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JOSEPH CHAIKIN AND THE WINTER PROJECT: WAYS OF WORKING

By

ROGER BABB

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Theatre in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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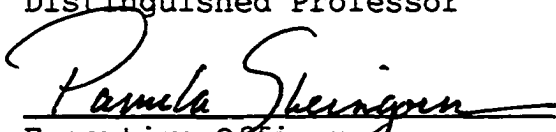
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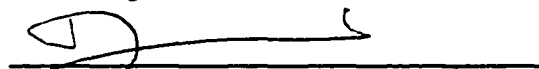
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Abstract

JOSEPH CHAIKIN AND THE WINTER PROJECT: WAYS OF WORKING

by

Roger Babb

Adviser: Professor Daniel Gerould

This dissertation examines the history of the Winter Project (1976-1983) and its particular process of creating theatre. Many of these “ways of working” were initiated in the Open Theater and were passed down and developed by Joseph Chaikin and his collaborators. I have included interviews with as many of the original collaborators as possible in order to represent the views of practitioners, which are often overlooked by scholars. I have particularly stressed the influential role of the dramaturg Mira Rafalowicz. The original scripts and documents relating to the five productions of the Winter Project have been included in an appendix. Most of these have never been published. I have also provided some theoretical perspective to the work. The Winter Project’s interest in examining fragmentary moments of behavior, in developing non-linear images of visual and auditory resonance and combining those images and moments into collage-like constructions anticipates and reflects the beginnings of postmodern sensibility and aesthetics.

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Marvin Carlson has like wise been very gracious with his time and advice and I have quoted extensively from his critical texts, which were invaluable to my own studies. I would also like to thank Albert Bermel, Jill Dolan and Judith Milhaus for sharing their knowledge and advice at the Graduate Center

Joseph Chaikin and the former members of the Winter Project patiently endured hours of interviews and conversation. Paul Zimet, Tina Shepard, Steve Reisner and Ronnie Gilbert were particularly helpful, providing personal notebooks, multiple interviews and much needed encouragement. I was blessed to be able to make theatre with Joseph Chaikin and his collaborators I hope this dissertation does the Winter Project justice. Mira Rafalowicz was an early supporter of my scholarly interests and I miss her wise and thoughtful presence.

The staff of the Kent State University Library was extremely helpful. I spent three days going through the Chaikin Archives and would particularly like to thank Jeanne Somers, Nancy Birk, Barbara Bass and Jennifer Schraeder.

Without Terry Stoller, my writing partner and colleague at the Graduate Center, I would have not been able to complete this process. For her astute advice, genuine concern and unflagging support over the last two years, I am profoundly grateful.

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INTRODUCTION

The Winter Project was not a theatre company. It was a changing group of theatre artists and musicians that met for two to three months every year from 1976 until 1983. It was organized by Joseph Chaikin, the director of the legendary Open Theater, which had disbanded in 1973. Most of the artists in the project had worked with Chaikin before and were familiar with ways of working that had been developed by him and his collaborators over the years. The work of the Winter Project can be seen as an extension of the work that was done in the later years of the Open Theater.

I propose to examine the history of the Winter Project and in particular its process of creating theatre. This process was not organized as a set of procedures and principles—in fact Chaikin actively discouraged promulgating a methodology—but there were areas of interest and ways of working that continued to stimulate Chaikin and his collaborators. Using improvisation to generate images, exploring the musical qualities of the spoken voice, the relationship of the actor and the spectator and employing a non-linear, collage like structure were some of the techniques and methods that recurred in the work of the project. Many of these ways of working were initiated in the Open Theater and passed down to and developed by the Winter Project.

In the first two years of the project there were no public performances. The emphasis was on experimentation in a kind of theatrical laboratory. This process of exploration was another important focus of the group. Even when the main concern of the Winter Project was the generation of a performable product for a paying audience, a rehearsal process that emphasized non-restrictive and open-ended investigation was key

to the collaboration. One of the important inheritances passed on by the Open Theater that reflected the tolerance and anti-authoritarianism of the 1960s was a sense of freedom in rehearsal. Participants were given leave, in fact were encouraged, to investigate a topic as fully and as personally as possible. The material generated from this type of exploration was then subjected to rigorous, critical scrutiny. But, an initial sense of allowance, permission and liberty was cultivated by Chaikin and his dramaturg, Mira Rafalowicz.

I intend to accomplish three goals in this dissertation. First of all, I want to assemble original scripts and documents about the Winter Project that have never been published and are important resources for theatre scholars and students who wish to understand this group. Much has been written about Joseph Chaikin and the Open Theater but very little scholarly work has been done on the Winter Project and in particular the role of the dramaturg, Mira Rafalowicz. Eileen Blumenthal's 1984 study, Joseph Chaikin: Exploring at the Boundaries of Theater is the important source of scholarly information about Chaikin and I have relied on it extensively. Robert Pasolli's A Book on the Open Theater is invaluable for understanding the early history of the Open Theater and the exercises and improvisations that were an important part of their ways of working. There are no scholarly studies solely about the Winter Project and apart from an important essay by Allen Kuharski, no serious evaluation or recognition of Mira Rafalowicz's contributions to the Winter Project.¹

¹ Allen Kuharski, "Joseph Chaikin and the Presence of the Dramaturg," in Dramaturgy in American Theater, eds. Susan Jonas, Geoff Proehl and Michael Lupu (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997), 144-158.

Secondly, I have included interviews with as many of the original collaborators as possible in order to represent the views of practitioners which are often over looked by scholars. Their testimony can be biased and subjective, but I believe it compliments a more analytic perspective. My own point of view as both scholar of, and participant in the Winter Project further complicates but also enriches this dynamic.² Mira Rafalowicz died in 1998, but I had interviewed her numerous times, including three tape recorded sessions in 1995 as part of my graduate work. Joseph Chaikin suffered a stroke which left him aphasic in 1983. I assisted him as part of his recovery, and although he has some difficulty speaking, he is able to express himself adequately and often eloquently. Many of the people I interviewed have remained colleagues and friends over the years. I have tried to be as objective as possible in these circumstances. Any disadvantage in terms of subjectivity or uncritical bias is balanced by the opportunity of frequent and extended access to principal collaborators in the Winter Project.

My third objective in this dissertation is to provide some theoretical perspective to the work. The Winter Project occurs at a time of great change in scholarly and critical attitudes to theatre and performance. In the early 1980s, semiotics, feminist theory and deconstruction were becoming influential in theatre studies and critics and theorists were fiercely debating the meanings of the term postmodern. The poststructuralist writings of French scholars like Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Julia Kristeva were beginning to exert changes in the way scholars looked at basic issues of performance such as presence, constructions of meaning, and language. Although the

² I was a principal actor in the last two years of the Winter Project creating roles in Trespassing (1982) and in Trio (1983).

Winter Project did not address these issues with a poststructuralist vocabulary, they were at the core of the group's investigations.

Too often, Chaikin and his collaborators are lumped together with Julian Beck and Judith Malina's Living Theater or Richard Schechner's Performance Group as examples of artists who practiced a "politics of ecstasy." The term is Schechner's and refers to Artaudian influenced performance of the 1960s that valorized communitarian process and anti-establishment, utopian politics. The stereotypical image conveyed is one of undisciplined excess and strident new age proselytizing. In fact, the late Open Theater (1970-1973) and subsequently the Winter Project had a much more formalist orientation. Although still interested in Artaud's notion of a theatrical language "half way between gesture and thought," a principal pre-occupation became generating rigorously refined theatrical images and emblems that owe more to Brecht's notion of *Gestus* than to Artaud's vision of a "theatre of cruelty." The groups were clearly sympathetic with progressive political forces, but the work was not polemic. In 1973, just after the disbanding of the Open Theater, Chaikin wrote:

It is not the responsibility of art to serve any politics or psychology or philosophy. The realm of art is inspiration, and inspiration cannot be policed even by noble motives.³

Although their work privileged acting, the notion of presence and the authority of the actor were continually reexamined and renegotiated by the Winter Project. However, Chaikin did not embrace the use of technology like some of his contemporaries. The use of microphones, video and electronic filtering by theatre artists such as the Wooster

³ Chaikin, "Notes on Acting Time and Repetition" Three Works by the Open Theater ed. Karen Malpede (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1974)

Group, Mabou Mines and Richard Foreman resulted in an increased estrangement of the actor and a different relationship to performance. The Winter Project can be seen to exist in the space between the radical, utopian, leftist theatre of the 1960s and the more cynical postmodern performance of the Reagan era 1980s. In a sense, they function as a bridge between the two. The Winter Project is post-Viet Nam, post-drug culture, post Watergate but not quite postmodern. However, their interest in examining fragmentary moments of behavior, in developing non-linear images of visual and auditory resonance, and combining those images and moments into collage-like constructions anticipates and reflects the beginnings of postmodern sensibility and aesthetics.

The subtitle of this dissertation is “ways of working,” and I have used this phrase throughout. Sometimes the phrase implies a methodology or a technique that Chaikin and his collaborators had developed to attack a particular theatrical problem. A theatrical problem might be: “How can the actor speak this overtly political text without sounding polemic?” or “What are the ways of touching that imply that this couple are no longer in love?” One of the key ways of working in both the Open Theater and the Winter Project was the use of exercises. One of Chaikin’s great talents was the ability to devise exercises that stimulated the actor’s imagination and at the same time opened up a new perspective on gestural or vocal behavior. Often the exercises started as questions. “What is the breath like?” or “How does the voice change?” Chaikin wrote about exercises:

An exercise breaks the existing premise within a group and opens up what is seemingly fixed. There is no aspect of work among groups concerning

performance and audience, or having to do with training, which cannot be studied through an exercise.⁴

Nevertheless, Chaikin became wary of writing down and codifying exercises and insisted that each new work should be approached in an entirely different manner. He did not promulgate an all encompassing Open Theater or Winter Project methodology or technique. However, the phrase “ways of working” conveys a sense of a shared vocabulary and experience that Chaikin and his collaborators developed over the twenty years of their working together. As a theatre practitioner as well as a theatre scholar, I am concerned with understanding how the Winter Project made theatre. I feel this information may be useful to artists as well as to scholars and students.

⁴ Joseph Chaikin, The Presence of the Actor (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 135.

Chapter 1

THE THEATRICAL LABORATORY

The Winter Project was initially organized as a laboratory for experimenting with actors, writers and musicians. Joseph Chaikin's previous ensemble, the Open Theater, had been originally set up with the same experimental intentions. Both groups were eventually transformed into ensembles that were financially and artistically defined by the necessity of performing for paying audiences. Nevertheless the process of eclectic experimentation in rehearsal was essential to both groups and continued throughout their existences. It is important to investigate what these groups were working on and how. It is my contention that there is a historical and methodological link between the Open Theater and the Winter Project that can be traced by their similar "ways of working." In this chapter, I will briefly discuss the history of laboratory approaches in the twentieth century and more extensively the experimental exercises and perspectives that the Open Theater developed and then bequeathed to the Winter Project

The practice of working experimentally and developing new performance techniques and methods in a laboratory situation has a history that coincides with the rise of the director as a central figure in twentieth-century theatre. In the beginning of the century, Konstantin Stanislavski, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Jacques Copeau and Max Reinhardt, among others, established small venues and rehearsal spaces where innovative texts and techniques could be experimented with and presented without the pressure of more formal arrangements.

Konstantin Stanislavski and the actors of what would become the Moscow Art Theatre spent their inaugural summer experimenting with a new realistic mode of acting at Pushkino, outside Moscow, in 1898.¹ Pushkino was also the locale of the Moscow Art Theatre's first "theatrical studio" in 1905, which Stanislavski placed under the direction of Vsevolod Meyerhold. Meyerhold was a major theatrical proponent of symbolism in Russia at the time and Stanislavski gave him free reign to develop new approaches to both acting and staging. In My Life in Art, Stanislavski emphasized the need for an experimental approach: "This was neither a full-fledged theatre nor a school for beginners, but a laboratory for more or less mature actors."²

Meyerhold further developed the laboratory approach through the numerous workshops and studios that he established throughout his career. Robert Leach has written of the importance of this type of theatrical research to the Russian director, indicating that in repeated examples such as Dr. Dapertutto's Studio or the Meyerhold Free Workshop, Meyerhold kept searching for an ideal working situation:

For Meyerhold, the alternation between performing or producing and teaching or learning was crucial to his development as an artist: the two kinds of activities, publication and research, existed in a dialectical and interdependent relationship; and paradoxically he often found that through public production he was learning and the training exercises were becoming self-contained entities of achievement.

¹ Konstantin Stanislavski, My Life in Art (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House), 236.

² *Ibid.*, 332.

This ability to make two kinds of activity cross-fertilize one another is one reason why Meyerhold's pedagogical work was as important as his actual directing.³

Edward Braun also stresses Meyerhold's life-long attention to experimentation in workshop situations and points out that his theatre-studio of 1913-1917 was run not so much as a drama school, but "more as a laboratory for collective experiment in which Meyerhold was engaged in a learning process alongside his students."⁴

Stanislavski and Meyerhold were not the only early twentieth century theatre artists who established studios and workshops expressly designed for theatrical research. Jacques Copeau had been strongly influenced by Jacques Rouché's Modern Theatre Art (1910), which described the work of Stanislavski and Meyerhold in Russia as well as that of Georg Fuchs and Max Reinhardt in Germany and the scenic theories of Adolphe Appia and Gordon Craig.⁵ Copeau's first directorial experience was his own adaptation of Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov at Rouché's Théâtre des Arts in 1911. In 1913, Copeau started the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier which famously experimented over the next fifteen years with the use of masks, Japanese theatre techniques, corporeal mime, improvisation and most importantly with the *tréteau nu*: the bare stage. Copeau had a direct influence on such great French theatrical innovators as Charles Dullin, Louis Jouvet and Etienne Decroux, all of whom worked for him. Jean-Louis Barrault acknowledged Copeau as "the father of the whole modern theatre."⁶ John Rudlin lists drama games, repertoire rather than repertory, theatre as communion and the revival of

³ Robert Leach, Vsevolod Meyerhold (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 47.

⁴ Edward Braun, Meyerhold: a Revolution in Theatre (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995), 127.

⁵ Frederick Brown, Theater and Revolution (New York: Viking Press, 1980), 184.

⁶ James Roose-Evans, Experimental Theatre (New York: Universe Books, 1984), 61.

commedia dell'arte as some of the areas of work where Copeau's initiatives have been crucial to twentieth-century drama. However, Rudlin finds Copeau's pedagogical interest in experimental work to be of prime importance:

But there is one of his preoccupations that can best be appreciated now: the continual search for appropriate means of renewing the relationship between training and performance, of practicing for one's practice. Copeau wanted his actors to improve for their parts, not through them, and that improvement he saw as being of the whole person, not just an individual's technique. He was concerned, also, not to develop the actor solely in isolation, but as part of a *confrérie*, a brotherhood or community of performers who would learn and grow together and whose performance would be a collective expression of their sense of that growth.⁷

Although Joseph Chaikin has not credited Stanislavski, Meyerhold or Copeau and their interest in performance research as influencing the setting up of his own workshops with the Open Theater and the Winter Project, he was strongly affected by the working methods of Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski, both of whom acknowledged a profound debt to their theatrical forebears. All three directors were interested in developing and exploring new approaches to acting beyond the normative scope of traditional Stanislavski-based systems. Chaikin worked with Peter Brook on US, a collectively constructed theatre piece about the war in Vietnam, created by the Royal Shakespeare Company in the summer of 1966. At the end of his stay in England, Chaikin attended a two-week workshop with Grotowski. This was the beginning of a lifelong relationship

⁷ John Rudlin, Jacques Copeau (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), xiv.

among the three directors who regarded each other as colleagues and mentors. Brook and Grotowski demonstrated in their writings and lectures their knowledge and respect for the theatrical innovators who went before them. The Empty Space, Brook's landmark 1968 book about theatre, is full of references to the experimental work of Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Brecht and Artaud. In Towards a Poor Theatre, also published in English in 1968 (with a preface by Brook), Grotowski pays homage to the above-mentioned artists as well as a number of others including Charles Dullin and most interestingly, Juliusz Osterwa.

The "Reduta," which Osterwa established in 1919, bears a strong resemblance to Grotowski's Theatre Laboratory in its devotion to actor training, communal life and the notion of an experimental theatre laboratory. Osterwa was famous for staging the great Polish romantic tragedies such as Slowacki's *The Constant Prince* and *Kordian* (both also staged by Grotowski) as well as plays by Wyspianski and Zeromski. Kazimierz Braun has pointed out another resemblance between the two Polish directors:

Osterwa treated acting as a "sacrifice" or an "act of redemption." The performance was for him a "sacerdotal sacrifice for the congregation." He referred to spectators as "witnesses." The "communion" between the actor/priests and the public/congregation was his goal, and the "actor-saint" was his ideal.⁸

Clearly, the notion of a "holy" theatre, which preoccupied Grotowski and to some extent Brook in the mid-1960s, had a precedent in the work of the Reduta. Grotowski was knowledgeable about the history of theatre and respectful of the investigations that had gone on before him:

⁸ Kazimierz Braun, A History of the Polish Theatre 1939-1989 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996), 137.

When we confront the general tradition of the Great Reform of the theatre from Stanislavski to Dullin and from Meyerhold to Artaud, we realize that we have not started from scratch but are operating in a defined and special atmosphere. When our investigation reveals and confirms someone else's flash of intuition, we are filled with humility.⁹

Chaikin has been somewhat reluctant to identify his influences and although he acknowledges Bertolt Brecht, Judith Malina and Julian Beck of the Living Theatre and Viola Spolin, the author of Improvisation for the Theater, as important to his work, he does not make any historical connection with theatrical innovators of the early twentieth century. This may be because of inadequate scholarship before 1970 about Stanislavski's theories and practices. Also, little was written about Meyerhold in English before Edward Braun's 1969 Meyerhold on Theatre. Chaikin was resistant to the American Method system of acting with its emphasis on psychology and its claim to be descended from Stanislavski's technique. He, unlike Brook and Grotowski, but in common with many American theatre artists, was suspicious of an analytic approach to theatre and uncomfortable with theory. As we shall see, this attitude created problems with postmodern critics in the early 1980s concerning Chaikin's notions of the presence of the actor.

The Open Theater

Chaikin's commitment to developmental performance research has marked his career since the founding of the Open Theater. Originally set up as a loose association of actors, writers and critics in 1963, the workshop allowed Chaikin and his collaborators

⁹ Jerzy Grotowski, Towards a Poor Theatre (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 24.

“the opportunity to innovate techniques of acting and staging for non-naturalistic material.”¹⁰ Eileen Blumenthal described the unstructured and provisional nature of the early Open Theater:

For the first seven of its ten years, the Open Theater remained a loose conglomeration of more or less discrete projects with Chaikin’s laboratory at the center. Neither a class with a teacher nor a collective of co-equal creators, his workshop was an ensemble with a definite (if not always admitted) leader.¹¹

Blumenthal suggests that Chaikin’s main focus has been the workshop. His “real work” has been the “behind the scenes research with actors, musicians, writers, dramaturgs and other directors.”¹²

Chaikin’s great skill and contribution lay in his ability to devise exercises and improvisations around a theme, such as the reality beneath surface behavior or the expression of “exiled” emotions. I am using the terms “exercise” and “improvisation” somewhat interchangeably here. The main emphasis is that the actor invents the “text” of the event. This text can be silent behavior or sound and movement or spoken language. Exercises can be formed around existing written text but when we think of improvisation we are mostly concerned with generating material in the moment. The Open Theater had begun to work improvisationally in order to discover ways to approach non-naturalistic material such as dreams, myths, poetry and the plays of the Absurdist. As the work progressed, the improvisational process itself became an attractive method of both exploring new techniques of acting and of generating new material for performance.

¹⁰ Robert Pasolli, A Book on the Open Theater (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970), 3.

¹¹ Eileen Blumenthal, Joseph Chaikin (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1984), 15.

¹² Blumenthal, 68.

Chaikin and his collaborators felt constrained by the psychological approach of the Method, the Americanized version of Stanislavski's system, principally promulgated by veterans of the Group Theater. Blumenthal notes a shift from psychological principles to "alternative understandings of character as well as new ways to enter stage roles using somatic and musical methods."¹³

Before proceeding, it is important to point out that Chaikin developed thousands of exercises over the years and discarded most of them as they became repetitive or locked into a sterile perspective. He also collaborated with many people, most notably Peter Feldman and Lee Worley, early members of the Open Theater, to push for subtler and more inventive ways to redefine exercises such as "sound and movement" which I will discuss shortly. Eileen Blumenthal has pointed out both Chaikin's great facility at developing exercises and his ambivalence concerning their general use for other theatre artists:

By the end of the Open Theater, Chaikin no longer felt that there could be a general system of stage training. He does not, finally, advocate even his basic interests, let alone specific exercise, as universals. The record of his investigations, he says, must not be taken as a collection of recipes. Exercises should be developed ad hoc to grapple with specific problems and then thrown away. Though he still believes one can get clues from other people and, in fact, sees lasting value in some lines that he has developed, he has come to feel that

¹³ Ibid., 16.

every work for the theater, every company about to do the same work, even different actors within the same company require different approaches.”¹⁴

Nonetheless, Blumenthal believes that Chaikin’s great contribution is his talent for translating impulses into stage action. He does this through devising an exercise that addresses the particular issues within the theatrical question and in recognizing the “dangerous point when discussion must stop and the question must be brought to the stage in terms of improvising actions.”¹⁵

In the premiere issue of Performance in 1971, Chaikin wrote very clearly about the usefulness of generating exercises during exploratory stages of rehearsal:

Forming an exercise is one of the most important things a theatre person can do. When he can envision a kind of behavior, a kind of ambience, a kind of interrelating, a kind of environment, a kind of physical life and kinds of sounds and then find the proper exercise, the actor is invited to envision as well as to inhabit that realm.¹⁶

In the same article, he mentions his own prolific exercise-inventing periods and regrets confusing variety for development and volume with refinement and points out that “the glib exercises from these periods are those now most used in other groups and schools.”¹⁷

Despite these caveats and warnings, I think it is possible and necessary to include descriptions of exercises to get a general idea of what was being worked on at a certain period and, perhaps of more interest, of how things were being worked on. These

¹⁴ Blumenthal, 70.

¹⁵ Ibid., 69.

¹⁶ Joseph Chaikin “Notes On Character. . .And The Setup.” Performance vol.1, no.1, December, 1971, 79. Performance was a short-lived journal (4 issues) produced by the New York Shakespeare Festival, edited by Erika Monk.

¹⁷ Ibid.

exercises and techniques don't provide a general method or "recipe" for creating experimental theatre but represent a particular way of working, forged out of a particular history and reflecting particular concerns. It is my belief that writing about the evolution and application of methods of working employed by Joseph Chaikin and the Open Theater and, most particularly, the Winter Project will be of interest to both scholars and practitioners of theatre and performance.

Early Open Theater Exercises

Some of the earlier Open Theater exercises have been cataloged, most notably by Robert Pasolli, in A Book on the Open Theater. Although Chaikin has expressed concern about codifying exercises, Pasolli's book does contain very useful information as to the nature of these exercises. Some of them were derived from Viola Spolin's theater games and included variations on the familiar "mirror images" improvisation, in which two actors define the plane of a mirror between themselves by touching their fingertips together with one actor "reflecting" the other. Pasolli points out that this type of exercise helps to "kineticize" the actor, emphasizing the body and moving him/her away from psychology and toward action and inventiveness. Other basic improvisations included walking in imaginary environments, molding and passing imaginary objects and creating a "machine" out of actors who represent individual moving parts. Early improvisations and exercises in the Open Theater also included "inside-outside" and transformation work as well as exercises designed to develop a sense of trust and communion within the ensemble.

As Pasolli writes, much of Chaikin's work has been about the inner dynamic within characters. Inside-outside improvisations helped examine and expose hidden realities that lie beneath surface behavior. Pasolli quotes Chaikin:

We have to explore the pleasure in despair and the fun in horror. When in the same city some men say that they are celebrating life and helping others and other people say of the same way of life that it is criminal, an actor has to understand the perplexing dichotomy. By understand, I mean to see, not simply to analyze, criticize and sweep under the rug. We can do that by seeking the ways to make these things visible in action.¹⁸

There are numerous ways to structure improvisations around the inside-outside theme. The aim is to expose the inner climate of a character, underneath their naturalistic behavior. Pasolli notes a similarity with the notion of subtext but differentiates the inside as being nonverbal, and not psychologically motivated. The inside can contradict the outside or exaggerate the implicit values of the outside. Inside-outside improvisations do not aim to expose the "truth" of a particular situation but simply indicate a multiplicity of perspectives within a behavior or condition. Actors who improvise the outside behavior of a situation can then improvise the inside condition, or actors who have been watching can step in to play the inside of a character. Two actors can also play the inside and outside of one character simultaneously. This improvisation was developed over many months and became the core device for Jean Claude van Itallie's The Odets Kitchen and Interview, which were pieces developed in collaboration with the Open Theater.

¹⁸ Pasolli, 12.

Transformation exercises involved enacting radical changes in the circumstances of a given improvisation. An actor could suddenly transform into an animal or the embodiment of his or her carnal desires. Other actors within the improvisation would transform in relation to the original transformation becoming say a different animal or a hunter. Pasolli mentions a “style transformation” in which the theatrical manner of a scene is transformed from Restoration comedy to soap opera to Brechtian *Lehrstucke*. He points out the ways in which such exercises help to break a reliance on psychological motivation and logical transition.

Transformation is a way rapidly and with minimal discussion to invent situations for improvisation (where improvisation itself is the goal). In terms of acting training, transformation develops the actor’s ability to handle a wide range of situations, acting styles and emotions. It also heightens the actor’s sensitivity to partners.¹⁹

An important aspect of the transformation exercises is the speed of the transition between conditions. The shift can be instantaneous with no apparent justification. The actor reveals numerous “ways of being” and problematizes the notion of a stable, fixed and unified self, as well as traditional notions of character. Megan Terry, an early collaborator with the Open Theater, incorporated the transformation device as part of the action of Calm Down Mother and Keep Tightly Closed in a Cool Place, which were performed by the company in 1965.

Another series of exercises were those that were aimed at developing trust and a sense of ensemble among the actors. Breathing in unison and talking in unison

¹⁹ Pasolli, 21.

developed into exercises that encouraged a sense of organic unity among the group. “Trust” exercises, such as those in which actors would fall back, with eyes closed, into the arms of others or a sighted actor would run as fast as possible around the room, holding onto the hand of a blind actor, helped foster responsibility in the ensemble and the ability to rely on others. The “chord” exercise became associated with the Open Theater, and Pasolli states that “the cohesion of the group and the ensemble aesthetic” were expressed by it.²⁰ Very simply, actors stand or lie in a circle, eyes closed and starting with breathing and then humming, create a communal sound or chord. This exercise can last a very long time and depending on the sensitivity of the performers can be subtle and powerful with beautiful harmonies and dissonance. According to Pasolli:

In it, the actor perceives the group as an entity of which he is a part. He experiences “I” in “it,” rather than “you” or “them.” The actor is in the group, but alone in it; the chord does not submerge his ego but subsumes it.²¹

Sound and Movement

In August, 2000, I interviewed Paul Zimet who was a principal actor for the Open Theater from 1967 to 1973 and for the Winter Project from 1976 to 1983.²² I was interested in a particular exercise called sound and movement that has been described as the first step in the development of the Open Theater’s post-naturalistic theatre technique.²³ It has an interesting history and by studying it we can gain some insights into its usefulness and its place in the process of developing and generating theatrical images. This improvisation involves the transfer of a non-verbal, physical and vocal

²⁰ Ibid., 32

²¹ Pasolli, 33.

²² Paul Zimet, Personal interview, tape recorded, August, 2000.

²³ Pasolli, 5.

gesture from one actor to another. Zimet taught sound and movement to me and other members of Otrabanda Company in the 1970s and I have used it in my own professional work as well as in acting classes at the universities where I teach. Here is a basic outline of one form of sound and movement:

There is a circle of actors who are warmed up and attentive to their own bodies and to their breath and to the bodies and breath of others in the circle.

An actor generates a movement or gesture from an internal impulse that is accompanied by a sound. Both the gesture and the sound are not representative of everyday behavior but are more abstract, more impulsive.

The actor brings the gesture into the center of the circle and tries to develop its fullest form in the body and the voice. This does not necessarily mean its largest and loudest form, but a concise emblematic sequence that is repeatable as a phrase.

The actor then “gives” the sound and movement to another actor who tries to inhabit the form, dynamics and energy of the first actor’s improvisation by a process of meticulous imitation.

When the second actor has fully received the initial physical and vocal gesture, she lets the sound and movement transform into a more personal and less reiterative phrase, perhaps informed by a different impulse. When this is fully developed, it is passed to a third actor.

Paul Zimet suggests several important elements to be considered while working with sound and movement:

1. Try to let yourself be as stupid as possible. The exercise is not about cleverness but getting the mind out of the way, letting the body and breath happen and not making choices. This is very difficult.
2. Open receptivity. Take in the full gestalt, inhabiting what the other person is giving and finding out how far the voice and body can go in meeting the other actor. By getting the outer form, the actor can understand the impulse.
3. Group energy exchange. Ideally, people on the periphery should be in a state of receptivity, ready to jump in, so that how the rhythms are transformed from one person to the next has something to do with what's happening in the room, the energy in the room.²⁴

In an improvisation such as sound and movement, the actor is required to understand that the work is not about being clever or making entertaining choices but about centering the attention on the body and the breath. The emphasis is on kinetic and physical communication and developing an open receptivity to the rhythms and energies of others. It is primarily a non-verbal exercise and is used to develop and strengthen a gestural (both physical and vocal) vocabulary. The “stupid” aspect is a hyperbolic injunction not to rely on the facile qualities of wordplay and mimicry, which are the frequent staples of much improvisational work. The Open Theater developed this type of exercise in the early 1960s, in part, to escape the psychological orientation of the dominant “Method” acting system but also to explore non-verbal methods of communication. As Eileen Blumenthal has written: “By circumventing the psychological

²⁴ Ibid.

and verbal levels, actors can tap directly into feelings that do not have reductive labels and interpretations attached.”²⁵

Sound and movement has a history like many other exercises developed by the Open Theater in the early 1960s. Its roots can be traced back to exercises used by Nola Chilton, a “Method” influenced teacher who had worked with Chaikin and many of his collaborators prior to the founding of the Open Theater. Chilton had experimented with ways to approach physicalizing non-naturalistic material, such as the plays of the Absurdist. Viola Spolin’s theatre games were also an obvious early influence and Chaikin had learned some of them in the summer of 1963 working with the Second City play production unit in Chicago. By 1967, Lee Worley, a founding member of the company, was using a sophisticated version of sound and movement extensively to train young actors interested in working with the Open Theater. Actors Tina Shepard, Paul Zimet and Brenda Dixon came into the company initially through their involvement with Worley’s workshop.²⁶ Sound and movement often is done in a large circle. Actors are encouraged to get in touch with a physical impulse and to develop it into a gestural phrase without the use of words. The exercise requires serious concentration and focus from all participants, and the energy in the room is an important element that the group is required to attend to. The actor senses the energy in the room by being kinesthetically aware of her own body and its relation to other bodies in the room; by monitoring the breath and focus of the group and by trying not to make choices with the mind but to react with the body. The exercise was also fundamental in establishing trust and a

²⁵ Blumenthal, 84.

²⁶ Brenda Dixon, “Being there with Joseph Chaikin” American Writing, 1992. Chaikin Archives.

communal feeling among the ensemble. Dorinda Hulton, in an essay in Twentieth Century Actor Training, has emphasized empathy and rhythm as important elements in sound and movement:

These two factors can be seen most clearly during the stage in the exercise when the two actors are sharing the same sound and movement simultaneously. Apart from the shared gestalt, within the sound and movement form, which is held between them at this time, there is both an empathetic and a rhythmic relationship. Thus, the intention within those moments is not simply to imitate the outward form of the other actor's sound and movement but to share the same inner rhythms and energy, that is the same kinetic and psychic space.²⁷

The exercise helped break down inhibitions about using the body as an explicit instrument of communication as well as generating a whole new vocabulary of gestural signs. The exercise was crucial in establishing a process whereby gestures and movement phrases could be assembled into images around a particular theme. Many of the characteristic physical emblems of the Open Theater's groundbreaking production of The Serpent were created using exercises that began with sound and movement, such as "worlds" and "conductor."²⁸ These exercises were an essential part of a process that began to privilege the collective creativity of specially trained actors over that of an individual playwright.

Conductor exercises involve an actor initiating an action (a sound and movement) and other actors who respond with their own sound and movement, not necessarily the

²⁷ Dorinda Hulton, "Joseph Chaikin and aspects of actor training" in Twentieth Century Actor Training, ed. Alison Hodge (London: Routledge, 2000)pg.162

²⁸ Tina Shepard, Personal interview, tape recorded. June, 2000.

same form. The conductor modulates and forms the tempo, rhythm and dynamics of the others by manipulating his own sound and movement. This exercise can take many forms. It can be set up as a conductor initiating kinetic impulses to a responsive “orchestra” of other actors. It can be done in lines or circles and ultimately it can be “conductorless” without a leader, but the actors must be extremely sensitive to the impulses of the group. Zimet remembers conductor exercises being used extensively in the development of The Serpent both to foster sensitivity and awareness of the group but also to hone physical and vocal flexibility.²⁹

The conductor exercises are the background for the worlds exercises. One actor initiates an image using sound and movement, another actor joins the “world” of the first actor by using his own impulses but by being in contact with the rhythms, sounds and flavor of the first actor’s “world.” More actors join in and add to the density and complexity of the image. The image now involves at least three actors who are moving and breathing and creating sounds in the mode of the original world generated by the first actor. The exercise obviously requires the patience, sensitivity and awareness that come with an experienced ensemble of actors. This world can be inspired by the condition of the initiating actor at the moment or by a suggestion of a director or by a theme that the company is working on. It could be “Man’s World” which became an image in Nightwalk, or the world of tasting the first apple in The Serpent, or the world of grief or desire, or more frequently, of an unnamed condition that the actor is groping for. Chaikin writes: “If the actor could tell the secret, the exercise would be unnecessary.”³⁰

²⁹ Zimet, August, 2000.

³⁰ Chaikin, “Notes on Character,” 80.

Sound and movement, conductor and worlds exercises were important tools in the development of The Serpent and Terminal from 1967 to 1970. The actors who went on to develop Mutation Show and NightWalk from 1970 to 1973 were proficient in these exercises and had established a kinetic grammar and physical relationship with each other that can be compared to the unspoken communication that exists on a sports team or in a veteran dance company.

The Open Theatre 1970-1973

In 1970, the Open Theatre was restructured from a large and fairly unwieldy group that included eighteen actors to a small, tight organization with six principal actors: Paul Zimet, Tina Shepard, Ray Barry, Joann Schmidman, Tom Lillard and Shami Chaikin. Ellen Maddow joined the company as a musician in 1970 and worked as an actor along with Ralph Lee in the company's last piece, NightWalk, in 1973. The new configuration of the company allowed for greater concentration and focus. Chaikin was clearly and indisputably established as the aesthetic leader of the group and his preference for clear and distilled artistic expression won out over a more communal, egalitarian orientation. Although the company continued to align itself with progressive and anti-establishment politics, performing in prisons and at benefits for leftist organizations, the work was not overtly political and not concerned with being popularly accessible. In the three years from 1970 to 1973, the Open Theater made three pieces: a revised Terminal, which had originally been produced with the larger ensemble in 1969; The Mutation Show (1971); and NightWalk (1973).

The actors generated many of the images for these three pieces in rehearsals out of improvisations and exercises. Much of the material was the direct result of the actors'

ability to act out of an imagined condition or to recreate evocative conditions from their past. Exercises were developed that would generate emblematic phrases and gestures that could be used to construct dramatic moments and sequences. These were arranged by the directors, writers or dramaturgs in a visual and textual collage that fit into a developing notion of theatrical structure. This was a period in the history of the Open Theater in which the company was refining what they believed was a new, experimental and collective method of creating theatre. Susan Yankowitz was the sole writer for Terminal, but Mutation Show and NightWalk used a number of different writers, none of who was ultimately responsible for the shape of the finished piece. The organization of all three pieces owed less to a literary tradition, particularly to a normative play structure, and more to an open dream-like narrative, where events overlapped one another and images carried more import than words.

Over the years, the group had developed a theatrical vocabulary that was useful in describing some of the exercises and techniques used to generate material in rehearsal. Some of the key phrases were “speaking out of a condition,” “talking into a moment,” and “modes.”

Speaking out of a condition

A condition is a state of being. It has its own breath, sound and body. Rather than starting with the emotional or psychological aspects of a situation, the actor would try to find the physical attributes of a behavior and speak out of it. The breath was often the starting point. It could be rapid panting or long, slow, sighs. The breath was repeated until it instigated a movement or gesture and ultimately a voice or sound. The condition could be a moment from the actor’s past or it could be an imagined condition that started

with a particular way of breathing. What is important is that the actor explored and investigated the ways in which the breath changed the body and the voice registered those changes. “Speaking out of a condition” was an attempt to directly voice a state of being. The exercise operated on the belief that the actor through training and intense rehearsal could access an authentic voice; a more essential way of speaking that was less mediated by social mannerisms and convention. Paul Zimet described the exercise:

You establish the condition on a breath or a sound and you stay in the same place so that the words are being spoken in that same place. There is no disjuncture between the way you are speaking and the condition. It is the opposite of subtext in a way.³¹

What were the words that were being spoken in this type of exercise? Often they were the first words or phrases that came up out of the actor’s subconscious, and the exercise was a useful way to generate text that could stand alone as an emblematic phrase or be reworked by writers.

Talking into a moment

The Open Theater used storytelling as a device to generate material for their pieces. The actors would relate a story from their personal lives, a memory from childhood, for instance, or an emotional event in their past. A particular moment from the story would be isolated and developed into what was called an emblem. Chaikin wrote in The Presence of the Actor: “The emblem of an action can be performed through a gesture, a sound, a word or a series of any of these. The emblem is not a symbol which

³¹ Paul Zimet, Personal interview, tape recorded, March 3, 2001.

represents an action; it is made up of parts of the whole action.”³² Eileen Blumenthal has pointed out that the use of emblems was inspired by Chaikin’s encounter with a director from China during workshops led by Peter Brook in the summer of 1966. What excited Chaikin was the sparseness and succinctness of the distilled images created in the workshop. Blumenthal wrote: “The economy of the Chinese theater also seemed to Chaikin a clue for crafting performance works. When the action is refined down, the audience becomes more actively engaged.”³³

“Talking into a moment” is a technique developed to identify and explore elements of a story that have the potential to become significant emblems. Paul Zimet explains that the process was to find a pivotal moment of a story and to “try and make it happen in the space, rather than discussing it.” Talking into a moment and the creation of emblems also provided a way for actors to repeat improvisations. A long, storytelling improvisation could be reduced to an emblematic phrase that would contain the essence of the event. Chaikin wrote: “If an emblematic part of an action is played out, with the actor living in the action, there is a resonance beyond what there would be if the entire action was played out.”³⁴ Zimet explained the exercise and its relationship to “speaking out of a condition” and to Stanislavski’s notion of affective memory.

In “talking into a moment” you are trying to retrieve something. You might be talking out of a condition. You set up a past-tense moment. If you set it up accurately, with the details, “at this moment I turned, like this, and saw this car coming at me,” then the physical details give you a better chance of entering the

³² Chaikin, Presence, 113.

³³ Blumenthal, 93.

³⁴ Chaikin, Presence, 113.

moment. In a certain way, it is like emotional recall. You are setting up all the steps. You're trying to be accurate in your telling of it. If you find something in the exercise that seems to be a distillation of the moment. . . a gesture . . . a sound, then that's an emblem."³⁵

As mentioned before, many of the exercises developed in this period privilege a physical approach to acting. Chaikin was disaffected by the emphasis on emotion and psychology of the American method system of acting training. He also was attracted during the late 1960s and early 1970s to the intense physical training of Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre and to a general movement in experimental theatre toward working with the body as a primary means of expression. Grotowski led a workshop with the Open Theater in 1967. Nonetheless, Chaikin cautioned actors not to valorize rigidly external technique: "Don't let anyone tell you to go from the inside out—or the outside in. It's a circle."³⁶

Modes

Modes refer to ways of speaking and with the melody of language. The Open Theater had experimented over the years with paralinguistic elements of speech and with non-verbal methods of communication. A mode is less a specific exercise and more a method of distilling language to its sound and musical elements. According to Ellen Maddow, modes were used extensively in the construction of NightWalk. One perspective of the play is through the eyes of the Traveler and his companion, the Creature (played by Paul Zimet and Tina Shepard), who observe a world of sleep and dreaming humans. Maddow remembers:

³⁵ Paul Zimet, March 3, 2001.

³⁶ Blumenthal, 56.

The idea was that the Paul and Tina characters were somehow non-human. It was like a squirrel's eye view of people because they couldn't understand the language, but the intention of the language and the melody of the language made very clear what was going on. There were a lot of exercises where you would let the language disappear and only the non-verbal sounds would remain.³⁷

The modes work in NightWalk involved the use of writers who would script scenes that were then reduced to sounds and a few phrases. One scene, "Dinner with the Boss," involved an elaborate Thanksgiving dinner that was initially improvised. Megan Terry wrote out a script that the actors then rehearsed line for line. Eventually the text was allowed to dissolve, leaving only a melody and some key words.

A good example of how modes work is the opening of NightWalk. The actors had learned the Japanese Buddhist chant "Nam yo ho ringei kyo" which eventually was reduced to just the consonant sounds. The result was a musical pulse that retained the intention of the original chanting but had a more open, less identifiable, ambiguous sound, somewhat like panting, somehow like a marching drone that suggested a unison sleep world.

Speaking out of a condition, talking into a moment and modes are all ways of working that involve an attempt to distill and reduce behavior to an essential phrase or emblem. The exercises reflected a concern within the Open Theater for clean and succinct images that were powerful and articulate but not necessarily tied to language. Also, these exercises point to a different approach to expressions of character as being less tied to given circumstances and more related to fragmentary states of being or

³⁷ Ellen Maddow, Personal interview, tape recorded. March 3, 2001.

momentary conditions. By the end of the Open Theater in 1973, the company, under Chaikin's guidance, had developed an efficient vocabulary and a focused method of working that would strongly influence the Winter Project. Many of the principle actors for the new ensemble, particularly Tina Shepard and Paul Zimet, had worked for years with Chaikin developing "ways of working" that were fundamental to creating new experimental work. The Winter Project would continue to develop methods and techniques for composing collage-like performance pieces made up of images, states of being, and emblematic moments of behavior.

Chapter 2

"CREATIVE WASTE": THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE WINTER PROJECT

The Winter Project was set up by Joseph Chaikin in December 1976 as a workshop or theatre laboratory. In the first year, a group of about twenty actors, writers, composers, and other theatre workers met over a period of about two months at a rehearsal space in the Westbeth Theatre Center in the West Village of New York City to work on a variety of performance related issues mostly having to do with acting. The project was funded by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Peg Saantvord Foundation, with the bulk of the support coming from the New York State Council on the Arts. Funds were administered by Artservices, through the Other Theater Inc., a non-profit corporation set up to handle Joseph Chaikin's post-Open Theater work. This large, initial group met each winter for two years. There were no public performances, no publications and no written record of what went on in the workshop. There are, in the Chaikin Archives at Kent State University Library, papers having to do with the beginning years of the project. They include notes by Chaikin for members of the workshop dated December 1976 and a preliminary list of participants dated February 1977. Most of the information in this chapter comes from interviews with the participants.

Chaikin had put together nine pages of preliminary notes that were distributed to the participants of the workshop. He wanted the research to be general and basic and was cautious about defining or limiting the direction that the investigations might take.

However, he indicated that his main interest was in the exploration of the act of speaking and the ways in which the voice could be used to access “forbidden emotions.”¹

Our voices are ample to ask for the salt to be passed and to talk on the telephone but the extreme conditions of eroticism, of the sharpest rage, of the most ecstatic changes that we move through, even in the passing moment, go unexpressed. Our voices are not developed to give expression to the passions—to the immoderate—which are commonly experienced, even if generally unexpressed.²

Although Chaikin and the Open Theatre had pioneered a theatre of images that relied on physicality and paralinguistic vocal work, text had always been an important consideration. In his notes, Chaikin stressed that he wanted to work on written material that was appropriate to a collaborative, developmental theatre. A sole, authorial playwright would not generate the literary content of the project. Instead, numerous eclectic texts would be assembled and worked on. He suggested a number of sources for content, including what he termed “inherited material” by which he meant Bible stories, Greek myths and other classic texts. Samuel Beckett, for example, was considered a classic playwright. Some material had been submitted to the project by writers Sam Shepard and Jean-Claude Van Itallie, and Chaikin hoped that the writers within the group, among them, Robert Montgomery, Susan Yankowitz and Joan Schenkar, would be encouraged to provide more material “as the writers become engaged with what we are working with.”³ The written sources were to be works intended to be spoken out loud.

¹ See Appendix A, Joseph Chaikin “Notes/Winter Project, 12/1/76.”

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Chaikin emphasized that “the study is about ‘telling’ ” and that he was interested in investigating the “performer as transmitter.” He stressed the dynamic aspects of transmitting experience rather than merely reciting it. “It isn’t a place (fixed, held) but a motion that the actor contacts and moves from.”⁴ Chaikin was also interested in devising exercises about audience reception and the ways in which the spectator was implicated in the performance. The listener was an important part of the circuit between the material of the story and the presence of the actor. Who was being addressed was an important consideration for the performer and required a focus that was specific to the particular listener or listeners. Musicians, composers, writers or performers could initiate separate projects and “the telling, could be through music, silence, the body, the face, the eyes.”⁵

All the members of the workshop had had some working relationship with Chaikin, either as members of the Open Theater or in collaborations since 1973 after the company disbanded. Joyce Aaron, Mark Samuels, and Ronnie Gilbert had all worked with the Open Theater before 1970, and Ray Barry, Paul Zimet and Tina Shepard had been part of the reduced ensemble until 1973. Actors Corey Fisher, Chris McCann, Charles Stanley and Robbie McCauley had been associated with Chaikin in projects after 1973. McCauley had worked with the Open Theater as a voice teacher, leading workshops in the Linklater technique. She had been featured in Chaikin’s production of Adrienne Kennedy’s A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White at the Public Theater in 1976. McCann had acted in Büchner’s Woyzeck with Chaikin and was involved with his production of Beckett’s Endgame at Princeton with Charles Stanley, who had also worked on Jean-Claude Van Itallie’s Fable. Musicians and composers included Richard

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Peaslee, David Van Tieghan, Skip LaPlante, Stan Walden and Peter Golub. Playwrights who attended the workshops included Jean-Claude Van Itallie, Susan Yankowitz, and Robert Montgomery. Texts by Sam Shepard and Samuel Beckett were also contributed. Chaikin had long-term collaborative relationships with Shepard, Van Itallie and Yankowitz and was beginning to establish a correspondence with Beckett.

Montgomery's Electra had been one of Chaikin's first projects after disbanding the Open Theater. Poets Muriel Rukeyser and Joan Schenkar also attended many sessions. The lighting designer Beverly Emmons worked with the group, arranging a lighting system that could be controlled onstage by the actors.

Mira Rafalowicz was the dramaturg, and her contribution to the Winter Project was extremely important both in the way she helped structure material and in her relationship with Chaikin. One cannot consider the history of this ensemble without recognizing Rafalowicz's constant presence and her enormous influence, particularly on the five productions that the Winter Project created from 1979 to 1983. Chaikin and Rafalowicz were close friends and collaborators. She had been the dramaturg for the final Open Theater piece NightWalk (1972) and had then worked on Chaikin's productions of Electra, Fable and Chile, Chile. She translated S. Ansky's Yiddish classic The Dybbuk, for which she worked as dramaturg at both the Public Theater in New York and the Habima in Israel. All of the material rehearsed during the seven years of the Winter Project was presented to Chaikin and Rafalowicz, who sat side by side, usually on the floor, constantly conferring and exchanging notes. Although the actors and musicians could change from project to project, Rafalowicz worked on all the Winter Project productions, and the work reflects her concern with structure and flow. As Allen

Kuharski has pointed out, despite her important contributions, critics and academics have consistently overlooked Rafalowicz. In an essay for Dramaturgy in American Theater, Kuharski wrote:

Out of the samplings of twenty reviews of the Winter Project productions collected for this article, for example, only one referred to the dramaturg by name or her function in the creation of the piece. Rafalowicz has expressed frustration that both the popular press and the few academic studies of the work of the Winter Project (including Blumenthal's) have created a false impression of the ensemble's work as "Auteur theater" with Chaikin as the single defining presence.⁶

One of the aims of this dissertation is to examine the process of developmental theatre and to re-evaluate the function and contributions of Rafalowicz as sole dramaturg for the Winter Project.

After disbanding the Open Theater in 1973, Chaikin had worked on a number of projects involving classic texts. He worked on a version of Electra (1974) with Robert Montgomery, directed Chekhov's The Seagull (1975) at the Manhattan Theater Club and played the title role in Büchner's Woyzeck (1976) at the Public Theater. Chaikin was also involved in two collaborative works, Fable (1975) with playwright Jean-Claude Van Itallie and composer Richard Peaslee, and a "musical documentary," Chile, Chile (1975), about the overthrow of Salvador Allende. Although most of this work was successful, it was produced for the most part in temporary arrangements at established, not-for-profit, theatre institutions like the Public Theater, the Manhattan Theater Club or the Lennox

⁶ Allen Kuharski, "Joseph Chaikin and the Presence of the Dramaturg," Dramaturgy in American Theater eds. Jonas and Proehl (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1997), 156.

Arts Center and lacked a sense of fundamental research that a more laboratory-like setting would provide. By 1976, Chaikin was eager to return to the type of collective, theatrical investigations that had been so fruitful with the previous ensemble. In an interview with Andrzej Bonarski, he said that, although he enjoyed performing, he wanted to work with a group again. He went on to outline some of the concerns that this new group would address:

I'd like to see if there is some way to bring about forms where people can speak about experience—through word, through action, through gesture, through face, through song, through voice, through silence. When I start to work, the active idea often changes completely from the idea that it becomes. The new study which I will be working on is called "The Winter Project." The necessity and danger of the exploration has to be taken from the way that we speak and will very probably effect the way that we will come to speak. A test to see what can be shared of experience and what can't.⁷

The group would explore technical aspects of expression using the voice and the body but as important for Chaikin was the question "What is possible to transmit and express and what isn't?" What emotions and feelings, what actions, were prevented from being expressed by a kind of societal taboo. "Because its embarrassing, let's say, or there's so few examples of it in our time or it's so exposed as being fraudulent."⁸

Another concern was what material would be repeatable. What would be as exhilarating as the first time, each time one did it? Chaikin understood that the

⁷ "Interview with Andrzej Bonarski," Performing Arts Journal, Winter, 1977, Vol.1, No.3, 119.

⁸ Chaikin in the film "Joseph Chaikin: Going On" by Steve Gomer, 1983, Films for the Humanities, Princeton, NJ.

performer's investment in the material was crucial to its repeatability. He wanted the commitment of the performer to be to the ideas of the material as well as to the behavior of the character. That required actors who were interested in ideas and not merely interested in playing a part. Chaikin has said that a central part of his experience in the theatre has been in collaborating with actors who are capable of understanding the intellectual implications of the work.

The people that one is working with, the actors and musicians and such, have to be people with dimension, not only good actors or developed actors. That is, that one is interested in their participation as thinkers.⁹

Chaikin was strongly influenced by Bertolt Brecht's requirement that the actor as a private person be concerned with the ideology of the play. As a young actor, he had played Galy Gay in the Living Theater's production of Man Is Man, and this experience was foundational for his own developing thoughts about theatre. "What happened was, I came to believe what I was saying" is how Chaikin describes his revelatory understanding of the importance of commitment to the ideals of the material.¹⁰ The actor and the director, the dramaturg and the audience are all implicated in the investigation of what is repeatable in the theatre. In incisively describing the Brechtian actor, Chaikin helps to locate his own notions of presence, repeatability and the relationship with the audience:

In addition to his presence on the stage as the character in the given circumstances, he is sharing with the audience a response to the character's predicament. Each choice has to be made according to the logic of the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

playwright's intention, rather than exclusively with the character's. Moment to moment, the play is between actor and audience, as the actor's attitude changes about the character and his circumstances. The audience is the actor's partner as he plays the role of the character with the other characters. He does not have to wink, woo or pander to win the audience's partnership; he begins with the assumption of partnership, and this assumption is the tacit understanding, the secret under the character's façade.¹¹

It is important to note Chaikin's use of the notion of character as a meeting place for both the actor and the audience. The actor is not "lost" in the illusion of character but neither is he merely playing himself. Chaikin employs a useful metaphor to explain this fundamental paradox: "He performs like a double agent who has infiltrated both worlds."¹²

Throughout the existence of the Winter Project, Chaikin was able to balance work with the group and his other engagements. As we shall see, there was a good deal of interpenetration between projects. Some of the text from Tongues, which Chaikin created with Sam Shepard in 1978, made its way into the Winter Project's Re-Arrangements in 1979. Similarly, Savage Love, the next Chaikin/Shepard collaboration, borrowed moments from Re-Arrangements. From 1977 to 1983, while devoting two to three months a year to the Winter Project, Chaikin also directed two productions of The Dybbuk, two productions of Endgame and one Sophocles' Antigone. He acted in Beckett's Texts for Nothing and co-wrote Tongues and Savage Love, which he also acted

¹¹ Chaikin, The Presence of the Actor (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1991), 36.

¹² Ibid.

in. Actors from the Winter Project appeared in The Dybbuk and in Antigone as well as a number of other pieces Chaikin developed during this period. Despite the eclectic mix of different types of theatre in different types of economic and structural situations, Chaikin's preference was for experimental theatre in a laboratory-like set-up.

My primary identity to myself in relation to theatre is as one who does investigation—that is one who is offstage—trying things out but following a strong intuition without knowing where I'm heading. And that's what I love most to do in the theatre.¹³

The work of the first two years of the Winter Project

The daily schedule involved a physical and vocal warm-up, some notes from Chaikin, possibly a group exercise and then presentation of work-in-progress by individuals and small groups within the ensemble. Rafalowicz noted that without the pressure of public performance, participants enjoyed a certain freedom:

In the first two years we had the luxury of just playing. What I like to call creative waste. You get to play around a lot and you have the luxury to throw away a lot. And then, you learn by what you don't want.¹⁴

Over the next two years, participants in the workshop would bring in material that they were interested in working on. This could be written text from a play or poem or an exploration of a condition or behavior. For example, Robbie McCauley worked almost exclusively on texts from the plays of Adrienne Kennedy, while Mark Samuels explored physical modes of elderly people. Chaikin would also set up various group exercises and

¹³ Chaikin in "Continuing Work" Theatre Papers, ed. Peter Hulton, Dartington College of Arts, England, 1982.

¹⁴ Mira Rafalowicz, Personal interview, tape recorded, November 20, 1995.

improvisations on topics that he wanted to investigate. The structure of the meetings was loose. Project members describe the atmosphere as free and open. Joyce Aaron makes a distinction between the first two years, which she described as random and unfocused and the third year in which a production, Re-Arrangements, was mounted. She points out that “there was a tremendous difference in the expectation of fruition” and preferred the more focused production work to the “hit and miss” exploratory work.¹⁵ McCauley also preferred to be involved in the making of a product but described the first two years of the project as life changing and amazing “because of the time taken—so much time taken—and that was not something I was used to.”¹⁶ Paul Zimet and Tina Shepard remember very little of the first two years. Both of them were founding members of a new theatre company, the Talking Band, which was producing its second piece Worksong. Zimet explained his vague recollections: “Probably part of the reason it wasn’t that memorable to me was that I was champing at the bit. I was much more into the Talking Band. My memory was that I was restless with this kind of potchkeeing around.”¹⁷

The company brought in and developed an eclectic mixture of material. Ronnie Gilbert worked mostly on poetry, much of which was ultimately abandoned by Chaikin and Rafalowicz except for sections of three poems by Muriel Rukeyser, which Richard Peaslee set to music. Gilbert and Peaslee took the songs to Rukeyser who approved one of them titled “Then.” This piece was subsequently performed in Re-Arrangements and in Trio.

¹⁵ Joyce Aaron, Telephone interview, tape recorded, June 29, 2001.

¹⁶ Robbie McCauley, Telephone interview, tape recorded, July 28, 2001.

¹⁷ Paul Zimet, Personal interview, tape recorded, August 20, 2001.

When I am dead, even then,
 I will still love you, I will wait in these poems,
 When I am dead, even then,
 I am still listening to you.
 I will still be making poems for you,
 out of silence;
 Silence will be falling into that silence.
 It is building music.¹⁸

Gilbert remembers collaborating with Mark Samuels on finding physical and vocal modes for elderly people. She also worked on a speech from Brecht's Arturo Ui, which became the seed for further investigations concerned with finding a particular vocal mode for a rapacious capitalist.¹⁹ Samuels spent the majority of his time working on generating modes of behavior for an elderly character, but recalled working on poems, which Robert Montgomery had adapted from Dostoevsky's The Idiot. He also began working on a response to the question "if you were told you had one minute to live, how would you be?" This silent, frantic movement section was later developed for Re-Arrangements.²⁰ The Holocaust was a theme that came up constantly in discussions that Samuels recollected and was a topic that ran through the whole two years.

Corey Fisher presented work on a section of "The Last of the Just," a Holocaust novel by Andre Schwartz-Bart. He also worked on Hasidic stories, an Elizabeth Bishop

¹⁸ Muriel Rukeyser, The Collected Poems of Muriel Rukeyser (New York: McGraw Hill, 1978), 564.

¹⁹ Ronnie Gilbert, Telephone interview, tape recorded, February 18, 2001.

²⁰ Mark Samuels, Telephone interview, tape recorded, June 22, 2001.

poem, and a Rumi poem brought in by Robert Montgomery. He spent a lot of time working on the messenger speech from Ted Hughes's adaptation of Seneca's Oedipus.

suddenly he began to weep everything that had been
torment suddenly it was sobbing it shook his whole
body and he shouted Is weeping all I can give
can't my eyes give any more let them go with their
tears let them go eyeballs too everything
out is this enough for you you frozen gods of
marriage is it sufficient are my eyes enough
he was raging as he spoke his face throbbed dark
red his eyeballs seemed to be jumping in their
sockets forced out from the skull his face was
no longer the face of Oedipus contorted like a
rabid dog he had begun to scream a bellowing
animal anger agony tearing his throat²¹

This speech was felt to be a good example of appropriate text to work on. It addressed many of the concerns Chaikin had mentioned in his preliminary notes such as dynamic transmission, the circuit between audience and performer and repeatability. It described Oedipus's recognition of his terrible sin and his subsequent self-blinding. The messenger told the story by switching from description to enactment. Chaikin was particularly interested in the rapid transformation from telling a story to evoking it. Chaikin and the Open Theater had done years of exercises and improvisations investigating how an actor

²¹ Seneca's Oedipus, adapted by Ted Hughes (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), 51.

can shift levels of energy, focus and presence. At one point the messenger addressed the audience directly and attempted to clearly set out the given circumstances of the scene. The actor's focus, his recognition of the audience and of his own presence as an actor were important in establishing what Chaikin described as a "circuit" with the spectators. At other moments, the actor took on the voice and body of Oedipus and spoke out of his condition of pain and horror. This shifting and the transformation of modes of behavior along with the technical details of exploring the multiple voices and gestures of each condition made the Oedipus messenger speech an ideal acting exercise for the Winter Project. It was a famous story, obviously repeatable, the telling of which involved carefully orchestrated transformations. In order to fully examine the dynamics of the text, the actor had to reject a fixed and stable position for a more mobile, mutable perspective. Fisher compared the acting of the piece to literary composition.

It's the difference between writing in the first person, where the consciousness is sunken down into one persona, as opposed to a kind of writing where there's a very expansive perspective that allows for a more prismatic presence.²²

There are obvious connections to Brechtian acting techniques, which attempt to disrupt an empathic response to the performance with a more critical and distanced one. Fisher recalls that Brecht's essay "The Street Scene" and Walter Benjamin's "The Storyteller" were texts that were studied and discussed at length in the first two years of the project often after work at Chaikin's apartment. As I will demonstrate in this study, Chaikin's lifelong understanding and development of Brechtian theatrical theory and practice underlay many of his own notions about acting.

²² Corey Fisher, Telephone interview, tape recorded. August 8, 2001.

Each actor is responsible to a particular character, but his attention is on the whole event. He must know the whole event in all its incongruities, seeing the chaos clearly. From that perspective we have a better view of the structures in which we live, these structures being arrangements we make to deal with the chaos. Brecht asks us to re-examine these arrangements.²³

Group Exercises

All the actors participated in group exercises, which were set up by Chaikin. A lot of time was devoted to discussion and to an ongoing compilation of questions, which were used in a series of exercises that can be loosely termed “interviews.” Interviewing is a basic technique in many improvisational groups and involves having actors develop a condition or a fictive relationship with another actor and then asking them a series of questions. This exercise, which had been used extensively early on in the Open Theater (Interview was one of the three pieces that made up Jean-Claude Van Itallie’s America Hurrah in 1966), was helpful in developing text and images for Terminal (1969) and was an important exercise in Mutation Show (1971). In the latter piece, according to Ellen Maddow, one of the actors in that piece, performers would be assembled into a gallery of characters they were developing, for example: the Man Who Hits Himself, the Bird Lady and the Petrified Man. Other actors or Chaikin and Rafalowicz would then interview them. Bits of text were generated in this way as well as gestural and vocal emblems that could be incorporated into the character. The actor would be speaking out of a condition. As Maddow explained, this involved establishing a breath, sound and body around a

²³ Chaikin, The Presence of the Actor, 40. (Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of the “dialogic imagination” also seems relevant to “a kind of writing where there’s a very expansive perspective.” See Marvin Carlson, “Theatre and Dialogism,” in Critical Theory and Performance, eds. Reinelt and Roach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 314.

limited and specific action (the Man Who Hits Himself) and then allowing the condition to generate a response to the interview.²⁴

In the Winter Project, the questions themselves became an important area of investigation, along with an interest in who was asking the questions. Long lists of questions were assembled and cataloged. Paul Zimet pointed out two important aspects of the interview exercise. The first was as a way to get into character and the second was to shift the emphasis onto the question. “I think it was also about what kind of question, the question being more important. At some point, the character could choose not to answer, so the question had a chance to reverberate.”²⁵ As we shall see, interviewing became a prime structural device for Re-Arrangements with many of the questions originating in the previous two years. Here are some examples of questions developed for interviews:

Is there any moment that changed you?

Can you relax?

Can you do something funny?

What do you think is worth doing?

What would you be doing if you weren't the person you are now?

If you stopped doing what you are doing?

If you would totally change your life?²⁶

Another series of group exercises had to do with the expectations of the audience. In one version, two people would repeat a simple action, say, sitting at a table and drinking from

²⁴ Ellen Maddow, Personal interview, tape recorded, March 3, 2001.

²⁵ Zimet, Personal interview, tape recorded, August 20, 2001.

²⁶ See Appendix B. Memo, December 27, 1978. Chaikin papers KSUL Box 6, Folder 51.

a cup. (Paul Zimet remembers eating many crackers.) The spectators would then invent a context for the scene: “They are lovers who are falling out of love” or “They are spies who are out to get one another.” The action was repeated exactly as it had been done before with no change of affect but a change of context provided by the spectators. The investigation was concerned with what an audience contributes to an understanding of a scene and how individual spectators construct their own private narrative. It also involved looking into ways in which actions could be kept open and unresolved, allowing multiple perspectives and interpretations.

“Expecting” exercises were done in a number of formats. Another variation required a line of actors sitting on the stage, assuming the condition of viewing an undefined event. Spectators would then make assumptions about what the actors were seeing. The exercise worked best when the actors did not take into consideration the spectator’s comments or better yet did not hear them and just repeated the action as exactly as possible. The “repeated action” and “expecting” exercises helped create mostly silent images that were “open” and “resonant,” two terms that were highly valued in the workshop. The exercises presupposed a circuit of energy that existed between the performer and the spectator. Chaikin had been exploring this dynamic for years. Eileen Blumenthal suggests that part of what Chaikin is getting at with his notion of the presence of the actor “involves the audience’s sense of shared aliveness and immediacy with the performers.”²⁷ The performer’s recognition of a circuit between himself and the spectator and his/her ability to keep the connection open by not fixing or determining an interpretation was an important aspect of “expecting” and “repeated action” exercises.

²⁷ Eileen Blumenthal, Joseph Chaikin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 76.

One of Chaikin's skills was in creating performance events that were not driven by text but by images and sound. A crucial element of these images was that they were abstract and not strictly defined. Mira Rafalowicz explained that :

Our Platonic model was never theatre. Our Platonic model is painting and movies and is music mainly. We're not going to make a play . . . We are not telling one story but many, many stories."²⁸

Rafalowicz and Chaikin looked to other art forms and disciplines for inspiration and for a way to privilege sensory perception over interpretation. The Open Theater and the Winter Project share the privileging of image over text with many other contemporary artists. Robert Wilson and Meredith Monk immediately come to mind. Marvin Carlson, in a discussion of contemporary theoretical approaches to textual authority, writes that "foregrounding the materiality of the performance" allows the spectator to rewrite the performance into a more personal version.²⁹ I will discuss the theoretical implications of the Winter Project's work in a separate chapter, but it is important to note that the exercises were not merely devices for generating material for performance but functioned as a way to investigate the aesthetics of performance.

Ultimately, only a very small portion of the work was deemed presentable to an invited audience. However, the investigations were part of a stimulating and fruitful process. Chaikin, in speaking about the benefits of working with actors who share a vocabulary, forged by years of collaboration said:

We have a language that we can refer to easily. It's a language that is very valuable, a vocabulary of common experiences, of common exercises, different

²⁸ Mira Rafalowicz, Personal interview, tape recorded, December, 1995.

²⁹ Marvin Carlson, Theories of the Theatre (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 512.

attempts that we never realized, some that we did. But, the ones that we didn't, in a way, are the ones that are the more engaging.³⁰

The first two years of the Winter Project were invaluable in supplying a space and time for investigating what was interesting and difficult to perform and what was engaging but perhaps not transmittable.

Eileen Blumenthal has pointed out that music provided Chaikin with a means to draw theatre “into more subtle and abstract types of address.”³¹ One of the aims of the Winter Project was to create a space for extensive experimentation between musicians and actors. Chaikin had used music in many of the Open Theater pieces but the Winter Project is distinctively different in that professional musicians were an integral part of every investigation and production. Peter Golub was the principal musician who collaborated with the group during the first three years of the project. Along with composers Richard Peaslee, Stan Walden, and musicians David Van Tieghan and Skip LaPlante, Golub provided a strong musical presence within the group. He had performed in Van Itallie's The Fable (music composed by Peaslee), Büchner's Woyzeck and in Adrienne Kennedy's A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White and remembers sharing music with Chaikin outside of rehearsal. Golub points out that Chaikin was less receptive to formed music that would be brought into the workshop, “work that was too composed” and preferred pieces that were organically improvised with the actors. Although Peaslee's pieces were written out and formally arranged and Golub recalls Stan Walden playing Stravinsky clarinet pieces, most of the music was created in response to what the actors were doing either as accompaniment to a piece of text or as counterpoint

³⁰ Chaikin, “Continuing Work,” 18.

³¹ Blumenthal, Joseph Chaikin, 97.

underneath an action. A lot of music was generated and then abandoned in the spirit of Rafalowicz's "creative waste."³²

Skip LaPlante, a skilled bass player and pianist, had developed a number of home-made, mostly percussive instruments that he used to accompany actors who were interested in collaborating with musicians. He worked with Robbie McCauley on her Adrienne Kennedy material and with Corey Fisher. He came into the project in 1978 as a replacement for the percussionist David Van Tieghan. LaPlante usually improvised very freely with the actors when developing work but played bass to a formal score written by Peaslee for Muriel Rukeyser's poem. His collection of over one hundred instruments complemented the rhythmic and textural aspects of many of the written texts. He encouraged the actors and other musicians to use and experiment with the instruments if they had a musical idea or notion. La Plante became one of the musicians for Re-Arrangements and worked on Tourist and Refugees as well as Tongues and Savage Love.

Chaikin was indisputably the main figure of authority within the Winter Project. He had instigated its formation, and it was funded through his personal non-profit organization. There was no pretense that decisions within the project would be arrived at democratically. In the first two years, members of the group could bring in material that was of interest to them personally, but if it did not stimulate or interest Chaikin it was soon abandoned. Rafalowicz sat beside Chaikin and was intimately involved in shaping and guiding the work, but ultimately Chaikin had the final say about whether material would continue to be developed. In a draft of an article about dramaturgy for theatre, Rafalowicz wrote:

³² Peter Golub, Telephone interview, tape recorded, August 8, 2001

Collaboration is not to be confused with equal input
or democratic procedure.

In reality some people's input is more inspired and
inspiring. Often actors are on different levels
of acting experience and consciousness. Once we
start molding a work, decisions are not made by
democratic voting procedures, but finally by those
who have taken the responsibility to watch rather than act.³³

The participants in the workshop conformed to this relationship to varying degrees. Often the actors would lobby Rafalowicz as a way to get their material reconsidered by Chaikin and she was often more sympathetic than he was. While the work was confined to experimentation in the first two years, most members were content to accept Chaikin and Rafalowicz as arbiters of taste and aesthetics with Chaikin having the final word. Corey Fisher mentioned an unspoken understanding:

There was a clear sense, the subtext was: Let's do stuff that Joe likes. Let's get Joe excited and inspired so he will be forthcoming and talk. There was a sense of offering. It was clear which work he responded to, and it became clear when he did not want to see it anymore.³⁴

Although Chaikin finally determined choices, participants developed a critical vocabulary that allowed for discussion and feedback. Work was "strong," "resonant" or "clear," and these terms came to be understood by a process that Ronnie Gilbert

³³ See Appendix B. Mira Rafalowicz, draft of article for Theater (Yale University) February 3, 1978. Chaikin Papers, KSUL, Box 6, Folder 10.

³⁴ Fisher, interview, August 8, 2001

described as “constant dialogue—before, during and after sessions.” The group discussed how it could be present in terms of critiquing work, and the phrase “speak to what was clear” was used as a directive for “seeing through to what the actor was trying to do.” Gilbert reiterated that the twofold aim in most of the work was focusing on “telling the story” and “transmitting the story.”³⁵ Robbie McCauley enjoyed the clear choices that were made by Chaikin and Rafalowicz: “What was strong—and that was the first time I had heard that term in relationship to work—was worked on. What was not, was not considered”³⁶ Undoubtedly, the ambiguity of such terms as “strong” and “clear” allow for arbitrary decisions to be made and one can imagine that Chaikin used them at times to express a personal preference.

Chaikin was notoriously faint with praise, and although there was a comradely feeling of collaboration in the group, work was very serious. In 1969 Chaikin had written to members of the Open Theater.

I rarely give praise in the workshop. I always feel that most of you are developed enough to know as you work whether or not you are working from your own nature. Even though we must sometimes be supported and encouraged, praise is beside the point. Even self-praise.³⁷

Performers with the Winter Project who had collaborated with Chaikin for many years, like Zimet, Shepard or Gilbert were comfortable with Chaikin’s work ethic and, although it was painful at times, accepted it as part of a mature working relationship. Younger members, like Corey Fisher, had to learn to adapt to it.

³⁵ Gilbert, interview, July 31, 2001.

³⁶ Robbie McCauley, Telephone interview, tape recorded, July 28, 2001.

³⁷ Chaikin, Presence, 86

It was hard when I was in it. There was not a lot of approval. Work was uncompromising and rigorous and Joe was not easy to please. To the degree that one could unhook from that, it was fine.³⁸

Not all the participants were happy with the way choices were made within the group. When the Winter Project came to produce fully mounted productions for public consumption after 1979, these resentments increased and came to the surface. The inherent pressures of performance and the switch from an emphasis on process to concerns about product raised the stakes for the performers within the group. These problems are not unusual among actors and musicians who produce work collaboratively, but as we shall see, the Winter Project addressed the questions uniquely, determined by the personalities within the ensemble and by a history of similar problems with previous collaborations. Ultimately, most people I interviewed considered this issue to be an unpleasant but inherent part of collaborating with a powerful and demanding director like Chaikin. The artistic benefits, for the most part, outweighed personal resentments.

In 1978, the main source of funds for the Winter Project, the New York State Council of the Arts, insisted on some form of public presentation of the work. According to Ronnie Gilbert, Chaikin was upset and concerned about the problems of showing experimental work to an audience who might be unfamiliar with the Winter Project's unique process.

It is not ready; it's too embryonic. Some of the work we are showing the audience is quite developed and, in fact, will be performed other places, but what people

³⁸ Fisher, interview, August 8, 2001.

are seeing this year are mainly little fragments of things. And yet some of the work that's unseeable is very much the context of our meetings.³⁹

According to Gilbert, Chaikin warned project members that there would be some spectators who would be able to take the work in, but others “who would be looking for what they understood theatre should be.” Gilbert thought that perhaps Chaikin was overreacting and was herself inclined to “give the audience credit for a little bit of brains.” She was dismayed, however, when at the end of the second season work was shown for an invited audience and the poet Allen Ginsberg was vocally critical.⁴⁰ He found Robbie McCauley’s work with the Kennedy texts to be cartoonish, and during a discussion about the Holocaust called out, “Which one?” McCauley felt his comments were fair and was not as upset as some other members of the group, while Peter Golub remembers Ginsberg’s Holocaust comment as being revelatory. Paul Zimet who had worked with Ginsberg at the Naropa Institute was familiar with his style of critique and was unaffected by it.⁴¹ Ginsberg was the only vocal critic of the event, and on the whole, Chaikin and Rafalowicz were encouraged by the showings. Under pressure from NYSCA they began to consider changing the format of the Winter Project to include public performances in 1979.

This would be an important shift in focus from process to product and would involve major changes in the composition of the group. The members were reduced from twenty to six actors and two musicians, along with Chaikin as director and Rafalowicz as dramaturg. The emphasis would be on producing an event that would engage and

³⁹ Chaikin to Blumenthal in Joseph Chaikin, 34.

⁴⁰ Gilbert, interview, July 31, 2001.

⁴¹ Interviews with McCauley, July 28, 2001, Golub, August 8, 2001, Zimet, August 20, 2001.

entertain an audience. Although rehearsals would continue to be experimental and investigative, the luxury of “creative waste” would disappear under the exigencies of performance.

Chapter 3

RE-ARRANGEMENTS: PROCESS TO PRODUCT

When the Winter Project reconvened in December 1978, a number of important changes had been made to the composition and goals of the ensemble. NYSCA, the chief funding source, had insisted on public performances and although Chaikin and Rafalowicz were reluctant to give up the luxury of open-ended research, the pressures of performance helped concentrate and energize the focus of the new group. There were six actors. Paul Zimet, Ronnie Gilbert, Tina Shepard, Joyce Aaron and Mark Samuels had all worked in the first two years of the project and had long associations with Chaikin and the Open Theater. Will Patton was a newcomer, having taken Chaikin's fall acting workshop where he impressed the director with his vibrant presence and unique sensibility. The musicians were Peter Golub and Skip La Plante. Another new addition was the Japanese set designer, Jun Maeda, who, although he had no previous experience with Chaikin, became an essential collaborator on all the subsequent Winter Project productions. Maeda had designed the sets for Andrei Serban's landmark productions of Trojan Women (1974) and A Good Woman of Sechuan (1975) and was La Mama's resident designer. Steve Reisner, who along with Patton had taken the fall workshop, was initially assigned a peripheral job as a production assistant but became a crucial contributor to the structural development of the next three productions.

The majority of the actors were pleased to be working toward a performable product. Most of them had long experience with creating characters and images in what had initially been an innovative process of collaborative, developmental theatre. By

1978, there were hundreds of theatre groups in the United States who had been inspired to create original work collaboratively by collectives like the Open Theatre, the Performance Group and others. There was a sense of security in the knowledge that the actors “owned” the material they were performing. In many cases, they had written the lines or had brought in the initial concept of the scene or at the very least had helped form and develop the material. This proprietorial relationship between the actor and the characters he portrayed was encouraged by an aspect of Chaikin’s notion of presence which involved the actor himself being fully present in the evocation of a role. Chaikin and his actors believed that this type of performance was qualitatively different from the normative tradition of a playwright handing an actor a preconceived role.

In December 1978, the company met and discussed a number of themes and possible areas of interest. Love and love relationships would be the main theme. The tentative title of the piece was ThoughtMusic. A ten-page memo was sent to company members on December 27 that summarized “some of the possible elements, questions, areas of interest and thought that could be a starting point for the nonexistent piece, ThoughtMusic.” The memo also stated that rehearsals would start on January 2 at 11:00 A.M. and continue six days a week from 11:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. at La Mama’s rehearsal space at 47 Great Jones Street. The finished piece would be presented at La Mama’s Annex theatre from March 3 to March 25.¹

The December 27 memo, Steve Reisner’s meticulous rehearsal notes, Mira Rafalowicz’s 1978 essay on dramaturgy and the unpublished final script of Re-Arrangements, are documents that enable us to understand not only the development of

¹ See Appendix B. Memo regarding the Winter Project, December 27, 1978. Joseph Chaikin Papers, Box 6, Folder 51, Kent State University Archives

the production but also a way of working that was a result of years of collective experience.² This way of working was both a practice and a sensibility, what might be called a practical aesthetics that was evolved and shared by the ensemble. I want to describe the working process in some detail to give the reader a sense of the day to day concerns of the Winter Project. I will also try to provide a more panoramic perspective that will include theoretical and historical connections to theatrical predecessors, most notably Bertolt Brecht. As I have mentioned, Chaikin's work, because of its genesis with the Living Theater, is often linked to what Richard Schechner has described as "the politics of ecstasy."³ I would argue that although there are clear Artaudian moments in The Serpent (1968) and in Terminal (1970), the influence of the more critical and analytical aesthetics of Brecht are prevalent in the later pieces of the Open Theater and The Winter Project. I interviewed most of the actors, designers and musicians during the past two years and have used two 1996 interviews with the late Mira Rafalowicz to supplement the written material.

The December 27 memo

The December 27 memo is a series of lists: lists of characters the company was interested in bringing to life; modes of behavior the group wanted to explore; books and authors that might stimulate theatrical images; spaces to arrange and possible elements of the set. Some of the material was retained from the previous two years of the Winter Project, such as an interest in the poetry of Muriel Rukeyser and the use of

² Steve Reisner, rehearsal notebooks; Mira Rafalowicz, "Dramaturgy in Collaboration with Joseph Chaikin" Theater (October, 1978), see Appendix B. Script of Re-Arrangements, see Appendix D.

³ Richard Schechner, "The Politics of Ecstasy", Public Domain (New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1969), 209-228.

“interviewing” as a technique for developing text and images. At least two-thirds of the material in the memo would be briefly investigated and then quickly dropped. On the other hand, some of the ideas were explored for long periods of time before being rejected for performance. There are two pages of lists about possible characters, such as a dreamer (one who can experience wonder); a released prisoner inspired by Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet; or a junkie (different stages on the way to being high). There are also two pages about interviews and the kinds of questions that they would contain. As we shall see, this technique would provide a lot of the content and much of the structure for many of the scenes in the final production. Another persistent concern in the memo is the use of songs and music. Musicians would be present at all of the rehearsals, and Chaikin and Rafalowicz wanted to arrange the play as a piece of music with starts and stops, developments and accompaniments. When one compares the memo with the final script, it is interesting to see where a particular scene had its genesis. Although most of the items in the long lists of material never made it to performance, a phrase such as “moments of different stages of couples” would inspire a fifteen minute section that would be considered the heart of the play. The memo helps illustrate the paradoxical economy of the Winter Project’s process of developmental theatre in which tremendous amounts of material generated in rehearsal were reduced to a select few images in performance. At the same time, a simple notion could be crafted into a complex and profound theatrical event.

I shall briefly describe the production of Re-Arrangements and then examine, in more detail, how it was put together. The piece resembled the late work of the Open Theater in that it was a collage of scenes and images with no obvious linear connection

between them. It exhibited three elements that Theodore Shank has suggested are particular to American alternative theatre: an autonomous creative method, a visual rather than literary emphasis, and an aesthetic in which “the audience is aware of both the illusion and the performers.”⁴ The title refers to the arrangements people make with each other about intimacy and death. Not only are attitudes and opinions “rearranged” but bodies and feelings as well.

The piece consisted of twenty-two scenes or images, some of which were nonverbal, linked together by movement and musical transitions. There was continuous sound and musical accompaniment throughout the piece, including two songs and a wedding march. Twelve of the scenes took the form of interviews in which a series of questions were asked of a number of characters, including an Ecstatic Person, a Dreamer, a Reserved Person, a Laugher and a group of World Leaders. Roughly in the middle of the piece was a section titled “love moments” which the company considered the core of the play. Richard Eder of the New York Times described that section:

It is a silent pantomime of three sets of lovers. Two are rigid at a breakfast table that revolves slowly; two are trying to make love on the floor but never quite match with elbows and noses and chins constantly getting in the way, and the third couple adopt various bereft and consoling postures. The characters and the scenes shift continuously; it is a lovely and subtle series of variations on love and what resists it.⁵

⁴Theodore Shank, American Alternative Theater (New York: Grove Press, 1982), 3.

⁵ Richard Eder, “Re-Arrangements, Skits About Love, at La Mama,” New York Times, 10 March, 1979.

Some of the characters reappear throughout the piece. There are two scenes with the Reserved Person and three scenes that involve what the script refers to as “Two Women with Hats.”

The set was fairly stark, the main scenic elements being curtains of various sizes that could be raised and lowered or pulled on and off the stage to reveal or hide actors during transitions. There was a portable revolve, a handcrafted table and a few chairs and benches. The lighting was by Beverly Emmons, who was beginning to establish herself as one of the country’s premiere designers but who kept a connection with experimental theatre.

This description is necessarily rudimentary but illustrates the provisional nature of the structure of the piece. Chaikin and Rafalowicz built the play around the “love moments,” framing this central, nonverbal but musically driven, scene with fragments and images of characters grappling with questions that essentially have no answers. Chaikin and Rafalowicz’s collaboration was most effective at arranging the scenes and developing the transitions between them. By a process of trial and error, collectively generated material was given shape and form into a collage-like structure. This was not the first time that a theatrical event was constructed in this way, but Re-Arrangements represents a continuation of a way of working. Chaikin and Rafalowicz and most of the actors in the group had developed an effective method for creating original work that continued to evolve during the life of the Winter Project. One of the key figures in its evolution was the dramaturg Mira Rafalowicz.

Rafalowicz on Dramaturgy

Rafalowicz wrote a significant and enlightening essay on being a dramaturg, and what the title entailed in the fall, 1978 issue of Theater, published by the Yale School of Drama. Written in free verse, this “poem,” according to Allen Kuharski, “can be taken as the dramaturgical credo of the Winter Project,” which began rehearsing Re-Arrangements a few months after its publication.⁶ In the unedited version, there are a number of specific references to the Winter Project, and the essay provides an important perspective on the process of creating a theatre piece collectively. Rafalowicz listed many of the functions that she performed: an internal critic, an intimate participant, an extra eye, and most importantly an asker of questions.

I try to help guard those basic questions as the work develops,

Those questions become part of a vocabulary of work.

I keep the whole in mind—an overall structure,

which frees others in the process to lose themselves

in details.⁷

Rafalowicz described four different stages of work. The first stage was to define the area of exploration by finding the questions the group wished to be concerned with.

“Together with the questions, we start to establish a vocabulary, a code, a common work history. A crosscurrent of work is going on between writers, actors, director, dramaturg, through improvisation, devising of exercises and through dialog.”⁸ The next stage

⁶ Allen Kuharski “Joseph Chaikin and the Presence of the Dramaturgy” Dramaturgy in American Theater (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1997),151.

⁷ See Appendix C. Mira Rafalowicz, unedited manuscript, Chaikin Papers 2, Box 6, Folder 10.

⁸ Ibid.

involved the development and shaping of the material and criteria for making choices. Some ideas are wonderful but have to be rejected because of limitations of the actors or the writers or because the original improvisations cannot be repeated or because the ideas eventually seem to belong to a different piece. In this stage, a lot of cutting, editing and choosing is going on and by trying out sequences of images, a structure is beginning to be formed. As mentioned earlier, Rafalowicz made it very clear that collaboration was not to be confused with “equal input or democratic procedure.”

The actor, whether or not s/he is working on material
s/he has created, needs feedback.

The differentiation between those who act
and have to repeat the chosen action and those who shape the material
becomes clearer.⁹

In the third stage, the piece begins to emerge and take shape. Although changes are still being made and sequences re-arranged, the non-actors or “participant onlookers” are losing control and power. They are no longer able to be objective and are too involved. Consequently, outsiders are asked in to look at the piece and give criticism.

We have to figure out what is really there or not there,
rather than wish it were there. We have to give up
ideas that don't work, even if we still have some
hope that they might work.

But we also have to evaluate other people's comments,
pick out the perceptions that are valuable to the

⁹ Ibid.

intentions of the work, screen them and use them carefully.

And especially, we have to try and stay open, not biased and defensive.¹⁰

In the fourth and final stage, the piece is given over to the actors in performance. Details can be changed but the main questions are questions of repetition “about how to keep a piece alive, about maintaining or deepening intentions.” This is the end of the process and a time for distance and re-evaluation.

In the unedited version of the essay, Rafalowicz writes about the initial stage of rehearsals and meetings as being a place where a context of “thinking-working” was established. She describes it as a “fruitful ground from which ideas sprout.” She adds a phrase that was removed from the published essay: “to later trace the origins of an idea might be an interesting task for academicians.”¹¹ Indeed, there are a number of ideas that I believe are worth tracing in the development of Re-Arrangements. One would be the idea of the interview as a means to reveal and explore inner states. Another would be the idea of “moments of different stages of couples” which is the seed from which the “love moments” section grew. Before examining “love moments” and “interviews,” I will briefly describe how rehearsals were arranged, to give the reader some idea of the practical ways in which ideas were transformed into physical images.

How the day worked

The Winter Project followed a daily routine that was similar to the work schedule established in the last three years of the Open Theater. In this extremely fruitful period from 1970-73, the streamlined company produced a revised Terminal and two new pieces: Mutation Show and Nightwalk. The major difference, apart from historical

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid.

context, was the severely reduced funding and consequent limited rehearsal time allotted for production. Whereas the Open Theater rehearsed and developed a project for up to a year, the Winter Project had about two months to produce a fully mounted play. One result of this abbreviated rehearsal period was less time allotted to developing new exercises. The Winter Project relied on shared vocabulary and accumulated work experience to develop text and images, but there was not the luxury simply to experiment, without a particular product in mind. The primary focus of the company became production and not process.

The company met in the morning for physical and vocal warm-ups that were often led by a visiting artist. Performers recall Yoshi Oida, one of Peter Brook's principal actors, leading some warm-ups for Re-Arrangements. After the warm-up, new material was investigated. Chaikin would often have slips of paper on which fragmentary ideas were written and these would be the basis for improvisations and exercises. Paul Zimet recalls the mornings as a time for more exploratory work.¹² In the afternoons, the company worked on material that was considered on-going. These were scenes that were in the process of being developed for performance; the group also reworked material that had been inspiring in the morning sessions. This was a time that actors could work on particular characters or images and lobby for their inclusion in the piece. Often small sequences of scenes were tried out to establish a tentative order. At the end of the day, Chaikin, Rafalowicz and eventually Steve Reisner would meet to discuss the day's work and prepare a schedule for the next day.¹³

¹² Paul Zimet, personal interview, August 20, 2001.

¹³ Steve Reisner, personal interview, August 2, 2001

Reisner had been a student of Chaikin's and Zimet's at Princeton University and had taken some workshops with Chaikin after graduating. He was initially taken on as a kind of intern but made himself necessary by keeping meticulous notes; he was eventually given credit as assistant director. His notebooks for his three years with the Winter Project are an invaluable source of information of what went on in rehearsals day-by-day. "We needed names. At the end of the day, I would go over everything and name it. Everything was forgotten unless it had a name. I became indispensable." Another one of Reisner's contributions was working with Rafalowicz on developing an order of scenes. This order was constantly changing and as soon as it was written out, Chaikin would be inspired to amend it. Toward the end of the rehearsal period, an order of scenes would often be tried in the morning and changed for the afternoon. This, of course, would require new transitions from scene to scene, which had to be arranged with the musicians and stage designers as well as with the actors. Reisner kept track of the order of the piece and assembled the final production scripts.¹⁴

The musicians and set designer were present at all rehearsals, and their contribution was, according to everyone I interviewed, enormous. A lot of the music was generated as a response to what the actors were working on, but as Peter Golub remembers, there were opportunities to bring in composed pieces to see if they sparked an image. Chaikin was the final arbiter, and the musicians were ultimately resigned to his judgements. This eventually caused friction, but during Re-Arrangements, the musicians were willing to enjoy the process of collaboration. Skip La Plante described the atmosphere as very open and interactive with the main requirement of the musicians

¹⁴ Ibid.

being to “punctuate a scene” through a process of organic improvisation. Another important function was to provide musical bridges or transitions between images. Some scenes used specifically composed music, such as the adaption of Muriel Rukeyser’s poem “Then” which was composed and orchestrated by Richard Peaslee. Duke Ellington’s Satin Doll was the musical foundation for another scene.¹⁵

Jun Maeda, the set designer, was initially unsure of his role as a collaborator. This problem was exacerbated by his poor command of English. After a number of props were quickly rejected, he began to understand that the process involved generating a large number of possibilities, a very small percentage of which would be retained. In response to Chaikin’s question of how to get an actor off stage, Maeda initially took him off with a large butterfly net, then used a portable curtain and eventually developed a series of mobile curtains that were manipulated by the actors. These curtains became the central element of the set, and there were times when their kinetic possibilities gave them an almost puppet-like quality. One of Maeda’s credos was that set pieces should be treated as characters, and this perception helped the actors endow the stage environment with an aura of liveness or presence that Chaikin was particularly receptive to.¹⁶

Interviews

There has been some discussion of interviewing as a rehearsal technique in the previous chapter. In Re-Arrangements, interviews were further developed and became the foundation for almost half of the scenes in the play. We have seen how Rafalowicz defined her role as a dramaturg as an asker of questions; part of her work was to assemble

¹⁵ Peter Golub, telephone interview, August 9, 2001. Skip La Plante. Telephone interview, August 6, 2001.

¹⁶ Jun Maeda, personal interview, December 1, 2001.

a list of evocative questions that could be inserted into the interviews. Steve Reisner's notebooks contain pages of questions that were generated during rehearsal. Here is a sample list that is taken from the December 27 memo:

What is having a good time?

Do you ever find yourself doing something you did not expect to do?

What is your song? Underwear? Freedom?

What makes you cry?

Questions about belief in afterlife.

About money, food, sexual fantasies (e.g., Make believe you have

Sexual fantasies. Describe them.)

Describe the lover you yearn for.

The lover your lover yearns for.

Who you are, who you want to be?

Your parents, do you think they are your real parents?

Is there any part of your body you are ashamed of?

Any particular part of your body you are attached to?

If you were to kill yourself, how would you do it?¹⁷

What became evident through the rehearsal process was that the answers were often not as interesting as the questions. What was provocative was the way in which the performers attempted to deal with the questions in character and the various strategies they evolved. Chaikin suggested four ways to deal with questions you can't answer: 1)

¹⁷ See Appendix A, December 27 Memo, Chaikin Papers, Box 6, Folder 51.

don't answer, 2) answer what you know, 3) find out, 4) lie.¹⁸ As Paul Zimet noted in the previous chapter, the strategy of not answering shifted the emphasis onto the question.¹⁹

The questions were allowed to “reverberate” in the room, framed by the silence or non-verbal response they provoked. Very early on, Ronnie Gilbert did an improvisation in which she responded to every question with laughter. This exercise eventually became the opening scene of the play. By presenting the interview format in a humorous way, much of the potential gravity and heaviness of the questions were lifted. The audience was prepared to view subsequent interviews with the expectation that they could just as likely be comic as tragic. Richard Eder, in the New York Times, wrote a particularly perceptive description of the opening scene. I quote it at some length: first, because it seems to me accurate, and second because it illustrates Chaikin's life-long interest and reliance on the power of nonverbal expression. In the theatre, a gesture or a sound, or an image is often profoundly more articulate than words.

It begins, though, with two of the performers donning black hats and pink gloves and raising a small cheesecloth curtain. Behind the curtain sits Ronnie Gilbert.

She is grey-haired, round as a melon and voluminously covered in pink cloth.

And she is laughing.

Miss Gilbert's laugh, like the appetizers in a peasant restaurant, is a meal in itself.

Years of living have gone into that laugh; it possesses her, rocks her, squeezes her, and all but lifts her from the tiny chair on which she is precariously balanced.

It is not a gargantuan laugh, nor a sardonic laugh, nor an aggressive laugh. It is a helplessly infectious laugh.

¹⁸ Steve Reisner, rehearsal notebooks.

¹⁹ See page 46.

The black-hatted performers conduct an imbecilic interview. “Do you ever get melancholy/” one asks. “Is it true that heavier people are jollier?” asks the second. “Do you believe in God?” Each question is an additional turn on a faucet handle whose threads are stripped. The laughter gushes out more and more alarmingly. It floods us; we bob on it.²⁰

Ronnie Gibert’s interview established the tone for the evening. Although serious questions were asked of the cast, the responses would be various, starting with a self-deprecating acknowledgement of the absurdity of such a project in the first place.

Gordon Rogoff, writing in the Village Voice, saw this as a kind of cop-out. “The set-up is clear: there will be perturbations and disturbances, but nothing too charged, nothing too dangerous.”²¹ The next four scenes were interviews: with a self-satisfied man (Mark Samuels) who declares in response to the question about how he got to be the way he was: “Wisdom is a ruthless business.” Samuels and Joyce Aaron played a simpering couple; Paul Zimet, a Reserved Man; and Aaron and Tina Shepard, two girls who interview each other about what sex might be like. At the end of this first section of interviews there was a wordless musical image set to Duke Ellington’s Satin Doll and then more interviews much darker in tone and content.²²

Although interviewing had been used for years as a tool for developing and finding out about characters via questions, in Re-Arrangements *who* was asking the questions was also an important issue. Did the interviewer have a character? Was he a

²⁰ Richard Eder, “‘Re-Arrangements’, Skits About Love, at La Mama” New York Times, March 10, 1979.

²¹ Gordon Rogoff, “Questioning Love” Village Voice, March 19, 1979.

²² Appendix D, Script for Re-Arrangements, Chaikin Papers, Box 6, Folder 27, KSU Archives.

spy? A psychiatrist? A priest? Or a torturer? There were experiments about the voice of the questioners and where they could be situated. Should they be onstage or off? Should the interviewers be physically located in the audience? Chaikin wondered if they could function like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, as a mediator between the action and the spectator. Ronnie Gilbert remembers time and effort spent on trying to find a mode of questioning that was not overly serious and pretentious.²³ A partial solution was found through one of those fortuitous events that frequently happen in rehearsal. Although these events appear serendipitous and unexpected, theatre artists come to rely on them occurring as an almost natural result of having many talented people in the same room.

Jun Maeda, the designer, brought in a very large piece of material sewed into a long tube. He thought it might be useful for performers to make entrances through, or, as a kind of curtain. At the end of the morning session, he and Chaikin held up the two ends and the actors improvised ways of moving through the tunnel of cloth. At one point, the material fell onto Tina Shepard, whose face could be vaguely and eerily perceived beneath the cloth. People were struck by this physical and kinetic image, and Chaikin asked Shepard to begin interviewing Zimet as the Reserved Person. This was a breakthrough. The Bag (as the tube of material came to be called) solved a number of problems. It made the questioner a clear focus of interest. The identity of the questioner was pushed out of the realm of the human, making it possible to view the Bag as an animal or an angel or as some strange otherworldly creature.²⁴ The questions this creature was asking took on a new kind of resonance because they were estranged and

²³ Ronnie Gilbert, personal interview, July 31, 2001.

²⁴ Jun Maeda, personal interview, December 1, 2001.

distanced in a compelling and unfamiliar manner. But the main focus of estrangement in this instance was the interview itself.

The Winter Project had been investigating interviewing for a long time and was familiar with it on a number of levels: as a technique, as a metaphor, as a theatrical device. The Bag fortuitously provided a new way of looking at an interview. Victor Shklovsky's well-known definition of art is useful here:

The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.²⁵

By making the interview strange and unfamiliar, the spectator's perception is brought to focus on the questions and their answers. The audience hears and sees them differently because they are filtered through the "difficulty" of the Bag. Ronnie Gilbert's character also makes us see the questions in a new way because the answers are estranged by laughter. Chaikin and Rafalowicz were certainly aware of estrangement or defamiliarization as a theatrical technique. When the Bag "happened" in rehearsal, they were ready to appropriate it and put it to use in a number of scenes.

As Marvin Carlson has pointed out in Theories of the Theatre, the concept of estrangement has been around for a long time. Aristotle discusses the technique of making familiar language unfamiliar through the use of ornament in chapter 22 of the Poetics. Carlson also suggests that Shklovsky's *priyom ostraniye* (technique of making strange) might be related to Brecht's theory of *Verfremdung* (alienation according to Eric

²⁵ Victor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" L.T. Lemon and M.J. Reis, tr. and ed. Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays (Lincoln: Univ. Of Nebraska Press, 1965), 11-15.

Bentely and others).²⁶ John Willett, in Brecht in Context, also makes a persuasive case for the connection between Shklovsky and Brecht, writing of *Verfremdung*:

Its basic idea is of art as a means of productive reorientation, making “familiar objects to be as if they were not familiar,” as Shelley said of poetry, or “the strange familiar and the familiar strange” as Wordsworth wrote in the preface to Lyrical Ballads and thereby permitting one, in Schopenhauer’s words, to “completely alienate oneself from the world and from things so that the commonest objects and incidents appear quite new and unknown.”²⁷

The extent to which Brecht’s theory borrows from Shklovsky’s is a matter of some debate but Carlson makes a helpful distinction by pointing out that it is the political dimension of Brecht’s use of the concept that “sets it apart from that of any of these possible precursors.”²⁸

Chaikin had a sophisticated and practical understanding of Brecht’s theories drawn from his own experiences both on the stage and in the “laboratory.” He won his first Obie in 1963 for his portrayal of Galy Guy in the Living Theatre’s production of Man is Man. Chaikin has credited these performances as changing his aspirations in the theatre towards a more political and artistic perspective.²⁹ In the early 1960s, the Open Theater regularly performed Brecht’s Clown Play (the third part of the 1929 Baden-Baden Cantata) as a kind of signature piece. Chaikin devoted a chapter of The Presence of the Actor to notes on Brecht. His concept of presence is directly influenced by

²⁶ Marvin Carlson Theories of the Theatre (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 386.

²⁷ John Willett Brecht in Context (New York: Methuen, 1984), 220.

²⁸ Carlson, Theories of the Theatre, 386.

²⁹ Joseph Chaikin, The Presence of the Actor (New York: TCG, 1991), 49.

Verfremdung and his work with phrases and emblems can be related to Brecht's concept of *Gestus*.

Chaikin chose to focus on *Verfremdung* (which he translated as detachment) as it related to the tension between the actor and his role: "An actor was to remain present in his impersonation of a character; he was not to merge with the character. It was to be more of a demonstration of the whole event."³⁰ One aspect of Chaikin's concept of presence is the contradiction which makes it possible to see "alternately the actor in the action and the space between the actor and the act".³¹ In Re-Arrangements, the actors played numerous characters. The spectator saw the actor place his props, enter the scene and take on a character which he dropped as soon as the scene was over. All of the theatrical devices were clearly manipulated by the actors who raised and lowered curtains, carried set pieces and often played music. There was no illusion of a fourth wall; in fact Chaikin's constant dictum was "this is not a dream."³² The actor was clearly separated from the characters he played. What might make the separation more Brechtian would be a clearer relationship to social conditions and the actors sharing with the audience a response to the character's predicament. There are scenes in Re-Arrangements where this happened, particularly in an interview with World Leaders and a scene in which an actor struggles with a willful curtain. There were many scenes in the play that were estranged and distanced; some of these were Brechtian in their use of detachment to point up social conditions.

³⁰ Ibid. 38.

³¹ Ibid. 21.

³² Steve Reisner, rehearsal notebooks.

How is Brecht's concept of *Gestus* related to Chaikin's use of emblems? As Willett points out in Brecht on Theatre, *Gestus* refers to both gist and gesture, which Willett describes as "an attitude or single aspect of an attitude, expressible in words and actions."³³ The *gestus* can be a phrase of music, or movement or text. Brecht wrote: "Not all *gests* are social *gests*."³⁴ Chasing a dog away may indicate man's "continual battle with watch dogs," while brushing a fly away may or may not relate to social conditions. Carlson writes: "*Gestus* functions to keep always before the spectator the social implications of epic theatre."³⁵ Clearly, the way the "single aspect of an attitude" is framed in the theatre is crucial to its holding a social relationship. The technique of isolating an aspect or part of a larger sequence and holding it up to the spectator's view is what Chaikin has appropriated from Brecht. It is also a technique that reminds us of Shklovsky, if we remember that increasing the difficulty and length of perception is at the heart of his aesthetics.

Robert Pasolli, writing about the Open Theater exercise called the Phrase, noted its relationship to Brecht's *Gestus*. Chaikin worked on it in the summer of 1965 and Pasolli describes it as "a brief sound and/or movement, which the actor repeats in identical form a specified number of times or for a specified period of time as the paradigm of a character."³⁶ Phrases are also related to the Chinese theatre where the actor "makes use of specific gestures to characterize particular archetypal characters." Chaikin continued to develop an interest in finding ways of distilling theatrical events into phrases or emblems. As I noted in chapter one, during the summer of 1966, Chaikin traveled to

³³ John Willett Brecht on Theatre (London: Methuen, 1986), 42.

³⁴ Ibid. 104.

³⁵ Carlson Theories of the Theatre, 384.

³⁶ Robert Pasolli A Book on the Open Theater (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970), 91.

London to work with Peter Brook and the Royal Shakespeare Company. While there, Chaikin attended workshops with the Polish director Jerzy Grotowski and went to a demonstration of Chinese theatre techniques. Eileen Blumenthal notes that Chaikin was thrilled by the way the Chinese artist condensed a narrative to a few isolated moments.

What I loved about it was the sparseness, was the way in which a single image would resonate with ten thoughts and other images, rather than playing out the other nine . . . It was the way the image was done so very, very succinctly. I loved that! I loved the way in which it was distilled.³⁷

Blumenthal suggests that Chaikin's contact with this approach was pivotal and that his work from this period on reflects a move toward distillation and refinement. She notes: "Extreme sparseness, always his inclination, more and more became a conscious goal. He worked at paring away, omitting some elements of a situation in order to put others in more relief."³⁸

There is an obvious connection here with Brecht's famous essay, "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting", although Blumenthal does not allude to it. The essay contains the first mention of *Verfremdungseffekt* written after Brecht witnessed a demonstration by the great Chinese opera star Mei Lan-fang in Moscow in 1935. In speaking of the way the Mei Lan-fang "quotes" character rather than being completely converted by it, Brecht emphasized the economy that he used: "He only needs a minimum of illusion . . . Among all the possible signs certain particular ones are picked

³⁷ Quoted in Eileen Blumenthal Joseph Chaikin (London: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 93.

³⁸ Ibid.93.

out, with careful and visible consideration.”³⁹ Chaikin’s enthusiasm for the ways the Chinese theatre used distilled images is clearly not unique. He shared it with Brecht, Meyerhold and more particularly with his colleagues and contemporaries Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski.

Chaikin initially used distilled phrases and emblems as a means to remember improvisations. Blumenthal describes a process of distilling each section of an improvisation into a phrase. By returning to the phrases “the actor could remember the core of each scene and recreate it.”⁴⁰ Eventually, however, he began to use phrases and emblems as building blocks in the construction of images and movement sequences. Although the vocabulary was never strictly defined, emblems and phrases are the gestural units out of which an image could be constructed. In other words, an image could contain one or more figures performing one or more emblems. In Re-Arrangements, the Love Moments were assembled and put together by a process of developing and rearranging units of distilled gestural sequences called emblems.

Love Moments

The company understood at the beginning of rehearsal that love and love relationships were to be a central theme of the piece. In Steve Reisner’s notebooks, one can trace the development of the concept of “arrangements we make with intimacy and with death” to the final title of the piece. Under the heading of romance in the December 27 memo is a list of possible elements:

date

couples—old couple

³⁹ Willett Brecht on Theatre, 93.

⁴⁰ Blumenthal Joseph Chaikin, 93.

moments of different stages of couples

meetings—lover's fantasies of first meeting

fantasies

people's thoughts while making love

jealousy

a wedding—without ever knowing who is getting married

gender roles

repeated action with changed context (action stays the same; the information given about the action changes).e.g. couple at a table are terrorists, lovers.

Most of these elements made their way into the final sequence of love moments (the Wedding was a separate scene near the end of the play). Reisner describes the section in the unpublished version of the script:

The love moments is the single longest moment of the piece Re-Arrangements. It is a wordless depiction of different couples in moments from first meeting on.

Each moment is an emblem of a kind of life together. The actors change, playing different characters in different love arrangements, moving in different points of time. Throughout, the music deepens and intensifies.⁴¹

The couples depicted different moments in the progression of their relationships from joy and optimism at the beginning, to despair and hopelessness of break up. There were “stations” that the actors would move to in a kind of choreography to the musical accompaniment. A table and two chairs on a revolve, a large bench, a smaller bench, an area upstage in which the actors lay down and a “corner,” upstage right. Will Patton and

⁴¹ Appendix D. Script for Re-Arrangements, Chaikin Papers, Box 6, Folder 27, KSU Archives.

Joyce Aaron played a couple whose deep sexual relationship was foregrounded by their gaze and the way they touched each other. Ronnie Gilbert and Paul Zimet became increasingly alienated from one another. Tina Shepard and Patton ate pears in the upstage corner. Mark Samuels and Gilbert depicted an elderly couple. Zimet and Shepard sat at a table eating crackers on the verge of weeping. All these images and many more were layered and overlapped one another in a movement sequence that was an intense collaboration between the musicians, actors, set designer and lighting designer. The company understood it to be the heart of the piece. Chaikin and Rafalowicz began assembling elements of the sequence from the very first rehearsals, and from Reisner's rehearsal notes, it is clear that some parts of Love Moments were worked on everyday.

Chaikin and Rafalowicz were interested in watching an image "turn" as the spectator received different information about it. Paul Zimet eating crackers at a table with his head in his hand could be the depiction of despair, or hunger or sleeplessness. Much depended on the context of what image proceeded and followed. The audience brings its own expectations to the theatre and constructs narratives with the help of what it understands the context to be. The exercise, "repeated action with changed context" had been developed in the first two years of the Winter Project to address these questions. A condition is explored and distilled into a repeated action or gestural sequence. The action is repeated exactly with different contexts supplied by the spectators. The two people at the table can be seen as in love or they are assassins or aliens. Meanings are partially determined in the theatre by the expectations of the audience. Keeping an image mutable and open was a constant concern for the director and his dramaturg, and one of the reasons they worked so much with nonverbal material. Words often fix an image and

put a name to an action or gesture that reduce it to its common denominator. An emblem, or what Blumenthal calls “a distilled image,” retains a fullness or density whose power is derived in part from its refusal to be defined. Chaikin wrote:

The spectator completes the action from the part of it which is being performed.

The emblem becomes a meeting point for the actor and the spectator.⁴²

The emblem is a kind of hieroglyph of a larger action, a sign that can be combined with other signs to create a concentrated image. Love moments was an opportunity for Chaikin and Rafalowicz to assemble a number of emblems or distilled images into a sequence, driven by music that would cumulatively make sense or meaning through the combined efforts of the performers and the audience.

One image from the love moments illustrates several themes I have been discussing. Will Patton and Joyce Aaron played a number of moments at a breakfast table. These moments were not continuous but were broken up by images of other couples at different stations on the stage. They were a couple whose heat and desire was conveyed by the way they looked at each other or touched. In one of the moments, Patton caressed Aaron’s foot, which she had placed on the table. The table was on a revolve and towards the end of love moments an actor came forward and slowly turned the revolve to reveal the couple from another perspective.

I would like to suggest a number of meanings that it is possible to read from this event recognizing, as Roland Barthes has pointed out, the multiplicity of meanings that are always present in theatrical images.⁴³ First of all, the couple is presented in a distilled

⁴² Chaikin, *The Presence of the Actor*, 113.

⁴³ Roland Barthes, “Literature and Signification” in *The Rustle of Language* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1986), 261.

and concentrated image. Their activity is reduced to an emblematic gesture related as we have seen to Brecht's concept of *Gestus*. This image is held up to the audience's view and the spectator is given considerable time to consider it. In other words: "the difficulty and length of perception" is prolonged in Shklovsky's terms. The actor who turns the revolve is not a part of the interaction between Patton and Aaron, but is consciously a manipulator of the theatrical apparatus, thus both distancing himself from the emblem and estranging it for the audience. The image actually "turns" providing both a different perspective and an active metaphor for what is happening between the couple. The spectator's relationship to the image is foregrounded by having the image "rearranged" by the actor/manipulator, thus emphasizing the audience's complicity in the making of meanings.

Bert States' Great Reckonings in Little Rooms addresses the tension between semiological and phenomenological approaches to theatre and is a useful resource for understanding how Re-Arrangements images work. States's contention is that the power of the image "is not necessarily exhausted either by its illusionary or referential character."⁴⁴ The sign's "inclination" is to be read and understood "to become more efficient." The image, however, (and here States borrows language directly from Shklovsky), is "difficult" and "unfamiliar". What makes the image "difficult" is its corporeality, its phenomenal presence, which cannot be reduced to a sign. This is, of course, a reiteration of the age-old problem of the double consciousness of performing, which Diderot first addressed in The Paradox of the Actor. Marvin Carlson in Theories of the Theatre describes it as a tension between a theatre of signs and a theatre of energies.

⁴⁴ Bert States Great Reckonings in Little Rooms (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 20.

Carlson cites Jean Alter who refers to “a binocular view” composed of a semiotic “referential function” and a more phenomenological “performant function.”⁴⁵ What States, as a phenomenologist, is trying to do is emphasize physical presence and the body as a carrier of meanings.

In the image, a defamiliarized and desymbolized object is “uplifted to the view” where we see it as being phenomenally heavy with itself. A transitional moment of shock signals the onset of the image: one feels the shudder of its refusal to settle into the illusion.⁴⁶

When Chaikin speaks about an emblem resonating, he is referring to it in relationship to an audience. “The emblem becomes a meeting point for the actor and the spectator.”⁴⁷ The distilled image is presented to the audience where it oscillates between its performant and referential functions, between the perception of the spectator, the actor and the character he is playing. Chaikin’s emphasis on the actor himself being present in his demonstration of character, foregrounds the dynamic between the spectator and the audience. Both the spectator and the actor are watching the performance and are complicit in its resonance. Chaikin refers to this dynamic when he speaks of watching (as a spectator) the great Brechtian actor, Ekkehard Schall “His performance offers to the audience of Brecht’s plays that perspective that makes it clear to see alternately the actor in the action and the space between the actor and the act.”⁴⁸

It is at the site between the image and the spectator where all these different strands unite. Shklovsky’s notion of estrangement and the difficulty of perception and

⁴⁵ Carlson, *Theories of the Theatre*, 514.

⁴⁶ States, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms*, 37.

⁴⁷ Chaikin, *The Presence of the Actor*, 113.

⁴⁸ Chaikin, *The Presence of the Actor*, 21.

Brecht's theories of *Verfremdung* and *Gestus* exist in the space between the performer and the audience. Chaikin's technique of emblems and distilled images has similarities and debts to both Brecht and Shklovsky as well as to the Chinese theatre and draws its energy from its emphasis on corporeal presence. Much of the research that the Winter Project undertook was centered in the space, both physical and psychic, between spectator and actor. What does the spectator bring to the dynamic? How does his or her expectations affect the performance? What is the audience's contribution to the "liveness" of the event? For Chaikin, unlike his good friend and mentor Jerzy Grotowski, who at this time gave up public performance for paratheatrical explorations, the presence of the actor depends on the presence of the spectator. Bert States speaks of the theatre taking the spectator into a world within the world itself:

At bottom, it is not a matter of the illusory, the mimetic or the representational, but of a certain kind of actual, of having something before one's vision— and in the theatre one's hearing—to which we join our being.⁴⁹

Not all theatre provides the opportunity for this kind of connection between audience and actor. The Winter Project followed in the tradition of the Open Theater that was explicitly interested in the encounter between spectators and performers. The encounter was not to be "made" but "permitted."

I believe a person should be moved at the theatre: something should move something should stir, but not just the heart strings. It is the perspective he sees from that should shift.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ States, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms*, 46.

⁵⁰ Chaikin, *The Presence of the Actor*, 98.

Interviews and love moments made up most of the material in Re-Arrangements. Towards the end of the rehearsal period two sections of text from Tongues, a piece created by Sam Shepard and Chaikin the previous summer, were added to the play. The first, "When you die," was a poetic incantation performed by Patton, and the second, a section in which Zimet, as the Reserved Person, terrifyingly loses his normal way of speaking and comically experiments with a number of alternate speech patterns before regaining his natural voice. There were also short texts contributed by Susan Sontag and Jean Claude Van Itallie, which were incorporated into the interviews. Ronnie Gilbert and Tina Shepard created Two Women with Hats, a set up repeated three times in the piece. Gilbert played a character who constantly gossiped about other people's love life, while Shepard's sole refrain was "I know . . . I know." The gossiping women provided a recognizable mode of behavior that was amusing and ironic, which also allowed them to speak of topics that were intimate and tender. The form was grotesque and bitter, the content more palatable, almost sweet.

Ronnie: Now how can they move in together, two people like that?

Tina: I know. . . I know.

Ronnie: They can't really be with each other. They like to think about one another. To miss one another. Not to actually be in one another's company.

Tina: I know.

The Two Women with Hats provided a successful framing device for delivering difficult content that would reappear in subsequent Winter Project productions.

Re-Arrangements was well received by critics, and played to sold out audiences for its run at La Mama. The production reestablished Chaikin as an innovative director of

developmental, collective theatre. After a number of tentative critical responses to his work on classic texts, such as Chekhov's The Seagull and Büchner's Woyzeck, the enthusiastic reception was both welcome and therapeutic. The Winter Project was seen as a group of artists who would continue a tradition of theatre-making that had its origin in the previous decade. There were both benefits and detriments to this perspective. On the one hand, the group was associated with a history of progressive and ground-breaking changes in the ways in which theatre was both made and consumed. But, as we shall see, they were also linked, rightly or wrongly, to the excesses and polemics of groups such as Julian Beck's and Judith Malina's Living Theater and Richard Schechner's Performance Group. As a postmodernist aesthetic began to be established in the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s, some key concepts of both the Open Theatre and the Winter Project, most particularly "presence," would be challenged and renegotiated.

Chapter 4

TOURISTS AND REFUGEES 1 AND 2

In Re-Arrangements, the company had developed a number of dramaturgical devices, such as Interviews and Love Moments that had served to structure the content of the piece. In the new work, Tourists and Refugees, Chaikin and the company created similar techniques for building theatrical images. These included Crosses, Translations and Framed Entrances. Some of these techniques were used to generate a visual or vocal image that could be used as raw content in the construction of a sound or movement section. Other methods were devised to find a form for a particular piece of text. The group worked interchangeably on developing forms and on generating content. How a particular moment meant was as important as what it meant. The success of Re-Arrangements, encouraged the company to continue with a way of working that although product oriented was heavily dependent on developmental process.

Tourists and Refugees 1

In May 1980, the Winter Project reconvened to work on a play about home and homelessness. Other projects had delayed the usual winter meeting time until the spring. Chaikin had created a new piece, Savage/Love, with Sam Shepard in the summer of 1979 in San Francisco and spent the following six months performing Tongues and Savage/Love in New York at the Public Theater and in Paris, Rome and Milan. He had also directed Samuel Beckett's Endgame at the Manhattan Theater Club. Paul Zimet and Tina Shepard, members of the Talking Band, had presented Sidney Goldfarb's translation

of Juan Rolfo's Pedro Paramo at Theater for the New City in the late fall of 1979 (Mark Samuels and Will Patton were also involved in that production).

The working title of the new piece was Changing Places. Ronnie Gilbert recalled having discussed in conversations and letters with Chaikin the theme of home and the rootlessness of the actor's life, one characterized by constantly moving from project to project, from city to city, often from country to country.¹ In a later interview she stressed that from the beginning the perspective had been global and political "What we talked about was the movement of people on the earth. Because they want to and because they are forced to."² Some of the images that made up the Love Moments section of Re-Arrangements had been situated in home environments in which the characters felt alienated or out of place. For instance, there was a couple in a bed that were continually thwarted in their quest to arrange their bodies comfortably in relationship to each other. One of the notions of home that the company experimented with was that it might be situated in an emotional and psychic landscape rather than a geographic location, in the arms of one's lover, for instance. Assistant director Steve Reisner suggests that one of Chaikin's strengths is "that he doesn't take for granted what goes on between people," and that his own sense of estrangement in relation to the concept of home was the starting point for much of the initial work on the piece.³ A lot of rehearsal time was spent on greetings and goodbyes, trying to defamiliarize habitual gestures and come up with emblems that would underline the strangeness of people coming together and leaving. Homelessness was becoming a social and political problem in many American cities at

¹ Ronnie Gilbert, Interview (tape recorded), July 31 2001.

² Gilbert, Interview (tape recorded), August 31, 2002.

³ Steve Reisner, Interview (tape recorded), April 4, 2002.

the time, and the Winter Project was eager to address the issue. This led to an investigation of street people who were ubiquitous in downtown New York. The company rehearsed at the La Mama space on Great Jones Street, which is adjacent to the Bowery culture of bums, alcohol, drugs, Christian soup kitchens and missions. A number of characters were created from local observations.

According to Reisner, after about a month of rehearsal, a new title was developed that would help focus the work and point it from a domestic focus toward a more political, global one.⁴ Tourists and Refugees was a useful signifier, opening up a number of perspectives on the original theme of home and homelessness as well as issues of post-colonialism, multi-national corporations and immigration. The investigation of the tourist as performer in this project prefigured a lot of theoretical writing on the subject that would appear over the next two decades. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's Destination Culture (1998) proposed that tourism stages the world "as a museum of itself." The tourist is part of a larger "heritage industry" that creates "the sense of 'hereness' necessary to convert a location into a destination."⁵ For the Winter Project, the tourist figure was already estranged from his environment, providing a stance that encompasses a wide range of responses, from wonder and desire to boredom and aversion. The refugee figure was both fleeing a painful past and searching for a hopeful future. The difference in momentum and pace between the two would provide a contrasting rhythm and a difference in intention that would be reflected in the structure of

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Destination Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 7. See also: "On Tourism", Performance Research (London: Routledge, 1997) Vol. 2, No. 2. This issue includes articles by Richard Schechner, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Coco Fusco, Ron Jenkins and others.

the piece. According to Mira Rafalowicz, Chaikin's paradigms for theatre were music and the visual arts rather than literature, and in Tourists and Refugees he was able to modulate tempo, pulse and intensity to great effect.⁶

Another benefit of Tourists and Refugees as a title and focus was that it provided the metaphor of travel or a journey as a structure for the play. Basically, the piece starts with light, humorous images of tourist etiquette and behavior as they move through exotic places, and then progress into the darker territory of the displaced and dispossessed refugees. Throughout the event, figures moved along a defined path, ambling or wandering as tourists and accelerating into a more desperate pace as refugees. The concept of changing places was retained in the way the actors transformed from character to character and also in the movement from First World to Third World images. The journey metaphor, an ancient storytelling device, allowed the company to investigate basic theatrical elements such as entrances and exits, parades and processions, and changes in pace.

The company consisted of five actors, Zimet, Shepard, Gilbert, Patton and Atsumi Sakato. Sakato was originally hired as a translator for the Japanese set designer Jun Maeda, but Chaikin, always eager to work with people from other cultures, began to incorporate her as a performer in the first rehearsals. The musicians were Skip La Plante, Harry Mann and Peter Golub. La Plante, who had worked extensively with Chaikin on the Sam Shepard collaborations, provided much of the percussive foundation for Tourists and Refugees but was eventually replaced half way through the project by Bill Uttley who played vibraphone, xylophone and percussion. Mann, a saxophone and reed player

⁶ Mira Rafalowicz, Interview, tape recorded, December 1995.

for the Shepard/Chaikin pieces, became an indispensable collaborator on all the subsequent Winter Project productions. Ruth Kreshka, also part of the Savage/Love production, served as stage manager for the Winter Project from this time on.

Jun Maeda was an essential member of the Winter Project group. He would bring in hand-made props and furniture that he felt might trigger improvisation, and his presence at all the rehearsals made set design an organic part of the process. The eventual main set piece for Tourists and Refugees was a massive upstage wooden wall, which had numerous doors and openings for entrances and exits as well as for framing actors. Maeda's initial task in rehearsal was to delineate a path for the actors to travel. Numerous methods for doing this were investigated, including orange traffic cones, ropes and, eventually, a wooden walkway, which the Daily News critic described as "a combination railroad track-boardwalk."⁷ Another important element was a pair of "windows," which were freestanding movable frames across which a gauze curtain could be drawn. One function of these set pieces was to act as a sign of privacy. An actor could push aside the gauze and enter through the full-length window into a place that would read as a room or an enclosed environment. Maeda also constructed various bundles of cloth that became the worldly possessions of the refugees. He built his furniture with odd irregularities, such as chairs with three legs or tables that could expand with multiple leaves. His constant assertion that the props and furniture should be approached and handled as characters helped the actors create a relationship with the set that was attentive and respectful. A good analogy would be the way in which a musician touches his instrument: with care and consideration of its presence, mindful of its

⁷ Don Nelson, The Daily News, July 18, 1980.

essential contribution to his performance. Chaikin, whose eye was always attracted to the minimal and particular, was delighted and inspired by Maeda's attention to detail. The way in which an actor pushed back the gauze on one of the windows would be meticulously rehearsed, carefully observed by Chaikin and his set designer.

I will briefly describe the sequence of scenes to give a sense of the shape and order of the piece and will then explore elements that were retained from Re-Arrangements as well as new dramaturgical devices that were unique to Tourists and Refugess.

Brief Description

After a musical overture, windows were set up in the upstage left and right areas of the stage. Actors began crossing the stage in the mode of tourists (Woman with Handbag, Professor on Sabbatical, a Child, Oohing and Aahing Tourists, etc.). The first interview was with a Trapped Angel (Will Patton). Don Shewey writing for the Soho Weekly News described the scene:

Then a blond guy appears in a corner wrapped in a beige body-sack tossing and turning like a caged animal or like the insomniac Chaikin played in his collaboration with Sam Shepard, Savage/Love. A man and a woman perched on a tower—a sort of life guard station on wheels—question this apparently post-mortal figure: “Are you an angel? What is it like where you come from? Is it made of air? Is it made of music?”⁸

There were more Tourist Crosses, and then Patton delivered a brief lecture on proper etiquette for tourists which began with advice about clothing and dining but became

⁸ Don Shewey, “A Matter of Life and Death” Soho Weekly News, July 16, 1980.

increasingly absurd: “It’s advisable to try not to think you’re being imagined by someone else; not to imagine your wishes are actually happening; not to think you’re more than one person; not to imagine you’re part of a movie.”⁹

Interviews with homeless people, a religious fanatic whose home was not of this world, and a man unable or unwilling to move were interspersed with more Tourist Crosses and crosses of gypsies, street singers and a character dubbed Macho Crotcho. This character’s given circumstances, demeanor and focus are implied by the short-hand of his title. There were about ninety crosses in the piece; each one had a title to distinguish it from the others and to help in the constant rearrangement of the order. The Two Women with Hats from Re-Arrangements reappeared twice as tourists in the first half of the play.

The middle section of the piece consisted of Family Moments, a collage of domestic images similar to the Love Moments section of Re-Arrangements and some scenes called Name Stories, in which characters spoke about the genealogy of their names and the histories of their ancestors. Atsumi Sakato, using text from Maxine Hong Kingston’s China Men, lay on a bed with Zimet and spoke of home: “ I think if there were such a place, it might be his body.”

The last third of the piece began with scenes about corporate mercenaries and global trade followed by a long section of Refugee Crosses accompanied by percussion and the reading of text from world refugee statistics. Refugee Voices was the title of the next section, which consisted of a number of “translations” of spoken sounds and music. The piece ended with a long sequence of Refugee Crosses, with military figures checking

⁹ See Appendix E, Tourists and Refugees. All quotes from the play can be found in the appendix.

papers and searching the refugees' bags and bodies. The Angel and an occasional tourist were interspersed with the refugees to provide a comical counterpoint.

Four scenes or configurations ¹⁰ from Re-Arrangements were re-worked: the use of the Bag as an interpreter, a modified Love Moments section, the Two Women with Hats scenes and a character that Ronnie Gilbert had developed for a scene called World Leaders. In that scene, four actors sat in chairs in front of a curtain where they were asked questions such as: "As world leaders, what do you think our prospects are?" The responses were in the form of nonsense syllables and sounds that became more aggressive and frightening as the questioning continued. Gilbert had devised a vocal mode that was based on a tape of Hermann Kahn, an enthusiastic cold warrior and right wing, think-tank analyst. The voice was gravelly, deep and punctuated by a rumbling, nefarious laugh. That vocal mode became the foundation for a scene called Corporate Mercenaries in Tourists and Refugees, in which Gilbert straddled a stool in one of the windows with a cowboy hat on her head, ripped aside the gauze curtain and intoned:

Move the plant to Brazil

Transfer funds to Paraguay

Shift the Indians to Santa Clara

Merge the factory in Canada with the one in Minnesota

Close down the branch in North Carolina

Move the operation to Malaysia

¹⁰ Configuration is a useful term borrowed from Manfred Pfister who describes it as "the section of the dramatis personae that is present on stage at any particular point in the course of the play." See Pfister, The Theory and Analysis of Drama (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 171.

Gilbert was flanked by two “mercenaries” (Patton and Zimet), who had their own vocal modes: “We stabilize, destabilize, eliminate, remove, replace, train, interrogate, advise, get rid of, terminate.” These texts were sung more than spoken and were accompanied by percussion and clarinet. They illustrate the Winter Project’s interest in using the voice musically as well as in finding unusual forms for political content. One of the problems confronting the company in this piece, as we shall see, was to incorporate political and controversial material without becoming didactic or strident.

The Bag, with Tina Shepard inside, interrogated some bums (Patton and Gilbert) and the Limpet (Zimet), a man who had found his spot and refused to move. The Love Moments section was reworked and was called Family Moments. It was meant to present a movement and music collage of domestic images. Shewey found this part of the play very effective:

There is a section in the middle that works as a genuinely hallucinatory coup de theatre. While a musician slowly tilts and retits a tray of rolling beads, the five cast members act out the subtext—or the “inside,” in Open Theater parlance—of some archetypal domestic situation in a dozen silent tableaux. The subtle tensions at play are indescribable, the scenes as deep and disturbing as an Edvard Munch painting. (Example: two women embrace as lovers while a man holding a baby and an older woman sit on a bench in front of a young man who, with his back to the audience, tears his hair.) And I can’t explain what these enigmatic images mean to me or what they are meant to mean, or their beauty, or their dangerousness.¹¹

¹¹ Don Shewey, Soho Weekly News, July 16, 1980.

Shewey wrote that he had not seen any of the previous work of the Open Theater or the Winter Project. Nonetheless his description of the company's collage technique is useful:

It comprises a series of bits—wordless acting exercises and improv-based dialogues, songs and informal dances, ready-mades (a Maxine Hong Kingston anecdote is included and duly credited) and private monologues—strung together without transition and without any through line except the actors' concentration and the time and space shared with the audience.¹²

I would argue that the transitions between images represent one of Chaikin's great skills as a director, and their transparency is a mark of their effectiveness. Shewey does emphasize the open relationship between the actors and the spectator, which was a crucial factor in the performances. The circuit (as Chaikin referred to this relationship) allowed the audience to contribute to the construction of meanings generated by the piece. This was a time when reader reception theory, as developed by Hans Robert Jauss or Wolfgang Iser, was becoming known, and the notion that the spectator or reader can be considered a co-producer of a text or a performance is certainly in accord with much of what Chaikin and Rafalowicz were attempting to do.¹³ As we have seen in the last chapter, the spectator's contribution to the "liveness" of an event was a major focus of exploration in the Winter Project.

Two Women with Hats, a configuration that had provided a comedic form for content about love and love relationships in Re-Arrangements, became a vehicle for bringing up exploitation and appropriation in a humorous way in the new piece. The two

¹² Ibid.

¹³ See Marvin Carlson, Theories of the Theatre, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 519-521

women were now rich tourists who discussed global politics and its repercussions on their life-styles. Gilbert did most of the talking with Shepard still verbally restricted to the words: "I know." In fact, this configuration was now referred to as the I Knows in both manifestations of Tourists and Refugees.

T: I know, I know.

R: They told me they'd hired a Peruvian cook. The woman had managed to escape from some skirmish down there, not her family, most of them were lost. So now she cooks, and they say she's wonderful. What is Peruvian cooking? I thought I'd tasted all the tastes, but nothing comes to mind when I think of Peruvian cooking . . . Oh, the ruins, the magnificent ruins.

T: I know. . . .

The Winter Project would rework material from previous performances in all of its productions. In keeping with their experimental process and philosophy, Chaikin and Rafalowicz wanted to "test" certain images and configurations with different text and contexts. As Marvin Carlson has pointed out, intertextuality, the recycling of material among different "texts" or performances, "clearly contributes importantly to the strategies of collage and quotation" that were central to ensembles like the Wooster Group. The Winter Project, although less aggressively deconstructionist, shared a similar propensity for collage technique and work that was "haunted" with previous material. In fact the Winter Project can be seen as a "ghost" of the Open Theater. Carlson cites Roland Barthes: "the text is a tissue of quotations from innumerable centers of culture."

Barthes suggests that we are able to “read” new works precisely because “we recognize within them elements that have been recycled from other structures of experience.”¹⁴

Chaikin’s dramaturgical devices: crosses, translations and framed entrances, were used extensively in Tourists and Refugees. All had been used in some form or another in the Open Theatre and in the first two years of the Winter Project but had not been featured in Re-Arrangements.

Crosses

Chaikin and his collaborators began using crosses as an exercise in the Open Theater. Actors would move across the stage in the physical mode of a character or as an expression of a state of being. The crosses would often be accompanied by music and percussion but sometimes what the musicians were playing would be the catalyst rather than the accompaniment. The prime concern was to get the expression into the body: “All exercises must start from and return to the body in motion.”¹⁵ In The Mutation Show (1971), the company had worked on parades, dances and processions of characters for months. These sections presented emblematic gestures and movements in a traveling panorama accompanied by a lone musician, Ellen Maddow. Occasionally, the actors would accompany each other on percussion instruments and woodwinds (recorder, clarinet, penny whistles, etc.). Karen Malpede, in her introduction to Three Works by the Open Theater, makes an interesting comparison between work that Chaikin created with a large ensemble in the late sixties and the more structured work of a reduced company three years later: “The dances in Terminal (1969) relied upon abandonment. The

¹⁴ Marvin Carlson, “The Haunted Stage: Recycling and Reception in the Theatre.” Theatre Survey, May 1994, 6.

¹⁵ Joseph Chaikin, The Presence of the Actor (New York: TCG, 1991), 16.

wedding dance of The Mutation Show (1971) discovers how repetition relates to change. You have a movement and you repeat it to the limits of endurance and suddenly you get a second wind.”¹⁶ This may reflect a shift in Chaikin’s aesthetic, away from what Richard Schechner has termed “the politics of ecstasy” toward a more formalistic approach that was focused on the framing and duration of an image.

With the metaphor of a journey in Tourists and Refugees, or the different journeys of different classes and races, the need to generate many images of moving through space was important. Rehearsals involved hours of crossing exercises, with music and without, trying to generate distinctive characters and images. Paul Zimet brought in a photograph of Rumanian gypsies by Josef Koudelka, and he and Tina Shepard used it as inspiration to create the physical mode and way of walking of a couple in the refugee crosses, labeled the Gypsies. Other labels give a rough idea of what the actors were working on: Dumb Tourists, Southern Swingers, Wondering Tourist, Two Suitcases, Black Shawl, Shared Bundle, Bag and Stick. The labels were appended after a particular cross was accepted as interesting or evocative and was merely a tool for keeping track of a large inventory of images. Hundreds of crosses were simply rejected and abandoned. Chaikin and Rafalowicz decided which images they felt fit into the world they were creating. Similarly, the music was modified and adapted to suit the sensibilities of the director and dramaturg. The actors were used to the process and having three top rate musicians as accompanists resulted in mutual inspiration and collaboration.

With almost ninety crosses during the course of the piece and only five actors, how were distinctions made between characters? The costume designer, Mary Brecht,

¹⁶ Karen Malpede, Introduction to Three Works by the Open Theater (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1974), 20.

dressed everyone in fairly neutral clothing to which accessories like hats, sunglasses, fans, scarves and shawls could be added. Jun Maeda provided bundles and suitcases, carts and stilts. There were large swathes of gray material that the actors could wrap around themselves. It was however the actor's bodies that were transformed the most. The breath, the focus and the sense of momentum all contributed to a kinetic manifestation of character and intention. Changing quickly from character to character was fundamental to the acting technique that the Open Theater had developed. Rapid shifts between states of being were the basis of the key exercise Transformations. Philip Auslander suggests the 'transformational acting' pioneered by the Open Theater" can be seen as a kind of performance equivalent to the French deconstructionist Jacques Derrida's practice of writing "under erasure." Auslander writes: "To some extent, performance in which the actor moves from style to style from role to role self-consciously dramatizes the construction of the actor's self from the language of theatre."¹⁷ Derrida's critique of the "metaphysics of presence" has helped form the foundation of postmodern theories of performance, and I will discuss where the Winter Project is situated within this discourse in a later chapter. Auslander suggests that the "actor can either hanker after presence or indulge in play which affirms the indeterminacy of meaning."¹⁸ I propose that the performers in the Winter Project did both.

¹⁷ Philip Auslander, "Just be your self" in Acting (Re)Considered, ed. Zarrilli (New York: Routledge, 1995), 67.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Translations

The company interviewed a number of people who they felt might provide evocative material for the refugee sections. Among them were Luisa Venezuela, an Argentinian poet, and assistant director Steve Reisner's mother, Eda Reisner, who had survived a German concentration camp and had immigrated to the United States. There were also fragments from the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet's prison journals and material about people who had been tortured. Chaikin and Rafalowicz were eager to use this material but needed to find a form that would prevent it from being too strident. As Eileen Blumenthal has pointed out, Chaikin had moved from a theatre that was "politically oriented" in the sixties, to a belief that agitprop type theatre that was not community based "accomplishes little, aside from making the artist feel virtuous and therefore, less likely to engage in more effective types of action."¹⁹ In 1972 Chaikin, wrote: "There is no need to demand that material we work on must have a topical propaganda benefit any more than we would demand that every poem written should be against the state and every song should be a call to action."²⁰

Ronnie Gilbert suggested vocalizing some of the quotes from refugees wordlessly and then having another actor translate the vocal mode into English for the audience.

The moment an actor, as a refugee, spoke the statement, however well, the quote lost its primal power—became just a line in a play. It occurred to me to "vocalize" my quote wordlessly, the vocalese standing in for the refugee speaking in her own language, and to have another actor "translate" that into English for the audience.

We had the pure text, and no one had to "act" it. Instead, the actors each had to

¹⁹ Blumenthal, Chaikin, 42.

²⁰ Chaikin, Presence, 119.

explore for a vocal emblem for his or her quote. Joe elaborated by having us work out our vocalizing with one or another of the instruments.²¹

The vocal mode and instrumentation served to mediate the raw material of the interview and provide distance for the spectator. The refugee figure would stand with a bundle in front of a section of the wooden upstage wall and make a non-verbal sound (a sighing, a way of articulated breathing, keening or moaning) that would be translated by an actor on a stool downstage. The refugee directly addressed the audience, but the circuit of verbal information went from refugee to translator to spectator, further distancing the testimony. Harry Mann accompanied Gilbert's vocal mode on clarinet with Patton translating sentence by sentence.

She says when you have to leave, take with you a warm sweater, a few small valuables for bribes, a few photographs.

Keep busy.

Don't pity yourself.

Laugh whenever its possible.

Don't wait for God to change things.

Part of the success of the Translations was the way in which the structure of meaning of the scene was exposed and separated. The image of the refugee, composed of a number of signs (the bundle, the breathing, the posture, the inarticulate but evocative sounds, the music), was followed by an interpretation of what those signs meant or signified. The spectator was expected to put back together the fragments of meaning that had been pulled apart. The Translations worked as a powerful theatrical moment but also as a

²¹ Ronnie Gilbert, e-mail, January 15, 2001.

demonstration of how meaning is constructed (or deconstructed) in the theatre. Roland Barthes, in The Pleasure of the Text, describes the pleasure of reading as *jouissance* or bliss. It involves the construction of fictive selves through the play of signification.²² The text being read can be (after Derrida who sees all cultural production as being written and textual) a book or a film or theatre. Although Chaikin and Rafalowicz would not claim Barthes and Derrida as direct influences, clearly their minimal and structural approach can be seen as deconstructionist, if not in intent at least in effect. They understood that part of the pleasure that they provided audiences was the opportunity to be complicit in the making of meanings. This is important in that the Winter Project straddles an ill- defined line between the ecstatic and overtly political theatre of the sixties and early seventies and a more formalist and postmodern theatre of the eighties.

Framed Entrances

I have discussed the importance of Jun Maeda's contribution to the process of developing new work with the Winter Project. Although his English was limited, Maeda established a working vocabulary that eventually made communication easier. His taste ran to constructions of natural materials held together with pegs rather than nails. His set pieces had a rough-hewn quality that emphasized simple organic textures. Raw wood, bamboo, tobacco cloth and dark stain gave his props a weathered, handcrafted look.

The "windows" were originally designed as rehearsal props and were continually modified until they reached their final simple, utilitarian form. They allowed for a portable environment that could be situated to provide framed entrances anywhere on the stage. These were used not just to make exits and entrances but also to provide stations

²² Roland Barthes, The Pleasures of the Text, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), 62.

that an actor could peer out of at other figures on stage. The upstage wall also had numerous doors and entranceways. These framed areas provided foreground/background relations with other figures on the stage that Chaikin and Rafalowicz used to create layered images of multiple activity. Many critics have noted Chaikin's use of collage technique, by which they mean pieces constructed out of brief fragments or images and the way scenes overlap one another with very little transition between them. One scene or image does not end or resolve but is merged or overtaken by another. Often there are two or three images happening at the same time. The edges or borders between images are unstable and porous allowing one scene to merge or bleed into another one.

The "window" could be used in a number of different ways in conjunction with configurations upstage or downstage of it. It served as a "sign" of a door, one that could be moved very easily and quickly and thus could be read also as a "sign" of the theatre and its artificiality. In all of the Winter Project pieces, the actors moved the set pieces in full view of the audience with no attempt to hide what Brecht called "the apparatus of the theatre." Framed entrances gave Chaikin and Rafalowicz a way to construct fragments of action that began when the actor entered the frame and ended when the actor exited or when the frame was removed. These became elements in the structure of the theatrical collage the director and his dramaturg were building. Because of their portability and their minimal construction, these set pieces and the way in which they were used emphasized the provisional nature of Tourists and Refugees. Actors could be seen arranging the theatrical apparatus to create brief images of worlds and realms that ended or began with an entrance through the artificial window. The sign of the door or window was clearly unstable and derived its meaning from the ways in which it was manipulated.

Collage technique emphasizes the constructed nature of an event be it a painting or a “piece” of theatre. Framed entrances were an effective dramaturgical device that evoked a fictive world and exposed the ways in which the fiction was created.

Tourists and Refugees was a critical success and sold out for its four week run. Erika Munk in the Village Voice thought it the best of Chaikin’s work since Terminal (1970).²³ Both the New York Times and the Daily News were favorably impressed with the piece. but John Corry of the Times seemed uncomfortable and unfamiliar with the non-linear aspects of experimental theatre: “Whatever it is that Mr. Chaikin and his people may think that they are saying, they often are not saying anything at all, although there is pleasure to be found simply in watching them.”²⁴ Don Nelson of the Daily News, pointing out that the audience sat rapt and attentive throughout the evening, seemed similarly confused: “Clarity is not one of its strong suits precisely because of its explorative nature but, paradoxically, it is consistently interesting.”²⁵ Shewey, of the Soho Weekly News, seemed the most impressed of the critics. After admitting an unfamiliarity with Chaikin’s collaborative work, “productions I have read about but could never picture before,” Shewey wrote:

The journey—it’s the oldest metaphor in the book for life. Instructions for what to be, how to live—it’s what we all seek, subliminally at least, from one another and from art. To tell the story—this is the humble intention of a play. Chaikin grasps these elemental tools in an almost frantic desire to say what must be said. And the amount of pure emotional experience he manages to express, through the most

²³ Erika Munk, The Village Voice, July 16-22, 1980.

²⁴ John Corry, “Theater: Tourists and Refugees” New York Times, July 11, 1980.

²⁵ Don Nelson, The Daily News, July 18, 1980.

oblique of theatrical gestures and the most direct methods of address, is astonishing.²⁶

Chaikin and Rafalowicz were pleased with the work but felt that it deserved an extended period of rehearsal. Chaikin told Robert Coe of the Soho Weekly News: “Some of the work we haven’t found solutions for that we would have with more time. In a sense it’s frustrating. We hope very much to return to this piece.”²⁷ The next Winter Project, which would begin in March 1981, was to be an extension of the Tourists and Refugees work with the inclusion of material from Re-Arrangements that Chaikin and Rafalowicz were interested in revisiting.

Tourists and Refugees 2

Rehearsals for the Winter Project’s continued investigation of home and homelessness began on March 17, 1981, with the expectation of a four-week run from April 29 to May 24. Robbie McCauley replaced Atsumi Sakato, and Raymond Barry joined the company after the first week of rehearsals. Barry had been a principal actor with the Open Theater and had worked with Chaikin on a number of projects since that company broke up. McCauley had worked with the first two years of the Winter Project and had been featured in Chaikin’s production of Adrienne Kennedy’s A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White at the Public Theater in 1976. Nicky Paraiso, who later became a principal actor/singer for Meredith Monk and who was a collaborator with downtown experimental artist Jeff Weiss, worked with the company during the first week of rehearsals but did not continue with the project.²⁸

²⁶ Shewey, Soho Weekly News, July 16, 1980.

²⁷ John Corry, “Theater: Tourists and Refugees” New York Times, July 11, 1980..

²⁸ Nicky Paraiso, Interview, tape recorded, March 4, 2002.

Steve Reisner's rehearsal notebooks indicate which scenes Chaikin and Rafalowicz wanted to save from the previous years' productions and what new material needed to be generated. The I Knows, Love Moments, the Bag, the Reserved Man from Re-Arrangements, the Refugee voices, Corporate Mercenaries and the Crossings would be reworked. New material to be developed included a Tour Guide who would act as a link between the spectators and actors, an African-American character based on Adrienne Kennedy's writings, the use of a poem by W.S. Merwin about pineapples, and the concept of a Port where people arrived and tourist and native cultures collided.²⁹ When Ray Barry joined the rehearsals, he developed a transvestite Travel Agent who was to become an indelible part of the piece.

Will Patton was to be the Tour Guide. During the first week of rehearsals, he was given W.S. Merwin's poem "Questions to Tourists Stopped in a Pineapple Field" to use as text. The actors would assemble as various tourists in a makeshift "tour bus" designed by Maeda, and Patton would recite portions of the poem:

Did you like your piece of pineapple?

Do you eat much pineapple where you come from?

How did this piece compare with the pineapple you've eaten before?

What do you remember about the last time you ate a piece of pineapple?

Do you like it better fresh or from the can?³⁰

Eventually, the vehicle became a minimal square frame that the actors would hold and the poem was divided into four sections recited at different moments in the piece. Patton

²⁹ Steve Reisner, *Rehearsal Notebooks, Tourist and Refugees 2*, 1981.

³⁰ W.S. Merwin, "Questions to Tourists Stopped in a Pineapple Field" Opening the Hand (New York: 1983)

delivered his lines directly to the audience. Chaikin experimented with having the Tour Guide interview tourists and refugees, acting as a kind of intermediary between the performers and the spectators. He and Rafalowicz liked the idea of a character that could go in and out of the action on stage, switching from direct address to the audience to inter-character dialogue. They were interested in manipulating the dynamics between the actor and the spectator. Chaikin had developed a number of exercises over the years having to do with “levels of address.” The performer should be acutely aware of the ways in which they interact with the audience. In 1970, Chaikin had written: “By attributing a certain quality to an audience, one invites the participation of that quality.”³¹ Blumenthal suggests “levels of address” are related to Chaikin’s notion of presence: “Perhaps the actor’s heightened sense of live spectators sharing the space, time and event generates or invites the audience’s heightened sense of aliveness.”³² The Tour Guide was to switch between several “levels of address,” sometimes speaking intimately to spectators and at other times addressing the other actors as their fictive characters. Chaikin and Rafalowicz would later develop this idea into the stage manager figure in Lies and Secrets, the last of the Winter Project pieces. Patton’s Tour Guide opened the show and his unique delivery, which Eileen Blumenthal, in the Village Voice, described as “a quality of carefully suppressed, skewed energy,” helped make the Tour Bus sections seem surreal and estranged.

Nicky Paraiso had been a student of Chaikin’s and McCauley’s at N.Y.U. Graduate School of Theater. He remembers improvisations based on the concept of an

³¹ Chaikin in Actors on Acting ed. Toby Cole (New York: Crown Trade Publication, 1970), 665.

³² Blumenthal, Chaikin, 61.

imaginary Port where tourists and refugees would intermingle. He was working with the company provisionally, the first week being a kind of working audition. "I remember the core group was really strong. I would watch the improvisation for a few minutes and then try to integrate myself into it. Carrying bags and suitcases. I had imagined a character, a boy, who would sit at the Port and try and ensnare tourists and who would later take on the characteristics of a dictator."³³ His recollection of the difficulty of joining a company of actors with years of experience of working together and a shared vocabulary is similar to Patton's initial reactions: "I came in raw to a new world and they had a code."³⁴.

Barry and McCauley, more familiar with the way of working, had little difficulty adjusting. Barry had a pragmatic attitude: "The play had already been performed. My job was to fit in and create my own stuff. We had developed a way of working that was useful. We had a lot of confidence and had the vocabulary."³⁵

In the first two weeks of rehearsal, a pile of clothes would be put on the floor, and the actors would improvise with costume and character. Both McCauley and Barry found interesting figures to work with. McCauley developed a Haitian refugee figure from a scarf she wound around her head:

Characters emerged from the clothing—amazing characters. If it was strong, you kept it. The headdress had a kind of fear and pride. Then, you imagined where

³³ Paraiso, May 4, 2002

³⁴ Will Patton, Telephone interview, tape recorded, July 21, 2001.

³⁵ Ray Barry, Telephone interview, tape recorded, July 18, 2001.

you were going. As you stepped onto the path, things began to emerge. The doing of it informed you.³⁶

One of the physical exercises was stepping into the window frame, getting into a costume and walking out of the frame. Paraiso recalls Robbie McCauley's transformation into a junkie as being powerful and amazing. Barry dressed himself as a transvestite with wig, high heels and a dress that was several sizes too small for his large and athletic body. He began to improvise text based on the vocal mode of a seedy, lower caste, travel agent:

It all depends on what you want or what you're looking for. Some people like it one way, some people like it another. It's ok with me . . . Orrrrr . . . Maybe you want to take a cruise to the islands. Get some sun and rum and fun! Sky, beach, pineapple, palm trees. They eat fish with the heads on them. Hotel rooms overlooking the ocean. Tantalizing specialties. Lotsa service. Lotsa natives. Fuck a native if you want. No telephone. No T.V. No radio. No outside world. And you can wear anything you want, nobody looks funny at you. It all depends on what you want. Some people like it one way, some people like it another. It's ok with me.

Barry had developed a number of memorable vocal modes in the Open Theater. In Nightwalk (1973), he and Tom Lillard created "Men's World," which was the gestural and vocal expression of a particular testosterone-induced male bonding, replete with knowing laughter, sexual innuendo, and growling. Barry describes vocal modes as: "Using the intonation of the voice in idiosyncratic ways so that the culture of the language is recognized and the intent of the words is foregrounded." The words are

³⁶ Robbie McCauley, Telephone interview, tape recorded, July 28, 2001.

purposely slurred with their musical qualities emphasized. According to Barry, the actor uses only “bits and pieces of articulation to give a hint of what the words are saying. From a distance, just hearing the tone, you can tell what’s going on.”³⁷ In the above speech, the vocal mode is “It all depends on what you want . . . it’s ok with me.” These phrases have a particular sound and rhythm that are emblematic of the character. By repeating the phrases, Barry was able to generate other text that matched the sound and intent of the original mode.

Barry used a trip to East Berlin in 1973 as inspiration for one of the sections of the Travel Agent. He had been affected by the still visible signs of World War II on the architecture: “There were bullet holes all over the walls. Steeples bombed off the churches and bullets in the walls.” That memory and a more recent recollection of a particularly carnal relationship spurred the phrase “Pussy and Bullet holes.” The rest of the improvisation was a process of “just working the modes,” somewhat like a jazz musician “jamming” with a set of chord changes.³⁸

There’s a special tour to the Iron Curtain countries. It’s a package and for groups only. Holes all over the buildings. You go to East Germany . . . bullet holes all over the walls. And a lot of pussy under them bullet holes too. Nobody talks about that. I know about that. Lotsa vodka, lotsa pussy, lotsa bullet holes. It all depends on what you want (repeat mode) . . . You miss romance ? You miss a little loving in your life? A little affection? Tenderness? Empathy? Go to Venice! Venezia! Lots of little canals, gondolas going up and down, Bridge of Sighs. Lots of aristocrats! As a matter of fact you get to be an aristocrat just by

³⁷ Raymond, Barry, Telephone Interview, tape recorded. July 18, 2001

³⁸ Ibid

gong there, that's all you have to do! People holding hands. Hugging, kissing, grabbing each other, looking each other in the eyes. Dry humping in the gondolas. And its all blue . . . totally blue . . . all blue . . .

The Travel Agent, raunchy and funny, was a memorable character in Tourist and Refugees 2. The Village Voice called him “an exquisite monster”³⁹ and Barry's performance helped the Winter Project win an Obie award that spring. Barry, like Zimet and Shepard had come into the Open Theater in 1967 with the making of The Serpent and had been a member of the reduced company that produced the revised Terminal, Mutation Show and NightWalk. These actors (and Ronnie Gilbert) must be seen as long term, crucial collaborators in the work of both the Open Theater and the Winter Project. Trying to evaluate Chaikin's developmental theatre pieces without emphasizing the contributions of his core actors, is like considering the work of Richard Foreman without mentioning his great actress Kate Manheim or the Wooster Group without giving credit to Spalding Grey or Kate Valk.

Robbie McCauley developed a recurring character called Clara who was based on Adrienne Kennedy's “Ida in London.” The Clara figure wore a hat and white gloves:

I went to London—the Queen Elizabeth, London. They all said who ever heard of anyone going to London but I went. I stayed in my cabin the whole crossing, solitary. I was the only Negro there.⁴⁰

McCauley had worked with Chaikin on Kennedy's material before, and she edited the text into several sections. Although McCauley says that Kennedy was unhappy about

³⁹ Blumenthal, Village Voice, May 6-12, 1981

⁴⁰ Appendix F, Tourist and Refugees 2.

the editing, she accepted it and was generous and supportive. Chaikin worked the Clara sections meticulously “moment to moment,” and McCauley felt very close to the text: “I could speak it with a certain resonance, especially the line ‘I was the only Negro.’ Joe told me, when this whole thing was set up, that as an actor I had sources. One of my sources was being the only Negro there.”⁴¹

McCauley also credits the musician Harry Mann with being an essential contributor in the rehearsals and performance: “Music was so important to the experience. Harry’s music was like a dialogue. He was like another actor.” During the rehearsals of the refugee crosses, McCauley was using images from the Middle Passage (the journey that slaves made across the Atlantic, chained in the holds of ships). “When the music was added, you could let go of the story stuff and let the music carry it.”⁴²

Barry also felt that the music particularly motivated much of the energy for the refugee crossings: “It was a kind of beating of tubes (cardboard tubes) that was very exiting.”⁴³

The Open Theater had worked extensively with music and musicians particularly in their last three productions. Ellen Maddow, also an actress with the company, provided much of the musical accompaniment with Stan Walden contributing ideas and arrangements.

The Winter Project was fundamentally committed to collaboration with musicians.

McCauley recalls Chaikin’s initial introduction of the concept of the Winter Project: “I’m assembling some actors, writers and musicians, to be together and see what happens.”

⁴¹ McCauley, Telephone Interview, tape recorded, July 28, 2001.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ray Barry, Telephone Interview, July 18, 2001.

She says her work with the Winter Project was “life changing” principally because of the intensity of the collaborative work with actors and musicians.⁴⁴

Zimet’s Reserved Man was one of the funnier highlights of Tourists and Refugees 2. Along with Barry’s Travel Agent and Patton’s cool and ironic Tour Guide, it provided a comic contrast to the grimmer images of the Refugee Crossings and Translations and to the often bleak and despairing configurations of the Love Moments. Zimet had created Philip, the Reserved Man, for Re-Arrangements. In the second version of Tourists and Refugees, the character was brought back as a tourist with references to pineapple and his facility with the local language: “The other day I had a wonderful conversation with a native fisherman. I said to him: ‘spear-o . . . fish-o’. He understood me perfectly.” The Reserved Man had been done in two parts in Re-Arrangements, but these were combined in one scene for the new piece. The Bag was the interviewer, and Zimet reiterated a speech about sexual fantasies and then a section on losing his voice that had been adapted from Chaikin and Shepard’s Tongues.

Just a second . . . is this . . . is this . . . Just let me catch my breath . . . Is this my voice? . . . No . . . Don’t try . . . Its coming . . . It’s not that I cant hear myself . . . I can hear myself . . . Nothing to it . . . Spear-o, Fish-o . . . there, that was it. That was it. Just now, it just came out. Just like that, nothing to worry about.

Spearoni, Fishoni . . . Spearetski, Fishetski . . . Spearala, Fishala . . . Oh-oh . . .

Don’t help, don’t help. It’ll come. It’s just a little lapse. I can already feel it

⁴⁴ McCauley. July 28, 2001

coming back now. Something in the patter, the tone, the turn of phrase. There .

I've got it. It must have been the feeling of dislocation. Being away from home.⁴⁵

While Chaikin felt that the first version of Tourists and Refugees was an unfinished piece, "now, with part two, it's deeper and richer."⁴⁶ Part of the reason that the play seemed more effective in its second incarnation was the increased awareness of the general public to the growing problem of homelessness. The newly elected president, Ronald Reagan, along with many other reactionary policies, had begun an effort to topple the revolutionary Sandinista government in Nicaragua, which stimulated political action and education about multi-national corporations and neo-colonialism. Eileen Blumenthal noted in her review that the changes between the two versions of the piece reflected a new historical context:

Some of the alterations simply reflect additional incubation and work time. But it is apparent too that the political climate over the past ten months has sharpened the work's ironic and angry edges: the hoodlum characters, in various guises, now show up in more situations; portions of a W.S. Merwin poem, recited by a tour guide (a new character this year), raise issues about economic exploitation of "natives" by fruit growers; the guide last appears dangling limp from a wall post.⁴⁷

Tourists and Refugees 2 won an Obie award that year. The production can be seen as a successful high point in the work of the Winter Project. The company had

⁴⁵ See Appendix F, Tourist and Refugees 2. Also, script of Tongues in Joseph Chaikin and Sam Shepard: Letters and Texts, ed. Barry Daniels (New York: New American Library, 1989), 80. Zimet says the original "Is this my voice?" character was based on a hashish episode he experienced in the late 1960s.

⁴⁶ "Joe Chaikin: Bringing it All Back Home" Glenn Loney Other Stages April 23 ,1981

⁴⁷ Blumenthal, Village Voice, May 6-12, 1981

established a smooth and comfortable process for developing material and editing it into a performance. The show toured to the Fifth International Theatre Festival in Caracas, Venezuela that summer. The Winter Project was the sole representative from the United States in a festival that included Kazuo Ono and Sankai Juku from Japan and Tadeusz Kantor's Cricot 2 company from Poland.

This was an extremely fruitful period for Chaikin. Along with the success of the Winter Project, he had experienced critical acclaim for Toungues and Savage/Love, his collaborations with Sam Shepard. His adaption of Samuel Beckett's Texts for Nothing was well received in London and Paris and New York. Joseph Papp had arranged to have Chaikin direct Antigone the next spring at the Public Theater and the new Winter Project piece was to be based on a subject that had been of continual interest to him. Chaikin wanted to make a piece about death and dying using a text that he himself would write.

Chapter 5

TRESPASSING AND LIES AND SECRETS

Throughout this dissertation I have relied heavily on the personal recollections of the actors, writers, dramaturgs and musicians who were directly involved in the process of making theatre with Joseph Chaikin in the Winter Project. Their insight and observations are sometimes subjective and personal, often lacking the kind of theoretical and analytical foundation that a scholar might provide. Many of them teach in prestigious colleges and universities but their expertise is artistic rather than academic. Most of them are well read and educated and have an active interest in a wide variety of topics outside of the theatre. However, their personal memories are necessarily clouded by time and prejudice and may lack a degree of objectivity that a scholarly approach requires. Nevertheless, I am interested in their testimony because I think it informs the theoretical and historical aspects of the work.

I have come to a point in the narrative where it is necessary to include my own experiences. This is problematic in that I will be attempting to write from a double perspective as both a scholar and a practitioner. When I began working in the Winter Project in 1982, my attitude to the work was uncritical to say the least. I was eager to absorb as much as I could from Joseph Chaikin whom I regarded as a master craftsman. As I gained more confidence and as Chaikin encouraged me to develop material, I acquired a working vocabulary and expertise that allowed me to be a fully contributing member of the ensemble. I learned by doing without being overly analytic about what I was doing. Acting or creating images and states of being requires physical and emotional

commitment that is often hampered by being overly critical or intellectually clever. After the material is generated there is an opportunity for shaping and framing that requires more critical distance and thought. Chaikin wanted his actors to be fully involved in this later process but often choices were made based on Chaikin's or Rafalowicz's intuitive expertise. In any event, discussions about the work involved questions of content or practice and were very rarely theoretical. Indeed, as I have previously indicated, both Chaikin and Rafalowicz were suspicious of the uses of theory in that they feared an overly theoretical approach to the work would tend to lock in or "fix" interpretation. Their preference was for a more indeterminate or "open" perspective.

After the Winter Project, my interests shifted from acting to writing and directing. I also began teaching at a number of universities as a visiting guest artist and lecturer. These career changes provided an opportunity to regard my experiences with the Winter Project from a more critical perspective. I became interested in the historical similarities between the actor ensembles of Stanislavski, Meyerhold and Copeau and how they related to those of Chaikin, Brook and Grotowski. My decision to enter graduate school was motivated by a desire to continue these interests in a more scholarly manner and to combine practical experience with academic study.

Philosophers and theorists can be suspicious of experience as an uncertain and makeshift form of knowledge. However, it often enhances understanding in that it places it within a physical context. What experience lacks in rational certainty it gains in feeling and a sense of space and time. Meyerhold's notion of the grotesque or Shklovsky's theory of estrangement can be experienced by students and scholars in a concrete, physical manner that enhances a more theoretical approach. My prime interest as both a

teacher and a scholar is to understand the connection between theory and practice. By including my personal experiences working with the Winter Project, I intend to broaden the scholarly perspective of this dissertation.

Another complication is that I began to collaborate with the group just after their most successful period when Tourists and Refugees 2 had won an Obie and had played to sold-out and appreciative audiences in New York and Caracas. The next pieces, Trespassing and Trio, were less successful both critically and commercially. For a number of reasons both personal and artistic, Chaikin dissolved the company in 1983. So, while I am charting the history of the company and my personal involvement in that history from 1981 to 1983, I am also charting the company's dissolution and ultimate break-up. Chaikin suffered a debilitating stroke soon after he dissolved the company. Although there have been a few attempts to re-assemble some of the collaborators from time to time, the particular way of working that characterized the Winter Project ended in 1983¹. Consequently, my optimism and enthusiasm were somewhat tempered by what can be seen retrospectively as the decline of the Winter Project. However, the way of working, as I will stress in the conclusion, continues to be useful and influential.

Trespassing

Trespassing is an anomaly among the five Winter Project productions. The first three pieces were all generated with considerable input from the actors, using a process that had been developed over a number of years involving discussion and exploration of

¹ There was a revised Terminal in 1996 with many of the original actors. In 1995, Firmament, a collaborative piece using several Winter Project veterans was presented at La Mama after a brief rehearsal period.

the themes under investigation. In Re-Arrangements and both productions of Tourists and Refugees, the actors were fully involved in defining the areas of exploration and were responsible for much of the text. Trespassing was Chaikin's attempt to examine death and grieving (a subject of interest that dated back to Terminal), sparked by his own experience of having open-heart surgery in 1978. He cast Gloria Foster, one of the United States' premiere African-American actresses (who had very little experience with collaborative playmaking), as the central figure and wrote most of the text she spoke. Mira Rafalowicz, Foster and Chaikin met separately, before regular rehearsals began, to develop the script and story behind the character Foster would be playing, that of a woman who has suffered a stroke and is in the final moments of her life.

The previous summer, Chaikin had described the main elements of the piece for an interviewer in London.

It's about a person, a woman, who is on a table in the last hour and a quarter of her life and she can't move. She can't speak and she can't see but the audience hears her thoughts and feelings and that's what I'm mainly writing, the words . . . Meanwhile in counterpoint to that, people around her do not know what to do and they begin to say and sing some psalms because they think these are the appropriate things to do for the occasion of somebody dying or dead . . . Once in a while one of them comes to her bed and talks to her. That person is somebody from her life, once it's her gravedigger. And the people who come don't follow a plot—they don't fall into place like a family.²

² Chaikin, "Continuing Work", Theatre Papers (Dartington College of Arts, Devon, England, 1982) 17.

Gloria Foster had worked briefly with Chaikin on scenes that were eventually dropped from the Living Theater's 1962 production of Kenneth Brown's The Brig. He had been particularly impressed with her talent at that time and followed her career closely.³ Foster had studied at the Goodman Theatre School of Drama in Chicago, and her approach to acting was firmly rooted in the American Method tradition with its attendant focus on motivation, subtext and given circumstances. Stella Adler, a seminal figure in the history of the Method, defines given circumstances as the background life of the character, "the social, cultural, political, historical and geographical situation in which the author places him."⁴ Chaikin, as we have seen, was more interested in exploring fragmentary conditions and states of being that need not be motivated or contextualized. Nonetheless, he and Rafalowicz created an elaborate back-story for Foster's character. The result was that when the rest of the actors began rehearsing, much of the play had already been determined—an unusual situation for an actor collective, which was used to generating most of its own material. Paul Zimet said that Trespassing "felt much less like our work."⁵ Chaikin explained that working with Foster required that the Winter Project's regular collaborative process be amended so as to make her more comfortable.

Most of the pieces we've done together are not formed as this one is from the outset. They're not written. The woman who is going to do the person on the table has never worked this way before. And she wants a script. She's a marvelous performer. So that's why it has to be much more developed.⁶

³ Chaikin, Interview, October 9, 2002

⁴ Stella Adler, "Interview: The Reality of Doing", Tulane Drama Review, Fall 1964, 149.

⁵ Paul Zimet, Interview, tape recorded, May 23, 2002.

⁶ Chaikin, "Continuing Work", 19.

Both Zimet and Gilbert suggest that the autobiographical nature of the project was important to Chaikin and that he felt compelled to write most of the text. Gilbert believes that “Trespassing was a way of defining in theatrical terms his own experience.”⁷

Chaikin had a history of serious heart problems. He had rheumatic heart disease when he was a child, which permanently damaged his health. He was critically ill a number of times and had open-heart surgery in 1974, 1978 and 1984. Death and mourning had been central themes in a number of pieces he had worked on, including the Open Theater’s collaboration with Jean Claude Van Itallie in The Serpent, Ansky’s The Dybbuk at the Public Theater, and his collaboration with Sam Shepard, Tongues.

Terminal, created with playwright Susan Yankowitz, had been Chaikin’s major investigation of dying and death and had received worldwide critical acclaim. Michael Billington in the British Guardian called it a “modern Totentanz,” and Mel Gussow in the New York Times described it as “a horrifying, unnerving and moving artistic experience.” Chaikin pointed out in Steve Gomer’s film Going On that because of his history with serious illness, much of his work was related to death. He also acknowledged, somewhat tongue in cheek, that it was a topic “that I find tirelessly interesting.”⁸

According to Gilbert, much of the material for Foster’s monologues in Trespassing came from Chaikin’s notes after an emergency operation in 1978. “He had an open-heart surgery. He talked about it as a near-death experience. He knew he was

⁷ Ronnie Gilbert, Interview, tape recorded, August 31, 2002

⁸ Joseph Chaikin in Steve Gomer’s film Joseph Chaikin: Going On, 1983. Distributed by Films for the Humanities, Princeton N.J.

going to write about it.”⁹ In addition, two colleagues had recently died. In 1978, Charles Stanley, an original Winter Project member, had died suddenly, and in 1980 Daniel Seltzer, who had played Hamm in Chaikin’s production of Beckett’s Endgame at the Manhattan Theater Club and in Paris, also passed away unexpectedly. These two deaths had a profound effect on Chaikin and on his desire to find meaningful and articulate expressions of grief, mourning, and other “exiled” emotions.

One of the things that I’ve stressed a lot with the Winter Project workshops has to do with the expression of zones of human experience that in a sense are out of fashion in our time but nevertheless are linked with a main artery of passion. These are what I have called “exiled” emotions that seem fundamental—mourning for example, or even tenderness.¹⁰

Although Foster was the main focus of the production and Chaikin’s text for her required separate rehearsals, the other actors continued to develop additional material collaboratively. The cast for Trespassing included Zimet, Shepard and Gilbert and two young actors: Cristobal Carambo and myself. Carambo had worked with Gilbert on Meredith Monk’s Specimen Days, and I had studied acting with Chaikin during most of the previous year. The play was to be oriented around the figure of The Woman in the Bed, played by Foster. Other characters included the Woman’s Mother, to be developed by Gilbert, a Terrified Visitor, to be developed by Zimet, and a Priest to be created by me. Tina Shepard concentrated on creating an Attendant/Nurse who would move the Woman around the stage in her bed. Carambo was to develop images of both the

⁹ Gilbert, July 31, 2002

¹⁰ Chaikin, “The Open Theater: Looking Back” Performance Art Journal (PAJ 21, Vol.7, No.3, 1983)

Woman's Father and her Lover and also worked on a Notary who would provide biographical information about the Woman.

In addition, Chaikin and Rafalowicz wanted to use the Psalms as textual material and to investigate ways in which they could be sung or chanted. In Shepard's personal files concerning the Trespassing project are introductory notes that were distributed to the actors at the beginning of rehearsals.¹¹ Chaikin and Rafalowicz had imagined a chorus or choir on an upper tier which would use sections of the Psalms as text:

At different points of the play, pieces of psalms will be said/sung, sometimes by the chorus, sometimes by one character (e.g. the mother). Sometimes the psalms will continue while other things happen. Sometimes Anna responds while the psalms are said/sung, sometimes she picks out a word, etc.¹²

The chorus idea was never developed but, as we shall see, the Psalms were integrated into the piece extensively. The musicians, Harry Mann (woodwinds) and William Uttley (percussion), both of whom had worked on the Tourist and Refugees productions, were joined by pianist Neal Kirkwood. The Woman was to have been a music teacher, and Kirkwood would play the pieces that Chaikin felt were appropriate.

As I explained in the beginning of this chapter, my personal perspective as a practitioner with the Winter Project is necessarily filtered through lenses of time, hindsight and after-the-fact theorizing. Despite this, I have attempted to give an accurate, balanced and objective account of what working with the ensemble was like. I had been an enthusiastic follower of Chaikin's work for some time and had come to New York

¹¹ Tina Shepard, Personal files concerning Tresspassing 1982. (Includes reviews, personal notes and partial script.)

¹² Ibid.

with the hope of somehow working with him. I had seen the Open Theater's productions of Terminal, Mutation Piece and NightWalk and both Tourists and Refugees pieces of the Winter Project. My training was in American Method in college and then in Grotowski technique with the Belgian director Tone Brulin for four years. The company I had founded with six other students in 1971, Otrabanda Company, had also traveled down the Mississippi River by raft performing in small towns and prisons every summer since 1973. The river shows were strongly influenced by the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and the traditions of commedia dell'arte, circus and vaudeville. As an actor, I had a well-trained instrument and many skills but had not experienced the intensely concentrated experimental work that characterized the Winter Project.

Despite the fact that I had worked with Chaikin as a teacher and been a professional actor for ten years before joining the Winter Project, I was unprepared for the experience of putting a performance together in five weeks of rehearsal with an ensemble of performers who had worked together for years. Actors were expected to develop images and character sketches by themselves and bring the work into rehearsal. Although there were warm-ups in the mornings, little time was devoted to group exercises or investigations. I had expected to do some of the more famous Open Theater improvisations such as sound and movement or transformations, but there wasn't time. The veterans had an established vocabulary and had incorporated years of experimental improvisation into a way of working that was understood viscerally and was seldom explicitly articulated. Newcomers were encouraged to figure out how things worked by observation and discreet questioning. Paul Zimet (whom I had known for years) and Mira Rafalowicz were particularly helpful to me in orienting myself within the company.

After warming up, actors would present material that they had developed, or they would work in small groups on songs or musical pieces. Chaikin would often work to further refine and distill fragments of behavior, adding music or shifting an actor's posture or isolating one small moment of the image, working very carefully on perhaps the tone of voice or the angle of the head. The work was meticulous and demanded intense concentration. Chaikin was quick to reject whatever he felt was not pertinent to the piece but also eager to support and develop images that he felt were "strong" or "resonant." The following examples indicate some of the ways Chaikin worked with actors.

The character I was working on was a Priest who comes to visit the Woman and urges her to accept his message of salvation. I developed the text with the help of Chaikin and Rafalowicz over a period of about a month. It was constantly revised, changed and edited. The Priest became more and more ghoulish, like someone out of a Flannery O'Connor story. After a long speech, his last words to the Woman (Anna) were:

This world you are leaving, Anna, it's nothing.

When God calls you, run to him.

Don't stop to ask "Am I ready? Am I worthy?"

Don't ask, "Do I approve of his church?"

Run to him and say, "Here I am. I am satisfied."

Without this . . . life is a blank. It's a rotten sewer.

A swamp of continual anguish and despair.

A shoreless, trackless waste. Every day, every hour, every minute.

My predilection was to preach this passage, but Chaikin's continual instruction was to "deliver it in your natural voice." Chaikin was extremely patient in helping me find a way of speaking that wasn't constricted with tension, that was powerful but not "fixed" or forced. This involved listening intensely to the sound of the voice in the room and the ways in which it resonated off the walls and ceiling. It was to be an "open" voice, not closed off but mobile and resonant. Chaikin used techniques learned from Kristen Linklater but also exercises that he had developed in collaboration with actors in the previous fifteen years. He was exceedingly generous of his time and attention. I emphasize this because Chaikin's intense, intimate concentration on the actor is one of the hallmarks of his directing technique. The vocal aspect of the role was only one element of the performance, but it helped provide a foundation upon which to build the character. Chaikin encouraged me to "sing" the part and to let the character "melt" into the vocal mode.

All of these directions were consistent with Chaikin's interest in experimenting with the musical qualities of speech. Eileen Blumenthal has noted Chaikin's explorations of "both how music works in the theater and how theater can enter the less literal, less literary realms that music addresses."¹³ In *Trespassing*, I sang most of the text that I delivered. Aside from the Priest's exhortation to Anna, I played a gravedigger who sang a curious Irish song: "Digging graves is my design." I also sang a number of fragments of Psalms and performed a scene with Ronnie Gilbert called *Mine Enemies*, which was chanted. *Mine Enemies* is a good example of an image that was initially inspired by text as opposed to a condition or behavior.

¹³ Blumenthal, 96.

In addition to being a long time collaborator with the Open Theater and the Winter Project, Gilbert had been an original member of the legendary Weavers, a 1950s folk group that included Pete Seeger. She was a talented singer, and the Winter Project featured her vocal skills in all of its productions. In *Mine Eyes*, the text was composed of some of the more bloodthirsty sections of the Psalms.

Mine enemies, they hate me. They would destroy me.

Let their table become a snare before them and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

Let their eyes be darkened that they see not and let their loins continually to shake.

Let their habitations be desolate and let all shun their houses . . .

After a number of experiments and improvisations, a way of delivering the text began to solidify. Gilbert and I sat at a table and cracked walnuts while we chanted the Psalms. I sang the higher part while Gilbert sang an octave below. The vocal effect was strange and oddly compelling. Chaikin wanted to work against the violence of the words and the cracking of the walnuts. He asked for our delivery to be sweet and for us to luxuriate in the sound of the language. Our focus was on each other; Chaikin emphasized the enjoyment, the bliss of vengeance. As an actor, I was excited to sing with Ronnie Gilbert on stage, and Chaikin suggested I use the feeling I had as an actor to propel and project my character's enjoyment of the event. Part of what Chaikin means by "the presence of the actor" is the exposure of both the actor and the role he is playing to the spectator. I looked forward to performing this section, knowing that part of what I was expected to do

was to openly experience the pleasure of it. My own “authentic” enjoyment added an ironic credibility to the last lines:

The righteous shall rejoice when they seeeth the vengeance.

They shall wash their feet in the blood of the wicked.

They shall wash their feet in the blood of the wicked.

Presence is a highly contested term in theatre and performance, and I will address some of the theoretical and historical problems of its use in the next chapter. For the moment, I would like to give some idea of how presence was addressed in a practical and personal way in a working rehearsal.

At times, Chaikin speaks about presence in the commonly understood sense of charisma: “It’s a quality that makes you feel as though you’re standing right next to the actor, no matter where you’re sitting in the theater.”¹⁴ But, often, he is referring to another quality, which has to do with “the space between the actor and the act,”¹⁵ which involves recognition of the audience. As opposed to the “fourth wall” concept of naturalistic acting, in which the actor is trained to be unaware of the audience, Chaikin, influenced by Brecht, wants the actor, not just the character he is playing, to be present to the spectator. How do you do this? A large part of being present in performance is overcoming the tension and insecurity that close the actor off to the spectator and his fellow actors.

The actor has to allow himself—has to be available to himself—has to be able to discover and call on himself—and he also has to direct himself and guide his own

¹⁴ Chaikin, *Presence*, 20.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 21.

process. Tension directs him to particular choices, limiting possibilities and concealing alternatives.¹⁶

One of the benefits of working with Chaikin was that, because of his close direction of images and attention to the smallest detail of performance, the actor had a defined path to follow when it came time to present the work for an audience. The result was a strong feeling of security in performance. The actor had also generated and written much of the material and “owned” the performance in a way that is fundamentally different from “interpreting” someone else’s text. Owning the material and feeling secure allowed the actor to remain open to the relationship, both spatial and psychic, between himself and the spectators.

Being present as actor and as character to the audience had other aspects. The material was often emblematic. By this I mean, images were the product of distillation and refinement. Chaikin’s intense scrutiny and adjustment of movement and tone and his ability to isolate the meaningful and articulate gestures of an actor’s performance allowed the actor to invest in images often constructed of the most minimal of actions and sounds. He focused on the way a hand opened or the sound of a person’s breathing. Many of the images that were used to construct Chaikin and Rafalowicz’s collages were that simple: the opening of a door, a person panting, a wordless sigh. These emblematic images were then delivered to the spectators by actors who were not closed off by tension or self-consciousness but aware of the circuit between themselves and the people in the audience. The circuit was a connection between spectator and performer made possible by concentration, focus and visceral and psychic energy. This is not to say that actors in

¹⁶ Ibid, 22.

the Winter Project played every action directly to the audience. Rather, they were fully conscious of the mutual presence of both actors and spectators in the theatrical space and of their mutual complicity in the event. As Chaikin said “The emblem becomes a meeting point for the actor and the spectator.”¹⁷

Chaikin’s intense concentration on the actor is one of the hallmarks of his directing technique. I experienced this as a sign of his patience and generosity. In a discussion with Ronnie Gilbert, she suggested it might be an attitude about working in the theatre of collaboration. She spoke of a particular kind of approach that she found exemplified in the experimental work of Chaikin and of his colleague Peter Brook, for both of whom she acted.

This process of working is so different . . . It’s almost as if everything that somebody has, once you are committed to working, is usable. Peter Brook also had that. Peter would take anything that somebody did and clue us in to what was usable. Nothing is not usable, once you are in the process. I guess that’s generosity. This is the material that we are working with, this human material, and every part of it is explorable.¹⁸

What was a revelation to me was the amount of time and space devoted to exploring a single image and the particular focus of the actor being as fully present in it as possible. The actor was required to be present in the room, as the character, as the actor, while acknowledging the presence of the audience. This complicated task requires, paradoxically, both effort and release. These contradictions are what Chaikin most admired in the Brechtian actor, Ekkehard Schall, of whom he wrote: “It is this balancing

¹⁷ Chaikin, *Presence*, 113.

¹⁸ Gilbert, July 31, 2002.

act of abandonment and control, of intelligence and innocence, which makes his performance remarkable.”¹⁹ Of course, paradox and contradiction are terms that abound in the vocabulary of acting theory found both in Diderot’s Paradox of the Actor, which examines the merits of technique over emotional insight, and in the esoteric writings of the Noh master Zeami, who contrasted “imitation” with “becoming” and advocated a unification of the two conditions while “retaining a positive consciousness of their opposition.”²⁰ Chaikin was interested in examining and manifesting these kinds of contradictions. Reading Diderot and Zeami certainly gives one insight into what Chaikin means by the “dialectic between restraint and abandon; between the impulse and the form which expresses it; between the act and the way it is perceived by the audience.”²¹ But, it is quite another thing to experience “balancing between control and surrender” in front of an audience. As Zeami often repeats in his writings: “These principles are surely not simple to grasp through logic alone.”²² Zeami’s observation is particularly relevant to my own situation as both a scholar and a participant of the Winter Project.

Chaikin had written of Gloria Foster as an example of an actor who possessed presence in the charismatic sense “a kind of deep libidinal surrender which the performer reserves for his anonymous audience.”²³ Most of the reviews of Trespassing pay homage to Foster’s considerable stage presence. Mel Gussow of the New York Times stated that she lent the performance “dramatic weight.” Tish Dace described her role as “poignantly

¹⁹ Chaikin, Presence, 21.

²⁰ Yamazaki Masakazu “The Aesthetics of Ambiguity” in On the Art of the Noh Drama: The Major Treatises of Zeami translated by Rimer and Masakazu (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), xliii.

²¹ Chaikin, Presence, 10.

²² Zeami, The Major Treatises of Zeami, 30.

²³ Chaikin, Presence, 20.

played,” while Joseph Hurley in Other Stages wrote about “this thunderously eloquent, heart-crackingly beautiful woman possessed of a daunting technique.”²⁴ Michael Feingold, however, found the most striking thing about the performance of Trespassing to be its move towards linear structure, verbal expression of emotional states and realism. In other words “most of the elements of traditional drama his (Chaikin’s) pioneering work with the Open Theater intentionally broke away from.”²⁵ Feingold, as we shall see, found this aspect of Trespassing to be hopeful and impressive. Most of the veterans of the cast expressed dissatisfaction with both the process of putting the piece together and the deferential atmosphere that developed around Foster.

Ronnie Gilbert felt uncomfortable with the way Foster’s role was approached. Her performance was unrelieved in that she never acknowledged herself as a performer. Foster stayed “in character” during the whole piece, creating a kind of fictional realism that Gilbert and the other actors had been working against for years. As Chaikin had written: “When we as actors are performing, we as persons are also present and the performance is a testimony of ourselves.”²⁶ Gilbert felt that Foster was committed to a type of acting that was unable to acknowledge either the audience or her fellow actors on stage.

That person in the bed never got up. I never saw a person who was not in a state of dying. I never felt that there was a person or an actor. It was a private kind of

²⁴ Mel Gussow, “Theatre: Chaikin Directs ‘Trespassing,’” The New York Times, Feb. 25, 1982.

Tish Dace, “Joe Chaikin Tackles Dying in Trespassing,” The Villager, March 11, 1982.
Joseph Hurley, “Without Words of God,” Other Stages, Feb.25-March 2. 1982.

²⁵ Michael Feingold, “Chaikin’s New Path,” The Village Voice, March 9, 1982.

²⁶ Chaikin, Presence, ?.

agony. I didn't feel connected to the character because it wasn't a character, it was a state of being.²⁷

Foster's intense realism was what had excited Feingold. He was interested in the dialectic that this type of acting played with non-realistic acting devices such as fragmentation of scenes, heightened speech and stylized gesture that the Winter Project had made a familiar part of their work. "The two elements challenge and interrupt each other, rub up against each other, sometimes merging and sometimes fiercely juxtaposed."²⁸

The feeling in rehearsal as the piece approached opening was that the Winter Project regulars would defer to Foster and accommodate her performance. Part of the problem was that Foster was restricted to the bed and had to be positioned for her scenes by her attendant, played by Shepard. This lack of mobility required the other actors to move in a strictly choreographed relationship to the static Woman. Entrances and exits were endowed with a certain amount of caution and danger. The proxemics of the scene, the spatial relationships between figures, were loaded with significance. How close a character got to the Woman signaled how comfortable that character was in the presence of death. The Priest enjoyed the sensual density of the environment, while the Terrified Man lived up to his name and was progressively mortified as he neared the object of his obsession. Shepard, who was responsible for making sure that Foster was in the correct relationship to the other actors and in exact position with regard to the lights, felt an unwelcome amount of pressure and responsibility. Her performance was determined by her deference to both the character of the Woman in the bed and her subservient

²⁷ Gilbert, Interview, July 31, 2002.

²⁸ Feingold, March 9, 1982

relationship to the lights and Foster's immobile body. She remembers weeping with relief after opening night having accomplished the difficult technical task of keeping the central character of Trespassing in the light.²⁹

In a recent interview, Kirkwood, the pianist, pointed out that the music for Trespassing was divided into two separate worlds: the realm of The Woman and the world around her. Classical music was associated with the Woman, who had been a piano teacher. Kirkwood played two late Beethoven sonatas, both times rolling the piano next to the bed of the Woman on stage and simply playing the pieces with no other activity occurring in the image. Kirkwood, who has gone on to collaborate with many theatre artists, was impressed with both Chaikin's understanding and appreciation of music and with his willingness to let musicians carry the weight of the piece at crucial junctures in performance.

That was one thing that was rare in the theatre. Allowing those moments just to have music. Having a little breath. A lot of people in the theatre can't handle that. Relying on a musician to hold the stage without any other activity.³⁰

Chaikin was adamant about the music he wanted played to illustrate the Woman's classical background. According to Kirkwood, Chaikin "was obsessed with late Beethoven." It was the only music that he was listening to at the time and he felt a strong correspondence between the Woman's state of being and Beethoven's final piano pieces.

He thought there was a connection with that music and what he was trying to do with Trespassing. It has to do with death and going into another world. There is

²⁹ Tina Shepard, Personal Interview, Tape recorded, August 20, 2002

³⁰ Neal Kirkwood, Personal interview, tape-recorded, October 5, 2002.

spirituality about the music that is achieved with great struggle. It gets to this serenity, but it is not a new-age serenity, it is hard won that serenity³¹

Kirkwood felt that Trespassing was a successful piece. Although it was dark he felt it was very “strong”, and he admired Chaikin’s courage in tackling such a serious subject. He found the deferential relationship to Gloria Foster to be problematic but also felt that it worked for the piece in that it created two separate worlds: “There was Gloria and there was everything around her.”³²

Trespassing played at La Mama for four weeks beginning February 24, 1982. After this, Chaikin did a number of projects not related to the Winter Project but using some of the project’s actors, principally Ronnie Gilbert and myself. Chaikin directed Sophocles’ Antigone in a new translation by John Chioles at the Public Theater. In the summer, Chaikin and Rafalowicz worked with Jewish and Palestinian actors in Israel on a collaborative work titled The Other’s. In the fall, Chaikin developed four half-hour radio theatre programs, Night Voices, for National Public Radio. The Winter Project worked for a little over a month from late December to the end of January 2002 on a workshop about comedy. In February and March, the last Winter Project production, Lies and Secrets was created using two actors, Ronnie Gilbert and myself, and the musician Harry Mann. It played at La Mama for two weeks and was then reworked and re-titled as Trio, which toured to London, Edinburgh and Paris in May and June 1983. In the summer, Chaikin disbanded the Winter Project.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

Comedy Workshop

The Winter Project met for the first five weeks of 1983 as a workshop on comedy with no production in mind. Ronnie Gilbert, Paul Zimet, Tina Shepard and myself were the actors with Harry Mann as the sole musician. Chaikin was committed to develop a new piece for La Mama in March that would satisfy the performance requirements of state and federal grants and which would tour to Great Britain and France in the summer. The early winter meetings would be the first time the Winter Project had functioned solely as a workshop since 1978.

Although the workshop did develop some interesting material that was used in the following production, the unfortunate timing of the project along with a lack of organization created a number of problems for the participants. The workshop was brief and coincided with preparations that Paul Zimet and Tina Shepard were making to develop a new piece for the Talking Band in the spring. Chaikin and Rafalowicz were similarly committed for the La Mama piece and did not have the time to develop a specific structure for the workshop. In Mira Rafalowicz's previously mentioned 1978 essay on dramaturgy, the four stages in the development of collectively created theatre work are described. In the first stage:

We define the area of exploration, we try to find questions we will concern ourselves with and open them up . . . We don't try and find solutions, answers, but we promote a dialog, a consciousness about these questions"³³

³³ Mira Rafalowicz, "Dramaturgy in collaboration with Joseph Chaikin" Dramaturgy in American Theater (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1997), 161.

This stage was drastically abbreviated in the workshop resulting in an uncharacteristic lack of rigor and focus. The consciousness that Rafalowicz refers to never had time to develop.

Despite these problems, some material was developed that was performed for two invited audiences at the conclusion of the workshop. Chaikin initiated improvisations on etiquette, hoping to establish concrete forms of behavior that could then be comically subverted. Shepard and I devised a scene about the etiquette of getting someone to stop crying. This was in the form of a demonstration played directly to the audience, somewhat in the manner of an airline attendant showing how to adjust a seatbelt. Shepard wept energetically as I explained and demonstrated a number of techniques of relief such as holding the Sobber in your arms or laying them on the ground or whispering soothing encouragement into their ears. Of course the techniques proved unsuccessful and the Sobber became increasingly disconsolate. Another scenario was about a mind reader who became overwhelmed by the thoughts that he intercepted from the audience. The premise of the exercise was to overtly include the spectators, or the self-consciousness of the spectators, into the scene:

Someone in this room is trying desperately to relax.

Someone is having sexual fantasies about someone else in this room and doesn't want to admit it.

Someone is afraid they'll get bored and have no thoughts.

Don't worry, boredom is perfectly natural for a lot of people. Just lean back in your chairs and take a deep breath. These dark, submerged thoughts are nothing to be ashamed about.

Someone is wondering if they would join in a conspiracy to kill the president.

There is somebody in the room who still has aspirations and illusions.³⁴

This scene was also delivered in the form of direct address to the audience. Both performances for invited audiences were structured as presentations in which the various scenes were introduced by a stage manager or master of ceremonies, whom I played. This figure became the basis for one of the principal characters in the next Winter Project production, Lies and Secrets.

The Winter Project's workshop on comedy was, in the opinion of most of the actors involved, although a noble failure, a failure none-the-less. Part of the problem had to do with Chaikin's rather limited appetite for comedy as a genre. Ronnie Gilbert pointed out the irony of a man who developed collective playmaking in the sixties and seventies being the same man who wanted to be the principal "author" of Trespassing in 1982. She found it similarly ironic that a man who claimed he did not know how to be funny would conduct a comedy workshop.³⁵ This is not to give the impression that Chaikin was humorless. In fact, he and Rafalowicz were often visibly and vocally amused during rehearsals. He appreciated the comic and many of the Winter Project pieces have very funny characters in them like Ray Barry's sex-obsessed Travel Agent in Tourists and Refugees 2 and Paul Zimet's Terrified Visitor in Trespassing. Chaikin, however, had very little interest in broad, aggressive, laughter-inducing humor. He claimed to be mystified by the appeal of low comedy and disdained the mechanics and conventions that are required to master the form. The actors had to struggle to come up with material that would hold Chaikin's interest. He had recently toured his adaptation of

³⁴ Roger Babb, notebook for comedy workshop, 1983

³⁵ Ronnie Gilbert, Interview, July 31, 2002.

Beckett's Texts to London and Paris and identified strongly with the type of mordant humor that drives much of Beckett's work.

There is a certain kind of cumulative misery that is almost always funny. I mean finally, when someone says "Enough." There is something about misery going on and on that is comic.³⁶

Because of his limited appetite for broad comedy, the actor's principal task was to tailor the material that they generated for the workshop to fit Chaikin's narrow sensibility.

It was not unusual to have the bulk of one's work rejected by Chaikin in rehearsal, but in this workshop Chaikin was particularly unresponsive to the contributions of his collaborators. This situation created an uneasiness that was not conducive to working on comedy, a genre that requires attentive input from a director. Chaikin's discomfort with the material was palpable, the actors sensed his disassociation and felt slightly abandoned. The tight schedule, lack of a clear thematic focus and Chaikin's apparent ambivalence combined to create tension. It may be that the uneasiness created by this situation contributed, in part, to Chaikin's decision six months later to disband the Winter Project.

Lies and Secrets

In Lies and Secrets, Chaikin and Rafalowicz recycled material from all of the previous Winter Project performances. The piece can be considered a kind of review (or revue) of some of the more effective images from those productions. The title referred to the artificial nature of performance and to the illusiveness of truth in the world, particularly in the theatre. Lies and Secrets not only presented images from previous

³⁶ Chaikin, "Continuing Work" Theatre Papers, (Dartington College of Arts, Devon, England), 1982, 14.

Winter Project productions but also “quoted” a number of scenes from famous plays such as Ibsen’s Ghosts, Chekhov’s The Seagull, Brecht’s Arturo Ui and Molière’s Tartuffe

One of the salvageable parts of the comedy workshop was the figure of a stagehand who introduced the various sections of the piece. This character addressed the audience directly as a kind of interlocutor. He explained what was happening on stage and sometimes tried to figure out what was going on in the audience, for example, when he tried to read their minds. I had played this part and continued to develop it for Lies and Secrets. Chaikin and Rafalowicz had used direct address to the audience as a theatrical device in previous Winter Project productions. Will Patton’s Tour Guide in Tourists and Refugees 2 spoke to the spectators as spectators when he asked them “Do you eat much pineapple where you come from?” Ray Barry’s demented Travel Agent in the same play aimed his “Do you want to take a trip?” directly at the audience. In both these instances the actors spoke as characters from within the realm of the scene but broke out of the internal communication system of the play into the external communication system that exists between the spectator and the dramatic event.

Manfred Pfister describes epic tendencies in drama as those that encourage the development of mediation between internal and external communication systems. He credits Brecht with stimulating awareness of epic tendencies in all kinds of theatrical practice from Chinese Opera to Greek tragedy:

Thanks to his systematic use of dramaturgical techniques such as prologues and epilogues, choruses and songs, montage, banners, and film projections, *conférencier* figures, asides and the exposure of theatrical machinery to the audience—all of which contribute in some way to the foundation of a mediating

communication system—he created a form of drama in which the epic element was not just conceived as an occasional effect, but determined the actual structure of his plays.³⁷

In Lies and Secrets, the stagehand served as a mediating device. He introduced many of the scenes, commented on the actors and the set, stepped in and out of the images and confided with, and imparted information to the audience. He served as a kind of dramaturgical glue that held together the disparate elements of the theatrical event. At the same time, the stagehand continually interrupted the action of the piece. Walter Benjamin in an essay on Brecht's epic theatre has pointed out that interruption of happenings is an essential structural device used frequently to encourage a critical attitude in the audience.³⁸ In Lies and Secrets, the spectator was encouraged at times by the stagehand to identify emotionally with images on the stage and at other times to reflect more critically on the action of the play. Also, the stagehand's function as both figure in the event and commentator on the event helped underline the continual tension in the theatre between illusion and "reality," thus furthering the themes of deception and concealment inherent in the play's title. Pfister refers to this type of character, who is independent of the figures on the internal dramatic level and who supports a mediating communication system as a "producer figure." He gives examples of the Singer in Brecht's The Trial of Lucullus, the Stage Manager in Wilder's Our Town and the Explicateur in Claudel's Le Livre de Christophe Colomb. This figure can interrupt the

³⁷ Manfred Pfister, The Theory and Analysis of Drama (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 71.

³⁸ Walter Benjamin, "What is Epic Theatre?", Illuminations (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), 150.

action at any time, invert the chronology of events, play minor roles himself and draw attention to the play as a theatrical event.

Using these informative narratives and evaluative commentaries to remain in constant contact with the audience, he is able to develop an independent figure-perspective, that is subordinate to and embraces those of all the other figures on the internal dramatic layer.³⁹

The stagehand appeared at the beginning of the piece, demonstrating a gesture that he explained had been used by Edwin Booth and had originated with an Irish immigrant who came over during the potato famine. Both the gesture and its history were fictitious.

The Irish used this gesture to summon up the ghosts of their ancestors, because they liked to keep in touch with them. When the English occupied Ireland they (the English) changed the gesture to this (demonstrates) because they didn't like the Irish to get in touch with their ancestors. The Irish did it anyway.⁴⁰

The stagehand periodically explained what the set pieces were made of and how they worked, told the audience how much time was left in the performance or indicated which famous dramatic stories he would not tell: "We're not going to tell the story about these three sisters who had a wish. They wanted to be where they couldn't be. They wanted to be somewhere else."

The images and scenes that were recycled from previous productions can be divided into two thematic areas. One had to do with religion, and used biblical texts and Christian hymns. The other theme was overtly political, and concerned economic imperialism and nuclear proliferation. *Mine Enemies*, the duet based on the vengeful

³⁹ Pfister, *Theory and Analysis*, 76.

⁴⁰ All quotes are taken from the text of *Lies and Secrets/Trio* found in the appendix.

Psalms from Trespassing, and the Missionaries Song from Tourists and Refugees 1 formed the center of the religious section. The Missionaries Song was an arrangement of a Sacred Harp hymn, the white gospel music of southern Appalachia and northern Alabama.

A few more years shall roll

A few more seasons come

And we shall be with those that pray

Asleep within the tomb

Both the Psalms material and the Sacred Harp hymn relied on singing in close harmony and, though pleasant to listen to, were undercut with a kind of bloodthirsty fanaticism that made them chilling and dark. For the political images, Ronnie Gilbert, recreated material that had initially appeared in Re-Arrangements and had been further developed in both Tourists and Refugees pieces, having to do with Corporate Mercenaries and the frightening figure of a nuclear warrior in a cowboy hat that was based on a tape-recorded speech by Herman Kahn, a Rand Foundation cold war hawk. In addition to these scenes, there were small phrases taken from Gloria Foster's monologues in Trespassing. At the end of the piece, Gilbert sang the Muriel Rukeyser poem, "It is building music," which had been arranged by Richard Peaslee for Re-Arrangements.

Interspersed with the Winter Project material were fragments from Beckett's Happy Days, Ted Hughes's translation of Seneca's Oedipus, as well as a small section of recriminatory accusations between Madame Arkadina and Treplev from Chekhov's The Seagull. The citations were often extremely brief. For example, before he made his initial entrance, the stagehand spoke Tartuffe's first lines from Molière's play: "Valence,

put away my hair shirt and my flagellator; if anyone calls for me, tell them I've gone to the prison to give away all my worldly possessions."⁴¹ Another "quotation" was a long paraphrase of the plot of Ibsen's Ghosts that Gilbert spoke to the recumbent, listening figures of the stagehand and the musician. This was delivered in the mode of gossip and retained something of the flavor of "The Two Women with Hats" scenes from Tourists and Refugees. The intention here was to project an ambiguous quality, somewhere between the "lie" and "secret" of the title. Chaikin was particularly interested in the mode of behavior of the "listeners." By underlining the ways in which the recumbent figures listened to Gilbert's story, Chaikin hoped to offer the audience different models of perception. In an interview the previous summer, he had described some of the listening exercises that the Winter Project had been working on and went on to explain one of the reasons for doing them.

In an immediate sense it's a dialogue, let's say between two people—one is listening and one is talking, then the other is listening and the other is talking. But ultimately, it refers also to the audience and one of the things that interests me is to invite different kinds of listenings from the audience, as well as to reveal different kinds of listening.⁴²

Chaikin had performed his adaptation of Samuel Beckett's Texts for Nothing and How It Is, under the title of Texts at London's Riverside Studios in the summer of 1981. He had negotiated to present a new Winter Project production there in the early summer of 1983. David Leveaux, at that time a young director associated with Riverside, was

⁴¹ Adapted from Richard Wilbur's translation of Tartuffe by Molière (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1965), 244.

⁴² Chaikin, Theatre Papers, 21.

invited to come to the United States to assist Chaikin in the direction of the new piece. Also, Lizzie Olesker, a young playwright and dramaturg, was taken on to help write and structure Lies and Secrets. Olesker remembers a lot of the dramaturgical work being done after rehearsal at Phoebe's, an historic downtown bar close to La Mama. Chaikin, Rafalowicz, Leveaux and Olesker would rearrange the order of scenes and Chaikin would suggest new topics for Olesker to write on. The theme of lying was constantly part of the discussion. Is it lying when you don't reveal the truth? Is it lying when you withhold? How are secrets connected to lying? What are the connections to theatre?

Joe's work is about opening up and being revelatory but a large part of theatre is about masking and untruth. So he was working the tension between the two.⁴³

Olesker wrote new material every night and brought it in the next day. Most of it was not used, and she says she became inured to having only a fraction of her writing rehearsed by the actors. This was part of the "creative waste" concept of Rafalowicz that I mentioned in the first chapter. The notion is that in rehearsal the participants have the luxury of throwing away a lot of generated material. This perspective can be hard on writers and lead to cynicism. Olesker said that eventually "You don't take the writing seriously because they don't." However, Olesker was primarily interested in observing Chaikin's legendary relationship with the performers. "I was interested in the way he worked with the actors. They got to this clear, honest place that was filled every moment, without being overly emotive."⁴⁴

Audiences in New York while appreciative appeared to be somewhat confused by Lies and Secrets. Chaikin and Rafalowicz sensed this and felt that the title of the piece

⁴³ Lizzie Olesker, Interview, tape-recorded, July 5, 2002

⁴⁴ Ibid.

although accurate, made spectators too anxious about what was a lie and when a secret was being revealed. The title of the piece was changed to Trio for the European tour so as to alleviate this misapprehension. The title change also may have been influenced by a review in the *Village Voice* by Erika Munk entitled “New Clothes”:

At the theatre we agree to be deceived for pleasure and enlightenment, and the stories we see there hinge, over and over again, on revelation and discovery: lies and secrets are tied to the earliest pain and the most jealously-defended core of our private selves; while our outward lies are manipulated by the lies and secrets of power. It is a dizzying and reverberating subject. Here, however, the title remains an expectation, barely referred to.⁴⁵

Erika Munk was one of the few critics invited to the two week run at La Mama, and Chaikin was disappointed with her dismissive review: “Bits and pieces, some clever, some banal, some moving, but nothing holds them together.”⁴⁶ Chaikin had had an ambivalent relationship with critics, “I have rarely known a case where a critic’s response to actors, directors, or writers has expanded or encouraged their talent,” and while realizing the commercial necessity of a congenial relationship with the press, he had never been able to form a consistent strategy to deal with the fickleness of reviewers. He frequently underestimated their capacity to be hurtful and often overestimated their interest in understanding his particular process of making theatre. The Winter Project’s mission was to experiment, and unlike Chaikin’s other contemporary productions of scripted works by Sam Shepard or Samuel Beckett, the work was often not set and was

⁴⁵ Erika Munk, “New Clothes”, Village Voice, March 29, 1983.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

provisional in its structure. Critics and reviewers could be unsympathetic to work that required some knowledge and respect for the history of alternative, experimental theatre. On the other hand, calling a work experimental or alternative doesn't give a director a free pass from rigorous critique. Munk, who had been a champion of Chaikin's work in the past, was most disappointed with Lies and Secrets' lack of dramaturgical cohesion:

Tedious as it is to say this, after years of critics moaning about the wrong-headedness of unscripted plays, the fact remains that Lies and Secrets needs writing, structure and passion.⁴⁷

Trio played in London, Edinburgh and Paris in the early summer of 1983 to sold out houses and respectful if not adulatory reviews. Chaikin then decided to disband the Winter Project. In a recent interview he cited a number of reasons for ending the project. It had become increasingly difficult to raise sufficient amounts of money to fund rehearsals and productions. The National Endowment of the Arts had cut funding sharply under pressure from President Ronald Reagan and his conservative allies in Congress. Institutional and private support became increasingly scarce as well. Chaikin felt that he had less time to devote to experimentation and was obligated to produce a fully mounted financially successful product as fast as possible. Although the Winter Project collaborators had become expert at generating a theatrical product quickly, Chaikin felt it had become too much of a commercial process and priorities had shifted. Chaikin had become increasingly frustrated:

There is very little funding in America for these things, for anything that's marginal, that's not boulevard theatre. But we can only allow for four and a half

⁴⁷ Ibid.

weeks of rehearsal on this piece I am currently writing, which is preposterous . .

The only thing I can't tolerate in relation to this process is sometimes because of the pressure of time, one can't consider certain things . . . And sometimes one doesn't know if there might not be an open door into some marvelous room that you want to go to or would want to if you could experiment with it.⁴⁸

There were also personal problems that contributed to Chaikin's decision to abruptly dissolve the Winter Project. Chaikin and Rafalowicz had been working steadily together for seven years and that relationship had become somewhat strained and predictable. The dramaturg resented Chaikin's failure to properly credit Rafalowicz's important contributions to the Winter Project.⁴⁹ Also, Chaikin felt that he and Rafalowicz had become unhealthily habituated to pot and alcohol in both their personal and professional relationship.⁵⁰ Chaikin had recently had a long-term romantic relationship end in much bitterness and pain and wanted to pursue a simpler and less complicated lifestyle. American critics had been ambivalent about the Winter Project's most recent work and tensions within the collective had also added to an atmosphere that was often strained and uncomfortable. All of these reasons contributed to Chaikin's decision to end the Winter Project. Because he had set the project up with himself in sole command of overall artistic choices, his decision was final and irrevocable

Theatre collectives often produce their best work in the first ten years of their existence. After this, they frequently break apart or reform like Richard Schechner's Performance Group transformation into Elizabeth LeCompte's Wooster Group or like

⁴⁸ Chaikin, *Theatre Papers*, 19.

⁴⁹ Mira Rafalowicz, Interview, tape recorded, November, 1998.

⁵⁰ Chaikin, Interview, tape recorded, October, 2002.

Arianne Mnouchkine's frequent rejuvenations of Théâtre du Soliel. Jerzy Grotowski's history in the theatre can be roughly divided into ten-year periods, each with a different collective and performance emphasis. The Winter Project had an eight-year existence that produced some important and highly entertaining theatre work. It may be that their demise was part of a natural cycle of creative energy in the theatre where new methods and perspectives become conventionalized and repetitive. Chaikin often felt stuck and was fearful of the pressures to become institutionalized. Eileen Blumenthal has charted his ambivalence as a leader and figurehead for both the Open Theater and the Winter Project. She quotes an interview Chaikin gave to Michael Feingold, the theatre critic for the Village Voice in 1974:

After you go on for a little while, you tend to see your reflection in a way; you tend to get defined. And if you don't do it yourself, the outside world helps you to do it . . . When that happens, very often the group freezes, the work freezes in a certain way.⁵¹

Although the Winter Project ended far more abruptly than did the Open Theater, without as much public notice and very little explanation from Chaikin, the reasons may have been similar. Foremost among these, was an anxiety about the work becoming fixed and frozen. Chaikin had fueled his career on a struggle against conformity and the predictable. When he felt that a group, either the Open Theater or the Winter project was beginning to establish and maintain a status quo, he dissolved it. Just before deciding to end the Open Theater he wrote:

⁵¹ Feingold quoted in Blumenthal, Joseph Chaikin, 25

As a group, I'm never sure how long we will survive; endurance probably isn't the best criterion anyway.⁵²

⁵² Chaikin, Presence, 160.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION: THE PERSISTENCE OF PRESENCE

I have argued that the Winter Project can be seen as an extension of the Open Theater. Both companies shared both personnel and practice. The ways of working established by the Open Theater served as a reservoir of technique and perspective that the Winter Project drew on. However, they existed in very different times. The Open Theater is clearly connected to the youthful, turbulent, politically active 1960s while the later ensemble reflected a more sober, more cynical, post-Viet Nam, post-Watergate, sensibility. Also, during this period, a shift was occurring in the theatre to a more electronically mediated style of acting that questioned the concept of presence and the centrality of the actor. Within the performing arts, “performance” began to be privileged over theatre. In this concluding chapter I would like to examine these developments, discuss the legacy of the Winter Project and trace the ways in which their ways of working were passed on to succeeding generations.

Richard Schechner’s controversial two-part article in Performing Arts Journal (PAJ 14,15) in 1981, “The Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde,” specifically refers to the Winter Project as an example of the fixed and static condition of the avant-garde.

Unlike the theatres of Asia, or ballet, where complete scores are handed across generations, what must be handed down here are techniques of investigation: theatrical research in the most concrete in-the-body way. These techniques of investigation must themselves be constantly revised, and the work they yield will

necessarily change over the years. Chaikin hasn't done this. His work is frozen, almost self-parody.¹

Although Schechner would later apologize for the harshness of this statement²—and I will argue that Chaikin's "techniques of investigation" have continued to be influential and significant—Schechner's essay provoked wide discussion in the theatre community and can be examined as a reaction to the apparent stagnation of experimental theatre in 1981.

Schechner, a tenured professor at New York University and a founder and editor of The Drama Review, had championed experimental theatre and particularly the work of Chaikin, Jerzy Grotowski, Richard Foreman and Peter Brook in his writings for almost twenty years. His stature in the theatre world was established as a theorist and author of such influential books as Environmental Theater (1973) and Between Theater and Anthropology (1985). Schechner had (and has) a reputation for being pugnacious, but he had earned the grudging respect of many theatre professionals. His editorials and articles were effective in stimulating debate within the pages of The Drama Review (TDR), Performing Arts Journal and in other journals. In his 1981 PAJ articles, Schechner eulogized a creative period in experimental theatre that he defined as beginning with the John Cage-Merce Cunningham performances at Black Mountain College in 1952 and ending with the closing of Richard Foreman's loft, home of his Ontological Hysteric Theater, on lower Broadway in 1979. He listed five reasons for the decline of experimental performance: the end of activism in society-at-large, a shrinking economy,

¹ Richard Schechner, "Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde", Performing Arts Journal (PAJ 14, Vol.5, Number 2, 1981)

² Schechner wrote to Chaikin "What I wrote was wrong. .. I do think something went out of it after the Open disbanded, but I never intended that judgment to read the way it does in my article." Letter dated January 30, 1982, Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 8.

stupid journalism, dissolution of the groups and the failure to pass on what was learned to a new generation of artists. Much of the two-part essay was given to explaining how and why the Performance Group (a theater collective Schechner had founded in 1969) was transformed by a kind of theatrical coup d'état in 1980 into the Wooster Group headed by Schechner's former assistant, Elizabeth LeCompte. The articles were deliberately provocative, and PAJ published a number of responses in its next issue (PAJ 16), including ones from LeCompte and Bonnie Marranca, an editor of the journal.

LeCompte acknowledged a decline in the avant-garde. However, she saw it less in "boundary breaking" theatre activity as much as "a change in the way the avant-garde is perceived." She pointed out that not only had experimental theatre lost its audience but it had also lost its critics who were now writing about film or philosophy. LeCompte emphasized the temporal nature of theatre and discussed the difficulty of recording, either by writing, film or video, even a semblance of the original performance.

Ideas are translated *only* through the work of art (or theatre piece) itself. The performance *itself*. Not a record of the performance, not a discussion of the performance and not by teaching the techniques used in the performance.³

LeCompte saw the popularity of the avant-garde in the 1960s and 1970s as an aberration. Artists who take risks and push boundaries have traditionally been considered and treated like outsiders. "It was Richard's delusion that he could make experimental theatre into a nice safe well paid institution." She was particularly bitter about Schechner's role as a chronicler of the avant-garde and accused him of mythologizing his past in the hope that

³ Elizabeth LeCompte "Who Owns History?" Performing Arts Journal 16, Vol. 6, No.1, 1981, 50.

“It will stand for history. It probably will. History belongs to those who write it down.”⁴

LeCompte was prescient on this point. Scholars who wish to examine experimental theatre of the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the United States, have to do so through the filter of Schechner’s prolific writings on the subject. Theatre scholars such as Philip Auslander and Philip Zarrilli used Schechner’s terminology and perspective as a foundation for their own observations about the period.⁵ This can be problematic when the often polemic statements of figures like Schechner or Julian Beck (co-founder of the Living Theater) were conflated with the perspective of a more thoughtful and circumspect artist like Chaikin. Auslander has made an effort to rectify this problem in his 1997 collection of essays, From Acting to Performance. After citing Chaikin’s book as a reference point, he allows in a note that “his own theorizing (Chaikin’s) is more sophisticated, complex and contradictory than the general trend.”⁶

Bonnie Marranca had published the script of Re-Arrangements, as well as several interviews with Chaikin, and was generally respectful and supportive of his work in her journal. In her response to Schechner, she asked whether he was criticizing Open Theater acting as a cliché of sixties performance ideas, or as a style.

Perhaps it all has to do with a sociology of taste. Chaikin’s delicate sentiment seems out of fashion in today’s theatre which values self-conscious, ironic art, the

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See Philip Auslander, “From the Politics of Ecstasy to the Ecstasy of Communication” in Presence and Resistance (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992) and Philip Zarrilli, General Introduction Acting (Re)Considered, (London: Routledge, 1995).

⁶ Auslander, From Acting to Performance (London: Routledge, 1997), 145.

raw, the overtly personal, an overflow of contradictory imagery, technological expertise—his work seems too simple, undercooked.⁷

Marranca pointed out that “avant-garde theatre” of its own will had become institutionalized and domesticated. She, like LeCompte, saw Schechner implicated in this.

How absurd that our “avant-garde” theorist/spokesman is a tenured professor in this country’s wealthiest university—NYU, the only place to go if you want to grow up and be an avant-gardist—and whose research in India on “interculturalism” is financed by Rockefeller money!⁸

She went on to suggest that what separated the Winter Project from other contemporary directors and groups, like Mabou Mines or The Wooster Group, was that Chaikin staged symbolic moments “in work that generates emotional content more than imagery.”⁹

Marranca was pointing to an important shift in the expectations that audiences and critics were beginning to bring to experimental theatre in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Influenced by the art and music world, the younger generation of audiences were interested in performance that was less theatrical, in other words less tied to illusion, emotion and most of all to “acting.” By acting they meant performing that emphasized technique, character, transformation and presence. Performance and performance art began to develop a separate aesthetic that distanced itself from theatre, in fact became overtly anti-theatrical. According to Marranca:

⁷ Ibid. 65.

⁸ Bonnie Marranca, “The Politics of Performance”, Performance Arts Journal (PAJ 16, Vol. VI, No. 1, 1981), 59

⁹ Ibid. 65

Performance art is an anti-theatrical form that displaces illusion with real time, character with personality, skill with spontaneity, artifice with the banal. It values idea over execution: the artist and his/her idea is more important than the work itself.¹⁰

The work that the Winter Project produced from 1979-1983 was actor oriented. It valorized acting as well as the communion between actor and spectator in a way that came to seem old-fashioned by the 1980s. Groups such as the Wooster Group, Richard Foreman's Ontological Hysteric Theatre and Mabou Mines that called forth a more favorable critical response and came to be dubbed postmodern had a different relationship to the actor. These companies still employed highly skilled and charismatic performers like Richard Foreman's wife Kate Manheim, the Wooster Group's Ron Vawter and Ruth Maleczek from Mabou Mines,¹¹ but the acting had become highly mediated. Through the use of microphones, video and almost continual sound environments, the presence of the actor came to be renegotiated and problematized. Whereas Chaikin had been interested in emphasizing presence and communion, absence and distance became the conceptual concerns of the 1980s.

Acting and an emphasis on the actor have provided fuel for antipathy and distrust throughout the history of theatre and performance. In his seminal study, The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice, Jonas Barish points to the many forms that this ambivalence can take: seeing the theatre as a house of lies, or a house of blasphemy, or as the abode of the

¹⁰ Ibid. 62.

¹¹ In fact, it is difficult to contemplate Foreman's success without acknowledging the extraordinary contribution of Kate Manheim. Similarly, one can ask: where would Liz LeCompte be without Spalding Grey or Lee Breuer without David Warrilow?

immoral.¹² Many critics and theorists have found the basic concept of pretending to be someone else profoundly shameful and embarrassing. Barish points out that many of the harshest critics of acting came from within the profession itself. He quotes Eleanora Duse: “To save the theatre the theatre must be destroyed: the actors and actresses must all die of the plague” and Bernard Shaw: “The curse of our stage at present is the shameless prostitution of the art of acting into the art of pleasing.”¹³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Charles Lamb and Gordon Craig each had their own particular problem with actors, finding them either fundamentally deceitful or inadequate and egotistical. Brecht disdained the commercial theatre’s focus on the status of the actor and proposed an Epic theatre in opposition to what he called the Dramatic theatre. According to Martin Esslin, Brecht saw the Dramatic model as “the drama of catharsis by terror and pity, the drama of spectator identification with the actors, the drama of illusion, which tries to create magical effects by conjuring up events which are represented as “totally present” while palpably they are not.”¹⁴ Perhaps the particular type of anti-theatrical prejudice manifested by intolerance of “acting” is cyclical. What is apparent is that around 1980, after a decade and a half of the valorization of the actor by avant-garde theatre artists like Chaikin, Brook and Grotowski, critics and theorists began privileging performance (a category which included performance art and solo performance) over theatre. This preference was based on claims that performance somehow “escapes presence”¹⁵ and in

¹² Jonas Barish, The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 468.

¹³ Ibid, 342.

¹⁴ Martin Esslin, Brecht: A Choice of Evils (London: Methuen, 1984), 114.

¹⁵ Auslander, Presence and Resistance, 45.

particular the presence of the actor, a concept had been one of Chaikin's prime areas of investigation.

The idea of presence is problematic for postmodern critics in that, in its classical form, it calls to mind an essential, fixed and stable self. A new conception of the self and of the actor's portrayal of it emerges in the 1970s. According to Philip Auslander, after Derrida and his deconstructive critique of Western philosophy, in which "every mental or phenomenal event is a product of difference, is defined by its relation to what it is not rather than by its essence,"¹⁶ nothing can claim to possess a stable, autonomous identity. What is this self that the actor exposes to the audience to make himself present? Chaikin is often quoted pejoratively as writing: "Acting is a demonstration of the self with or without a disguise." Auslander points out that Stanislavski and Grotowski, in different ways, privilege the actor's self as the foundation of performance and "that it is the presence of this self in performance that provides the audience with access to human truths." By using terms such as presence and words like self, Chaikin was assumed to advocate the notion of the self as a stable location or to engage in "dualist metaphysics." Philip Zarrilli, while not specifically referring to Chaikin but quoting his vocabulary writes,

In some improvisational, bodily and/or experientially saturated approaches to acting where "being in the moment" is emphasized, a Cartesian dualism is simply reinscribed in the form of an overly simplistic and monolithic subjectivity often described as the actor's "presence" or as an "organic" or natural state of being.¹⁷

¹⁶ Auslander, "Just Be Yourself: Logocentrism and difference in performance theory", Acting (Re)Considered, 59.

¹⁷ Philip Zarrilli, Acting (Re)Considered, 15.

As I have demonstrated in this dissertation. Chaikin's notion of presence is neither simplistic nor monolithic. A better formulation of Chaikin's position would be, "Acting is a demonstration of selves" rather than "the self" but it is clear that Chaikin never advocates a fixed, stable or unified notion of the self.

For the actor to give form to the changing present, he or she must first understand that time is experienced in many diverse ways. His or her own usual cultural experience of time is only one form, rather than a fixed truth.¹⁸

Natalie Crohn Schmitt, the author of Actors and Onlookers, includes Chaikin in a segment of contemporary theatre artists whose aesthetic principles are affected by developments in modern physics, particularly quantum theory. She sees Chaikin as being strongly influenced by the composer John Cage and his anti-Aristotelian aesthetic based on modern scientific notions of indeterminacy and uncertainty. Unlike the existentialists who express a tragic sense of loss at the absence of absolute certainties, Schmitt sees modern theatre artists like Chaikin embracing endless change and unpredictability. "Reality ([Chaikin] writes, recalling Frank Stella's dictum that what you see is what you see) is not a fixed state, . . . it means that which we can fathom and he would have us widen our embrace."¹⁹ Schmitt's clear and plausible thesis (Marvin Carlson finds her approach "strikingly free from the standard vocabulary of post-structuralism")²⁰ suggests that in the theatre of Chaikin and the Wooster Group the idea of unity is replaced by interpenetration and the idea of order with unimpededness.

¹⁸ Chaikin, "Notes on Acting Time and Repetition," Three Works of the Open Theater (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1973), 33.

¹⁹ Natalie Crohn Schmitt, Actors and Onlookers: Theatre and Twentieth Century Views of Nature, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1990), 114.

²⁰ Carlson, Theories of The Theatre, 513.

To deny the overweening importance of the self, as do Schrödinger, Cage and Spolin, or to explore the self like any other interpenetrating aspect of reality, as do Heisenberg, the Wooster Group and Chaikin, is to cease to take it for granted.²¹

Chaikin's use of the word presence was problematic for many theorists who wished to make a distinction between classical and more postmodern notions of the term. Chantal Pontbriand, in an often quoted 1982 essay in Modern Drama titled, "The eye finds no fixed point on which to rest" wrote that to even speak of presence "can indeed seem retrograde." She was more comfortable with terms such as "neo-presence" or "renegotiated presence" and finally "reactualized presence."²² Pontbriand and other early theorists of postmodern performance saw an attack on presence as a way to critique the structures of authority that they felt were embodied in theatre.²³ Theatre, through the use of presence, representation and the presentation of the actor as an exemplary figure, invested itself with an authority to make "truth claims" that were unsupportable. Performance on the other hand, according to Josette Feral, "rejects all illusion" and "is the absence of meaning." Pontbriand claimed that performance "presents; it does not represent." Of course, in retrospect it is clear that performance did not "escape" presence. It sometimes questioned it or interrogated it, but no more so than did Chaikin with his experiments. As Marvin Carlson has pointed out,

²¹ Schmitt, Actors and Onlookers, 130.

²² Chantal Pontbriand "The eye finds no fixed point on which to rest. . ." Modern Drama, March, 1992. Vol.XXV No.1. 155.

²³ See the above cited special issue of Modern Drama which contains Pontbriand's article as well as Jossete Feral's "Performance and Theatricality". Auslander helps explicate the issues in the third chapter of Presence and Resistance.

The post-structuralist rejection of the “pure” presence of modernism (and of early performance art) did not, however, inspire a postmodern rejection in toto of either presence or performance, but rather a reinterpretation of both concepts.²⁴

Auslander writes that Derrida suggests two alternative responses to the realization that all is difference. One is a kind of nostalgia or yearning for presence, the other is play. Play here means the play of difference that disrupts presence and affirms the indeterminacy of meaning.²⁵ I would suggest that Chaikin’s work investigated both responses (nostalgia and play) and that often the actor in his pieces was involved in a contradictory tension between the two. I can think of a number of instances in the work of the Winter Project in which the actor tried to be both present and absent at the same time. Many of the experiments Chaikin devised, like “wattage” exercises, were about manipulating the degree of presence manifested by the actor. In the performance of Trio, the stagehand introduces a door to the spectators, describing what it is made of. He then goes in and out of the door, appearing and disappearing, and speaking from both sides of the closed portal.

(In front of closed door)

Here I am on this side of the door and I’m wondering whether I want to be on the other side of the door; I open the door and I’m in.

(from behind closed door)

Now I’m on this side of the door.

I know right away that I don’t want to be here.

²⁴ Marvin Carlson, Performance: a critical introduction (New York: Routledge, 1996), 136.

²⁵ Auslander, “Just be Yourself”, 66.

(Opens door and comes back to spectators)

As soon as I opened that door I knew

I didn't want to be there.

When I worked on this image with Chaikin, although there was of course no post-structural terminology involved, the emphasis was on the shifting levels of presence and absence between the performer and the spectators. The example we used was the Japanese theatre attendant or *kurugo* (literally “black man” or “nothing”) who “eliminates himself entirely, yet without leaving the stage.”²⁶ When we performed *Trio* in Paris, an enthusiastic audience member told me that for him the door scene was a perfect explication of Derrida's concept of *différance*. Rather like Molière's bourgeois gentleman who discovers that he is speaking “in prose,” I was pleased to be accomplishing something I had no idea I was doing.²⁷ The point is that Chaikin's fascination with the presence of the actor involved a process of ongoing experimentation to find out what it was and how it worked. This way of working led to a continual renegotiation, reevaluation and reassessment of what presence might be.

Dorinda Hulton, in a recent book about key theatre practitioners, suggests that Chaikin's notion of presence has to do with a shifting balance, a kind of dialogue between body and mind during the creation of an image.

In such a case, there is a perceptible quality of ‘presence’, moment to moment within the process of change and transformation, this quality of ‘presence’ having

²⁶ Eugenio Barba, *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 174.

²⁷ Personal notebooks, 1983.

more to do with the actor in operation with imagery rather than uniquely with the actors 'self'. The image, in fact, becomes a 'possibility' rendered present²⁸

What Chaikin means by "performing in the present" has to do with the actor recognizing the audience and being aware of his own somatic changes, as well as the character's (if there is a character) given circumstances. All of this happens "in the moment" or simultaneously. As John Cage would have it, we do not perceive nor accomplish only one thing at a time; rather, "everything happens at once."²⁹ Roland Barthes described the theatre as informational polyphony or a "density of signs."³⁰ He was referring to the simultaneous messages and items of information proceeding from the set, costumes, speech, lighting and acting, etc. The actor can also be seen as involved in "an extremely dense semantic act" in that his breath, focus, gestures, tone, sexuality, and many other factors are being generated and manipulated simultaneously. Rather than submerging one's self (or selves) in the portrayal of character, Chaikin saw the actor's task as maintaining an open focus that included the spectator, the space of performance, the other actors, the fiction of character and the visceral reality of the actor's own body.

Elinor Fuchs in The Death of Character has described in Aristotelian terms a shift in dramaturgical emphasis in 20th century non-realist theatre. Whereas Plot was once considered the "soul" of tragedy, later replaced by the romantics with Character, in recent times Thought and Spectacle have assumed a newly dominant position as performance has become more conceptual and "as ideas became manifest through a quasi-allegorical

²⁸ Dorinda Hulton, "Joseph Chaikin and aspects of actor training," 20th Century Actor Training, ed. Alison Hodge (New York: Routledge, 2000), 161.

²⁹ Cage quoted in Schmitt, Actors and Onlookers, 16.

³⁰ Roland Barthes, "Literature and Signification," Critical Essays (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), 262.

use of space.”³¹ Chaikin’s use of transformation and wattage exercises, his preference for fragmentary images of states of being, and concentrated emblematic moments can be seen as what Fuchs refers to as “the emergence of dramaturgical and performance strategies that deliberately undermined the illusion of autonomous character.”³²

However, Chaikin did valorize acting and theatre, which seemed old fashioned in the early 1980s. While the more postmodern artists were electronically filtering the acting elements of their performances, Chaikin’s actors performed in a more “acoustic” or “organic” style. This style did not reflect the consumerism and commodification of urban life that the postmodern artists embraced. Pontbriand made an interesting observation about the use of electronic mediation as a technique for “estranging” presence.

The more performance is expressed by technical means, the more chance it has of being removed from the theatre or theatricality; the more it withdraws from representation into simple presentation; the more it draws away from aura into simple actuality; the more it draws away from classical presence to assert a new and different presence, a radical presence. It seems therefore that technical mediation is a necessary condition for a “good” performance, a performance in which presence differs from what it is in the theatre.³³

It is true that Chaikin never experimented with technical mediation of the voice or with the use of video and from Pontbriand’s perspective the Winter Project’s work with its lack of electronic filtering of sound and image could not be considered “good”

³¹ Elinor Fuchs, The Death of Character (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 31.

³² Ibid.

³³ Pontbriand, 156.

performance. On the other hand, Chaikin considered himself a theatre artist and “performance” was not a term he associated with his work. As for presence, it is useful to consider the phrase that Marvin Carlson applies to performance: “an essentially contested concept.” Carlson quotes from W.B. Gallie’s Philosophy and the Historical Understanding:

Recognition of a given concept as essentially contested implies recognition of rival uses of it (such as oneself repudiates) as not only logically possible and humanly “likely” but as of permanent potential critical value to one’s own use or interpretation of the concept in question.³⁴

The essential contestedness of both presence and performance was demonstrated in the 1980s during which each concept was invariably linked with the other in an attempt to define their relationship to theatre. It is difficult not to refer to two of the three terms (theatre, performance and presence) when trying to define one of the others.

As I stated in the introduction, the Winter Project can be seen as an extension of the Open Theater. Over the years, many of the same artists collaborated on developing a way of working and a form of acting that came to be recognizable as a style of performance. Bert States in Great Reckonings in Little Rooms discusses the ways in which innovations in the theatre become conventions and eventually are reduced to the merely conventional. Innovations are interesting because they are new; then because they help to initiate a new order; finally they disappear into the order and become the building blocks out of which new paradigms are made.³⁵ “Above all in the theatre, as in

³⁴ Marvin Carlson, Performance (New York: Routledge, 1996), 1.

³⁵ States acknowledges the influence of Thomas Kuhn’s Structure of Scientific Revolutions as an influence on his thinking.

any art, there is always the need to defamiliarize all the old defamiliarizations.”³⁶ Many of the innovations that Chaikin developed to escape the conventions of American realist acting in the 1960s—such as an emphasis on improvisation, transformations, sound and movement, non-verbal modes and a collage like, non linear structure of images—became part of the normative vocabulary of experimental theatre in the United States in the 1980s. However, Chaikin’s particular interest in the presence of the actor along with other concerns, like the expression of “exiled emotions,” seemed out of fashion by then. As Eileen Blumenthal wrote in 1983:

The humanistic, politically committed, actor centered avant-garde that dominated the sixties and early seventies has largely taken the background to high-tech and dispassionate postmodernism.³⁷

I have stressed a strong connection between the Open Theater and the Winter Project both in the personnel employed in both groups and in the ways of working. Some of the important differences were the continual presence of professional musicians at all rehearsals, an emphasis on rapid development of a performable product and the establishment of the dramaturg, Mira Rafalowicz, as an essential component in the collaborative process.

Music had been a strong dramaturgical element in the Open Theater, particularly its last three years when actress/composer Ellen Maddow became a member of the company. But, as we have seen, there were at least three professional musicians involved

³⁶ States, Great Reckonings in Little Rooms, 43.

³⁷ Blumenthal, 209

at rehearsal and performance in every year of the Winter Project except the last. Chaikin and Rafalowicz incorporated musical concepts and vocabulary into the structure of the pieces. Trio is an obvious example, but another would be the Love Moments section of Re-Arrangements, which can be said to be collaboratively composed by the director, dramaturg and the musicians Peter Golub and Skip LaPlante. Having musicians constantly present helped shift the focus of the company to more auditory and musical perspectives and ways of arranging material. This was in keeping with the trend among avant-garde artists like Robert Wilson, Merideth Monk and Ping Chong for making performances whose logic was not literary or theatrical in a normative sense but musical or visual.

In the Open Theater, Terminal was developed and reworked over a period of two years. Mutation Show took a year to put together, and NightWalk was first performed as a titled piece six months after rehearsals began. The Winter Project put pieces together very rapidly, often during a six week rehearsal period. Lies and Secrets was assembled in a month. On the one hand, the speed at which the company worked can be seen as an indication of the skill and expertise of the collaborators. Communication between actor and director and between the performers happened on a highly efficient kinetic and visceral level that was the result of decades of working together. On the other hand, the shift of emphasis from process to product in the Winter Project created commercial and artistic pressures that helped to bring about the demise of the company. Chaikin, as we have seen, felt particularly uncomfortable with the lack of time to investigate adequately and refine theatrical questions of interest to him. Massive federal cuts in funds to the arts that accompanied Ronald Reagan's presidency in 1981 signaled a change in the

relationship that experimental theatre would have with sources of financial support. Downtown performance venues like La Mama now depended on box office revenues for a larger share of their income and could not afford to support long runs that were not commercially successful. New York real estate prices began to increase astronomically after years of stagnation, and performance and rehearsal space disappeared. Soho, which had been a haven for loft-based venues of experimental music, dance, theatre and performance, rapidly became unaffordable. These economic pressures made a long investigative rehearsal period impossible and helped initiate the trend for small solo performance work and the death of larger theatre ensembles. The ability of the Winter Project to work efficiently with great rigor and discipline was the result of both economic necessity and years of acquiring skills and craft.

Mira Rafalowicz's contribution to the Winter Project has been discussed at some length in this dissertation. Chaikin's clear contribution was as a director with special skills in eliciting strong and refined performances from actors. Rafalowicz was more interested in structure and content and in the absence of a playwright; her presence was invaluable. As Allen Kuharski has written:

The eventual "absence" of either a ready script or a resident playwright eventually created the opportunity for the ensemble dramaturg to assume a radically heightened collaborative and creative role.³⁸

Chaikin and Rafalowicz sat side by side, usually on the floor, at every rehearsal. She fought to make Tourists and Refugees more political; her disagreements with Chaikin

³⁸ Kuharski, "The Presence of the Dramaturg," 145.

were often fierce and partisan. Nevertheless, Chaikin and Rafalowicz remained very close friends up until her death in 1998. The Open Theater had the early dramaturgical advice of Gordon Rogoff and Richard Gilman. Roberta Sklar, who is listed as co-director for Terminal and Mutation Show, often functioned as a dramaturg, but Rafalowicz's relationship to the Winter Project was fundamental. The collaborative affiliation she established with Chaikin in the last Open Theater piece, NightWalk, became the dramaturgical foundation for the Winter Project. All of the actors and musicians I interviewed testify to her importance as a critical element in the development of the Winter Project's work. Unfortunately, as Kuharski has pointed out, Rafalowicz's presence as a dramaturg has been consistently overlooked, even by critics who are familiar with the group's inner workings. Part of this is due to American unfamiliarity with the nature of the work of a dramaturg and another problem was Chaikin's unfortunate tendency to forget to mention his collaborator's contributions.

For Richard Schechner, of the five reasons he listed for the decline of the American avant-garde in his 1981 essay, the "failure to pass on what was learned to a new generation" was the most important. He criticized the Winter Project for appropriating the work of the Open Theater without adding anything new. With his characteristic hyperbole, Schechner wrote "what was exciting in 1965 is a cold omelet fifteen years later."³⁹ He was referring to the production of Tourists and Refugees, which, as we have seen, was critically well received and in its revised version was awarded an Obie. Schechner has admitted to being overly harsh in his assessment, but is

³⁹ Schechner, PAJ 14, 60.

there some validity to his charges of not passing on “techniques of investigation” to a new generation?

After the disbanding of the Winter Project, the Talking Band, Otrabanda Company (of which I was the artistic director), the Omaha Magic Theater (founded by Open Theater veterans Joanne Schmidman and Megan Terry), and many other companies and artists who had worked with Chaikin continued to develop new material using techniques and ways of working that had been passed on from the Open Theater and the Winter Project. In 2001, Chaikin collaborated with the Pig Iron Theater Company of Philadelphia on a piece about sleep called Shut-Eye. This young company was founded using the Open Theater and Winter Project as models of organization and aesthetic perspective. Paul Zimet, Tina Shepard, Robbie McCauley and myself along with many other former members of either company, teach in well-known Eastern universities and colleges (Princeton, Smith, Williams, New York University, Duke, Swarthmore, etc.) I would argue that the ways of working and “techniques of investigation” have been passed on by these teachers to several new generations of artists over the last thirty years. Chaikin inspired acting techniques—along with the “Viewpoints” work of Ann Bogart and Jacques Le Coq’s physical approach to acting, can be seen as important alternatives to Stanislavski-based systems in the United States.

Chaikin and his collaborators are included as principal contributors to acting technique in a recent, influential book about twentieth century actor training. Along with Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook and Ariane Mnouchkine, Chaikin is regarded by Dorinda Hulton as a seminal force in the development of non-traditional, non realistic acting practice over the last thirty years. Wlodzimierz Staniewski, a colleague and collaborator

with Grotowski and the artistic director of the legendary Polish company Gardzienice, considers Chaikin and his ways of working inspirational and influential.⁴⁰

Despite the fact that after his 1983 stroke, Chaikin was never able to successfully assemble an ensemble in the same way that he had with the Winter Project and Open Theater, the ways of working generated by these groups continued to develop through the projects and productions of his collaborators. On several occasions Chaikin has reassembled actors from the Winter Project and Open Theater to work on developing new work with Mira Rafalowicz but these projects have been under-funded and under rehearsed. Since Rafalowicz's death in 1998, there have been no new projects that united Chaikin with significant numbers of his old ensembles other than revised a production of Terminal in 1999. Chaikin was able to engage in a number of interesting collaborations with Sam Shepard and Jean-Claude Van Itallie based on his stroke and resultant aphasia. The War in Heaven and Struck Dumb were productions that were performed to critical acclaim by Chaikin in a number of venues in the United States. Mostly, however he now directs scripted pieces, most recently premiering Sam Shepard's The Late Henry Moss for the Signature Theater in New York in 2002.

The ways of working, developed over a period of some twenty years from 1963 to 1983, have been carried on and modified by his collaborators, ever mindful of Chaikin's warning to resist codification and to remain open.

I believe that any work for the theater, any different company about to do the same work, and even different actors within the same company require a different approach. There is no path laid out beforehand. The exercises, discussions, and

⁴⁰ Włodzimierz Staniewski, Personal interview, tape recorded, March 2001.

relationships within the group and toward the material must be newly assessed at the beginning of each new adventure of work.⁴¹

⁴¹ Chaikin, Presence, 134.

APPENDIX A

Notes/Winter Project

**J. Chaikin
12.1.76 (Revised)**

Joseph Chaikin papers, Kent State University Library, Box 5, Folder 28

The value for the actor is not to take all experience back to the actor's own circumstances and memory but to extend outward to different circumstances. This form of development is very under worked in this period of the theatre.

The main double criteria are that the actor is connected to what the actor is doing and that connection is transmitted to the audience. The second part is a vital step which takes up a great deal of our work—that is to test what is transmitted, what is understood by the other—the audience. As we explore different ways of speaking, the exploration will take us to the very abstract and musical elements as though going from fixed meaning to a more open, not definable, communication. There are 2 important considerations—as it becomes abstract—that it stay connected, as opposed to becoming obscure and remote because there are vast kinds of expressiveness in abstract language—but only if the source condition that it stems from is still connected. Imitation, the second thing, is that we should also try to bring in material heard and spoken of those tones, words, inflections, which we hear in daily circumstances so that we can inquire into those combinations of sounds and meanings which we come to take for granted and what some of the forgotten intentions might be.

Sources for Materials

Where do we go to for the material that we use in this research of the Winter Project?

- 1) Written work WHICH IS INTENDED TO BE SPOKEN not read alone with the eyes. Some material has been sent for our use by poets and playwrights and I hope we can elicit more material as writers become engaged in what we're working with.
- 2) Inherited material. The Bible. Socrates. Dead writers, etc.

3) Stories of our own to tell. (The advantage and limitation of telling our personal stories.)

4) Other people's stories—One suggestion is stories of resisters. Exceptional and creative choices that people have made opposing those choices given. Example, Karl Bissinger introduced me to a guy who was a bomber pilot who pressed the button 99 times and refused the 100th time. He claims he had no conscious opposition to the War and didn't know why he did it. He was put in the stockade and was court-martialed and now he has some explanations. That's just a random example. Since this research is so general and basic it wouldn't be right to define beforehand or limit the direction. The study is about "telling" so if someone wants to tell through silent gestures without words or with sounds, that is another source. The "telling" would be through music, silence, the body, the face, the eyes, the performer as transmitter. Separate projects can be initiated by a musician, composer, writer, or performer.

The risk and promise in this exploration of speaking, is that as we probe into the way that we speak and hear, it will very probably effect the way we will come to speak and hear.

The Music of Speaking—the effect of the sounds that make up the words. Since we have to find a starting point I would like to suggest the starting point to be first—to tell a story, poem, song, etc. Secondly, to think whether that telling is worth repeating, like in a story; there are many stories best told only once. There is a special staleness to certain stories that are repeated and repeated. And then there are other stories that one wants to hear because of knowing what's going to happen. So the first criteria is that of repeatability.

I want to bring up a very ad-hoc non-systematic vocabulary. Any of which can be replaced or expanded. With the mechanic voice there is breathing, resonance, placement, special work on consonants. In terms of the actor's attention as opposed to the mechanics there is intention, rhythm, sound as meaning, level of address, spatial consciousness.

When speaking involves character, the actor's attention has to do with the sound-essence of the character. All charged "telling" are forms of invocation.

I'd like to refer to a few diverse singers who seem to me organically to use words and songs through their own voice in direct ways. They are Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Buffy Saint Marie, Jan Digaetani, Marie Callas, Janet Baker, Heinrich Shlusnus, Gerard Souzay and Richie Havens—these are just a few examples of singers.

The actor's form is not through an instrument, like a violin, but in the actor's immediate presence.

Among what I've learned working with the deaf, I've learned the experience of breath as sound moving through the body without benefit of the ears. Voice which is unknown to a person who is stone deaf is directly and absolutely dependent on the immediate, external environment.

Character

The writer makes a character (not herself or himself). The actor inhabits and plays this character (who is not herself or himself). The spectator sees a character (who is not herself or himself). The character is meeting point where each one stands in relation.

Mask/Maskless

The moment we engage in any common language there is style (the meanings and the artifice) or mask. Language has more breadth when one can see the style, as opposed to making believe there isn't any.

The sociologist, Peter Berger, says: "sincerity is the consciousness of a person who is taken in by his own act."

Character is the question “who.” Character body. If I am playing Lear I’m standing in for Lear’s madness—who?—I can’t even see my own face. I don’t experience my own body as solid but to other people I have a face. I answer by a name. People refer to me as in some sequence of action and history and I even read about myself or something I said is quoted but I don’t really experience that as me. To me, my eyes are functions of seeing, but from outside me from the other, they are like blue marbles which are either expressive or not.

Theatre under repressive society. Since all society is more or less repressive what can be told and what is theatre takes on different possibilities and changes with the degree and kind of repression.

Intention. Working technically on character intention is very valuable because it is clear as one starts to focus on it more and more how to understand it and portray it. Intention is the active intended meaning of the speaker. So the intention of the speaker is the conscious part of what one claims to have meant. (Give example) In speaking a poem the actor is a musical composer to the lyricist, who is the poet.

Acting & Acting. In TV commercials actors are presenting people who in one way or another testify to the value of a product in order to promote the product for the manufacturer. The invisible part is that at the same time they are promoting a personality, often a type, a way of being in the world to the spectator.

Voice— Clearly the voice comes to be expressive out of what we repeatedly express so our voices are ample to ask for the salt to be passed and to talk on the telephone but the extreme conditions of eroticism, of the sharpest rage, of the most ecstatic changes that we move through even in the passing moment, go unexpressed. Our voices are not developed to give expression to the Passions—to the immoderate—which is commonly experienced, even if generally unexpressed.

As far as it’s possible to know at this point the beginning of our theatre was in Greece when people gathered to commonly name and remember the dead. From what can be put

together, they developed voice to talk to one another about the common lament and grief of the loss of the dead. For the actor the question is how to create those conditions for the voice to be able to grow and deepen in order to give expression to extreme states. This is a service that the actor could do and a way that that actor could release the common expressions of a given community. The actor must compose a discipline to release and strengthen and control the imaginative voice, as opposed to any fixed idea of what the voice is supposed to do. The resources of the voice are limitless and different from singing. The voice starts as breath in the body and comes to exist in space. The voice can be changed in countless ways in placement as well as through experiments of sound travelling through space. The actor's attention is in what area to draw the energy and inspiration from. Only through developing that organic consciousness can the actor begin to discover ways to express deep and generally unexpressed conditions. In all voice work the body must be released and open so as to free the breath to move from and through the body like pipes through which the winds move. The head, chest and back must be open and sensitive to let resonators play the bony parts of the body and the throat to be released and loose. All the exercises of vocal sound are conditioned by the space and directly involved with the actor's images.

Stories have to do with sequence and surprise. How an event becomes a story. A perspective like coming into this room. The condition. The story of Joey, cerebral palsy, from where is the report?

Bits of culture cling to us and become part of our character. The actor can know in what way we've formed by patches of what we're been fed or can be deceived into imagining that the actor-self is entirely original. The spectator can see this difference in the actor's consciousness of the actor's character. Acting is always the actor and the action. Like in a story told there is the presence of the teller and the material of the story.

As an actor my entire personal history is incorporated in my body. And even prior to my birth and personal history, so that the "telling" includes the body.

Who's listening? Notice the eyes and the body position of the listener as you tell a story. Is the listener travelling with the adventure of the story or of the telling? Is the listener polite and turned-off? What are the subtle responses that let us know what is taken in? I sat in a restaurant and began telling a story to two people who sat across from me. Suddenly, I saw one of them where his eyes ran away like a trapped person. I cut the story short to the relief of both the people who weren't interested in any story.

The listener to the story. What are those things that every listener has in common? Who is being addressed? What part of who? How much can we assume is understood? It isn't necessary for an actor to undertake to speak to everybody; but it is necessary to focus on WHO is being addressed.

St. Augustine: "If a thing believed is incredible, it is also incredible that the incredible should have been so believed."

Rehearsing is choosing what will be repeated, repeating it, and creating the realm which it invokes which is to be repeated.

A random not-Song—from this moment on "implying that there is a moment which will redeem all the passing used moments."

The range is not restricted to the actual. The spectrum of experience and responses (also in the immoderate), that's the material of the theatre that requires experiencing which also means a kind of immunity to those forces which numb us.

And where do we join in experience—in common?

It's not enough to express, but to transmit the experience

So what is the language of behavior, of voice, of image, of body energy that is experienced in the actor, (which is tolerated by consciousness without being reduced in order to be tolerated) which can be given live form. It isn't a place (fixed, held) but a

motion that the actor contacts, and moves from. And the actor is in contact with a moving point that is already begun with the writer and composer.

Unless the actor is also the composer.

And then they work it out together. Who is speaking the language of which body, of which voice, of what words, of what experience is in common and where the wish is to give clear live form in collaboration by both to make and affirm a community of human experience.

Following are many exercises which can't be written, but only demonstrated.

The very research of the Winter Project is to explore and invent forms through which to bring about a creative investigation of those questions that we put. Ready forms and structures don't exist. We can't rely on what we already know, or what we can learn from given systems. This time is different.

Suggested reading about spoken language:

Walter Benjamin	The Storyteller
Herbert Marcuse	One Dimensional Language
Ong	The Presence of the World.

APPENDIX B

Draft for Mira Rafalowicz's article
for Theater(Yale University)

February 3, 1978.

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 6, Folder 10

people ask me what I do in the theatre.

this is a selection from my list of answers:

an internal critic

an intimate participant

an outspoken audience member

a collaborator

an extra eye

I work in dialogue with the director and the writer(s), if there are any.

I help asking questions and finding doubts.

the questions are essential, answers and solutions

are part of the end of a process. we don't always find them.

I try to help guard those basic questions as the work develops.

those questions become part of a vocabulary of work.

I keep the whole in mind – an overall structure,

which frees others in the process to lose themselves

in details.

I give my opinion about just about anything.

People either listen to my advice, my opinions,

or they don't.

I talk endlessly. with the director, with writer(s),

with some actors who find me useful.

I talk after working hours.

what wonderful work for someone who likes to talk a lot.

usually, hopefully I am part of the process from

beginning till end – from the earlier stages of thinking

till the last day of performance.

what I do changes. it is different in different stages of the work.

it is different in working on known material

or in starting a piece from scratch.

what I do is fluid

and, as I am writing this I realize,
hard to describe.

In the traditional theatre dramaturgs read and select plays, choose the repertoire of an existing company, sometimes translate plays, write program notes, give historical backgrounds and literary explanations of plays and write theoretical articles about the theatre.

I have done several of those things too.
I have translated plays (from English and French into Dutch, from Yiddish into English), I have adapted plays with different friends/directors, I have written program notes.

But I have mainly worked in theatre and with people who believe in and thrive on collaboration and dialogue, a theatre in which functions merge and overlap in the earlier stages of work.

“I” and “we” – a note on collaboration.

as I am trying to define my work, label it,
isolate it from its context, I am discovering
how difficult it is to use “I”.

Ideally in the first and basic
stage of the work, there is a meeting of minds,
an openness to each others concern and ways of
thinking, a merging of ideas.
In the kind of collaborative work

I'm trying to describe, a context of thinking –
working is established, a fruitful ground from
which ideas sprout.

I will use “we”.

I tried to define myself by absence.

would the end result have been different without me?

yes.

how?

I don't know.

but yes different.

another note:

collaboration is not to be confused with equal input
or democratic procedure.

In reality some people's input is more inspired and
inspiring. often actors are on different levels
of acting – experience and consciousness.

As I dramaturg I try to give shape to the process of working,
which might be described in these stages:

the different stages of work – the changing questions.

stage 1:

we define the area of exploration.

we try to find the questions we will concern ourselves with
and open them up.

questions:

what has value for us to attempt to express,

personally, theatrically, socially, politically?
 what are we attempting to explore and express with
 this work?

we don't try to find solutions, answers,
 but we promote a dialogue, a consciousness about
 these questions.

at this stage the different labeled functions
 in the work merge and overlap. actors, director,
 writer(s), invited guests, dramaturg – all
 contribute according to their own ability and skill.
 the dramaturg contributes to the texture of thought.

together with the questions, we start to establish
 a vocabulary, a code, a common work-history.
 a cross-current of work is going on between writers,
 actors, director, dramaturg, through improvisation,
 devising of exercises and through dialogue.

stage 2:
 we develop and shape material.
 we develop criteria for making choices.

the questions become more focused:
 what is transmitted, what is evoked?
 what can be repeated?

everything is still fluid in this stage of the work.
 everything still seems to be possible, but it isn't.
 this stage is about necessary limitation, about finding

a focus, a direction. there are no longer
unlimited possibilities.

some ideas sound wonderful, but when they are brought up
and tried out, nothing happens.

does the idea stink?

maybe the writer is not inventive enough

or do the limitations of the actors/creators stop

the idea from growing?

some ideas just dry up, we have to give them up.

some ideas create a wonderful initial excitement,

but the improvisation could never be repeated

and nobody can find the impulse again

the idea has to be dropped.

some ideas are wonderful and exciting, the work

coming out of them is wonderful and exciting,

but it all turns out to belong to a different piece.

It's hard to give those up.

in this stage some of the different functions

re-emerge.

the actor, whether or not s/he is working on material

s/he has created, needs feedback.

the differentiation between those who act

and have to repeat the chosen action and those who shape the material

becomes clearer.

in this stage we start eliminating, choosing, cutting.

trying out sequences, finding a beginning structure.

in this stage too, we ask the actors to tell the story
of the unformed piece.

very often the story is not formed yet, so it has to be invented on the spot, improvised.
and we learn from those stories,
about what is alive, what is important, what we miss.

Example:

when I first translated The Dybbuk from the original
Yiddish, I translated most of the material that I
thought we might use, very closely to the original
Yiddish.

Anski's Dybbuk opens with a number of men who hang out
in the synagogue and tell competitive stories about
miracle-rabbis. Since these specific stories were not interesting, we decided to look for
other Chassidic
stories that meant something to us. We found a few.

However, when 3 of the actors (Marcia-Jean Kurtz, Bruce Meyers, Corey Fischer) and
the director (Joseph Chaikin) started telling and sometimes acting the story of the play,
they
consistently forgot those opening stories.
We decided to cut them and felt relieved.

stage 3:

in this stage the piece is starting to emerge,
it is finding its shape.

at this stage we can still change things, cut scenes
and speeches, change the sequence, add a scene here
and there, but we are losing control, power.

by this time none of us participant onlookers

is 'objective'. we have to recognize the limitation
of our perceptions. We are too involved

our questions change. we cannot ask those questions
among ourselves any longer, we need 'real' outsiders
and ask them questions.

at this stage we invite friends, friendly outsiders,
our first, still safe, audience.
safe, because we are also vulnerable. the wrong thing
said to any of us at the wrong time can close possibilities.

we now ask:
what does the piece actually express?
what do you, audience, outsiders perceive or understand?
is anything transmitted of what we thought, wanted, planned, tried to express?

at this stage we, the non-actors(director, writer, dramaturg) have to make a
difficult re-adjustment.

we have to re-create distance, to re-see, re-examine;
we have to listen to outsiders' comments, judgments,
criticism.

we have to figure out what is really there or not there.
rather than wish it were there. we have to give up
ideas that don't work, even if we still have some
hope that they might work.

but we also have to evaluate other people's comments,
pick out the perceptions that are valuable to the
intentions of the work, screen them, use them carefully.
and especially: we have to try to stay open.

and especially: we have to try to stay open.

Example:

the first time we invited friends and related people to see Nightwalk, the piece lasted 2 days. The piece that was finally called Nightwalk was 70 minutes.

stage 4:

the performance has found its independent life.
at this stage we have to find even more distance,
painful separation.
we have to find out what this creation has become.
this is the end of a process, a time for re-evaluation.

in this late stage, details can be changed,
small changes can be made.

the questions now become questions about
repetition, about how to keep a piece alive,
about maintaining or deepening intentions.

this is the point at which we have to
let go, accept the limitations of the work done,
appreciate and stimulate the actors in what
remains interesting and strong. we have to
become a supportive eye and give the piece over
to the actors.

Example:

when we started working on The Dybbuk we hit

on many of the things we have rejected in our relationship to being Jewish. At an early stage of the work we thought that we would offend many Jews with our version of the play. but looking at it later, when the play was living its own life, testing it with many different audiences, it was clear that the play had not become offensive. on the contrary, what showed was our love, concern, tenderness for that world.

about dramaturgs and critics:

the fluid function I have been trying to describe is little known in this country.

In the commercial theatre, the producer serves as dramaturg. most producers have invested financial interest in a production, so theatre becomes merchandise. the basic questions asked are related to consumption. what will make more people want to buy tickets.

the producer is the artists employer. the artists working in the theatre are economically dependent on the producer. So the artist has to serve the taste of the producer (no matter what his taste). the producer tries to serve the public, s/he is an intermediary between the public and the artists.

the reviewer comes at the end of a process. s/he comes to see a product. s/he sits there, thinking about the article s/he has to write (often the same night) formulating sentences and opinions. The critic's mental

pre-occupation may limit his/her seeing.

ideally but very seldom the function of the critic and the dramaturg overlap. a good critic can help define the limitations, gaps, flaws of a work and help create ways of thinking that a re-useful , to improve a work.

mainly reviewers have no problem using “I”.
the level of criticism in this country is limited
mainly to “I like it” or “I don’t like it”, a
consideration that is totally useless to anyone creating
anything.

as a dramaturg I am limited in who I can work with.
I can help make something better, cleared, only
when the basic working-relationship is one of
mutual respect. Not uniformity of thinking and
feeling (there is no creative dialogue possible
in uniformity, total agreement), but a basis of
sympathy. Ideally with everyone involved in the
process.

So I can really only work with friends. When I run
out of friends to work with in the theatre, I
will do something else.

everyone creative in the theatre should take breaks,
should enter other fields, should experience other
worlds.

I once met an old actor who played 500 parts,
but never did anything outside the theatre.

we non-actors in the theatre (shapers, developers, critics, reviewers, dramaturgs) should be conscious of tired eyes of the limitations of our perceptions. Only with that consciousness can we constantly re-open ourselves to experience anew. At least we should try.

a few more examples of dramaturgical questions:

example:

when we started working on Nightwalk, we envisaged a journeyer and a guide so one day, on the way to wine and Japanese food, we found this idea: that one of the travelers would be a creature, who sees for the first time, who views the passing worlds with a fresh eye. The creature's 'guide' was another Traveler, a human being, someone who has seen much, but can still see.

Example:

when we started working on A Fable, we started out thinking that on this journey we would have 2 journeyers of different journeys. after many weeks of struggling with that idea, we ended up with one journeyer, who has different encounters with persons, who are all journeyers themselves. The many different lives they have lived are journeys.

example:

example:

the original Dybbuk had many different stories.
 the character of the messenger in the original version
 was too all-knowing, too much a mysterious link between
 heaven and earth. so we changed him into a maggid,
 a travelling storyteller. The maggid told 2 stories
 The Heart and the Spring, a story by Reb Nachem from
 Bratzlav, adapted by Corey Fischer who played the maggid
 and a very straight parable about the selfishness of
 richness. we listened to the first story without tiring
 of it, but opinions were divided on the second story.
 then we decided that the message of the second story
 was already clearly in the play, and that we could use
 that story-telling space to tell something more pertinent.
 one of the ideas we tried to make clear was that
 in this world the we were creating, the imagination
 about death was unlimited. So one day some of us
 sat together and invented a story about different
 images of dying. About a man who couldn't die, who could
 only dream about death.

Example:

when I first translated The Dybbuk, we discovered
 that a word in Yiddish has many different
 possibilities of translation. sometimes more than one
 word covers one word in the original language, sometimes
 it is hard to know which way of saying something is better.
 so I made a multiple choice translation, giving
 the actors a chance to feel out different ways of saying
 something, giving us a chance to listen. But also
 indicating to the actor that s/he has the right to think.

Example:

one of the most fascinating projects we have been working on is the Winter Project. This is the second year that we are meeting with actors, musicians, composers, writers to work on questions of theatre.

what are the questions that are important to ask in the theatre now?

who is the audience?

what can be transmitted?

what are the limits we want to test?

what do we like to see in the theatre as an audience?

what is funny?

how do people see? how is their seeing influenced by the person they are sitting next to?

how do people listen, pretend to listen?

this year we will try to test different questions with different audiences:

e.g. the theatre-community or people who go to the theatre a lot.

people who have never been to the theatre.

specific groups (e.g. all men, all women, all children, all black ghetto-kids, all Jews, etc.)

in this project we are not planning to make a unified piece on one theme, but to find forms and structures, exercises and material, ways to test some of the questions that we ask.

the works that I referred to are:

Nightwalk, the last piece of the Open Theatre,
a journey of 2 beings, the Creature and the Traveler,
through many different worlds. The piece had a number
of writers, who were mainly absent.

Electra, writer Robert Montgomery. We did Electra
twice. The first time with Michelle Collison
playing Electra, the second time Tina Shepard.

A Fable, writer J-Cl. Van Itallie.
The journeyer meets different people (e.g. a person
under the king, a stone, the hanged woman, the hermit, the grandmother).

The Dybbuk, written by S. Anski, translated by me from
the original Yiddish, adapted, changed, reshaped by
Joseph Chaikin and me with input of the actors.

The Winter Project, a very special theatre-research
in its second year of exploration.

this is one of the stories we ended up not using in the Dybbuk.
/ indicated a choice, () a possible cut.

There is a story
about the Holy Baal Shem Tov
(may his merits protect us).
Acrobats came to Mezibush.
They stretched a rope across the river

and one of them
 walked across the river
 on a rope.
 People came running
 from all over town
 to watch this (marvel).
 Among them stood/was the Baal Shem Tov.
 His students were astonished to see him
 and asked (him): why he had left his house
 to watch tricks/
 why did you leave your house
 to watch tricks.
 Said the Baal Shem Tov:
 I came to see
 how a person crosses a deep abyss.
 And I looked (and I watched) and I thought:
 if we could live
 each moment of our life/time
 with such inner concentration
 such total attention
 what deep abysses could we cross
 on the thin/delicate thread of life.

example:

the ending of Anki's original story is:

if a person would work on his soul
 the way this acrobat works on his body
 what deep abysses could he cross

APPENDIX C

NOTES FOR RE-ARRANGEMENTS 1979

Performing Artservices Inc.
463 West Street
New York, New York 10014
212.989.4953

December 27, 1978

Memo regarding the Winter Project:

Joe asked me to send a copy of these notes to everyone involved with the Winter Project, '79, and to tell you that rehearsals will start Jan. 2 at 11 AM, and continue six days a week from 11 – 5. The meeting place: 47 Great Jones Street.

Please call if you have any questions, confusions, etc.

Sincerely,

Liza Lorwin

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University, Box 6, Folder 51.

Winter Project.

Some of the possible elements; questions, areas of interest and thoughts that could be starting points for the non-existent piece Thoughtmusic.

Ideas that have come up in our meeting, ideas like ingredients.

Some of the books that were mentioned:

Bettleheim: *The Informed Heart*
 Simone De Beauvoir: *The Prime of Life*
 Italo Calvino: *Invisible Cities*.
 Nissim Hakmet, Turkish poet.
 Ecclesiastes
 Michelangelo's sculptures
 Poetry: Muriel Rukeyser, Neruda, Bly.

Some possible elements we talked about. In random order

Intermediary (person between audience and action)

Listenings

Interviews

Romance: date
 couples old couple
 moments of different stages of couples
 meetings – lovers' fantasies at first meeting
 fantasies
 people's thoughts while making love
 jealousy
 a wedding – without ever quite knowing who is getting
 married

Gender roles

Repeated action with changed content: (action stays the same;
 the information given about the action changes.
 e.g. couple at a table are terrorists lovers, etc.
 e.g. baking of cake is Nazi-party cake with swastika, etc.

Entering into moment (e.g. Tina's burn)

Songs

Music

The piece as a piece of music

To see something start – to see actor go from rest to motion

The actor describing moment, commenting on moment, playing what
is not the action in contrast

“onstage”/“offstage”/ “backstage”

Wattage

Actor just sitting – pulse

An action can open into another version of the same action or a
contradiction of the same action

Extremes – theatre as expression of extreme states

Passions

Feelings

Terrible suffering

Obsessions

Trance

Exaltations

Modes – also theatre modes: classical, Tennessee Williams etc.

Waiting

The missed train

Hellos and goodbyes

Death- last moment

Funeral

Shopping as one main entertainment

Numbness

Living a soap opera

Airs – style - masks – disguises – protections

Rules - crimes

Hunger - craving

Hurting

Commenting on yourself in mirror

We want to continue to find ways to give expression to a range from numbness to
different feeling states.

Different characters

One who never gets hopeless (fascination with hopelessness)

Innocent one

Dreamer

One who can experience wonder.

Released prisoner (e.g. Nissim Hakmet, turkish poet who was in

Jail, coming out of jail, new appreciation for everything: people, sights, feelings,
pain – from numbness to awakening.)

Spy

One with different disguises, masks, looks and disguises

One part of self constantly denying, negating other parts. (related to murder, suicide, romance, etc.)

Junky

Different hungers, cravings.

Different levels; funny – inside of hunger, nodding, visualizations, trance, exaltation stages on the way to high

Preacher, priest, guru (alternating between wisdom and nonsense)

Old person

Leper

Sloth

Psychologist

Epileptic

Lovers

Guru and lover

One who lives in a soap opera

One who is in romantic love with an object or product

Invented states

Characters from movie stories:

Gangsters

Lovers

Ugly duckling

Monsters

Mysteries

Spies

Falsely accused

One who is in the wrong place (Kafka)

The postponed murder (the threat)

Musical

The escape, the running away from

The totally changed life in one moment (e.g. person told of immanent death)

Some elements of character:

Airs- culturally taught, reinforced, accepted.

Masks, disguises (protections)

Gender

Sexual fantasies

Choices of character, choices in life connected with what one things happens after death.

Stories one is told, stories one accepts to be the truth.

Inheritance (one's history, looks)
Costumes

Photographs the face within the face; the face changing with time
History in images- the changed character in different
Pictures
Different pictures
The posed portrait (mask, airs, disguise) vs. snapshot

The Chinese, as uniformity cracks, individuality, different characters
come through.

Some possible starting points characters:

A character you are not but could be
Indicate a life you're not living
Your rejected selves
The implausible selves – the ones you could not be

Questions about interview, interviews as a way to reveal what?

Who is the interviewer? Someone from audience
Intermediary between audience and action
Other character

More than one person interviewing being interviewed, in different spaces times

Questions funny
Dangerous
Extreme

Elements of interview : words, motion, silence, rhythm, entering
moment, story.

Interviewer can change by answer or not

Interviewer(s) is (are) also listener(s)

Character- revealed through questions
Covered concealed changing

Some possible questions for interviews

What is having a good time?
Do you ever find yourself doing something you didn't expect to do?

What is your song? Underwear? Freedom?

What makes you cry?

Questions about belief in afterlife

About: money, habits, food, sexual fantasies, (e.g. make
believe you have sexual fantasies, describe them)

are you in love?

Religious?

Do you believe in God?

If you could change one thing about your life, what would that be?

Describe your perfect mate, partner, lover

Describe the lover you yearn for

The lover who yearns for you

Who you are

Who you want to be

Your parents (do you think they are your real parents?)

Your ideal parents

Is there any part of your body you're ashamed of?

Any particular part of your body you're attached to?

If you were to kill yourself, how would you do it

Describe your death

Stage your funeral

Describe how people mourn you

Tell the stories about yourself that people tell about you

Is there any moment that changed you?

Can you relax?

Can you do something funny?

What do you think is worth doing?

Is there anything you want to tell about yourself?

What else do you want to reveal about yourself?

Describe your day

What would you be doing if you were not the person you are now?

if you stopped doing what you are doing

if you would totally change your life

Relationships

Relatives

Married

Friends

Lovers

Affair

Business relationships: people in shop

Doctor – dentist

Assistant

Work associates

Colleagues
Patrons

Teacher-student
Master-slave
Peer group

Of worship – with priest, guru
To role model – e.g. Beethoven, Kierkegaard.

With ghosts, pictures, images
Strangers
People on subway
People you see on the subway all the time
Unemployment office (she doesn't remember you, but you remember her)

question: who is interesting?

Heroes
Villains
Clowns
Extreme people
Mad people (identifiably mad)
Suffering people
Unpredictable ones (unpredictable from moment to moment)
The last ones (the last witnesses – the completed story)

Some crimes are interesting
Facts of ones imprisonment

Some more general questions:

What is worth repeating?

Funny?

Clear?

Not a dream?

What should come next? (going from one movement to the next
movement of the piece)

What if we were the audience? Is each part clear and
identifiable?

Some different spaces-limits-prisons

Hospital
Prison
Concentration camp
Sanatorium - an invented kind

Monastery

Hotel

Train-boat

Island

Oasis

Desert

Restaurant

Telephone

City

Village

Office

Theatre

Market

House

School

Church

Factory

Laboratory

Graveyard

Elevator

Gym - work on body

Mobile home

Imprisoned in body - physical extremes: fat, tall, leper, cancer.

broken heart, short (childhood, prisoner of being small), senile (prisoner of mind), old age(prisoner of limitations of body).

How it moves:

Scenes, images, music, transitions, pulses, starts and stops and returns and restarts and developments and accompaniments

About rules, crimes, sins, taboos

Rules and the breaking of rules

Unspoken rules

Outspoken – legal rules

What can we(as a heterogeneous group)agree on as crimes, sins

Feeling you don't want to feel, hopelessness

Some kinds of suffering

Guilt, jealousy

Some crimes: betraying a friend

Rape

Child abuse

Some stealing
 Some killing
 Some taboos: vengeance

About spaces

How arrangement of space(furniture)determines social action

Social extremes: rituals of social actions(e.g. hellos and
 goodbyes)in changed spaces

A space of being alone

Rooms – the spaces between rooms : corridors, passages,(rites of passage)
 inner–outer space

Possible elements of the set:

Bridge, fabric, carts, steps, lights,
 Furniture: bed, chairs, toilet

APPENDIX D

RE-ARRANGEMENTS

Text by members of the Winter Project
 Music by Peter Golub and Skip LaPlante

Actors:

Joyce Aaron
 Ronnie Gilbert
 Will Patton
 Mark Samuels
 Tina Shepard
 Paul Zimet

Director:	Joseph Chaikin
Dramaturg:	Mira Rafalowicz
Scenery:	Jun Maeda
Lighting:	Beverly Emmons
Stage Manager:	Larry Russell
Production Manager:	Liza Lorwin
Asst. Director:	Steven Reisner
Asst. Lighting:	Tina Charney
Technician:	Mike Shiske
Rehearsal Assts.:	Pricilla Cohen, Carla Howard

Additional Text: Sam Shepard, Susan Sontag
Additional Music: The song "Then" is from a poem by Muriel Rukeyser.
 Music by Richard Peaslee
 "Satin Doll" by Ellington/Strayhorn/Mercer

Performed at La Mama March 3-25, 1979

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 6, Folder 27.

OVERTURE

(Toward the end of the overture, Ronnie enters from upstage and sits in chair behind curtain.

Mark and Tina cross to Questioners' position at strings downstage and don hats and gloves.

Ronnie begins laughing. Mark and Tina raise center curtain revealing:)

THE LAUGHER

(The LAUGHER responds to questions with laughter and gesture.)

TINA: Do you ever get melancholy?

MARK: Is it true that heavier people are jollier?

TINA: Do you believe in God?

MARK: Are you in love with anyone?

TINA: What are your sexual fantasies?

MARK: Is there any joke that makes you laugh every time you think of it?

(LAUGHER stops laughing for a moment to think. Then laughs again and nods.)

MARK: Would you tell it?

LAUGHER: Mr. and Mrs. Beethoven...(laughs) Mr. and Mrs. Beethoven are splitting up. Mr. Beethoven says to Mrs. Beethoven, "Darling, don't leave me. You're my inspiration." Mrs. Beethoven says, "I'm your inspiration? Ha ha ha HA!"

(LAUGHER laughs as Questioners lower curtain.

Ronnie exits U.C. with chair. Mark takes rocking chair from off stage, places it behind center curtain and sits in it. Tina performs Finger Ballet behind left curtain, then returns to Questioner Area. She raises center curtain, revealing:)

MR. WORTH

TINA: Do you have a family, Mr. Worth?

MR. WORTH: I have two excellent sons, and a girl.

TINA: What do you think most people want?

MR. WORTH: While I accumulate, gather, acquire and collect, all around me people are striving to be ordinary.

TINA: What distresses you?

TYRANT: With more people, there are more voices to tune out.

TINA: Do you ever make a mistake, Mr. Worth?

TYRANT: Even when I announce that I'm going to do something stupid, I know it's not true.

TINA: How did you come to be the way you are now?

TYRANT: Wisdom is a ruthless business.

(Tina lowers curtain. Mark takes rocker offstage.

Mark and Joyce sit in chair behind left curtain.

A "rag" is played on the piano, and Mark and Joyce hop to center stage on their chairs as:)

HENRY AND HENRIETTA

TINA: Henrietta and Henry, what was the longest time you've been apart?

HENRY: Apart? Well, tell him, hon.

HENRIETTA: Apart?

HENRY: Well, actually we're never apart. You know, I spend a lot of time on the road, but the one thing about Henrietta and me is we are never —

HENRIETTA: Apart.

HENRY: We may be separated, but we are never —

HENRIETTA: Apart.

TINA: Henrietta, what do you enjoy doing most?

HENRY: Tell him, hon.

HENRIETTA: Shopping. I'd say shopping.

HENRY: She'd say shopping. More than anything, shopping.

HENRIETTA: Barbeque.

HENRY: Ah.

HENRIETTA: The children.

HENRY: Boys. Two. Henrietta has enjoyed them both. Anything else, hon?

HENRIETTA: (shrugs)

TINA: What do you think about homosexuals?

HENRY: (Whispers to Henrietta) She means deviants, hon.

HENRIETTA: I've never seen a deviant.

HENRY: We don't know any.

TINA: Do you have any sexual fantasies, Henrietta?

HENRY: Well, tell her, hon. You got any?

HENRIETTA: Henry's my sexual fantasy.

HENRY: There you go. Me. I'm her sexual fantasy.

HENRIETTA: He's my sexual fantasy.

HENRY: Mmmmm-hmmm. That's enough, I think.

(Henry and Henrietta, still seated, hop off to behind right curtain. Tina joins Mark behind curtain, and the two of them enter THE BAG. Paul enters and stands behind left curtain.

Paul steps center with chair and stands in front of center curtain. THE BAG enters from underneath right curtain, and the scene begins:)

THE RESERVED MAN I

BAG: Sir, is there anything you can imagine doing that you wouldn't forgive yourself for?

MAN: Well, I can imagine it. But I wouldn't do it.

BAG: Sir, have you ever felt ecstasy?

MAN: Well, when I was child I used to hold my breath and spin around for long periods of time, and that made me feel quite high. I would do that until I fainted.

BAG: Do you do anything like that now?

MAN: No.

BAG: Sir, do you have any sexual fantasies?

BAG: If you had any sexual fantasies, what would they be?

MAN: Well, if I had sexual fantasies, I might imagine making love to many women at the same time, you know, having sexual intercourse with one while I was licking the vagina of another, and sticking my fingers in the vaginas of two others, and at the same time sticking my toes in two other vaginas, while another woman would be licking me all over, and another would be sitting on me rubbing her genitals up and down my body or I might imagine the same thing with men, you know jerking off two men with huge penises, while I'm sucking another penis and my penis is in someone's ass, while someone's penis is in my ass, and another person's penis is in that person's ass, and maybe we're covered with whip cream, or I might imagine, if I had sexual fantasies, drugging someone so she was completely immobilized, and then I would take off her dress and panties and spread her legs and lick her vagina, and she would feel extreme pleasure but not be able to show any sign of it, or I might imagine making love to a dead person, someone not dead for too long, still flexible,

(THE BAG cuts him off.)

BAG: Sir! Sir, do you love anyone?

MAN: Of course, my family.
 BAG: Are you different with them than you are in public?
 MAN: Of course I am.
 BAG: Could you show us how?
 MAN: Something like this (sits) I'm relaxed.

(Bag exits behind right curtain. Paul takes chair and exits left. Joyce sets two chairs, as if in a row in a classroom, behind center curtain. Mark and Tina come out of the Bag. Tina joins Joyce in chairs, Mark crosses to Questioner Area. Mark raises center curtain revealing:)

TWO GIRLS

JOYCE: When he puts his hand on my breast, is that when I'm supposed to touch his penis?
 TINA: Yeah.
 JOYCE: When he kisses me, what am I supposed to do...
 Am I supposed to have my eyes open or closed?
 TINA: What if we see each other?
 JOYCE: What if we look at each other?
 What then?
 TINA: Then what?
 JOYCE: When he's on top of me can I think about other things?
 TINA: Anything?
 JOYCE: Do I have to think about him?
 TINA: What if I can't move my ... leg?
 JOYCE: Arm?
 TINA: What if I can't breathe?
 JOYCE: When he's inside me, am I supposed to move?
 TINA: What if I can't move?
 JOYCE: What then?

TINA: Then what?

(Mark lowers curtain. Joyce and Tina exit taking chairs up center. Paul and Ronnie sit in chairs behind right curtain. Mark pulls right curtain off to the right revealing:)

SATIN DOLL

(“Satin Doll” is played on the piano. Paul and Ronnie move their heads to the music, each in his/her own time.)

(Mark returns the curtain to position. Paul and Ronnie exit left with chairs. Tina joins Mark; they cross to Questioners’ area. Will takes position on floor behind center curtain.

Mark and Tina raise center curtain about three feet off the ground revealing:)

THE DREAMER

(Will rolls forward. Curtain is lowered behind him.)

TINA: When you look at a stranger for the first time, what do you notice?

DREAMER: I don’t really distinguish between strangers and those who are close to me, my friends. Either there’s a certain recognition or there’s not. It has to do with an aura that moves between the faces. It’s not really a color.

MARK: When you make love, is it to the person you’re with?

DREAMER: Usually it’s what I dream, and that’s the same as what I do. The person is that creation. The most vivid images are the ones where the sexes are reversed.

TINA: What do you think will happen to you when you die?

DREAMER: I could only tell you in terms of what happened to me in my previous lives. Life to birth-from in here-new worlds are thought into being.

MARK: Do you have sense of what the future holds?

DREAMER: I have a sense and I know, but I can't say it yet until it happens and I remember it.

TINA: Are you in love with anyone?

DREAMER: (smiles.)

MARK: What do you think when you see people suffering?

DREAMER: I don't think it's necessary. Sometimes we get stuck on a funny color. We perceive the world as world, only as long as our mind looks outward. Everything that's going on, is going on inside here.

TINA: What about the outside?

DREAMER: That's also inside.

MARK: What do you find funny?

DREAMER: When an inanimate object smiles/

(Mark and Tina pull black curtain from left, across the stage. Will exits rights. Mark pulls left curtain offstage left, and right curtain offstage right. Tina raises center curtain to the ceiling. Joyce enters and stands in corner upstage left. Mark and Tina step under the platform upstage right and begin the questioning:)

WOMAN IN THE CORNER

MARK: Do you sleep with anyone? Do you wake up with anyone next to you?

WOMAN: In the night...Waiting.
Falling asleep...Waiting.

TINA: Can you say what are the moments when you wouldn't rather be somewhere else?

WOMAN: Every room I got into, I look for him.
Every street I walk on, I think he might be on it.

Every pair of eyes I look into, I think he might be in them.

MARK: Do you wish for the same things you've always wished for?

WOMAN: The yearning. The longing.

(Paul enters with chair, sits center stage and becomes The Withdrawn character from the Love Moments. Will climbs onto the upstage left platform and becomes The DREAMER attempting to find a comfortable position. The conditions of the three characters onstage becomes increasingly acute, creating:)

THE ISOLATION MOMENTS

(Tina crosses closer to the WOMAN IN THE CORNER)

TINA: What thoughts trouble you?*

WOMAN: To find everybody crazy.

To be afraid.

To feel how desperate everyone is.

To find in myself the desire to stop listening to people's distress.

To live in bad air.

To have an airless life.

To feel there's no ground.

That's there's nothing.

But air.

(Mark pulls back curtain from right. All actors exit, Paul with chair. Will and Tina transform platform into a short wall, creating a 'dutch doors' effect. Ronnie joins Tina behind the platform and they become:)

TWO WOMEN WITH HATS I

RONNIE: He was telling her that everything that seems to be going on out there is actually going on inside, in the mind...

*The following has been adapted from material by Susan Sontag.

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: She said, really, what about me? He said, you're in there, too. She said that's what you think.

(pause)

They did everything together. They did shopping together. They did barbequeing together. They were never apart...

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: One day she ups and leaves him, she walks out. His whole life fell apart. Then he met someone just like her and they did everything together.

TINA: I know.

(pause)

RONNIE: Every street she walked down she looked for him.

Every room she went into she thought he might be there.

Every pair of eyes she looked into she thought he might be in them.

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: She loved him. With all her heart. With all of her. She just hadn't met him yet.

TINA: I know.

(Ronnie and Tina exit. Mark returns right and left curtains to their onstage positions. Will and Joyce cross to Questioners' area and lower center curtain. Paul takes position on floor behind center curtain. Tina joins Will and Joyce and raises center curtain revealing:)

THE ECSTATIC MAN

JOYCE: Do you feel one part of your body more than another?

MAN: (sits up)
 I feel my skin. I feel the hairs on my skin.
 I feel my toes. And I feel my eyes.
 And my spine.
 I feel everything.
 (Drops back to the floor.)

WILL: Have you always felt the way you do now?

MAN: (Sits up)
 No. I used to feel depressed. I mean not particularly depressed. Just ordinary depressed. And now, everything seems different.

JOYCE: Are you in love?

MAN: (Sighs. Drops back to the floor.)

WILL: How would you dance?
 (Man dances beginning lying down, dancing with one foot. Other parts of the body join the dance. The dance brings him to a standing position. He dances around the stage. The center curtain joins the dance, manipulated by Tina.)

JOYCE: Would you like to be in this state forever?

MAN: (while dancing)
 Well, I'd like to, but I don't know if I can keep it up. I mean, I haven't slept since it started.
 (Man returns to the ground, still dancing. The curtain lowers slowly. Paul exits. Then the curtain is raised up to the ceiling. The turntable is placed in the upstage right corner. On it are a table and two chairs. The right corner is pulled offstage right. Will stands next to the left curtain extending two bamboo poles, attached to which is the BAG. Mark and Tina enter the BAG. Will releases the BAG by extracting the two sticks and exits left taking the left curtain off with him. The BAG begins:)

THE DANCE OF THE BAG

(Toward the end of the DANCE, Will sits on the bench up center and gazes at Joyce who is sitting at the table atop the revolving stage. The DANCE finishes and the BAG moves behind the right curtain. Mark and Tina come out of the bag and exit left, taking the left curtain offstage. Tina places small bench down left. This begins:)

THE LOVE MOMENTS

(The Love Moments is the single longest section of the piece “Rearrangements”. It is a wordless depiction of different couples in moments from first meeting on. Each moment is an emblem of a kind of life together. The actors change, playing different characters in different love arrangements moving in different points of time. Throughout, the music deepens and intensifies. The non-verbal sequence runs somewhat as follows:)

Will, on bench, gazing at Joyce, at table.

Tina and Joyce on small bench.

Ronnie and Paul on large bench up center.

Will joins Joyce at table. He rubs her foot.

Paul and Tina look for comfortable position on the floor up center.

Ronnie sits on small bench, becoming an old woman. Mark as an old man walks past but doesn’t sit.

Tina and Joyce, evidently later in their relationship, sit apart on chair center stage.

Ronnie and Paul on bench up center, evidently later in their relationship.

Will and Tina stand in corner up left eating pears.

Paul, Tina and Mark each lying alone in restless sleep.

Will and Joyce at table. Her foot rests upon the table. (Table revolves)

Mark and Tina is the corner.

Ronnie and Paul on bench up center, evidently even later in their relationship.

Tina and Joyce on small bench as first time.

Paul and Tina at table, crying with crackers. Paul becomes withdrawn,

Paul and Mark at table. Paul becomes more acutely withdrawn.

(The three moments which follow occur simultaneously:)

Ronnie, as old woman, on small bench this time is joined by Mark as old man.

Will and Joyce at table. Repeat of foot massage. (Table revolves)

Paul and Tina on floor up center find comfortable position.

(These three moments remain for a bit as the music of the Love Moments fades. Then, Paul takes chair and cracker and sits center. Tina crosses to small bench and takes position without Joyce. Will and Joyce remain at table. Ronnie exits, Mark takes small stool and sits right of Tina for:)

QUESTIONING THREE FROM THE LOVE MOMENTS

(the first to be questioned is Tina.)

MARK: What will happen in the next moment?

TINA: I don't know. I want to stay in this one.

MARK: Have you ever felt this way before?

TINA: Yes.

MARK: How many times?

TINA: As often as possible.

MARK: Have you said I love you?

TINA: Not yet.

MARK: Are you going to wait for her to say it first?

TINA: Probably.

MARK: Will you use words of endearment with her?

TINA: I'll try.

MARK: Which words will you say?

TINA: I don't know which one's I can say
 maybe honey
 I might say darling,
 or I might say my love or sweetheart
 maybe some french ones.
 I might say, touch me.
 I might say, let's like down together, love,
 and hold one another.

(Mark turns toward Paul who has become the WITHDRAWN ONE.
 Paul's responses are non-verbal.)

MARK: Can you hear anything?
 Are moments of the day different from one another? Is there anything you
 would never answer if you were asked?

(Mark crosses behind Paul to the turntable. He sits next to it and revolves
 the table so that the audience can see Will's face.)

MARK: If you were to express, to show, your love for her, how would your face
 change?

(Will's response also is non-verbal. He shows the change in his face.)

(Mark pulls black curtain from left. All exit, Paul with chair, Tina taking
 Mark's stool. Ronnie steps in front of curtain at extreme left of stage and
 sings:)

THEN*

When I am dead, even then, I will still love you.

I will wait in these poems.
 When I am dead even then I am still listening to you.
 I will be making poems for you out of silence.
 Silence will be falling into that silence.
 It is building music...

(Ronnie opens corner, up left, transferring it into a doorway, revealing two musicians behind it playing a duet. Ronnie and Tina climb to 2nd level stage left.

*Text by Muriel Rukeyser. Music by Richard Peaslee.

Will and Joyce return to table. Table revolves slowly throughout scene:)

TWO WOMEN WITH HATS II **

RONNIE: Now how can they move in together, two people like that?
 TINA: I know.
 RONNIE: They can't really be with each other. They like to think about one another.
 To miss one another. Not to actually be in each other's company.
 TINA: I know.
 (pause)
 RONNIE: In the middle of the night she had a nightmare. She reached for his hand.
 Hold me tight, she said. Promise me you'll never leave me. He promised.
 He'd never thought of leaving her before.
 (pause)
 Years later, when he was on his deathbed, breathing his last breaths, all he
 could think of was her. At the very end, with only seconds of life left, he
 was thinking of her. He was trying to say her name. He was trying to say,
 weep for me. Weep for me and I'll weep for you. He was trying to say,
 help me. I don't want to weep for myself.
 (pause)

He was thinking, why is life with someone else like prison?

TINA: I know.

** The following is adapted material by Jean-Claude van Itallie.

RONNIE: Why is life alone like prison?

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: Were there ever two people ever happy in any age? He was thinking. Moments. There are only moments that matter. But moments aren't enough. Moments with so much emptiness in between aren't enough. He was thinking, if only I could find something. Something that continued. Something that didn't stop.

(pause)

She was thinking. I wonder what will happen in the next moment. Will the telephone ring? Who will it be? Will it be a death? A bombing? War? She's thinking who will know about this moment a hundred years from now?

(pause)

She's thinking, maybe in ten million years or less the sun will grow so hot that the oceans will boil and the stones on the surface of the earth will grow sticky.

TINA: She was thinking:*

Yes, we were looking at each other

Yes, we knew each other very well

Yes, we had made love with each other many times

Yes, we had heard music together

Yes, we had gone to the sea together

Yes, we had cooked and eaten together

Yes, we had laughed often day and night

Yes, that day we were looking at each other

Yes, we saw the sunlight pouring down
 Yes, the corner of the table was between us
 Yes, bread and flowers were on the table

* The following is from a poem by Muriel Rukeyser.

Yes, our eyes saw each other's eyes
 Yes, our mouths saw each other's mouth
 Yes, our breasts saw each other's breast
 Yes, our bodies entire saw each other
 Yes, it was the beginning n each
 Yes, it threw waves across our lives
 Yes, the pulses were becoming very strong
 Yes, the beating became very delicate
 Yes, the calling; the arousal
 Yes, the arriving, the coming
 Yes, there it were for both entire
 Yes, that day we were looking at each other

(Musicians continue their duet during the following set change. Mark pulls right and left curtains back to their original positions onstage. Will lowers center curtain to its original position. Tina moves table and chair from revolving platform to behind center curtain. Revolving platform is moved offstage. Ronnie sets two chairs down left as an "audience." Mark and Tina climb into BAG behind left curtain. Paul steps center, sets chair behind him. The BAG makes its entrance by pulling down the right curtain:)

THE RESERVED MAN II

BAG: Sir, how would you be if you stopped being who you are now?
 MAN: (shows)

BAG: Thank you, sir.
 Sir, is there any event that changed your life?

MAN: Yes. The moment I learned that someday I would have to die. When I was a child I had a hamster. One morning I reached into its cage to feed it and it was stiff. My mother told me it was dead and she said everyone would die like that hamster.

BAG: Sir, what do you enjoy doing most?

MAN: I like to read. Biographies I like to find out when people died. How old they were. And what they died of. I also like listening to requiems.

BAG: Sir, do you believe in god?

MAN: God is dead.

BAG: Do you believe in life after death?*

MAN: Well, I don't think its too useful to speculate on such matters. I know there's the religious view but personally I...personally I wait – Is this the one. No. Let's see. Is this my voice. No. Just wait. Just one minute more. Just let me catch my breath. Now. No. Don't try. Don't try to. It'll come. It's not that it's lost. Not that it won't come back. It's just a temporary thing. Something. Something must have. It's not that I can't hear myself. I can hear myself. I can hear myself now. There. That was it. That was it just then. It just came out. Just like that. Why not now. Nothing to worry about. Sometimes these things just happen. Something loses something. Temporarily. It's not that it's a big deal. Big deal. It's not that I won't find my voice again. Ever again. Nothing as final as that. It's just a lapse, a little lapse. It's already coming back. I can feel a certain familiarity. Something in the tone. The patter. The turn of the

* The following is adapted from material by Sam Shepard.

phrase. There. I've got it now. Now. Your question. Do I believe in life after death. Well. I can't say.

(Paul exits left still looking for voice. BAG exits right. Mark, Tina, Paul, Ronnie sit in "audience." Joyce sits in Questioners' area. Will enters from left and sits in chair:)

WHEN YOU DIE

WILL: When you die
 you go straight to heaven or hell.

When you die
 you disintegrate into energy.

When you die
 you're reborn into another body.

When you die
 you turn to shit.

When you die
 you travel to other planets.

When you die
 you get to start all over.

When you die
 you get marked in the book.

When you die
 you're rejoined with your ancestors.

When you die
 all your dreams will come true.

When you die
 you'll speak to the angels.

When you die
 you'll get what you deserve.

When you die
 it's absolutely final.

When you die

you never come back.
 When you die
 you die forever.
 When you die
 it's the end of your life.

(Will exits with the chair and pulls left curtain off left. Mark crosses behind center curtain and sits at table. Will takes his place in "audience."
 Joyce raises center curtain, revealing:)

ONE MINUTE TO LIVE

JOYCE: If you were told you had one minute to live, how would you be?

(Mark responds non-verbally, finding a series of possibilities. Joyce drops center curtain. Mark takes table off right. Tina crosses to Questioners' area. Mark, Paul, Will, Joyce and Ronnie place chair in a row and sit in from of center curtain for:)

WORLD LEADERS

TINA: As world leaders, what do you think our prospects are?

(The responses are in the form of nonsense syllables. The actors' "modes" make the intentions clear.)

TINA: Are there any decisions you would have made differently?

(The "modes" change.)

TINA: Are you satisfied with the decisions you have made?

(The “modes” change again, becoming more aggressive. Tina cuts off the scene by pulling the black curtain from the right. All exit with chairs. Mark crosses to Questioners’ area and raises center curtain all the way up to ceiling. Paul crosses downstage left and lowers BALANCER’S curtain to the floor. Tina places BALANCERS’S chair behind curtain. Attached to the BALANCER’S chair is a rope which Tina hands to Ronnie sitting offstage left. Tina unties the curtain and the scene begins:)

THE BALANCER

(Throughout this scene Tina is literally fighting to keep on her chair, which Ronnie is pulling away from her, and to be free of the curtain, which Paul is pulling in front of her:)

RONNIE: Do you believe in God?

TINA: In God? Well. I would like to believe in God. There are days where really I believe it would be quite a comfort if I could believe in God. But frankly, when you look at how things are, I mean, look at how things are. Who could believe in God? If I believed in God I would have to hate him. I was talking with someone who believes in God. I said, how can you believe in God, the way things are? He said, listen, everyone makes mistakes. The world is God’s mistakes.

RONNIE: Can you say what it is that sustains you?

TINA: Sustains? I’m going to have to admit that there are times when really I’m not sustained at all; when I’m feeling the ground slipping right out from underneath me. But...when I’m sustained? I don’t know... I’m very stubborn.

RONNIE: What thoughts are a refuge for you?

TINA: A refuge. Thoughts? Well I... I read something. To think that things could be different. Unrecognizably different. An that they will never be

different. And that it is good that they will not. Not there's a thought to be going on with. But I can't go on with it. That's a refuge to me sometimes

(Paul pulls curtain all the way up to the ceiling. Tina takes chair offstage left. At this point the stage is completely cleared. Paul takes position downstage center. The corner is transformed into a revolving door, through which the actors make their entrances for:)

THE WEDDING

(A wedding march is played. The participants proceed down the "aisle". However, it becomes increasingly clear that no one knows exactly who it is that is getting married. All exit through revolving door. Actors keep revolving door spinning until stage is cleared. Ronnie and Tina enter from upstage center. Will holds a canopy about them as they stroll forward and backward:)

TWO WOMEN WITH HATS III

RONNIE: He was telling her that the universe is in a state of constant creation. That galaxies keep disappearing, but new ones for to take their place. He was saying that the changes are fine compared with the universe which goes on forever. He said that the earth is younger than the oldest stars in our galaxy and that the galaxy is dynamic, full of violent change.

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: She was looking at his mouth.

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: She wanted to kiss his mouth while he was talking.
She wanted to close his mouth with a kiss.

(The two stop strolling, and begin swaying, slowly, from side to side.

The lights slowly fade.)

THE END

APPENDIX E

TOURISTS AND REFUGEES

Text by members of the Winter Project

Music by Peter Golub, Harry Mann and Will Uttley

Actors:

Ronnie Gilbert

Will Patton

Atsumi Sakato

Tina Shepard

Paul Zimet

Director: Joseph Chaikin

Dramaturg: Mira Rafalowicz

Lighting: Beverley Emmons

Set Design: Jun Maeda

Costumes: Mary Brecht

Asst. Director: Steve Reisner

Performed at La Mama July 9- August 3, 1980

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 7, Folder 30.

OVERTURE

(During overture, middle section of wall pulled DC.

Woman with Handbag(Ronnie) crossing

Woman on Sabbatical(Tina)

Uncomfortable Tourist(Paul) lies down on path

Angel appears, Child cross(Atsumi), Paul exits

Woman with Handbag and Fan(Ronnie)

Oohing and Ahhing Tourists(Paul and Tina)

ANGEL

(Climb Observation Deck and question the Trapped Angel, Will. Angel beats wings, makes sounds)

PAUL: Are you the only angel in captivity?

TINA: Are you? Are you living or dead?

PAUL: Do you sleep?

TINA: Do you dream?

PAUL: Do you dance?

TINA: Is your hair made of gold? Are you near the dead?

PAUL: What's it like to be an angel? Do you feed the fauns?

TINA: Do you sew robes of gauze? Do you take care of the
garden?

PAUL: What is it like?

TINA: Will you die if you don't go back there?

TINA: Is it made of air? Is it made of colours? Is it made
of music?

PAUL: What's the light like? What's it like? What's the
light like?

(Tina, Paul exit.

Tourist with 2 suitcases, Atsumi.

Macho Crotcho, Paul

Carmen Miranda, Ronnie

Latino, Paul.

Tina sets window S and L. Paul sets window, Old Man.

Atsumi joins Tina

Southern Swingers. Ronnie and Will

Guided Tourist, Will

Will, jerking off

Dumb Tourists, Paul and Atsumi go to Ob. Deck

ETIQUETTE LECTURE

WILL: WHEN TRAVELLING: No matter how you are travelling or

for how long, your luggage should be neat and compact. Nothing looks worse or makes a traveler so uncomfortable as broken-down bags and numerous bundles. Be sure that you wear loose, comfortable clothing that is as wrinkle-proof as possible. The first thing that a native of another country notices is your appearance. If you unpack your clothes when you arrive and keep them clean-always carry a good spot remover to remove any stains-you will appear well-dressed. Clothing should, of course, be appropriate and modest.

EYE CONTACT: When sitting opposite another person, as at table, it is best to avoid direct contact with the other person's eyes, unless you are engaged in conversation. If inadvertent eye contact is made, smile briefly with closed lips.

In conversation, **LISTENING** is the best possible advise, because the person most people love to sit next to is a sympathetic listener. Remember

though, that a sympathetic listener really listens. To hold a fixed expression of sympathy and let your mind wander wont do at all.

WHEN DINING AT A RESTAURANT: Techniques for inside the mouth:

Fish bones or other incidental bones are taken between the finger and thumb and removed between compressed lips. Pits and seeds must be eaten quite bare and clean inside the mouth and dropped into the cupped fist and then conveyed to the edge of the plate.

ASPARAGUS: The ungraceful appearance of a bent stalk of asparagus falling limply into someone's mouth and the fact that moisture is likely to drip from the end requires one to eat it with the fork. Cut the stalks with the fork where they become harder and then pick up the ends in the fingers. But don't squeeze the stalks or let juice run down your fingers. Don't lick the moisture off the tip of the asparagus.

WHEN ALONE: AT HOME OR IN YOUR HOTEL ROOM: When spending some time alone, it is advisable to try not to think that you're being imagined by someone else; not to imagine your wishes are actually happening; not to think that you're more than one person; not to imagine that you're part of a movie. Also, try not to examine the inside of your body. Do not eat and masturbate at the same time. Do not get into contorted positions that you may not be able to get out of. Never lapse into prayer without intending to. Avoid thoughts about ways to kill yourself. Avoid thoughts about the end of the world.

(Will exits)

I KNOW #1

(Jet Setters Cross, Ronnie and Tina.

Ronnie speaks the following interspersed by Tina's "I Knows". As they move across the Path, Will pushes the Ob. Deck.)

RONNIE: Oh, the ruins...the splendid ruins...
 We were walking among those ancient human bones in the excavation in Ethiopia and he turned to me and said, "I wish I lived somewhere else; I hate my life where I am."
 I said, "And if you lived somewhere else, do you think it would be better?"

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: "Do you think you wouldn't hate it?"

TINA: I know.

RONNIE: He said, "But I belong somewhere. Everybody belongs somewhere. I'm just not where I belong..."
 Ah, the ruins, the marvelous ruins...
 I like Coca-Cola when I'm abroad, the taste reminds me of home. Did you know you can get Coca-Cola now in China? You can't get it in Russia or Jordan or Burma. You can always get it in Italy-the Church there owns 80% OF IT...oh the ruins, the astonishing ruins...
 They told me they'd hired a Peruvian cook. The woman had managed to escape from some skirmish down there-not her family, most of them were lost. So now she cooks, and they say she's wonderful. What is Peruvian cooking? I thought I'd tasted all the tastes, but nothing comes to mind when I think of Peruvian cooking...Oh, the ruins, the magnificent ruins...

(Ronnie and Tina exit; also Atsumi.

Ob. Deck now at beginning of path; Paul gets off it and checking, Paul crosses. Scooter cross, Will. Ronnie with fan, pushing Ob. Deck.)

PAUL: (Praying, mode, "iiiiii", goes in an out of words:)

I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels. I will not restrain my

mouth. I will speak in the anguish of my spirit. I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Lord shine Your face upon me and give me peace. May I dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

(Paul closes curtain, exits.)

WISHING

(Wondering Tourist, Tina crosses to Ob. Deck. Wish. Atsumi. crosses slowly as Tina questions:)

TINA: When you're silent, are you wishing? Do you wish your dreams would tell you how to live? Do you wish you could die for a moment and then come back with a report? Do you wish that the things that happened weren't constantly more outrageous than the things that you imagine? Do you wish you could make certain adjustments to history? Do you want to stop wishing to assassinate government leaders? Do you wish that those who have done you injustice would suffer? Do you no longer wish you could believe in God? Do you try not to wish that the world will end when you die? Do you wish you could have clothes made up of the colors of leaves, of birds, and of fish? Do you wish that everything would become clear for a moment and that you wouldn't forget?

(Tina and Atsumi exit. Street Singer Cross, Paul and Ronnie. Gypsies Cross, Tina and Paul. Guided Tourist Cross, to Ob. Deck, Will)

MOTHER AND FATHER

(Enter Mother and Father, Ronnie and Paul, sit RC, sing "A FEW MORE YEARS

A few more Years shall roll
 A few more seasons come
 And we shall be with those that pray
 Asleep within the tomb.(Then:)

WILL: Where is your home?

PAUL: Well, our home is here in the Holy City. But this Holy City is just a counterpart for the Other City. Tell them about it.

RONNIE: You see, this is a practice world. We were put here to practice for the Counterpart, the Ultimate Home, a world much like this one but without the human misery. Everyone goes there after this life-but no everyone stays. Only a few can stand the joy. The rest come back to practice for another lifetime.

That's why we started Holy City, so we could practice together. It's so simple, really.

PAUL: And we open up the doors of our Holy City to everyone: whether they're an alcoholic or a prostitute, rich or poor, or suffering from the anxiety and despair that most of us feel nowadays.

RONNIE: Tell them about it.

PAUL: I know. My life was caught.

RONNIE: Tell them about it.

PAUL: I was like a log caught on a rock in the middle of a stream. And even though that stream was flowing past me, I could not budge off that rock until I gave myself over to the Eternal Spirit. Then I could flow with the stream.

RONNIE: We welcome everybody, of every religion. You know, we can't see God, we can only imagine God-and we believe that the imagination of God is the most beautiful aspect of each people on earth. So we worship all deities in Holy City. It's so simple really.

PAUL: And we practice together and we share together. And we practice divine respiration.

- RONNIE: This is a model for being in the world. You take in
(takes in breath)
and you give out.
(Lets breath out; Father joins her)
You take in, and you give out. Everything starts with breathing. It's so simple, really.
- WILL: What do you do about disagreements?
- PAUL: We pray. We have a prayer tower where we pray 24 hours a day.
- RONNIE: Not 24 hours a day.
- PAUL: In shifts.
- RONNIE: We take turns.
- RONNIE: You know, in Holy City we've discovered three major cures for anxiety, envy and hatred: They are MUSIC, especially singing; VIGOROUS DANCING, and PRAYER. It's so simple, really.
- PAUL: My life was caught. And I am so grateful that the Eternal Spirit has seen fit to make my life useful. Now with the help of the Eternal Spirit and with her, who has been a rock by my side, I can flow with that stream.
- WILL: What advice would you give to the ones who want to come to your city?
- PAUL: There are many things I don't know. What I don't know could fill a book. But there are three things I know; I know the Eternal Spirit has asked me to spread his word; and I know when that final roll is called, we're going to the Other City.
- RONNIE: We're going to the counterpart.
- PAUL: We're going home.
- RONNIE: We're going home to Moses.
- PAUL: We're going home to Vishnu.
(Excitement, pace escalates. Paul goes into tongues.)
- RONNIE: We're going home to Ogen.
- PAUL: We're going home to Mazda.
- RONNIE: We're going home to Krishna.

PAUL: (in tongues) I'm going to see Abraham. I'm going to see St. Augustine.
 I'm going to see Gurdjieff. I'm going to see Bodhidharma.
 RONNIE: We're going home.
 PAUL: We're going home.

(Paul and Ronnie exit.)

CREATURE IN BAG, BUMS

(Cross, Tina, to foot of Ob. Deck. Bums, Ronnie and Will, sit in front of C wall)

TINA: Where is your home?
 RONNIE: Where I go to sleep?
 TINA: Do you believe in God?
 RONNIE: Sort of.
 TINA: What will happen to you when you die?
 RONNIE: I want them to take my body, cut it up, put it in a pot with salt and pepper, make a stew out of it, and feed me to my friends.
 (laughter.)
 Him! And all the others!

(Bums move wall, left, exit, revealing UC of rest of wall, Limpet, Paul, on his spot, smooth barrel on side; in front of wall, UR, is upright barrel where Atsumi's creature it, unseen.)

TINA: Do you ever move away from that spot?
 PAUL: Not if I can help it.
 TINA: Is that thing the spot or part of you?
 PAUL: That's the spot. I think. It's hard to tell anymore.
 TINA: What do you thing will happen when you die?

PAUL: Not much. I'll become part of my spot.

TINA: Do you have any feelings?

PAUL: I feel that weather.

TINA: Do you have any thoughts?

PAUL: Yes. How happy I am to be here. How lucky. But sometimes I worry that something will try to pull me off my spot.

TINA: Before you found this spot, did you imagine one?

PAUL: Yes. It was exactly like this one.

LIMPET

(The 3 creatures dance; Limpet staying horizontal on spot (green barrel); Bag somersaulting UC; A emerging in red material, only hair showing, always in barrel. A exits. Paul and Tina UC.)

(Uncurtained window, left. Bench center, table and 3 chairs right.)

CHINESE STORY

(Paul in a bed, sitting up)

ATSUMI: There isn't any place where I feel altogether at home. But for moments I think if there were such a place, it might be his body. He could never picture my grandfather, coming here from Chin, working in the fields in America, digging a hole and shouting into it: "Hello China...Hello, down there...Hello, my home...I don't look Chinese anymore..."

(Atsumi and Paul exit. Kitchen light drops down.)

FAMILY MOMENTS

1. Hair combing, Ronnie and Tina

2. Mother-in-law, Ronnie and Tina and Will
3. Embrace, Ronnie and Tina; Will with cup
4. Hands, Will and Tina; Ronnie, old, at window
5. Three Alone
6. Couple Cross, Paul and Atsumi; Welcome into Unwelcome
7. Pregnant, Tina; Men Chat
8. Clutching pillow, Tina; Will and Atsumi kids; Ronnie and Paul, old
9. Embrace, Tina and Atsumi; Paul with baby, Ronnie watch, Will schiz.
10. Mourning

(Atsumi and Ronnie exit; Tina in bed on sleeping Will.)

TRUTH OF THE MATTER

TINA: The truth of the matter is, I'm 38 years old.
 My grandmother died this year when she was 95.
 My mother died seventeen years ago when she was 54.
 My mother died in her parents' home.
 My grandmother was born at home, but she died in a hospital.
 The truth of the matter is, I have no children.
 I have 5 sisters, and 2 brothers.
 Of the 8 of us, only one has children.
 The truth of the matter is, We sleep in the bed his mother died in. His father and his grandmother also died in the house we live in.
 He was born on his father's birthday.
 His father and his grandfather, and his great-grandfather all died when they were 47.
 His uncle was a construction worker and is buried in the concrete of a bridge her was working on.
 His father's great-grandfather came to this country from debtor's prison.

His ancestor was beheaded for betraying Queen Elizabeth.

All of my grandmother's children are divorced.

My great-grandfather was an outlaw, but he laid down his gun. When my mother was dying, her father found the gun and brought it to her.

My great-grandmother died of a broken heart to years after her husband died. My mother died of cancer two years after her husband died. My sister remembers the instant in which each of her children was conceived.

The first two years of my life, I slept in a closet.

When I was two, we moved to a log cabin.

My grandmother's great-aunt was burned as a witch.

My father's grandfather married a woman who was a twin. Five years after their marriage he discovered that the sister he was living with was not the one he had married.

My grandmother's family comes from a land where they believe that the wife should be fat because it shows that her husband is wealthy.

(Tina and Will exit)

NAME STORIES

(Paul, right at kitchen table)

PAUL: My father's father came from Poland. His name was ZISHE. He crossed the border to Austria without papers hanging underneath a train. In Austria, he changed his name to SIGMUND. When he had to leave Austria he made his way to America through Spain. My grandfather used to say how happy he was to be in America. He used to say, here they need a reason to arrest you. In America, he changed his name to STEVEN. My Uncle DOVID didn't manage to leave Poland in time. My Aunt MALKA escaped across the border of Poland to Germany, across the

border of Germany to France, then to Morocco, then to Buenos Aires. Her son's name is RAFAEL.

My mother's father came from Slovakia. His name was MIA. His family were gypsies. When they came to America, my grandfather carried with him only a small rolled up rug and a pillow. They found a place to camp out, in the fields of Long Island. Later they lived in Tudor-style houses in Forest Hills filled with furniture.

When my grandfather was dying, crowds of gypsies camped in the corridors of the hospital in New York. There's a photograph of my grandfather where he stands like this:

(Paul stands as Gypsy cross)

WILL: (from sofa, center) My name is the same as my father's name and the same as my grandfather's name. But I don't know where the name came from. I don't know who my grandfather was. They won't tell me. They're afraid to talk about it.

There was either something tragic or something scandalous that happened. It may have been either an accident while he was riding on the running board of the car or a fire that destroyed all traces of him. He may have been either an undertaker or a football player. He may have been either killed while riding on the running board of a hearse or he had continual bleeding from the ears 'til he died. Or he was a drunkard. Or he ran away. All that's left is a photograph of him that looks like a photograph of me.

(Strike Home set except sofa)

I KNOW #2

(Tina and Ronnie cross to sofa and sit)

- RONNIE: We were visiting the ruins, some sublime temple of some vanished civilization, in Guatemala. I said to him, "What do you care about, really? What do you believe in, besides the corporation?" I said "You know, even though it's a multi-national, it's not the world."
- TINA: I know.
- RONNIE: "Even though it has interests throughout the world, it's still not the world."
- TINA: I know.
- RONNIE: He said, "Sometime when I'm alone, all alone, I pray..." They told me they were being transferred to Kuwait-
- TINA: I know.
- RONNIE: -and they'd just gotten settled in Pakistan. They said they didn't mind where they lived in the Middle East, that after the pleasant years in Chile and Brazil they had come to think of South America as their home.
- TINA: I know.
(they rise, walk; Will strikes bench)
- RONNIE: We were resting on the steps of the palace at Abu Dabu, and he was telling me that his corporation is interested not just in oil but in sugar cane, in entertainment, films-and even in the circus.
- TINA: I know.
- RONNIE: Then he said, "Are you aware of your genitals, right now, as you're sitting here talking?" I wasn't at all sure what I should feel about his talking to me like that...
- She seemed nervous as we were leaving for the shrine outside of Kuala Lumpur. It was about that interesting Russian type she'd met the last year in Jamaica. It had just been disclosed that all along he'd be an agent of the KGB.
- TINA: I know.
- RONNIE: I said, "I wouldn't be too distressed. After all, everyone has to make a living some way..." Ah, the ruins, the splendid ruins!"
(they exit; wall moved back)

(Uncomfortable Tourist cross, Paul. Set window. Ronnie, peeking. Will crosses on stilts. Men leaning cross, Paul and Will. Kids cross, Atsumi and Tina. Carrying the Injured cross, Will and Tina. Reporter to Ob. Deck, Atsumi. Dragging cross, Will and Paul and Tina. Will and Paul as Corporate Mercenaries. Will with cassette of Muzak. Set window and frame, LC, with chairs. Corporate Mercenaries cross, Paul and Will: dance in chairs, questioned by Atsumi, Ob. Deck pushed by Tina.)

CORPORATE MERECENARIES AND MOVE THE PLANT

ATSUMI: What line of work are you in?

PAUL/WILL: Weeeeeeeee

(repeated each time as the alternate:)

stabilize/destabilize/eliminate/remove/replace/train/interrogate/advise/get rid of/terminate.

ATSUMI: Who pays you?

PAUL/WILL: Certainnnnnnn

fruit companies/oil interests/intelligence operations/soft drink

firms/Japanese American Dutch German Companies.

ATSUMI: Is there anything that bothers you in your work?

PAUL/WILL: The first tiiiiimme

PAUL: I watched an interrogation I threw up.

PAUL/WILL: The second tiiimmme

PAUL: I held it in.

PAUL/WILL: The third tiiimmme

PAUL: I was a little shaky.

PAUL/WILL: The fourth tiimmme

PAUL: It didn't bother me.

(Ronnie, as Corporate Head in right window, rips away curtain. Corporate Mercenarie's dance continues.)

ATSUMI: (to Ronnie) How would you describe your work?

RONNIE: Move the plant to Brazil. Transfer funds to Paraguay.
Shift the Indians to Santa Clara. Merge the factory in Canada with the one in Minnesota. Close down the branch in North Carolina. Move the operation to Malaysia.

(Music changes):

Buy Japanese yens/sell Mexican pesos/hold on to German marks/hold off on Indian rupees/buy Brazilian cruzeros/bid on gold/get a hold of Saudi-Arabian riyals and buy Swiss francs/pick up a few rubles and some Chinese yuan.

ATSUMI: What does your company produce?

RONNIE: Create needs. Create tastes. Create products. Create wishes. Create longings.

(All exit but Will, on empty stage, dances to musak;
His Girlfriend, Tina, enters, dances with him; Paul and Ronnie enter wigged, etc, as Hookers; All promenade to muzak; Atsumi enters as Jap. Hood; piano, cymbal and sax embellish muzak; join promenade; all exit but Harry who turns the muzak into a sax solo)

WORLD REFUGEE STATISTICS

(Ronnie sits with musicians, left, and reads from
World Refugee Statistics as other 4 bring out shopping cart, suitcases, boxes, drappings, with which they cover selves to become anonymous refugees and move bundles across with them as Ronnie reads)

RONNIE: Displaced from Argentina taking refuge in Austria, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Ecuador, France, Israel, Italy, the United Kingdom; Displaced from Brazil taking refuge in France, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland. Displaced from Chile, taking refuge in Algeria, Columbia, Cuba, Honduras, Panama, USA; from Cuba, taking refuge in Spain, USA, Venezuela; from El Salvador, to Costa Rica; from Haiti to Bahamas, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, USA; from Nicaragua to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras Panama, USA; from Cyprus to United Kingdom, internally displaced; from Palestine to East Jordan, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank; from Yemen to Oman; from Angola to Botswana, Namibia, Zaire, Zambia; from Chad to Cameroon, Niger, Sudan; from Equatorial Guinea to Cameroon, Gabon, Spain; from Ethiopia to Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, internally displaced; from Lesotho to Botswana; from Namibia to Angola, Botswana, Zambia; from Rwanda to Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire; from Western Sahara to Algeria; from South Africa to Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, etc.

(CROSSINGS during Ronnie's text:

Bag and stick, Atsumi. Guided Tourist/Ref, Will. Two heads, Paul and Tina. Kerchief, Atsumi. Breugal, all. Rolling, all. Head-bundle, Paul. Cart 1, Tina and Will. Carrying her, Paul and Atsumi. Cart 2, Tina and Will. Black Shawl, Atsumi. Wounded, Will, Tina and Atsumi. Wrapping, Unwrapping, Paul. Shared Bundle, Atsumi and Tina. Leaning, Will and Paul. 2 Suitcases, Atsumi rests. Shoulder carry, Will and Tina. Atsumi exits.)

(after all the crossings, Ronnie crosses:)

RONNIE: In Africa, displaced: 4,045,200. In Asia, displaced: 7,292,000; In Europe, 229,750; in Latin America, 1,085,300; in the Middle East, 3,312,500.

(Wall moved to center again, for Refugee Voices Section: actor indicated as 'voice' stands against wall with bundle in hand, speaks with sounds which are underscored musically, and translated by another actor sitting DS on stool)

FORM 320

VOICE:PAUL, TRANSLATOR:WILL:

PAUL: (vocal mode)

WILL: He says all the family's money went to get a form 320 for me. Then they don't accept more the form 320. Then my father sell the last animals to get a form 13. Then I got caught working.

GO BACK

VOICE:ATSUMI, TRANSLATOR:TINA, QUESTIONER:PAUL

PAUL: What did you take with when you left your country?

ATSUMI: (vocal mode)

TINA: Only the clothes I was wearing.

PAUL: What do you miss most?

ATSUMI: (vocal mode)

TINA: Water that I grew up with. It tastes very different in this country.

PAUL: What is most confusing to you?

ATSUMI: (vocal code)

TINA: People's smiles

PAUL: Is it true that you want to go back?

(Silent moment before they exit)

MISSING HELICOPTER

VOICE:TINA, TRANSLATOR:RONNIE

TINA: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: She says, in my country there's an herb that grows. I don't know the name. The smell fills the air in August. And I miss the taste of certain food-wonderful spiced: cumin, caraway. And the landscape; the way the land spreads out. And the light.

TINA: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: She says, in my country the land is sinking under the rain. In my country people are taken away with hoods over their heads. In my country people get tortured and thrown out of helicopters. People turn away, they don't see anything.

FAMILY DESTROYED/CHECKLIST

VOICE:RONNIE, TRANSLATOR: WILL

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

WILL: She says her whole family got destroyed. She says everyone she knows was rounded up and taken away. She says she went on alone.

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

WILL: She says her country has been in wars for may generations. She says when you have to leave take with you a warm sweater, a few small valuables for bribes, a few photographs.
keep busy
don't pity yourself
laugh whenever its possible
don't wait for God to change things
if you have no family left, choose someone to take care of

even if it's not a pleasure, live another day
to spite the enemy
to tell the story.

OH GOD

VOICE:TINA, TRANSLATOR:PAUL

TINA: (vocal mode)

PAUL: She says I leave my country in the night in the winter. In the sky the smoke made a black cloud everywhere. Now I don't sleep. I ask my god, My God, how do I see my family again, and how do I go back to my country. I sorry I don't get the answer from my god.

OBEDIENCE

VOICE:RONNIE, TRANSLATOR:ATSUMI

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

ATSUMI: She says they are not unique. She says, their terrible, their brutal behavior is not unique. Obedience, I would say, obedience. Power, something about power...

DREAM/SHOCK/HAPPY

VOICE:PAUL, TRANSLATOR:TINA

PAUL: (vocal mode)

TINA: He says he dreams of many places, he has nightmares only of home.

PAUL: (vocal mode)

TINA: He says, we didn't have the time to think. We were like hit in the head and then we walked around in shock. Where I come from people are soft and gentle. My father could cry like a baby. Here if you saw someone behave human you were moved by that. It was the first time we were in the rain all night with no roof. I knew that everything had changed from that night.

PAUL: (vocal mode)

TINA: He says if you don't think about yourself you can't feel pity of yourself.
You have to invent to feel happy. And if you think you're happy, you feel,
in a way, happy.

FIRST ENGLISH

RONNIE: She came here with her mother, her grandparents, her aunt and two
cousins. She's in school now and has learned her first English lesson.

ATSUMI: This is the mother, so happy and gay
This is the father who work all the day
This is the brother, so strong and tall
This is the sister who plays with her doll
This is the baby, sweetest of all
This is the whole family, great and small.

(Border Crossing set up with raised platforms of path's flanks)

(Toll Crossing, Paul: Ronnie's arm, bag, coat
Tina gathers baggage, Shopping Cart Lady
Officer, Will, sets platform, examines Paul
Raincoat Cross, Atsumi
Ronnie, self-exam of platform
Currents Cross, Paul
Shopping Cart, Tina, cross
Angel cross, Will, then to platform
Officer, Paul, examines Angel on platform
Angel cross, Will, finishes
Flying cross: Tina, Atsumi, Paul (twice)
Atsumi, in window, putting Ref. on
Struggling Couple cross: Will, Tina
Ronnie with Head cross past strugglers
Paul with suitcase cross
Ref cross, Atsumi

Street Singer(Gypsy Song), Paul and Ronnie

Struggler finish

Officer cross, Will, to Ob. Deck, observes

Little Man, Tina, cross

Ref cross, Atsumi: Tina backtracks into Atsumi then continues on

Clarinet, Paul

Little Man, Tina

Will off Ob. Deck

Tina exit last)

THE END

APPENDIX F

TOURIST & REFUGEES No. 2

Text by members of the Winter Project

Music by Harry Mann, William Uttley and Suzanne Little

Actors:

Ray Barry

Ronnie Gilbert

Robbie McCauley

Will Patton

Tina Shepard

Paul Zimet

Director:	Joseph Chaikin
Dramaturg:	Mira Rafalowicz
Set:	Jun Maeda
Lights:	Beverly Emmons
Costumes:	Mary Brecht
Stage Manager:	Ruth Kreshka
Asst. Director:	Steve Reisner

Performed at La Mama April 28-May 24, 1981.

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 7, Folder 75.

Will as 'Tour Guide' moves curtain from left to right
 Tour Bus #1 crosses (Beach ball, Gladys, Paul from Oohs/Aaahs, Moving
 on Again, Tour guide)

PINEAPPLE POEM #1*

TOUR GUIDE (Will):

did you like your piece of pineapple
 do you eat much pineapple where you come from
 how did this piece compare with pineapple you've eaten before
 what do you remember about the last time you ate a piece of pineapple
 do you remember the first time you tasted pineapple
 do you like it better fresh or from the can
 what do you remember of the picture on the can
 what did you feel as you looked at the picture
 which do you like better the picture or the pineapple field
 did you ever imagine pineapples growing somewhere
 how do you like these pineapple fields
 have you ever seen pineapple fields before
 do you know where pineapple is native to the islands
 do you know whether the natives ate pineapples
 do you know whether the natives grew pineapples

* Pineapple speeches From W.S. Merwin's "Questions to Tourists Stopped in a
 Pineapple Field."

'Moving on Again' (Tina) crosses
 'Travel Agent' (Ray) crosses and bring on SL window
 'Hood' (Paul) brings on SR window
 (Travel Agent and Hood disguise themselves)
 'Haitian' (Robbie) crosses

'Oohs/Aah' (Tina) crosses and enters SL window, changes into Little Man
 'Clara' (Robbie) enters SR window

CLARA #1 WINDOW*

CLARA (Robbie): When I arrive in London I'll go out to
 Buckingham Palace, see the Thames at dusk and Big Ben. I'll go for
 lovely walks through Hyde Park, and to the little tea rooms with great bay
 windows, and white table cloths an little white tables. I'll order tea. and it
 will be June.

* Clara's speeches from Adrienne Kennedy's "Ida in London"

Green Bag enters SL window

Tour Bus #2 crosses (Travel Agent, Little Man, Green Bag)

PINEAPPLE POEM #2

TOUR GUIDE (Will):

what and where was the last animal you noticed
 what was the last bird you noticed
 do you remember what sort of bird it was
 do you know whether there were birds before
 are there any birds where you come from
 have you seem any natives since you arrived
 what were they doing what were they wearing
 what language were they speaking were they in nightclubs
 are there any natives where you come from

'Going Native w/ Marracas' (Ronnie) crosses

'Macho Crotcho' (Paul) crosses

'Cool' (Ray, Robbie) crosses

'Oohs/Aahs' (Paul, Tina) cross to Question Angel

OOHS/AAHS QUESTION ANGEL

TINA: Are you a waterfall?

PAUL: A native?

TINA: A ruin?

 Are you a spirit?

PAUL: Are you an angel?

TINA: Are you?

PAUL: An angel?

TINA: An angel?

PAUL: An angel?

TINA: Do you sleep?

 Do you dream?

PAUL: Do you dance?

TINA: Is your hair made of gold?

PAUL: Is it?

 Do you have feelings?

TINA: Are you near the dead?

PAUL: Are you?

 Do you feed the fauns?

TINA: Do you take care of the garden?

PAUL: Do you?

TINA: Do you?

 Where do you come from?

 What is it like?

 Is it made of air?

 Is it made of colors?

 Is it made of music?

PAUL: What's the light like?

What's it like?

What's the light like?

'Travel Agent' (Ray) crosses into SL window

TRAVEL AGENT #1

TRAVEL AGENT (Ray): You wanna take a trip? Get away from it all? Take a rest?

Take a holiday. Vacation. Go to Méhico. Rio de Janiero. Alcaupulco.

Trinidad. Jamaica. Miami. Las Vegas, 24 hour town. Topless happy

home. Take a trip around the work in 28 days. Shop different. Cheaper.

Get some sun. Get some tan. You work all year long. You might as well get away. Take a vacation. What the hell!

You like movie stars? I'll show you some movie stars. Go to Hollywood!

Sunset Blvd! Movie stars all over the place. They pass you on the left. The pass you on the right.

See the Chinese theatre where movie stars put their shoes in the wet cement. And they don't even mind that they get the wet cement all over their shoes. These movie stars got 40-50 pairs of shoes.

It all depends on what you want or what you're looking for.

(mode) Some people like it one way, some people like it another. It's okay with me.

Maybe you want to take a cruise to the islands. Get some sun and rum and fun! Sky, beach, pineapples, palm trees. They eat fish with the heads on them. Hotel rooms overlooking the ocean. Tantalizing specialties. Lotsa service. Lotsa natives. Fuck a native if you want. No telephone. No TV. No radio. No outside world. And you can wear anything you want.

It all depends on what you want and what you're looking for. Some people like it one way, some people like it another. It's okay with me.

(mode)

Or... Maybe you want to go to the Holy Lands.
 Go to Jerusalem. Get right up close to God.
 Go to Mecca. Get right up close to God.
 Go to Isfahan where Marco Polo rested his camels
 I'll even take you to the place where Christ was buried. And you know
 what? It's all in ruins. That's right totally ruined.
 It all depends on what you want and what you're looking for. Some people
 like it one way, some like it another. It's okay with me.
 Now you give me \$100 down I'll make a reservation, you cancel 45 days
 before the flight, I give you \$75 back, \$25 in my pocket. You cancel 15
 days before the flights, I'll give \$15 back, \$85 in my pocket, you cancel
 any other time, \$100 right in my pocket.
 I got connections. You need connections, I got 'em. I got so many
 connections, my connections are connected.
 It all depends on what you want and what you're looking for. Some people
 like it one way, some like it another. It's okay with me.

'Harry' (Harry, Tour Guide Will) crosses

'I Knows' (Ronnie, Robbie, Tina) enter Path SL

I KNOW #1

RONNIE: She couldn't take it anymore and she left him.
 TINA: I know.
 RONNIE: He felt he'd lost his home, he said the only home he'd ever known was
 next to her body.
 TINA: I know. I know. I know.
 RONNIE: Only home her body. He went away, gave up everything.
 TINA: I know.
 RONNIE: Sold his business and his apartment. He thought that if he could live
 simply, close to the earth, he might find his balance, so he went to the

islands to live. Sunny. Palm trees. Pineapple. Always the sound of the sea.
 He met someone there who likes to love simply and they moved in
 together.
 He says they live in paradise but it isn't home.

I KNOW #2

RONNIE: They took a trip around the world in 28 days.
 On the 27th day they were waiting at an airport lounge looking up at the
 stars. Suddenly he told her that the universe is in a state of constant
 creation. She looked at him. He said that in the universe galaxies keep
 disappearing, but new ones are born and take their place.
 He was saying that these changes are tiny compared to the universe itself
 which goes on forever. She noticed he had hazel eyes.
 He told her that the earth is younger than the oldest star in our galaxy and
 that our galaxy is dynamic, full of violent change. And while he was
 talking she was looking at his nose
 She was looking at his mouth
 She wanted to kiss his nose
 She wanted to close his mouth with a kiss.

'Grapes' (Paul) enters SR window as 'Checking Beverly' (Robbie) crosses
 'Wisher' (Tina) crosses and enters on SL window

WISHER TEXT

WISHER (Tina): I love to travel
 to see the sights
 to get away from it all
 to find adventure
 to be in another time

to meet somebody
to make a change

I love to travel
to see the ruins
to walk among ruins
to feel like I'm in a movie
to change who I am
to be by the sea
to have a few perfect hours

This could be the day
I'm looking for someone who would love me
He would be a native
I wouldn't know how to live in his world
But I could learn how to live in it
I might leave my world and never go back
Everything I wanted, even what I'd stopped wanting, would be in this new
place
I would never need to go back
This could be the day
I brought an outfit with me for every occasion
For the day; for the night
For meeting someone; for being alone

This could be the day
My life might change
I might find someone
He might love me
I might fall in love

This could be the day
 I might have clothes made up of the colors of leaves, of birds and of fish
 I might sit under a waterfall that went all the way into the sky
 I would be among the clouds
 I would breathe clouds
 I would cry
 I would sing
 I would walk among palms some days
 Other days I would swim in the sea
 I would dance in the night
 I would dance all night

'Beverly' (Robbie) enters SR window, removes hat and wig
 'Board Chairmen' (Ronnie, Tour Guide Will) crosses
 'Phillip' (Paul) crosses
 'Bag' (Tina) enters from up stage

PHILLIP AND BAG

BAG: Are you enjoying your vacation?
 PHILLIP: Yes.
 BAG: Do you like to travel on your vacation?
 PHILLIP: Yes, very much.
 BAG: Why?
 PHILLIP: It makes me feel young. Opens up new possibilities. Get a new outlook.
 Meet new people. Pick up the local language.
 BAG: Do you talk to the natives?
 PHILLIP: Why yes. The other day I had a wonderful conversation with a native fisherman. I said to him "Spear-O Fish-O" He understood me perfectly.
 BAG: What do you do when you go on a spree?
 PHILLIP: I laugh. Dance.
 BAG: Could you show us how you dance

PHILLIP: (shows) That's it.

BAG: Is there anything you could imagine doing on vacation that you wouldn't do at home?

PHILLIP: I can imagine it. But I wouldn't do it.

BAG: Do you have any sexual fantasies?

PHILLIP: No.

BAG: Not even on vacation?

PHILLIP: No.

BAG: If you had any sexual fantasies what would they be?

PHILLIP: Well, if I had sexual fantasies I might imagine lying on a beautiful beach with palm trees and blue water and I'd be making love to several native women at the same time, you know, having sexual intercourse with one while I was licking the vagina of another, and sticking my fingers in the vaginas of two others, and at the same time sticking my toes in two other vaginas, while another woman would be licking me all over, and another would be sitting on me rubbing her genitals up and down my body, and the vaginas would be wet, very, very, wet, or I might imagine a similar sort of thing with some of the indigenous men, you know jerking off several men with penises of assorted shapes and shades while I'm sucking another penis and my penis is in someone's rectum, and someone's penis is in my rectum, and another person's penis is in that person's rectum, and maybe we're covered with crushed pineapple and there are some native dogs – no, no dogs – or I might imagine, if I had sexual fantasies, sitting next to a traveler on a plane or boat and I would drug her food so she was completely immobilized and I would pull down her panties and lick her clitoris and she would feel extreme pleasure but not be able to show any sign of it, or I might imagine making love during some international crisis – like Iran or Poland – and as the crisis heated up I would become more excited and then I would imagine the bomb going off and my molecules being blown apart as I ejaculate...ejacu
(voices)

Just wait a sec...is this...is this...just let me catch my breath...is this my voice...no...Don't try...It's coming...It's not that I can't hear myself...Nothing to do...Spear-O, Fish-0...there, that was it just now, it came out just like that, nothing to worry about. Spearoni Fishoni...Oh-oh...don't help, don't help, it'll come. It's just a little lapse. I can already feel it coming back now. Something in the pattern, the tone, the turn of phrase. There. I've got it. It must have been the feeling of dislocation. Being away from home.

BAG: Are you different at home than you are now?

PHILLIP: Of course I am.

BAG: Could you show us how?

PHILLIP: I'm relaxed.

'Tour Bus #3" (Clara, Rich Tourist, Tour Guide) crosses

PINEAPPLE POEM #3

TOUR GUIDE (Will):

what would you say is the color of pineapple leaves
 when you look at things in rows how do you feel
 would you like to dream of pineapple fields
 did you buy any clothes especially for the islands
 did you make your own plans or are you part of a group
 would you rather be on your own or with a group
 how many are in your group
 how much was your ticket
 are the side tours part of the ticket or are they extra
 are hotel and meals and car part of the ticket or extra
 have you already paid or will you pay later
 did you pay by check or by credit card

Bag Dance (Tina, Ray)

LOVE MOMENTS

‘Cups’ (Will, Tina)

‘Regard’ (Paul, Ray)

‘Bed’ (Robbie)

‘Child’ (Tina, Ray)

‘Shaking’ (Will, Paul)

‘Family Moments’ (Will, Ronnie, Tina)

(Ronnie, Paul on Bench)

‘Bed’ (Will, add Tina)

‘Finding a Position’ (Paul, Tina)

‘Head Anguish’ (Will)

‘Lap’ (Tina, Ray)

‘Head to Head’ (Paul, Robbie)

‘Crackers’ (Paul, Ray, Tina)

‘Breathing Embrace’ (Tina, Robbie)

‘Gladys’ (Ronnie)

‘Restless Sleep’ (Tina, Will, Paul)

(Strike love moments. Raise curtain revealing:)

THE PORT

‘Waiting’ (Ronnie)

‘Little Man’ (Tina)

‘Athlete #1’ (Ray)

‘Clara’ (Robbie)

CLARA #2

CLARA (Robbie): I went to London – the Queen Elizabeth, London.

They all said who ever heard of anybody going to London but I went. I stayed in my cabin the whole crossing, solitary. I was the only Negro there.

‘Athlete #2’ (Will)

‘Trembling’ (Robbie)

‘Old Couple’ (Paul, Ronnie)

(Little Man and Tour Guide close PORT by pulling two curtains)

‘Transvestite and Josephine’

(Curtain descends. Windows come outs.)

‘Hood and Wife’ (Will, Tina) enter SR window

‘Hood’ (Paul) enters SL window

‘Hoods and Wife’ promenade into ‘Board and Hoods’

BOARDS AND HOODS

(HOODS in front of closed curtain)

HOODS: We stabilize
destabilize

We advise
train

We interrogate
eliminate
terminate

We work for certain fruit companies
certain oil interests
certain intelligence companies

certain soft drink firms

certain British-American-German-Dutch-

Swiss-Brazilian companies

(BOARD mode begins. HOODS open curtain revealing
BOARD)

HOODS: certain fruit companies

BOARD: Move the plant to Brazil

HOODS: certain Swiss banks

BOARD: Transfer funds to Paraguay

HOODS: certain intelligence operations

BOARD: Shift the Indians to Santa Clara

HOODS: certain arms dealers

BOARD: Close down the plant in North Carolina

HOODS: certain British-American-German-Dutch-Swiss-Brazilian
companies

BOARD: Move the operation to Maylasiz

(BOARD mode changes)

HOODS: certain tourist corporations

certain intelligence operations

BOARD: buy Japanese yen....sell Mexican pesos...hold onto German marks...hold
off on Indian rupees...buy Brazilian cruzeros...sell Portuguese
escudos...bid on gold...get hold of some Saudi Arabian riyals...buy Swiss
francs...pick up a few rubles and Chinese yuan

HOODS: certain nuclear industries

certain British-American-German-Dutch-Swiss-Brazilian
companies

(BOARD mode changes)

BOARD: we create needs
 we create markets
 we create tastes
 we create longings

(HOODS close curtain)

‘Injured’ (Ray, Robbie) crosses

‘Street Singer’ (Paul, Ronnie) crosses

STREET SINGER SONG

STREET SINGER: My young love said to me, “My mother won’t mind.

 And my father won’t slight you for your lack of kine.”

 And she stepped away from me, and this she did say.

 It will not be long, love, ‘til our wedding day.

 She stepped away from me and she moved through the fair

 And fondly I watched her move here and move there

 And then she went homeward with one star away

 As the swan of the evening flies over the lake.

REFUGEE CROSSINGS

 ‘Tears’ (Will, Tina, Robbie)

 ‘Crawling’ (Ray)

 ‘Head Bundles’ (Paul, Tina, Robbie)

 ‘2 Bags’ (Will)

 ‘Carrying’ (Ray, Robbie)

 ‘1/2 and 1/2’ (Tina)

'Leaning' (Paul, Will)
 'Veiled' (Robbie)
 'Staggering' (Ray)
 'Shared Bundle' (Tina, Robbie)
 'Carrying on Back' (Paul)
 'Near Dead' (Tina, Will)
 'Carrying #2' (Paul, Ray)
 'Haitian' (Robbie)
 'Household Goods' (Tina, Will)
 (Translation of Refugee voices set up)

REFUGEE VOICES

SPIRITS

Robbie: voice

Tina: SPIRITS text

ROBBIE: (vocal mode)

TINA: She says, in my village everyone knew everyone

ROBBIE: (vocal mode)

TINA: She says, in my village we lived with stories our old people told
in my village we lived with spirits:

spirits of air

spirits of earth, of water and light

ROBBIE: (vocal mode)

TINA: She says, I didn't want to leave, I had to leave.

FINALLY DESTROYED

Ronnie: voice

Will: FAMILY DESTROYED text

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

WILL: She says her whole family got destroyed. She says everyone she knows was rounded up and taken away. She went on alone.

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

WILL: She says her country has been in wars for many generation. She says when you have to leave take with you something warm to wear
a few small valuables for bribes. a few photographs.
keep busy
don't pity yourself
don't wait for God to change things
even if it's not a pleasure choose someone to take care of, live another day
to spite the enemy
to tell the story

MISSING

Tina: voice

Ronnie: MISSING text

TINA: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: She says, in my country there's an herb that grows. I don't know the name. The smell fills the air in August. And I miss the taste of certain food – wonderful spices: Cumin, caraway. And the landscape; the way the land spreads out. And the light.

TINA: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: She says, in my country the land is sinking under the rain. In my country people are taken away with hoods over their heads. In my country people are tortured and thrown out of helicopters. People turn away, they don't see anything.

DREAM/SHOCK/HAPPY

Paul: voice

Ronnie: DREAM/SHOCK/HAPPY text

PAUL: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: He says he dreams of many places, he has nightmares only of home.

PAUL: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: He says, we didn't have the time to think. We were like hit in the head and then we walked around in shock. Where I come from people are soft and gentle. My father could cry like a baby. Here we were like animals just trying to live.

PAUL: (vocal mode)

RONNIE: He says if you don't think about yourself you cant feel pity of yourself. You have to invent to feel happy. And if you think you're happy, you feel, in a way, happy.

OBEDIENCE

Ronnie: voice

Ray: OBEDIENCE text

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

RAY: She says, their brutality was not unique.

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

RAY: She says, the people became obedient.

RONNIE: (vocal mode)

RAY: Power, she's talking about power.

FIRST ENGLISH

RONNIE: She came here with her mother, her grandparents, her aunt and two cousins. She's in school now and has learned her first English lesson.

ROBBIE: This is the mother, so happy and gay
 This is the father who work all the day
 This is the brother, so strong and tall
 This is the sister who play with her doll
 This is the baby, sweetest of all
 This is the whole family, great and small.

(Refugee Voices are stuck)

'Name Story' (Paul Will) crosses from upstage doorway

NAME STORY

PAUL: In my family we changed names many times.
 In Poland my grandfather was named Zishe.
 He crossed the border to Austria without papers hanging underneath a train.
 In Austria he bought a dead man's passport. His name became Sigmund.
 He escaped across the border of Austria to Germany, across the border of Germany to France, then to Morocco, then to Buenos Aires.
 In Buenos Aires he changed his name to Saul.
 He lived there for many years. Then suddenly he had to flee, first to Venezuela, then to Mexico, then to the United States.
 My grandfather used to say how happy he was to be here. He used to say, here they need a reason to arrest you. In the United States he changed his name to Steven.

'I Used to Wonder' (Ronnie, Tina) crosses from upstage doorway

I USED TO WONDER

RONNIE: I used to wonder what it would be like
If I had to leave my home
If I had to leave my country
If I arrived in a place where no one understood my words
Where voices around me sounded like wild noises

I used to wonder
What would I take with me
What would I have time to choose
Would I find a way to go into hiding
If I stayed behind
I know who was a friend and who was not?
We know how to speak without words which had become a language to
know one another?

I used to wonder if I found myself alone
Would I think about killing myself
Would I think about joining the enemies?
Turning on my friends?

I used to wonder if I went to another country
How would I earn my living?
Would I be arrested?
Would I ever go back?
Would there be anything to go back to?

I used to wonder how will I know when it was time to leave?

(curtain descends)

'Clara' (Robbie) crosses

CLARA #3

ROBBIE: They all say, "London, who the hell ever heard of anybody going to London?" Of course I shouldn't go. They said I had lost my mind. They said I should stay and teach summer school. But I went. All the way from Piccadilly Circus out there in the black taxi, my cold hands were colder than ever. Then it happened. No sooner had I left the taxi and passed down a gray walk through a dark gate and into a garden where there were black ravens on the grass when I broke down and started to cry. Oh, the tower, winters in the Queens house, right in front of everybody. People came and stared. I was the only Negro there...you must know what it is to be filled with yearning.

'Hawaii' (Paul, Tina) crosses

'Travel Agent' (Ray) enters SL window

TRAVEL AGENT #2

RAY: There's a special tour of iron curtain countries. It's a package deal for groups only. Bullet holes all over the buildings. You go to East Germany. Bullet holes all over the buildings. And a lot of pussy under them bullet holes, too. Nobody talks about that. I know about that.

Lotsa vodka, lotsa pussy, lotsa bullet holes. Right across the wall from East Berlin to Czechoslovakia. From Czechoslovakia into Poland into Hungary. From Latvia which isn't a country anymore to Samsonia which isn't a country yet. But I'll take you to both of them anyway. You know how those countries change all the time.

Follow that wall into Lithuania to Estonia, and to the Ukraine – nothing but bullet holes, pussy and vodka.

It all depends on what you want or what you're looking for. Some people like I one way, some people like it another. It's okay with me.

(mode)

Or, maybe you want to take a little tour of famous graves. Go to where the bones are under the earth, beneath the ground. Walk right on top of the bones.

From Mussolini to Mao to Montezuma, walk right on top of the bones. King Tut, Lenin, Stalin, the grave of Hegel. Walk right on top of the bones. Napoleon Bonaparte. Walk right on top of the bones.

I'll even take you to Hitler's grave and they haven't even found that yet but I know where it is, and I'm going to take you.

It all depends on what you want or what you're looking for. Some people like I one way, some people like it another. It's okay with me.

Now let's face it. Any place you go, it's going to get boring after a while. You go to the Holy lands, you go to Hollywood, go to the islands, go to the iron curtain countries, it's going to get boring after a while. Eat new food, drink new drink, meet new pussy, it's still going to get boring. What are we going to do about that? I've got a solution. Got a worldwide tour. Travel around the world in twenty-eight days. Keep moving. I got a tour which will take people all over the world, all over the globe, earth! See the way different people live. Everywhere you go, shop different, cheaper. Cover the whole world, the whole globe, the whole earth. See the whole houses of Hamburg, Amsterdam. The ancient temples of Tibet with their golden Buddhas, big, golden. Swim among the corals of the Haitian bay. The renowned toilets of Kuala Lumpur. The strange customs of Calcutta. They wipe their ass with their left hand. It's true. With their left hand. It all depends on what you want or what you're looking for. Some people like I one way, some people like it another. It's okay with me. You miss romance? Miss a little loving in your life? A little affection? Tenderness? Empathy? Go to Venice. Venizia. Lots of little canals,

gondolas going up and down, bridge of sighs. Lots of aristocrats. As a matter of fact you get to be an aristocrat just by going there, that's all you have to do. People holding hands. Hugging, kissing, grabbing each other, looking each other in the eyes. Dry humping in the gondolas. And it's all blue, totally blue, all blue...

'Satin Doll' (Paul, Ronnie) enters SR window

'Tour Bus #4' (Satin Doll couple, Tour Guide Will)

PINEAPPLE POEM #4

TOUR GUIDE (Will):

where have you been in the last three hours
 what have you seen in the last three miles
 do you feel hurried on your vacation
 are you getting your money's worth
 are you homesick
 do you like dancing here what do you do when it
 rains
 was this trip purely for pleasure
 do you drink more or less than at home
 how do you like the place where you live now
 would you like to live here
 if so would it be year round or just for part of the year
 do you think there is a future in pineapple

FINALE

'Refugee' (Robbie)

'Child' (Ray, Tina)

'Toll' (Paul, Ronnie)

'Exam' (Paul, Will)
'Angel Exam' (Will, Paul)
'Self-Exam' (Ronnie)
'Currents' (Paul)
'Piggy-back' (Paul, Ray)
'Tour with Little Man' (Will, Tina)
(General wall climbing and dangling)
'Street Singer' (Ronnie, Harry)
'Little Man tours Alone' (Tina)

THE END

APPENDIX G

TRESPASSING

Text by members of the Winter Project

Music by Neal Kirkwood, Harry Mann and William Uttley

Actors:

Roger Babb

Cristobal Carambo

Gloria Foster

Ronnie Gilbert

Tina Shepard

Paul Zimet

Director: Joseph Chaikin

Dramaturg: Mira Rafalowicz

Set: Jun Maeda

Lights: Jane Hubbard

Light Consultant: Beverly Emmons

Costumes: Mary Brecht

Stage Manager: Ruth Kreshka

Sculpture: Mary Frank

Additional text from Old Testament Psalms and Muriel Rukeyser.

Performed at La Mama February 24-March 21, 1982.

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 8, Folder8

TRESPASSING

(Preset out, Tina moves bed on in dark in front of U.C. doors. Tina crosses to kitchen table, Marimba/ Chimes played from U.R. corner doors. During overture, Tina chops vegetables in kitchen. Anna is lying in the bed with the sculpture. The musicians play. Tina adds sounds with her voice in overture.

Tina crosses U.S. to the bed. Lights pull down. Tina moves bed to Anna I position, then crosses to U.L. stairs where she sits, arm dangling.
Anna speaks.)

ANNA: In the middle of the night
 I woke up dying
 People come to talk to me
 They come to my dying bed
 I can't speak
 I can't speak words that they can hear
 I'm not dying, not me
 Everyone else is dying and I'm watching

 I thought I would try to see what
 it was like to be dead
 for a while
 I think I'll go back now
 to my life.

 It'll be alright
 even if it doesn't change very much
 It's not so bad
 My body isn't listening to me

In a while, I'll get up
I'll sit at the piano and I'll play music
I'll play carefully
Touching music with my fingers
Touching sound with my living fingers
Music touching music, touching music, touching music

No twitches anywhere anymore
Not comfort
Not peace, No peace

This body still
This body still

In the middle of the night
In the middle of sleep
I began to die (piano sound)

I would have woke up
put on shoes
gone to work.

Wait a minute
What about the phone bill
Who will pay it?
What about a coffin
Who will pay for that
If I knew that I wouldn't wake up
anymore
I would have called my friends
together

even mine enemies
 I would look at each one
 Maybe I would forget which was which
 Maybe they wouldn't come
 when I called

It would be a leave-taking
 If I had known yesterday was my last day
 I would have wanted some kinds of departure
 Tenderly remembered, and then forgotten.
 Tenderly, forgotten?

(Scientists appear in U.C. doors, Tina crosses to bed, lowers it and rocks
 and turns it)

SCIENTIST: Angiography reveals sudden rupture of berry shaped
 Aneurysm of left ophthalmic artery – Middle cerebral artery – posterior
 cerebella arteries – superior cerebella arteries

(Tina regards Anna)

Red blood cells and cerebral spinal fluid, cerebral spinal fluid and
 increased pressure thoracic ganglia, lumber ganglia, sacro-ganglia
 vertebral ganglia.

Electroencephalogram reveals slow wave activity and focal spike.

(Tina turns to bed and speaks:)

TINA: Can you see me?

I'm the one who's tending you

I'm the one who's turning you

I'm the one who's turning

(Piano / saw begin. Chorus U.L. on platform sing:)

CHORUS: O all ye works of the lord
 bless ye the lord
 Praise him and magnify him forever
 O all ye angels of the lord
 bless ye the lord
 Praise him and magnify him forever
 O all ye heavens
 bless ye the lord
 O all ye waters that be above the firmament
 bless ye the lord

ANNA: Stop that

CHORUS: O all ye powers of the lords
 bless ye the lord

ANNA: Stops it!

CHORUS: O all ye sun and moon, stars and heaven,
 showers and dew
 bless ye the lord

ANNA: Stop that. Please!

CHORUS: O all ye winds of god, fire and heat, winters and summers
 bless ye the lord
 dews and frosts

ANNA: Stop it!

CHORUS: frosts and colds, snow and ice
 ice and snow
 nights and days
 light and darkness

lightness and clouds

(Light up on lover in kitchen reading letters. Reading letters from a covered jar.)

LOVER: Things are alright with me- I got to work, eat, do the laundry, but I walk around like I'm not all together here.

(new letter)

I miss you terribly in the mornings. The afternoons are not so bad. Yesterday afternoon I actually didn't think about you. The nights are unbearable. The other night after I went to bed I heard someone playing the piano. I thought for a moment it was you.

(new letter)

If you were to need me I would take care of you. I would want to take care of you. I would only need to know.

(new letter)

I hate you. Don't tell me you didn't mean it
That would only make it worse. Your cruelty is unbelievable.

(new letter)

Call.

(new letter)

And maybe you won't be the last love of my life. Not sure. Since I have had to realize that I cannot live without love and intimacy. But you are now in my life, my love. (Notary appears, with mode under)

I kiss the miserable paper. I might as well open the window and kiss the night air.

NOTARY: Name- Anna
 Female
 Born August third, 9 o'clock in the morning
 Central Hospital, Chicago Illinois
 6 lbs 8 ozs
 Eyes brown
 Hair black
 Race mixed
 One month premature
 Mother caucasian
 Father black
 Resident city of Chicago
 Only child
 Cause of death unknown
 Accident – negative
 Starvation – negative
 Old Age – negative
 Natural causes – unknown
 (mode)
 At age 5 entered P.S. 122
 Average student, loved music
 and drawn to the piano
 At age 6 moved to Michigan
 Moved to only neighborhood that
 would accept interracial couple.
 And her father
 At age 8 went away
 wrote her many letters

father fought in all black unit
Father killed in action
Entire unit killed in action
Only black men died
On that day
On that beach
In that way.

(Tina moves bed and speaks:)

TINA: Your mother has come
Your mother is here
Your mother had come to see you

(Ronnie enters U.C. doors, walks around bed and sits in the chair.)

MOTHER: I hope you can hear me...
I always wished I could tell you...
Your father and I...
From the moment you were conceived...

(Mother wanders, Tina aids and exits U.R. door)

ANNA II: What do I do now?
What can I think?
What pictures do I look for?
Something about desire...
Something about murder...
Something about my death...
Something about madness...

(Scientists appear in U.C. doors)

SCIENTISTS: Twenty minutes past midnight.

Aphasia, vertigo, ataxia.

Omniscope exam reveals subhiloid hemorrhage

Superior occipital lobe

Parietal lobes...lobes

corpus collosum

TINA: You can't see

You can't talk

You can still think. You can still hear

SCIENTISTS: Angiogram reveals sacular dilation and

basal spasm of circle of willis reveals

massive encepholopathy globus palatis

cloustrum, substratum

duramiatum

pramaturm

A kinetic mitism reveals ruptured aneurysm

of

ANNA: My brain burst in the middle of the night!

SCIENTIST: bleeding in subarachnoid space

TINA: Even if you can't move

Even if you cant see

Even if you can't be understood

You can still imagine

They sat it is possible you will be

able to hear until the very end

(Tina moves bed S.L. to meet the chair where the lover comes in.
 Tina moves bed U.R. in front of the center doors.
 Sax and musicians begin The one note chorus
 Harry to the light from chair, Tina turns in this light around Harry-
 Chris goes through clothes in the kitchen, trying them on.
 Ronnie sings with musicians
 Tina crosses to bed and takes it back into the room.
 One not chorus fades away
 The terrified man enters U.L. center doors with flowers
 The terrified man attempts an approach to the bed drops flowers,
 withdraws
 attempts again
 fails.
 Tina has entered kitchen and begins to chop vegetables
 Terrified man grabs flowers, runs
 Terrified music faces.
 The Priest enters U.C. doors, loud creaking as door opens)

PRIEST: Anna, I don't know if you can hear me.
 Let go. Forget the body. Go forward. No looking back. Let go. Forget the
 body. Leave it, lying there. Give yourself.

The one that planteth the ear
 Shall that one not hear?

The one that formeth the eye
 Shall that one not see?

The one that teacheth us knowledge
 Shall that one not know?

(Tina breaking vegetables as percussion to scene)

Anna, open your heart

Say yes.

It's not too late. Even in the last
instant you can still say yes.

If you don't

It you don't

You will be accursed by day and accursed by night

You will suffer eternal exile

You will be alone for eternity

You will find no peace, not even one minute

For eternity your name will be blotted out
from under the sky. Among the living
you will never have existed.

I cut my hands off Ann

They had a life of their own

(sits on bed)

You know I used to wake up and say to myself 'Is this it? Is that all?' I
was never satisfied. One day, one moment, one ordinary moment in my
room, the darkness held a presence

I could no more have doubted that it was there than that I was. Indeed I
felt myself, if anything to be the less real of the two. I understood at that
moment that there are things that do not end

This world you are leaving, Anna, it's nothing

When god calls you, run to him.

Don't stop to as 'Am I ready? Am I worthy?'

Don't ask 'Do I approve of his church?'
Run to him and say 'Here I am. I am satisfied.'

Without this, life is a blank. It's a rotten sewer
A swamp of continual anguish and despair. A shoreless, trackless waste.
Every day. Every hour, every minute

(Twisted Song of Creation on Priest exit and Tina moves Anna into
position and raises bed)

ANNA: They have created you to sing songs to

They have invented you because they need you

I can't remember the word for what I need

I need someone to explain everything

Bring all the specialists in the world
together and explain
my dying.

I want the window opened
I want to feel the wind
I want to catch cold and die from it.

Give me my music back
without words of God

I'm not sure of anything

I plan each day
I plan the week, the year
I put my music papers in a blue file
Official documents in a metal box
Love letters in a covered jar
I want to stay a person with a name

(Enter Notary in mode on U.L. platform, continues
under Anna)

Not sure of anything

All the time feeling
Too much
or too little
or not sure.

Colors going
Yellow gone and most of green

I'm frightened of the changes, Momma
I'm frightened of the dark
I'm frightened of the light, too

Let's make a party
Where we can cry for all the dead and dying
And drink wine, until the glass
And the bottle are the same.

My mother is not, not now, my mother
Turn in the mother for another mother

Trade in this day for another day

Trade in

Replace

Exchange me

If my hands could move now

If my fingers could move

I would go to the piano

Be thou exalted

above the heavens

Let thy glory be above all the earth

Let mine enemies wander up and down for meat
and grudge if they be not satisfied

I will sing of thy power

Yea I will sing in the morning

From the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee

Now my heart is overwhelmed.

Other peoples words

Light turning

I wept, in sackcloth

Let me loose

My friends, my lovers

Let me loose

I call you up

even though you don't exist
 I call you up
 I ask you to be with me
 Because of this long loneliness.

(Lights pull down on Anna – Notary mode turns to speaking)

NOTARY: Enraptured in music, studied the piano
 scholarship to school, Finished her studies
 moved to New York. Piano competitions
 engaged in small recitals, saved six years
 for a piano to play
 took on students and taught children to play
 carefully
 Worldly possessions include;
 the aforementioned piano.
 An oak desk,

(Lights up on U.C. door to reveal the vultures going through things in a box)

a dining table oak dresser with attached mirror
 There is a bed, a couch, a rocking chair, legal papers, letters.
 No journal, no diary, no will. According to the law body disposed of by
 the state
 (into mode again, lights fade on Notary, up on piano as Roger and Cris
 enter and kneel at piano. Tina lowers bed turn into position of C stage.
 The two men sing/speak Psalm 88 into piano as Tina moves bed around)

CRIS: Lord god of my salvation I have cried day and night

before thee. Let my prayer come before thee. Incline thine ear into my cry

(Tina, Roger, Cris sing YEA's)

For my soul is full of trouble and
my life draweth nigh into the grave
I am counted with them that go down into the pit
I am as a man who hath no strength

Free among the dead like the slain who lie
in the grave, whom thou rememberst no more
and they are cut off from thy hand. Thou hast laid
me in the lowest pit, in the darkness, in the deep
Thy wrath liest hard upon me and thou hast
afflicted me with all thy ways, Sela

Lover and friend hast thou put far from me and
mine acquaintance into darkness.
Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction
Lord, I have called out daily unto thee
Wilt thou show wonders unto the dead.
Shall the dead arise and praise thee. Sela

Lord, why castest thou off my soul
Why hidest thou face from me. Cella

(YEA's continue with a stop or a cry from Anna in 5 part dissonant chord.
Harry cuts off YEA's. Percussion and tune begin. Bed exits with Tina.
Light change. Tina reenters with bed, empty with added sculptural bones
and hand)

The empty bed dance

(Lights up U.L. platform with Ronnie and Bill and Melodium.

Twisted YEA's

Paul joins them, then drops dead upon first utterance.

Ronnie, Bill, Tina stop, arrange body like sculpture

and returns to bed dance and yea. Roger and Cris sit on bed and exit U.C.

Lights fade.

Lights up and U.R. doors open to reveal scientists. Tina and Anna

Tina moves bed as Scientists speak.)

SCIENTIST: 57 minutes past midnight etc.

TINA: You can't speak
 You can still think
 You can still hear

(Kitchen lights up on Ronnie and Roger seated at table
cracking walnuts from a wooden bowl.)

RONNIE/ROGER: Mine enemies. They hate me. They would destroy me.

Let their table become a snare before them And that
which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.
Let their eyes be darkened that they see not and let their loins continually
to shake.
Let their habitation be desolate and let all shun their houses
Mine enemies. They hate me. They would destroy me. Let them melt
away as waters which run continually. Let everyone of them pass away as
a snail which melteth. Like the untimely birth of a woman that they may
not see the son. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living. They
shall be as the fiery oven and the fire shall devour them. Their fruits shall
be destroyed from the earth and their see from among the people. Mine

enemies. They hate me. They would destroy me. Break their teeth o god in their mouths. Let them make a noise like a dog and go round about the city. Let them wander up and down for meat and grudge if they be not satisfied. Fill their faces with shame. Let them be confounded and troubled forever. Yea, let them be put to shame and perish. Consume them. That they may not be.

The righteous shall rejoice when they seeth the vengeance. They shall wash their feet in the blood of the wicked.

(Lights out on Kitchen and up on U.R. doors)

Terrified Man 11

(Terrified man enters with fruit, flowers, candy
tries to approach bed. Eats compulsively, the gifts.

Runs away.

Lights pull down on Anna.)

ANNA: Yesterday I looked at them with
my living eyes

Waiting through the night
love opened and closed
opened and closed

(Tina moves bed D.C. then goes to sit on stairs, arm dangling)

Who are these people
The man with the wooden eyes
That woman who dances round my bed

She sings to me
 Her teeth dropping out of her mouth
 Who is that?
 His lips are painted
 Why is he naked?
 Why is he crying?
 Which one's the judge
 And which one digs the grave?

And when I'm all dead
 Take my remains
 and walk with me
 Walk me to the dug up ground
 let me sink into the earth
 to become roots of a stone.

I never loved enough

Sing me to sleep
 Sing me to sleep and mourning
 Sing me to sleep
 Sing me to sleep
 Sing me to sleep and mourning

(Opus III Beethoven quote. Tina turns bed upstage and then back down.

S.R. door open revealing light

Tina runs to door then back to bed reporting:)

TINA: Anna, Anna, people are going through you house, people are going
 through your things, people are going through your letters
 people are going through your clothes

Anna, Anna, people are grieving in your house. They are grieving at your death

Anna, people are raging in your house
They are raging at your death.

(Mother enters Kitchen, lights up, she is setting a place at the table)

MOTHER: It's out of order. It's out of order
You had no child
And now you're dying, and they'll be no one left
What will I do with my love?
Now that I'm old and there's no one else
What will I do with my love?
If I could forget I gave birth to you
I would.
If I could forget I nursed you
I would
If I could forget I rocked you, comforted,
I would do it.

(Tina crosses to Kitchen, brings Mother U.C. meeting Harry who plays
clarinet under Mine Eyes)

Mine Eyes

TINA/RONNIE: Mine eye is consumed with grief yea my soul and my
belly
My life is spent with grief and my years with sighing
My bones wax old through my roaring all day long

My days are consumed like smoke
 My heart is withered like grass
 With the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin
 I looked for comfort but there was none
 I looked for comforters, I found none
 I am dumb with silence
 I am dumb with silence

(Ronnie, Tina, Harry exit S.L.

Tina enters upstage side of U.L. platand then enters down stairs
 Musicians play Bartok tune and lights up in the room, U.S. wall backlit
 and all doors lifted)

(Tina to Anna. As Tina names the foreign names for death she reveals
 each one behind a door but nothing appears again and again)

TINA: Death is coming. Death is right outside the door

Death is at the door

La muerte

La morte

La mort

Mast su

der tóte

hammavet

sanatos

schmertz

Korin ju

Smert

Alun

Smiert

Valumbe

(As Tine flies out the last door quickly U.R.C. door opens revealing the Terrified Man with more fruit, flowers and a huge teddy bear. He enters drops dear and begins to speak:)

TER. MAN: I don't know what to say
 I don't even know if you can hear me
 I wish you all the luck in the world
 I wanted to find a way to tell you
 that I've enjoyed association over the years

(runs terrified to platform, then recomposes and starts again)

I don't want to get too close to you
 I think you can understand that.
 When I looked at you, lying there, mostly dead

(breaks into small terrified dance and stutter, composes again)

I know I'm acting like a baby
 I should comfort you
 This fear makes me feel sick
 It's not only in my head, it's here, and here, and here.
 When I close my eyes, even for a moment,
 I can't stop the pictures coming
 I'm scared of my body changing
 Cells multiplying, fluids leaking, no control
 eyes not focusing, the mind going its own way
 Not existing before I was born didn't bother me
 Why should no existing when I die be any different.
 It doesn't help. It makes me cry to think

how much hasn't happened to me yet. I've never lost myself in love
 I was always watching a little. I never had any revelations, or if I did, later
 I couldn't remember what was so important about them.

A lot of people measure how big or thick or juicy. Not me. A lot of people
 compare how much or how long. Not me.

Anna, I haven't lived one satisfying day yet. Not even forty some
 consecutive minutes. There were individual minutes, on rare occasions, I
 don't.

I don't want to d-d-die alone but I don't want anyone watching either
 it would be too embarrassing. To tell you the truth I never want to die.
 Never. I don't believe in life after death, but what if I'm wrong?
 I don't believe in hell, and wouldn't like heaven, singing songs and eating
 fruit. And what about limbo...

(He goes into Terrified dance with bear and plays dead occasionally and
 exits.

Tina moves bed into position and lights pull down from room to Anna
 special)

ANNA: The next breath, the next
 someone will help me
 I will breathing breathing
 Now not dying
 I tasted just now death in my mouth

I'm forgetting something
 Must remember
 Almost remembering, almost seeing, try, hold on gone.

Someone's missing
 I die without you

Nothing was good enough
Nothing lasted long enough
Except for some things that went on too long
Tenderly forgotten

Give me my music back without words of God
without that throne
that kingdom
that office

I hate
I hate
Yes, I with everyone were blind.

It goes on like a river
contaminated
it goes on
or clear
either way
it goes on, without me

Finish with me and I'll finish with you
What will the next second be
The last second
The second after the last living second
What will it be like?
That second?

I want to stay out of forever
Don't put me in forever
I have stayed out of forever all my life

I go into the shadow
 I go into the valley
 Give me a hand, a paw

(Lights fade and up on U.L. platform revealing the
 gravedigger and the coffin maker
 Roger sings the Gravedigger song)

Gravedigger Song

ROGER: Digging graves is my delight
 Digging graves for you to lie in
 Digging graves from morn to night
 I makès my living from your dying
 Digging graves the whole day long
 As I dig and sing this song
 to anybody who comes along
 Dust to dust and ashes to ashes
 And so my song goes on...

You might be dancing in the street
 You might be gay, you might be grieving
 You might be signing a song so sweet
 But you'll not cheat death, there's no deceiving
 In the street or in the hall
 Whether you skip or whether you crawl
 Death could come at any time at all
 Dust to dust and ashes to ashes
 And so my song goes on

(They enter room and take measures of Anna and sculpture.

Tina and Cris leaning on each other, Cris revealing arm behind doors)

ANNA: Still not dead

(All exit. Musicians enter beginning the procession with instruments circling the bed. Lights up on Kitchen on Roger and Paul in Men's Grief. They are drinking and Tina is chopping/slicing beef)

PAUL: She had beautiful hands. Long fingers played piano beautifully, everything looked beautiful, what happened? ppffftt

ROGER: There you are, you know. You've got everthing going for you, everything to live for, you're happy. This is turning into to that, that's turning into this. You're finally gonna pay off some debt what happens? ppffftt

PAUL: Or like you're in bed with a beautiful girl, you're having a really good time. Your dick is way in there going in and out in and out, something goes in the brain. ppffttt

BOTH: Que sera. C'est la vie. Dust to dust. Ashes to ashes.

PAUL: Hey look, you wanna 'nother drink

ROGER: No, no

PAUL: What? You gonna save it for a rainy day? ppffftt

ROGER: There you are, you know, you're perfect. You've got a real satisfactory day, ya know what I mean? Everything's copacetic. You got a couple of six packs, a great game on the tube, a beautiful girl. It's all set for ya and what happens? ppffttt

PAUL: Ya go to the doctor, gives you some medicine
Puts a thermometer in your mouth, puts it in your armpit up your ass...
What's the difference? ppppffftt

(Lights out on Kitchen)

ANNA: I don't see any god from here and I don't think any god sees me

(Enter Notary mode turning to words)

NOTARY: Unable to cancel lessons, which she would give the following day
 During her last living hours people came to her
 Came to her dying bed.
 Only hearing left. Other peoples music
 Other peoples words
 Hardly seeing. Not sure who she can see. Sometimes alone at the piano,
 she played carefully. Not for listeners, nor students. Played her music in
 this last hour body unmoving almost entirely still, her body still thoughts
 turning, looking for pictures
 Body pain, in the head mostly. Sometimes terrifying pain, unrecoverable
 pain

Different
 Different in her fathers Africa
 How different the funeral
 How similar the dying
 How different the mourning
 How similar the grief

In her fathers Africa, the corpse is washed in tepid water then dressed in a
 special white gown called Mwamba
 The body is taken to the courtyard
 laid on a cowskin. In her fathers Africa, friends of the family villagers and
 friends come to the body, greet the body they say

"You are dead today
 You have departed, left us

This is your leave taking”

In her fathers Africa a cow is slaughtered, roots are dug, vegetables are gathered

Friends prepare a feast for the mourners

(Hammerklaiver Quote begins as Tina moves bed into position and speaks)

TINA: I'm your child
You never had a child
I'm the child you never had
I'm the one who wasn't

I'm the lover who would have held you through the nights, rocking you
I'm to one who wasn't

(Tina exits, lights face to Anna)

ANNA: I hear the silence
Now I hear it
I hear the silence
I hear it
The silence
I hear it.

END.

APPENDIX H

TRIO/LIES AND SECRETS

Text by members of the Winter Project

Music by Harry Mann

Performers:

Roger Babb

Ronnie Gilbert

Harry Mann

Director: Joseph Chaikin

Dramaturg: Mira Rafalowicz

Sets: Jun Maeda

Lights: Richard Lloyd

Costumes: Mary Brecht

Stage Manager: Ruth Kreshka

Asst. Director: David Leveaux

Asst. Dramaturg and writer: Lizzie Olesker

Additional Text: Molière, Adrienne Kennedy, Anton Chekhov, Henrik Ibsen, Bertold
Brecht, Samuel Beckett, Old Testament Psalms, Lizzie Olesker.

Performed La Mama March 9-19, 1983.

Joseph Chaikin Papers, Kent State University Library, Box 8, Folder 59.

(Roger as Stagehand, with pieces of set (curtain))

ROGER: throughout this piece I will move various objects
around the stage.

(Harry overture on clarinet

door: Harry packing with radio and suitcase (a sin to tell a lie)

Harry through door with suitcase and radio

Roger quotes from Molière's Tartuffe.)

ROGER: Valence, put away my hair-shirt and my flagelator;
if anyone calls for me, tell them I've gone
to the prison to give away all my worldly possessions.

(shows gesture)

This gesture is an old American theatrical gesture,

that comes from Edwin Booth, the brother of

John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Abraham Lincoln

in 1865. He picked it up from an Irish immigrant in 1852, who came over
during the potato famine.

The Irish originally had a gesture like this and they used this gesture to
summon up the ghosts of their ancestors, because they liked to keep in
touch with them. When the English came over (occupied Ireland) in the
16th century, they changed the gesture to this

(shows gesture)

because they didn't like the Irish to get in touch with their ancestors. The
Irish did/used it anyway.

TAPE 1

(Harry patrols with radio. Plays tape. Ronnie and Rogers voices on tape:)

ROGER: Last night the president said:
Our enemies hate us. They would destroy us.
The under secretary of state in a meeting with the secretary of defense said
quote "I wanted to leave this universe but there is not other" unquote.

RONNIE: Something about desire
Something about murder
Something about madness

...how the lie grows,
how the part that originally knew the lie was a lie
begins to forget and becomes a conspirator in the lie-

...at the edge of the world...

a woman, who said she was going for groceries, got in
her car and never returned

something about light
something of breaking open

ROGER: to discover one has been lied to leads one to feel a little crazy.

(Roger as Stagehand with Materials on set:)

ROGER: All these objects are going to be used throughout the play.
This door has birch veneer on it; the American Indians used to use birch
bark to make canoes out of it. This screen has cloth on it; it is called
tobacco cloth. It is used in North Carolina and Georgia to shield the
tobacco leaves from the hot sun, so that they don't get scorched. This

bench over here looks like it might be made out of teak or mahogany, but actually it is simple pine, which you can pick up in any lumber store. This bowl contains walnuts from California and this screen here is made up of hundreds of beer cans and soft drink cans, all woven together. Here is Amstel beer from Holland, and Heineken from Holland and Sapporo beer from Japan, Budweiser and Miller, and Coca Cola all over and this is YooHoo chocolate drink, made in the U.S.

BOARD AND HOODS

(overlap radio: multinationals and static into Board and Hoods and radio. Ronnie as Board. Harry and Roger as Hoods.)

BOARD (Ronnie): Move the plant to Brazil;
transfer funds to Salvador;
ship the Indians to Santa Clara;
close the factory in North Carolina;
move the operation to Malaysia

HOODS (Roger and Harry): we work for certain fruit companies;
certain oil interests;
certain intelligence operations;
certain soft drink firms;
certain British-American-German-Dutch-Brazilian multinational corporations

BOARD: buy Japanese yen;
sell Mexican pesos;
get rid of Portuguese escudos;
get hold of some Deutsche marks;
bid on gold;
pick up a few rubles and some Chinese yen

HOODS: certain tourist corporations;
 certain British-American-Dutch-French-Japanese-German- Brazilian
 multinational corporations

BOARD: we create needs
 we create markets

MINE ENEMIES

(Roger and Ronnie as Missionaries quote Mine Enemies from Psalms:)

ROGER/RONNIE: Mine enemies. They hate me. They would destroy me. Let their
 table become a snare before them And that which should have been for
 their welfare, let it become a trap.
 Let their eyes be darkened that they see not and let their loins continually
 to shake.
 Let their habitation be desolate and let all shun their houses.
 Mine enemies. They hate me. They would destroy me. Let them melt
 away as waters which run continually. Let everyone one of them pass
 away as a snail which melteth, like the untimely birth of a woman that
 they may not see the son. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living.
 They shall be as the fiery oven and the fire shall devour them. Their fruits
 shall be destroyed from the earth and their sea from among the people.
 Mine enemies. They hate me. They would destroy me. Break their teeth o
 god in their mouths. Let them make a noise like a dog and go round about
 the city. Let them wander up and down for meat and grudge if the be not
 satisfied. Fill their faces with shame. Let them be confounded and troubled
 forever.
 Yea, let them be put to shame and perish. Consume them, consume them.
 That they may not be,

The righteous shall rejoice when they seeth the vengeance. They shall wash their feet in the blood of the wicked.

MISSIONARY SONG

(Roger and Ronnie sing:)

A few more years shall roll
A few more seasons come
And we shall be with those that pray
Asleep within the tomb

A few more storms shall rage
On these wild rocky shores
And we shall be where dangers cease
And surges swell no more

A few more meetings here
Shall speed us on our way
And we shall reach the endless grace
Of the eternal Sabbath day.

ROGER: your pain, your sorrows, your worries, your fears will vanish
 your pain will vanish
 your sorrows will vanish
 your fears will vanish
 this time of toil will change
 this time of trouble will change
 this veil of tears will change

RONNIE/ROGER: wake up
 you will have revenge on all those who made you suffer/harmed you

ROGER: you will feel joy that will never desert you
 you will be a winner
 you will e fun to be with
 without this life is a blank, a stinking pit,
 an open wound, a wasteland, a desert

RONNIE/ROGER: wake up (etc.)

MUSICOLOGY

(Harry plays Music Lecture on tape)

The rondoform is a movement of a sonata, in a brisk temp and using an ABACABA formal scheme. The initial A Theme is in the tonic while the B and C themes are introduced in contrasting keys and are later played in the tonic key.

The piece you are now hearing departs from this earlier practice as it often introduces a theme and quickly drops it. Sometime this thematic ideas does not return, but often it returns in another guise.

(Roger as Stagehand, going in and out of door:)

ROGER: Here I am on this side of the door and I am wondering
 whether I want to be on the other side of the door;
 I open the door and I'm in.
 Now I am on this side of the door.
 I know right away that I don't want to be there.
 As soon as I opened the door I knew
 I didn't want to be in there.

(Ronnie quotes from Beckett's Happy Days)

RONNIE: There is a problem here.
 (pause)
 One cannot sing...just like that, no.
 (pause)
 It bubbles up, for some unknown reason, the time is ill chosen, one chokes
 it back.
 (pause)
 One says, Now is the time, it is now or never, and one cannot.
 (pause)
 Simply cannot sing.
 (pause)
 Not a note.
 (pause)
 Another thing, while we are on this subject.
 (pause)
 The sadness after song.
 (pause)
 Sadness after intimate sexual intercourse one is familiar with of course.
 (pause)
 One would concur with Aristotle there, I fancy.
 (pause)
 Yes, that one knows and is prepared to face.
 (pause)
 But after song...
 (pause)
 It does not last of course.
 (pause)
 That is what I find so wonderful.
 (pause)
 It wears away.

(Harry in door, intense clarinet in door.

Ronnie and Roger as missionaries

Quote Mine Eyes from Psalms:)

RONNIE/ROGER: Mine Eyes

Mine eye is consumed with grief yea my soul and my belly

My life is spent with grief and my years with sighing

My bones wax old through my roaring all day long

My days are consume like smoke

My heart is withered like grass

With the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin

I looked for comfort but there was non

I looked for comforters, I found none

I am dumb with silence

I am dumb with silence.

(Roger as Stagehand.)

ROGER: some stories we are not going to tell in this piece
 some stories we are not going to tell in this piece:
 we are not going to tell the story about these
 3 sisters who had a wish, they wanted to be
 where they couldn't be / they wanted to be
 some place else

And we are not going to tell this other story
 about this guy who killed his father and was
 sleeping with his mother and they were all
 very happy till they found out

and we are not going to tell this other ancient
 story from the Mediterranean
 it was told for years and years and centuries;
 first it was a story and then it became a song
 as a story
 and finally it became a play;
 a story about these two families of clowns;
 they had this belief that they had received a
 promise from a god
 and they hated each other; they were enemies
 and the ghosts of their ancestors reappeared
 and urged them to fight battles with each other;
 meanwhile someone from one family fell in love
 with someone from the other family (of clowns)
 and there was something about betrayal; something
 about infidelity; something about promises;
 something about lying;
 and there was a big battle;
 and at the end of the play the corpses
 were carried on stage and the stage was filled
 with bodies and with blood
 and this long line of mourners come in
 and they walk around the piles of bodies,
 singing and mourning;
 we are not going to tell that story

(Roger and Ronnie quote from Chekhov's Seagull)

Roger as Treplev

Ronnie as Ark.)

ROGER: I don't accept you; I don't respect you.

RONNIE: You're decadent.

ROGER: Why don't you go back to your charming theatre and act in your miserable and worthless plays.

RONNIE: I have never acted in a worthless play. You can't even write a cheap vaudeville sketch. You're nothing but a Kiev petty bourgeois.

ROGER: Miser!

RONNIE: Beggar!
Nobody/ little nobody;
Don't cry. Please don't cry.
Forgive me! I am so wicked,
I am so miserable.

(Harry plays saxophone, Ronnie sings song without words.
Radio-static. Ronnie at door.)

RONNIE: I hear the silence
I hear it
the silence
I hear it
the silence

(Harry and Roger quote Adrienne Kennedy's The Owl Answers.)

HARRY/ROGER: They are dragging his body across the green, his white hair
hanging down. They are taking off his shoes and he is stiff. I must get into
the chapel to see him. I must. He is my blood father. God let me into his
burial.
(kneeling)
I call God and the Owl answers.
(softer)

It haunts my Tower calling, its feathers are blowing against the cell wall,
speckled in the garden on the fig tree, it comes feathered great hollow-
eyed with yellow skin and yellow eyes, the flying bastard. From my
Tower I keep calling and the only answer is the Owl God.

(pauses. Stands)

(Harry, patrolling with radio and suitcase. Plays WBAI tape on
unemployment

Ronnie quotes from Brecht's Arturo Ui)

RONNIE: As an individual the working man has all my sympathy. It is only when he
bands together, when he presumes to meddle in affairs that are beyond his
understanding, such as wages, profits, etc., that I say: watch your step,
brother;
a working man is somebody who works, but when you strike, when you
stop working, you are no longer a worker, you are a menace to society and
that's where I step in.

(Harry, clarinet into song with out words (white lies) with Ronnie.

Roger as Stagehand)

ROGER: The actress' name is Ronnie Gilbert, the musician is Harry Mann, the
stage manager/musician is Ruth Kreshka; that's just about all I know
about them. In this piece we are not going to tell about their private lives.

(Ronnie quotes from Ibsen's Ghosts. Roger and Harry listening)

RONNIE: She was a respectable woman – well born – and she married well.
Certainly not for love. Her husband had a commission – in the army. He
was a captain – and he had standing in the town. We tried to run away

from him the second year, but everybody thought this was a little caprice – otherwise it seemed a perfect marriage. The minister persuaded her to go back and everything settled down.

They had a son. That boy was sent away to the country when he was seven years old. He spent the rest of his childhood away from home – eventually he fell in with some artists in Paris.

It was after the captain died that things began to come to light. In a conversation with the minister.

In ten years she has sent every penny that her husband left her to build an orphanage for the town. It was to be a memorial to the captain's name. Her son came home from Paris for the opening ceremony.

That's when it began to come out. It was in a conversation with the minister about insurance. She told him that her husband had been a regular debauch. She even found him one night together with the family maid. That's why she sent the son away, she believed if he breathed the same air as his father he would be poisoned, so she sent him away – cut the cord.

She really loved her son, she adored him. She planned, once the orphanage was open, to start a bright new life together, she and her untainted son – to start clean.

But that was not to be. Untainted. He'd hardly/ no sooner set foot in the door when he told her he had contracted a terrible disease – his nervous system – brain. He had no idea what he'd gotten it from – the doctor in Paris had said something about the sins of the fathers...His mother was horrified.

She couldn't accept it. But the boy was depressed, he began to drink more and more and he could not stand to be in the dark.

There was a maid in the house and she was infatuated with the boy and he was drawn to her. If only they could have been allowed to follow their hearts. But they had to be told. The girl was the illegitimate daughter of his father. By the former maid. He was falling in love with his half-sister.

You know, it's only what we inherit from our fathers and mothers that keeps on returning in us – it's all kinds of old dead doctrines and opinions and beliefs, and they hang on. I just have to pick up a newspaper and it's as if I could see the ghosts slipping between the lines...

Then the orphanage burnt down. It seems the minister was putting out a candle...The boy went to help the fire fighters, and even though there was nothing anyone could do to save the building, he stayed there for hours, transfixed, staring at the heap of glowing embers.

When he finally came home he told his mother he was afraid. He begged her to help him kill himself, (to get it over with quickly). She tried to soothe him. She told him that everything would be fine and bright again.

They talked all night. The lamp burned low on the table and neither of them noticed the time. At last the boy became calm. He was sitting in the old armchair and in the half-light his face seemed innocent and also bereft.

The day was breaking and she went to the curtains to let in the morning. It was a beautiful day. And then suddenly he said: "Mother, give me the sun." She asked him what he meant. But he just repeated: "The sun – the sun...the sun..."

(Harry, clarinet, into sequence of knocking on door:

1. kids
2. missionaries
3. hoods (w. radio-nuclear corporations tape

Ronnie Thinktank / nuclear rap)

RONNIE: one the one hand
 they have 20,000 nuclear warheads
 on the other hand
 we have 30,000 nuclear warheads
 on the one hand
 they could knock out 90% of ours
 on the other hand
 10% left we could destroy them.

am I right...etc.

on the other hand
 catastrophic predictions
 could we destroy the ozone layer?
 could it start a new ice age?
 We don't know; we haven't done the experiment yet.

on the other hand
 according to predictions
 according to map exercises
 according to statistics,
 it wouldn't finish us off;
 not completely.

What we need is enough shovels

Am I right? right...etc.

can't turn back

can't turn around

time marches on

ticks on

worse comes to worse

we start all over again

am I right? right...etc.

(Harry over powers tape

Roger as Stagehand:)

ROGER: we have about 12 minutes left more or less;
this door is going to be used one more time;
and at the very end of the piece, I will
go over to this curtain here and pull it all
the way over to the other end of the stage.

RONNIE/ROGER: ...and then you came

RONNIE: there was the year the cold blew into the city
and we could find no way to keep warm;
there was the year the streets were dark and
we talked in rooms with curtains drawn;
there was the year some left, others were gone;
and still more wondered whether to leave;
there was the year after the battle;
there was the year of hunger and thirst;

there were many years I didn't count
and then you came

(Ronnie sings song 'Katy Cruel':)

RONNIE: refrain: If I were where I would be
Then I'd be where I am not
Here I am where I must be
Where I would be I am not

Spring's the time for love
It grows with summer grasses
Autumn's when it turns
And winter's when it passes

refrain:

Through the woods I mourn
Through the boggy mire
Straightway down the road
Till I come to my heart's desire

refrain:

Have you seen the sweetheart
Full of grief and pain
Have you seen the dead grass
Rise and grow again

refrain:

(Harry in door with suitcase and radio – tape 2 –
and sax on 2nd tape Ruthie.
Ronnie and Roger speak on tape)

ROGER: Our enemies hate us. They would destroy us.
It was discovered that the security advisor was selling secrets.
RONNIE: at the end of the day they shared a bed.
ROGER: To discover one has been lied to leads one to feel a little crazy.
RONNIE: am I right?
ROGER: ...of dryness and of thirst...
RONNIE: He said, in the galaxies stars disappear and others are born – galaxies are
full of turmoil and violent change. But these changes are tiny compared to
the universe itself, which, he says, goes on forever.
Cardiovascular illness among the unemployed has increased.
ROGER: at the edge of the world...

THINKING ABOUT MY FEET

(Roger as Stagehand:)

ROGER: I am thinking about my feet.
I am thinking about what's underneath my feet.
There's this floor. It's made of wood.
And underneath that: rafters and joists
(under that a theatre with people in it)
then there is concrete and cement and dirt.
Then miles and miles of cable and electrical
wires and sewage pipes.
Below that more dirt and rocks
and the remains of an ancient community
(the ruins of another city / an ancient city)

with bones and bits of pottery and arrowheads.
 Then there's more rocks and sand and gravel and
 granite and clay
 and a dried up river with fossils.
 And then there is this deep place at the center,
 a hot, liquid place.
 And further and further till the other edge of the world and then back
 to this liquid heat at the center, the shifting
 plate, a dried up river and fossils, granite and
 sand and clay, an ancient community (city) with
 bones and arrowheads and bits of pottery,
 and pipes, electrical wires, concrete and cement,
 (the theatre), rafters, joists, the floor
 and my feet.

(Roger as Stagehand – shapes

Harry plays sax as Ronnie sings “Then” from Muriel Rukeyser, music by
 Richard Peaslee.

RONNIE: When I am dead, even then, I will still love you.
 I will wait in these poems.
 When I am dead even then I am still listening to you.
 I will be making poems for you out of silence.
 Silence will be falling into that silence.
 It is building music...

THE END

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