

Editorial

Characters have the main role in this issue of *The Open Page*. They speak for themselves, they put forward their point of view, they direct the work, they become authors, they decide. The actors, directors, scholars and historians are witnesses or mediums who help to reveal the life of characters, as if they were independent beings who want to be set free with the help of craft and artistic work. Seen as a whole, the articles bring together characters from the magic world of theatre as people from different eras and continents who have the power to meet and communicate.

The articles explore the relationship between the theatrical character and the person, between the artefact and the artist, between the performer's identity and the assumed identity. But they also focus on the importance of having a strong self-reliant **character** to confront adversity and establish an autonomous expression and existence in one's work.

Whether creating, being, playing, interpreting or presenting a role, whether telling stories through words, images or music, a connection exists between the performer's own personality and the nature of who or what is presented on stage. The spectators see characters, and beside/inside/behind/through/above each **character** they see a person. They see a role, the interpretation of that role and the actor who is presenting the role. Some articles talk about developing a character by creating and elaborating actor's material; others discuss character by taking the example of a particular production. In some articles different characters are revived and confronted. Those performers who need years to fully embody a character in their particular genre use the article to follow the long process of apprenticeship. We find many references to the sources of inspiration that help in creating or interpreting a character, in both technical and emotional terms, reminding us of the connection between life experience, daily events, improvisation, composition, exercises and training. Building a **character** can also be a process that can be ignored or rejected with the performer just trying to behave in as ordinary fashion as possible on stage.

For what and whom are we searching when we build a **character** or we allow ourselves to be inhabited by a character? For ourselves? For an alter-ego? For a guardian angel? For complementarity, opposition or similarity? For truth? For the spectator's perspective? For a challenge? For immortality? Characters live on, and even the women we remember from the past seem to have acquired a certain fixed personality in our eyes, becoming myth, archetypes or characters. They come alive when we let them speak to our world today, when we let them struggle for a better tomorrow, when we let them help us say what it is that we need to say.

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Holstebro, March 2003