022) "Major Directorial Poetics. The Evolution of Time-Space Concepts in Artistic Performance from an Exterior Placement to an Interior One," *Concept* 2(25), pp. 201-217.

Introduction

With the advent of modern physics, the term space-time was born. But in this study, we will refer to time from the director's point of view in the scenic space of creation in directorial poetics. The view of time is changing with the evolution of the stage directors' poetics. However, time remains a concept operated by the director in the scenic unfolding: "Theatrical time therefore depends less on the text than on the staging: choice of reference, choice of signs. *The director is the master of time*" (Ubersfeld, 1999, p. 88). The director is the one who visually, symbolically renders the construction of time and its perception in a theatrical performance. The existence of the fourth wall differentiates the various times in a performance, dividing it, according to Ileana Berlogea (1985, p. 31), in:

1. *The time of the story* represented on stage—is defined by the *fictional time* of the action.
2. *The time of the characters* in the situations—time that does not overlap with the fictional time due to differences in character perception.
3. *Subjective audience time*—time that does not overlap with fictional time, audiences made up of people who perceive subjectively and differently.
4. *Real time*—measurable, common time that can be timed with instruments.

The scenic time as well as the space can sometimes be symbolized with the help of the scenographer through the set, costumes, video projections or other specific methods. They can also be integrated into the performance through specific sounds.



Welded steel, paint, performance, shadow installation (2016)

© Alexander Augustus.

Film, sculpture, installation.

Seoul Culture Station 284, Seoul, Korea.

The Time Crown and Slippers—are sharp like a knife because they cut through space. The eyes spiral and see-through layers and dimensions of space.

The Space Slippers are calendars—365 holes are organized into the days of the year; clock faces show hours and minutes of the day (Alexander Augustus)

Source: <https://www.alexanderaugustus.com/work/the-crowns-of-timespace>

The idea of this study is to look into how these two concepts, that of space and of time, evolve in directorial poetics from an exterior approach to an interior one, by imprinting a synthetic rhythm and by generating overlaid images.

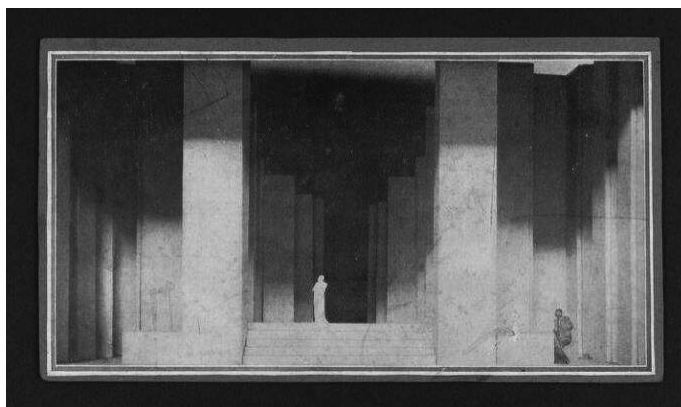
The introduction of time and space in directorial poetics is done by the French authors. France has its own place on the directorial poetics map of the world. We owe thanks to *Denis Diderot* (1713-1784) the concept of the fourth wall, first mentioned in 1758: “Imagine a huge wall across the front of the stage, separating you from the audience, and behave exactly as if the curtain had never risen” (Denis Diderot cited in Britannica, “Fourth Wall”). The invention of this new theatrical convention means the separation of the acting game by the *invisible wall* that separates the actors from the auditorium, the actors disregarding the audience present at the performance. Denis Diderot being a follower of the creative mind through reason and a seeker of *truth* in the art of scenic representation, “the absolute absence of sensibility is what prepares sublime actors” (Diderot, 2010, pp. 42-43). Time is perceived as subject to the law of unities in Diderot’s time; he contemplates redefining them:

if events occur in fifteen days, is it proper to leave the same duration in representation? And if others took place between them, how would it be appropriate to portray this tangle? And if they took place in various places in the house, should I present them as taking place in the same place? The laws of the three units are difficult to follow . . . (Diderot, 2010, p. 124)

Thus, the convention of the fourth wall is an assumption of the audience and has become part of the *normality* of acting and the directorial concept.

Another development in the concept of space on stage belongs to *André Antoine* (1858-1943). Until his appearance on the French stage, performances were usually played in the foreground: The middle of the stage became the center of the action, the actors being directed to play among themselves and not for the audience. The auditorium was in darkness (this practice only dates back to 1888), and the actors were unaware of the presence of the audience (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 13). A new form of staging the performance was the assumed play of the actors who began to disregard the audience and no longer address the spectators directly as if they were a felt presence. The time and space of the play were now protected by the invisible line separating the audience from the stage. The style of play is recreated by widening the playing space, becoming more intimate from “exhibitionist to illusionistic. As the audience was no longer situated in the center of attention, spectators began to experience the illusion of being the eavesdroppers, the unwitting witnesses of a closed world in which the characters’ innermost concerns were revealed” (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 13).

Even though *Gordon Craig* (1872-1966) was born in England he was *adopted* by France, where he lived most of his life. The beginning of modern theatre in terms of space and light is completed by his conception of scenic space in relation with lights. His belief is that “the art of theatre was born out of action-movement-dance” (Craig, 2012, p. 127). In his view, the director must find the most appropriate indications of place and time for the play to unfold, accusing modern editors of Shakespearean texts of inserting these indications into the text in the form of captions, and stating his opinion of Shakespeare who would have understood the role of the director and would not have left these captions, but would have inserted them into the text of the characters if necessary: “Shakespeare seldom gives directorial indications . . . All directorial indications from first to last are the insipid interventions of various editors...” (Craig, 2012, pp. 138-139). The sets of his plays were oversized creating a world of giants in which moving steps created a dynamic of space and the two axes created the link between heaven and earth, thus he believes that the plastic image creates art (Crişan, 2004, p. 28). The space created by his immense sets “transformed the actors into dwarves, their problems becoming trivial in relation to the scale of the environment” (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, pp. 28-33).



Photograph of a set model by Edward Gordon Craig for the final scene of *Hamlet*, Moscow Art Theatre, 1912, mounted on board.

(c)Victoria and Albert Museum, London(c).

Source: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1193459/photograph-of-gordon-craigs-hamlet-photograph-craig-edward-gordon/>

Also, an important book on theatre was released in 1938, by the French author *Antonin Artaud's* (1896-1948): *The Theatre and its Double*. The way he perceives theatre is between magic and ritual “. . . i.e., linked to certain forces, based on a religion, on effective beliefs—whose effectiveness is translated into gestures and is directly linked to the rites of the theatre, which are the very practice and expression of a spiritual need” (Artaud, 2018, pp. 197-198). His vision of space goes so far that he proposes “a new notion of space that multiplies, tearing it apart” (Artaud, 1960, p. 317 cited in Deleanu, 1972, p. 45). For Artaud the ideal performance space would be a huge space like a factory shared by actors and spectators: “There would be no set and the audience would be surrounded by the action. The actors would be splendidly dressed, playing ancient instruments that make unbearable sounds, precisely to express the impact of uncontrollable forces. The light is designed to come towards the audience” (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 68). The ideal theatre is a space full of surprise where the body of the actor is the focal point for the spectator and not so much the text of the play.

The mother of *Théâtre du Soleil*, which is located in Paris, *Ariane Mnouchkine* (1939-present) states that “Only the present interests me. I exist in the present” (Picon-Vallin, 2010, p. 60), but that there is also a past that must not be forgotten. Explaining that on stage the present becomes an experience of living and a relation to the past that creates the link, “to be present is also to believe” (Picon-Vallin, 2010, p. 95). The story takes place in the *immediacy of the moment* on stage making the actor absolutely dedicated to the scenic present (Feral, 2009, p. 24). The method

she proposes for acting is one based on the actor's vision and ability to believe not on "the importance of memory as the engine of the play" (Feral, 2009, p. 24). Trying to develop through her theatre a familiarity with the audience that makes them feel at home at her plays, she gives them the necessary time before the start of the performances to connect and make them feel welcome, taking the relationship with the audience to another level, a direct and close one, considering them her guests. About the atmosphere of her performances, we can say that it is

convivial and a sense of celebration are fundamental to Mnouchkine's notion of theatricality . . . Space is, for Mnouchkine, not something to be filled, but something to be structured for the needs of each production. In productions after Shakespeare, the playing space has a hanamichi-style extension.¹ (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 207)

The Russian Revolution in *time and space* on Stage begins with *Konstantin Stanislavski* (1863-1938) and his most notable work *An Actor Prepares* which was published for the first time in 1936. His opinion on time in the scenic space was that "measure is the criterion of time" (Stanislavski, 2021, vol 2, p. 196). Which depending on the convention approached can change its rhythm "the measure is all time. Time measures time" (Stanislavski, 2021, vol 2, p. 196), in the sense of the rhythm beaten by a metronome we can calculate the measure becoming scenic time. Through scenic actions and our speech unfolding in time, "the time that elapses must be filled with moments of the most varied movements, altering with stops" (Stanislavski, 2021, vol. 2, p. 196). About tempo-rhythm he states that when they are correct "the right feeling and the experience are created naturally, by themselves" (Stanislavski, 2021, vol. 2, p. 203); if they are wrong the feelings and experiences are false. There is a connection between tempo-rhythm and given situations Stanislavski observes that you cannot imagine them distinctively, including inner as well as outer actions. Another of his great contributions to the development of the art is that of the scenic situations caused by the magic *if*. The magic *what if?* used by Stanislavski in developing the method of scenic creation, puts the actor in a position to make his thoughts visible on the stage. Its use on stage opens up the actor's creative imagination. This *what if?* can answer questions that the author does not answer in the written text. Using the question "what would you do if...?" (Stanislavski, vol I, 2021, p. 107) proposed by Stanislavski the

1 A stage extension used in Japanese Kabuki theatre especially for actors' entrances and exits. It consists wooden platform that sits to the left of the center stage and stretches from the back of the theater to the main stage, passing through the audience, allowing actors to set the stage for superb stage entrances and leaping exits across its borders (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 207).

creative mind gets set in motion and the imagination creates answers. The answer invites scenic action, it does not remain within the actor. It is called magic because we know that it proposes an untruth and invites us to reflect. This reflection is of great importance in the role-building stage because it also becomes an inner monologue of the created character. In order for the acting to be a realistic play, the actor gives birth to truth by believing in the possibility opened up by this *if*. The scenic truth of the experiences is born in the encounter between the answers to the Stanislavskian questions asked by the actor at each performance. When we answer this question through scenic actions, the scenic situational answers are also born, that is, we find out where the action happens as location, when it happens as time and why it happens. The stage situation questions are: “Who? Why? Where? What? How? When?” How a stage situation happens is determined by the question “How?” which is how the situation unfolds or how the character satisfies the need experienced and is strictly related to “Who?” because it shows us how the character does the action. The question “What?” shows us the action physically performed on stage in a proposed situation.

Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874-1940) who was Stanislavski's student, influenced by him but going on a different direction in which the acting method is theatrical and the body becomes a vehicle in the biomechanic process. He explains how space changes in the perception of the contemporary spectator with the performance of bodily expression, a constructivist decor on stage and the act is orientated more towards *outside* representation rather than the inside of Stanislavski realism method:

The break with Stanislavskian realism, the use of episodic structures, punctuated by music and songs, the tendency to draw the spectator's attention to the fact that a fiction lies at the basis of the stage action, the use of projections and titles, the establishment of critical distance between actor and role . . . (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 46)

The scenic space based on his principles should be as empty as possible, leaving only what is essential on stage, without *cluttering up the details* and relying on the imagination of the spectator to create the set (Meyerhold 2015, p. 222). He wants to arouse (Meyerhold 2015, p. 222) the viewer's imagination and power of association through the performances on offer. An important element of spectacular construction in Meyerholdian spectacle is that of time as the duration of a scene, starting from the fact that “in performance time is very precious. If a scene, which in the author's intention should be episodic, lasts longer than it should, it will hang like a burden on the next scene, which is very important in

the author's intention. And the spectator... arrives tired at the important scene" (Meyerhold 2015, p. 23). The system of biomechanics that Meyerhold considers merely "a training" (2015, p. 121) becomes the particular and identifiable way of constructing performances that rely on the movement of the actor's body in a precise rhythm and a good mastery of time that animates the precision of movement in the proposed scenic stake.

The Austrian director *Max Reinhardt* (1873-1940) had a cabaret theatre in Berlin and has worked all over the world. Having different views on space, he designed it individually for his plays, built from his own rules of lighting and acting styles (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 35). The importance of the stage time is represented by the action of the characters (Crişan, 2004, p. 9). The temporal beings of the representation are the actors-characters (Crişan, 2004, p. 15) and the timelessness is given by the meaning of the relations established between them, through the superposition of two types of events, the first belonging to fiction, the last to the scene" (Crişan, 2004, p. 15). Although there are cases as in the music-hall where time is interrupted or exists without a duration as in the juggler (Crişan, 2004, p. 54).

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) was born in Germany and the theory of distancing proposed by him breaks the convention of theatrical time valid until his revolution, creating the epic theatre and the distancing effect, "distancing transforms the everyday into something special" (Brecht, 1977, p. 130). This innovation was made possible by intervening in the narrative, by breaking up the structure of action in the performance. The procedures through which he chose to create other performance times, which cancelled out the present stage time, were those consisting of "the narrative being interrupted by songs so the play would remain *open* or the epic theater would be more of a narrator tale than an act" (Brecht, 1977, p. XIX). By using these procedures, he wanted to create more stage *reality*, to make it seem that the characters are alive and not have a predetermined path by the author (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 73). Another way in which Brecht played with stage time and rhythm to build the necessary distance is:

[to] ask the actors to tell their roles in the third person or past tense, so that they literally place themselves outside the role. To the same end, actors were asked to swap roles between themselves or to parody each other's performances. Another way to dislodge actors from their characters was for them to play a scene very slowly or very quickly. (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 76)

The German choreographer, *Pina Bausch* (1940-2009) is responsible for the manifestation of dance and theatre emerging together in a stage set accompanied by sound and exploring the psychological connection with mind and body through trauma. She creates a space in which themes of pain make their presence felt, populating time through choreographic movements that represent liberation of the body. She as a performer represents the Neo-Expressionist movement. "No one has so radically transformed the surface of the performance space using natural elements, thereby affecting the execution of the movement" (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 223). She spatialized the bodily actions of the performers to populate the space as Lehmann reminds us, thus creating the *body-space*, by amplifying with the microphone the noises produced by the actor, the heartbeat, the inner organicity becomes surrounding, intertwining they become a coherent dynamic (Lehmann, 2009, pp. 231-233).

In Poland, *Tadeusz Kantor* (1915-1990) or the founder of the theatre company called *Cricot 2* refused to accept "the concept of a traditional theatrical space, as well as the refusal of the controlled artistic object of imitation and representation... leading not only to the elimination of the idea of props on stage, but also to the re-definition of the role of the set, the costume..." (Kobialka, 2010, pp. 21-22). He proposes performance spaces outside of the classical theater stage, among them we mention: art galleries, warehouses, sports halls (Kobialka, 2010, p. 33). His theatre of avant-garde and the concept of *informal theatre*, changes the concept of the act on stage. Regarding his plays, Mitter and Shevtsova wrote that with the performance *Dead Class*, he reconsiders space and time in the art of scenic representation by *exploration of memories* which was in a space behind an *insurmountable barrier*. The spectators faced, when they enter the representation, a space composed of old actors in a statue pose treated like an object, Kantor being the one who made them come to life using specific gestures. Another example of his exploration of spatio-temporal forms is his performance *Wielopole, Wielopole* in which his visual memories take on a three-dimensional form. Illusion and reality as representation is explored by Kantor in his production *Today is My Birthday*: "filled with the objects and people in Kantor's imagination/memory chamber: his paintings, objects and characters from previous productions, people, and so on" (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, pp. 97- 98).

The Polish theatre creator *Jerzy Grotowski* (1933-1999) wants to leave time and space, his performance recalling the manifestation of sacred time, of the primordial man, of the ancestor that lies rooted within us and penetrating the depths of the human being, he succeeds, like a master, through the ceremony created, to induce the cathartic state specific to the theatrical performance. Thus, the role of art is to transcend frontiers (Grotowski, 2009, p. 15). The most

important element of his theatre is that the body of an actor is part of the space and the relationship with the public, as it could be included in the performance. The form of theatre that he developed, the *poor theatre*, is a way of acting that can be seen as a development of the Stanislavskian method and he is also in search of addressing the audience as an individual not as a full mass of people. He creates the idea of intimacy; by playing his shows in little spaces he also advocates the inclusion of the audience as part of the performance itself, considering that when the audience becomes visible acquires a role in the performance (Grotowski, 2009, p. 13).

About his experience with the English director *Peter Brook* (1925-2022) Andrei Șerban describes the rehearsals where time and space become themselves compressed: “time melted until there was nothing left” (Brook, 2012, p. 11). Alongside the great creator’s time and space becomes perceived as having a different dimension in rehearsals. His remarkable book *The Empty Space* begins with the proposal to imagine any empty space that can become a stage: “I can take any empty space and consider it a stage” (Brook, 2014, p. 19). Brook’s view of space is reminiscent of Appia who argued that “the stage is an empty space” (2000, p. 15). Brook’s talk of the imaginary line of convention that separates the audience from the artistic act, makes it possible for any empty space to become one of play, a stage. The idea of space in the context of theatre versus real life is developed in another book of his, where he tells of his experiment with actors exiting the stage through the audience. He concludes that the difference between real life and theatrical space is that in the latter we are more concentrated, so “space and concentration are therefore two inseparable elements” (Brook, 2018, p. 206). The experience of the physical space in which an event can take place he takes up in importance by exemplifying the moment when he was giving a lecture about *empty space* in a space unsuitable for communication where the message could not *reach* his listeners. By moving the event into an empty space, the norm is triggered and thus the possibility of closeness and real communication is opened (Brook, 2012, p. 18). On stage he notes how the closeness between audience and performance is possible, even if the times of experiencing are different, the present time of the theatre brings them all together: “There must be a difference between theatre and non-theatre, between everyday life and life on stage. There must be a compression of time that implies and determines an intensification of energy. And through it, a strong connection with the spectator is created” (Brook, 2012, p. 45). Another of Peter Brook’s approaches to space is that of the space between people attending a lecture of his in a room, he mentions the empty space between the people present as a space in which the energy emanating from the speaker is lost in the gaps between people (2018, p. 202). He uses *space as a tool* (Brook, 2018,

p. 202), thus the purpose of the space in which the performance takes place is to become useful to the play and the angle of the spectator as well as the actor to be favorable in facilitating reaction and relationship.

The British theatre director *Declan Donnellan* (b. 1953) says about time that it is indestructible and out of control and as “the stakes increase, the time available seems to decrease” (Donnellan, 2006, p. 169). He divides his work into three principles: “care for the text, as discrete verbal composition with clear exposition, enunciation and diction, which facilitates the actor’s discovery of targets; an ordered space in which the spoken dialogue maintains its integrity and focus on the actor, through which the contradictory motives, emotions and actions of the characters are crystallized, contradiction and indecision being part of the flow of the text evolving towards performance” (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, pp. 293-294). About the actor’s scenic present, he is of the opinion that the more we try to be anchored in the present, the more difficult it is to achieve because we thus distance ourselves from the present moment of the scene and he concludes that the scene is anyway of the present: “the second I blame the present to flirt with the past or the future, I give Friction a superb chance. Fear cannot breathe as long as the actor remains present. All the problems of blocking are stuck in the *now*” (Donnellan, 2006, p. 38). About the actor in Donnellan’s direction used *formally* (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 296) as a process of displaying stage time: “The actors in this scene freeze, while others complete other scenes or introduce new ones. At other times, they freeze in order to preserve their emotions, as happens at the end of *The Winter’s Tale*, when the emotion is so intense that movement would make them lose control. The past collapses into the present. Time is suspended, or its passage is set up emblematically—in *The Winter’s Tale* an old woman sweeps the floor, and when time facilitates healing, she is transformed into a young woman radiant with beauty” (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 296).

In American theatre, *Robert Wilson* (b. 1941) triggers a revolution in theatre performance. His shows are sometimes unscripted “and the performance is structured around the movement of bodies in space” (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 235) in a rhythm from distant lands. His art is closest in image to photography as a representation of frames in the frame of the stage: “static, barely glimpsed motion portraits Wilson’s photographs of great American stars confirm the tacit marriage between an atypical form of performance and the digital technology he has waited patiently for since the beginning of his career” (Saiu, 2017, p. 123). His figure is presented in Mackenzie Davenport’s short film entitled *How Robert Wilson Bends Time* which explains time and the viewer as one of meditation in which the director considers that: “I gave you time and space to think” (Davenport, 2021). In terms of directorial construction, his performances have a rhythm of acting with

a particular construction of the stakes on stage, diluted by its concentration and recognizable. Aesthetically speaking his performances resemble photographic art as imagery through the play of light in composition. The author himself invites the audience into a space-time of meditation:

Go to my performances as you would go to a museum, as you would look at a painting. Appreciate the color of the apple, the line of the dress, the brilliance of the light . . . you don't have to think about the story, because there isn't one. You don't have to listen to the words, because they mean nothing. Simply enjoy the landscape, the architectural arrangement of the space, the music and the sensations it evokes. Listen to the images. (Brustein, 1990, cited in Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 235)

These *moving statues* create an importance of time having a slow pace due to the slowed movements of the actors thus inviting the viewer to a reflection. Peter Brook, speaking of Bob Wilson's 1970s experiments with the actor's insubstantial movement on stage, has the opinion that "the lack of movement, experienced in a certain way can become irresistibly interesting without the viewer understanding why" (Brook, 2018, p. 26).



H-100 seconds to midnight (2022)

© Robert Wilson at the Thalia Theater, Hamburg, Germany.
Source: <https://robertwilson.com/h-100-seconds>

Anne Bogart (b. 1951) worked most of the time in the American space. She drew inspiration from dancer Mary Overlie's *Six View Points* choreographic theory (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 278) in devising *The View Points Book* (Bogart, 2006) with this method of directing movement through space. As a simple semiotics of movement in time and space "View Points"—form, spatial relationship architecture, repetition, gesture, tempo, duration, kinesthetic response—form the basis of a series of improvisations that help actors articulate their presence with clarity and precision, establish a common vocabulary, and quickly create, find form and vary the rhythms of a performance (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 278). Her method inspired by body-motion in different rhythms is a composition through space. The space in her shows has a constructivist design, with sometimes fantastical elements, with platforms, stairs and empty spaces.

Theatre directors from all over the world bring their contribution in the art of directing finding different approaches to the relation of time and space. The Swiss architect *Adolphe Appia* (1862-1928) revolutionized the stage by adding light as a composition on stage in relation to space and time. He asks whether

time and space have a conciliatory term in common? Could form in space take its share of successive durations of time? And could these durations find the possibility of spreading out in space? For this is what the question comes down to, if we want to bring together the arts of time and space in the same object. In space, duration is expressed through a succession of forms, and therefore through movement. In time, space is expressed through a succession of words and sounds, that is, through various durations that dictate the extent of movement. (Appia, 2000, p. 14)

His vision of the stage is that of a bare, illuminated space of different dimensions arranged in a way that can be manipulated (Appia, 2000, p. 15). Emphasizing the stage space because his profession was that of an architect, he justifies the stage space as *our life* we animate by being alive, space being measured by "the body which needs time... Our life creates space and time" (Appia, 2000, p. 68). The bare stage is animated by the actors who give it spatial dimensions through their movements. He calls the arts of time and space music and text the actor becomes the main correspondent of movement in space, *living duration* becomes the art that is able to express together in time and space an essential idea (Appia, 2000, p. 34). The concept developed by Appia called *living space* becomes scenic in that the sculptural forms of the actors' bodies dominate the scenographic elements. About the scenic space, conceptually speaking, we can state that "it is nothing but the keyhole through which we capture the manifestations of life that

are not accessible to us” (Corvin, 1973, p. 197, cited in Crişan, 2004, p. 28). Appia relies in his compositions on light to create spatiality.

The Italian *Eugenio Barba* (b. 1936) who is lived in Denmark is the creator of Odin Theatre in 1964 and The International School of Theatre Anthropology which was founded in 1979. He is of the opinion that the actor through his technique offers the spectator an experience through which he is able to suspend time (Barba and Savarese, 2018, p. 15). The actor’s body must receive proper training in his opinion as well as the voice which is used as an instrument. The space in his conception belongs to the actors and separates the actors from the spectators (Barba and Savarese, 2018, p. 90), but at the same time brings them together, either in a *river space* in which the actors play between the spectators, or the one between *two banks* with concomitant actions in which the spectator chooses where to direct his attention. He names the stage space according to the distribution of spectators towards the stage (Barba and Savarese, 2018, pp. 101-124). The space created in his performances is minimalistic with only what is necessary for the act to take place. He pays special attention to the characters of the play and the costume.

Jan Lauwers (b. 1957) who was born in Belgium, brings together artists from many different backgrounds and ethnicities in his company he founded with Grace Ellen Barkey called *NeedCompany* which has been operating since 1986 in Brussels.² The relationship he has with stage space and time in his creation is a composition through broken elements created from choreographies, images, voices. His performances aim to bring the spectator closer to the universality of man through the themes touched upon in the performances combining visual elements being influenced by figurative art and telling stories created through images rather than a chronological narrative.

The Canadian theatre director *Robert Lepage*’s (b. 1957) work is based on the communication through body and sound and not as much on a predefined text for stage. His performances are *alive* and they increase in duration and they can be perceived as a form of theatre in evolution. He recounts how in his performance of *The Dragon Trilogy*, an actress, for lack of time (to leave the stage and change her costume), remained on stage, and the audience observed how this *stripping off* of her clothes led to a metamorphosis into the other character she was playing (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 308). Another example of the passage of time on stage in director Lepage’s case is the story of a character’s life “is compressed into a few seconds . . . his coat is worn in turn by three actors playing the role at different ages during the course of the performance” (Mitter and Shevtsova,

2 <https://www.needcompany.org/en/about/jan-lauwers>

2010, p. 309). In this sense Lepage assumes that many of the Shakespearean monologues were designed to conceal the changes of actors taking place behind the scenes (Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 309).

Conclusion

Famous theatre makers have left their mark on the concept of space and time in stage representations. On the audience's reception of time, Professor Delegado says:

We tend to do theatre in a way where we use the old ways of telling the story thinking that people are obtuse, and that's the only way they will understand. In fact, people are extremely modern... They watch TV, they know what a flashback means, they understand the codes of a flash forward, they know what a jump-cut means. They know all these things that we didn't know when we started going to see theatre. And if we don't pull this trigger, of course they will get bored. (Delegado and Heritage Paul, p. 148, cited in Mitter and Shevtsova, 2010, p. 310)

The development of new technologies to create a new reality, from performing arts artist *Yayoi Kusama's* creation of infinite represented space and interactive exhibitions or the development of the Oculus-type 3D glasses industry will create new conventions of time and space in the performing arts sphere.

The evolution of the concepts of time and space in theatre performance in the last centuries is beginning to be focused on the interior, becoming more of a feeling of time-space reality. This duality of perception can be influenced by the discovery of the string theory and the multiverse so the possibility of *different times* may be real, as neurological studies show that time can be perceived differently by individuals.

If we look at the exterior-interior extremes, we can use as a creative model the concept of Biomechanics as a form of training and as a system of viewpoints, while on the opposite end we can see the prolonged time from the work of Wilson as an immersive, almost hypnotic experience. Looking into the evolution of the concepts of time and space in directorial poetics we can come to the conclusion that the focus has shifted, in time, from the construction of the defining exterior elements towards the elements that refer to suggestion, meanings and theatre indications.

Although each director develops a unique language to transport the spectator into convention, and his vision of stage space and time bears his personal imprint, the spectator by his very availability desires to escape from the everyday. Regardless of the proposed spectacular aesthetic I believe that the purpose of it, as Brook argues about *Deadly Theatre* (2014, p. 17), would be to not bore the audience.



Yayoi Kusama, *Infinity Mirrored Room – Filled with the Brilliance of Life*
2011/2017 Tate Presented by the artist, Ota Fine Arts and Victoria
Miro 2015, © YAYOI KUSAMA

Source: <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/yayoi-kusama-infinity-mirror-rooms>

References:

1. Appia, A. (2000) *Opera de artă vie*. București: Unitext.
2. Antonin, A. (1960) *Oeuvres Complètes*, vol IV. Paris: Gallimard.
3. Artaud, A. (2018) *Teatrul și dublul său*, 2nd edition. București: Tracus Arte.
4. Barba, E., Savarese, N. (2018) *Cele cinci continente ale teatrului. Fapte și legende din cultura materială a actorului*. București: Nemira.
5. Berloghea, I. (1985) *Teatrul și societatea contemporană*. București: Meridiane.
6. Bogart, A., Tina L. (2006) *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*, 2nd edition. New York: Theatre Communications Group.
7. Brecht, B. (1977) *Scrieri despre teatru*. București: Univers.
8. Brook, P. (2012) *Fără secrete. Gânduri despre actorie și teatru*. București: Nemira.
9. Brook, P. (2018) *Punct și de la capăt. 40 de ani de explorări în teatru, film, operă*. București: Nemira.
10. Brook, P. (2014) *Spațiul gol*. București: Nemira.
11. Cioabă, B.V. (2020) *Flexibilitatea spațiului scenic în funcție de conceptul regizoral*. București: UNATC PhD thesis, supervisor Prof. univ. dr. Cenean Ștefania.
12. Corvin, M. (1973) *Le laboratoire de theatre. Art et action. Etude sur le théâtre de recherche entre les deux guerres*. University of Lille III.
13. Craig, E.G. (2012) *Despre arta teatrului*. București: Cheiron.
14. Crișan, S. (2004) *Teatru, viață și vis. Doctrină regizorală: Secolul XX*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Eikon.
15. Deleanu, H. (1972) *Teatru – anti-teatru – teatru*. București: Cartea Românească.
16. Diderot, D. (2010) *Paradox despre actor. Dialoguri despre Fiul natural*. București: Nemira.
17. Donnellan, D. (2006) *Actorul și finta*. București: Unitext.

18. Feral, J. (2009) *Întâlnire cu Ariane Mnouchkine. Înlăfând un monument efemerului*. Oradea: Artspect.
19. Grotowski, J. (2009) *Spre un teatru sărac*. 2nd edition, București: Cheiron.
20. Mitter, S., Shevtsova, M. (2010) *Cincizeci de regizori cheie ai secolului 20*. București: Unitext.
21. Meyerhold, V.E. (2015) *Reconstrucția teatrului*. București: Cheiron.
22. Picon-Vallin, B. (2010) *Ariane Mnouchkine*. Bucharest: Cheiron.
23. Lehmann, H.-T. (2009) *Teatrul postdramatic*. București: Unitext.
24. Saiu, O. (2017) *Clipa ca imagine. Teatru și fotografie*. București: Nemira.
25. Stanislavski, K.S. (2021a) *Munca actorului cu sine însuși*. Vol 1, 3rd ed. București: Nemira.
26. Stanislavski, K.S. (2021b) *Munca actorului cu sine însuși*. Vol 2, 3rd ed. București: Nemira.
27. Kobialka, M. (2010) *O călătorie în alte spații. Teatrul lui Tadeusz Kantor*. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință.
28. Ubersfeld, A. (1999) *Termeni cheie ai analizei teatrului*. Iași: Institutul European.

Online References:

1. Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (n.d.) "Fourth Wall," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 25 May 2023 [Online]. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/art/fourth-wall> (Accessed: 21 November 2022).
2. Davenport, Mackenzie (2021) "How Robert Wilson Bends Time," *YouTube* [Online video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA67jt8QiKo> (Accessed: 21 November 2022).
3. Needcompany (n.d.) "Jan Lauwers," *needcompany.org* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.needcompany.org/en/about/jan-lauwers> (Accessed: 21 November 2022).

Andra Pantea holds degrees in theatre directing (BA in 2014 and MA in 2016 from the Faculty of Theatre and Film, "Babeș-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca), acting (BA in 2010 from the Faculty of Music and Theatre, West University of Timișoara), and photography (BA in 2010 from the Faculty of Arts and Design, West University of Timișoara). She has worked as an actor, teacher, and theatre director. She is currently a PhD student with a research on "Directing Technique of Time Flow Symbolized in Theatre Scene," and an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Music and Theatre at the West University of Timișoara. For her Bachelor's Degree she directed the play *Canicula* by Antoaneta Zaharia, which is currently still performed by the "Mihai Eminescu" National Theatre in Timișoara. Also noteworthy is *The Wizard of Oz*, a children's musical adapted after Frank Baum that she directed at The Merlin Children and Youth Theater in Timișoara.