
Theatres of Performers of Specific People, of People Present (in Barcelona-Based Theatres, 2006-2012)

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Abstract

Between 2006 and 2012 independent scenic creation models occurred in spaces that usually host *dependent theatres and dances*: rehearsed, completed, efficient and exemplary scenic products, mainly, recreating stories and/or themes distanced from those who present them. Official Barcelona theatres such as the Teatre Lliure and the Mercat de les Flors included risky irregular, open, experimental and extremely radical scenic events in their well-planned programmes. In these venues liquid and processual events took place, led by real people (art professionals or otherwise, regular attendees or otherwise). The researcher was not only a spectator of those events conceived by Sònia Gómez, David Espinosa, Roger Bernat, Lidia González Zoilo, Àlex Serrano and Ferran Dordal, among others, but also, without rehearsals, to some extent a performer. Three studies on the performative turn in arts by Ewa Domanska, Erika Fischer-Lichte and Sven Lütticken will help understand those recent artistically independent theatres — theatres than are neither by playwrights, directors or choreographers nor by actors or dancers strictly speaking, but by performers.

Keywords: theatres of performers, performative turn, performance culture, performance ideology, creation models, artistic independence

To Mercè Saumell / To Alba Saura / To Desiderio Navarro

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Theatres of Performers¹ of Specific People, of People Present (in Barcelona-Based Theatres, 2006-2012)

Entrance-Lobby

These pages research and *revive* scenic events produced in Barcelona between 2006 and 2012. Relating to pertinent theories and submitting themselves to the researcher's scrutiny, they *revive* two events by Sònia Gómez: *Experiencias con un desconocido* and *Mi madre y yo*; also *MAD (Destrucción Mutua Asegurada)*, conceived by Àlex Serrano and Ferran Dordal; as well as *Dar patadas para no desaparecer* and *Fingir* by Colectivo 96°; two by David Espinosa: *Felicidad.es* and *Desconcierto nº 1...* The list is completed with *Pendiente de voto*, by Roger Bernat and FFF. These unique and well-differentiated events, in terms of the features they share, attempt to collectively inhabit the scenarios of these pages. In this context this set of events will be called *Radicals Lliure*.² *Radicals Lliure* features people/agents as well as forms of participation and representation that are not provided for or frequent in *official artistic scripts*.³ These appearances confirm their artistic independence.⁴ *Radicals Lliure*, however, found a space and was endorsed in Barcelona's major theatres and outstanding public institutions: the Teatre Lliure and the Mercat de les Flors.

Along with the aforementioned events and those who conceived and realised them, the article introduces three theoreticians. These figures enter these pages in the following order: first Ewa Domanska, followed by Erika Fischer-Lichte and, finally, Sven Lütticken. And with them come, their theories: first, "Performative Turn in the Humanities", followed by "Auf dem Wege

1. The study is related to a PhD thesis, registered at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

2. Remembering under this name the framework of most of the events cited here: the cycle *Radicals Lliure*, an annual cycle of new scenic creation of the Teatre Lliure, Barcelona.

3. *Official artistic scripts* are the productions and programmes that feature and promote, as stated in this article's abstract "rehearsed, completed, efficient and exemplary scenic products, mainly, recreating stories and/or themes distanced from those who present them."

4. Hence these reflections were set out in the framework of the 2nd Research Conference on Independent Theatre: Artistic Independence and Models of Creation in Today's Theatre. Institut del Teatre / Festival MUTIS. Barcelona, 20 to 22 March 2019.

zu einer performativen Kultur / On the Path Towards a Performance Culture” and then “Progressive Striptease: Performance Ideology Past and Present”.⁵ These theories will help us understand the aforementioned events. Which independent, radical *scripts* characterise the aforementioned events? How are (1) the performative turn, (2) the existence of a performance culture, and (3) the overcoming of the performance past ideologies apparent in *Radicals Lliure*? The play of contrasts, the play of recognitions and identifications begins.

(Aside: Theories and practices come together in these pages. By engaging in a dialogue, they lead this *writing*. *Performative writing* that risks not being considered a matter of serious, rigorous scientific publication. Certainly, the structure of these pages deliberately reproduces the parts of a scenic event: *entrance-lobby*, *creative meeting* and *lobby-exit*. But the structure is not arbitrary. The parts that shape the core of the writing, its development, and the parts that evoke the creative meeting are absolutely intentional: on the stage, in the stalls, during the meeting. These parts seek to show the topography of the events in question: what describes and outlines the arts of *Radicals Lliure*, what enables us to regard them as unique and independent theatre creation models.)

(Another aside: This introduction can be understood, if you prefer, as the *programme notes*, notes to the *written performance* that now begins — a performance in which the *asides* can be seen, if you prefer, as *footnotes* or vice versa —, a written performance that describes the scenic meeting in a classical theatre: closed and with confronted spaces.)

I. On the Stage: other Spectators

Ewa Domanska talks about “the performative turn” in the humanities, a detour related to performance and performativity as a research object and method. The definition of performance we use here as a basis, among the definitions provided by Domanska, understands it as “the performance alive in the presence of the ‘audience’ of a given action that has the character of a theatre event” (Domanska, 2011: 127). And the definition of performativity would be understood as the “conviction that some phenomena exist only in the performance event and must be repeated to begin to exist” (Domanska, 2011: 127). Both characterisations fall to theatre, they are its own. But in the regular theatre models, those embedded in the programming circuits and those asserted in the academies, what is usually performed and exists in the act of the performance are matrices/masks of space, time and fictional people inhabited/embodyed in the scenic realization by the performers. With the performative turn what is usually realized in theatre is another matter: one related to the realization itself and the performers. The transversal aspects emerge with the turn and with them the spillovers and hybridisations: of cultures, of languages, of arts and media. With the performative turn the crossing of borders and even their removal takes place, “both in the sense of

5. The three articles appear, in the same order, in issue 37 of the Cuban journal *Crerios*, edited by Desiderio Navarro.

‘removal’ of the disciplinary borders and of ‘removal’ of the borders between the human and the non-human” (Domanska, 2011: 142). With the performative turn, its cause and consequence, theatres different from the regular ones emerge.

In theatre practice, the performative turn can eventually materialise in a theatre text, in the theatre of writers. Self-fictional text-based initiatives, for instance, can attest to it.⁶ It can also be verified in the *mise-en-scène* by a director of theatre texts, as Valentina Valentini has studied.⁷ It can also be manifested in the productions of directors *direct based on the format*, and with a scenic vocabulary: in the productions of theatre directors. But the turn in the aforementioned theatres, however much they shape the forms of performance and reception, does not reveal the actors or the spectators as themselves, or their own bodies or their meeting with peers. The productions of these theatres are also not usually questioned with the *performative idiom* (Pickering, 1994); an idiom that, in theatre, is related to what happens during the meeting, between all those present: between humans and between humans and non-humans.

In the practices and in the critical and reflexive analyses of such practices, for a long time and hegemonically the reading and questioning “of the world” in terms of signs, of meanings, was settled. But, as Ewa Domanska states, “the metaphor of the world as text lacks a strength that explains the problems with which today’s world is fighting” (Domanska, 2011: 131), the problems of:

[...] the cyborg, the clone, the thing in its subjectivity, the animal, the mutant (human individual or genetically manipulated animals), the terrorist (mainly the Muslim suicide bomber); the “missing”, the representatives of minorities of several types (mainly the queer, the transsexual, but also people from different ethnic backgrounds or the handicapped) (Domanska, 2011: 133).

All these *figurations of subjectivity*, as Domanska calls them, can be and are represented in theatre texts, in *mise-en-scène* of texts, in scenic realisations and performances as virtuous and artistically risky as those achieved in pretensions and commitments to “the problems of today’s world.” All of them manage to maintain a distance, to become independent, from the classical models. In *Radicals Lliure* the figurations are generated during the meeting between real people, objects and media.

In *Radicals Lliure* the spillovers between theatre and performance have already taken place. The hybridisations between dance and theatre are

6. Suffice it to read José Luis García Barrientos’s comments (2015) on *Tebas Land*, by Sergio Blanco: “... we can consider *Tebas Land* an example of dramatic self-fiction (cf. García Barrientos, 2014), and of the choir, in its recurrent mediation and interlocution with the audience. Indeed, the whole show should be understood as the narration of the whole creation process by itself, with the assistance of Martín and Federico (the two sides of the same actor), of the show, which we attend while observing its genesis. It is the narration that, correspondingly, opens the door to all the other mediating gazes. But without undermining the deeply dramatic character of the play: not postdramatic but rather metadramatic, that is, dramatic to the full.”

7. “Theatre, like the contemporary novel, puts on stage the ‘indefinite whisper of the production itself’ rather than an objective world governed by impersonality. In any scene, among these accidental gestures, completely insignificant yet obsessively repeated, a sole figure stands out in the foreground, deprived of any environmental contextualisation, unlinked from any space-time anchorage, through which it can proceed in its egocentric verbal universe in which the “I” and the ‘world’ meet.”

already a *fait accompli*. In *Radicals Lliure* we sense the performative turn: not only the turn towards *the scenic*, but towards *the real* that is unequivocally scenic — that is, radically performative. In the “entitled events” those empowered are the scenic persons themselves: the actors understanding the notion in a wide sense and also the spectators; those empowered are the scenic persons themselves who introduce themselves as real people. They are, in the events revived here, the emerging figures of subjectivity.

Those empowered in *Radicals Lliure* are real people: Sònia Gómez, her mother Rosa Vicente, the university professor, the stranger, the person who connects to Internet, the group of voters, I myself, etc. The empowered agents are experts in art and non-experts in art, professionals and non-professionals, regular and circumstantial of a given event, known and anonymous people, etc. During the meeting and based on themselves, new figurations of subjectivity will emerge out of these real people in a performative situation. We will return to this key point later. The theatre or the *theatres of/between performers* emerges indeed out of these real people meeting in a theatre device, devoted to the fulfilment of a given game.

Erika Fischer-Lichte, referring to *Untitled Event* from 1952 of the Black Mountain Collage conceived by John Cage, enters this scenario by foregrounding the elements that she considers important for a future theory of *the performative*. Her descriptions and reflections on the *Untitled Event* are set against the events produced in Barcelona, those that will appear in these pages: those which have titles. In the following paragraph Fischer-Lichte sets out the core of her theory:

Theatre always fulfils a referential and a performative function. While the referential function deals with the the representation of figures, actions, relationships, situations, and so forth, the performative function deals with the realisation of actions — through performers and through the audience — with the “eventness” of the theatre. To some extent, the history of European theatre can be conceived and written as the story of restructurings and new definitions of the relationship between both functions (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 145).

In the Barcelona scenic events, the “entitled events”, the performative function is located in the foreground, above the referential function. *The referential* in them emanates from *the performative*, and the former is in function of the latter rather than the reverse. For this reason, the theatres of performers are located at the antipodes of the settled and asserted theatre or theatres; they are located at the antipodes of the theatres based on the representation of matrices of time, place and fictional people, theatres in which *the fictional* (the referential par excellence) prevails without enabling interruptions, revelations, of the scenic and/or the real (the performative par excellence).

The stage of *Untitled Event* is not, as Fischer-Lichte points out, “another space: Willy Loman’s sitting room, the road where Didi and Gogo are waiting for Godot, etc.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 145) but the space itself where the event takes place. All action or narrative in *Untitled Event* is indebted to this specific space or place. And this, with nuances, also happens in the events

cited here. If on the stage of *Untitled Event* the site specific appears as the container of artistic presentation, in the “entitled events” the site specific appears as the home to the meeting between all the specific people attending. The theatre with a proscenium stage, the architectural venue in which all the collected events take place, behaves as a site specific. In *Radicals Lliure*, as in *Untitled Event*, the time in which the presentation is realised also coincides with the time presented: we will we find “neither another time of the day nor another season of the year, neither another historical era nor the time in which a fictional character performs an action or reflects...” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 145). And if these *othernesses* appear they will not govern the presentation, they are presented as citations or comments.

While in contemporary theatre, the actors, as Fischer-Lichte recalls, use “their body to signify the bodies of fictional characters, to perform with them actions that should signify the actions of those characters, and said words that signified their speeches” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 146) in the *Untitled Event* and in the Barcelona events, the “entitled events”, the “actors” use, as we have said, their bodies to realise their own actions and speak of themselves or speak of others from themselves (in the theatres *of* performers) or rather encourage others to speak about themselves or about others from themselves (the theatres *for* performers). Sònia Gómez’s mother speaks of her time as an emigrant in Germany, Diego Anido invokes his childhood in Galicia and his passion for chess, and Lidia and David tell of the years they have shared as a theatre group, and so on.

In short, in all the events, whether untitled or entitled, “it is not about constituting fictional characters, their stories, actions, etc... by the realization of actions of speech or of another kind by real people in a real space” (Fischer-Lichte: 146). It is worth noting that the performances in *Radicals Lliure* is not based on performances of fictional people and between fictional people (performances of Hamlet, etc.). Neither, in addition, is it based on the performances of the scenic people themselves as artistes; these performances that result from revealing the ins and outs of the arts (fragmentations, processes, generation of images, energy flows, deconstructions, etc.); of the confluences, spillovers and hybridisations between artistic disciplines (dance, theatre, etc.) and of the crossing of scenic cultures (eastern, western, local, global, etc.); these performances in which rhythms, actions, images, entities, beings, typically scenic and artistic figurations emerge.

The scenic conceptions and models that characterise *Radicals Lliure* differ from those, equally radical, that confirm the death of the subject or the presence of weak subjects, constituted by the discourse, etc. With the collected events “the ‘strong subjects’ return” (Domanska, 2011: 135), although they return changed, they return with other attributes and qualities. In *Radicals Lliure*, for instance, the strong human subjects, the classical agents among theatre agents, do not “return”, because their tasks and functions do not include the representation of others different from themselves. The human agent in *Radicals Lliure* is clearly, and unambiguously, a scenic performer.

In the Barcelona scenic events, in *Radicals Lliure*, those who manifest themselves are not fictional people but real people, real people in a

performative situation and mode that bring about specific transformations and distances. In all these events, *the other* (person) or *the other* (figuration) emerges from real people: from their autobiography, narratives, experiences, inventions, proposals, etc., and from their precarious and sophisticated craft as performers. *The other* (person) or *the other* (the figuration) emerges from what happens to these performers during the meeting with those humans and *non-humans* with which they share the event. Because we should take into account, and this is important, that the strong subject in the scenic events in Barcelona is not only the human but also the *non-human*. Alongside Sònia Gómez, her mother Rosa Vicente, etc., are the microphone, the camera and the screen among other non-human agents. They all *act/perform, interact/interperform*.

Sven Lütticken appears to talk about the past and present of the performance ideology; of what he calls “progressive striptease”. The first artists of the happenings and the art performances, in the mid-20th century, positioned themselves against all forms of representation, the market and the spectacle. Their visions of that time, their ideologies, involved questioning the object and its reproductions. And, with all this, the media. Spectacle or performances, that was the problem (before). Today, as Lütticken states:

The polarity between performance and media cherished by performance ideologues has been replaced by a capricious dialectic: every profession, every job, every private life — in other words, every performance — can claim an entitlement to reproduction, and at the same time every conceivable media model may be lived out and performed (Lütticken, 2005: 174).

In *Radicals Lliure* the meeting between real people in the theatre environment, and the environment itself, is *experienced and performed*. In the aforementioned events the performers who are located on the traditional stage, those that could recognise themselves as hosts of the meeting, do not distance themselves from those located in the stalls, from those that could recognise themselves as guests. The hosts coexist with the guests, who, from time to time, exchange their roles. The biographies communicated by the guests (not represented), the autobiographies of the hosts or of the guests (individual or collective) and the “biographies” that emerge *in situ* as a result of the exchanges between all shape the events, the artistic meeting. Hence the performers located on the stage behave as spectators of those who are in the stalls.

II. In the Stalls: other Performers

Well into the 21st century it seems that there is “not much room for contemplation” (Domanska, 2011: 136). The agency and what is experienced prevails: onsite or offsite; games and players prevail, as do performance and performativity. New strategies appear and new concepts linked to consuming and the contents generator simultaneously: gamification, prosumer, 2.0, etc. The following comment by Ewa Domanska can be understood as a metaphor

for these new appearances: “not only the individual, but also the community creates changes in the social and cultural reality. The individual and the community are valuable insofar as they have agentive strength, they act (perform) and provoke specific changes” (Domanska, 2011: 136). The events that made up *Radicals Lliure* are distinguished by immersion — precisely by a performative immersion.

The *theatres of performers* are theatres of real people empowered as performers, empowered in *artistic meetings*, in *theatre-meetings*. There are the theatres of usual performers, of regulars of an event that is repeated, and there are the theatres of occasional performers, an occasional event-meeting. The performers in *Pendiente de voto*, for instance, are the spectators attending one of the realisations, a call to play — although, if they so wish, they can repeat. In *Pendiente de voto* the performer who repeats for sure, among other *non-human* agents, is the screen.

The researcher was not only a spectator-witness of the unique events conceived by Sònia Gómez, David Espinosa, Roger Bernat, Àlex Serrano, Ferran Dordal and Lidia González Zoilo, but also, to some extent, part of them. In all of them, to some extent, the researcher was *in situ* (during the occasional meeting) an activated human subject — and in some he was invited to perform creative actions: call from the stall the performers located on the stage to describe and shape “their biographies” (*Dar patadas para no desparecer*), get on the stage to consume “the witchcrafts” prepared by the performers (*Desconcierto n.º 1...*), etc.

The performance of the *non-humans*, particularly the technology agents, is used based on the mobilisation, the creative activation of the spectators (whether they are located on the historical stage or in the historical stalls). An example of this is, in *Pendiente de voto*, the screen of the proscenium with questions that enable, with the help of commands and computational programs that emulate those used in speeches, the visible activation of the spectators, their immersion in the performance as performers. The questions are based on current issues directly related to the spectators as members of the same specific community, related to their collective biography. Erika Fischer-Lichte comments on the dissolution of the disciplinary borders in the 1952 event — that of the Black Mountain Collage. She comments that “as the artefacts dissolved in realizations of actions, the borders between the different arts shifted; whether they were poetry, visual arts or music, all of them were here, at the same time, also performance art. In this respect, between them and theatre there was absolutely no difference” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 152). Erika Fischer-Lichte’s descriptions and reflections apply to the aforementioned events, but in them, as previously pointed out, the arts emanate from the biographies and autobiographies that those present during the meeting recreate or share: whether individually or in pairs, or as part of a community.

Given the presentation or publication in the theatre framework of issues that come from biographies directly related to the performers as real people, *Radicals Lliure* consists of performative shows. All participate in the performative show: the stranger, Txalo Tolosa with his recordings from the stage

and the broadcast of these recordings on closed circuit TV (*Experiencias con un desconocido*), Sònia Gómez' mother with the cakes she bakes for the spectators (*Mi madre y yo*); the one who chats via Internet from a computer set on the stage with a couple of performers who reply from their home, those who in their turn create profiles on pornographic websites (*Felicidad.es*); Lidia González Zoilo covering David Frank's naked body with "documents", etc. In the performative spectacle Sven Lütticken comments, "everybody is a potential performer, from movie stars to next-door neighbours. Reality TV, webcams and similar phenomena are the ultimate consequence of this development" (Lütticken, 2005: 174).

III. During the Meeting, Between Those Present

The richness of *Radicals Lliure*, as a collection, is that it is made up by events in which the main human performers are located on the traditional stage (*Mi madre y yo*, *Dstrucción Mutua Asegurada*) and by events in which they are located in the stalls (*Pendiente de voto*). The *non-human* performers, in their turn, also occupy one space or another, although they tend to mainly inhabit the traditional stage.

All the *Radicals Lliure* events take place in classical theatre venues or containers with a proscenium stage. However, in all of them, to a greater or lesser extent, the proscenium and its invisible fourth wall — that which separates the two opposed spaces: the stage and the stalls — is transformed or surpassed. The communicational axes activated in all scenic events directly involve, albeit each one to its own degree, all those present. Through the activation of these axes a dimension specific to the "feedback loop between actors and spectators" (Fischer-Lichte, 2011 [2004]) and a specific *immersive theatre* (Machon, 2013) emerge: the theatre without apparent doubles, theatre in which all that occurs does so during the meeting between those present. Nevertheless, a key definition, that of the event, appears.

(Aside: * "The philosophical term 'event' (*Ereignis*), however, suggests no so much the sense of appropriation and self-affirmation but the moment of incommensurability." ** "Theatre playfully puts us in a position where we can no longer simple 'face' the perceived but are participating in it" */** Hans-Thies Lehmann. *Post-dramatic Theatre*.)

The performers located on the traditional stage usually behave as spectators of those located in the stalls. The spectators located in the stalls, immersed in the scenic play, behave as performers. Then there are the relations and exchanges of roles that take place in each area of the theatre building. In the events under the name of *Radicals Lliure*, both the *performers-spectators* and the *spectators-performers* coexist, in some way, in an expanded space and in a "unique situation" (Cornago Bernal). The microphones, one of the constants in all the events cited, tend to establish the distances between different spaces and performers. As previously mentioned, the productions that

make up *Radicals Lliure* are not only *of* performers or *for* performers but also theatres *between* performers.

All performers are agentive subjects — strong subjects that, on the one hand, represent themselves and, on the other, as described by Ewa Domanska, create subjects “through the action” (Domanska, 2011). This is the complexity of the classical events cited. This is the singularity, the radicalism, they share. This reveals, following Ewa Domanska’s notes, that the centre of the practices examined must be placed “...in the category of change as positive value and in the active (agentive) subject (performative subject) that is created through the changes and brings about specific changes in the surrounding reality, mainly through events, happenings, performances” (Domanska, 2011: 131). Hence we can contend that *Radicals Lliure*, that the *theatres of performers*, are characterised, among other aspects, by the following features: interdisciplinarity, unpredictability, emerging phenomena, the use of new technologies, the commitment to *the real*, the alliance between the bodies present, and so on.

In *Untitled Event* “the spectator” barely “feels encouraged to look for meanings given beforehand and to strive to decipher the messages formulated in the public presentation” (Fischer-Lichte: 147). Something similar happens with the spectator of *Radicals Lliure*. The threshold phase that according to Fischer-Lichte identifies the “Untitled Event”: that *betwixt and between* — that between the one and the other and between the two things — also identifies the events cited, the *Radicals Lliure*. It is in this liminal field between performers and spectators, the researcher tells us, where the meanings first occur and are negotiated. The state of liminality, argues Fischer-Lichte, “in which the performance art places performers and spectators, extends, so to speak, the process in which the meaning is produced, negotiated or scrutinised...” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 161). In *Radicals Lliure* that *betwixt and between* takes on extreme dimensions as it occurs between performers and spectators that fuse and confuse the public with the private sphere, art and life, in *theatre-meeting*.

The concept *theatre*, like all disciplinary notions, has suffered the effects of the turn: it has expanded. In *Radicals Lliure* the concept *theatre* does not refer to the building supported by the stories but the theatre device with its memories, those present in the meeting and the meeting itself, what is generated with the exchange between those present. We are dealing with theatres of specific agents, spaces and times. However, that space, that time and those specific people (concerning in fact the memories of the device that delimit them and the structures of the performative play that motivate them) are fictionalised. Completing Fischer-Lichte’s sentence from the previous paragraph, in these meetings “[performance art] extends... the process in which a new I is constituted” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 161) and, it should be added, in which a new *we* is constituted.

(Aside: How post-theatrical is *Radicals Lliure*? How irregular are the *theatres of/between performers* collected? If we accept that post-theatre, as conceived and specified by Joan Brossa, is mainly based on the impersonal, on

the objectual or on the conceptual, it can be confirmed that the scenic events conceived and realised by Sònia Gómez, David Espinosa, Roger Bernat, Àlex Serrano, Ferran Dordal and Lidia González Zoilo, etc. follow the steps taken by Joan Brossa but surpass him in radicalism and irreverence as they advocate *the personal, the liquid* [Bauman].)

For all this, researching the nature of the performances of *Radicals Lliure* is a real challenge. This object of study demands methods and methodologies adjusted to it. The three studies — Sven Lütticken's, Erika Fischer-Lichte's and Ewa Domanska's — not only help understand the events in general but particularly the performances that occur in them — performances including those of the researcher as participating spectator, as spectator-performer — and also to think about and reflect on the possible approaches to obtain knowledge from the performances in *Radicals Lliure*.

With the art performances and happenings the object is replaced by the ephemeral action, one of the reasons why they were considered progressive. Sven Lütticken reappears to invite us to look at the complexity of *Radicals Lliure*; to invite us to establish a critical distance with respect to them while encouraging us to verify and accept their norms, playing down the old anti-capitalist discourse of the performance. Roger Bernat generates structures of play, theatres for performers, that later promotes and makes them circulate through different geographies. However, at present “the dematerialisation of art has completed its capitalist turn” (Lütticken, 2011). “The striptease is almost wholly immaterial: the shedding of material ballast has become its content.” According to Tino Sehgal, the artist Lütticken refers to, striptease is a commodity, a commercial model:

Only if we avoid presenting today's culture of performance as a prelude to utopia and instead acknowledge its normative character, is there a chance of art performance instigating little ‘truth-events’ that highlight tiny fissures in the performative spectacle, and so raise the possibility of a more fundamental break with it (Lütticken, 2011: 179).

With *Radicals Lliure* the path to performance culture is not only outlined but followed as is the research investigating it. Erika Fischer-Lichte invites us to analyse *Radicals Lliure* from the point of view of its performativity rather than following the model of the text, the model interested in finding “the meanings generated by the performances” (Fischer-Lichte, 2011: 158); she invites us to analyse the events mentioned in these pages from the performance model. Then she proposes that the questions suggested for these purposes by the anthropologist Dwight Conquergood are pertinent.

The anthropologist Dwight Conquergood speaks of “a mode of knowing sensitive to performance.” *Radicals Lliure*, as an object of study, calls for this approach. The researcher must move, according to Tamy Spry's proposal, towards the position of the performative. Coperformative witnessing prevails. Hence the possible inclination of research on the pieces collected by

the empathetic epistemology: that of “people living in the conviction that they share a complex common world” (Domanska, 2011: 158).

The performative turn has a post-human side, repeats Ewa Domanska. And she insists on using the performative idiom, the idiom on which the philosopher A. Pickering reflects,⁸ “given that now more than ever we are surrounded, but not determined by the ‘material agency’, the performative idiom — Pickering states — ‘is our hope of understanding who we are and in which world we live’” (Domanska, 2011: 139).

(Aside: As a result of the research led by the author of these notes over these years, six brief performances have emerged, six research-based performances, six performances conceived by him and in which he also participates as a performer while bringing out the participation of non-humans and spectators as performers — those who, to some extent, will also be researchers.)⁹

Lobby-Exit

Which independent, radical *scripts* characterise the events cited? The central core of this writing, the core of this performance, has just concluded. Its three “acts” (on the stage, in the stalls, during the meeting) evoke the creative meeting. This structure anticipates the conclusions (the exit). It describes the main features of the events that make up *Radicals Lliure*, features that equal them and make them unique to a time: expanded stages, exchanges of roles and a becoming that emanates from those meeting, those present in the events. These are the *scripts* of *Radicals Lliure*, of the events conceived by Sònia Gómez, David Espinosa, Roger Bernat, the artists of Colectivo 96°, Àlex Serrano and Ferran Dordal. These events, despite their notable differences, share a model of scenic creation and a performances model.

Examined from the theatre discipline, examined as theatres, we can state that the events included in *Radicals Lliure* are not productions by playwrights or directors. Not even *theatres of playwrights* or *theatres of directors* aimed at *the performative*. This shapes the artistic independence of *Radicals Lliure*. *Radicals Lliure* consists of theatres of the performers, but not of actors/actresses strictly speaking but of performers. The *theatres of performers* are led by real people empowered in performative scenic art. The *theatres of performers* are not based on *theatre-texts* (of the theatres conceived by playwrights) and distance themselves from the *scenic-theatres*, the theatres conceived by directors). Their contexts are the *theatre-meetings*; real theatres and between real people that during their realisation become fictions. The *theatres of performers* are *theatres of specific people* attending the event, of real people who over the course of the meeting become characters.

In the events under question we see: 1) the performative turn, 2) the existence of a performance culture and 3) the overcoming of the past performance

8. A. Pickering, *After Representation. Science Studies in the Performative Idiom*. PSA: Proceedings of the Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association, 1994, vol. 2 (Symposia and Invited Papers), p. 145.

9. *Actuaciones Orestes, seis performances como investigaciones, como investigaciones encarnadas.*

ideologies. *Radicals Lliure* proposes and defines a specific degree, undoubtedly the most categorical, of that turn, of that cultural existence and of that ideological overcoming in the field of the performing arts. What follows them in terms of radicalism, with which they share a border, probably goes beyond the universe of art.

The performative turn (Ewa Domanska, 2011) in theatre, particularly in theatre performance, is cause and consequence of the displacement and re-location of the staged/published object, of the modes of representation. Such a displacement and such a re-location affect and shape the names (for example: of the concepts *actor*, *theatre*, *performance*, etc.). The performative turn is the result of the process that goes beyond, that underestimates, the *mises-en-scène* of the performances of fictional people (of Hamlet, of Nora, of the three sisters, etc.). The performative turn is cause and consequence of the *mises-en-scène* of the performances made by the scenic people themselves. But the scenic people, the performers, in *Radicals Lliure* are staged and do not represent themselves as specialists or experts in the performing arts. The scenic people in *Radicals Lliure* are staged and represent themselves as real people, as real people in a performative situation and artistic mode.

In the theatres of *Radicals Lliure*, stories or themes distanced from those who present them are not recreated. These theatres, on the contrary, are based on the biographies and autobiographies of those who are not only present in the event but, moreover, seek to offer such biographies and autobiographies, avoiding fictions, offering them as real, authentic documents. Each presentation, repeated or not, is the work of a unique performer. The *theatres of performers* are theatres of real people that become visible as such in a theatre meeting. The model of creation that defines the *theatres of performers* is summarised as follows: *people meeting* in performative scenic art (forms of participation), under their own name (forms of representation). Hence it is better to define them as *theatres of/between performers*. In this definition it should be added that the performers are human, people, and *non-human* – and notable among the *non-human* performers is the screen.

The *theatres of/between performers* design their own hierarchical systems. All designers are directly involved in the scenic realisation of their idea. Some do not become performers but limit their links to the scenic realisation working as directors, as *directors of performers* such as Roger Bernat, Àlex Serrano and Ferran Dordal. Some of the designers “show themselves”, present themselves and realise the events they conceive, such as Lidia González Zoilo, David Espinosa and Sònia Gómez. They do not call themselves authors, or playwrights. All the designers-performers have trained in art academies. Following this criterion, and not the strictly economic, it can be argued that all of them are professionals of art, are experts in art. There are also the professionals who in the events are above all, but not only, *scenic workers*, such as África Navarro, David Franch and Diego Anido. However, the events that make up what here we have called *Radicals Lliure* are inhabited by workers, performers, non-professional performers, people not trained in art, such as

Sònia Gómez' mother and the university professor. And among those empowered as performers are the spectators.

In the *theatre-meetings*, in the artistic meetings, the liminalities thrive; the *betwixt and between* (Erika Fischer-Lichte, 2011) between “actors” and “spectators” prospers. Hence the nuclear structure of the present performance, of the present writing: (I. *On the stage: other performers*; II. *In the stalls, other performers*; and III. *During the meeting, between those present*.) In *Radicals Lliure*, *performers-spectators* and *spectators-performers*, regular and occasional performers, meet; hosts of the event and guests, famous and anonymous. For some of them it does not matter whether the performers are professionals or not, experts in art or not; the game structures that make them up do not require training or artistic skills. *Radicals Lliure* consists of scenic products rehearsed or not; efficient or not (as products). The events cited are irregular, open, experimental, extremely radical products. What matters in them is immersion. What matters in them is “what is extended” among those present. What matters are the figurations of subjectivity that emanate from real people, objects or media during the meeting. What matters are the fictions that appear with the meeting of and between real people, objects or media. What matters in these events, rather than the meaning, is the experience.

There is the commitment to creation, there is the will to empower oneself or empower real people in a theatre framework, but there is also the interest in promoting, in parallel, equally creative productive laws, forms of production and circulation in keeping with the nature of the models of artistic creation sought and achieved, in keeping with the performative spectacles proposed and achieved.

(Aside: The risks run by the managements of the Teatre Lliure and the Mercat de les Flors between 2006 and 2012 have yielded results in these and many other research works, in those practices and other similar ones which, in this *performative writing*, have been revived. After 2012, however, the changes in cultural policies were notable. Perhaps these changes began to gestate during the 2008 crisis. Perhaps it was after that date when the tested cultural policies began to be resumed, those that only promote theatres without risks, the theatres that ensure profitability: the regular, dependent ones.)

The *theatres of performers* adapt, persist, seeking to reproduce themselves and coexist in the contemporary scenic panorama along with the other theatres and arts. They, certainly, *are arts among arts*.¹⁰ In the *theatres of/between performers* the representation, the market and the spectacle are a reality, the “progressive striptease” (Sven Lütticken, 2011) is a reality.



10. Paraphrasing a poem by José Martí, a fragment of the poem entitled “Yo soy un hombre sincero”.

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