SHIFTING SCALES AND SCENERIES !

Art, Globalisation and Territories

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Fresh Perspectives on Art, Globalisation and Territories

by Eric Corijn

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Credits picture (*see attachment*): Europe seen from space, by Annabel Cook: http://blogs.ft.com/photo-diary/2014/10/europe-seen-from-space/?

About

This new publication of IETM's Fresh Perspectives series deals with performing arts and territories. Global issues like economic stress, environmental challenges and migration flows are influencing and transforming European cities and their populations. National identities no longer correspond to national borders; the physical and the mental spaces we inhabit – our territories – are shifting.

How did the performing arts react to these shifts? Are they playing in national territories, in regions or in urban networks? Are they European, local or global – alternatively or at the same time? Whose stories do they tell? And how are they part of the geopolitical or socio-economic gaming? These are the key questions at the origin of this essay.

In this new Fresh Perspectives publication we've asked an expert from outside the performing arts world to give his views – a 'fresh perspective' – on arts and territories. Professor in Social and Cultural Geography Eric Corijn thus leads us on a journey exploring, from the point of view of cultural geography, how territories are shifting, re-scaling, under the effect of global challenges. In its first part the author presents us with his vision of the transition in progress from nation states and national identities into globalised, multicultural, networked cities. The second part shows how performing arts are rising to the challenge, through examples collected from IETM members and other practitioners. The final chapter opens up for further reflection and discussion.

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IETM

is a dynamic, engaged and forward-looking network for the performing arts sector as well as a resource and reference point for innovative contemporary art. IETM consists of over 550 subscribing professional performing arts organisations from more than 50 countries. They are engaged in innovative, contemporary performance work and are committed to cross-border artistic exchange and collaboration.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. It creates international opportunities for people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. It works in over 100 countries in the arts, education and English.

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Have a look at those fantastic satellite night images of Europe. They are bluish and full of light pollution. You clearly see the coastal lines, the Atlantic coast, the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea... And then, of course, the great metropolitan areas and especially the southern English cities, the Low Countries and northern Italy linked by urbanisation around the Rhine. Or, more in close-up, you see networks between greater London, the Belgian urban network, the Dutch Randstad, greater Paris, the Ruhr, Munich and Bayern, the Milan metropolis. There seems to be a very dense European central area, with peripheries in the south and in the east. There is much less lighting in some places. Looking at the whole picture, you don't see countries or national borders. The political map only exists in hardly visible administrative structures. What you see is the real geography of human activity.

01.

RE-SCALING THE PLANET, REMODELLING THE CITY

The reality behind these images is the importance of urbanisation and thus of population density. In a city many people - and of different kinds - live together. Globalisation is urbanisation and the post-industrial economy searches for urban contexts. The central area of the map - less than 19% of the European territory - shows 60% of the population and produces 72% of the gross domestic product. It is the beating heart of the European Union. The north-western core of that area, say the London-Paris-Berlin triangle, is also the best connected to the rest of the world and attracts very international publics and activities. It is a space of arrival for a lot of migrants. It is Europe in the world. Within Europe, high-speed trains and airlines connect this core area with other capital cities and metropolitan areas. The world system and the European Union function in networks with cities as nodal points. A global market is not spread evenly over the territory. It functions in a space of flows. Both the spatial structure and the composition of the population in Europe have changed quite a lot over the last few decades. The vast majority of Europeans live in the urban sprawl today, whereas in 1900 only 10% of all humans lived in cities. In 1950 only New York and London had more than 8 million inhabitants; now we have some 30 megapolises of

more than 10 million. The world is caught in a profound transition, as deeply affecting us as the Neolithic or the industrial revolutions, says Mike Davis[1]. That is how we have to think: a transition, a deep restructuring and an epochal shift... Bob Dylan already told us: *the times they are a' changing.*

Do we have the stories and the images for that reality? Have we adjusted our mental maps? Do we express, represent and discuss these spaces of flows? Basically we don't, even if many intellectuals and artists are working on these challenges. If we think of Europe or if we watch television news about Europe, we think or we are told about countries. The European Union is a consortium of member states, isn't it? We imagine a continent full of countries. With their flags. With their population size. France, Blue-White-Red, with nearly 66 million French inhabitants, French speakers, with a great French culture, all drinking wine and eating baguettes or croissants. Isn't that the image behind the symbols? Or Germany, Black-Red-Yellow, with up to 82 million Germans, German speakers, beer drinkers... Except for the 4 million Turks there. Are they then in the right place? Don't they have their own territory, with their own flag – Red with a white crescent moon and a star – and 74 million inhabitants? Can they simply export their culture, their religion and their habits to other territories? And do these territories have to integrate those newcomers with their specific cultures and habits? And what about Yugoslavia? Between 1918 and 2003 it was a Balkan state with its flag – Blue-White-Red with a red star in the middle - with its culture, a language, its regime and nearly 24

million inhabitants... And now it is Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia, and in addition, Vojvodina and Kosovo... Are we sure that all these populations have already adopted their new identities? And what should we think about those northern Italians that prefer to call their country Padania? What about Catalonia that tends not to be Spain anymore? Or that Flanders which would rather not be Belgium? And Scotland that wanted to leave the United Kingdom, perhaps to be able to stay in the EU if England leaves...?

How did the performing arts react to all these shifts? Are they playing in national territories, in regions or in urban networks? Are they European or are they local? Or both? What is the place of culture? In what world are theatres performing? What is the imagined space they refer to in their stories? What is their mental reference system? And how are they part of the geopolitical or socio-economic gaming? These are the questions at the origin of this essay. It is a preliminary attempt to relate the great transformations of the world to the mental maps and discourses wherein theatre performs. It is a real '*essay*' – an attempt - in cultural geography, relating real spaces, political and adminw<istrative territories with some examples and illustrations from the performing arts. It only has the ambition to open a discussion on, and raise awareness of, the implicit or explicit spatial references included in each production, inviting the public into a certain positioning and framing, into a certain worldview.

Modern Europe

Europe took its basic modern form under the leadership of Metternich at the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) that aimed to dissolve the Napoleonic world. The major European powers - Britain, Russia, Prussia, Austria and (after 1818) France - pledged to meet regularly to resolve differences. This plan was the first of its kind in history, and seemed to promise a way to collectively manage European affairs and promote peace. It was the forerunner of the League of Nations and the United Nations and formed the framework

1   Davis, M. (2007): Planet of slums, Verso, London

4

for European international politics until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. By then the format of the nation-state was the model, a modern State for each people with its own characteristics, language and culture. Further democratic struggles for universal suffrage, or liberties, or social rights were always taught and fought within that national framework.

While the French Enlightenment developed a universal approach based on the most general human moral characteristics – the Good, the Beautiful, Truth … Freedom, Equality, Solidarity … and rooted the Republic in philosophy and science, those who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo had little sympathy for republicanism or revolution. Here another framework prevailed: that of particular histories and romanticism. In the spirit of von Herder's 'Volksgeist', rooted tradition and language, poetry or heritage were the building blocks for a social bond. Not culture in general, but a particular culture had to be related with the State. That was the basis for the development of nation-states.

It is in building that format that the industrial revolution spread over Europe and the transition from a rural to an industrial era occurred. The new industrial working classes formed a massive platform for democratic politics and an inclusion of the people in governing the state. Social organisations, general suffrage, reduction of work time, increased wages and also access to literacy, education and culture evolved with that national framework. It was bigger than the feudal domains and offered a larger horizon than rural villages. But the wider world remained foreign and caught in inter-national diplomacy. Citizenship equalled membership of a country, surely beyond localism, but not as far as globalism.

After the First World War, the progressive inclusion of 'ordinary people' as citizens was widely placed on the agenda. General suffrage, the eight-hour work day, leisure time and increased salaries were gradually introduced, together with the development of mass production and mass consumption. The interbellum was a time of radicalisation, intense class struggle and totally opposed societal models. It ultimately led to the Second World War and the division of Europe in two socio-economic models. In the West the project of the 'welfare state', of 'organised capitalism' of 'Fordism' prevailed, in the East that of 'planned economy', 'really existing socialism' or 'state capitalism'. In both cases cultural integration was thought of on a national level and developed a national cultural policy and scenery. The performing arts developed a certain type of repertoire, part of the selective tradition. A number of plays were regularly performed as part of a common cultural reference system to illustrate identity.

Let's have a closer look at the social position of the arts in general and theatre in particular. In the national industrial society, the economy is regulated within the state form. The population falls into different social strata related to their socio-economic position. This is the main element structuring the way of life. Arts and culture are related to social reproduction within that framework. Daily life, regular social practices, the life paths tend to evolve beyond local particularisms. A form of daily culture is involved and mobilised that allows for those human interactions to be structured in place and time, even beyond the household or family traditions. The social form of incorporated culture organises civilised and informed social interaction. Here, we are at the level of popular culture, of that culture needed for daily interaction.

The arts, and cultural production at large, document in different ways, refer to life experiences, produce a symbolic and imaginary reference system, offer objects, concepts and performances that 'make sense'. This is 'the cultural sector' which includes all those activities that produce the large amount of objects or constructs to give meaning to our practices and experiences. It is in these artefacts that social interactions can mirror themselves in search of sense and meaning. 'Mirroring' is different from 'expressing'. It refers to a different register, that of imaging and symbolising, with its own practices and rules and constantly searching for its anchorage in reality. Here we are at the core of the impossible combination between the necessary freedom of the arts and its societal relevance.

In fact, that societal functionality is the product of yet another process. Within that sphere of documented culture institutional, political and societal processes select a corpus that can represent 'tradition' or 'identity' and that can be presented as collective mirrors. These operate as central legitimation or references to social bonding and cohesion[2]. Within the national framework, 'way of life', 'documented culture' and 'selective tradition' are in a dynamic relationship both to maintain the national identity and to adapt to change and evolution. In the storyline of 'countries', 'cities' are represented as a special, marginal phenomenon: too multicultural, too vanguard, too liberal, too complex and disorganised. And at the same time it is exactly that complexity that confronts the nation with necessary innovations in their cultural apparatus, that pulls the nation into the modernisation process. The city, especially the capital city, functions as the laboratory for arts and knowledge to be mainstreamed for suburban and rural use.

In that conception of what keeps society together, cultural homogeneity plays a crucial role. It is thought that labour division and functional fragmentation in modern society can be kept together through a common set of norms and values[3]. It is that set of common 'traditions' that forms and informs the 'community' (*Gemeinschaft*, *communauté*) based on (mono)cultural bonding. And that is the stable basis of the 'society' (*Gesellschaft*, *société*), the political expression of the nation[4]. State and culture are united to form a society, within a world of nation-states and of 'multiple societies'.

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2   Framing culture and cultural studies as a combination pattern of way of life, documented culture and a selected tradition builds on the work of Raymond Williams and the British school of cultural studies.

3   See the foundation work in sociology by Emile Durkheim in his PhD (1893) on the effects of the division of labour and the way to maintain organic solidarity in society.

4   Community and society remain the two main concepts in use to discuss social bonds since they were discussed in early social sciences by Ferdinand Tönnies (1887) Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft, Leipzig: Fues's Verlag. (Community and Civil Society, Cambridge University Press (2001))

Pre-modern histories

The abovementioned developments are mainly related to 19th century ideologies and political institutions, later adapted to 20th century massification and democratisation processes. Elite arts and cultures had to be made available for working people, better educated, with higher living standards and leisure time. They referred to earlier traditions rooted in history. National cultures were presented as being rooted far back in history, in events of long ago in pre-modern ages.

The history of Europe goes back to the Greek and Middle-Eastern cores of civilisation leading to the Roman Empire and the development of a Mediterranean way of life. That civilisation was separated by a permeable 'limes' (border) from the 'barbaric' tribes in the north. These borderlines are still to be felt when looking at maps of wine versus beer drinking, olive oil or butter cooking or the position of honour in social relations and justice. Such North-South delimitations are complemented by East-West divides such as the schism within the Roman Empire and Christianity from the 4th until far into the 15th century, religious and linguistic territories structured by the religious wars, or the division of Europe by the Iron Curtain after the Second World War. Whereas the West was segmented and fragmented in feudal domains, the East remained organised in much larger empires and reigns. Crusades from the 11th to the 13th centuries (with the promise of becoming a free man), agricultural revolutions of the high Middle Ages in the 11th and 12th centuries (with enough food to prevent decimation by starvation) and post-medieval urban renaissance allowed for the development of a free individual and of urban arts, science and citizenship. The notion of individual freedom versus collective organisation also marks an East-West divide.

In that sense, a certain concept of a 'European way of life' under construction is heavily determined by territorialised cultures, like 'protestant' bourgeois values as they have been integrated in the national cultures of the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavia, etc. European integration has put the 'Mediterranean way of life'5 under pressure. This seems a deficit both from the point of view of quality of life and of the historical roots of 'Europeanness'. Maybe here lies the difficulty of building an integrated collective imaginary, as the historical divide between the Germanic North and the Romanic South is still reproduced through uneven but combined economic developments. Today that tension is highlighted again in the uneven spread of the crisis. It is why certain scholars have always insisted upon the importance of bridging that divide and looking back at the Mediterranean origins of the European imaginary.6 A number of elements of 'the good life' are still cultivated in the South and placed under big productivity pressures in the North.

The basic trends of any integration in the European space are similar: industrialisation and post-industrialisation, urbanisation and commodification. Overall there is a process of de-traditionalisation of rural cultures and entry into modern and urban consumer cultures. As in the social and economic maps of Europe, the 'blue banana'7 urban corridor stretching from northern Italy to north-west England seems also to be the tastemaker in life style and cultural developments. The Fordist regulation at the base of early economic integration processes was culturally embedded in north-western European protestant cultures, later enforced with the Scandinavian model. Basically 'social capitalism', the 'Rhineland model', is grounded on productivity agreements and thus has fuelled overall productivism. Economic growth is based upon rapid labour productivity growth. It needs a 'mentality' based on labour ethics, on a clear cut separation between work time and leisure time, on modern contract relations, and so on. It is what Weber called 'the rationalisation process' and its focus on 'zweckrationalität'8.

Underneath the state form of national territories, these cultural elements of the long history continue to operate in different ways. The distribution of religions or languages and language groups sometimes identify supranational European regions. They might contribute to distinguish between different local and regional identities.

Besides these very ancient cultural roots of the European continent, the urban might be the most important characteristic of a European identity. We again find the pre-modern territories and networks of medieval European development in the existence of the 'blue banana' core, bridging the historical urban networks in both the Low Countries and northern Italy. We also see that Europe is a continent where the urban bourgeoisie took over from the feudal nobility, as opposed to other continents where the empire remained in power. It is within these post-medieval cities that the market economy flourished, that the new sciences and arts developed, that ideas of freedom and democracy were nourished and that new social relations developed. It is there that financial and mercantile capitalism grew to expand into a world system. It is in the cities that religious reform, renaissance and enlightenment were fuelled. It was only in a later period that this urban substratum was replaced by the nation-states that became the political map of Europe in the 19th century. This deep urban history is surfacing again now that globalisation takes the form of (re)urbanisation.

A world in transition

Politically the 20th century ended in 1989. The fall of the Berlin wall. A symbolic moment. The First World War can be considered the real beginning, resulting in American hegemony superseding the UK's and the Russian Revolution's division of the

5   Scardigli, Victor (1987) op. cit

6   See: Corijn,Eric (1994). Europe's Unification Project and the Ethics of Leisure Studies, in Ian Henry (ed) Leisure : Modernity, Postmodernity and Lifestyles, LSA,Brighton: 13-27; (1998). L'Europe a besoin d'un projet multiculturel, in: Culture & Société, Bruxelles, Ministère de la Communauté Française: 94-103; (2000): Corijn, Eric, Stefan De Corte & Walter de Lannoy: Bruxelles, de ville mosaique multiculturelle à capitale méditerranéenne de l'Europe?/ Brussel: van multiculturele en gefragmenteerde stad tot mediterrane hoofdstad van Europa, in: Corijn,Eric & Walter De Lannoy (eds): La qualité de la différence. De kwaliteit van het verschil, Brussel, VUB-Press: 17-27-41; (2004): with De Corte, Stefan & De Lannoy, Walter: From a Multicultural and fragmented city towards the "Mediterranean" capital of Europe, in: INURA,The contested metropolis. Six cities at the beginning of the 21st century, Birkhauser, Basel/Boston/Berlin: 78-88

7   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_Banana

8   Weber, Max (1967): The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, London, Allan & Unwin

world. The 'short' 20th century ended with the collapse of Eastern European regimes and the expansion of capitalism and the market towards the East. President Bush Sr. declared a new world order and U.S. political scientist Francis Fukuyama spoke of the end of history, referring to Hegel[9]. All the historical debates of the 19th and 20th centuries were seemingly decided in one direction. The divided world of the last decades – divided Europe, three worlds, social classes and ideological battles – seemed to have become one global system. The European Union grew to 28 Member States. The post-colonial countries, before choosing between two camps, were confronted with a global market. Some, like the BRIC countries - Brazil, Russia, India and China - or South Africa, have emerged as global players. Economic growth in China made many think of a shift of the global centre to the East. The planet has become one world system fuelled by a global free market and a neoliberal trend towards deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation.

That shift is not without impact within the countries. In fact the economic crisis of 1974 (the so-called 'oil crisis') announced the end of the post-war social contract and the redistributive welfare politics in the West. The logic of market economy emancipated itself from welfare state regulation. That was supported by the new neoliberal ideology and politics, tested in the Pinochet dictatorship and globally introduced by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. To adapt to overall tendencies, more and more activities, public service and care have had to submit to market laws. Manufacturing delocalises towards low wage countries. The most developed countries shift towards a post-industrial flexible accumulation regime. That has favoured without any doubt the emergence of a new middle class consumer culture recognisable within all national cultures. This has been described from the first sociological studies on ways of life in Europe[10]. Arts and culture follow

9   *The National Interest*

10   *See Scardigli,Victor (1976): Ways of life and social change in Europe, Brussel, E.E.G.; (1983): La consommation, culture au quotidien, Paris,P.U.F.; (1987) : L'Europe des modes de vies, Paris, CNRS; (1989) Consumption, Leisure and Lifestyle in Western Europe, in: Filipcovà, Blanca; Sue Glyptis & Walter Tokarski (eds): Life Styles, Theories, concepts, methods and results of life style research in international perspective, Prague, ISA13/Academy of Sciences, 2. Vol: 302-321.*

the trends and move from a main position within social reproduction mechanisms related to the state towards a commodified consumer culture. High culture and popular culture are both submitted to the market of audiences, popularity, budgets and profits. Cultural hierarchies are replaced by trends, fashion and sometimes hype. Conformity becomes distinction. Of course there is also its (marginal) counterpart with a number of initiatives in old warehouses or squatted buildings turned into artistic hubs, in explicit anti-systemic performances and in socio-artistic projects with the excluded parts of the population in precarious situations.

The transition is basically an urban fact. In the beginning of the 20th century, 10 to 13% of the world's population (1,6 billion at the time) lived in cities. In 1950 it was 29% and in 2000 it went up to 49%. By 2030 it will be 60%. In other words from 220 million people, to over 730 million to more than 4,9 billion today. At the beginning of the 21st century more than half of the population lives in cities. And on the most developed continents the urban share is more than 75%. The human species is becoming an urban animal … and we don't seem to know it yet. We are living a very profound transition that urban theoretician and historian Mike Davis compares to the Neolithic or the industrial revolutions. Revolutions that substantially transformed the living conditions and gave rise to totally new forms of organisation and conviviality. Imagine the profound shift at the beginning of civilisation from small migrating groups of maximum 50 individuals of hunter-gatherers to settlements of organised agriculture, with irrigation and administration, institutionalised religion and social classes and many thousands of inhabitants. Or imagine the shift from the 19th century onwards, from the pre-modern, rural *Ancien régime*, to the industrial societies with their new entrepreneurial and working classes, with mass production, and then mass consumption, and then a social contract and welfare states… In less than a century in many countries more people are now working in banks than in agriculture. In that same century the majority of the population shifted towards urban settlements. And the economies opened

up, the industries moved towards low-wage countries, connectivity and interdependence improved, migration increased… That is the situation now. The 20th century is over. We are moving to a new era.

Globalisation is not the only thing taking place in cities. Cities are becoming gradually bigger and are the centres of innovation and post-industrial economies. Moreover this new globalised economy functions in a space of flows, in a network with metropolitan nodes. And those nodes become the points of attraction and concentration of the increased mobility, including that of human beings. In 2010, 47.3 million people lived in the EU, born outside their resident country. This corresponds to 9.4% of the total EU population. Of these, 31.4 million (6.3%) were born outside the EU and 16.0 million (3.2%) were born in another EU Member State[11]. The largest absolute numbers of people born outside the EU were in Germany (6.4 million), France (5.1 million), the United Kingdom (4.7 million), Spain (4.1 million), Italy (3.2 million), and the Netherlands (1.4 million)[12].

It is not only increased migration that induces multicultural cities, but also the multiplication of lifestyles and subcultures within domestic populations that increases cultural segmentation and fragmentation. In fact we live in an urbanised global system where great cities and metropolitan regions are increasingly characterised by multi-religious and multicultural populations. In some of them the natives are a minority. We speak of superdiversity.

In such a situation *'Gesellschaft'* does not simply fit *'Gemeinschaft'*. We are living in a multi-communitarian urbanised context. Our multi-layered integration of daily life, documented culture and selected tradition within a national cultural territory is challenged. In the first place because of the presence of multicultural migrant groups, of on-going new arrivals, of different imported traditions that challenge the domestic repertoires and collective identities. But also the reality of daily lives is increasingly segmented and fragmented

11   *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_Europe*

12   *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki_Demographics of the European Union*

as social and cultural stratification and inequality increase. Urbanity is made of many distinguished layers and territories that are not spontaneously integrated. These segmented daily cultures are documented in multiple ways. There has never been such cultural or artistic production than there is today. And these artefacts and references compete to take a place in the overall selective tradition, to be part of the overall societal imaging.

We can indicate two critical interfaces in that urban cultural stratification. Are all ways of life, all daily cultural patterns evenly documented and made visible? Surely not. In most cases white middle class standards inform cultural production and media or education much more than a number of cultural minorities. Not every social experience gets the same volume of visible references to make sense of one's experiences. That produces a cultural duality between those who find their system of reference presented as 'the norm' and those whose daily lives seem to be very different from the standards. So different that social integration becomes problematic. If a group's way of life does not find any reference in cultural representation, then the public (inter) cultural debate becomes biased. There is yet another critical interface. Do all artistic or cultural documents or creations evenly participate in producing a social identity or tradition? Is the production of societal identity based on the multicultural reality? Again, surely not. Imaging and identity are a political playground. Cultural policies are part of maintaining existing hegemonies and social interests.

So we encounter a double deficit: there is a lack of documented culture and the real diversity is not sufficiently documented. That leads to non-identification and non-participation, resistance and rejection. And there is a lack of openness of the dominant culture that remains basically nation-based and gives only a marginal place to newcomers and diversity, even if they are in growing numbers. At the same time these deficits do mobilise a whole number of independent cultural centres, mushrooming in suburbs and abandoned industrial buildings. Of course the cultural field is much more nuanced and

diversified. Most cultural, intellectual or artistic producers are of course constantly busy with documenting changing realities. Many efforts are oriented towards covering the whole spectrum of human activity. Deficits grow bigger however when we consider institutionalisation, conditioned by state regulation and market laws. Maybe even performance arts allow for more consideration of diversities than the more state-related institutions like public museums or official festivals. But - we have to admit – even the contemporary performing arts field still show the hegemony of the white middle class …. even when it is acting/touring on a global scale and connecting with the rest of the globe.

Here we see also the structural differences between national cultures and urban cultures. A nation is kept together on the basis of an assumed common history that is continuously constructed through national history, monuments, memorials, heritage and other references. It is that historic continuity that produces tradition and identity. This enables society to be represented both in artistic and cultural production and through representative democracy. These symbolic and imaginary assemblages are contained within a territory. However, a city is not a country. Cities are confronted with the mobility and mixed populations described above. Common roots are not an adequate basis for social bonding, as the main characteristic of cities is precisely the different origin of their residents. Mixed populations have to be kept together through their common destinies. Social bonding and intercultural bridging comes from a future project, a common vision, communing through working and living together. Such a project has no strong historic identity; it is a hybrid construction, a mixed intercultural endeavour. And that cannot easily be represented or mandated. It is a process of co-production and of continuous participation. That is why socio-artistic processes of co-produced culture form part of urban cultural practices. And finally these processes involve networks, not contained territories. Networks within different artistic practices, but also networks beyond borders, with other places and experiences.

These substantial transitions challenge our mental maps. On which scales do cultural productions operate? What is their reach? What is their system of reference? Are they oriented to communitarian bonding? Or are they part of intercultural bridging? Are they inscribed in disciplinary traditions or do they take part in transversal and transgressive interdisciplinary platforms? And how are they interrelated? Even if they are increasingly multi-scaled, how is the local connected with the regional, the national and the continental and the global?

We are in the midst of epochal shifts. On the one hand some tendencies try to return to the firm basis of tradition, discipline and territory. On the other hand some do inscribe their programme in the times that are *a' changin'*, in search of new connections and cohesions. The performing arts are questioned by all these transitions which inspire themes and formats. There are many projects dealing with migration, arrival and crossing borders, integration of newcomers, hybridity, interculturality, multilingualism etc; metropolitan urbanity and public spaces or Europe (or Europeanness) and post-national cultures... Let us illustrate this with some examples that show the great variety of reactions to a changing world by an arts scene that is meant to represent it.

02.

PERFORMING ARTS AS A MIRROR OF RE-SCALING

Of course, each production or programme is the result of a production process mainly inspired by the 'makers'. But all of them are creating within a certain frame of reference. It is clear in arts studies that these frameworks are conditioned within language or cultural traditions, inspired by styles and fashion, formally or thematically related. Less attention is paid to the spatial reach and structure of the references, to the mental maps behind the production. In the following pages we look at a number of practices, suggested by IETM members and other culture professionals, in an attempt to relate them with the shifts analysed above.

The Nation-State

We start this overview on the national scale as it is the dominant state-funded level with clear territorial delimitation. Performing arts have been mainly positioned within that framework. We know of the RSC, the Royal Shakespeare Company, chaired by the Prince of Wales and with the Queen as a patron, maintaining the national author's heritage in Stratford-upon-Avon. We know of the Comédie Française and its origins under Napoleon to maintain the French repertoire of Molière, Racine or Rostand. In Germany the Nationaltheater had to bridge the Hoftheater and the Volkstheater to favour plays in German and build a language community. Nearly all countries have one or another form of 'national' theatre focused on maintaining a national repertoire.

There seems to be a special interest for staging a national repertoire in some newly constituted countries reframing their 'identity', such as after communism or after splitting up federations. Poland is such an example. According to the annual publication *Teatr w Polsce 2014* (Theatre in Poland 2014) there have been few changes and shifts among the most often staged Polish authors and

there is no indication of major changes in the repertories over the last decades, under the influence of globalisation. Some classical Polish authors keep being staged often, like the romantic authors (Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Zygmunt Krasiński) as well as Stanisław Wyspiański, Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz 'Witkacy' and Witold Gombrowicz.

The Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute in Warsaw, founded in 2003 by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to document, promote and enliven contemporary Polish theatre, established the *Ogólnopolski Konkurs na Wystawienie Polskiej Sztuki Współczesnej* (National Competition for Staging Contemporary Polish Drama) as a grant programme that supports theatres to produce contemporary pieces. Its aim is to reward the most interesting repertoire research, support native drama and its realisations and popularisation of contemporary Polish texts and their authors. The second programme, called *Klasyka żywa. Konkurs na inscenizację dawnych dzieł literatury polskiej* (Classic alive. Competition for Staging Old Works of Polish Literature), was founded in the context of the 250th Anniversary of Public Theatre in Poland, celebrated in 2015. The aim of this programme is to encourage creators to deal with the old texts in different historical and cultural contexts.

Another 'new' country stressing its national identity is the Czech Republic. Here national 'classics' from the repertoire are often staged, although challenged by innovative staging. These plays are ever again re-interpreted in a self-referential way within the national culture and hardly affected by globalisation. It is the case, for instance, of Ladislav Stroupežnický's *Naši furianti* (Our Swaggerers), one of the few plays by a 19th century Czech national playwright that always generates great expectations and strong responses from critics and audiences whenever it is staged. It functions in an environment with a very mixed population, with many influences of Slavic, German and Jewish elements that were not easily reduced to a new identity. The play's simple plot follows two villagers (one honourable, one not) competing for the position of night

watchman, with the entire village, including the councillors, getting involved in the contest. Several recent productions of that play reflect on contemporary moral apathy and ignorance and highlight many grotesque features of the current Czech political life. Another classic is Alois and Vilém Mrštík's *Maryša*, a classical Czech theatrical work about an unequal marriage, which ends in a family tragedy.

If one seeks some typical features of contemporary Czech theatre, one could refer to an ironic view, the humour by which authors often laugh at themselves or the Czech 'nature'. They try to point out the bright and the dark sides of the Czech national character, and at the same time to find the shared and characteristic features of today's 'European' reality.

Similar examples can be found in many European countries, built around the idea of monocultural bounded territories, generating a national identity exemplified through common cultural references. These of course have to adapt to epochal changes through re-interpretation and/or ironic distance. In general, however, these national repertoires are challenged both by new contexts of production and of audiences.

Supra-national identities?

One could assume that a certain cultural geography derives from pre-national religious or linguistic regions; 'supra-national' territories, such as 'Scandinavian', or 'Slavic', or 'Mediterranean' or 'Anglo-Saxon' would then exist. Yet even if some nations share a common background with their neighbours, these groupings do not seem to be consciously more important than the national reference. The nation-state seems to have been more powerful in structuring cultural mapping than these older assemblages.

Contemporary Polish theatre, for example, is very influential and very much affects the whole Central-Eastern European region. Polish theatre, being part of Slavic culture, touches many topics that are easily understandable to their neighbours. Cultural exchange is also easy and natural within the region. Common history is a reference...

However, Polish theatre, situated between East and West, seems to be rather influenced by Russian artists on one side and Germans on the other. These two important but also distinguished centres were a strong referential point in the 20th century and inspired some of the most important Polish artists. The romantic idea of a 'Slavic literature' was supported amongst others by the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz and announced during the lectures he held at the Collège de France in Paris. However, despite his authority, this approach was not generally accepted. It is indeed difficult to talk about Slavic drama as a cohesive concept. It seems that the Czech, Polish, Russian, Croatian and other Slavic theatres are very different; Czech theatre, for instance, is closer to German theatre than to all the others. Of course, there are common themes, which are however common for most European countries. Perhaps it makes more sense to talk about the drama and theatre of Central and Eastern Europe, including non-Slavic countries like Hungary, Romania or the Baltic countries. Historical background and the geopolitical situation are possibly more influential than romantic supra-national identities.

Similarly, one may assume that the Northern European theatre features very similar works. Yet for example all the three Baltic countries and their theatre cultures are very different. Common issues have more to do with institutional and training contexts than with cultural geographies: almost all theatre directors over the age of 45 studied under the Russian theatre method/influence. Scandinavia (referring to Sweden, Norway and Denmark) all have a similar royal theatre history, but their contemporary theatre systems, styles and attitudes differ. During the 1920-30's the Finnish cultural intelligentsia was rather exploring the German model concerning the theatre buildings, repertoire systems, etc. Nowadays the relationship with wilderness and nature is possibly the most relevant common feature of Nordic theatre (referring also to Finland and Iceland).

Besides regional interactions between the arts there are many cross-border influences affecting national repertoire through the inspiring approaches of some directors or authors introducing innovating styles.

Cities and public space

The main driver in re-scaling references remains urbanisation. A central feature in imaging urbanity is getting a sense of public space. Rediscovering the city, finding pathways, looking at encounter and avoidance, exploring the structure of social practices in space and time…There are huge differences in the notions and the uses of public space throughout Europe and also in the socio-geography of multicultural cities. Finally, public spaces are at the core of citizenship and play a key role in politics and revolt, as shown by Taksim Park in Istanbul, Puerta del Sol in Madrid, Majdan Square in Kiev or Place de la République in Paris.

- **Charleroi adventure** (http://www.charleroiadventure.com/) by Nicolas Buissart takes the audience on a very special tour of Charleroi, Belgium (named 'the ugliest city in Europe' by some of the Belgian press). The visitors wander across the neglected neighbourhoods and paths, overcoming prejudices with humour, allowing the exchange of experiences and meeting the local population. In principle the project is interesting for a niche of the population, but thanks to globalisation, internet and the use of a basic English, the audience of these 'urban safaris' is increasingly diverse.

- In Brisbane, Australia, Contact Inc developed **The Walking Neighbourhood** project. (http://thewalkingneighbourhood.com.au/about/) Children aged 8-12 prepare guided walking tours through 6-week workshops with professional artists then curate the walks around an inner city neighbourhood in Brisbane, Australia (and other towns). This introduces new ways of seeing and experiencing places, spaces and buildings in this public space. It also provides opportunities for the children to communicate what they see happening in their city. The project addresses issues like children's visibility in communities, their agency to be autonomous and share public space in a safe and

appropriate way with general public, while also tackling the harder task of building friendships and connections between children and unknown adults who live, work or visit a town, ultimately supporting the greater resilience of a community.

- In Zaragoza, Spain, Trayectos developed an innovative concept using digital tools in 2011 and 2012: the **Choreographic Map** (http://www.danzatrayectos.com/esp/text/trayectos-mapa-coreografico.html). The project involves different social entities and the city's professional and amateur dance companies, exploring public spaces not just as places of transit, but as artistic containers presenting dance performances. Several dance pieces have been recorded on video and integrated in a multimedia map on the festival website. Community Dance Project is thus widely visualised, spaces of the city are rediscovered, and new audiences can be approached through technology. Dance and architecture, presented together, acquire new meanings. The spaces explored include among others, the old town, parks, abandoned leisure areas, and vacant lots in public space.

- In Porto, Portugal Visões Úteis, Theatre/Performance Company developed **The Rest of the World** (2007, https://vimeo.com/26759604): a performance inside a taxi, taking 3 spectators each evening from the centre of Porto to the suburbs of the city, an area just 10 minutes away from the centre where nobody goes. Inside, a fiction played out with two actors in the front seats and a car stereo. Outside everything was real, including the drug dealers and the police sometimes chasing them. In the last ten years the project has shifted in terms of content and formats, in order to approach the relation between local reality and global problems. They started to devise performances not only for 'black boxes' but also in public spaces, like audiowalks, performances in cars and bicycle operas. The work also started to relate more with the construction of Europe, as they realized it was impossible to

think of the future without considering common problems. And this shift also made the work more appealing to producers outside of the performance arts sector, and closer to tourism, religion and economy.

Temporary use and marginal spaces

Within the rediscovery of the urban space the re-use of abandoned or derelict zones is important. Contemporary culture can play a powerful role in making citizens re-discover their own cities: abandoned places brought back to life by independent cultural centres or, for shorter periods, by festivals. Globalisation is reshaping public spaces, local economies and the identity of people and territories; the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial city discloses former manufactures or other infrastructures that are taken up in the creative transformation. In the words of Chiara Organtini (Indisciplinarte), '*the arts can support the development of an idea of a wider, diverse and multiple community combining strangeness and sense of belonging in a new perspective'*.

- **Indisciplinarte** (http://www.indisciplinarte.it) is an Italian cultural organisation active in the field of cultural planning and contemporary arts production, based at CAOS in Terni, a multidisciplinary cultural centre born from the restructuring of an old chemical factory. CAOS' activities aim to get people closer to arts by spreading artworks in odd places, developing site-specific projects and hosting artists that research local memories involving local inhabitants emotionally. The main activity in this sense is Ternifestival, international multidisciplinary festival of contemporary creation, working as a workspace of actions, art, debates rather than a showcase. The city of Terni has a strong industrial heritage but several factories are now closing down – like in many parts of Italy – as an effect of globalisation, leaving spaces empty and abandoned with a high risk of draining the economy and the cultural identity as well. By overcoming traditional genres and actively involving the

audience, the festival allows people to experience art directly and accept an innovative and lively idea of culture, as a new economic resource and a tool to develop a new identity, able to face the complexity of a globalised world and society.

- **Red Transibérica de Espacios Culturales Independiente** (http://www.transiberica.org/red) is a cooperation platform aiming to facilitate the development and consolidation of independent cultural spaces in Spain and Portugal. Inspired by Trans Europe Halles (www.teh.net), which has supported the initiative since its beginning, it aims to develop and strengthen independent cultural centres through cooperation, exchange, research, professional development of the staff, support to the creation of new cultural spaces promoted by artists' collectives or citizens, increased visibility of spaces and activities and national and international networking. It also aims to act as a collective, representative body before the public administrations and foster a legal framework more open to independent cultural centres.

Red Transibérica is a cooperation project willing to take action from local to international levels concerning cultural citizen participation. Independent cultural spaces (and centres) were ignored by the government of Spain since its democratic transition. Now these initiatives are starting to know each other and collaborate in national and international projects. Over 25 centres have taken part in the project and around 20 more are in the sphere of the network. The Transibérica network is also a potential bridge between European and Latin American independent (artist- or community-led) cultural centres.

New media and the virtual space

In this whole process of rediscovering space and adjusting mental maps of the city the virtual space of the new media is essential. New media allows new connections, hybridisation of art forms, international networking… They are also much

used for special performances, e.g. walks along the city, re-discovering suburban areas etc. and are easily available to 'minorities' as well. New media affects the content (hybridisation, customisation of contents, re-appropriation and manipulation, availability/ access/ use…) and delivers support systems (relatively cheap mobile devices affordable by large sectors of population). And above all they are accessible means of production and thus question the notion of 'dominant culture' today.

- The increasing influence of the e-world is the focus of Klaus Fruchtnis, a Paris-based French-Colombian digital artist (www.klaus-fruchntis.net), whose projects explore the 'distant proximity' prompted by new technologies, allowing people to engage in conversation with interlocutors who are miles away. His project **Regards Croisés** (http://regardscroises.blog.com/sample-page/) deals with social and urban development through new media: the artist reflects, produces and develops an interface to allow the inhabitants to build a collective memory to rediscover the city, aiming to create social links between the inhabitants. Similar projects under development are **Correspondances Numériques** (http://www.correspondances-lacriee.fr) and **GPSme** (http://gpsme.tumblr.com/) that position the artist and the designer as a key element in our society and in territorial development.

- In Madrid (Spain), the **Intermediae** association has developed a programme of activities since 2007 for the community and the neighbourhood, linking Matadero – their headquarters - to Legazpi and Arganzuela, its closest areas. Artists, collaborators, neighbours, amateurs, experts, researchers, producers, apprentices, associations and collectives join temporary communities aiming for collective processes, allowing citizens to take part in the cultural production of the city. Projects include: Banco Intercambio de Semillas (bank of seeds), Jardín Avant Garden (collective gardening), Ocupación Poética (poetic occupation of the city), Festival In mediterraneum, Citykitchen, and the **Fábrica de Cine**

sin Autor (Factory of Cinema without Authors - http://intermediae.es/project/fabrica_de_cine_sin_autor), which allows any interested person or group to direct, interpret and manage their own film with the support of the professional staff of Intermediae's Open Studio.

Cities of arrival

Cities are made by migrants and newcomers. They are places of diversity. Big cities are nodes in the new world system and places of globalisation. Most post-industrial cities have become part of the great migration flows. Demographic booms are not only the product of natural growth and 'greening' of cities (as opposed to 'greying' of the population, many cities now have increased numbers of young people). The population growth is in many cases due to foreign newcomers. Thus working with and for these new populations becomes a major challenge for performance arts. There are a number of projects focusing on migrants or asylum seekers.

- **108 Responses to One Man's Story** by British multi-disciplinary performance company Analogue (http://analogue-theatre.co.uk/portfolio/stowaway/) tells about a stowaway on a flight from India to the UK who freezes to death 35 000 feet above the ground. As the plane approaches its destination and the landing gear is released, his body is tipped out and crashes through history, through time, through fiction and non-fiction, landing in the car park of a DIY superstore in an affluent suburb of London, and into someone else's world. A real story Analogue wanted to find a way to tell. And yet to whom does this story belong? Who has a right to tell it? Who can truly understand such an extreme experience so far from what most of us will ever experience? Following a research trip to India aimed at meeting potential collaborators, they collected so many contradictory voices about the story that they began to develop the idea to create 108 responses (a number with complex spiritual meanings in Indian and Hindu culture). The backbone of the entire idea

rests on one of the strongest symbols of globalisation: travel across borders. It highlights the extreme corners of its impact: the freedom and education it offers those who gain and the deprivation and compromise of those that lose. The increasing problem of stowaways risking their lives to travel to a place thousands of miles from everything they know is the product of globalisation. '*This is a story of a man from India who is born of a history moulded by the hands of our ancestors, a history we struggle to talk about and a history we have failed to resolve. It is a story that unravels in many directions, calling on experiences of people across the world and theories of Globalisation, Interculturalism, Postcolonialism and Empire. This is the story of the myriad of voices and the complex network of people who intersect with the journey that one man made.*' (Hanna Barker, artistic director).

- Tragic stories of stowaways are also the core of Graeme Miller's **Beheld** (http://www.artsadmin.co.uk/projects/beheld), an art installation piece. The artist recorded the locations where migrants' bodies have fallen while attempting to cross borders into Europe and the USA inside the undercarriages of passenger airplanes. Graeme Miller went to all of the places in the installation, following a long research process, and continues to research and record new locations.

- Migration and crossing borders is also in the interest of the Australian theatre-maker Ahilan Ratnamohan. **Michael Essien I want to play as you...** (http://www.essieniwanttoplay.com) is a football-dance-theatre performance in which 6 Nigerian footballers who have migrated to Europe to pursue a professional football career invite the audience into their world of training, politics, visas and contracts. A total of 14 African footballers have been involved in developing this piece. Through a unique theatrical form, their football skills and physicality are choreographed to create dance-like movement sequences which transport the audience to a surreal playing field. Through intimate direct address the audience receive snippets of their

complex journeys, arriving in Europe as 15 year-olds, visa problems in airports, broken promises from agents. The performances are raw and powerful, never begging for the sympathy of the audience. Dynamic movement sequences reveal a poetic side to the limitless training they embark on in pursuit of their dream; the players' sweat, breath and smell are palpable. The players rejoice in performing and their love of life is evident, as is the fact that any one of them may not be here tomorrow. The project Michael Essien I want to play as you... was inspired by the massive migration of African footballers to Europe. This migration was a direct effect of globalisation as the world markets in football have resulted in the rise of football as a genuine profession for many.

- Where has the heart of Europe gone? Could it be hidden in Kostelec nad Orlicí? Could this small town in east Bohemia mirror all of the world's problems? The international team at Prague's Archa Theatre worked with people who have been living in Kostelec nad Orlicí for several generations and those who have been brought here by fate - asylum seekers from Burma, Georgia, Syria, China and Chechnya. For several years a community art programme has been involving a group of actors, musicians and art teachers, holding a series of workshops at refugee camps, resulting in shows performed in the camps and in non-traditional public spaces (http://www.karaokeeurope.eu/promisedland.html). As a result of this work, several strong relationships were developed with asylum seekers who continued to work on projects (e.g. the Allstar Refjúdží Band was formed as a music-theatre project of Archa Theatre and still performs actively).

- The **Municipality of Genoa**, Italy (http://www.comune.genova.it/) runs one of the most important Italian accommodation projects for asylum seekers, in particular for unaccompanied minors who arrive in Italy and in Genoa escaping from wars or political troubles. They're resourceful guys,

whose richness is clear to all those who give the time and engagement to work with them. *'To think about and tell their stories will help our city to become more open to diversity and to be ready for future challenges'* (Danilo Parodi, Municipality of Genoa). The minors hosted the project, together with the director and an actress of a local theatre company, revisiting Homer's Odyssey, starting from their own experience. The result is a wonderful play that they presented for the first time at the end of 2012.

Common roots or destinies.

Every form of social cohesion needs a narrative. It is either derived from a common history, or is a projection for a common future. An important source of inspiration for performances is the search for shared memories, for stories that can unite newcomers and give them a place in the city or neighbourhood of arrival. More and more European cities are confronted with a demographic boom mainly carried by international migration. Hosting new populations and building intercultural urban identities cannot be based on local cultures alone. The roots, histories and memories of migrants have to be invested in a common destiny for urbanites.

Ultimately this work of recognition of the Other allows for living together on the basis of difference. It is then important that newcomers, strangers or other 'minorities' show their own ways of artistic expression. In that sense artistic work with and by those minorities is essential as a contribution to building an artistic scenery of diversity and encounter that opens the space for the co-production of a common destiny.

'Over the last decade people have been informed about other cultures and traditions by the growing means of social media and easy access to travelling. But what do we actually know about our neighbours who were born in these countries we visit and read about? Do we ever cross the street and ring the bell of our Moroccan neighbour? Do we ask the man next to us in line at the bakery how he feels as an Arab immigrant? Do we stop the Polish beggar and ask him about his life? Based on this

curiosity Female Economy has been making performances not only ABOUT but also WITH those neighbours, who live in the suburbs that we hardly ever visit. Starting with ringing their bell and asking if they want to share their life stories with them.' (Daniella Groenberg, Female Economy).

- Female Economy (the Netherlands, (www.femaleeconomy.com) works with immigrant communities in the Netherlands and abroad, not from the perspective of a problem group in our society, but focusing on the aspects of common knowledge, on what is heard and thought, without knowing the details, whether positive or negative and with the aim of crossing the borders between 'us' and 'them'. The **WijkSafari** (Neighbourhood Safari) performances began (after intensive research) with the 'adoption method': all actors live for two weeks with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood they're working in, who become the adoptive parents. Based on their stories and on what happens in those two weeks the actors create performances that will take the audience into the lives of these inhabitants during a four-hour walk through a world they've never really experienced before. Starting with a lunch in one of the parents' houses while listening to their stories and that of the actors, then walking through a supermarket, or drinking tea with the men from the mosque, carried on the back of a Moroccan guy's scooter – arms safely wrapped around the driver – to the next location, while watching a veiled woman singing beautiful songs from a car or being invited into a bus to sing folk songs yourself, inspired by the stories you've heard and the people you've seen. Wondering if the people passing by are part of the performance or not…

- The **Carnival of Hammarkullen**, taking place for almost 40 years, is a yearly event held on the last weekend of May. In the 1960's and 70's, when Gothenburg was one of those heavily industrialised European cities, the newly built suburbs hosting immigrant workers from Finland, Italy, Greece,

Turkey and the former republic of Yugoslavia were short of social services. To face the increase in crime and social tension, the local authorities decided to meet the demands for leisure activities by arranging a 'spring festival', quickly renamed *carnival* by immigrants from Bolivia and Chile joining the festival. The Carnival of Hammarkullen is in constant transformation, joined by new groups from, for instance, Bulgaria and Nigeria as well as Roma people. *'The Latin American carnival tradition, with roots in Africa and Europe, is in itself a history lesson expressing the power structure in society and the oppression of colonised indigenous people. Identity and history are expressed in the dances, the costumes and in the music. To include this cultural heritage in the narrative of the city will help to renegotiate the identity of the city'* (Mats Sjölin, City of Gothenburg).

- **Graceland** (http://www.dansearenanord.no/graceland.html) is a performance created by a group of Swedish and Finnish actors and Norwegian-Greek artists at Dansearena nord. The work explores being Scandinavian immigrants in Norway and the difference between being from Scandinavia and being from a war-ridden country; it deals with Norwegian immigration policy and Norway's image of a model of democracy; it also deals with the task of being human in front of other human beings.

- Since 1984 the Verband Freie Darstellende Künste NRW e.V. works as an independent group in Nordrhein-Westfalen (Dortmund, Germany). Richard Siegal's **(c)oPirates** (http://www.copirates.org/performance/intro.php) is an artistic experiment that is by turn performance and party, dance and interactive experience. (c)oPirates embarks upon an exploration of community by bringing together professional and amateur performers, as well as different groups from the city – traceurs, jerks, folkloristic dancers, ballroom dancers, poetry slammers, krumpers, musicians… local actors with different social and cultural backgrounds. (c)oPirates brings a unique, festive performance

to each new venue. '*The piece maintains this eclectic material within its own unity by playing on the contrasts and proximities between these diverse communities. Piracy became the leitmotiv in the development of the piece for not only is it an operation that deviates from normality, but it can also be a powerful pedagogical tool. Group-identities are no longer quite so distinct – through stealing from each other they have learnt to blur their boundaries.*' (Barbara Formis, quoted by Andre Sebastian, Verband Freie Darstellende Künste).

Urbanity as post-national scenery

Globalisation takes place in cities, is made and fuelled through those localities connected in the space of flows. Local populations can resist, maintaining their specificities. They can also embrace the external input and become global players. Artists can document 'niches' of population on purpose to go against globalisation and mass cultural/media products. Or they can be the initiators of externalities confronting the local with the global. The global-local nexus is the essence of urbanity today and opens a transnational landscape for the performing arts.

- Promised Land Company, Poland is a multi-disciplinary group of artists, working mostly in theatres – acting, singing, dancing, drawing and more. In their project, **Looking for Promised Land,** they ask: is the mythical Promised Land there, anywhere in the world? What does this expression mean? Has this idea survived till today? Is the place we live in our Promised Land? Or where is It? We live in a multi-cultural world, that is why the performance touches upon important questions like philosophy of life, identity, social background, politics, democracy, religion, sex, dependence, freedom of expression. '*Today's theatre is the dialogue with the Audience and our part is to listen carefully to Them, draw information from Them and turn it into art. We meet people and question them about the abovementioned things. We interview them, ask about their past, present and dreams of the future. We are All looking for Promised Land – the Audience and us'.*

- The SPIELART theatre festival in Munchen (Germany) deals explicitly with urbanity. **Global City – Local City** (http://www.theatrefit.org) is a project of Theater/Festivals in Transition (FIT), a network of theatre festivals in eight European countries initiated in 2005. The international artists involved develop their artistic research in a particular quarter in each European city involved.

'*The city is taken as the concrete manifestation of our global world. Almost every trend involving goods, capital, immigration, social, economic and political structures, real life situations and people's plans for their lives, production and consummation, collective and fabricated dreams and utopias that exist in this world can be found in their visual, audible and tangible forms in the city. The city is for its inhabitants the aesthetic and social realm of experiences and actions regarding the globalised world and often it appears to us like a reduced map of the world. As the centres of the cities in their more and more uniform look represent the global aspect of the city, the outer districts and quarters reflect the other side of the globalisation process, as each city and each quarter is still very different, with its own history, location, mentalities, language habits, local rituals, population structures, education, ecotopes, surroundings, and social and cultural heritage. (…)The city quarters are the experimental zones of social changes.*' (Annette Geller, Spielmotor)

- The **Art-Square** social enterprise explicitly focuses on the urban challenge. The **Let's go Urban!** project (2013 - http://art-square.org/urban-art-projects/lets-go-urban-germany-2013/) was a youth exchange organised in the small village of Hirschfeld (Hunsrück, Germany), dedicated to a group of about 30 young contemporary artists, street artists, creative people, who worked together for 10 days, through workshops of street painting, street performance, video mapping, DJ-ing, Urban / landscape workshops, documentary filming. The venue deeply influenced their creations and the whole project was a mutual,

structured contact between artists and inhabitants and thus constitutes a deep interaction with the local territory. The project was, since the beginning, connected to the Airport Hahn, formerly the American Military Airbase. Up to 2012, it served as inspiration to international artists hosted by the local organisation Art Square. The ideas brought to the space by the artists change the perception for the audience, other artists and local inhabitants. The whole concept is a specific answer to the globalised world where points of view and ways of life become increasingly standardised, and thus poorer, less stimulating for future generations. The concept is also multicultural, connected to mobility as well as various perceptions of global history, borders and the future.

The city close to the world

The global is also present as a systemic challenge. Climate change, decline of biodiversity, exhaustion of resources, food shortages, increased inequality and poverty... The global system seems to escape from all forms of regulation. International treaties or global agencies are incapable of containing global market forces. At the same time there is an increased consciousness of the necessity of developing a sustainable transition, increased social equality and a peaceful intercultural conviviality.

These global challenges inform artistic creativity and debate. Globalisation confronts individuals and societies with (relatively) new problems that question established ways of thinking and require a reflection by the individual, the community and the society. '*Globalisation has made the world "smaller" and more complex, living together has become more complex: as societies we are facing problems that are bigger than ourselves and the horizons of our nation states. Our decisions here and now influence people in other parts of the world now and tomorrow: is it possible at all to take the right consumer decision? Globalisation seems to have made it impossible to know what is wrong and what is right, how to act right, to make the right decision.*' (Martina Marti, Gnab Collective).

- For the Springfestival aan de Werf in Utrecht (the Netherlands) **Floris van Delft** created **Dat Staat** (http://datstaat. blogspot.nl/), a series of 6 evenings in which the actors, audience and experts created a new State. In a specially designed structure in the middle of the public space the audience is welcomed and invited to think about how they would construct a new State.

  Over the last nine years Floris van Delft has been creating several 'theatrical debates', a mix of interactive theatre with experts on different subjects who engage with the actors and the audience, exploring hot topics for today's society. Starting off with a 'Dutch' subject, the performance always reaches the question of how to position the Dutch subject in a globalised world. Do we look over our borders and consider the geopolitical perspective? Or do we try to deal with the questions on a local/national level? And how does the audience respond to such a perspective? Can they still engage with certain questions or themes (public safety, national defence, health care, education, immigration/identity, wealth) if these are so big, or on such an enormous scale? Dat Staat develops a theatrical way of dealing with big questions and topics in a playful manner, without losing (too much) of the complexity of the topics.

- Martina Marti's **Hamlet private** (http://martinamarti.blogspot.fi/) is a reflection on how globalisation has affected us on the very personal level - how we take decisions, how we become visible as human beings in a togetherness as described by Hannah Arendt in her *Vita Activa*. Meeting one spectator at a time in a relaxed, unconventional space, an actress from the Gnab Collective (a loose group of freelance artists) uses a set of 'Talmeh' cards, developed specifically for this performance. The actress gives the spectator a reading of 6 cards and by doing so helps him or her approach and understand the larger questions of life. But Hamlet private isn't only Hamlet, it is above all 'private'. With the help of the Talmeh cards, the performance deals with the individual issues and questions of each spectator without him or her having to formulate them out loud. The cards serve as a tool to visualise the complexity of the world around us, of human relationships and the human psyche. The performance is a private, intimate experience for the spectator who ends up him- or herself in the role of Hamlet. It makes Hamlet's conflict concrete and personal and brings out the universal nature of the play. The project's point of departure is the claim that in order to deal with the complexity of a globalised world, we need to stop taking decisions and give space to dithering. The project proposes Hamlet and his inability to act as a role model for us all. His fundamental questions are also our questions. His hesitation is also our hesitation.

03.
PERFORMING ARTS IN A RE-SCALING WORLD

The above is not a systematic research, nor an all-inclusive mapping of the transitions at work in the many forms of theatre in Europe. Any historic overview will show a great diversity of formats, all related to different mental maps. In that sense the contemporary evolutions are only a question of minor shifts and intensities. However due to great political, social and economic changes, the context for the arts is shifting in a more radical way. The mental frames in which art and performances are produced do not coincide (necessarily) with the social and political organisation of their environment. The dominance of the national frame is fading away and is steadily being replaced with kinds of metropolitan urbanities. This unleashes at least many movements of deconstruction and opens many new thematic fields. Urban culture is not a given transmitted culture but a construct, a creative process situated in a very diverse environment. We seem to be still in that phase of deconstruction and experimentation. Repertoire is replaced by a new focus on production. But we also see important shifts from purely formal reconstructions or deconstructions to a renewed interest for contents and societal challenges. And these are tackled in a closer relationship with the public and some target groups, in many versions of co-productive processes.

The world is undoubtedly in a deep phase of transformation. The economic sphere is a world system, with a worldwide labour distribution and above all a worldwide financialisation. That has profoundly changed domestic relations between state and market and diminished the capacity of national politics for regulation. Globalisation has exacerbated the problematic forces of productivism, destroying a sound relationship with nature and increasing social inequalities. It has also changed the social composition of populations around the world. All these processes are mainly concentrated in cities, big cities and metropolises, networked with each other to form a space of flows. All these shifts have deep cultural effects. They have affected the references that have functioned as common backgrounds for reflection and representation.

The main shift is the demise of the nation-state with its national cultural imaginaries and symbols as the main driving forces for social cohesion and reproduction. The 19th century model of integrating societies through monocultural territories is gone. Countries have become multicultural and multi-religious, cities have taken over from the countryside, diversity has even turned into superdiversity. In the cultural field, that involves a number of dissociations. Language is not automatically culture. The use of a common language – English or French or Spanish - as interface in multilingual contexts does not imply common cultural or artistic references. Culture is not automatically expressing a single way of life. Religion or ethnicity does not indicate fixed social practices or behaviours. And, what probably is the most challenging shift, community is not the solid base for society anymore. Cultural bonding around identities produces the multicommunitarian urban societies of today. In

their most sectarian way they even become anti-societal forces. Socialisation increasingly becomes bridging, an intercultural, intermediate and thus mediated process.

The social position of the arts – and of research and education – will therefore change. Besides the reproduction of identities and traditions, representing a common history, they will increasingly have to critically deconstruct precisely these given cultures to accommodate newcomers, diversities and hybridities – possibly in a dialogic manner. The arts are in the forefront of opening up imagination and creating a symbolic sphere to shape a common destiny, a social and sustainable transition, a post-national way of life. And these new mental maps will also have different scales, reaching from local proximities to global systemic challenges. Performing arts represent the whole range of positions within these re-scaling processes. It is good to be conscious of that diversity.

Theatre has renewed its central position in producing the social software of imaging, symbolising and promoting solidarities. It functions and searches for the right scale and the right connections. Space does matter. New scales and sceneries are part of the same quest.