

Editorial

At first, the theme Theatre-Women-**Text** seemed limited to the horizon of written plays and traditional Western text based performance, though we had expected to receive articles looking at text from different points of view, such as inspiration, action, craft, choreography and narration. We were surprised: we were taken on a journey through different kinds of silence. The unspoken words, which reveal the insecurity of not knowing what to say, the lack of a pulpit from which to make an address or the prohibition of expression are confronted by the wisdom of grandmothers and women from other parts of the world who write, remember, sing and speak, revealing a silence which is filled with biographies, ambitions and stories. Silence can be inert, but also powerful, mysterious and active. Starting from the awareness of receiving in heritage a free open space on which to leave the mark of our experience, the articles move on optimistically as silence becomes a container to explore and invent, rather than an imposed obligation. Theatre helps us recognise the wisdom that has tacitly been passed down.

The articles don't easily subdivide into groups; they don't immediately reveal a common cultural or geographical background; they all connect in an intricate network of arguments. In relation to **text**, feminism is as equally upheld or rejected in industrially developed countries as in countries still struggling against imperialism. Confidence and enthusiasm are expressed by the role women are taking in the area of virtual theatre, while the cruel reality which words must deal with is apparent in harsh political contingencies. Hope comes from looking into examples from the past, and the love women have for images and oxymoron is revealed in poetic forms of writing. For practitioners, text is inextricably tied to body language and biography. For critics, writers and intellectuals, text becomes the practical tool that connects them to the stage, while resisting or enjoying isolation and collective participation. **Text** also includes the richness, emotional depth, personality and mystery of voice and the enormous need women have to sing. The word silence is often used: Pei Yanling repeats her texts without saying a word; Gabriela Bianco communicates in deaf and dumb language; Jacky Lansley dances her revolt against official historiography; Lena Ekhem remembers sitting close together on benches; Carlotta Ikeda turns words into choreography.

The majority of recognised playwrights of the past are men; the easily transmittable **text** fills the memory of theatre and women play a small role in this kind of historiography, not dominating the connection between auto-biographical, personal writing and dramatic, objective and universal texts - all this is true, but still this issue gives a general feeling of individuality, creative joy, inventiveness and youth. If women have not left texts behind it is also because they are busy living. For some women text is simply the occasion for making theatre and the articles take us on a journey full of expectation. To continue in this direction, Theatre-Women-**Travel** has been chosen as theme for the next issue.

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