



# Geddy Aniksdal

## Yes

Supertext

I, myself am my starting text

The poetry  
The blood jet

The real text  
the poetic text  
the personal text  
the private text  
the forbidden text  
the automatic text  
the text of today, here, now  
the actor's text  
the director's text  
the audience's text  
the interpreted text  
the raw text  
the unspoken text  
the danced text  
the text of silence  
the silenced text  
your text  
my text  
our text

hypertext

the text that connects  
the unspoken text  
the dead text  
the dead context  
the song of text

words  
sounds  
utterings  
pauses  
breath  
the overtext  
the subtext  
the subtle text  
the simple text

Told by me, yet to be told by us all.  
The story. This story.

Our nights and days.  
Our daily bread.

We see more than we hear.  
We see before we hear.  
I can see what you are saying.  
Can I hear what you are doing?  
Read my mind...  
Hm...  
I trusted my body before my tongue.  
My speaking tongue. Speaking body.  
Body speaking.

## THE PUB

What is it in me that makes me want to visit the Sailors Inn Pub more often than I want to read the writings of renowned theatre men/women, or, even, want to go to the theatre?

I often find life at its peak before or after the announced moment: the night before the big party, or the morning after; the cigarette break rather than the meeting itself; the improvisations rather than the fixed score.

My heart goes to the Pub, the party, the coffee drinking, the walks, the talks, the games, the dancing, the fights, the juicy discussions. The being together; for good or worse. The stories being told there, the drama that unfolds itself without script or directors.

## MY SISTER

Of course, my sister and I were going to the dance. She had a lift. I would come later, hitchhiking.

... a curve in the road. All the cars had stopped. Accident. People. People coming over. "Your sister was there". Standing in front of the local taxi driver. With another girl in the car. My sister, my sister. Gone. Gone to the hospital.

Came to the hospital. Frantically chewing and chewing my gum. Managed to see her. So still. Me chewing and chewing. She is hurt. Doctor coming in. "Get that gum out". "How is she?" "We don't know yet. Get out."

Where are mum and dad?

Away for the first time. Find them, call them. Ride home alone. Sit in their big bed. Home. Alone. Drunk crazy man at the door. Shooting. Going away.

Parents coming home. Parents of dead boy visiting us.

Tears, tears, my dad crying.

The car. Only wheels and metal pieces.

My sister. Injured. Coming home. Father buying a sun-chair. Sitting quietly in the garden.

Afraid to touch her. We were. Afraid.

Alone she must have been. Alone alone.

## GRANDMOTHER'S TOE

Once when we were discussing what actors think about during improvisations, a colleague reported that Else Marie Laukvik had been asked that question by an audience member. Her answer was: "I am thinking about my grandmother's big toe".

I was young at that time, not so experienced, and I found the answer flippant or jokey, a refusal to answer the question "properly", or a way of putting the person off.

## IMPROVISATION

My first text, the first word that I really worked on as an actor, was "yes".

It was my first work with Grenland Friteater, and I began when they had already been working on a theme for a while. The work was later to become the performance *The Play is Over - American Dreams*, the performance/work-demonstration *Too Much of Nothing*, and a collaboration with Institutet for Scenkonst, *Leaving Theatre*.

That was much later.

All I knew at the time was that we were working on the theme of the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s in America, and that the work of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, and also of Lillian Hellman, was the main source of text. We also had popular jazz songs from that era and Film Noir as inspiration. Elegant women. Detectives. Crooks. Slang. McCarthyism. Alcohol and what have you.

I was to work every day from morning to evening. I was to read all the books. See all the films. Listen to all the music we had. Transcribe the lyrics, as we could not afford to buy the music sheets. Practise American

slang. Do my training.

At that time we worked with Tor Arne Ursin. He was the director of the group; earlier the company did not have a director. This was the ensemble's first work after a crisis, where Lars wanted to leave, Trond did not know whether to stay or go, Eva and Lars Steinar had just come back from a long study of Kathakali in India. And me, oldest in age, youngest in this kind of experience.

Second floor of the printer's shop, mint green walls, windows facing the side of the factory, greyish lino on the floor.

After some hours of training we started with improvisations.

I could not understand how the others could move so much and talk, shout and sing. Whisper, cry, breathe. Jump around, stamp the floor, dance, fight, gesticulate.

During the day I had solo improvisations with only Tor Arne in the room. He would read me some lines from a poem, then I would come onto the floor, alone.

"Start when you are ready. Take your time."

Alone.

I felt as alone as my first time at home alone. Home. Alone.

I wanted to run away, to sink into the floor, to hide behind the curtains, to suddenly be relieved of a curious illness. I opted for the corner, Chinese goat as I am. My hands started to move as if I were pulling back a curtain. I sweated so much that I had to wipe my hands on my trousers. These two

movements became my physical score. Then I whispered yes. And I had my text as well.

Working with this material for weeks and weeks on end, with Eva, Lars Steinar, Lars, Trond and myself. With all of them, with some of them. The possible combinations were unlimited.

The interpretation of yes! Yes as no, yes as maybe, yes as climax, yes as affirmation, yes as longing, yes as trickery, yes as question mark, yes as victory, yesssss! Yes as giving up. Giving in. As wondering. Yes as yesterday, yes as tomorrow. Yes as "fuck you all", and what am I doing here? But mostly yes. Yes. Simply yes.

Improvisations with grandmother's toes...

Improvisations involving sisters...

GEDDY ANIKSDAL (Norway) is an actor and director working with Grenland Friteater. She has considerable experience as a workshop leader, specialising in ways in which actors can create their own material. She has been an active member of the Magdalena Project since it began.