

ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN PRAGUE

THEATRE FACULTY

Dramatic Arts

Alternative and Puppet Theatre and its Theory

DISSERTATION THESIS:

FROM TRADITIONAL SONG TO SITE SPECIFIC THEATRE

Practice-based research as an inspiration for anthropological theatre

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Date of thesis defense:

Academic title granted: Ph.D.

Prague, 2016

AKADEMIE MÚZICKÝCH UMĚNÍ V PRAZE

DIVADELNÍ FAKULTA

DRAMATICKÁ UMĚNÍ

Alternativní a loutková tvorba a její teorie

OD TRADIČNÍ PÍSNĚ K DIVADLU SITE SPECIFIC

Practice-based výzkum jako inspirace k antropologickému divadlu.

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Datum obhajoby:

Přidělovaný akademický titul: Ph.D.

Praha, 2016

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ABSTRACT

My doctoral thesis, entitled "From Traditional Song to Site Specific Theatre," is practice-based discursive scholarship. The paper includes two sections: research of traditional music and practice: a description of music-theatre performances that I co-created. Observations that I made while researching traditional songs led me to create a parallel between the traditional song and site-specific theatre. Among common aspects for traditional song and theatre work, I pointed the categories which can be fluently applied in terms of tools: spatiality, acoustics, uniqueness vs ensemble work and approach: tradition, local communities, culture animation through arts. Beside that, I was exploring the musical folklore as dramatic text.

The sphere of my research and practice isn't one of collecting songs, but the application of their spatial and culture rules, as well as bodily experience into theatrical language in site specific performances.

My dissertation presents an individual perspective -engaged with somatic experience to work with folklore in music theatre. As such, folklore is no longer just a rigid form of assembling a group's behaviors, or interpreting the past. A performance-based perspective allows one to read folklore as a constellation of social interactions within a particular group, established as composite of symbolic behaviors. Every specific group or local society and also space would present its own folklore, which reflects specific aspects of certain space location, society. Therefore the performances, which I realized and described in dissertation include methodologies from documentary theatre and culture animation.

Site specific projects were executed under the attentive supervision of MgA. Tomáš Žižka. Academic side of the dissertation was led by Prof Vacláv Riedlbauch, whose leadership was overlapping and , especially while participating in the interdisciplinary projects in terms of KNOWtilus program. I would like to thank for your wonderful support nad clever advice, leadership in my individual researches and practical work, and encouragement to develop the culture dialog in a Polish – Czech Borderland through art exchange and culture animation.

ABSTRAKT

Tato disertační práce s názvem „Od tradičních písní do *site specific* divadla“ je výzkumná esej založená na divadelní praxi. Práce obsahuje oddíl týkající se výzkumu tradiční písně a praktickou část věnovanou analýze realizovaných představení a uměleckých projektů. Postřehy, ke kterým jsem během výzkumu tradičních písní dospěla, mě vedly k vytvoření paralely mezi tradičními písněmi a *site specific* divadlem. Ze společných prvků tradičních písní a divadla jsem vybrala kategorie, které se mohou aplikovat jako nástroje: prostor, akustika, sólo a ansámbl, nebo jako přístup: tradice, místní komunity, animace kultury prostřednictvím umění. Dále jsem zkoumala hudební folklor a dramatický text.

Do mého výzkumu a praxe nepatří sběr písní, nýbrž aplikace prostorových a kulturních pravidel a tělesného prožívání do divadelní hry v *site specific* divadle.

Tato disertace prezentuje využití folkloru v hudebním divadle založené na individuálních tělesných dojmech. Folklor již nepředstavuje pouze rigidní způsob vyjadřování chování skupiny a výklad minulosti. Přístup orientovaný na výkon umožňuje folklor vnímat jako sběr sociálních interakcí v rámci určité skupiny, vytvořený jako souhrn symbolického chování. Každá specifická skupina, místní společnost nebo prostor prezentuje specifický folklor, jež odráží konkrétní prvky určité lokality a společnosti. Proto v této disertaci popisovaná představení obsahují metodologické postupy převzaté z dokumentárního divadla a animace kultury.

Na místně specifické projekty dohlížel Mgr. Tomáš Žižka, který mi díky svým praktickým zkušenostem poskytoval užitečné rady pro mou činnost v oblasti prostorové dramaturgie. Akademická část disertace byla vedena profesorem Václavem Riedlbauchem, jehož dohled byl neocenitelný, zejména během účasti na interdisciplinárních projektech v rámci programu KNOWtilus. Chtěla bych Vám poděkovat za Vaši úžasnou podporu a chytré postřehy, za podporu v mém individuálním výzkumu a praktické práci a motivaci k vytváření kulturního dialogu v česko-polském příhraničí prostřednictvím umělecké výměny a animace kultury.

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INTRODUCTION

Body – voice – space is a triangle that determines the performer' work. The discourse of contemporary theatre binds them into pairs: *singing-body*, *dancing-voice*, *speaking-space*. While discovering relations between those three components, we reveal *musicality* as linking them.

The revelation of one of the components demands an active correlation with the second and third. We develop the voice through vibrations in body and movement, movement through interacting with space, we reveal space through performing action.

I would like to introduce a few observations that I made while researching traditional songs, which led me to create a parallel between the traditional song and site-specific theatre.

My doctoral thesis, entitled "From Traditional Song to Site Specific Theatre", is practice-based discursive writing; the paper includes a section dedicated to the research of traditional song and practice and a description of music-theatre performances I co-created. In my work, the point of departure is the experience of space, sound, the body of the researcher and position of performer. The researcher uses the sensual perspective to bring personal experience to the theatre; therefore the field of my practice has been site-specific theatre. The performer deepens his attitude towards memory of certain space and context. The somatic knowledge brought from musical research becomes the material for physical theatre practice. I deal with the embodied voice to let the performer work with his physical presence while performing with voice. In contemporary times of virtual communication I turn to the deepening of the performer's presence through the sensual practice.

Doctoral studies at the Alternative Theatre and Puppetry Department enabled me a series of researches, scholarships, master classes and workshops related to traditional song and theatre practice. Thanks to the Program "Art of Space; Theatre in Non-traditional Spaces," I had the opportunity to apply my research in practice and examine the methodology of musical work in specific spaces. Due to the interdisciplinary character of this program, new perspectives binding theoretical research and practice appeared.

The research of acoustics, history, architecture of space and mapping of space becomes a performative practice bordering on documentary art, community art, intervention, and performance. Tools of recognition become tools of creative work; for instance, while researching and reflecting the specificity of space through the voice and body action. The leadership of Tomáš Žižka, my tutor of Ph.D. creative works and participation of other students from the Department of Alternative and Puppetry Theatre is entwined with my individual research and practice.

While referring to the research of traditional song, I will not take an ethnographic perspective, as my aim has not been to collect material, whether musical or visual. Ethno-musicological approach is supposed to map the geographic area, while my attempt lies rather in mapping the specific space of performing action.

Besides, ethno-musicology looks upon music as the central object of research, whereas I aim towards an anthropological understanding through the acoustic lens of music. In theatre work, music turns to musicality that connects the triangle of voice, body and space.

The sphere of my research and practice isn't one of collecting songs, but rather the application of their spatial rules into theatrical language. The anthropological point of view shifts music away from its autonomous space afforded by Western – centric musicology.

In my thesis, I will deliberately avoid elaborating upon the ethno-musical heritage of European folklorists and composers inspired by folklore. As such, names including Leoš Janaček, Oskar Kolberg, Karol Szymanowski and Antonin Dvořak will be omitted here. I will refer to the experience of research in a particular space.

However, the common tool for ethno-musicological research and research of theatre anthropology is the category of *participant observation*¹ during the field-work. Fieldwork participation, which I explore in the first section – the Introduction – introduces the unique and new perspective for both researcher and performer. The essential element that links those realms of theoretical reflection and practice is therefore the body. Bodily experience during field-work is related to physical presence, which is a theme and challenge for performer's work. It is only my modest attempt to develop the performer's presence, as I believe that every artist is in charge of sharing his experience-based personal sensitivity.

1

STOBART, H., *The New (Ethno) musicology*. Lanham - Toronto - Plymouth: The Scarecrow Press Inc., 2008

BREATH AND VOICE - creative powers of Gods

I breath, therefore I am. The emphasis on the vocalization of existence brings us to reflections on breath, voice and creation. Here, the phenomenological perspective meets the Biblical texts about creation. This symbolical scenes included in Bible, which to a large extent shaped the European culture circle, resound in Hebrew language very significant. Human was created by breath of God. *Breath* in Hebrew is *ruah*, in Greek it means *pneuma*, Latin language puts here *spiritus*. Hebrew *ruah* is but not only "spiritual" but relates to body, *ruah haim* means *life*. In a magnificent study about the phenomenology of voice, Adriana Cavarero writes:

"*Ruah* manifests itself as wind, storm, above all, as a creative force. God creates 'with the breath of his mouth,' says Psalm 33. This breath is the same spirit, *ruah*, that blows the waters at the beginning of Genesis."²

Second significant instrument that God uses to create is voice: Hebrew *qol*. Hebrew *Qol*, which is Latin *phone* indicates voice, but also refers to the acoustic sphere and refers to everything that is perceptible by ear.

"*Ruah* and *Qol* – which are sources of an inspiring and vocal communication between God and the world, and human beings – belong in the Hebrew tradition to a fundamental sphere of meaning that comes *before* speech."³

Pre-semantic communication is significant for oral cultures, which even now practice ritual singing, mourning or whistling in the praise of God, Gods and Ghosts. Among the cultures who preserved this way of using breath and voice I choose the Sami people living up to the present in southern Scandinavia, and Tuvian culture, who nowadays function as the Republic of Tuva under the protection of Russia. The reason to choose ethnic groups that speak in languages I do not understand is not accidental. I knew that it will create situations where non-verbal communication is necessary, requiring to gestures, a musicality of language and reliance on trust. Thanks to this, the Lapland was discovered by me as a silent land, where the songs are hidden; Tuva appeared as a complex ethnicity, where the precious throat singing is inaccessible at first glance. It needed a longer time to contemplate the space around and absorb the local air... The researches were very inspiring for the performance "Woman, Skin, Song and Bone" (described in chapter: *Practice*).

2

CAVARERO, A., *For more than one voice. Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford University Press, Stanford California 2005, p. 20

3

Supra, p. 20

Before developing the thesis I shall introduce the research-based background of artistic practices and explain why my inspirations for making musical theatre are rooted in folk music.

Tendencies in theatre of second half of the 20th century aren't just about seeking inspiration, but also inquire about the roots and the core of theatre. New ways of perception the world emerged along with the social and cultural, political and social changes over the past decades. Theatre was seeking a new language to reflect the new awareness of space, distance, national and religious variety, virtual reality. The redefinition of drama and space was about to emerge. Anthropological research and studies turns theatre towards new horizons of foreign cultures, which preserved some traditional behaviors in music and dance. For theatre, art that employs forms of dance, movement and music becomes a source for not only new techniques, but also a new way of thinking about theatre as communication. Broader research about performativity in traditional forms like dance and music was done to incorporate the leading authorities of European school of theatre anthropology - Leszek Kolankiewicz, Jerzy Grotowski, Eugenio Barba.

The reason I point to theatre anthropology here is to consider the role of ethno-musicological research for theatre and to refine my investigation. What can the realm of theatre bring from the music traditions?

What is it that we understand as folklore today, and why has folklore appeared in theatre?

Anthropologist Richard Bauman writes about the "...social need to give meaning to our present lives by linking ourselves to a meaningful past"⁴. That can explain the interest of contemporary theater makers in folklore. Conceptions about folklore that were introduced by German social theorists in the late 18th century were developed a century later by sociologists like Emil Durkheim. Folk societies were considered as rather primitive, spontaneous groups with a strong sense of solidarity and usually village artists contrasted with urban societies. The counter-image to this cold rationalized vision of Enlightenment was the romantic view of folklore as emotional, natural and authentic. Yet redefined theories about folklore appeared in second part of 20th century, with the development of anthropology as humanistic science. Folklore became considered in terms of not only being rooted in past, but also as item with a temporal

4
BAUMAN, R. *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments*, New York - Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 32

continuity, series of dynamic processes, which symbolically identify group of people. Also, with the development of humanistic studies and anthropology.

As Bauman states,

"Still another substantial departure from classic folk theory is represented by recent social - interactive and performance -centered approaches to folklore that focus on the structures of social relations that organize the actual use of folklore forms in the conduct of social life."⁵

Following the perspective of folklore as performance, I shall not omit such authors like Erving Goffman and his "The Presentation of Self in Everyday life," Victor Turner and his theories of ritual and theater, Roger Caillois who in "Man, Game, and Plays" made brilliant classification of games with comparison to performative categories in theatre, and also Guy Debord⁶ with his "Society of spectacle." This stream in consideration, however would lead as more to investigate theatricality in social life. Whereas I would like to explore site-specific performance as specific folklore of space. If folklore has a group of distinguishing features, symbolic construction of esthetically functioning behaviors, it offers creators a tool for aesthetically marked documentation of group or space.

In recent years, however, largely under the influence of performance-centered approaches, a greater emphasis has been placed on individuality and creativity in folklore."⁷

As such, folklore is no longer just a rigid form of assembling a group's behaviors, or interpreting the past. A performance-based perspective allows one to read folklore as a constellation of social interactions within a particular group, established as composite of symbolic behaviors. Every specific group or local society and also space would present its own folklore.

Musical performances take interest in those forms that are rooted in activities expressed in traditional forms (ceremonies, secular and religious ceremonies). Therefore I will refer to folk elements that are accompanied by music and rhythm, or of any kind where music is communication.

To observe such "musical behaviors," I embarked on the ethno-

5

BAUMAN, R., *op. cit.*, p.36

6

DEBORD, G., *Spoleczeństwo spektaklu*, Warszawa: PIW, 2006

7

BAUMAN, R., *op. cit.*, p. 33

musicological journeys, through which I acquired some material for further artistic work. I would like to introduce the main points of this research and propose my critical approaches in the process of creation.

Then I will describe the example of music performance, in which the Korjen ensemble under direction of Dana Račkova applied particular tools taken from traditional songs and their context.

I. RESEARCH

1. The voice of the resonant cave and modern aural architecture

"Extensive observations of prehistoric sites support the notion that the subjects of cave pictures and the acoustic of their locations were deliberately related."⁸

Our distant ancestors were not educated in physics and modern neurological sciences, but they were clever enough to depict the interdependence of aurality and spatiality. A pioneer of acoustic archaeology, Steven J. Walter, offers an example from the Lascaux caves, on how the acoustics influence the paintings of Paleolithic human.

"Pictures of bulls, bison and deer were more likely to be found in chambers with strong echo spaces, whose acoustics created percussive sounds similar to the hoof beats of a stampeding herd (...) In contrast, acoustically - silent chambers are more likely to contain drawings of felines."⁹ Undoubtedly, aural perception of the Paleolithic human was different from today's. But similarities on the field of aurality of spaces are very clear. Another aspect of cave art worthy of exploring is the experiential character- what is again pointed by Walter.

The multi-sensory aspect of this very old art (called "art" by scientists, but in the Paleolithic epoch playing role of testimony) in caves is close to experiential tendencies that emerged in postmodern theatre, especially on the field of experiencing sound in space.

Our ancestors experienced sound immediately, without analysis. While entering some space, the human ear was very sensible for any sound, and automatically the sound was considered as magically meaningful. They would perceive reverberation in caves as the voice of the spirit of this cave.

"The voice of resonant cave was more than a literary metaphor (...). Lacking a scientific explanatory framework preliterate cultures used religion, along with its associated arts and myths' to explain a wide range of otherwise events (...). Such explanations provide a memorable, enduring, and external description of experience, one that

8

BLESSER, B., SALTER, L. R. Auditory Spatial Awareness an Evolutionary Artifacts, [in:] Spaces speak, Are you listening? London: The MIT Press, 2009, p. 75

9

Supra, p. 74

can be passed along to future generations."¹⁰

The history of spatial acoustics confirms that space and aurality has been always linked. Unfortunately, the science about sound has been developed at a much slower pace than, say, the science of light, till 20th century. For this reason aural architects could not really incorporate their knowledge into the process of designing music spaces.

However, we cannot omit the milestone in the discourse of spatial acoustics, called the father of modern architectural acoustics, Wallace Clement Sabine, who "transformed the basis of acoustics- from philosophy to science and engineering (...) and merged theoretical physics with empirical measurement".¹¹

Worthy of mention in terms of site-specific performances, especially sensory performances, is experience. Considering virtual reality is so much a part of everyday life, the concepts constructed around experience in contemporary art are worth depicting. In theater, real spaces are components of experience that engage our senses. It deepens our sensitivity to the world encompassing.

2. Methodology of performative approach towards traditional song in Gardzienice Theatre

Mutuality is one of key words in the Academy of Theatre Practices of Gardzienice in Poland. When I graduated from the Academy in 2003 I hadn't imagined that the ethos of work built by Włodzimierz Staniewski (founder and director of Gardzienice Theatre) would engrave such a strong trail in my future work. Mutuality as a literary rule for singing polyphonic songs became a rule in my future musical and theatrical work. Singing but, was never only an act of singular voice.

Among significant activities I would like to mention here, we went through the physical training based on synchronization of breath, voice and movement. The trainings often took place in nature, where students were focused on doing the exercises "towards someone, something" and sharpened the focus to encompassing landscape.

I will come back to this kind of exercises during the project „Woman, Skin, Song, Bone” (described as “I make something *towards*”).

10
BLESSER B., SALTER L. R., op. cit., p. 71

11
Supra, p. 80

Experiencing of space built a link between human and nature and made a question of bringing it to theatre action.

Another significant practice was singing with the old singers from Ukraine, brought by Mariana Sadowska, who was in charge of music work in Gardzienice till 2003. They were teaching us for couple of days in a village of Gardzienice. They were very old women and they were not talking so much as they were singing. However, everything they did seemed very musical, even talking. They presented another sensuality, another presence. Staniewski invited the old ladies in frame of "building the new environment for theatre." Few of us were really aware what was happening with us while taking part in traditional singing, but undoubtedly for most students this experience was very strong.

Experience of meeting in a song, I experienced in Gardzienice, made me travel for several years to recall this event and find out why was it so strong for theatre makers. I knew that I needed to explore connection between traditional singing and theatre.

After few years I graduated from Gardzienice Academy and Warsaw University with a diploma in cultural anthropology, I moved to the Czech Republic for the next few years to start acting with the Czech theatre group Divadlo Continuo. When I decided to continue academic education in the Academy of Performing Arts DAMU in Prague as a Ph.D. candidate I knew that traditional music culture would be the point of departure of theatre work. I made several researches in Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine, Lapland in Northern Scandinavia and Baltic countries. I was choosing countries, institutions and theatres where I could meet representatives of culture where traditional song has been preserved as vivid part of human life or social identity, is being transmitted from generation to generation and has performative, not only aesthetic quality.

I also made study visit in Germany to observe how artists from Neukollner Oper deal with musical theatre and how to adopt traditional motives in Western theatre culture.

In my doctoral thesis I will refer to experiences with traditional songs.

The orders of anthropological researches were not ruled by ethnographic perspective, but rather by artistic directions and artists who work with traditional culture. Among my teachers and artists, pedagogues who influence the directions of my artistic works were Włodzimierz Staniewski, Mariana Sadowska, Natalia Polovynka, Sergej Kovalevič, Maria Pomianowska, Svetlana Spajić and in Czech

Republic Pavel Štourač, Tomáš Žižka, Jana Pilatova, William Dočolomansky, Ridina Ahmed, Biljana Golubovič. With regards to doctoral study, I shall refer off course to leadership of Tomáš Žižka as my tutor in practices and Prof. Václav Riedlbauch my tutor in academic work and their leadership in cooperating with interdisciplinary program KNOWtilus. Those people shaped the direction where to search the roots of performativity of traditional song and applying it in theatre and encouraged me to create my own way in musical site specific theatre. I knew it will not be simple way, but I took the challenge.

The aim was to explore how traditional song can be applied to theatre. Therefore, performances I participated in, co created or invented were always in a spirit of anthropological theatre, meaning that there was always base of space (site specific performances – Libenská Synagogue in Prague, Bochnicka Gallery in Prague, post-industrial landscape in Duchcov, land art in Estotnia), people (documentary theatre – performances in former coal mines in Czech Republic and Poland, “Lanostory” in Jachymov), historical (Czech Sudety – Köningsmühle - Land Art Festival), spiritual (The Institute of Jerzy Grotowski in Wroclaw) or context behind the strict theatrical work. The main tool of expression remain music site specific theatre in a broaden sense.

I would like to introduce here some common aspects for traditional song and theatre work, some points where the categories can be fluently applied in terms of tool (vocal work, song, movement, influence of space) and approach (tradition, local communities, culture animation through arts).

Why I wrote about mutuality first and then about uniqueness? Perhaps even uniqueness appears as the phenomenon in relation to something outer. In both cases, during exploring reciprocity or uniqueness, I must be able to deeply listen in order to hear – the uniqueness of my own and the uniqueness of the other voice. Each human voice is from phenomenological point of view unique. Each voice manifests the uniqueness of the speaker, because voice is tied to the single unique body. It is not a sound like many others. Adriana Cavarero in a chapter “Vocal Ontology of uniqueness” puts emphasis on the voice being bind to body as a condition differencing voice from sound. Simply speaking, voice needs body to be produced, sound does not. Following Cavarero's writing about vocal ontology, the existence appears as embodied voice.¹² “The voice belongs to the living;

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The Reciprocal Communication of Voices, [in:] CAVARERO, A. For More than One Voice. Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, pp. 198-199

it communicates the presence of an existent in flesh and bone; it signals a throat, particular body"¹³. Inherent bound of voice and body confirms that flesh and bones are construction of resounding the uniqueness of human being.

Enriching attentions to this topic is given by Villiam Dočolomanský, when he writes about flamenco singers: "Spevák se vnára do vnímania tektoniky piesne všetkými zmyslami, počúva alebo dokonca vidi pieseň, ktorú nikto iný nebude počuť."¹⁴

3. Research of folk songs in Bulgaria

I traveled to southern Bulgaria in 2010 and to Belgrade, Serbia in 2011. During several weeks I visited singers in a few villages in different regions of Bulgaria. I chose the diverse cultural as well as geographical landscape to investigate the specificity and distinctiveness of musical patterns. I was interested in folklore items that could be applied within a theatrical context.

I observed that the structure of song is influenced by a shape of space where it is performed. One of the most significant - obvious is rhythmical interdependence, for instance in the Pirin mountains the songs are usually performed on uneven, sharp and vivid rhythms in $\frac{7}{8}$ time, whereas in the broad mountains hilly of Rhodopi melody is fluent and performed according to an irregular *rubato* rhythm.¹⁵

I noticed in central Poland another interesting interdependence between space and way of singing, where I participated in musical workshops.¹⁶ Songs in the Mazowsze region were performed in groups (monophonic songs) or with accompaniment of instruments (as intermezzo for dancing music). During the last century and in the 19th century Poland was under occupation and performing Polish

13
CAVARERO, A., op. cit. p. 177

14
DOČOLOMANSKÝ V., *Výraz ako prenos ľudskej skúsenosti : reflexia praktík pri práci na inscenáciách Sonety temné lásky a Sclavi-Emigrantova Píseň*, Doctoral thesis in Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague under tutoring of Jaroslav Vostrý, Praha, 2007, p. 30

15
Bulgarian singer Katerina Kadjamanova says about songs from Pirin, that they are performed vivacious and encourage to dance; what is noticeable in movie "Intervals". Rhodopi songs are commented by singer Alena as fluent and continuous voice imitating shape of mountains, what is also captured on the movie. More: *Intervals. Documentary movie about Bulgarian singers made during the doctoral studies*. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://vimeo.com/4465961> and available on attached DVD.

16
Mazowiecka Szkoła Muzyki Ludowej (The Mazowiecka School of Folklore Music)- workshop of folk songs and dances in Central Poland (Mazowsze District), 2011. Audio and video material accessible on DVD. Singers were showing the process how the song is being created, how the rhythm of melody influence the steps.

traditional songs was often forbidden, as an element of preserving national tradition.¹⁷

In less civilized regions - in mountains - the techniques from Slovakia, Poland or Bulgaria show that the voice was used in exteriors, and specific callings were practiced. In Slovakia they are called *halekačky* and were practiced also as communication in open air. There is a group of songs also related to field labor. One of the characteristics of this genre has a relation to space such that a singer would sing with a sonorous, reverberating voice that corresponds with the landscape. This way of singing is often called *biały głos*¹⁸. Some of the harvest songs have also a very relevant significance in its emission, corresponding with open space and a wide landscape.

This coincidence performs a relevant role in my later theatrical and musical practice. Two of the musical performances I participated in ("Woman in a Mining Landscape" in a former coal mine in Kladno, Czech Republic and "Korjen v Synagoze" - scenic concert in Libenská Synagogue, Prague) are governed by an interdependence of vocal expression and space. Whereas "Woman in Mining Space" engages with the properties of a particular room, which I described in another chapter, the second project -scenic concert "Korjen in synagogue" - deals primarily with traditional song as dramatic text. I will describe the process of creating performances that have folk music as an element or folklore of place in a further chapter.

I would like to return once more to research and field recordings in Southern Bulgaria.¹⁹

Another interesting phenomenon is the location of singers in a technique called *na vysoko* with *rukačky*, what I observed in southern - Bulgarian village Satovcha.²⁰

In this technique singers would be located on the slope of the hill in the form of a triangle. They create three sources of sound, so that their voices can flow into three directions, engaging each trajectory of reverberation.

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Recording from the workshop in Central Poland (Mazowsze District) available on DVD attached.

18

The term *biały głos* is invented to describe specific vocal emission practice in folk singing. It is used in Poland.

19

Intervals. Documentary movie about Bulgarian singers made during the doctoral studies available on attached DVD.

20

The technique of singing *na vysoko*, with a special duet called *rukačky* is described by a Bulgarian singer Katerina Kadjamanova in the movie "Intervals" available on attached DVD.

Here we have a form of using the physical occurrence when the air stream reverberate in a specific way according to the location of source of sound (singer) and the constellation of singers. This way of locating performers in space was used in music performance "Korjen v synagoze" during the introduction. Singers stand on the other sides of balconies in the synagogue, leading vocal dialogues.

The location in a specific space is related to Husserl's theory about *timeful sound*²¹ - duration of sounding is a motion that allows to the listener to discover his own experience and feel of presented action (as *action* I understand here the "sounding" of the performer is located consciously into space).

For music performance this observation introduces some tools for locating singers in space in order to obtain a multiplication of voices, or to obtain the effect of increasing the thickness of polyphonic voices.

Using the spatial properties of space opens up possibilities to experience through sound, and to experience music in multi-dimensional way.

"Theater does sonically resonate in a characteristic way, by virtue of the size of its typical spaces."²²

3.1. Uniqueness of voice

The issue of uniqueness of the human voice proposed by Cavarero led to me to further discoveries around the voice of interviewed singers I met during research. The voices of people I recorded were a testimony of their life. They not only delivered the melody and words while singing. They brought with the song and through the song the uniqueness of performing or storytelling.

Katerina Kadjamanoa from village Satovcha (Pirin mountains, southern Bulgaria) sang in the way characteristic only for her, showing her faithful attitude towards what she sings; being simple and modest. Her confession: "Song is for me everything" is reflected in her eyes, the way she looks and speaks. The way she

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IHDE, D. *Listening and Voice, Phenomenologies of Sound*; New York: State University of New York Press, 2007, p. 87

22

BROWN, R. *Live Listening: The aural Phenomenology of theatre* in: *Sound: A Reader in Theatre Practices*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 148. Ross Brown is Prof. at the Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London. Conducts research and teaches "theatrical aurality" - means "of sound and / acoustics of the theater." At his lectures Professor treats theater as an active acoustic space, that is opening for the viewer the opportunity to experience sensually. Brown also points to a particular type of musical coexistence of spectators and performers in a play, possible thanks to the action of audible art. Space in its physical properties becomes crucial in considering of the author, providing a source of liveliness for participation in the show. In a quoted book, Brown relies on introduced by Philip Auslander "liveliness" which can be translated as "vitality, liveliness, dynamism, what is dead." The term has been in operation in the discourse of performance art and electronic music as "liveliness" in English form.

sang brought a bit of her story. She, in the act of sharing the song with me, gave me a bright look, simple joy and joy of singing. The song "Janio abre Janio" will be different if someone else taught me it. Also, the context of presenting the songs was unique. I met Katerina in a small village where I stopped at a gas station. I asked the man working there, if he knows about any singers of traditional songs. He said, that he knows about one lady – secretary in a local school. He called her to come, and meanwhile he took his guitar and spontaneously started to play. Immediately the space of gas station fulfilled with tonality recognizable as Balkan with typical unpaired rhythm. The music is in vain of people living in Balkans, even though they use to say, that now it is not that vivid as before. Katerina came soon after. Unusual meeting opened short conversation about folklore. However, we did not speak the same language, we found a way to communicate. Language of gestures helped, Katerina agreed to sing and invited a friend – teacher in a local school to join. They both are filmed in a document "Intervals."

Katerina also took me to the oldest lady in the village, Baba Vanga. Her age, the way she walked and smiled, wonderful soft eyes commanded respect and reciprocal sensitivity. We spent together almost the whole day. On the beginning we were just talking, not about music. I was interested in particular types of song. Her voice, even while talking, sounded very melodic, as if she was drawing the lines in the air. Baba Vanga was telling about the habits, memories, her traveling with music ensembles before 20 years. She brought pictures. We were exchanging some information without understanding at all our languages. But I remember till now the sound of her speech, the lines and shapes she drew with her voice, warmth of her gentle intonation. Baba Vanga was teaching me some songs, using her hands to show me high and low voice, and after some hours we were singing together. But it was not about singing two voices (what is actually easy to learn, if one is a bit musically talented), but about listening to each other. When you do not know the next note, you are very awake and alert to meet with your partner on the right interval. This situation is indeed being in sound, taking part in a musical reality which is being created thanks to our presence.²³ This experience was helpful for me while leading workshops with people from different nationalities, because automatically I was rather showing and wanting people to repeat that explaining what they should do. I took the pre semantic communication as foregrounded. It is also in singing in a folk band KORJEN,

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Intervals. Documentary movie about Bulgarian singers made during the doctoral studies available on attached DVD.

with who we made music performance based on traditional songs (more in chapter: Practice).

During research in Bulgaria I experienced also another situation of being in song. Another one. This time, that was not about singing together, but rather about witnessing the confession. But in her village all the old singers she used to sing with had died.



*Photo No. 1:
Baba Elena Bouživa*

The single voice of Baba Elena was very touching, bitter and sad, like a shout directly from the heart, but not hysterical, rather just bitter and sounded like she wished to throw away some old memories from her body. People in the village Beli Iskar warned me that she might not want to talk to me, and she is said to be a bit like a witch. Jelena was very old, sad, small but with strong body, and skin as if she was dried apple. She invited me to her small room and started to sing without any prefaces. That was the most bitter voice I have ever heard. I knew I don't have courage to ask her to teach me whatever. I was just listening to her lament.

Two years ago, one of her songs appeared in Libenska Synagoga during the music performance and it was lamentation of mother whose daughter was getting married. (more in chapter: Practice).

3.2. Voice in ensemble

Mutuality in theatre is a rule needed in many layers. In my thesis I am interested in the reciprocity of being in sound.

I shall start from the very simple: the act of deep listening to someone. As the voice always appear in its reciprocal character, the situation of "giving voice" automatically requires the one who receives (= listener, co-speaker). Oral tradition

creates the interdependence of the one who speaks and the one who listens. One always learns from each other, hardly ever from books, or alone. There is always the collective act of taking part in creating sound.

Most of the singers I met while researching in Bulgaria and Serbia have never written notes of the songs they performed. They sometimes helped themselves with written words, but melodic patterns belonged to the realm of oral transmission. The melodies and words are taught through repeating, youngsters often observe the elders singing, repeat their movement, gestures, way of looking.

The interdependence between co-singers or singer-teacher (elder) and singer-youth, sharpens the sense of hearing and deepens the ability to rule the creation according to musicality of language.

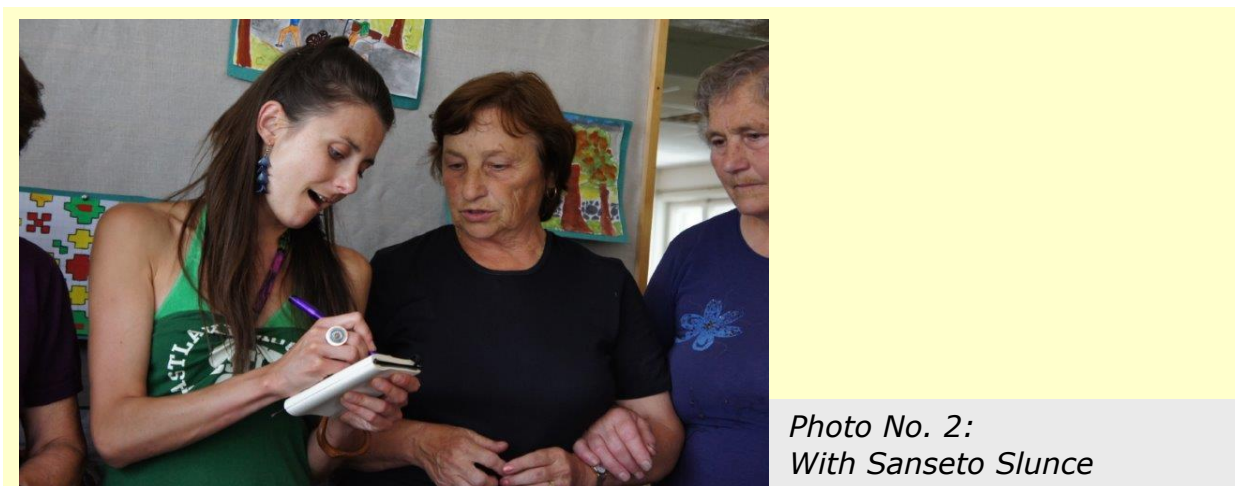
In the same village, I was invited for the rehearsal of the Sanseto Slunce Ensemble, who was performing typical for this region shop songs; they sung together the harvest songs and ballads. Singers were located in a semi circle, in two groups. Due to the difficult harmonies and not obvious intervals (small and big seconds, and semi-tones) they had to listen to each other with deep focus to sing clear. Also, the rhythm was conditioned by their collective breath taken as if by one body...I would call it a real example of the "corporeal communication of uniqueness"²⁴ described by Adriana Cavarero. Cavarero presents an anti-metaphysical perspective, denying the division of body and soul.

The group of 8 ladies gathered in a room of a local library to sing their repertoire, which had been sung on the fields during (or after) the work. Most of them used to have a farm and field, so the songs were very connected to the land, the earth and work. Even they were singing a love ballad, the spatiality was resounding in their voices. Often appearing the lyrics are essential elements: sun, water, sunset, big fields... Their voices sound encompassing even inside, even without the space around. They have kept space inside; it breathes inside their bodies. They stand close to each other while singing and they hold each other with arms. They breathe together like an enormous dynamic organism, and each particular voice is included to the sound of human who meets powers of nature. This is how they sound.²⁵ As if all the long days they had spent in the field working

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CAVARERO, A., *op. cit.*, p. 199

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In the movie "Intervals" there is a part dedicated to the ensemble Sanseto Slunce. *Intervals (...)*, *op. cit.*

were brought here to the small library room in the moment they perform. That was a strong vocal presence!



What is but the most typical and difficult about Shoppy songs are dissonances. Small intervals, big and small seconds are not easy to hold in such a big group. Additional spatiality is holding a tone on a single pitch for quite long time without doing any ornament or shouting at the end (what could make it easier). Where is the secret? From my experience – as singer and performer who acts with body – the secret lies in a connection of voice and body, which, as I wrote few lines before, is strong advantage of Sanseto Slunce, but also many others groups of traditional singers. Their imaginary is steeped with landscape around, albeit not in a romantic sense, because it is work that brings them to the field. Beside this it was absolutely natural to spend time outside, 30 years ago there were not so many in-door entertainments as today.

As Ihde states:

“(...) experience itself as our capacities of listening are changed by technological culture. Its roots lie in the birth of the electronic communications revolution. Through this revolution we have learned to listen farther than any previous human generation.”²⁶

The close interdependence of aural perception and the acoustics of space and shape of space is a theme for further reflections.

3.3. Space affects the form of songs

During the research in Bulgaria in 2010, I was observing the relation between landscape and vocal techniques. I choose tree regions: Rhodopi mountains, Pirin mountains and Shoppy region to compare how the geographical conditions

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IHDE, D. *Listening and voice. Phenomenologies of Sound*, State University of New York Press, 2007, p. 4

influenced the songs. The first region looks like high mountains with sharp tops. Singers often use the natural shape to locate themselves on the hill in a form of triangle, using the natural acoustics to the specific techniques called "na vysoko." Two women I met in villages of Pirin mountains presented this technique. Katerina Kadjamanova talks about singers called "rukačky" who used to stand in the hill and sing quite demanding pattern of "na vysoko" in a documentary movie "Intervals." Also, they try to recall this technique with another singer, Baba Vanga. Another thing is that the songs from Pirin are always very rhythmical (usually the rhythms are 7/8, 9/8, 11/8. This is quite typical in a whole Balkans, but – for comparison, this kind of rhythmical patterns never happen in Rhodopi mountains, where people used to sing rubato. The singer Alena, whom I met in a village Momchilovtsi presented the songs typical for region. The sentences are long, flowing, the voice is waving and stretched like gentle tops of massive plain mountains around. The lady said, that singer get inspired by the shape of landscape a lot. They look outside and they see never ending lines of the mountain chains. There are no sharp ridges, everything looks fluent. And this is how their voice sound. Only the length of breath conditions the length of voice, and the bagpipe, which is accompanying instrument for Rhodopian singers. They used to perform together and the singer Alena said that it makes her difficult to sing without bagpipe player. The human voice and the voice of instrument used to overlap and create beautiful mutuality based on listening to each other. It is documented in the movie "Intervals" and it is clearly shown how the technique differs from any other in Bulgaria. The third region I researched is located in central Bulgaria, near to the capitol – Sofia. Shopsy region is known from the group singing with a rich use of small intervals and dissonances what influence the body presence through voice.

Worth mentioning here is an ethno musicological heritage of Leoš Janaček. His researches in field-works show also this interdependence of vice and space. In a collection "On the Music Aspects of Moravian National Folk songs, 1901" he refers to study of ethnic group with a view to certain geographic context. The term "mesology" is the expression introduced by Janaček as he observed the effects of particular environment and life on singing. In a collection "Folk song Tunes/ Napěv lidových písni" Janaček described effects co-creating the origin of folk songs. The attempt to find the moment when the song is being born refer to "direct effect of the acoustic parameters on the nature of the tunes produced by the long distance

yodellers.”²⁷ That was my attempt in a project “Woman, Skin, Song and Bone” while leading the vocal workshops in Estonian landscape.

4. Master class with Svetlana Spajić in Serbia

4.1. Voice as movement. Imaginary in oral culture on the example of Serbian songs

The master class with Svetlana Spajić, singer of traditional songs and performer from Belgrade, Serbia. Her lectures about tradition and explanation of the ethos of traditional singer is countless. And of course, practical workshop with her gave me some insight into the way how to work with voice and music imaginary in theatre. She, as a contemporary performer, who acts with artists like Robert Wilson or Marina Abramović, has a key to the process of transition between tradition and contemporary art.

During the master class, we spent much time on singing the simple *callings*. We started with singing together one tone with making with voice the smallest interval “up” and “down;” while one person keeps the tone, another sings small or big seconds interval for a while and then singers meet on the same tone. This situation Spajić described as “walking together”. She says, that “There is no singing for singing, to make aesthetic shape. Singing is always action; it forms action, or reflects action, helps action to happen. It is never pure form, as its rule is to make things happen”.²⁸

This might have been the situation when this kind of *callings* appeared. People used to spend much time outside and work, so the voice was the first accompaniment to the daily actions; shape of songs reflect movement, the voice is movement.

“We walk together, then you turn and go back. We meet again together. (...) You have to be mentally connected to the situation you create with the voice”²⁹ - she made commands using the language of traditional imaginary: “walk, stop, up,

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STOBART, H., *The New (Ethno) musicology*, The Score crow Press, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. Toronto. Plymouth, OU. 2008, 137. Stobart writes about sound experience and music phenomena in terms of interaction between human and his sonic environment. He opens the new perspectives of contemporary ethnomusicology and the creative approaches towards of the researcher. According to his thoughts new ethnomusicology is a reflection of current researches and its application to performance practice.

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Svetlana Spajić, master class in Belgrade, 7.09.2011

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Svetlana Spajić, master class in Belgrade, 7.09.2011

down" formed by simple categories like direction or speed.

Then we were talking about further connection between voice and movement. I sang a Polish traditional song "*Oj holuje postatnica*" (now it belongs to repertoire of "Korjen" ensemble) and Svetlana wanted me to find the "movement I want to tell", the situation I want to recall through the song. I will of course not recall the work in the field, but I must have the experience of space to make it present in the song. I understood that movement is shaped by voice and voice is shaped by movement. We started to improvise with steps and turning. For a performer this lecture may be applied as "singing the gesture or step", similar as Peruvian dancers who pray to the Earth with their feet"³⁰ and I practiced that during the project "Woman, Skin, Song and Bone" (more in a chapter: *Practice*).

Another very precious advice given by Svetlana Spajić related to body and voice, especially searching the spaces in body which resonates. While doing breathing exercises she put attention on the moment when the voice is being born. For performers, whose main tool is their body, exploring it there is a condition to develop oneself. Vibration in our body is possible thanks to the space in our body; it is a specific materialization of the audible presence that takes "place" in body. Not only Spajić, but also another vocal leader, Brigitte Deneck³¹ dedicates attention to the chain of breathing – voice – body. Deneck emphasizes that exploring the spaces which we use for breathing opens our organism for energy needed to sing. Strengthening the energetic centre located in abdominal part of our body moves the focus to the most powerful part of our organism. In this way the voice enlarges its scale and becomes much stronger. The exercises demand physical power and aim to find positions which we do not use in daily life. Thanks to that we does not overwork the usual "breathing" parts of body.

4. 2. Traditional song as a source of drama

Traditional cultures preserve in their music and tales the elements of dramatic situations. In the songs we search for archetypes, heroes and objects which exist under the power of time and space. Within the constellation of time,

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Traditional "scissors dance" performed by Peruvian dancer and puppeteer Jose Navarro. I observed it during the doctoral scholarship in London 2012. More retrieved September, 26, 2015, from: <http://jose-navarro.com/category/scissors/>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danza_de_tijeras.

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I graduated the course "Pneumaphony - Be Your Voice" led by Brigitte Deneck in London in 2012; it was a part of doctoral research in DAMU. <http://beyourvoice.co.uk/about-brigitte-deneck/brigitte-deneck/>

space and creatures there are certain tensions that build - like in ancient drama - conflict. Performer takes the text of the song as an existing script.³²

Beside this, there are certain moments in ballads, which cannot be omitted for the tale to happen. These dramatic moments can be applied to the theatre script as elements of action. If we use in theatre moments recognizable in our culture, we can build the script with the help of songs, making the structure clear not in linear way, but giving to the public only the key how to read it. There are which dramatic key moments and moments which slow down action. Dramatic moments in the songs are for example: wedding, meeting of woman and man, leaving family house, meeting evil, killing someone.

Another dramatic aspect of traditional songs are symbolic motives, recognizable in diverse culture circles. Particular pictures of situations will influence certain associations: In case of a religious text we use the motif of planting the seed of life, or beginning of life with the light. In secular texts of the songs we have: sunset as decline, wisdom of elder people, innocence of a child, old rock that remembers, old tree which has its wisdom. These motives appear in the songs as the most simple objective categories³³ which influence our thinking. The topos are strongly rooted in our imaginary. Of course in many texts written for theatre we have the motives I mentioned. They don't but belong to the reality of symbolic imaginary traditional text do. While in traditional song the tension is in the very small piece of reality, in dramatic prose there must be the whole dramatic construction for the drama to happen. In the traditional songs those topos represent the objective categories, some kind of constant reality. Those universal pictures we used in the music performance "Korjen in Synagogue" and the land art installation "Woman, Skin, Song and Bone" (chapter: Practice).

Svetlana often underlines the significance of oral communication in the music education in former Yugoslavia. Due to the political and social changes, songs became the element of ethnic identity.³⁴ Oral tradition is transmitted through

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Kovalevič, S. during the session of "The School" says that "*Text does not need explanation, text is alive and it is our task to make it alive on stage*".

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Kovalevič S. during the session of "The School" says that "The structure of the text in song gives us the objective categories, the qualities in which the singer perceives the world".

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The topic of song and identity belong to the huge sphere of sociological perspective and ethnographic researches, which is not the dominant perspective in my work. Some methods of sociological perspective, however appear in projects dedicated to documentary theatre, realized in post-industrial areas in Poland and Czech Republic. The "song" means there more a typical for the region. While in my work the aim is not to show this what is typical in folklore. My aim is transforming, not presenting the pure folklore forms.

memory of people, therefore imaginary is essential. Imaginary is symbolic and it is clear what is what and who is who.

While working with the text of traditional songs the significant element is pause. Singers used to call it "a breath of the outer"³⁵. That was the moment when the singer and the listener meet. In the pause resound the essence, the notions are about to emerge. For theatre public it is a moment for making their own montage. Following the symbolical logic from traditional songs we get to the imaginary of public, which is also rooted in some collective categories.

4. 3. Tradition is dynamic process. Tradition as testimony of truth

During the 2 weeks of Master Class with Svetlana Spajić, we were working on rules in traditional music forms, which can be applied in contemporary music theatre.

Spajić says: "The imagery reflects the beliefs and ethics of society. The tales and songs are testimony of the truth; they are told/sung to testify the truth."³⁶ The patterns and forms are reflecting the way, in which people structure this what they hear and see. Tradition reflects the multi layered form of perceiving the world around. Following these words, an artist shall find his way of structuring the world with the voice, according to his/her perception of the world around. Especially the sound perception is an interesting sphere, due to its medialization through last decades. Today, we rarely experience not medialized sound. In the contemporary European culture we live in is dominated by extensions of human. Each experience is possible through the instrument, as Ihde puts it: "(...) by living with electronic instruments our experience of listening itself is being transformed, and included in this transformation are the ideas we have about the world and ourselves."³⁷

Svetlana gave me the task to invent my own calling. "How would you sing the harvest calling? Which words would be proper to use?" I was singing callings

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Notes from the researches in Bulgaria in 2010. The singers often make a pause and looked into my eyes. When I asked what is happening when they make the pause, they would say "silence" or "nothing" and they emphatically smiled. Of course they would not use the categories from post dramatic theatre discourse, where we talk about the public's montage.

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Spajić Svetlana, master class, Belgrade 8.09.2011

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IHDE, D., *Listening and voice. Phenomenologies of Sound*, State university of New York Press, 2007, p. 5

and songs according to my own imaginary of space. Svetlana would tell me if that sounds truth. It was not easy, because songs I used to hear from the old singers belonged to another reality, different from urban space of big city where I lived. But she encouraged me to try, saying:

“Tradition cannot be copied; it is dynamic process.”³⁸ Patterns and melody can be repeat, off course, when one learn the song. But tradition cannot be limited to patterns. It is something more. The core of tradition is to transmit this what remains vivid further, to future generations. Studying the music heritage gives us the tool, how to express the emotion or how to name landscape by using voice. This tools I used while preparing the performance “Woman, Skin, Song and Bone,” where I was leading the vocal work with the group Neceser in Estonia. (more in chapter: *Practice*).

I asked Svetlana the questions about ethic while changing aesthetic of the song. Spajić underlines, that in traditional cultures there is no difference between “ethics” and “aesthetic,” the meaning in a song cannot be divided from form. Spajić explained me the practical aspect of using voice: “They used to shout in the hill to announce something to the people, to communicate.” This is not about the ornament you do with voice. Ornament must always serve to content. In traditional singing aesthetic is ethic.” Those callings which are practiced during harvests, on the hills when people communicate are but not actually useful for contemporary performer. She asked me to invent my own calling, my own message. Spajić attempted to make me aware of why the structure sounds like it sounds. She put emphasis on transforming experience, emotion or state to melodic pattern.

4.4. Ethnomusicological approach - meeting Moba Ensemble in Belgrade

There are, of course, more and less restrictive attitudes towards artistic freedom while working with folklore heritage. Undoubtedly, transforming or researching existing forms demands exploring the context. In this way only, we get aware of this, what we aim to change.

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Svetlana Spajić talks about the oral traditions in Serbia during her master class in Belgrade 2010, 2011. She refers to contemporary performance as a challenge for old oral forms and traditional music. She herself sings the old folklore songs being adequate to the ornaments and melodic patterns. At the same time Spajić composes her own traditional songs built on her long time experiences of recording the old singers and singing with them. One of the albums is called “Zegar zivi” and it contains pieces performed by Svetlana and old singers from village in Serbia.

Very accurate indications were given by musicologists from Belgrade, Jelena Jovanović.³⁹ It is a question of individual artistic responsibility, taken in a creative process. Jelena is a leader of the group MOBA, based in Belgrade and formed among female students of Ethnomusicology at Belgrade University. The members gather once a week to sing. I first met them in the city center to witness the rehearsal.⁴⁰ Although they look very young and simply like “urban girls,” they seem very tied to their tradition conserved in songs. They sing very precise every ornaments and have an imposing knowledge about each song; they explain the origins, where the song comes from. I often ask about their attitude towards what they sing about. “When you sing the song about harvest, where are your thoughts? You know that this kind of songs were dedicated to be performed during harvest time and are strictly connected to the work...and you live in a city of Belgrade and perform these kind of songs. What is the aim for that?”

Girls respond almost all in the same way; that they focus on the song and being proper with the notations, structure, ornaments. They find as a priority to get as much close to the original version of the song, as possible. My questions about using some motives of traditional songs in contemporary music theatre, is taken rather skeptic. “If the song used to be performed with specific accompaniment, it should stay like this, otherwise it will not be this song any more”. This is the way of preserving the original forms typical rather for ethnomusicologists, who are supposed to preserve the forms. Their attitude but differs from the theatre artists, who “use”, “change”, “inspire”, “transform” .

Ensemble MOBA represents the other approach due to their profession; duties of ethnomusicologist are different than those of theatre makers. So, my conclusion is that in case of a harvest song, a theatre maker would search for the shape of body while cutting or gathering grass and building choreography around those positions, theatre maker would search in voice the feeling of exhaustion and perhaps he would use different words or ornament to express his state. But he would attempt to make the essence of harvest to happen.

Where is then the border of authenticity? Or, not to sound too much pathetic,

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J. Jovanović is a doctor of ethnomusicology at SANU – Institute For Arts in Belgrade. During the research in Balkans in 2010 I met Jelena for an interview and she introduced me to the rehearsals of the MOBA ensemble, where she is artistic leader. MOBA many times hosted at international festivals of folklore, especially dedicated to preserving the regional and national musical heritage: *The oldest Song of Europe*, Lublin Poland 2014, <http://npe-festiwal.pl/en/> Audio: Jovanović J., *MOBA Ensemble* available on attached DVD.

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The rehearsal is recorded as collection of various Serbian songs enriched with interviews, which I made during the second study visit in Belgrade, Serbia, 2011; *Moba Ensemble, festival in dolna Šatornija* available on attached DVD.

truth? Perhaps Jelena Jovanović gives enough reply, by pointing the "individual artistic responsibility".

William Dočolomansky in his dissertation write about the research of Andalusian music folklore practiced by Gypsy singers: "*Naviac, udajně spievak ktorý nie je Rom, nikdy nebude mať dar spievať tak, aby tam bolo „to niečo“, aby prišlo „duende“*".⁴¹ This is not the form that we search for. This is "this something," something inside, the spirit of vivid human presence, of than is awaken through the form of song. Even though we meet this essence through forms, the form itself serves the content. Dočolomansky writes about "živý odkaz, ktorý niesie forma (...) živý, ľudský material".⁴²

The living presence is for me the aim of researches, finding the access to it may lead through listening to the song, but also through simply spending time with singer and listening to his voice, observing the landscape when the song is rooted. The anthropological perspective opens the area of mutual communication, which still is the most important in making theatre.

5. Workshop in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski in Wrocław

Origin of the song was one of essential issues in the project "Foot of mountain" that took place in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski in Wrocław.

I participated in two working sessions "The School. Art Research"⁴³ organized in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski in Wrocław and led by two artists: an Ukrainian singer of traditional songs - Natalia Polovynka and a director Sergiej Kovalevič from Russia. At the beginning, Kovalevič and Polovinka introduced us to the philosophy of theatre they practice in an ensemble "Maisternia pisni" based in Lviv, Ukraine. They refer to the nature of traditional songs and sacred songs. Philosophy of their work is focused on developing the performer's presence on stage and applying the

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DOČOLOMANSKY, V. talk about researching the songs and rituals while gathering material to the performance „Sonety Tmavé Lásky“. He, as director and leader of ensemble (later "Farm in the Cave") was attempting to find the living forms of the Andalusian cultures. A chapter dedicated to confrontation with the flamenco folklore leads to intriguing statements about what folklore is and how we can be inspired by it. More in: „Hľadanie starého Flamenca“ in Dočolomansky's dissertation, op. cit., p. 30

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DOČOLOMANSKY, V., op. cit., p. 82

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Wrocław, 14.-20.04.2011. The School – Artistic Research – First session with MAISTERIA PISNI was named "The voice of tradition" and was based on Ukrainian traditional songs. Second session was dedicated to the sacred songs of Europe, mainly Bible and was named: "Song of the Songs", Institute of Jerzy Grotowski, Wrocław, 06.– 16.06.2011.

performative elements of traditional song into theatrical action. The techniques in some points are close to the theatre of Jerzy Grotowski, some reminded the techniques from Gardzienice Theatre. Although "Maisternia Pisni" is very specific and emphasizes the responsibility of each performer for his time and space which he shares with public. Kovalevič goes far beyond the actor's *emploi* to get to his essence. He does not allow to cheat even in the name of the greatest effect.

This workshop was not aimed to learn the songs, but to use this what can be performed through the songs; it was dedicated to deepening the actor's presence with the help of traditional song. However, we worked not directly with the song as material. Rather, we would approach a song as a certain creature, testimony of human being, certain reality. Singing traditional song means performing. If we want to sing it in theatre we must find the performative way to approach the song and find the way to enter the stage. "When you enter, you cross the infinity. You leave the chaos behind you. On the stage the chaos is structured. The way you structure the chaos is the way you sing the song."⁴⁴

5.1. Ritual Zero; awareness and presence in performer`s individual work

In order to be able to enter the reality of the song, the performer needs to "clean the space" inside of him and prepare the space around him.

Therefore the practices of "ritual zero" contained of essential steps: understanding the space, tuning the inner space of performer to the outer space—learning to actively listen and observe. We were learning how to hear the silence. In this way we get to the state when the first word and first tune appears. Kovalevič led the group through the exercises based on concentration. We were doing simple movements and giving simple tones, but with big precision and focus. Single sounds one gave to the space had to be "in the same tonality as the space is tuned" -Kovalevič used many metaphors while teaching, but after few days we got used to the language and understood that the reality we want to approach is beyond the language of names.

Reality, where Maisternia Pisni was introducing the group, was build on very simple presence of human. The way to get there but, was exhausting training of brain: physicality. Many hours we spend on exercises deepening the musical

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Kovalevič S., during the sessions in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski

awareness. The group was focus on finding the performative tools like vocalizations, talking, walking, making simple gestures to create the strong circle of musicality. Also, there were many tasks dedicated to work with body. On session we worked with Hindu marchial arts – *kalaripayatu*. The positions we practiced strengthen the tensions in a body and only making steps in precise directions. We were training to keep the rhythm (individual and group), so that performers are able to re-create the territory in which the vocal ritual could take place.

We were going through the “ritual zero”, what the director Sergiej Kovalevič called as “cleaning the way we look and hear in order to reveal this what is not revealed.”⁴⁵ During the sessions the group spent hours on building their presence through voice and movement but with an emphasis on awareness of the state from which we start to perform. Kovalevič repeated often that we are not ready to perform with the whole body, or to sing the song, because “It is not about just singing (...) our seeing of things around is not clean”.⁴⁶ We worked on revealing the acoustic of space and trying to listen to the silence from which the word appear. Through the movement in space, physicality of a performer's body becomes energetic and it gathers focus.

Performative aspect of the songs is conditioned by its prelude. That reminded the trainings in Odin Theatret, where actors were building their scenic *bios*.

Therefore we were getting to the very beginning of existence on stage. The exercises were aimed to explore the relations between me and the space, me and the other performers. Then we started to work with the songs.

Kovalevič and Polovynka often repeated: “This is not you, who sings; this is the spirit of the song that you allow to become (...). You must allow the partiture of the song to happen.”⁴⁷

During the first days the team was introduced to the specificity of Ukrainian traditional songs. It was helpful in understanding the structure of the songs, when we worked on ballads. There is an action written in the text. This action we have to reveal through embodying the song. We were searching the movements and pauses

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Kovalevič S., during the sessions in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski

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Kovalevič about being on stage was very demanding: “This what you do on stage is your child. You and your child make the theatre. It is a question of destiny (...). Here is the place for black sides of human to appear in order for the empathy of public become “. Sessions in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski. 17.04.2011.

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Kovalevič and Polovynka, notes made during the sessions, Institute of Jerzy Grotowski. 17.04.2011

in a ballad; focusing on the epic elements and the metaphors which build the pictures. Movement includes information about the text, if we find the dynamic and static moments. Then we can make the song present, our gestures will not be describing what is happening, but we will find the equivalent dynamics in the text and our body. Focus on movement and pauses on stage create the space for public. The musical presence on stage must breathe, so that the public can make their own montage.

A bit different was with the sacred songs. We worked with the Biblical text and two mystic European songs brought by Kovalevič and Natalia for the sessions in order to teach us how to approach this what is hidden, mysterious and sacred. Although the text belong to mystical sphere, they were leading exercise very concrete, almost in pragmatic and technical way. "Count the space. In which direction you speak? What do you see when you sing the first verse? Try to speak vertically, like a tube through which the voice appear".⁴⁸ First thing was again to clean the space from conventions and find the most simple information contained in a text and melody. The study was dedicated to the musical information in a song, but before the interpretation comes. "There are human conditions told in a sacred song (...) there is inner information contained in a song."⁴⁹ In sacred texts like the Bible there is an element of European root of culture that formed our thinking and perceiving world. In order to perform through the mystical song we need to deeply experience what it is for us, the root of our tradition.

5.2. Female songs, ritual

During the session in Institute of Jerzy Grotowski we participated also in specific female and male songs. We were divided for two groups in order to work in a circle, like women and man in traditional cultures used to. The leader of female group - Natalia Polovynka introduced participants to female songs dedicated to wedding ceremony. She aimed on building the vocal presence with the emphasis on specific technique in female ritual singing.⁵⁰

Polovynka told us about the role of wedding song in a whole ceremony. The work was intimate and gentle, awaking the female sensuality through the voice

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Kovalevič S. during the sessions, Institute of Jerzy Grotowski. 17.04.2011.

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Kovalevič S. during the sessions, Institute of Jerzy Grotowski. 18.04.2011.

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Video: *Wedding song* available on attached DVD (min.11)

and movement. In spite of the gentle sphere of female songs, we revealed also the other side of feminine in the songs: being grounded, close to earth, being present in the body. A lot of sensual imaginations were inspiring for us. As Polovynka said, feminine is very much connected with the nature, so to sing female song woman singer must experience what it is "wet grass under her feet".

With regard to the singing rituals, Natalia focused on specific tensions in wedding songs. There is inevitability of fate and she draws attention of slash of oppositions. The past is ending and the new is coming, two forces are fighting with themselves. The song reflects that in a rhythm and structure; the lower voice always keeps the base and "holds the bride". Women who sing supportive voice, they are to support the ritual. Otherwise the ritual will not be done, and the girl will not become a woman.

Intentionality is essential in the ritual. I came back to this experiential approach in female songs during the work in the project "Woman, Skin, Song and Bone"⁵¹ I describe it in the chapter dedicated to this project.

Natalia Polovynka underlines the connection between the way we sing and the way we perceive the world around. She practices and teaches the specific aesthetic of traditional singing as a practice of building relation towards national history, religious symbols and cultural heritage included in songs.

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The female songs are big chapter in traditional songs in general. I will not develop the theme as much, as it could be explored. I focus only on the little episode that became part of the PhD research and following artistic work.

II. PRACTICE

1. Spatiality in theatre; music performance "Korjen in Synagogue" in Prague

1.1. Historical perspectives for space and aurality

"Today spatiality is just another musical attribute."⁵²

The relation between space and vocal expression, which I will describe in first part of this chapter. Here I will refer to the historical background of acoustic architecture, my own research and few musical site-specific realizations that I participated in or co-produced.

To give a broader scope of the topic undertaken, I shall introduce briefly the term of aurality, with a glimpse at the history of how the acoustics of sacred spaces were always related to the politics of public space, religiosity, and cultural aspects of performing music.

The occurrence of aural architecture⁵³ used to be applied époques generations in various ways in sacral buildings. For instance, ancient Mayans during the ceremonies in ancient Greek theatre, in subsequent periods during performances of choral songs in cathedrals of the Renaissance. The sacral architecture with its properties reflects the rules governing the universe and religion.⁵⁴

1.2. About the performance

I would like to consider spatiality in theater using the example of a scenic concert, which I participated in and co-produced as a doctoral student at DAMU KALD. The premiere of the concert "Korjen in synagogue" took place in May

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BLESSER B., Salter L.R., *Spaces speak, Are You listening?* London: MIT Press, 2009, p. 213.

53

BLESSER B., SALTER L. R., op. cit., pp. 1-9. The term "aural architecture" relates to properties of space and to influence for emission and perception of sound.

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Supra, p. 89: „In ancient Greece and in the succeeding Roman and Christian cultures, using abstract thinking as the mean of attaining truth, philosophers influenced spatial concepts by elevating the importance of their cosmic rules; indeed spatial concepts originated from religious philosophy“.

the 25th, 2011 year, at the Synagogue "Libenská synagoga" in Prague. The project was founded as transformation of musical material into specific properties of space. The artistic team has been working with traditional songs for 4 years before, as music group. This realization was a challenge to weaving the fabric of folk music into into dramatic form, build relation with sacral space and to reveal the aural properties of synagogue. Performance deals with acoustics of space, semantic notions of the synagogue, as well as uses themes of songs to develop a musical dramaturgy.

a. Locating performers

"Site specific is connected with building the relation with space and searching for themes offered by the space of creation."⁵⁵

The questions we asked ourselves during preparations were as following:

- *What does it mean to build a relationship with space?*
- *Maintain silence yet allow the space to speak?*
- *When can space talk?*
- *When we listen?*

I would like call for authority of sound artist John Cage⁵⁶ and his theory of active listening, which is one of revolutionary approaches toward music in 20th century.

If we imagine the initial point of establishing any relation to space, we have a performer who is actively listening. Where is he? Is it important, where exactly is he standing?

It is essentially important, because his location conditions what he hears.

Equivalence in this relation (space and performer) shall be underlined. This kind of work about, is much about locating the performer in a space. I will focus on the performer's vocal presence, which builds the spatial relations in a show.

As Roland Barthes states,

"The theatre is precisely this that practice which calculates the place of

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ŽIŽKA, T. VÁCLAVOVÁ, D. *Site Specific - Hledání Jinného Prostoru* (In:) *Divadlo v netradičním prostoru, performance a site specific*, Schmelzová, R. (Ed.), Praha: 2010, p. 86: "Site specifc umění je tedy propojeno s vytvořením vztahu k prostoru a s hledáním tématu, jež nabízí." Theoreticians and practitioners of site specific art investigate the theme of creation process in specific spaces.

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CAGE J. *Experimental music* (In:) *Hermitary, resources and reflections on hermits and solitude*. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://www.hermitary.com/solitude/cage.html>

things *as they are observed*."⁵⁷

Following the thought of Barthes, we can say that the process of locating creates spatial relations.



Photo No.3:

Voice as rope between balconies

For this reason, in each part of the concert, performers would sing from another spot in synagogue, through that, they were opening next perspective, discovering next hidden level of space. The vaults of sacral building were resounded by voices and instruments. The space became dynamic.

The performance begins with soft tones that reverberate from balconies. From tree locations resound voices and fill the space with vibration upstairs of synagogue. It is a sound of creating the universe of theatrical reality, and also an introduction of a Slovak song *Slnéčko horuce*. At the same time light fulfills space, as if the sun was rising.

Slowly percussion and single strings of guitar, located also upstairs, but a bit lower than balconies on sides, right in front of altar, join the wave of sound, which begins to fill the whole space. Singers walk on the balconies, therefore the sound is changing the source.

The second song starts with callings from balconies; women exchange daily chats, modulating voices from a whisper to shouting and adding birds-like sounds. These snippets of sentences, humming create a musical background, which is introduction to finding the right frequency, tuning to each other, achieving the harmony of breaths, voices and synchronizing movements. This happening I observed during the researches and this phenomenon seems to be an integral

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BARTHES, R., *Image, Music, Text*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1997, p.69

element of a specific prelude to singing in rural territories.⁵⁸

The dialogs take place on balconies, so above the audience's heads; voices interweave with hanging the flowered and hanging the big white curtain between balconies.

They appear to be hanging laundry, by suspending a huge white scrim from a rope spanning the synagogue's "stage." Callings were inspired by techniques existing still in some regions of Slovakia and Bulgaria.⁵⁹ In these introductory scenes the scenography corresponds with the architecture and symbolism of the synagogue. Singers hang huge curtains that resemble, according to Jewish symbolic, a Tent for meeting God with human. The curtains become simultaneously the house of the Creator, and a shelter for gathered audience.



Photo No.4:
Curtains as God`s Tent

When the tent-roof is formed, musicians go down where the audience sit and present a series of musically dramatized situations from life cycle.

The sacrum of a holy space binds with the profane of common life. This contrast underscores how religion and daily life intertwine. In traditional culture the realm of religion and work are in a very visible symbiosis, which was for our performers important to elaborate. We were attempting to uncover the new sacral meanings that will be valid in contemporary word and for urban audience. We were searching for redefinition of term "holy", "saint", "pray" - using the symbolic language of visual and aural arts.

The projects executed as site specific realization, so the artists were aware

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Intervals. Documentary movie about Bulgarian singers made during the doctoral studies (op. cit.)

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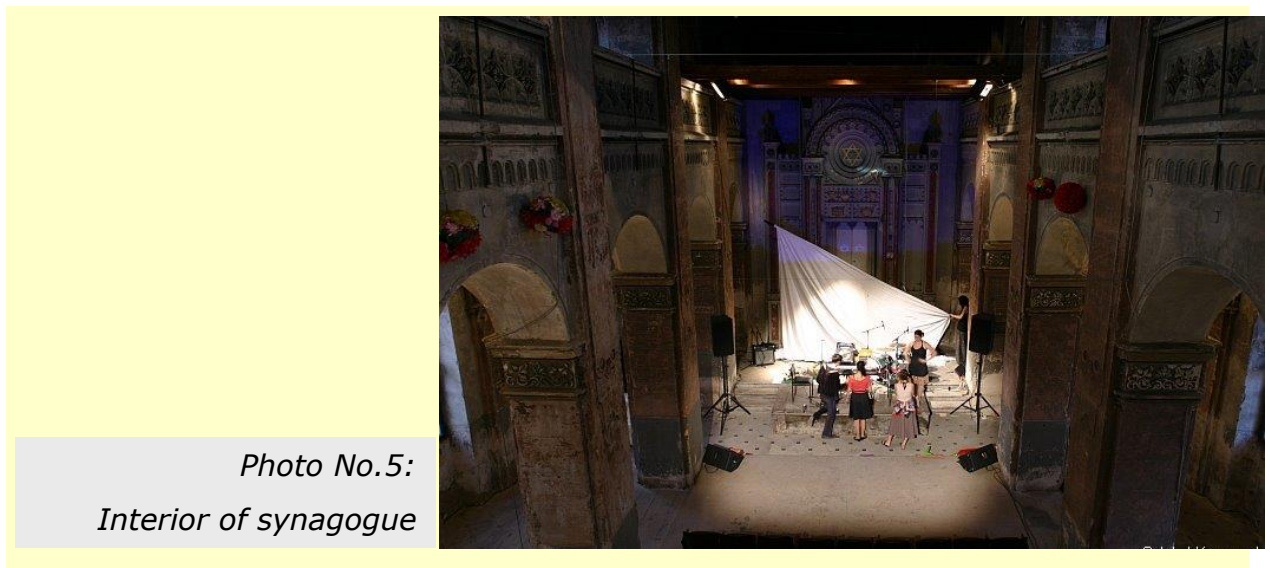
In Slovakia in the mountainous parts were and are still performed chants *halekačky*. Originally constituted a kind of communication between shepherds grazing cattle. Lots mountainous require the use of voice as an "abandoned between the mountains rope". Highlanders therefore apply chants that are used for communication. This regularity occurs in mountainous areas of different countries. Found in Polish and Slovak Tatra Mountains, Ukraine, Poland, the Bulgarian Rhodopi. More: *Centrum pre tradičnu ľudovu kulturu*: <http://www.ludovakultura.sk/index.php?id=4673>

that it ought to be an 'extension' of space, towards which every action is considered as a *relation with space*. Due to this fact chosen, songs were related to the semantic aspects of space.

b. Semantic aspects of space

The songs in performance were selected in this way so they could correspond with the sacral character of the space. Particular parts of the synagogue with their semantic properties became points of artistic dialogue. The altar with a recess in the wall, called *Aron kodesh*, where the Tora was kept became a scene for ceremonies: weddings and funerals.

In the space of the performance we incorporated *Aron kodesh* as a scene for ceremonies and rituals of transition. In Christian tradition this is a space of transubstantiation, in Judaic tradition it is place, where holy texts of Tora are kept. In the performance the altar becomes a scene of wedding ceremony, funeral celebrations and prayer.



*Photo No.5:
Interior of synagogue*

In a Judaic synagogue in front of the *Aron Kodesh* there was a curtain called the *parochet*. For the performance we made a visual reference to the *parochet* and used a white canvas as a wedding veil, which covers a bride, and in the following scenes the canvas becomes a screen for projection. We present a video piece of documentary recording from folk societies of Southern Bulgaria and Serbia. In this way the field recording recalls the teachers and singers. The Resounding of the folk songs, which were the inspiration for the show, sent us back to the cultures in

which singing is a part of ceremonies and daily life. Singers in the video are filmed in a festive context, during ceremonies (solemn as well as convivial), but also at home.⁶⁰ That again demonstrates that folk song is an integral element in the very rich variety of social dimensions.⁶¹

The fact of introducing multimedia into the performance enlivens the past.⁶² At the same time, media, because of its distancing effect, initiate to question about possibility of the truth dialog with past and tradition. This is also a question about authenticity of dialog and appointment with second human in the age of virtual communication.

This project was also an attempt to inquire into the community today; the community of teams, groups and people gathered in one place. We attempted to involve the audience as much as possible in the space of our event to sensitize to the presence of another man, somehow recreate the relations within the gathered group. Here we again got inspiration from folk societies.

"Folk songs are shared among folk groups as events in the home or community gathering places in which most people take an active role, interacting as listeners, players, dancers, and singers."⁶³

Beside this, introducing *field recordings* is an illustration of natural landscape of regions where the research was done, and wee most of the songs come from. In this way, the performance is enriched with documentary aspects.⁶⁴

The transformation of original meanings of the space was carried out also in terms of dividing sacral space for female and male parts.

During the performance a Muslim song is performed in the balcony – which is a space dedicated only for men. The singer is female and comes from Bosnia, so the song was a part of her religious background. With the exception, that she would

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Recording is part of materials gathered during research in Bulgaria and Serbia in 2010. Recordings from the performance "Korjen in synagogue". Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kRCTAPEGLI> and www.korjen.cz

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Song. HERDON, M. [in:] *Folklore, Cultural Performance and Popular Entertainments* BAUMAN, R. (Ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. The chapter titled describes various contexts where the traditional songs accompany to war, work or are aimed to solve local conflicts.

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HÁJEK, J. *Funkce hudební složky v rámci multimedialního díla* [in:] *Hudba a multimédia sborník studii*, ed. I. KURZ, Akademie Muzických umění Praha 2010, p. 20

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TITON J. T., *Music, Folk and Traditional* (In:): *Folklore, Cultural Performances and Popular Entertainments*, BAUMAN, R. (Ed.), p. 168

64

Recordings from the performance "Korjen in synagogue" (*op. cit.*).

never dare to sing it in her country, as this prayer is dedicated only to be performed by muezzin (male).

Locating the Muslim prayer in a Judaical synagogue might be perceived as inconvenient, but in fact it was attempt to broad the space and its semantic for public. Where is the female and male sphere in multi-denominational Europe?

A measure of this issue is featured literary in space; the Bosnian singer announce her pray from the rear balcony, while the two other singers respond from the front of altar. Waves of their voices create a bridge above the heads of audience; the sound travels through the whole length of the synagogue, horizontally and diagonally. In this song space is animated also thanks to changing the acoustic and electro-acoustic sound, what additionally enhances musical experience.

c. Song as dramatic script

"Song is also heavily used in connection with ceremonies and ritual acts promoting well - being, restoring balance, or curing illness."⁶⁵

The theatrical concert "Korjen in synagogue" was built on the archetypal motives of traditional Slavonic and Balkan songs, as well as ballads, love songs and recitatives. Due to the dual nature of folk songs we had sacral and profane plots, which created a necessary dramatic tension.

The script was a collection of scenes, which we built on these situations which would be recognizable for audience form diverse cultural and religious background. Particular scenes are related musically and thematically, but the tensions are not dependent on classical plot-structure. Rather the musical structure rules the construction.

Other members of the Korjen ensemble have also shared their experiences brought from their cultural background. Thanks to the creative work of devising, under leadership of director Dana Račkova we were sharing these customs we know from our cultural background or these brought from study visits. We were searching for elements of collective memory and archetypal behaviors in Slavonic and Balkan music traditions, present during ceremonies, as well as in musical texts.

I would like to give a few examples of variety of folk motives from Bulgaria,

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Song. HERDON, M. [in:] *Folklore, Cultural Performance and Popular Entertainments* BAUMAN, R. (Ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992

Serbia, Armenia – which created symbolic pictures - situations, which I would describe as landscape of gestures, musical short scenes, vocal behaviors.

“Another performative property of traditional song is that they are settled in ceremonial context, in sacral space, as well as common life”.⁶⁶



Photo No.6: Wedding

Traditional song as communication with Spirit and human. Specific techniques associated with spiritual singing

Selected songs to the performance referred to universal themes, like creation of the world, Biblicist cosmology, as well as motives from marriage ceremony and funeral rites. We show the cyclical nature of human life - both sacred and secular ceremonies.

Another aspect of the cyclical nature of existence are the threads that show the daily customs related to work, play, meeting the male and female world. They appear in the songs: mentioned Bulgarian "Jana Turčin" and "Dilmano Dilbero", as well as in the Armenian song "Jerkir". The rhythm of human life associated with the cyclical nature of wedding and funeral rituals represent songs: Bulgarian "Marko bije", Armenian "Kele Kele", Slovak "Janko brodil".

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Gardzienice Theatre. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://gardzienice.org>. Włodzimierz Staniewski, Polish director and founder of Gardzienice Theatre, long-time researcher of music cultures, accurately defines the specificity of traditional music culture. He underlines, that singers of traditional songs don't consider themselves as creators. They would rather treat song as a way to tame world around, way to communicate with spirituality. More: STANIEWSKI, W., HODGE, A. *Hidden Territories*, London: Routledge, 2003, p.63: „People performing those songs don't consider themselves as artists, as they sing to order the word around, to tame the universe and to communicate with holiness.”

Thanks to study internships in the Balkans I could have observed how local communities celebrate harvest. The rhythm of songs helps to synchronize work. The rhythmical gesture of spreading the seeds is used in choreography to symbolize the word of God.

In the scene introduced by the song "Dilmano Dilbero" performers begin singing from behind the public's seats⁶⁷. Then we walk between the public's seats, walk around the arcades – to the sound bounces up and down from the walls, travels through the space of the synagogue horizontally, and diagonally. Additionally, distance between singers and audience changes. We use the space between arcades and walk through the audience, calling a capella the first verses of the Bulgarian song about fertility in relationship. The notion of fertility and fruits of intercourse is told metaphorically through cultivating fruits; so the scene is full of kittenish gestures, coquetry to demonstrate ludicrous character of this folk song.

In another scene song "Snošti mi dojde" we involve audience to the world of unknown, wilderness of nature ruled by cosmic elements, sensuality of youth. The lights are turned off, and space is animated only by sound; singers are located on both sides of the public, with the aim to encompass the with the resounding song, musicians play the instrument on the stage, in front of alter. The public is involved into the sea of sound, not knowing where source of voice is. The lack of light automatically turns their focus to sound. Interaction of lights, colors and sound bring the audience to transcendental atmosphere, through synthetically impressions.⁶⁸

The traditional song is a consequence of the need to express emotions through music. Man communicates with the spiritual world and the another man through song.

The show appealed to both communication situations: man with God and nature and man with another man. In cultures with the oral way of expressing the relation of man to God or with Nature we observe singing - as an example of prayer, which is residue of shamanic rituals, presented in the vocal techniques such

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Recordings from the performance "*Korjen in synagoge*" (*op. cit.*).

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FISCHER-LICHTE, E. *Estetyka performatywności*, Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka 2008, pp. 98-99, 198, 208. Fischer-Lichte considers affecting the spectator; the author points, that physical closeness of actors and spectators is a way to abolish the allusiveness in theater. Discussing the illusory and the reality of the experience in theatre, Fischer-Lichte pays the attention on the perception of the spectator, and underlines that looking and seeing results automatically in distance, and improves the handling of theatrical illusion , whereas the effect of sound and light simultaneously evokes sensory experience. It puts the spectator in the position of actively experiencing the reality of the place and another human.

as in Tuva or in Lapland. Different varieties of throat singing are imitating the sounds of nature, for example hissing" with *sygit*⁶⁹ is mimicking the rustle of leaves. Similarly operates *joik*⁷⁰ singing tradition Lapland. Singers of both these culture worship Earth, Heaven, God with the help of specific vocal techniques.⁷¹ Throat-singing techniques used in the performance of the synagogue, for example in a scene where we sing from the altar with candles synagogue specific hymn to honor God and love. These themes are accompanied by the Armenian song "Jerkir" and melorecitation Biblical The Song of Songs. We found analogy between the Biblical The Song of Songs and the Armenian song in terms of the lyrical situation.



Photo No.7: Preparing the bride

In communication of one person with another, the spectator experiences a

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Sygit is a one of overtone singing technique. I was researching this technique and its context during the trips to Tuva, 2007. Musicians while describing the techniques of singing, refer to the observations of nature; *sygit* they scribe the whistle of leaves. More: *Anna Marie Hefele*: Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://www.anna-maria-hefele.com/>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHTF1-IhuC0>

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Joik is a specific technique performed by Sami people in Lapland, Northern Scandinavia. Sami are indigenous inhabitants of today's Lapland; this way of singing is rooted in animistic beliefs and practices and is used to worship gods and nature. Sami people are very tied to the environment they live, so that many common situation is marked by emotional relations with animals, trees, mountains, lakes. *Joik* is often performed "towards" the tree, or deer. Observations comes from a research trip to Lapland in 2009, in frame of doctoral studies at Academy of Performing Arts DAMU in Prague. More: *Music from Lapland*. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://www.lapland.fi/en/living/culture/music>.

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I refer only to the cultures which I visited it means Tuva, Siberia and Lapland/ Sami culture. Those cultures cultivate the way of singing connected with shamanism and animism.

transformation through sound, thanks to its spiritual strength.⁷² It is also worth mentioning this use of spiritual aspects of sound are characteristic even in ancient culture, where religious aspects of music appeared in theater⁷³. Joining the celebration of the ancient rituals and everyday life during Dionysia aimed to integration and socialization of different social layers.

This aspect of non-verbal musical communication has been undertaken by Don Ihde in his studies, where he investigates sound from phenomenological perspective. Ihde writes: "Meaning *in* sound embodies language."⁷⁴ Continuing this considerations we can state that melody, rhythm and intonation encompass all the ringing properties of voice expands semantic sphere of language.

d. Religious song and sacral space

During the meetings with singers in Bulgaria, I was attracted by songs associated with secular and religious rituals. I would identify this kind of song as the seed for a dramatic situation, due to their transgressive properties.

Their context refers in fact to the rituals and behaviors related to a particular ritual. During the meetings with Bulgarian or Ukrainian singers I was observing how structure, tonality and technique reflect particular emotions. Wedding songs, harvest songs or working songs seem to be the seed for dramatic situations that are very inspiring to use in theatre. In the movie, singers explain wedding songs performed by a bride's mother.⁷⁵

In a music performance in synagogue we present rituals associated with an entering marriage. Songs which used to accompany to wedding ceremonies aim to prepare bride to change of social status and occur as sad laments of mother, ribald songs of invited guests, comic short songs sung by bridesmaids. In the wedding scene we refer to the ritual of dressing the bride's veil known in Slavonic as well as Balkan culture. The bride sings the tender notes of love song, Armenian "Kele Kele"

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BROWN, R., op. cit., pp. 149-151

73

BLESSER, B., SALTER, L. R., op. cit., pp. 94 and 168

74

IHDE, D. *Listening and voice. Phenomenologies of Sound*, State university of New York Press, 2007, p. 150

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More: *Intervals. Documentary movie about Bulgarian singers made during the doctoral studies*. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://vimeo.com/4465961>. Examples: „Nevesto Mari hubava" (14:33'), where mother is mourning because of the daughter departures from family home. In the song "Proštavaj Majko" (15:44), the bride express sorrow that she will never be back at home, and since marriage, the mother in law will take care of bride.

from central place in front of altar. Melody sounds romantic, slow, subtle and reflects thoughtfulness.

This musical atmosphere is contrasted with two other songs, which appear like a comment. One singer - older woman sing the Bulgarian lament "Marko Bije"⁷⁶ about the bitter sides of marriage. Second singer sing Bosnian lament.

In this way the bride is introduced to mature word by married women.

In the wedding scene we refer to the ritual of dressing the bride's veil, known in Slavonic, as well as Balkan culture.⁷⁷ In this way songs created the scene referring to universal symbolic comprehend for multicultural audience of Prague.



Photo No.8: Bride

Traditional songs and themes contained in them become the basis for building a dramatic text in performance. Musical – theatre composition echoes in the viewer with its over semantic value. Excitement reaches public through musicality of all components of the performance. We may recall again the words of

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Intervals. Documentary movie about Bulgarian singers made during the doctoral studies (op. cit.). Song Marko Bije performed by singer Baba Elena Bouživa (min. 31:45) is about the wife, who betrayed her husband and he beats her. Woman betrayed husband with "turčin" - the man who converted the Orthodox faith to Islam. This motive of Turkey as a negative character appears often in Bulgarian songs – religious, love songs, ballads – as reflection of historical Bulgarian-Turkish conflicts.

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Czech folklorist KUBA, L. describes common roots of Balkan and Slavonic cultures. More about author and his research achievements in: <https://sites.google.com/site/ludvikkuba1/zivot-a-dilo>

researcher and expert in the field of phenomenology of sound - Prof. Don Ihde: "Music amplifies the dramaturgy of sound."⁷⁸

To sum up, I can say that the performance of "Korjen in synagogue" inspired a variety of reactions and reflections among spectators from different cultures and religions. Reference to the acoustics of space and semantic aspects of synagogue, helped in building a performance at the level of culturally universal themes.

Drawing from various cultures, musical heritage, both Roman Catholic sacred music traditions, Muslim, Orthodox, Jewish and secular rituals of European culture, were a form of multicultural spectacle. Stage concert at the same time became the fruit of trans cultural dialogue between artists of musicians from Korjen ensemble, who brought into this space and unique musical arrangements tuned to their national roots. Thus, the music performance became a part of the current site-specific stream, treating the sacred space of the synagogue as a starting point for artistic creation.

2. Folklore of post-industrial spaces. Ideas of project as intercultural cooperation on the example of site specific project in Czech Republic and Poland

2.1.Site specific and documentary theatre in context of space animation. Performance "Woman in a mining landscape of Mayrau" in Kladno, Czech Republic

The site specific performance "Woman in a mining landscape of Mayrau" connects sound arts, physical theatre with the emphasis on vocal expression. Performative activities undertaken during the preparation and the show aimed to map articulation of the former coal mine. Due to the fact, that the main tool was sound and voice, I will develop a description the project in terms of musicality of space. In the introduction I would like to point the cultural and social aspect, as well, to present the wider background of this production.

Since "industrial heritage" signifies different things for different countries depending on political, social and economical situation, the this project has been conceived to be relevant in three countries: Czech Republic, Poland and Germany.

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IHDE, D., *op. cit.*, p. 156

"In different social settings, the same acoustic features have different meanings, which then influences the mood and behavior of people in those settings."⁷⁹

Each realization will follow similar principles of devised work, briefly marked below. The dramaturgy of the piece is related always to documentary aspects of each space, the specific audible and architecture features of a particular coal mine, as well as its history. In this part of my essay I will refer to Czech realization. However, importance of international level of this project calls for a bit of an explanation. Therefore I will introduce main ideas of projects and its assumptions:

- The main issue of the project is the phenomenon of work in post-industrial spaces reflected in site specific performance.
- Research into acoustic aspects of former industrial spaces; sound-scape in former industrial spaces. Sounds of working place, sonic objects and instruments built with materials found in a space as artistic inspiration for musical works.
- Musicality (of space, of local folklore) as an element that connects working place with art space.
- Documentary aspect as the material for a script; art team gathers materials from historical archives and personal narratives – interviews, video and audio recordings related to particular place of work.
- The project aims to explore relation between human and place and character of work in particular industry from cultural, sociological, anthropological, ecological and geological perspectives.
- Work as an element of collective national memory and experience in Germany, Poland and Czech Republic. Work as measure and aim.
- Voice as individual human expression in post industrial spaces, where human has been replaced by machine.
- Medialisation in industry and arts; craft replaced/enriched by manufactures and technique, natural voice replaced/enriched by sound design.

What is the contribution for inter-cultural cooperation

Culture heritage of neighboring European countries: Germany, Poland and Czech Republic are connected through historical experiences - both positive and negative. The aim is to build transcultural relations between bordering countries: Germany, Poland, Czech Republic in aspects of historical changes. Emigrations and migrations caused by work and political changes are taken into consideration.

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BLESSER, B., SALTER, L. R., op. cit., p.3

International artistic activities in post-industrial spaces are exchange of experiences between countries from post-communist industrialized states and capitalist industrialized countries. Due to the fact, that economical, political and social decisions are conditioned by natural sources, we research the influence of ecological factors in Germany, Poland and Czech Republic for a character of work, as well as for specificity of post-industrial spaces. Contemporary changes of national identity are modulated by changes of working place, searching for job, assimilation of foreign nations, discussion and perfusion between German, Czech and Polish societies. Additionally, different perception of spatial relations in post-communist industrialized states and capitalist industrialized countries opens the scope for creative artistic enterprises. Therefore this project endeavor to build European identity of bordering countries belonging to European Union through artistic activity which strengthen collective culture heritage.

Process and execution of the project

The art team working by performance in Kladno consisted of creators from various disciplines: academic scholars and students of Academy of Performing Arts DAMU and Academy of Music HAMU in Prague, independent artists, exterior collaborators: scientists like geologists, historians and anthropologists.

Undoubtedly, in any kind of site specific project, space is a point of departure. For this reason preparations were preceded by few months of research in space. We made a few trips to Kladno in order to recognize the space and devise to structure of work. We were guided by former coal miner through the rooms of Mayrau several times, and gathered considerable documentary material. We had notes, pictures of space, videos of usable machines. Audio recordings were made in various rooms and they were taken from different angles to check the aural architecture of each room⁸⁰.

The art team made interviews with a few miners and women who worked in mine Mayrau: Olina Vyšínová, Eva Novotná⁸¹. During this few months of mapping, which preceded work in space, I made a first draft of script.

Due to the fact, that the only accessible space in Mayrau was the huge corridor and a few rooms dedicated mostly to female work: handing out food. Here

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BLESSER, B., SALTER, L. R., op. cit., p. 5

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Audio: *Interviews with former women miners* available on attached DVD

we gained a key to the topic of our work - female perspective of work in coal mine. Additionally, I investigated the themes of work and female society involved in mining culture and work in industry from historical and sociological perspective. I used theoretical tools like literature (Jiřina řiklová, Elfriede Jelinek), and also met with several female artists and anthropologist who had made some artistic work or works on the field of community arts: Lenka Klodová, Dagmar řubrtová, Renata Malá, Jasanka Kodjamanová. Thanks to their experiences I got broaden scope of what Mayrau as a mining museum and art centre had been up to now.



Photo No.9: Women work - rations of food

Due to the interdisciplinary character of the project I explored the scientific and cultural materials from various sources, e.g. archive in Mayrau. I overlooked articles dedicated to post industrial heritage and publications about soundscape of post industrial spaces, as well as and historical documents about mining. It was important to explore former performative activities in Mayrau as well, so that I had several appointments with artists and curators involved in art works in museum in Kladno. I shall mention some of relevant personalities like Rolf Dennemann, Tomáš řiřka, Lenka Klodová, Martin Zet, Martin Janiček, Michael Delia and, off course, Dagmar řubartová, whose curating contribution in artistic development of the Mayrau museum was matchless.

Nevertheless, the most fruitful was experiencing the space, so every visit in Mayrau led me and the group one step forward. Site specific approach was executed on following levels: space and location, documentary theatre and text, space animation through acting, interactivity and role of public.

a. Space and location

Nowadays the former coal mine in Kladno functions as a museum of mining and for many years has worked as residency space for artists from Czech Republic, as well as from abroad. I was attracted by multi-functionality of the space on the border of museal, scientific and artistic activities. I must admit that former performative actions uncovered some of the hidden topics built around mining or just inspired by acoustic or visual specificity of space.

How much is mining culture still an issue to explore for contemporary artists? To what extent are we interested in the theme of mining in a broaden perspective of the space?

The project "Woman in a mining landscape in Mayrau" is based around the space and explores the relations with space; following words of Tomáš Žižka:

"Site specific art deals with the relations with space and searching for topics expressed by this space."⁸²

In the performance the methodological point of departure is phenomenology, with its first Husserlian notion of *experiential presence*. It means that the entire reality of the space - as we perceive it nowadays - is a contextualized significance. In order to recognize these meanings, we made a few workshops in the particular rooms. The following exercises were proceeded:

- Choreography built on rhythm of work done on particular room (Kateřina Lanči).
- Building relations with space using objects found on site (Mathias Straub, Kateřina Molčíková).
- "Acoustic architecture" - location of sound and location of listener (Jan Trojan, Jan Fila).
- Dynamism of space was transformed into vocal expressions (Ewa Żurakowska, the performance was under the artistic supervision of Tomáš Žižka).

The focus on meaningful space, especially soundscape of the space was essential. What we hear, what we imagine we could have heard 50 years ago, when rooms were full of people, what we will not hear again?

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ŽIŽKA, T. (Ed.), *Divadlo v netradičním prostoru, performance a site specific*, Praha: Akademie muzických umění, p. 86

b. Documentary theatre, archives, dramatic text and role of interviews

"Yet all sounds are in a broad sense "voices", voices of things, of others, of the gods, and of myself"⁸³.

Postindustrial spaces provide not only the experience of sounds produced, they also generate a trail of humanity – a notion of a human being involved in a particular context of civilization.

That which reverberates in Kladno mining museum is a single voice - voice of a guide who worked as a miner in Kladno, voice of a woman who worked in the lamp room. Today in the Mayrau museum we can take a guide trip and hear stories about the creators of this place, we can speak with some of those included in a history of industrial era. For this reason an integral dramaturgical element were interviews with former coal miners. The documental aspect underlined sociological side of the whole work. While interviewing people who had worked in coal mine Kladno we transferred to previous époque, we could have built an image of mining culture and acknowledged habits, ethos of work, some characteristic of common day of miners and their families, as well as position of mining profession in the social scene. The living single voice was the testimony of industrial culture, which seemed to be gone. Several stories we gathered from women who had worked in Kladno were a part of script of performance.

How we built the script

Concept of the performance is thought as the "touring guide" with the guide, who leads the public through the space. In nowadays use, Minig Museum Mayrau in Vinařice (Hornický skanzen Mayrau ve Vinařicích) offers a guide tour for tourists, and the former miners work as professional guides. In the show we had two guides; one of whom was the performer and second was an ex miner- Jan Uváček.

Due to the museum's character we had two levels of reality: *real*: physical space of former mine and *fiction*: dramatic text, physical action, stenography, light design - built around creative interpretation of space.

The public was shown round by two guides: one was a former miner who nowadays works as a guide in museum – Jan Uvaček, who introduced documentary text. Second one was performer - Mathias Straub, who used documentary text

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IHDE, D., *Listening and voice. Phenomenologies of Sound*, State university of New York Press, 2007 p. 147

and introduced dramatic text⁸⁴. Their statements overlapped and we had two complementary narratives, where fiction is used to elicit realism and physicality. The museum became a performative space.⁸⁵



*Photo No.10:
Guide – former miner -
Jan Uvaček*

Documentary text consisted of: elements of interviews with male miners and female miners, archives from Mayrau museum, personal memories of people connected with mining culture, songs belonging to mining repertoire. Documentary text was used for biographical installation composed with interviews and sounds recorded in coal mine.

Dramatic text exposed female work. Melo-recitatives are composed by connecting pieces of interviews and combining them into melodic parts⁸⁶.

Main text, based also on interviews, archives was introduced by guider and performers. Additionally the prose by Czech dramatist Alexandra Berková "Temné lasky" was used.

c. Performers animate the space

Mining culture calls up associations with male culture. Also, common imaginations about mining, evokes picture of dirty man with a black face, looking at this picture we almost can smell his sweat and dust on his body. This emblematic

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Video: *Mayrau. Guiders* available on attached DVD

85

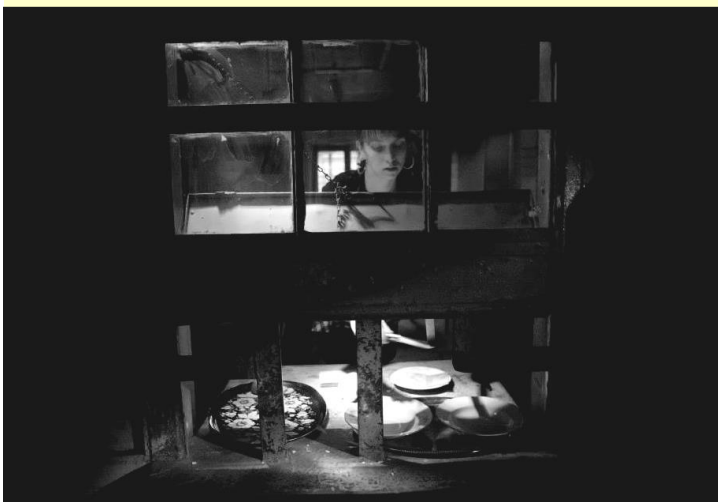
FISCHER-LICHTE, E., op. cit., p. 280

86

Video: *Mayrau. Museum* available on attached DVD

portrait of miner could represent mining in archive picture or industrial literature. We see this black male face and not much of a light beside this. Surprisingly, mining culture contains female presence as well, hidden in special rooms in mine. In our workspace this hidden topic becomes lighten. The corridors where women worked are for us real testimony of their presence, engraved in walls of lamp-room, wardrobe, kitchen-window, tea & coffee window.

The mining space also evokes picture of a huge group of working men. Our approach, again, explores the hidden topic of waiting woman - wife of miners.



*Photo No.11:
Women working in mine*

Dramatically, we use oppositions of light and dark, male and female, group and loneliness to build strength of these words.

Miner's wardrobe called "dry wardrobe" is a huge empty room, with working uniforms suspended on chains from the ceiling of a roof. They look like dead bodies and recall emptiness, death, absence, loneliness of women waiting for their miner to come back home. This room has also meaning of the end of working day. In a show women dance with the uniforms, and fulfill the space with callings to absent men.



Photo No.12: Loneliness

Thanks to the light design and sound expressions, as well as stenography related to museum aesthetic, the dichotomy between real and fiction, between museum exposition and performative installation, disappears.⁸⁷ The public is involved to the performer's intervention, and illusory character of theatrical space becomes real physical experience.

The space is animated by:

- Voice - singing of woman in the *kitchen corridor* create rhythmical noise of callings, knocking of knives, hitting of plates, swinging of pot and dropping water, ironing clothes⁸⁸
- Whispering in a dark corridor, where the public is closed and listen only to silently talking couple of miner and his wife
- Movement - choreography is inspired by automatism of industrial machines; in a *kitchen corridor* woman move in a repetitive way
- Smell - female perfumes lead the guiders and the public from the first room to the next one, also smell of food prepared for a miner provokes the movement of public to walk across the rooms of museum
- Sounds of reproduced music played from radio as a sound installation in a small male wardrobe.⁸⁹
- Sound object created from strings produces loud tones, which overlap with the protest song of being captivated by working machines⁹⁰
- Sound installation with recorded interviews resounds in a room where there are portraits of women who worked in Mayrau⁹¹
- Lights - small lamps pointed into picture exhibition, which became a part of museum exposition
- Mining lamps, which are used to light space and lead public through the corridors of museum

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FISCHER-LICHTE, E., *op. cit.*, p. 97

88

Video: *How women worked in Mayrau* available on attached DVD

89

Video: *Guide - former miner - wardrobe* available on attached DVD

90

Video: *Sound object with voice* available on attached DVD

91

Video: *Sound installations with document* available on attached DVD

- The museum space outlasts lively through stenographic intervention. We installed fragments of interviews and pictures of woman in a windows of one of corridors.

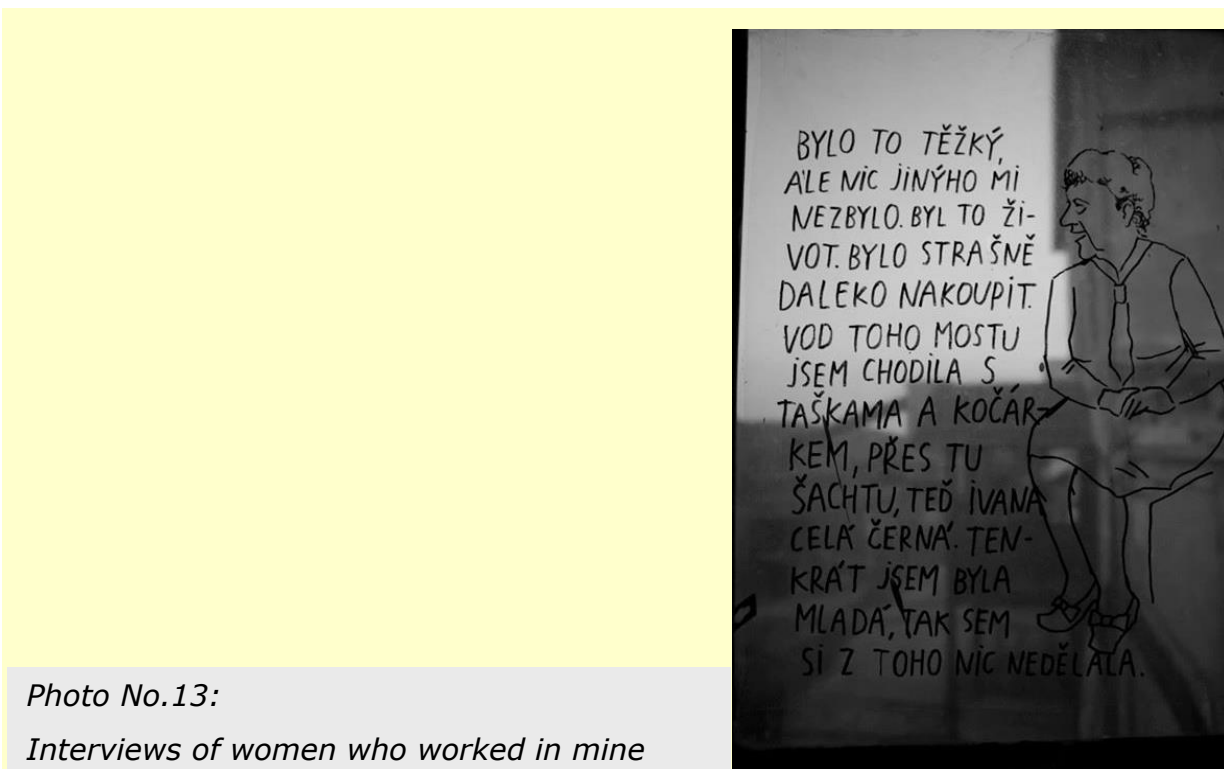


Photo No.13:

Interviews of women who worked in mine

d. Interactivity and the public⁹²

Interactive show animates the museum through performative actions and the special form of watching - through guiding tour. The performance offers a new experience of this space, it becomes a tool to read the hidden meanings of space and hidden stories of mining culture. The public is involved into the processes of liminal experience which initiates transformations.

In this process the perception is destabilized and the public must trust to the new rules of perceiving reality around. Then the redefinition of self-perception and world perception occurs.

The performance's form engages the public from the beginning through cognitive activity. Particular scenes start often in darkness and the public needs to wait for instruction from a guide to move. The space is being discovered by public sensuously.

⁹²

Video: *Interaction with public* available on attached DVD



Photo No.14:
Interactions with public

The audience is lead by light, sound, voice, smell and acquires new tool of synaesthesia to redefine the bodily presence, the phenomenological *being-in-the-world*.⁹³

Thanks to this kind of interactive elements and tactile experiences, the public has also opportunity to relate to a collective memory and is responsible for creating the meanings of narrative.

Post-industrial spaces have functioned as art spaces for decades in Western and Middle Europe in projects by ensembles like: Doegtroup from Belgium, Artscenico or Rimini Protokol from Germany, Under Construction in United Kingdom, lately various ensembles invited by Heiner Goebbels to the Ruhrtirennale in Germany and, off course, mentioned artists performed in Mayrau in Czech Republic. If we observe work of these various ensembles and very differential productions, we quickly notice how much shape of work is influenced by social and political context.

It is worth considering the site specific production in terms of revealing forsaken story through art intervention, and vice versa: revealing the collective memory through personal history. Documentary arts executed with anthropological approach gives to the creators a tool to piece together the single human story with global reflection. The audience is in this way sensitized to a story of another man.

Performative guiding tour gives opportunity for sensual participation, the post-industrial space is resuscitated as alive organism. Mining industry is personified and obtains a new dimension, anonymous workers acquire identity.

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IHDE, D. *Listening and voice. Phenomenologies of Sound*, State university of New York Press, 2007, p. 86-87

We shall always underline that animating space means building relation with space in a broader scope, it means uncovering the potential meanings of culture connected with this space.

Art intervention opens post-industrial space for dynamic cultural dialogue, where "former" foundation of space becomes an artistic inspiration for giving the new dimension.

2.2 Folk of post-industrial cultures. Performance "Mining Odyssey"

The Polish edition of this international project about the folklore of post industrial spaces was based on collections of recorded interviews, pictures and observed situations in local society of Nowa Ruda (Poland).

As for the first part of project - which took place in Kladno, Czech Republic, in a former coal mine, was the point of departure for creative work, here in Nowa Ruda the work was focused on exploring the local culture and social landscape. Therefore, the first step of the project is research into the local culture of former-mining areas in Southern-West Poland: Nowa Ruda and Nowa Ruda - Słupiec.

a. Local identity in post-industrial culture of Nowa Ruda. Former miners and dancers in nowadays: what do they share?

Local identity is always very strong in every working subculture. Here, in Lower Silesia the identity reminds a collage of roots from almost every part of Poland and former Poland (Volynha – nowadays in Ukraine, Vilnius Region - nowadays in Lithuania – Polish "Kresy" from the period before Second World War).

While usually we identify ourselves *with* something, people in Lower Silesia – as displaced society – would rather say that they *do not* identify with. They would say quite often, that "the culture here is neither German, nor Czech, but is...special...".

The situation with local identity is very ambiguous here.

On one hand people acknowledge their diverse roots – they have grandparents coming from Eastern Poland, more rare from central Poland. Also, miners who have been the dominant working class for over the millennium were speaking with pride that they have co – workers from Germany, France or even Belgium. Some have German ancestors, little of them have Czech relatives. On the other hand, they deny belonging to anything other than the Polish national circle.

Exploring the historical background, though, is not my point of interest. I would like to explore it only up to a point so as to provide for artists specific

perspective for creation.

The specific situation of local communities and their approach towards their own culture opens the field of working with *tradition, time, past* and *presence* in a specific way. It will become the core of performance "Mining Odyssey."

There are two strong identity groups in the city of Nowa Ruda and around. One is The Folklore Ensemble of Songs and Dances (Zespół Pieśni i Tańca), a second group is composed of trade unions of former miners and mining orchestra. Around folk music culture, as well as around mining culture there are many people gathered.

Therefore, I would like to focus on culture animation as it holds the liveliness in community through arts. The project may belong to the community arts. Although the aim is to make performance, the activities which precede are more than year research and workshops with two folklore groups in Nowa Ruda: Folklore Ensemble and former miners.



Photo No.15:
Workshop in Nowa Ruda:
Folklore Ensemble



Photo No.16:
Workshop in Nowa Ruda:
Mining orchestra

b. Broken continuity of music tradition - The Folklore Ensemble ZPiT Nowa Ruda

The first time I had the opportunity to meet Vocal Ensemble was in Winter 2014. I wished to work with singers on the local repertoire of folk songs. I knew already that Polish folklore from Lower Silesia is very diverse and it is problematic to describe what is "specific for the region."

One could say, that "specific" here means "diverse" or invisible, hard to depict and describe.

At the same time, the process of gathering together to sing becomes something specific as it is still alive and it gives hope that there is something to preserve. Relations within a group are strong and familiar.

While leading the workshop for the Voice Folk Ensemble, I was searching for songs with Polish words. I had a dilemma: what should I teach? If there really are no songs connected with this land, maybe we should focus on another element that binds people together? The ethos of a group is an important aspect of traditional music. (more in: Introduction). Perhaps the local music tradition for displaced people is somewhere beyond the words and texts? Here there was no "local repertoire" at all, and we had to decide on some alternative strategy that would let us simply sing together. The group, in any case, wanted to sing songs. The language makes it sometimes difficult...

Nevertheless, the workshops for singers turned to teaching the vocal techniques and building presence through vocal work, rather than teaching particular songs.

On the example of Folk Ensemble we see very clearly that local identity is not established due to space but due to what we make together. Roots of local society is so diverse that singers and dancers cannot use the collective memory according to figures in dances or patterns in melodies. They perform repertoire from all the regions in Poland, so they cannot say "this is our dance, from Lower Silesia." However, they are very proud of what they do, present the dances with due reverence and are very connected to the collective of Folklore Ensemble ZPiT Nowa Ruda. They are represented as a group and that gives them reason to feel related to the local community- even though they do not come originally from this land. Folk dancers then present their ethos of work in the way of doing something important together, being a team, building relations on trust and relying on each other. We can observe similar partnerships in the circumstances of two groups: folk

dancers and former miners.

Considering the way of working with the Vocal Group of Folklore Ensemble, I was observing how they work together. I noticed that the spirit of singing together what makes them happy, bind the group together.

Some of them were dancers before, so naturally they would connect voice with body. Some would tune rather through finding common rhythm, which also points to a strong connection with the dancing world. I tried working with body awareness while introducing the breathing and vocal exercises; but this was not successful because the physicality called for something different than that which is in the bodies of dancers who sing in modern physical theatre. Perhaps the difference is related to the collective act of giving sound (folk singers) and developing individual voice (physical theatre).

The act of being together in sound keeps the group alive. Therefore, I rather focused on voiced language,⁹⁴ which from phenomenological point of view would lead us to "presence through voice."

Considering the relation of "what we sing" to "we sing," I came to the issue of word and voice.

Following the thoughts of Professor Don Ihde about the language and its centre (described in the chapter "Centre of language"⁹⁵) I would like to relate written language and spoken language in terms of "being in a voice." Ihde says that the moment we learn to read we enter another perception, built on written word: "Once having entered the second embodiment, word without voice is possible."⁹⁶ This means that with the end of oral culture we lost the ability of pure (meaningless) voice perception. In traditional forms like callings and onomatopoeic vocalizations practiced by some ethnic groups in Serbia (more in the introduction chapter to Svetlana Spajić) this kind of pre-semantic vocal communication still exists.

In my work (as artist or as leader of artistic projects/workshops), the essential aim is to get to the moment when singers can immerse in an ocean of their voices so that they embody music. It means that the semantic word gives

94
IHDE, D., *op. cit*, p.150

95
Supra, pp. 147 – 154

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Supra, p. 153

the location to the voice. The encompassing voice leads us to strengthen the relation of body and voice and the relation between singers.

Then, no matter – singing words or using calling, the presence results from a creation of collective sound.

As for the reciprocal communication of speech, nothing in fact communicates uniqueness more than voice.⁹⁷

The singers then deliver this vocal presence instead of the notion of words. Once we experience the semantic power of voice, the voice without word is possible. Voiced – word perception was valid for the last time in oral cultures – these are considered as traditional cultures. So there, we observe how the songs are being born in the realm of spoken language and people who speak (and sing) do not imagine, that “non voiced word” exists. That changed completely their imagination about sound and language. After having worked with the Vocal Ensemble in Nowa Ruda I would risk saying that the group represents some of the features of oral traditions, due to their sound imaginary and strong collective spirit in a group.

Their voices are, as Ihde says “pregnant with significance but not yet word.”⁹⁸

Of course, the society in Nowa Ruda bears only some behaviors of traditional cultures, according to the musicality and the centre of word, language and embodying.

We practiced singing outside in search of a location that would encourage work with exterior architecture of land. My attempt was kind of applying the thought of “per – sona” which is described by Professor Ihde as the act of becoming live through sound. I am giving voice, therefore I am – simply speaking.

Nevertheless, the natural landscape was not the key to develop the enthusiasm for singing of the group. As I mentioned the relation to the place is very important for them. As such I was searching for spaces that are important for them, where the group would feel “on the right place.” I wanted them to feel familiar, like “*u siebie*” (“feeling home”) I needed to find the key to this specific collective.

Through the few months of rehearsing voice and movement we tuned to each other in a way of building musical presence. Singing in a group let us enter the

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CAVARERO, A., *For more than one voice. Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, p. 196

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IHDE, D., *op. cit.*, p.154

wider situation of communicating without words.

As Prof. Cavarero says:

“One regards the uniqueness of voice that is for the ear, the other resounds in the musicality of language itself. Both have a physical corporeal substances.”⁹⁹

The Folklore Ensemble from Nowa Ruda is reminiscent of the Bulgarian ensemble Sanseto Slunce, whom I met during research in the Balkans. They have been still cultivating the singing customs, which were previously practiced as only accompaniment to the work on the field. After the rural territories has changed into more industrialized, they step by step were giving up the work on the field. But they kept singing and being together. Therefore the fact of singing together enabled group of Bulgarian women to survive as a collective (more in the *Introduction*).

The function of singing in the Voice Ensemble brings them to the traditional ensembles where music maintains the social structures, binding people together. Therefore, when I started to search for space to sing, I knew the space would have to belong to the map of collective imagination. Finally, we found the space of a Neo-Gothic church. Singers were located upstairs on both sides of the choir. They sang facing one another, so the voice resonated along the arches of the structure with Polish religious song was performed in canon and the voices resonated the whole space of church. Because singers were far from each other (the church is wide about 15 meters and has long resonance) it demanded not only listening but also observing partners, what allowed for coexisting in the collective rhythm. Meaning, that we touched the strongest attributes of the group: collectivizing. In this way I believe I found, eventually, the key to sing one song with the group.

c. Situation of mining industry nowadays

In the case of music traditions - the dancers still dance and musicians still play, which keeps them together as a group. In case of coal mining - mines were closed, miners stopped working due to economic circumstances and political decisions. Although mines were closed, some mining customs are maintained as a representation of a former culture, which continues to be a basis of pride in Nowa Ruda.

Once a year there is a gathering around the male community called “*karczma piwna*” (beer pub), when men sing typical mining songs and play games, some of which reflect initiations to the miner's society. The second important celebration is

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CAVARERO A., op. cit., p. 198

"Barbórka" (Saint Barbara is a patroness of miners). All miners are gathered in the city and march through the streets; they visit local governments and the mining museum – their previous place work. The museum chief is currently a woman, named Barbara, something that enhances the event with a taste of theatricality.

Both events are celebrated with due reverence, but also spontaneously. These are days when the memory about mining culture revives. The Mining Orchestra is honored by the city mayor during significant city celebrations, and treated with dignity.

There is an important issue on the economic and political level associated with the future situation of mining in this area. The Australian company "Coal Holdings" has plans to restart mining in the areas of Nowa Ruda and Nowa Ruda- Słupiec. I set-up an appointment with the director of Coal Holding representation in Poland, Andrzej Zibrow. Three years ago Zibrow (a former miner) organized a few conferences with specialists of industrial resorts, whose opinions and investigations would be decisive in the future steps for mining in Nowa Ruda and surroundings. Soon after that, they began initial investigations and recognitions of the situation of the former mining areas. After receiving permissions, they are expected to start to mine again. According to Zibrow's opinion mining is going to come back to its former kingdom. If it happens the problem of unemployment in the coal mining areas would be solved. There will appear about 1500 work places, the whole transport will grow up as well. In the former coal mining industry in Nowa Ruda and Nowa Ruda - Słupiec (mine "Piast" and mine in Nowa Ruda - Słupiec) there were 6000 people employed. However, most of the former coal miners are now over 60 years of age, meaning that they will not come back to work. There will be a perspective for getting employment for the next generation, many new potential employees will come to work from all Lower Silesia. There is also a plan to open new schools preparing to mining professions.

I asked Zibrow if the older miners would be needed as teachers for a younger generation. But the education would probably involve new tools. New mining technologies will be applied, so the former miners will not be able to transmit their knowledge and work experience.

This short description shows that no matter how the situation in mining industry develops, even in the case of opening the mines again, there will be a generational gap between the former miners and the new generation. This "gap" - discontinuity within generations - becomes the dramatic point in building the performance.

In this perspective, as artists we may try to preserve the memories of single human representing the peeling, vanishing era. Beside this, What interests us is the relationship between human and work; we would like to talk about the human without work that gave the importance his single life. Miners became important social group due to their profession. They lost this significance due to losing the possibility to work.

d. Preparation to the performance. Research and artistic tools – culture animation and community arts. Workshops in Nowa Ruda and Wrocław. Final show: “Mining Odyssey” in frame of “Wrocław - European Capital of Culture 2016”

During the autumn of 2014 the Grund-ig collective (Małgorzata Chodyna, Paweł Sokołowski, Jacek Szczepanek and Ewa Żurakowska) started preparation for the project. During the two week residency in Nowa Ruda, we made appointments with 2 groups of miners and met the mining orchestra as well. The conversations were focused on the specificity of mining work. We inquired about rules and habits practiced underground and about habits typical for miners and their families after work.

Rather than doing typical ethnological research, which would require using the tools as quantities categories according to subject interviewed, we depicted the category of quality. Therefore we focused on the way they talk, the atmosphere they paint with words and metaphors, as well as the moments they just kept silence. The memories were sometimes nostalgic, comparisons and metaphors of mine as another time-space kingdom were surprising; we spent hours with the miners... These recordings as documentation became part of the sound installation in a photo exhibition and in further performance. Our attempt was also to animate the society through our artistic tools, therefore we invited miners from orchestra to perform in the spectacle.

Recollections free time or pauses in work helped us to create the scene of free time in the performance. Men would recall the “golden years for their lives...”: *“There were cafés on each corner, dancing halls! Completely different than today. And the weekends! You cannot imagine how vivid it became on Friday evening. We would take our women and go dancing... Taxis could not follow!”*



*Photo No.17:
Around the table with coal*

We were searching for the keys according to the phenomenon of work, ethos of work and mutual responsibility. There was a strong sense of cooperation. "I could always count on the colleague next to me," "No way I would not give a hand to the other." Work tied them together and with a group spirit. All the interviewed men were behaving with simplicity and pride. All they have till now strong local identity. Nevertheless, miners were telling us also about the multi-ethnic society of Nowa Ruda, with its diverse nationalities, was not dividing people whose work was so much uniting.

Artistic tools. The performance "Mining Odyssey" in a coal barge in Wrocław

The artistic perspective of the "Mining Odyssey" project was defined by the topic: memory of vanishing mining culture, which is being preserved by Mining Orchestra in music and by the Folklore Ensemble of Nowa Ruda is being preserved in dance. As such, those two groups were involved in a show. Developing dance and music was an inspiration for engaging contemporary dancers from Pantomime Theatre in Wrocław and the experimental singers named Choir of Industrial Sounds (artists from Lower Silesia and Prague). We wanted these artists to engage mining folklore with their artistic tools and reflect the memory of vanishing culture in a new perspective. We deliberately invited contemporary artists whose work was not connected with the mining industry, and were beyond the examining context. The anthropological approach teaches that the foreigner introduces a perspective

that is fresh, enriching, and close for the viewer. As outsiders they could depict this what can be preserved in a universal way. In this way, culture we research can be shown in another light, and something surprising can be revealed.

Nevertheless the second part of rehearsals was aimed at recalling the space of the coalmine through sound and movement, combining industrial soundscape created by a beatbox. Choir and choreography made by pantomime dancers. We had to find a model of working that allows dancers to react for sounds in literary and abstractive way.

From a directing point view, this collaboration of two interactive groups (dancers, beatboxers) requires each to create a code. So then, the language of gestures, steps and figures can meet the language of sounds. I divided work on two blocks where the beatbox choir could rehearse their material according to the script and dancers could do the same. Then we spent the second half, or rehearsing time, together and both groups would inspire one another. The time to prepare the show was very short; we had 5 days to make the structure ready to show, therefore we had little time for improvisations and focused on making the series of understandable scenes.

The script contained two narratives:

1. Vertical, big narrative; within the big narrative the folklore of industry was presented in a preserved form. The Mining Orchestra and Folklore dancers presented themselves. It was a pure manifestation of that which the Nowa Ruda heritage is today.
2. Horizontal, small narrative introduced the public to underground world. We structured it as "One day of miner's life" to make a linear story. This is the part where act: Pantomime dancers - Nowy Ruch and Choir of Industrial Sounds. However, I wanted those two narratives to overlap to enable the encounter of past with the present. Therefore rehearsals were also focused on searching for the link between the nowadays represented by folklore and past represented by modern theatrical tools. It was a challenge to meet these two worlds.

Our attempt was to consider folklore of post-industrial spaces as testimony of local heritage and in terms of ethos of work. The rehearsal were organized around following activities:

1. Movement. New perception of time and space introduced in the industrial age used by actors of physical theatre; movement and dance as tools to express human partnership and mechanization of human movement. We will have two dancing

groups on a coal barge.

2. Sound installation. The soundscape of post-industrial spaces as a material to create sound score to the performance; recordings of sounds of coal mine space, recordings of sounds of machines are used to create the "sound library". The sound installations with these recording become part of performance on coal barge.

3. Voice of industry - choir. Finding the connection between human voice and technology. The beat box choir produces the sound of mining machines.

Workshop in Nowa Ruda – animation of local culture

The first meeting was organized to introduce all the groups involved in the performance. It was aimed at acknowledging each other with accessible material and tools. At the beginning the Folklore Ensemble presented their folk dances. A couple of dances from Lower Silesia were found and prepared by the choreographer Ewa Miś-Krzemińska, especially for the "Mining Odyssey" performance. The Pantomime dancers from Wrocław were observing and searching inspiration for their choreography.

The keys were:

The body's reaction to sound, partnership in folklore dance vs mutuality in physical theatre, abstractive movement vs meaningful gestures; collective choreography vs. solo dance; body and machine; synchronization vs. automatism.

The same day we made a movement workshop for contemporary dancers. The aim was to transform the key issues associated with working underground. As a leader of this workshop I wanted to go deeper into sensuality and imaginary of dancers, although this experience is "not possible to describe"- as the interviewed miners often emphasize.

We were going through cold and hot, thick and transparent, dynamic and static, closeness and distance – finding those feelings in body positions, for instance. "How does my body react to enormous heat?" "What happens with the group when we have to escape very quickly?" "How I hold my colleague in a dangerous situation, when he is about to fall?" They tried to inspire with the positions and gestures dealing with movement of body, collective movements and being as a group.

Also, positions in pairs related to the folk dances were elaborated to single figures or gestures. Dancers built couple of figures expressing the supportive role of partner; in which the public could read the appreciation, closeness and mutuality.

Also we were working with speed, changing tempo, slowing down, being

in silence and absolutely rush. Everything aimed to acknowledge the environment of a coal mine.

Folklore meets pantomime¹⁰⁰

On the second day, pantomime dancers presented a workshop for folklore dancers under the leadership of choreographer Piotr Soroka. The meeting of two different dance cultures was astonishing. Folklore dancers were taught basic pantomime steps and some rules of acting with their bodies in another convention that they had thus far known. Piotr and two dancers from Nowy Ruch: Agnieszka Charkot and Agnieszka Dziewa demonstrated ways to construct narrative through movement, creating partitures of concrete situations such as cutting bread, dressing up their shirts, expressing emotions in enlarged gestures. Young folk dancers were very interested and succeed in learning the new techniques. Transition between the folklore and pantomime ended up with the scene introducing the linear narrative "One day of miner's work".

Sounds. Brass orchestra and beat box choir

During the workshop Mining Orchestra presented their repertoire which will be the part of show. We listened to the collection of pieces which are usually presented during mining festivals and city celebrations. Twenty five musicians playing in a brass orchestra made momentous, weighty impression¹⁰¹. Their performance is set with the Choir of Industrial Sounds on the coal barge¹⁰².

In order to explore the soundscape of a coal mine, we organized a trip to the former coal mine near to Nowa Ruda. Under the artistic leadership of sound designer Jacek Szczepanek, participants of the Industrial Choir checked what kind of noises are produced by the machines and explored the acoustics of space. They prepared a collection of sounds gathered before by Jacek Szczepanek and elaborated to beat box form by Jan Melichar – an artist from Prague. Their team worked in Nowa Ruda under the eye (or rather ear) of a former coal miner who plays in today's Mining Orchestra. He assesses whether the beat boxers sound reliable, according to his memories from the coal mine.

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Video: *Pantomime dancers teach folklore dancers* available on attached DVD

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Video: *Mining orchestra* available on attached DVD

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Audio: *Industrial Choir; interviews with miners are combined with sound of coal mine*. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <https://soundcloud.com/heavyindustryisme/przemysl-ciezki-to-ja-zwiastun?in=heavyindustryisme%2Fsets%2Fprzemysl-ciezki-to-ja-rozmowy-czesc-polska>

Final show: "Mining Odyssey"

The history of mining overlaps with the history of Wrocław. In the past, barges loaded with coal passed through the sluice under the Osobowicki Bridge. In this way the show takes place in a spot where the history of mining intersects two roads – water and land.

The performance refers to two spaces: space recalled by collective memory of former miners and the real space of the show - coal barge, which is located on the Oder River near the Osobowicki Bridge.

On the barge we gathered the four groups of artists. The public watches the show from the riverside.

The show begins with the movement of barge, at the same moment Mining Orchestra starts to play. After that the Folklore Ensemble presented their collection of dances from Lower Silesia. Then there is transition; folklore dancers show the preparation to the miners' work. But they will not go underground on their own. In this way we underline the break in generation chain, as the young generation will not continue the mining work.

We recall the mining world by showing underground reality. This part is performed by the Nowy Ruch Pantomime Theatre and Choir of Industrial Sounds. Then we introduce the linear narrative of "A day in the life of a miner".

Work in a coal mine is so connected with the soundscape of the mines that it definitely influence movement. The idea was to have two teams: a Choir of Industrial Sound would make the sound of a certain tool and the dancers would respond with certain body positions. In this way we structured interactions between movement and sounds. Contemporary dancers also constructed a working machine for a show. In the figures we were trying to find the distinction between human and machine movement. The whole choreography aimed to touch the ethos of group work also in dance as the kind of movement which also "work of body." After the scenes "One day from miner's work" the show turned to the big narrative.

The pair from the Folklore Ensemble performs again the scene of preparing the miner to work. We are in the circle of miner' work, the miner stays on the barge, the woman goes out and waves to him. The coal barge moves with the sound of trumpet. The trumpeter, a former miner plays the song of emigrants, who had to leave the industrial spaces as the mines were closed. The odyssey passes away... but the memory of single life, the pair of woman and man, pair of grandson and grandfather still resounds. The chain of broken traditions was

played to hold the memory of mining culture.

The performance juxtaposes individual and collective, past and presence, local and global in terms of work in contemporary world. Exposing movement and static scenes, male and female elements, as well as automatism of work evoke reflection about body in contemporary theatrical discourse.



*Photo No.18:
Folklore Ensemble
and Mining Orchestra*



*Photo No.19:
Folklore Ensemble*



*Photo No.20:
Pantomime dancers
as miners*

3. Traditional song as inspiration for land art. On the example of international project: „Woman, skin, song and bone“

Devised visual performance combining puppets, textile art, video art and old singing traditions: tracing the images before words, voices before songs, movements before dance and touches before battles. Singing creates and moves stage images, primitive puppets weave the eternal field of ancestors, and the video projections bring another level of time spinning thus a cycle of life and death.

The project „Woman, Skin, Song and Bone“ began during a residency at culture centre MokS in Estonia in 2013. The main idea was to transform the surrounding landscape through the notions of traditional songs and their symbolism, as well as regional customs. The clue was to research the world of female customs within traditional societies and contemporary urban society. Nevertheless, to create the performance about the feminine in diverse cultures, based on the relationship between human and nature.

Artistic team Neceser consisted of international members, who brought into play their own traditions from Slovakia, Finland, Czech Republic, Poland and Sweden. The group spent the month-long residency working in sound studios and outside making land art installations and interventions.

The method used was devising theatre of the following components: puppetry theatre and dramaturgy of object manipulation (Kateřina Fojtikova), audiovisual arts, sound design, video art (Susanne Kass), traditional vocal techniques and physical theatre (Ewa Żurakowska), artistic weaving (Lucie Novačkova), voice as tool of meditation (Světlana Sarkisjanova). Each of us introduced her own workshop to the collaborative work.

Invaluable to this project and to my artistic contribution were courses taken from performers transforming the heritage of traditional cultures to contemporary art: Svetlana Spajić, Natalia Polovinka, Sergiej Kovalevič (chapter: Research). They significantly gave the direction of our, at least my artistic work. To notice the link of their school and our work I will often reference to materials brought from master courses with these artists and art pedagogues in this text.

3.1. Residency in Estonia. Working in a spirit of collaborative arts; Estonian folklore meets traditions from Czech Republic, Poland, Finland, Slovakia

The team Neceser found themselves in a space, where geographical location, topography and cultural background influenced the shape of artistic work.

The Cultural Centre MoKS is situated in a small village in Estonia and is surrounded by forests, lakes, fields and trees. These elements of the natural world became the arena of our creative work, estimating the value of nature for its own sake, but also building relationships with nature. Emily Brady in her essay „Aesthetics in practice: Valuing the Natural World” shows a tight link between aesthetic experience and „ethical attitude towards the environment”¹⁰³. In order to build the attitude towards space around we researched local folklore.

Research of folklore

Even before coming to MoKS centre for the residency, we were collecting documents of Estonian folklore. Our team made trips to local centres of folklore to explore Baltic traditions.

In our interest were female customs, secular rituals related to the natural and spiritual word in traditional societies, as well as religious ceremonies connected with changing social status.

I did the first research on Kihnu island, which is culturally significant and an essentially matriarchal society. The old customs and songs have persisted there longer than anywhere else. Cultural heritage on Kihnu was very helpful for artistic enterprises; exercises and activities. The island is entered by the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, and so the traditional songs of the society Seto leelo from Southern-Easth Estonia are covered under the patronage of UNESCO¹⁰⁴. Among materials gathered in museum of Kihnu there were filmed materials, DVD, pictures, books (almost all in Estonian language). All these scenes of female celebrations, situations from daily life and female activities are documented on video¹⁰⁵. Female activities in Baltic countries, especially on islands

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BRADY, E. *Aesthetics in Practice: Valuing the Environment* (in:) *Environmental Values*. 15(2006). Retrieved September, 26, 2015, from: <http://www.ericademon.co.uk/EV/EV1512.html>, p. 277

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Available on Internet. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00173>, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-5Lz_p5Ey4

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Video: *Kihnlased 1991 - 1994 (Kihnu islanders 1991 - 1994) compiled by Ingrid Rütel* available on attached DVD

were an integral part of identity and have been practised for generations. Not only the island Kihnu, but several other Baltic countries have developed rich female culture. Due to the fact that husbands were usually sailors and spent most of their time out of home, women gathered together while they were waiting for them. Those were perfect conditions to develop such activities as weaving, sewing, splicing threads to make dolls and baking bread. Also the weather conditions and long cold evenings encouraged women to spend their time at home.

For our work this material had inestimable value, because these customs were accompanied by traditional songs.

“As a form of cultural expression, song is associated with marked events, transformations, and the resolution of conflicts. It serves to create special kinds of temporal-spatial continua as well as to signal the support of the social system”.¹⁰⁶

Choral female compositions are performed up until today, as we had the opportunity to witness during the festival in Tartu¹⁰⁷.

Estonian folk songs are an inspiration for us also due to the structure and specific tempo, which reflects the surrounding landscape. The land forms here are subtle; not high mountains or hills, but rather flat extensive meadows, lakes surrounded by low hills of the land, soil covered with deciduous and coniferous forests. Estonian songs, which accompanied to home and work activities became a part of folklore in Scandinavia and constructed some type of behaviours comprehend also for other cultural circles. For us – performers from Finland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Sweden some melodic patterns touch motions in a similar way to how they were aimed to influence Estonians.

As we were listening to group of singers at a folk festival in Tartu we all had similar impressions about the songs. Symbolic motives created a collective memory of female societies, a specific map of behaviours which are universal and specific at the same time.

However, not only similarities, but also diversities were interesting in our work. Differences in structure, words, perspectives, semantics of songs, customs and – first of all – approaches towards cultural phenomena were leading us to the most interesting solutions, uncovering the cultural contrasts, and causing

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HERDON, M., *Song*; [in:] *Folklore, Cultural Performance and Popular Entertainments*. BAUMAN, R. (Ed.), New York - Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 166

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Video: *Festival Baltika in Tartu, July 2013* available on attached DVD

the dynamics of the work. The clue was to search for dialogue of cultural codes, finding the inflammatory points and using them to build tension and structure the dramaturgy.

Our collective folklore in Neceser. Social landscape

„When individual respond to stimuli and a spatial awareness experiment or the aural architecture of a space, their experience is necessarily influenced by the social and environmental history of their ancestors.”¹⁰⁸

Every one grows up in a certain surrounding, which influence his perception. While sharing memories, we realised how our background had engraved certain habits of thinking and perceiving reality, how the religion influenced thinking about femininity, and even how much climate influences sensation of time, space, distance, cold and hot... Working in a spirit of theatre anthropology¹⁰⁹ concluded with a more mature approach towards cultural diversity. The dynamics of a group is a summary of not only different personalities, but also the cultures of each participant of a project. Additionally, each of us brings her “past”: cultural background, collective memories from her traditions, collective imaginary... Each of artists from Neceser group have a different experience of feminine, other social perspectives of woman in society and a different point of view on emancipation. Each approach crashes with another with double strength, also due to the religious differences which dictate perception of the world. Especially, the Catholic influenced mentality of Poles – is reflected in contemporary feminine art (just to mention Katarzyna Kozyra or Dorota Nieznalska) and is as if, in contrast to the rather atheistic Czechs or quite released customs of Scandinavians. Nevertheless, each of performers would sing her femininity in different way.

Cultural backgrounds were a way to highlight the culture objectives which determine the work of performer. At the same time, this process gave opportunity to search for understanding among diversities, of linking the personal to collective and past to present, with an attempt to touch something like archetypical communication. As Barry Blesser proposes in his publication about aural architecture:

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BLESSER, B., SALTER, L. R. *Auditory Spatial Awareness an Evolutionary Artifacts*, [in:] *Spaces speak, Are you listening?* London: The MIT Press, 2009, p. 348

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More about theatre anthropology in works of Eugenio Barba, who is one of the most important directors and practitioners of this theatre branch. E. Barba, since having founded the Odin Teatret has been building the theatre pieces and collaborative works on the basement of collective spirit and ethos of group work.

„Using social cohesion as a framework, let us then connect auditory spacial awareness of architecture to the survival value of our evolutionary trajectory.“¹¹⁰

How can we work as a collective? How to connect puppetry and video art? Working in a spirit of collaborative theatre opened for us a way of supportive, diverse, sometimes not predictable work.

3.2. Establishing artistic language: songs, puppetry, sound arts, movement, artistic weaving, video art

My teachers of traditional songs underline often, that acknowledging the context is a key to singing a song from particular folklore. That means, in the case of a project which is founded as a dialogue of diverse cultures, each representative shall know her culture specificity.

Therefore, beyond inspiration of landscape and folklore, we worked with memories of our ancestors - grandmothers: the way they speak, move and smile. We gathered family pictures, stories, rituals characteristic for particular cultures we come from. Beside this we brought into the creative process our experiences of being woman in our families, countries, cultures with the emphasis of our place in a chain of generations. Tangible and intangible materials provided the team with ideas to transform them into theatrical scenes¹¹¹.

a. Around weaving – weaving in the field

As I stated before, traditional songs accompanied to a variety of domestic work, usually weaving. We recorded the weaver and her loom in Mooste. The sounds are rhythmic, but with long pauses between each hit, rapid with strong impacts on pieces of wood in a machine for weaving. It evokes something strong, irrevocable, with a taste of resettable theme or rhyme in a poem. The repeatability gives a feeling of monotony, recurrence and inevitability of fate. It recalls a mythical wheel of fortune in Greek tragedy¹¹².

The sound of the loom becomes a narrative topic. The structure and strength

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BLESSER, B., SALTER, L. R., *op. cit.*, p. 347

111
Video: *Storytelling, grandmothers* available on attached DVD

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Video: *Loom as object* available on attached DVD

of weaving serves us in many subsequent actions¹¹³: in video art, in combining a visual with sound.

Weaving, due to its repetitive structure, is worked out also as choreography with a series of little looms and threads.

We used weaving in a big magnification; each of us acts as an extension of thread; we pass the thread to next woman together with sound – syllable or calling.



Photo No.21: Body - weaving

b. Shape of song and shape of gestures, language constructions: circle in picture, repetitiveness of gesture and sentences; idea of choir

"Where the principles of traditional dramatic structure play critical roles in linear drama, the principles that govern musical structures become more imperative in non-linear theatre"¹¹⁴.

The performative aspect of musical structure, described above by Prof. Ross Brown very adequately, in the following way.

A characteristic pattern of Estonian traditional songs is the following: one woman performs one verse calling and then others join. This repeats with the beginning of every strophe. They sing in unison.

The monotonous form of the songs captures the rhythm and character of the land. Whilst repeatability of rhyme and internal structures indicates that the majority of these songs were performed by weaving or sewing. It brings anyway

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Video: *Spider woman* available on attached DVD

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BROWN, R. Live Listening: *The aural Phenomenology of theater* (in:) *Sound: A Reader in Theater Practice*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p.178

the association with the wheel, circles, dancing in a circle. Therefore these forms appear in performances.



*Photo No.22:
Wheel of Fortune*

A priceless contribution to the work was also meeting with Marie Kalkun¹¹⁵, who visited MoKS centre during our residency and had a concert there. This Estonian singer and her repertoire is influenced by the local, regional and national folklore of Estonia. We used the song "Lope, Lope," which she taught me, for vocal work. This song is rooted in work in the field and was aimed to help people to last the exhausting harvest time. It relates to the earth and the sun setting. In a monotonous rhythm of lyrics and repetitive structure let the singer immerse with the land. Our group improvised with the song using the traditional vocal techniques like callings and overlapping the voices.

All the musical forms I consider here, suggest pre-aesthetic properties of singing¹¹⁶, where the song is helpful to do something or even to survive in hard conditions or when it becomes testimony of the human relation with a spiritual zone.

Undoubtedly, the musical pattern of Estonian songs indicates strong interdependence between women themselves and woman with the surroundings. For the group of performers from Neceser, some activities (like weaving) are distant and therefore we focused on the theatrical aspects of weaving and explored

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The song was recorded during the residency at MoKS Centre, in Mooste in 08.2013. Marie Kalkun is Estonian singer, who is inspired by local and national folklore. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: [http:// www.marikalkun.com/](http://www.marikalkun.com/). Another examples of folk music performed by Marie Kalkun: <https://vimeo.com/channels/mariakalkun>.

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The term „pre-aesthetic“ is introduced here to describe the type of behaviours which are not yet a clear form, but become to be performative. I am following the understanding of the term “pre-expressive”, introduced by Barba in: BARBA, E., SAVARESE, N., *A Dictionary of Theatre Antropology. The secret Art of Performer*, 2nd edition, London - New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 216

the sound and visual aspects of working with threads.

Not only through musical channels, the motive of weaving and the pattern of singing in Estonia appears in various forms in our work.

The pattern of one performer beginning and the rest being a "choir", appears in the scene „generations". One performer is a storyteller and introduces the others to her family legends, using the symbolic gestures and vocal lines.

During one rehearsal we found gestures and sentences we remembered our grandmothers used to say. The point was to find something really typical that is engraved in our memories. We were trying to reproduce as faithfully as possible the specific melody and rhythm of particular sentence. The way performers were collecting the tunes of their ancestors was a beautiful way of uncovering the root. Some of the sentences preserved were painful, traumatic, some comic, funny... Specific melodic properties of language build a score of sentences and gestures.¹¹⁷

We have explored the specific melody of our grandmother's or mother's speech, we have tried to recall the memories of "how they used to formulate things". Then the pattern becomes a vocal line that we repeat in various rhythms, changing pitch, tempo, speed. A soloist – storyteller says the specific sentence – memory in her mother tongue, like "*Jenda, měl rad zabavu...a ja sem se stydila*" ("*Jenda used to play while I was ashamed.*") or: „*Przyszedeł, Ukrainiec. I powiedział: cicho, bo zastrzelę jak psa!*" ("*The Ukrainian came and said: Shut up, otherwise I will shoot you like a dog!*"). We repeat the sentence; first time with the same rhythm and melody and then with change of rhythm.¹¹⁸

In this way the other performers objectify this which is specific, a personal testimony. Personal document – the sentence becomes objectified notion. We end up with the scene, when the soloist tells her sequence, and others repeat melody and gestures. Once we exaggerate, the next time we zoom out the soloist. Performers while repeating, make a comment as a choir in a Greek tragedy.

Musical and movement performances became the testimony of their attempt to communicate and find cultural dialogue. Moving towards the Nature foundation is one of the ways to acquire sense the artistic creation.

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JANAČEK, L. *Folksong Tunes*, in: *On the Music Aspect of Moravian National Folksong*. Czech composer and folklorist explored the relation between spoken word and sung word on the example of language of the group researched in e. g. village Hukvaldy. Many of his observations brought him to the point of finding mutual relationships between melody and language, or rather exploring the musicality which is very influencing the way people in villages use language and when it becomes "singing text" or „speech melody".

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Video: *Storytelling II* on attached DVD

c. Wedding ceremony; songs and symbolic behaviours as dramatic situations. Rituals of transition

"The starting points which led artists away from established spaces have their origins in much older social manifestations such as rituals."¹¹⁹

Due to the topic of the project we choose the wedding songs as material to elaborate. We watched the videos of Estonian female ceremonies heritage and compared Estonian rituals with Finnish, Czech, Slovak and Polish. I brought a video recording from museum in Kihnu made by an Estonian folklorist. For our work, the scenes when the bride enters another social status of being wife is especially precious, as it portrays the liminal status¹²⁰.

The bride is kept with eyes closed and head absolutely covered for a few hours, so she loses a sense of orientation where she exactly is. She cannot see anything and is absolutely dependent to those who lead her. The family of the bride acts in a role of guardian and protector.

This state of keeping the eyes closed sharpen the sense of smell and hearing, and let us focus on experiencing space differently. We searched for some common symbols presented in this ritual: hiding hair, or combing hair, covering face with hair, wrapping the whole body in a net, being guarded by witnesses.



*Photo No.23:
Bride - state in transition*

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Art of place, p. 50

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GENNEP, van, A. *Rites de passages*, London: Routledge, 2004, p. 7



Photo No. 24: Hunted bride

Another portrait of an emancipated woman in transition is an installation of woman in the meadow with branches and white material stretched between branches instead of a veil.



Photo No.25: Married to the tree

We come back to archetypical symbols like; fortune teller (poet or weaver in case of our show) becomes a topic for installations.

An important inspiration for wedding ceremonies was a workshop in the Institute of Jerzy Grotowski in Wrocław and the session about female rituals led by Natalia Polovynka (more in chapter: *Research*).



*Photo No.26:
The rite of passage*

The song is an integral element of passing through from one state to another and deeply relates to the inevitability of fate.

The rule looks like ancient Greek tragedy, where the audience knew the plots of plays they watched, but the moment of participating in a theatre transformation guaranteed the catharsis.

In the wedding songs we have a dramatic situation of mother saying good bye to her daughter, blessing her and mourning. The atmosphere is cruel and so the wedding songs are poignant and full of sorrow. This was established in my previous research in the Balkans.

For contemporary performers this traditional reality and transition is something they can only approach. They can "translate" to our reality this performative function of singing. To make so, performer must find in his or her work intention, and her personal own passing through rituals. However, those rituals are aimed to work in society, so the work must be individual, as well as collective.



*Photo No.27:
Urban queen of the forest*

The topic of “passing through” in female society turns towards the topic of woman and wilderness. This is reflected in relation of woman and Nature; woman in transition is portrayed as an element of through locating woman in a tree.



*Photo No.28:
Urban queen of the field*

d. Text of traditional song as dramatic situation

As the topic of performance is built around traditional songs, we also refer to the songs directly. Having researched local Estonian and Baltic traditions, we chose one song to devise its meaning, and to explore its symbolism.

The Finnish song "Viimeissen kerran" tells about a girl banished from family home and doomed to a lonely journey full of bitter memories. As usual there are pictures in each strophe containing particular notions. We analysed each picture and build the vocal reflection towards the elements of a song. We created a kind of a sound-drama line which accompanies to the main voice of the song. Each performer created her own vocal story about a small part of a song. Referring to elements of the dramatic situation¹²¹ like: "girl walking with a heavy luggage through the village", "angry father shouting at girl", "sobbing mother" "mountain full of sand, that symbolises enormity of suffering carried by the girl" we use callings, words, whispering, screams, whistling, vocalised imaginations and - practised before - equivalents of landscape produced by voice. The previous exercises about reflecting landscape through vocalisations becomes very useful.

The aim was to reach the most personal emotion that performer builds towards the song and express it with voice. The voice then became an individual response to the song, a personal dialogue with the traditional motive. In this way we not only developed an originally monophonic structure of the song, but also added an individual artistic contribution to existing musical folklore¹²².

"What is for me the lonely woman wandering through the land with her bitter memory? What this picture could evoke today?" These questions are essential.

Even though, many doubts appeared while we touched the topic of rituals which are distanced to our culture, we took the challenge. Who is going to watch these installations in nature, how many people are going to witness the process we are passing through?

The series of workshops undertaken during the residency in the Estonian village aimed to deepen the individual creativity and sensibility of the performers. Whether we worked with objects, music, puppets or installation, we worked, first of all, with our presence. Therefore, the focus in my contribution to this project turned into the direction of deepening the presence. Musicality was a leading thread; musicality of movement and searching for the organic way of being through the voice. A big influence during this work was the workshop session in Institute of

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More about the dramatic situation in traditional song in chapter: Research. Svetlana Spajić: "Each song has some points, which cannot be omitted to the whole story could happen".

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Available on Internet. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <https://necesercollective.wordpress.com/look-listen/audio/>

Jerzy Grotowski and master class with Svetlana Spajić in Belgrade¹²³.

The project „Woman, skin, song and Bone” was invented to explore the personal rituals built on song and experiences with nature as a condition of the performer's work.

3.3. Land art

“This space mixes orders (...), it suspends foot print of the human world. It becomes a significant ambivalence. (...). The meadow is therefore no longer representation of the Earth's land and not quite divine.”¹²⁴

The work in open space was supposed to explore the natural human ability to read the landscape around and transform it to language of artistic codes. Therefore landscape became a point of departure; lake and field, rich and persuasive in their semantics, delivered scope of alive entities. Not without reason are fields and meadows often described as space „in between”. Earth and Heaven, space where spiritual forces rule and where life meets death. It is enough to recall ancient mythologies where the field figures as a liminal space of transformation of the chthonic life to the spiritual; Egyptian „meadow happy”, ancient Greek „Elysian fields” or Roman „arve beata”.

a. Building relation towards landscape. New folklore? Around the lake

“Some environmental philosophers have suggested that developing relationship with nature through aesthetic experiences, that is, first – hand, multi sensory, emotional and imaginative engagement, can encourage or contribute to an oral attitude toward nature.”¹²⁵

Locating the human in natural landscape is a crucial issue in our project. The village Mooste – our surrounding becomes a map, which we read through multi-sensory channels and transform to tones and gestures.

“Sense of hearing and hearing experience refers to pre-semantic perception and deepening of sensual experience.”¹²⁶

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Described in chapter: *Research*.

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Symbolika łąki i pastwiska w dawnych wierzeniach. JUREWICZ, J., KAPEŁUŚ, M. (Ed.). Warszawa: Agade, 2009, p.23: „Przestrzeń ta miesza porządki (...), zawiesza ład ludzkiego świata. Nabiera więc znamiennej ambiwalencji. (...). Łąka jest więc przedstawieniem krainy już nie ziemskiej i nie do końca boskiej”.

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BRADY, E., *op. cit.*, p. 280

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Sensual perception on the example of Hindu theatre develops in his seminary Richard Schechner; Goldsmith University 2013. I witnessed the seminary during the scholarship at Rose Bruford College; recording accessible in the archive of author.



*Photo No.29:
Elements: Earth.
Granddaughter of sand*

b. Installations and performances in the nature. Everyday rituals

Several weeks of the residency were dedicated to working in space with emphasis on building a relation with space, creating installations and performances in open air. Deepening the spatial awareness improved our ability to interact with the elements of space. We were teaching ourselves to navigate with senses, not only sight but also touch and ears.

The everyday rituals of walking and swimming have become an integral part of "earthwork". During this „tuning“ to the landscape we would illuminate the personal memories of familiar elements of landscape (in our family home the lake was smaller/bigger, so what was it like – can you sing it?) and collective imaginary (how was the mist in my family town, we never were collecting mushrooms...we had often rain in Scandinavia, we seldom have snow in Finland...).

Series of short vocal compositions inspired by the soundscape of Estonian land was made and are available on the website of the project. I used the effect on overlapping voice working with loop station. In a recording "landscape" I used the simple vocalisations to draw with voice the shape of soft hills. In "waking" I was trying to express the noises coming out from woods and ground¹²⁷.

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Available on Internet. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <https://necesercollective.wordpress.com/look-listen/audio/>



*Photo No.30:
Elements: Water.
Ophelia in swimsuit*

A big inspiration was of course creative achievements of Andy Goldsworthy, whose installations might be recalled here, as very mature testimony of building relation with elements and time, with the great respect toward Universal rules. His works decay under the weather conditions. Although ephemeral, they touch deep issue of human dependence on law of the universe.¹²⁸ Our investigations but, were not that much about the time passing, even though the life cycles were essential. Our works related rather to space than to time. Not without reason the shape of Estonian land is often compared to the shape of female body.

Therefore we adopted the exercises to the elements of nature.

Exercises

Around the lake. Folk callings and echo. Building actions

When doing vocal exercises in Mooste, we inspired ourselves by acoustic properties of exteriors. We were looking for recipients in the environment. We made series of callings over the lake, where the techniques like Slovak *halekačky*, Polish highlanders' shouting finds the new application. Inspired by plain area of Estonian village and the patterns from Estonian songs, we built voice bridges over the lake.

Who is on the other side of the lake? Who does the responding voice belong to? Why is that we hear it in this way?

Creation of the scene "calling the ancestors" is set on the both sides of the

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Available on Internet. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: More about Andy Goldsworthy: http://www.morning-earth.org/ARTISTNATURALISTS/AN_Goldsworthy.html

lake. Imagination is soaked with the sounds of the humid forest and moist fields around Mooste centre. Each element of landscape – including performers – with their uniqueness acquire *sound personality*¹²⁹ and become part of *aural architecture*, so that trees create wall that responds to the human voice.

Description of the action “calling the ancestors”

Two girls standing on the opposite shores of the lake. They shout over the water, one response to another. They communicate on the model of the Slovak *halekačky*. Callings included elements like in *fertility songs* or *joik* technique, we pay tribute to water, trees and soil; we use words like “the girl is in a forest”, “hey, where are you, dear fellow”, “what are you doing and where the waves bring you...” Simple sentences talking about the land around. The voice of human overlaps with echo.

Blessner and Salter, authors of quoted book „Spaces speak, are you listening?” give some acoustic cues to understand sonic process in echo phenomena. First of all, the basic explanation of terms:

„the adjective *aural*, which parallels to visual refers to human experience of a sonic process; *hearing*, to the detection of sound; and *listening*, to active attention or reaction to the meaning, emotions, and symbolism contained within sound.”¹³⁰

Aural information included in a specific sound from the forest suggests force of nature, kind of spiritual force...The fact that we associate the specificity of sound we hear from the other shore of the lake, with a “spiritual force” is a consequence of what we know about lakes and forests. Although we live in modern society, we are supplied with a symbolic dictionary, mythological and literary references which influence our perception. Consequently, the sonic event activates our sonic perception¹³¹.

Exploring relation of spatial, aural and visual elements we create series of land art interventions, nearby the lake. The aim is to correspond with existing aural and visual settings like weather, birds' singing, fishermen talk, sound of waves and wind. Natural acoustic processes produce new senses.

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BLESSNER B., SALTER, L.R., op. cit. p. 2: „As we hear how sounds from multiple sources interact with the various spatial elements, we assign an identifiable personality to the aural architecture, in much the same way we interpret echo as the aural personality of the wall”.

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Introduction to aural architecture, in: *Spaces speak, are you listening*, p. 5

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BLESSNER B., SALTER, L. R., op. cit. p.2

After few days of repeating this interaction with natural conditions, the performative situation of *acting through voice*, builds recognizable code. Always the sound effect is dependent on weather conditions, presence/absence of other people in the vicinity of the lake, time of the day, moisture of air.

Interacting with elements of Nature, make us sensitive to natural laws, which are often omitted in artistic creation. When space becomes a subject, instead of being object, the creation is about valuing the aesthetic properties of nature in ethic criteria, such as strengthening our attitude towards the world.

Developing the aesthetic experience of landscape with use of multi-sensory channels deepens the performer's presence beyond the cultural differences. The individual experience may be reflected in a spirit of sensual anthropology¹³² - studies dedicated to conditioning of processes of perception. Collaborative work of the international ensemble builds the artistic language.



Although our emotional reactions are conditioned by cultural background, and many scholars in neurobiology examine the processes of receiving information (visual and audio) and giving them meanings, there is still a broad realm of impulses, which are received by humans no matter the cultural distinctions.

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BLESSER B., SALTER, L. R., op. cit. p.3

Thus, the sensual experiences must in this case be encompassing and strong enough to let us be immersed in the landscape, in its duration and beauty. For this reason many of the actions are dedicated to contemplating the soundscape and recording the diversity of sound experience as a way of touching the sensual landscape.

The field recordings are useful during improvisations around the topics: woman, bone, skin and song. The point of reference is often ground, soil and land. Although the soundtracks I prepared for the teaser of the project include a little part of original field recordings, creating the melodies by voice and loop is always in reference to the field-works and experience of sound scape. The rehearsal room in Mooste art centre was permeated with the moist forest of Mooste¹³³.

c. Voice ecology¹³⁴: inner and outer landscape

During the residency in Estonia, I led several blocks of workshops built on song, breath, rhythm. Although, not all the participants were „able“ to sing, or consider themselves as “not singing” artists, they eventually started to sing and move. Most of the exercises I brought to the group came from the experiences of working with traditional singers, also contemporary performers who are inspired by folklore (described in the chapter “Introduction”). As a performer being in charge of vocal work and body – voice exercises, I would like to introduce a few of them.

We tried to apply some thesis about a collective sense of tune, a tendency to tune with another voice. Therefore the aim was to find a way to connect through voice, breath and rhythm, to create coexistence in sound.¹³⁵ We started exploring the inner landscape to fulfil one of the key assumptions of the project “Woman skin, song and Bone”: skin - this what connects *the inner* with *the outer*.

Developing the relation with land, led us to internal exploration. The body itself became an object, material and sculpture which can resonate.

The exercises described below are a way to reach the moment when the song is born.

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Available on Internet. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <https://necesercollective.wordpress.com/look-listen/video/>

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The term „voice ecology“ is introduced here as an analogy to „sound ecology“ as “relation with“

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Coexistence in sound as a practice I observed during the scollarship in Bulgrian village; the female group Sanseto Slunce perform *shoppe* songs, typical from this region. These songs are sung without instruments, the rhythm is hold by collective breathing. Singers stand in a semi-circle, close to each other, touching with their arms. Each strophe of a song begins with a breath in - this is invisible sign to start singing. The structure is full of dissonances, so they have to be very focused on keeping the right tune. Accessible to watch on vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/44659612>, 34 min.

Inner landscape

"Site specific was undoubtedly inspired by land (...), the space that is exterior and by the art of body as the internal, inward space."¹³⁶

I will describe series of exercises around developing musicality of body and deepening the performer's presence.

Inner landscape – breathing meditations

Exploring the inner landscape began with focusing on breath and penetrating spaces in body where the air can reach. We work outside. "Focus of the way how your breath penetrates you body." *Breathing in* accepting everything that comes. *Breathing out* is dedicating this what I have to the world around. We visualise the stream of energy that fills the body. Every little room in a body is filled with a warm air, which reaches more and more space, getting to the tops of our fingers and toes. "Imagine that your skin is a surface and your body is earth. Your body-earth is covered with moss. Inside the earth there are many lands, mountains, waterfalls, caves... Smell and touch it with your breath".



*Photo No.32:
Sensual body meditations*

While doing so, we recall the pictures from the outer landscape and imagine a body as landscape. Breathing meditations develops into the vocalisation. Explore the sonic parts when the voice resonates. Awakening of resonators increases the space which we can intentionally use while singing.

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Art of place, p. 50

Inner landscape – voice

“Add to your breath a sound. Now the sound penetrates the crannies of your body. Find a specific sound for each part of your body.” The human organism becomes an instrument. This exercise is developed in pairs, to the dialogue, where partners give impulses to each other using breath and sounds coming from particular parts of body. In this way performers build their own map of sounds located in body. Communication is not random, but follows a consequence in the rules. After few days, we reach a symbolic language of sounds and gestures.

Inner – outer landscape. Soundwalk to the meadow

Finding connections with the outer world through sounds begins with active listening of the sound scape of a nearby meadow. “Listen to the sounds around and try to catch their specificity. Locate the sounds in your body. Find the sound of rustling leaves in your arms or hips. What does your bone sound like?”



Photo No.33: Sonic map of body (drawing)

The action turns our concentration into the process of structuring vocal notion. We try to catch the moment when the onomatopoeic vocal expression occurs. Svetlana Spajić says: “The traditional song is a consequence of how we structure our thoughts.”¹³⁷ The aim is rather to find in the human organism the properties of water, moss, rock, rather than just imitating the forms. So, we follow

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Svetlana Spajić during the master class, Belgrade 2011

the thought: "I sing in the way, how I perceive the landscape". While developing the communication we add words from the performance: „woman, skin, song, bone" in various languages, structuring them to improvised voice impressions, consonances of words, phrases¹³⁸.

d. Physicality of nature; identification, sensual experience

The meadow became a space of transition.

"The meadow is after world, intermediate region, border, through which mediation with sacred takes place."¹³⁹

One of traditional techniques of building relation with outer world, to which we refer is vocal technique called *joik*, practised in Northern Scandinavia by Sami people. It is a way of making songs, in which the addressee is a tree, animal or man. Always the singer dedicates the song for someone / something. The recipient is necessary. We transform this reciprocity as a rule during action of walking, singing, talking. It leads also to series of physical actions with elements: tree, leave, water, sand.

The reciprocity as a property of singing a song is transformed to the physical actions with materials and objects.

Series of tasks given by puppetry artists were aimed to animate objects like a net, thread or to identify with the tree, branch, sheaves of grain video.



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Audio&video: *Under the skin* available on attached DVD

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JUREWICZ, J., KAPEŁUŚ, M. (Ed.), op. cit., p. 23: "Łąka jest zaświatem, obszarem pośrednim, granicznym, przez który odbywa się mediacja z sacrum."



*Photo No.35:
Exploring inner and outer landscape*

The exercises of building the inner landscape deepen the sensual presence and develop imagination about the performer's organism, which is indeed the instrument of acting. The sound journeys "under the skin" lead to internal levels of the performing body¹⁴⁰.

3.4. Media and voice performance. Video art. Bringing lake to stage. Preparations to the performance in Theatre Acropolis in Prague, 2014

Bringing media to the stage

All these activities undertaken during the residency in Mooste are filmed and are material for the second part of the work - presentation on stage in Prague. For example, in a show the screen with video projections from Estonia is used. The application of video media on stage raises the question of the authenticity, the reality of the theatre space¹⁴¹.

Bringing lake to the stage. Audio and video recordings

The purpose of recording the lake performance "calling the ancestors". In the action in the Estonian lake we used microphones, which were placed on both sides of the lake. In this a game with the phenomenon of echo, which - as a natural

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Audio: *Song and Bone* available on attached DVD

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Available on Internet. Retrieved September, 27, 2015 from: <https://necesercollective.wordpress.com/look-listen/video/>

physical dependence space (voice carried by water) gives an excuse to modification by sound technologies. The second side of the lake became the „echo of ancestors“, who reply to our callings. During the montage of sound, the recording is in the stereo format and gives to the listener the “echo experience”. We searched for some way to introduce to our work some contemporary accent like media.

The effect of an "echo of ancestors" is brought to the stage also with the help of projection, which is displayed on the screen woven from threads. On the screen there are elements of landscape where we worked in Mooste. That creates our collective past, so we refer not only to some past – collective memory of our nationalities, cultures and grandmothers. Gathered pictures form the meadow, forest, lake and trees - we quote this that has been as the close past, but which has created our collective heritage of experiences. On stage the second shore of the lake is “replaced” with the big screen where we watched this scene filmed by the lake in Mooste. The screen is made with threads and refers to the weaving tradition which we worked with. In this way, the presence of the medium on the stage becomes justified; recall our common past experience as a model of "coexistence with the land through the song" practised in traditional societies.

Weaving scenes on stage

One of the key scenes is a weaving of life's thread. The motive appears on many levels; as a reference to local traditions, as metaphor present in many mythologies for hundreds of years, from the ancient Greek legends to the contemporary Finnish tales. Motives built around the weaver depict pictures of a fortune-teller, witch, working woman. We incorporate also the figure of a bride and weaving of a new life thread. Additionally we are inspired by the bride with covered head from the Kihnu wedding ceremonies. The scene we build includes then the picture of blind weaver, who enters the new sphere of life. Interactions with the wall is also used as the scene of weaving in macro – scale. While performers are weaving the screen and thread resound. The single thread forms the screen and becomes a new life.

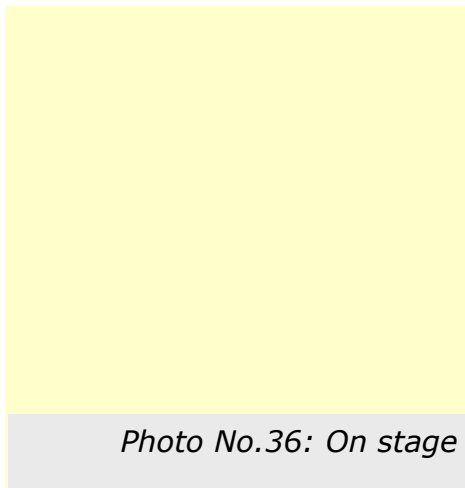
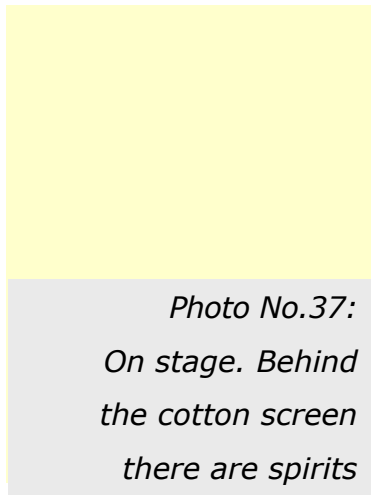


Photo No.36: On stage

The wall – screen belongs to realm of subconsciousness, reality of dreams, the “voice that results, like a mere residual material”.¹⁴² The woven wall symbolises the border, behind which is the mystery, the “unknown” exists, still being a resonance of human voice, re-vocalised logos of universe.

Performers also animate the woven screen; depending on the dramaturgical situation, there are the ancestors spirits, thoughts resonating from behind the screen.

The spiritual creatures talk with the movement of threads - some of them make sounds. Between threads of woven nylon strings contact microphones are attached connected to the mixer. In this way, we use sound installation as part of the scene. The presence of the media becomes juxtaposition, the realities are reversed. The old becomes new.



*Photo No.37:
On stage. Behind
the cotton screen
there are spirits*

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CAVARERO, A. (op. cit.) writes about echo as mechanism of resonance which appears involuntary and also describes in a hilarious way the myth about Narcissus and Echo, p. 167

Nevertheless, by any interaction the screen makes noise, so it becomes an acoustic object, with its own semantic and symbolism.

This element of scenography works thanks to actions and video projections.

Preparations to the show at theatrical stage introduced new stage elements and other principles than the land arts activities undertaken during the residency in the Estonian Art Centre. Although the premiere of "Woman, Skin, Song and Bone" took place in Acropolis Theatre on 14.09.2014 as a performance, the whole project has its value rather as art of space. The emphasis on articulation of landscape through voice and movement established by the relation of human – voice – space in an artistic language of a group of performers who started the journey into the beginning of folklore, to renew the spirit through performative practices.

Unearthing and burying stories on the field where our ancestress planted the messages among potatoes, for those who would come. Death is not taking eyes from us and still we are born again and again by our descendants. Our lives dig the furrows in the earth, into the souls and to the memories. The bloodline may dry up, but the net connecting us all to the cycle of life and death lasts. Stretched over this net, our ancestress dried up by endless work in the field, are carrying us beyond dream and memory.

III. SUMMARY

One might say that traditional songs are a very narrow branch to be used in theatre. I see it as an opportunity to deepen creativity and awareness of individual creation. Work with traditional issues and folklore opens the way to developing this what is individual but in terms of collaborative work. Turning into the national and ethnic heritage and building relation with our own culture gives us sociological perspective. Relating to the traditional heritage of culture turns focus to intersection of aesthetic, ethic and spiritual spheres.

Interesting perspectives here will be considerations about aesthetics and ethics by Emily Brady. According to Brady,

“The careful perceptual attention required and exercised in the experience of art may enable one to more carefully observe important features and detail in a complex moral problem. A well developed imagination may facilitate greater empathy with another being, and in this way help to motivate appropriate moral action.”¹⁴³

It is desirable to practice renewing of the symbolic construction included in ritual behaviours, to refer to their aesthetic as well as ethic roots. It deepens the roots of each human from where we take inspiration and points of departure while exploring the “new,” or “foreign” in creative work.

In artistic work it became for me an ethos of collaborative work: the emphasis on the creative process as individual education of performer, who take the challenge to improve his skills and in this way to influence the society. As it is one of the main directions of anthropology in theatre, I consider traditional songs as a point of departure in theatre practice on many levels. I believe that in this introduction, where I describe the researches of music tradition, I made a draft of what was the inspiration and material to the following practice.

In the thesis “Traditional song and its application to site specific theatre” I introduced some categories from traditional song which can be applied to theatre. As theatre anthropology turns towards question of theatre beyond aesthetics, projects described in the dissertation link many disciplines to create interdisciplinary projects, often on the border of community arts. Majority of performances, however can be considered as site specific projects, as investigating context of spaces and culture.

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BRADY, E. *Aesthetics in Practice: Valuing the Natural World*, in: *Environmental Values* 15, The White Horse Press 2006, p. 280

Nevertheless, each study visit influenced another performance or music project. I was researching musicality in a broader sense, but on the example of particular group of people I visited. It considered phenomenon of music folklore and folklore of specific societies as collection of performative signs, which useful for dramaturgy in theatre allow to animate societies, tangible and not tangible heritage.

Interdisciplinary character of the projects I described in my thesis inevitably required cooperation with the management of culture, which could happen through participation in KNOWtilus program. Supervision of Professor Václav Riedlbauch with his specialization cultural management allowed for implementation of artistic ideas, scientific researches into several festivals, symposium and performances.

Academic research-based program KNOWtilus included culture animation and community arts as fields of constant dialog between theatre makers and scientific discourse.

Professor Václav Riedlbauch lead and expertised the shape of doctoral thesis, at the same time being the main manager of the Polish–Czech Borderland coproductions executed in 2014 – 2015. Thanks to cooperation on artistic, scientific and project managing sphere, four projects were executed in Polish – Czech Borderland: music performance „Mining Odyssey” postindustrial heritage of Nowa Ruda, took place in Wrocław in terms of European Culture Capital Wrocław 2016), Land art festival „Přez hranice” in village Verněřovice (Broumov region), Festival Space Animations - revitalisation through arts in renovated Gorzanów Castle (Kłodzko region).

Executed projects focused on the animation of specific spaces in terms of creative culture. As Prof. Václav Riedlbauch states,

“In all its manifestations, creative culture seeks to engage with spaces other than those created directly for it like theaters, concert halls, dance halls and church spaces. Such interaction can, and often does, challenge actors with specific artistic tasks (creative and interpretational) and technical tasks (like management on all levels), with the successive interplay among these elements resulting in something unique and non-repeatable for the main actor: the listener, the spectator or another participant. For the creative culture in its entirety, it is a logical approach to appropriate and sometimes even recuperate material heritage, to enable something exceptional to be rendered and realized.”¹⁴⁴

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„Kreativní kultura ve všech svých podobách kromě prostorů pro ni přímo vytvořených nebo určených, jako jsou divadla, koncertní sítě, taneční studia, plesové sály, kruchty kostelů aj., ráda vychledává propojení s prostředím jiným. Taková interakce může a obvykle též přináší všem aktérům jednak zvláštní úkoly umělecké (tvůrcům, interpretům) a technické (zejména menažerum všech stupňů), při zdárném výsledku úsilí všech výše jmenovaných pak cosi jedinečného a neopakovatelného zejména pro aktéra hravního – posluchače, divaka či jiného podobného účastníka. Logickou cestou v tomto směru pro celou oblast kreativní kultury je využívání a mnohdy doslova objevování památek, jež by umožnily něco mimořádného připravit a uskutečnit.“ *Ekonomické aspekty využití kreativní kultury v animaci hmotných památek*. RIEDLBAUCH, V. (Ed.), Praha: Vysoká škola ekonomická v Praze, Nakladatelství Oeconomica, 2011

First study visit in Polish–Czech Borderland took place in Spring 2014 and investigated the sacral architecture and land as sacrum and resulted in two following projects.

Polish premiere of Czech opera „Stalo se Slovo” (production of Opera Studio at Music Academy HAMU in Prague) in Kłodzko, Nowa Ruda and Jelenia Góra. Oratorio containing Easter threads revealed both: religious diversity and common themes in neighboring countries. The project under artistic supervision of Prof. Václav Riedlbauch directorial supervision of Dr Martin Otava engraved the arena for cross – border artistic cooperation with mentioned institution in Poland.

Documentary aspects of postindustrial cultures in Lower Silesia (Nowa Ruda town) were implied in the performance “Mining Odyssey”, which was preceded with a study visit of KNOWtilus creative team¹⁴⁵. Overlapping historical and social branch with diverse artistic crafts (folklore dances , brass orchestra, beat box, pantomime theatre) opened interdisciplinary field for creating a music performance. The process of preparation aimed to educate participants through series of workshops in sound design, dance and scientific presentations of industrial heritage, which led and to reinforce the ethos of ensemble work as one of leading profiles of KNOWtilus activities¹⁴⁶. Performance has its premiere during the events preceding „Wroclaw European Culture Capital 2016”.

Borderland symposium “Over the Border – Přez hranice” was founded to animate neighboring societies of Poles and Czechs through land art and scientific presentations.

Creative work of artistic team focused on articulation of land as an element connecting the diversities in these two nations.

Ethnomusicological perspective of folklorist Josef Štefan Kubin was a point of departure to work not only with music. Lyrics of songs he collected, as they contained a testimony of the local mentality and history, became for participants a tool of recognizing the land and investigating its articulation. Itinerant character of Kubin's work inspired the group of artists to field works in Verněřovice and around lands. That resulted in visual and sound installations near the church and by the spring with medicinal water, sound installations by the tree, and creative

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PROKOPOVA A., PROKOP A., „Veda a umění”, [in:] KNOWtilus - ponor do vědy skrz umění, p. 61

workshop led for artistic team in a nearby Culture Centre in Zdonov village, where participants built a polyphonic song only with the help of the world "land" in each one's mother tongue, what gave an improvised composition in over 6 languages. The song became a way of communication indeed.

Beside that, some of spatial aspects of traditional songs were applied during the land art workshops and presentations while singing on the fields and hills using the acoustic of large open air spaces, as well as in interior of the local church.

Worth mentioning is the fact of paralelly running Polish Festival of Literature of Lower Silesia, around Olga Tokarczuk and Joanna Bator, where artist from Verněřovice collective (Prague-based Trio BaVlna) performed their polyphonic songs from various cultures. Our music performances in the churches with diverse acoustic conditions and historical background in Polish - Czech Borderland underlined multicultural and religiously diverse character of the region.

The festivals took place over the hill towns and villages along the Broumovsko region and Klodska Land region. Participation the Polish - Czech creative team in both events created the real physical cross - border cooperation of artists from both side of the border.

Additionally, the scientific part of festival was aimed to implement historical background and political aspects to transnational cooperation.

Project was invented by creative team of Theatre Faculty in Prague - Heidi Hornačková and Economy Faculty - Pavla Rouškova with musical leadership of Ewa Żurakowska and participation of Music Faculty students, local artists and local culture animators and was executed with the financial support of KNOWtilus program. Supervision of Tomáš Žižka, whose professional directions and sugestive tutoring was invaluable in the field of land articulation and community arts binding local societies, as well as in terms of musicality as a way of bulding the event, where the song transforms to a script.

Creative methods practiced in KNOWtilus program have also handled a strategy to organize the First Festival of Space Animation which took place in Gorzanów Castle on 9-10.10.2015.

Overlapping of artistic branch with material culture heritage was implied in a program of festival, which joined the theoretical symposium with theatre and music performances.

Additionally, theoretical presentation of cultural institution from the Czech Republic - Valdštejsnke Imaginarium from Jičín, has strengthened the possibility

of cross-border dialogue as a real partnership in baroque objects spaces of renovated historic objects.

Musical interventions revealed unique acoustics of the baroque architecture and emphasized the multidimensional use of the Gorzanów Castle. Presentations of historians and economists dedicated to the theoretical discourse proposed ideas of management and development the renovating castle.

Symposium aimed for creative ways of managing the heritage of material culture.

The perspective opened on the example of my own research of folklore on the field of anthropological theatre and culture animation, was implied in the KNOWtilus realization.

It referred to space as the factor that defines interpersonal relations in today's borderlands.

In terms of culture politics, tangible and intangible heritage, religious diversity. Results of the research based creative works under artistic supervision of Tomáš Žižka and structure in my thesis under tutoring of Professor Václav Riedlbauch were invaluable support in my independent creative work. I would like to thank and express gratitude to my tutors, all artists involved in projects executed, support of creative teams and art ensembles I worked with. I would never make those performances happened without their wonderful participation.

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