BABEȘ – BOLYAI UNIVERSITY, CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF THEATRE AND TELEVISION
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND FILM

DOMENIUL TEATRU ȘI ARTELE SPECTACOLULUI

DOCTORAL THESIS
summary

COORDINATOR:
Prof. univ. dr. habil. Miklós Bács

<div align="right">

PhD CANDIDATE:
Raluca Lupan

</div>

2018

BABEŞ – BOLYAI UNIVERISTY CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF THEATRE AND TELEVISION
DOTORAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND FILM

THE MINIMUM REQUIRED DISTANCE BETWEEN THE ACTOR AND HIS ROLE APPLIED IN SMALL PERFORMATIVE SPACES
summary

COODINATOR:
Prof. univ. dr. habil. Miklós Bács

Phd CANDIDATE:
Raluca Lupan

2018

The minimum required distance between the actor and his role applied in small performative spaces

Key words: distance, space, spatial art, proximity, identification, distancing, live-performer, performance, optimal experience, the minimum required distance between the actor and his role applied in small performative spaces.

The present thesis contains a number of 7 sections which can be consulted at the indicate pages in the following content:

The actor attire's himself with the `skin`of a character or a role or with the psycho-physical face of a fictional identity, but in the creating process of this new identity, the actor oversees and encounters a major difficulty: setting his personal feelings, thoughts and emotions appart from the characters feeling, thoughts and emotions. On the other side of the stage, in his diurnal state, the actor can remain captive in this `new created skin`, and this event or process can engender a severe condition in which the actor can not make a clear difference between himself and his role or a impestuos dissimilarity can ocurr between the personal emotions and the factitious ones. In the absence of a rigurous consideration of the proffesional process of constructing a fictional part or score, the actor can find himself in an utter abandonment in another reality,in assuming a fictional identity that he can no longer be separated from. The actor's need to secure his own self and his own identity plays a very important stage in the artist's proffesional life. The strong closeness between the fictional image and the personal image of the actor can cause important changes on a psycho-physical level, altering his social and personal inteactions in his daily life.

In the following section we will attempt to define on short terms the concept of `the minimum required distance between the actor and his role` and other concepts used in the body of the present thesis. Therefore, the collocation used above can be apprehended as:

(1) The optimal distance that can `liberate` the actor from his charater when he relinquish the performative space;

(2) The distance which serves the actor in making an obvious distinction between his personal imaginative space (seeing the actor as an extra-diurnal being) and the fictional imaginative space (that belongs to the character/the role/the ficional identity);

(3) The distance through which the actor can develop the ability to internally control, observe and analize the extent of his psycho-physical-emotional investment in the process of the process of designing the fictional identity;

(4) The distance that make possible the cohabitation of the actor and the fictional identity in the same body and at the same time without damaging the psychological and physical functions of the actor;

(5) The distance that grants the actor the posibilitty to see in an objective manner his means of vocal and physical expressions, without infesting the social and psychological behaviour of the actor, or more accurate, the neutral surface where the actor's individuality is not

compromised by an identification or a supra-identification with the character/the role or the fictional score.

During the practican and theoetical inquiry of the current thesis, notions like actor, role, character, distancing, identification have suffered several dissolutions implying a change in their classical definitions. Because of these implied dissolutions, in the 6th sections of the thesis dedicated to the practical case studies we refer to the actor as a live-performer. The dissolution of the classical character or of the role specifically identified in the theatrical representation guides us to the following allegation: the elaborated construct will turn into *fictional identity,* and we take into account this term because it comprises all aspects of the concept by not eliminating any substantial part. We can regard the contemporary theatrical representation as a performative experience in which the live-performer can exhibit and express all his containable identities: his diurnal identity, his pre-expressive identity and his fictional (constructed) identity. The contemporary actor (live-performer) can appear as a practitioner of a performative state that wants his audience to regard this performative or theatrical act as an optimal experience.

Most allocutions about the perfomative state or about the functional conditions of the actor during the theatrical representation implicate the following ideas or concepts: distance, identifying with the role, protecting the inner-self and finding the appropriate methods and techniques in securely building the character/ the role/ the fictional identity.

The research concercing the minimum distance between the actor and his role can reveal, on a conceptual direction, the existence of this minimun extent of this phenomenom that can have multiple psycho-physical manifestations. The actor-role relationship depends from the early stages on the inner-self of the actor and also of the assigned importance to processes like, identification and distancing from the role. The theatrical methods or training techniques will coequally influence the identification and distancing processes. For practically reifying the minimum requiered distance from the role, the actor can consider the character or the fictional being as a psycho-physical mask superimposed over his own identity. For accompleshing the demand of his role or score the actor can decide on the distancing and identifying degrees based on his own personal and professional choises and also on the staging directions given by the director himself. In this manner the performative act can be regarded as a hole. Depending on the viewing perspective concerning the theatrical or performative experience of the actor, he can

determine the distancing and identifying extent and implicitly the calibre of the minimun required distance from his role.

The minimum required distance from the role can be remodeled depending on the theatrical or performative space chosen for acting out the performative or stage actions. The gestural and playfulness (includig his imaginative forms) space of the actor embraces the minimum required distance and also includes a personal empathy towards the fictional identity that can be regarded as a infinitesimal identifying degree with his constructed and elaborated new-being.

The motivations behind the process of choosing to identify or distance oneself from the role are exclusively based on the professional beliefs of the actor. The fictional identity will interpenetrate the diurnal identity and the pre-expressive identity. These three massive identities work together in an individual, but simultaneous way in the internal substrate of the actor under the sway of the minimum required distance, this developed pre-expressive state that has continuity even in the dramatic or performative space. The overlapping of this multiple consciences spread inside the actor's (live-performer's) inner movement does not always guarantee a presence of secure distance, because the actor is a living and dynamic creature submissive to manifold metamorphosis and transformations. The organic structure explored by the actor, the process of assuming his role, of this fictional identity as he regards it as a fictional-mask constructed in the pre-expressive space will support a gradually discharge of any possible identifications or over-identification with the role.

The minimum required distance from the role can at any point in time change his action trajectory in the actor's psycho-psysical matrix. Even in the event of a live performer, performing his own personal identity, it is necessary to realize that even this type of performative act implies that the actor will operate on a construct. The actor's labor will consist in molding and elaborating a fictional identity of his private personality. The peformative practitioner expresses a mask, an avatar of his own personality that will be presented in front of an audience under the form of a performative situation. The one that reveals himself in front of the audience, will deliberately and knowingly `wear` the mask of his identity. In the event of an over-identification with himself, with his own identity, the most important and valuable process of the actor is the awareness of the significant manifestations of the minimum required distance from the performative construct.

Assuming, evaluating and the use of internal discipline in relation to the minimum required distance from the role can become a part of the actor's internal process followed by the identification of its disappearance.

Systemizing the constructive process of the role or of the character or of a performative identity is based on the actor ability to trace and observe the identification and distancing mechanisms. Inside the pre-expressive space or the prior-to-fiction space or pre-performative space one can find dregs of psycho-physical manifestations of these two concepts.

Ousting the distance between the actor and his role implies assuming that in the creative process a psychological disequilibrium can appear. The actor's maximum identification with his role will be followed by mischievous events in his own personal and social life. The actor's relationship with the distnce between him and his role can be build by profoundly understanding the creating methods or techniques. The analysis of the practical manifestations of the minimum required distance can be based on professional introspection, practise by reaserch or on constructive feedback techniques inside the practice. The staging/directing aesthetic will automatically produce an alteration in the process of analyzing the minimum required distance of the actor from his role. This minimum required distance in small performative spaces is conditioned by the physical coordonates of the space, by the theatrical method, practice or technique used for producing the performance, by the actor's and the director's intellectual capacity and by the shape and structure of future acting representation compared to the primary representation. In the pre-expressive space and in all shapes or forms of spectacular or performative show a minimum required distance will be perceived and this type of distance will maintain the actor's self in a protective and safe area from a fictional over-infestation.

Even though this division between the individual as a unity and the actor as another unity can not be made possible in the practical process, there is a necesity to reconfigure and separate this two entities. For a theater practitioner this division comes from the desire of fully undertansting the theatrical mechanisms. The individual performs, the actor performs and this leads to the the conclusion that the fictional identity will also have to perform in front of other fictitional identities in the ongiong process of a theater performance.

In the professional practice of the artistic act we will find three basic components : the individual performing the status of his profession, the actor that will perform assimilating the fictional identity that the play indicates and the fictional identity which will perform acording to

his general characteristics given by the play writter. In the basic structure of a theatrical act we will take into consideration three performative levels: the individual, the actor, the fictional identity (role, character).

The strain of the physical manifestions between the distancing and identification phenomenons and the awareness involving these two operations can be considered a personal process of the actor in his enconters with the fictional identities or with his perfomative scores.

The live-performer's opinions regarding the distancing or identification with the fictional identity will alter and vary over time in his professional career, but one of the most important aspects that he has to take into consideration is the process of becoming aware of the minim required- personal distance between himself and his role.

The minimun required distance between the actor and his role (fictional identity) can be submitted to several changes from one stage vision to another, but the process of acknowledging this type of distance it belongs entirely to the actor. The cut out and the surgical outline of this two process contained by the actor inside his pyhco-physical system is very unlikely to take place, because the identitification process can not be achieved without a prior distancing process that has already taken place. Likewise, the distancing effect can be accomplished in the presence of a foregoing indentification.

Th minimum required distance between the actor and his role (fictional identity) hinges upon the live-performer's degree of psycho-physical investment in the role, the live-performer's psycho-physical mobility and also on his intelectual elasticity and in addition, on his personal attitudes and beliefs in relation to his proffesion. This type of distance is upholded by the amount of time spend by the live-performer in the pre-expressive space dedicated to the construction of fictional identity, by the degree of his connection with the role (character, fictional identity). Nevertheless, this particular sort of distance is linked with the actor's influence over the fictional construct and the level of transformations suffered as a result of his conscious assumption of the role.

The minimun required distance from the role (fictional identity) still depends on the forms of organization in the construction process of the fictional identity and on the terms of the actor-role relationship: subordination, exchange, conflict, etc. The minimum required distance to the role can become an operational form in the construction of fictional identity, as long as the actor acknowledges that it can only manifest itself in relation to identification.

The secure distance, the mental distance, the condescension distance, the optimal distance all of this types of distances are found in the live-perfomer' inner world and in the operational stages he will become aware of this distance by giving up his protective routines deliberately and consciously assuming one or more fictional identities. The immediat danger of infecting everyday space with fiction will have only pathological manifestations in exceptional cases. The ability to control the minimum required distance to a role can occur when the actor (the live-performer) traces the limits of the fictional identity in a personal and professional manner. The level of psycho-physical investment in transforming into fictitious identity is a personal process similar to macro-optimal activities.

It is assumed that in the process of building the fictional identity in the pre-expressive space there are at least three stages that the live performer will have to take into account: 1) accessing or emboding or translating oneself into the fictitious identity; 2) developing or interpreting or representing or performing a fictional identity; 3) removal or separation or segregate from the fictional identity. At each level of these three stages, the actor will be temporarily inhabited by the fictional identity and will act simultaneously in both daily reality and fictional reality.

The three consciousness simultaneously active in the carnality and internality of the live performer consumes its psycho-physical energy both in the pre-expressive space and during the performative experience, but it will protect the self by maintaining an echilibrium distance of between this three identities. This distance that balances the potential identification or over-identification can be called the minimum required distance required from the fictional identity-role.

In our opinion, the physical distance accessed by the actor in the pre-expressive or extra-dayly space in which you can create and observe the development of the fictional identity, regulates and changes the forms of psycho-physical expression, at the same time will simultaneously generate in the live-performer processes such as identification and distancing from the intermediate consciousness which will subsequently become a unitary being. It is also possible that the degree of investing in the spatial-directional attitudes of the intermediate identity provides information or clues about the optimal distance-the minimum required distance from the role.

In our opinion, the physical distances accessed in the pre-expressive space of constructing the fictional identity will regulate and modify the forms of psycho-physical expression, and in

the same time will simultaneous generate in the internal formation of the live-perfoemer processes like identification with and distancing from the fictional conscience which will be incarnated or embodied. It is also possible that the level of investment of the live performer in developing his spatial attitudes that will be used in the creation of the fictional identity can offer information about the minimum required distance from the role. In this regard, we can assert that the definition of the minimum required distance from the role is:

The minimum required distance from the role (fictional identity) represents the intermediary distance with the help of which the actor can act in a conscious and secure way in the pre-expressive space in which he will construct the fictional identity. The processes by which the actor (the live performer) supports condescending-optimal distance are: 1) depersonalization of one's own identity and assuming extra-daily identity; 2) the incorporation with the elaborated psycho-physical data of the fictional identity, 3) the depersonalization of the fictional identity; 4) the resumption of extra-daily identity and implicitly of daily identity.

In the next period concerning the research we expect to extend the area of the analysis of this type of optimal distance and examine and investigate the elements omitted in the current study. Another intent or aim is to identity the practical and actual methods that can be used by the live-performer in engaging and directly and organically accessing the optimal distance in relationship with a role. Our academic appetency is to specifically detect a method that can succor the actor (live-performer) in constantly attaining an optimal distancing-identification in his practical researches and elaborated constructions of fictional identities. Another objective of the future research of the theme in discussion is to discover the techniques and practical exercises through which this securing process can be adopted at each stage of constructing fictitious identity in extra-daily (pre-expressive) space.