

Towards a Poor Techno-theatre

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I write. *Escribo*. The inevitable beginning. A consciousness of the act (this act). I write lying down – more and more so with time – being a resistance to sitting. I breathe. Warm hardware over my chest. I write this sentence. This. I write in an old house turned into a theatre, in a small town in the southwest of Puerto Rico: San Germán. In a blue-grey room. Still a bedroom. The dust is part of the room. Peeling paint. Trembling floors. Termites' eggs, like sand. The room, as the whole house, possesses a simple functionality: between a ruin and a space of thought.

Here my company and I have worked since 1998. In this small theatre. A sparseness of means. A constancy, between community and experimentation. Inside, we imagine ourselves burning candles and digital Bengal lights to the poor theatres of America. We do it (at times). We recall our own island: Moncho Conde, Zora Moreno, El Tajo del Alacrán, Jóvenes del 98, los Teatros de Cayey, Rosa Luisa Márquez remembering Augusto Boal, when he would say that you can do theatre even in a theatre.¹ The theatre, Casa Cruz de la Luna, is a theatre, yet it is still a house (maybe here lies the poverty). The dust comes from the street, like the noise.

I breathe. I evoke tales of Pedrito Santaliz, the Puerto Rican popular theatre champion, constantly moving between Puerto Rico and New York, between island and mainland, struggling for art and a living. His handwritten note in an archival box listing money needed for food. I remember his warmth, his discipline, anecdotes of him asking friends for car lifts and asking his students for change. Poverty as Artaudian cruelty: at the same time unapologetic necessity and unrelenting

transgression. I quote Polish director Tadeusz Kantor (1915–1990):

To make public
what in the life of an individual
has been more intimate,
and what contains the highest value,
what to the 'world'
would seem to be
ridiculous,
something small,
'poverty.'
(Kantor 1993: 165)

The writing is now projected on the walls. Hands, keyboard, light, drifting. There is something always lacking from this act (as I write, I edit), always turning against itself; it is something not unlike the glittering beautiful woman who accompanies the magician; it is simultaneously complacent and it is politically questionable, like this comment, disappearing in the middle of the act (as I write this line, Kantor's words fade from view). Writing is a transaction of loss; it is like the noise on the street that I have been blocking from my senses until now. *La escritura es la pobreza*. (It is poverty.)

ESCRITURA ACTO ('ACT-WRITING')

In 2001, I began to explore the act of writing on stage at a computer, making the contents visible to the audience through the use of a video projector. The performative action sprang from the quotidian action of writing, from experiencing and perceiving it as a sort of mediated self-dialogue, an act that on stage would potentially engender tension and attention. It also emerged from a myth, more specifically, from the convergence of

¹ These are some of the exponents of Puerto Rican popular theatre in the late twentieth century. Informed by Brechtian epic theatre and by other theatre movements of Latin America, such as Augusto Boal's theatre of the oppressed, these practitioners often combined farce and ritual, addressing marginal communities and embracing a mission of cultural resistance. Among them, Pedro Santaliz Ávila (1938–2008) founded the inspiring Nuevo Teatro Pobre de América in 1963, moving through streets, cafes, squares and communal centres in the Island and in New York until his death.



■ Figure 1. Aravind Adyanthaya in *Prometheus Bound*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2002. Photo Melisa Riviere.

the action and the myth. The myth was that of Prometheus, the bound god, the titan who gave humanity the gifts of writing and fire (the forge and, consequently, technology). It was this image of myself, constricted to a desk, bound to writing and the machine for many hours a day, which prompted the *mise-en-scène* of 'Prometheus Bound', my first digital writing piece in 2002.

Through the performance, I approached Aeschylus' tragedy through its rewriting. The rewriting was public, theatrical. It included segments in which my task was to copy excerpts of existing translations of *Prometheus Bound*, as well as other sequences in which a variety of contents surfaced: my own poetry; improvised reflections on the work itself or on the surrounding performative space; call and response games with the audience; automatic writing; and gibberish. As I wrote, simultaneously or successively, I spoke. The speech was equally a mosaic, also combining words from the tragedy with an assortment of other scripted and unscripted fragments. The complexity of graphic and aural language flows made the textual terrain of the piece an unstable one, inherently hybrid and mutable. The performative act itself, in its production and perception, was also constantly (de/re) constructed through the particulars of the

event: typographical errors, live rhythms, and font and display choices. For the audience, mistakes became memorable, as did computer functions (like automatic auto-correction or windows activated by pushing the wrong buttons). The play began to be read through its accidents, through details and associations that I did not altogether control. My presence began to echo Roland Barthes' notion of the 'scriptor' in the essay 'The Death of the Author': someone existing only at the moment (by virtue of the moment) of writing, someone who is 'born simultaneously with the text' (Barthes 1977: 145). In turn, the text being, as he suggests, something multi-dimensional and oblique, comprising combinations and clashes of different sources and instances: an inherently performative enunciation.

I began to refer to the poetics of digital stage writing as *escritura acto* ('act-writing'), for it was the ways of production and reception of the act that interested me. I denoted the writing being generated and perceived at the moment of performance as 'text', distinguishing it from the 'script' and the 'document'. The script is the pre-existing guide to the performance that encompasses lines to be written and spoken, improvisation outlines and stage directions. The document is the trace that remains in the computer after the event, the file that can be

saved at the end, a partial performance record (for it includes the letters, the signs, but not the circumstances of their occurrence).

The movement between these three types of writing (text, script and document) plays on the visibility of another type of writing, the 'original' playscript of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*. The source is, then, what is approached through its very disappearance. The crossbreed nature of the performance text and the accidents of the event just highlight the fact that the book, which often carries the rubric of 'original', is already a writing that has been intervened by multiple acts of transcription, translation and editing.

As it moves away from the notion of an original source, *escritura acto* relies on a function of the present, a linguistic and spatial negotiation. It forms an experiential junction point in which no attempt of recapturing or copying the past is made. Instead, a here and now is engendered, an occasion open to the past's disrupted and disrupting materialities. Again, Barthes' essay comes to mind: '[W]riting can no longer be designated as an operation of recording, notation, representation, "depiction" (as the Classics would say); rather, it designates exactly what linguistics, referring to Oxford philosophy, call a performative, a rare verbal form' (Barthes 1977: 145).

Escritura acto is a historiography of surface movement. The surface of the screen. The perceived surface of the proscenium stage. The surface on which lines of languages travel. The surface of the glass of water. I drink from it during the performance, its fluidity admitting embodiments, des-incarnations and encodings. In it, even the materiality of an original moment (the presupposed instant in which a man, Aeschylus, is writing the text 'Prometheus Bound') can participate as an intangible tangibility, something capable of effacing and being effaced: a phantasm with language as one of its apparitions. In this *séance*, I am the medium, the medium-writer, that is, the writer intertwined with the technological medium, the medium functionally intertwined with the writer.

Over the years I, alone or together with my

ensemble, Casa Cruz de la Luna, have enacted writing of other texts that invoke the canon. These productions have been characterized by a flow of stage materialities. For instance, in 'The Library', an *escritura acto* of Jorge Luis Borges' 'The Library of Babel', oral enunciations and projected narration from the short story were combined with epigraphs from tombstones, with code games and repetitive aleatory typing patterns. As this happened, live bodies were washed over the graves, actual given-away money was showered over the audience in a future-divination act, and, finally, an enormous linen white cloth descended, shrouding everyone in darkness. The shows took place at night, as site-specific performances, at the Santa María Magdalena de Pazzis Cemetery in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 2006. This graveyard, dating from 1863, contains the tombs of many of the most prominent political and cultural figures in Puerto Rican history. It constitutes a national archive of sorts (of remains) in an island where the very notion of 'nation' is contested through the complexities of its neocolonial status. Borges' tale of another archive, a mythical library that encompasses all possible books made of all possible letter combinations – a sea of nonsense with occasional islands of meaning – vitally echoes the constant transformations of the bodies, of matter, of the bones, of printed, engraved and ephemeral light-made words, a mutating archive: the fiction-history of a nation. At the gate of the cemetery, some people turned around as pages of an antique book were torn out to be given as programmes.

'The Marquis de Sade is Afraid of the Sea', an *escritura acto* ensemble piece that toured various indoor and public outdoor spaces in the Island in 2009, also travelled different physicalities: animate and dead animals, naked and overdressed bodies, puppets, digital machines, and mechanized and non-mechanized household appliances. The work was episodic. Its sources included the first act of Chekhov's *The Seagull* and fragments from the writings of de Sade's dialogues. In the last episode, an actor, who had just played the

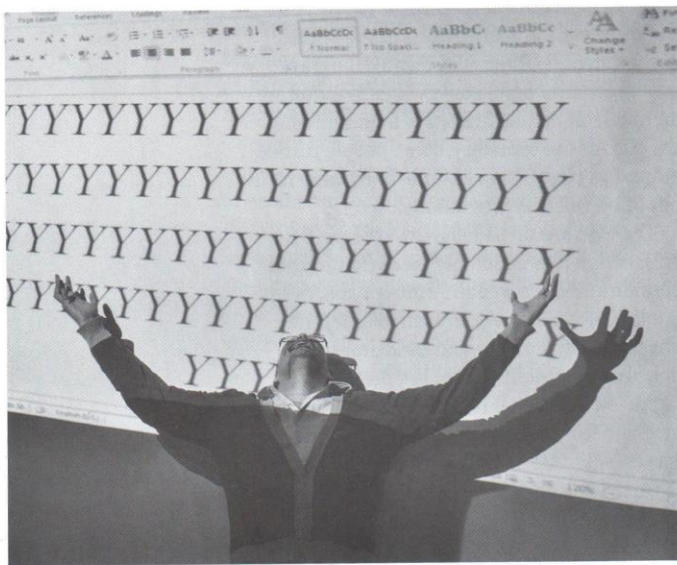
writer Trigorin, now alone on stage, executes a series of contortions and precarious balancing movements in front of a laptop. He holds an extreme pose as a digital recording is heard:

If matter acts in combinations unknown to us, if movement is inherent in Nature; if, in short, she alone, by reason of her energy is able to create, produce, reserve, maintain, hold in equilibrium within the immense plane of space all the spheres that stand before our gaze and whose uniform march, unvarying, fills us with awe and admiration. (de Sade 1990: 210–11)

Thereafter, the recording itself indicates that the ‘voice’ the spectator is listening to is made up of a digital mixing of the voices of the actors and technicians in the production. It also provides the source of the quote: the character of Dolmance in the Marquis de Sade’s *Philosophy in the Bedroom*.

For our theatre company, *escritura acto* has taken the shape of an engine for the generation of exercises and productions, but it has also become a way of understanding the stage as a space that carries a consciousness of the movement of matter. Words, codes and technology are essences in its nature. As in de Sade’s writing, language becomes obsession, proliferating through plateaus of necessity.

■ Figure 2. Aravind Adyanthaya in *Prometheus Bound*, New York City, New York, 2012. Photo Carlos Rodriguez



It incarnates mediated desire. ‘The Marquis de Sade is Afraid of the Sea’ opens as two bare-chested, unknown, soldiers fight and caress, at the same time that four Victorian techno-mediums type gibberish while voicing the Lord’s Prayer. Meanwhile, the rest of the ensemble moves wildly, talking automatically among the audience. Then a cow carcass is lowered onto the stage. This beginning attempts to be one of sensed confusion, emoted chaos and a transit of visible intangibilities, that is, a ritual. On the one hand, it is aligned with Peter Brook’s conception of a ‘holy theatre’ and akin to Jerzy Grotowski’s proposal of theatre as encounter, self-penetration and transubstantiation. On the other hand, however, as technology is ingrained into the instance and creates it, technology becomes another actor-medium, as essential as the bodies. Accordingly, I instead now talk about encounters, transubstantiations, *interpenetrations*, organic–inorganic clashes and bridges, even pixelated faith.

TOWARDS A NEW POOR THEATRE

What is the theatre? What is unique about it? ... Two concrete conceptions crystallized: the poor theatre and performance as an act of transgression. Jerzy Grotowski (2002 [1968]: 18–19)

No matter how much theatre expands and exploits its mechanical resources, it will remain technologically inferior to film and television. Jerzy Grotowski (2002 [1968]: 19)

In 1968, Jerzy Grotowski wrote *Towards a Poor Theatre*, a call to reimagine the materiality of the human body in the performative act. Stripped of the accoutrements of make-up, traditional scenery and extraneous music or sounds, Grotowski’s holy actors followed a *via negativa* in order to also get rid of acting tricks and conventions. The intended result evoked the notion of the body as a non-conceptual object, that is, a physicality of excess, shock and unexpectedness verging in its own impossibility, transcending its preconceived image and its expected functions. Grotowski’s theatre fostered

the disconnection of ingrained movement patterns, the exploration of acrobatics, tearing with eyes closed, sweating in rest and using all body parts as voice resonators. Transgression lay in this reinvention of the actor's body and also in the body's centrality in the act. For Grotowski, media devices only worked as distraction and detraction, taking away from the uniquely biological and spiritual nature of the theatrical.

I would like to suggest that, since then, this paradigm – the notion of the possibility of a non-conceptual body in performance – has been changing. The limits of the organic are each day closer to its couplings to the inorganic. Interactivity has become a technological directive through innumerable devices and applications. Even media like film and television, which carried the supposition of a passive viewer, have been permeated by interactive features. Furthermore, ways in which human-machine relationships and embodiments are viewed and theorized have also changed, technological performance discourses now circulating in a contested, shifting terrain.

In her book, *Closer: Performance, technologies, phenomenology* (2007), Suzan Kozel draws on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology to postulate technological performance as the experience of the live moment, as embodied perception and as a present in which action, reception and reflection intermingle. Consequently, technology is not conceived of as an opposite polarity to the body or as an end in a human-machine spectrum.² Instead, she talks of techno-human 'entwinements' and 'enfoldings' that make up the performance. The divide between subjects and objects is broken. Grotowski's motto of theatre as an encounter is reformulated as a communion in which there are no exclusive functions of agents and witnesses, but in which there are continuous crossings of enactments and perceptions.³ This proposed interconnectivity brings to mind *escritura acto* as writing moves through an interplay of dimensions: different projection surfaces (screens, skins, architecture), different languages (translations), different degrees of correction and intelligibility, the sounds of typing on a keyboard or those articulated by a person

reading the writing, its degree of dependence on spoken words and, lastly, the integration of articulated reflection about the moment in the moment itself. The entwinements are the mediums, engendered as technological and linguistic presences interweave with bodies. These fluxes also presuppose a degree of familiarity: a history of connection between humans, codes and machines.

Escritura acto is a child of low-tech experimenting. It draws its richness from the fact that the act of writing on a computer is imbued in the fabric of quotidian lives – that it has become habitual, second nature (or merely nature). Word processing forms part of the array of technologies (Internet, phones, games) that generally define contemporaneity and that are becoming increasingly accessible. And here poverty strikes again. *Escritura acto* is an advocating of poor technology in performance, of those modes that are actively changing the function of our day-to-day bodies. It places itself in a discursive arena that recalls the poverty of Boal, of Santaliz and of many poor theatres of Latin America: to use what is more readily available, what you have with you, so that its poverty and closeness serves to examine the struggles and complexity of your life. In *escritura acto* workshops, almost all participants bring their own laptops. In most schools, universities and even community centres, I have found a projector.⁴

Digital writing on stage has made me reflect upon elements brought by contact and intermingling with technology that are modifying our ways of sensing and living. I have focused my explorations on three of these elements, which constitute, at the same time, research guidelines, paradigmatic transformations, and behavioural and perceptual trends. These elements are: simultaneity, compenetration and fluid reality.

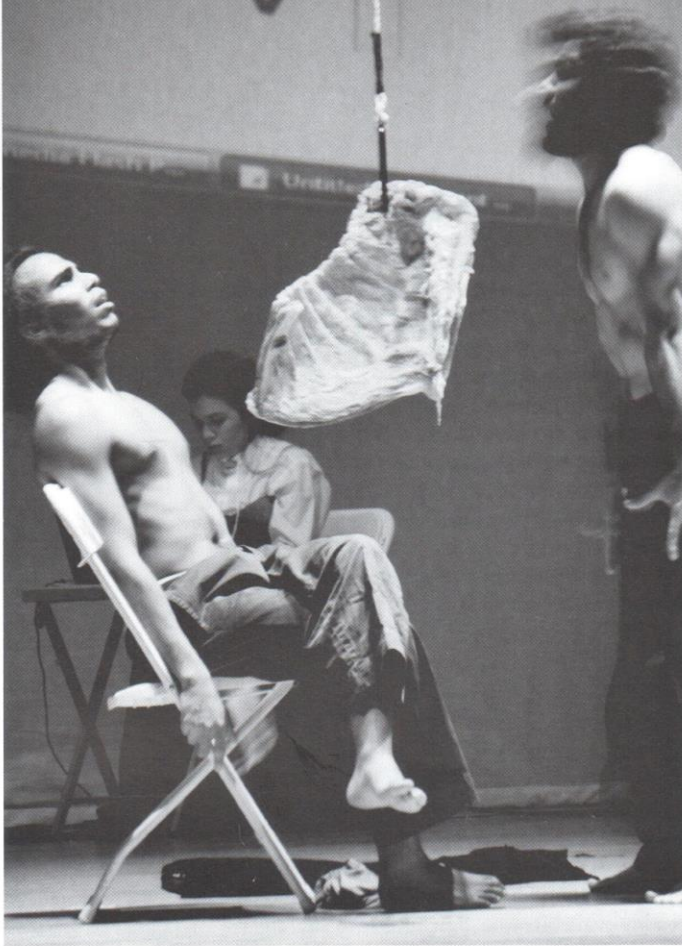
SIMULTANEITY

Simultaneity. Two or more things produced at the same time. Two or more things perceived at the same time. Multi-tasking.

² Kozel contrasts her current stance with the idea of technology as foreign to the body or as a threat that is going to replace the body, a way of thinking that spread in the 1990s and that she refers to as 'body police' (Kozel 2007: xvii).

³ For Grotowski himself, his original proposal in which the spectator functioned more as a witness to the actor's spiritual act turned out to be eventually insufficient, leading him to the practise of 'paratheatrical acts' in which every person present was part of communal rituals.

⁴ Commonalities can also be traced between *escritura acto* and the Italian movement of poor art, 'arte povera' (1967-1972): flows in materiality; the importance of presence over representation and process over product; the foregrounding of the everyday and the now, of the personal and the emotive; and the emergence of letters and signs in simple denuded forms (in *escritura acto* this sometimes takes the shape of aleatory panoramas of letters, of writing as typing).



■ Figure 3. Golem episode of *The Marquis de Sade is Afraid of the Sea, Cayey*, Puerto Rico, 2009. l-r: Omar Colón, Natalie Pagan and Gabriel Mejía. Director Aravind Enrique Adyanthaya. Photo Eillezer Perez

⁵ According to André Breton's 'First Surrealist Manifesto' of 1924, automatic writing attempts to transcribe an uncensored drift of thought. Persons can be instructed to write as fast as they can without pause. They can pick a letter before they begin. If their minds go blank, they can write the preselected letter down and begin a word with it, thus keeping the flow.

Multi-focusing. The bombardment of stimuli. The proverbial burden of younger generations. In its more controversial form (maybe): driving and texting. In *escritura acto*, I have found one of the more theatrically strong applications of simultaneity in 'disjunction': the act of speaking one text while simultaneously writing a different text.

EXERCISE: BASIC DISJUNCTION (THE PERSONAL PORTRAIT)

Preparation: Close your eyes and find a script deeply rooted in your memory, something that you are able to say by rote, while doing, for instance, the most complex daily chores. It can be short or long. It can be in any language. Many people find such hyper-memorized lines in prayers, songs, poems or pledges. Once you have it, begin to repeat it in your mind. Then soundlessly articulate it with your lips. Finally,

speak it, first softly and then louder. Play with its volume and tempo. While always speaking this hyper-memorized script, open your eyes, walk around the room, shake hands with the people around you, run and jump. Go to a desk, always while speaking, and begin to write automatically, that is, write whatever comes to your mind, first on paper and then on a computer. Stop. Notice the easiness or difficulty of each action.⁵

Exercise: One at a time, members of the group go to a computer hooked to a projector. Each performs this short piece in front of the others. First, the person begins to speak the hyper-memorized fragment repeatedly and then simultaneously begins to write automatically. The person is instructed to try to avoid copying the spoken words and to not give up on the task, no matter how hard it seems. I have named the exercise 'the personal portrait' for it gives the audience an impression of the writer: from the selected, very personal, spoken text, to the rhythms and melodies of the writing and the speech, body gestures, ruptures and the unpredictability of the automatic text. The writer-speakers find themselves in a situation of extreme concentration, a multi-tasking action that requires absolute stage presence. The simultaneous act, by its contradictory nature, is alive, dramatically tense. Although disjunction exercises can be done with any combination of oral and written hyper-memorized or automatic texts, I have found carrying the hyper-memorized oral line together with the automatic written line the easiest combination to enact and the most theatrically playful. If there is available opportunity, I precede this exercise with an automatic writing session in order to familiarize the participants with this technique.

EXERCISE: DISJUNCTION IN A SCENE (SUBTEXTING)

Two persons memorize well a dialogue from a play. They carry on the scene while one of them is sitting at a laptop writing automatically.

The impression is often that the contents of the writer's mind can be read on the projected writing, appearing like a subtext of the character's speech. Variations can be explored with more than two people in a scene, as well as with more than two writers. Positions and movements of the actors who are not writing can be further blocked.

CHAINS

Multiple exercises in simultaneity can be developed, linking different written and spoken texts through acts of reading, dictation, copying and transcription. A particularly effective one is 'Street Jam I'.

EXERCISE: STREET JAM I

Preparation: Engage the group in a session of contact movement. Make them talk automatically – whatever comes to their minds – while they move freely, touching one another. The goal of this preparation is not to instruct the participants in specific techniques used in contact improvisation: Free exploration and letting emotions flow through the movement should be encouraged. A degree of awkwardness while moving is not to be shunned.

Exercise: One participant writing automatically at a computer. Two or more actors are engaged in contact movement. One of the movers is talking automatically. A prompter sporadically selects and shouts a word from the projected automatic text being written. The talker-mover must then immediately repeat the word, incorporating it into the automatic speech flow. At the sign of the facilitator, participants can switch functions. In a variation, the audience can act as prompters. This was the first exercise that our group took to the streets as an improvised performance.

COMPENETRATION

Compenetration (Spanish: *compenetración*) is both a coming together and an emotional

involvement. It points to the closeness between humans and machines, between humans and humans through machines. It is the shortening of distances embodied in a text message or an email. In fictions: mediated telepathy, the human-robot mind.

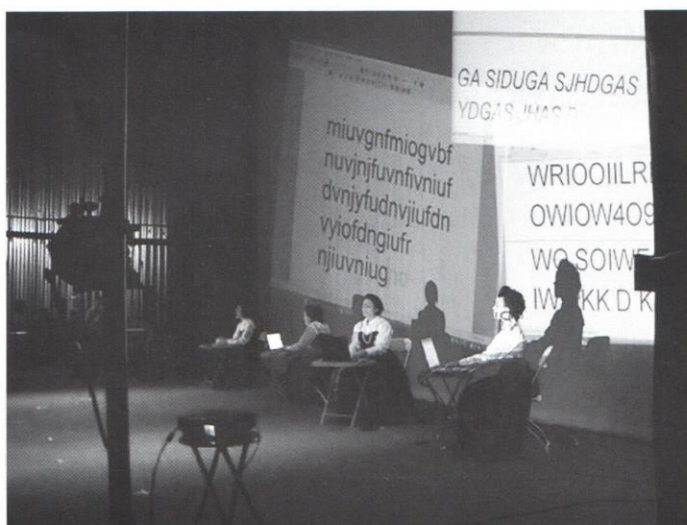
In *escritura acto*, a great degree of connection or compenetration between actors and audience members comes from the sharing of language and sign codes. It is evident in the ability of a spectator to anticipate, rightly or wrongly, what a word or phrase is going to be from its first projected letters. This anticipation or 'preognition' generates a theatrical tension based on expectations.

EXERCISE: MIRROR COMPENETRATION

Preparation: First try an old mirror practice: Two people face each other; they talk together. No observer should be able to tell who is leading or who is following. At times the participants will get the impression that they know what the other is going to say.

Exercise: Two people. One speaks while one writes on a computer. The speaker looks at a screen. The writer listens for the words as they are formed. If the writer is able to type without looking at the keyboard, the eyes should look

■ Figure 4. Victorian techno-mediums in *The Marquis de Sade is Afraid of the Sea*, Cayey, Puerto Rico, 2009. l-r: Marian Perez, Natalie Pagan, Limary Ruiz and Kathya Torres. Director Aravind Enrique Adyanthaya. Photo Eiliezer Perez



at the speaker's mouth. The goal is to have the speaking and the writing mirror each other, coming together as one.

EXERCISE: BASIC WORD PRECOGNITION

One participant at the keyboard silently chooses a word. The audience begins to voice words trying to guess the writer's word. When the writer hears a word that shares the first letter (or first letters) with the chosen word, he or she writes this beginning. The audience keeps anticipating the word, speaking words that share the beginning. Subsequent letters are added as anticipated words resemble more and more the chosen one until we arrive at it. At any moment in the exercise, if the public guesses the chosen word, it is written and the exercise ends. In a variation, the writer has the option of changing the chosen word if the public voices it. In this case, the new chosen word must not have been mentioned before and must share the beginning that has already been written. The audience now arrives at the final chosen word as the writer runs out of options of words sharing the letters that have already been written.⁶

⁶Variations of the exercise that allow the writer to continually change the target word at each stage that a letter is added could echo the statistical dynamics proposed by Markov chains in which each successive state of the system is arrived at randomly based on a set of possibilities.

VARIATION: CONTEXTUALIZED WORD PRECOGNITION

This exercise proceeds as 'Basic word precognition' except that a facilitator, when prompting the audience to anticipate the word, precedes this request by an incomplete phrase. In 'The Marquis de Sade is Afraid of the Sea' the prompting phrase was 'I believe in ...', being quickly and melodramatically completed by each word enunciated by the public.

Explorations in compenetration:
Neurolinguistic notions of priming – the quick identification of a word as it is preceded by a related word – and lexical decision tasking – identifying if a combination of letters is a real word or not upon hearing or seeing it – could inform future variations of *escritura acto* precognition exercises.

FLUID REALITY

Fluid reality: the potential of the stage to serve as a space in which different conceptions of the real converge. A movement between the magic 'if' (the presupposition of a stage fiction) of a Stanislavskian actor, the commitment to visceral actions of the body art performer and other (allegorical, oneiric, instructive, virtual) modes. The horizontal placement of daily realities in relation to theatrical realities thus negating any hierarchy that would define one as being the copy, negation or simulation of the other. In *escritura acto*, the capacity of projected writing on stage to form a reality plane capable of interacting with others.

EXERCISE: THE SPOTLIGHT

Each person in the group is instructed to write on separate pieces of paper the following: an action that the person is comfortable doing on stage, an action that the person is uncomfortable doing and would never do on stage and an action that the person thinks would be impossible to perform as a single body on stage even if the person wanted to. The actions can be anything, except for things that could cause permanent body harm to the participants. They should be written in the first-person, present tense, for example: 'I sit on the floor', 'I jump' or 'I explode the core of Earth'. The three papers from everyone are collected and mixed. A person in the group is designated as a writer-prompter. Each member of the group takes a turn at standing under a spotlight, back towards the others. The writer-prompter takes out a piece of paper and writes the action it suggests. The person in the spotlight takes a look at the projected prompting above. The person turns and either executes the action literally to the audience, executes the action metaphorically (not literally) or stands there without executing the action. The person turns around and is given another prompting. Three to six repetitions work well before the person comes out of the spotlight.

In this exercise, the projected writing that

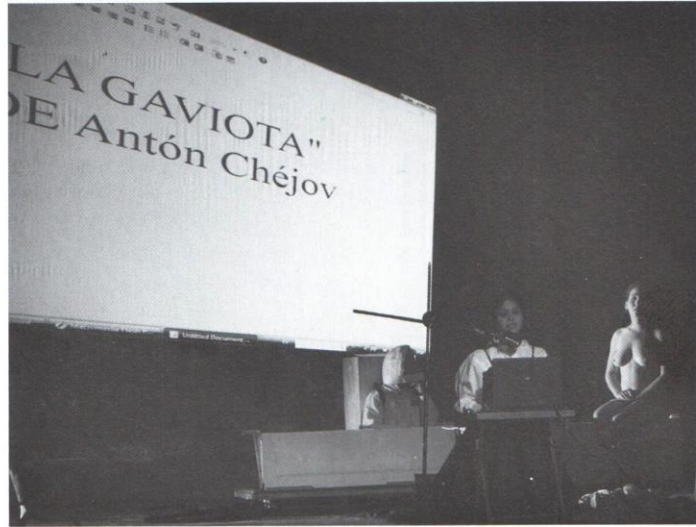
coincides with the image of the performer acts as a simultaneous reality that is produced live in the moment. It is read in conjunction with the physical materiality of the body on stage. The convergences and clashes between the two can be dramatic. For instance, a participant performs the following sequence: 'I sing.' She does nothing. 'I lie down.' She does nothing. 'I strip completely naked.' She does nothing. 'I rain.' She lowers her underwear and urinates on stage.

VARIATION: THE SPOTLIGHT

Two or more people are under the spotlight. When they turn simultaneously to face the audience, each has the option to not execute or literally or non-literally execute the action. They turn back around at the same time. They do this three to six times with different promptings.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND INTO PRODUCTION

The *escritura acto* exercises discussed here constitute a sample of my work with the Performance, Theatre and Technology Laboratory of Casa Cruz de la Luna. Exercises often act as matrices for proposing other exercises and variations. Most of the time, a performance begins to take shape when we pair an exercise with one or more mythical frameworks, sources or stories. Some other exercises, not described in this article, which have been incorporated into our stagings, include: dephasing (enunciating and simultaneously writing different parts of a hyper-memorized script); *escritura karaoke* (prompting the audience to read aloud or sing written sequences); kinetic response of bodies on stage to the shapes and rhythms of the writing; correct and incorrect, verbal and graphic translation movements between different languages and codes; and the incorporation of text from live Internet searches and audience texting to the flows. I have found wide variance in the way that



escritura acto is perceived, interpreted and emotionally received. These differences seem to echo Barthes' foregrounding of the reader in the making of the text or the importance of the spectator as another active medium in a multi-dimensional act.

■ Figure 5. *The Marquis de Sade is Afraid of the Sea, The Seagull* episode, Cayey, Puerto Rico, 2009. l-r: Ricardo Olivencia, Marian Perez and Alejandra Maldonado. Director Aravind Enrique Adyanthaya. Photo Eliezer Perez

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