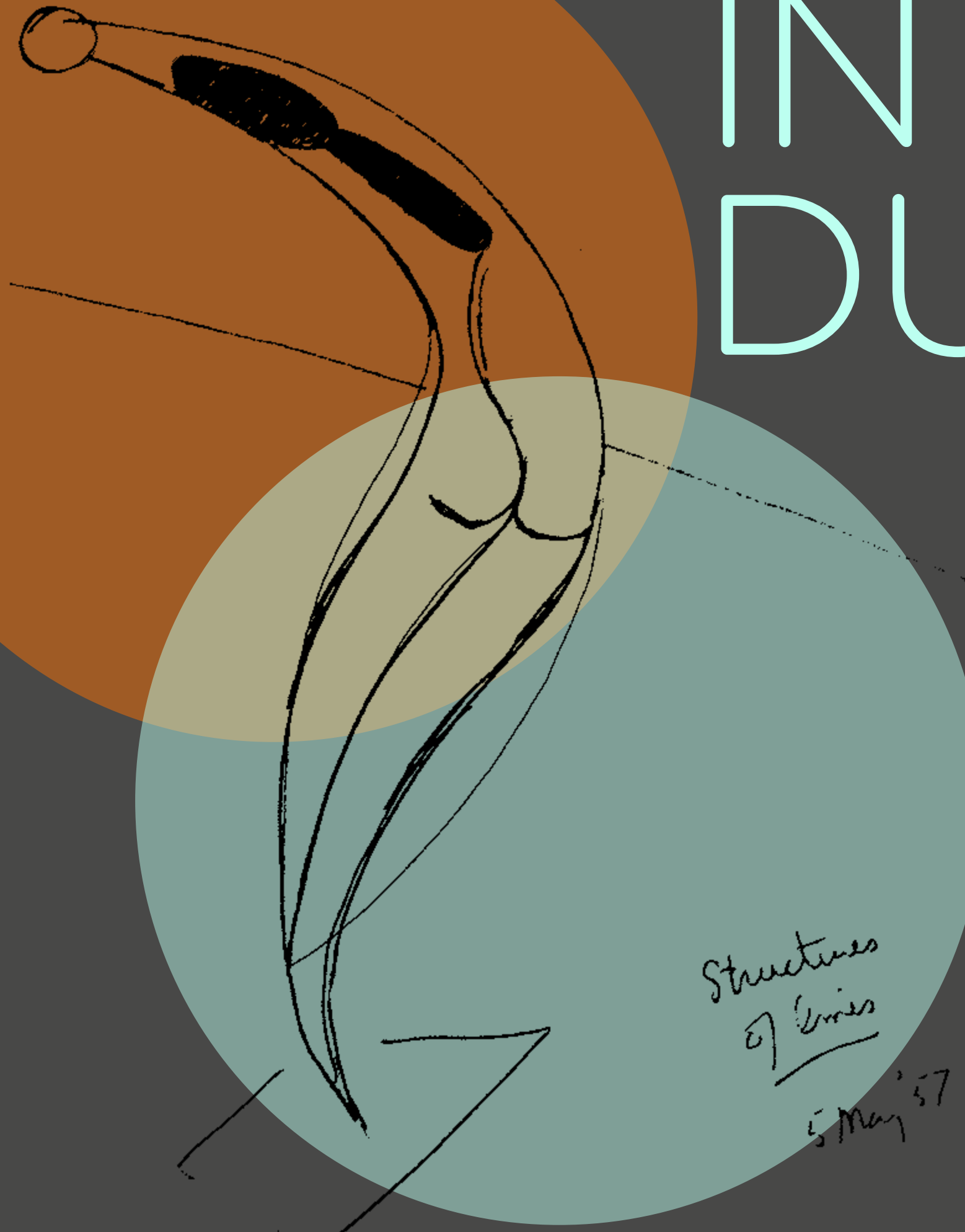


SCHOLAR IN FOCUS

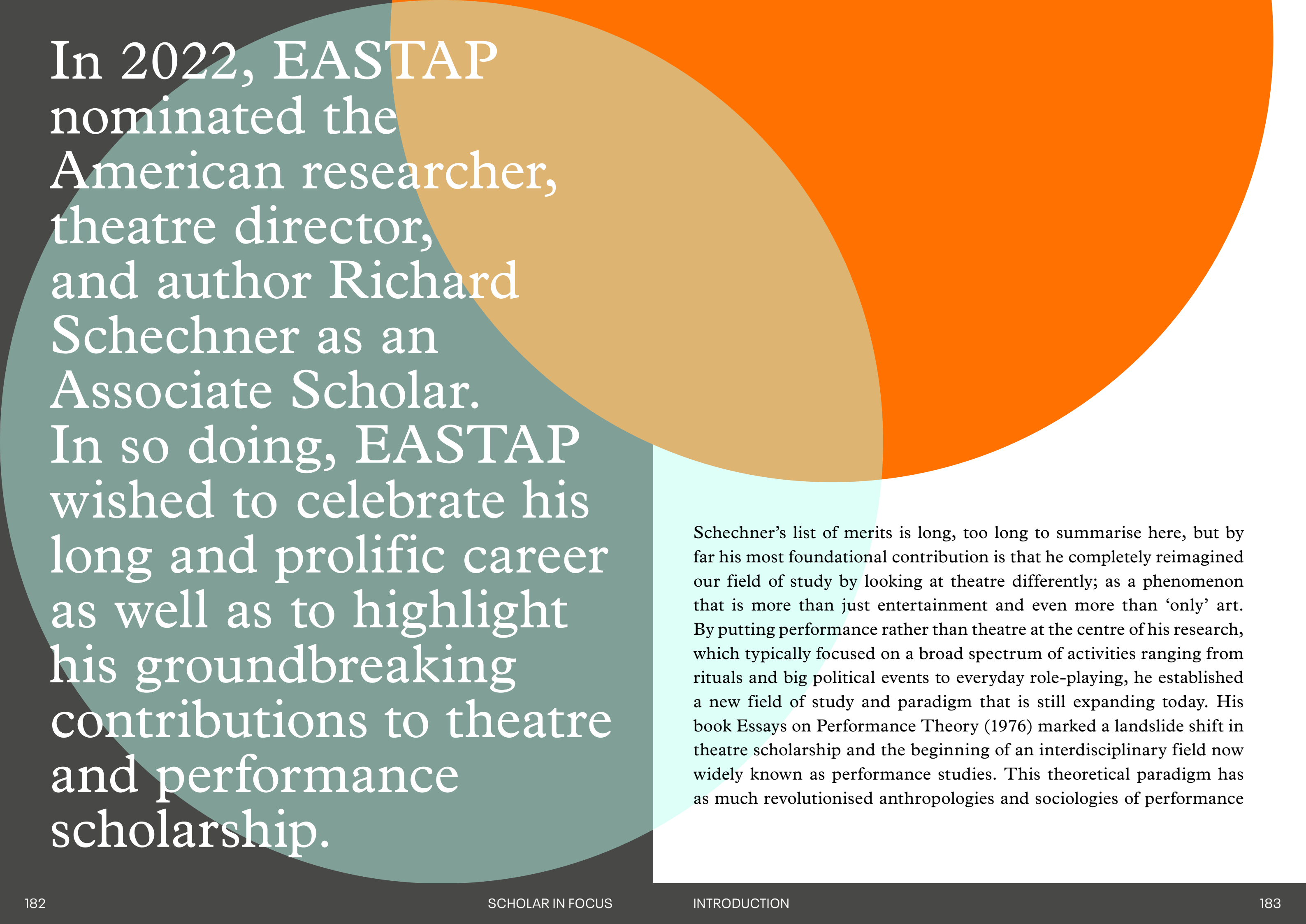
A circular, teal-tinted portrait of Richard Schechner, an older man with glasses and a collared shirt, is positioned on the right side of the cover. An orange circle is placed over the letter 'O' in the word 'FOCUS'.

RICHARD SCHECHNER

INTRO DUCTION



GUEST EDITORS
Luk Van den Dries
Pieter Verstraete



In 2022, EASTAP nominated the American researcher, theatre director, and author Richard Schechner as an Associate Scholar. In so doing, EASTAP wished to celebrate his long and prolific career as well as to highlight his groundbreaking contributions to theatre and performance scholarship.

Schechner's list of merits is long, too long to summarise here, but by far his most foundational contribution is that he completely reimagined our field of study by looking at theatre differently; as a phenomenon that is more than just entertainment and even more than 'only' art. By putting performance rather than theatre at the centre of his research, which typically focused on a broad spectrum of activities ranging from rituals and big political events to everyday role-playing, he established a new field of study and paradigm that is still expanding today. His book *Essays on Performance Theory* (1976) marked a landslide shift in theatre scholarship and the beginning of an interdisciplinary field now widely known as performance studies. This theoretical paradigm has as much revolutionised anthropologies and sociologies of performance

as it has extended discourses of postmodernism, poststructuralism, and post-colonialism in pursuit of analysing our present-day societies and state of humanity with always a role for theatre to play or to take a lesson from. Performance Studies, together with Schechner's investigative and instructive praxis as a director birthing the concept of environmental theatre ever since the 1960s, would leave indelible marks in curricula, institutions, theatre training, and practices all over the world.

With Richard Schechner, we are excited to present for the very first time a new section in EJTP, called 'Scholar in Focus'. The section will alternate with our other recurring feature, 'Artist in Focus', which highlights the work of EASTAP's Associate Artists. Now that EJTP will be published twice a year, there is the possibility for us to dive into the creative, poetic, intellectual, and critical universe of both remarkable artists and outstanding scholars.

We asked Schechner to provide an inside perspective on his research and working process, to give us a glimpse of the work that lies beneath the surface of the printed page in order to give readers an idea of the wide range of his writings. This surely is an almost impossible task for someone who has written almost daily throughout his career. From the enormous mountain of material, a selection has been made that aims mainly to give a flavour of the multiformity and creativity of Schechner's scholarly but also poetic practice.

The main part of this Scholar in Focus section consists of two essays. The first, 'Postpone the Great Game', was commissioned by EASTAP. Schechner opened EASTAP's fifth congress on 23 May 2022 with a first version of this text. Anyone who heard his speech will attest to its extreme topicality. Amidst the vicissitudes of the war between Russia and Ukraine that is still ongoing, we are asked to consider whether this conflict is not only overshadowing but also getting in the way of a much

more important and urgent agenda of our time, that is, the struggle to save this planet from destruction.

The second essay, 'The Crash of Performative Circumstances', dates from 1981 and forms an interesting diptych with 'Postpone the Great Game'. The essay was written in the heyday of postmodernism; and, characteristic of Schechner's holistic style of writing, it deals not only with the climate crisis, poverty in India, the homeless in New York, and the dangers of a nuclear war, but also with (writing) processes central to postmodernism and deconstructivism, such as decentralisation and fragmentation. With an astonishing ease, Schechner brings together philosophical, social, spiritual, intercultural, phenomenological, and ecological ways of looking at the world. The essay is more than forty years old, but it reads like a contemporary manifesto.


The two essays are accompanied by a selection of (auto)biographical texts: four poems; a 1978 notebook entry about India; and an excerpt from *A Yeers Worth*, a piece of 'non-fiction fiction', as Schechner describes it himself. In addition to the textual material, this Scholar in Focus section also offers images from Schechner's personal archive: a range of diagrams that support his reflections (because, above all, he remains an analytical mind); some photographs from his time in South Asia; and a few drawings that serve as observations of what moves around him.

We genuinely want to thank Richard Schechner for his incredible commitment and cooperation in making this very first Scholar in Focus section possible. And we hope that, as only a snippet or fraction of this erudite (re)searcher's life work, this dossier may inspire deeper understanding of a very influential strand of performance practice and history, as well as find resonance, debate, and critique amongst new generations to come. •



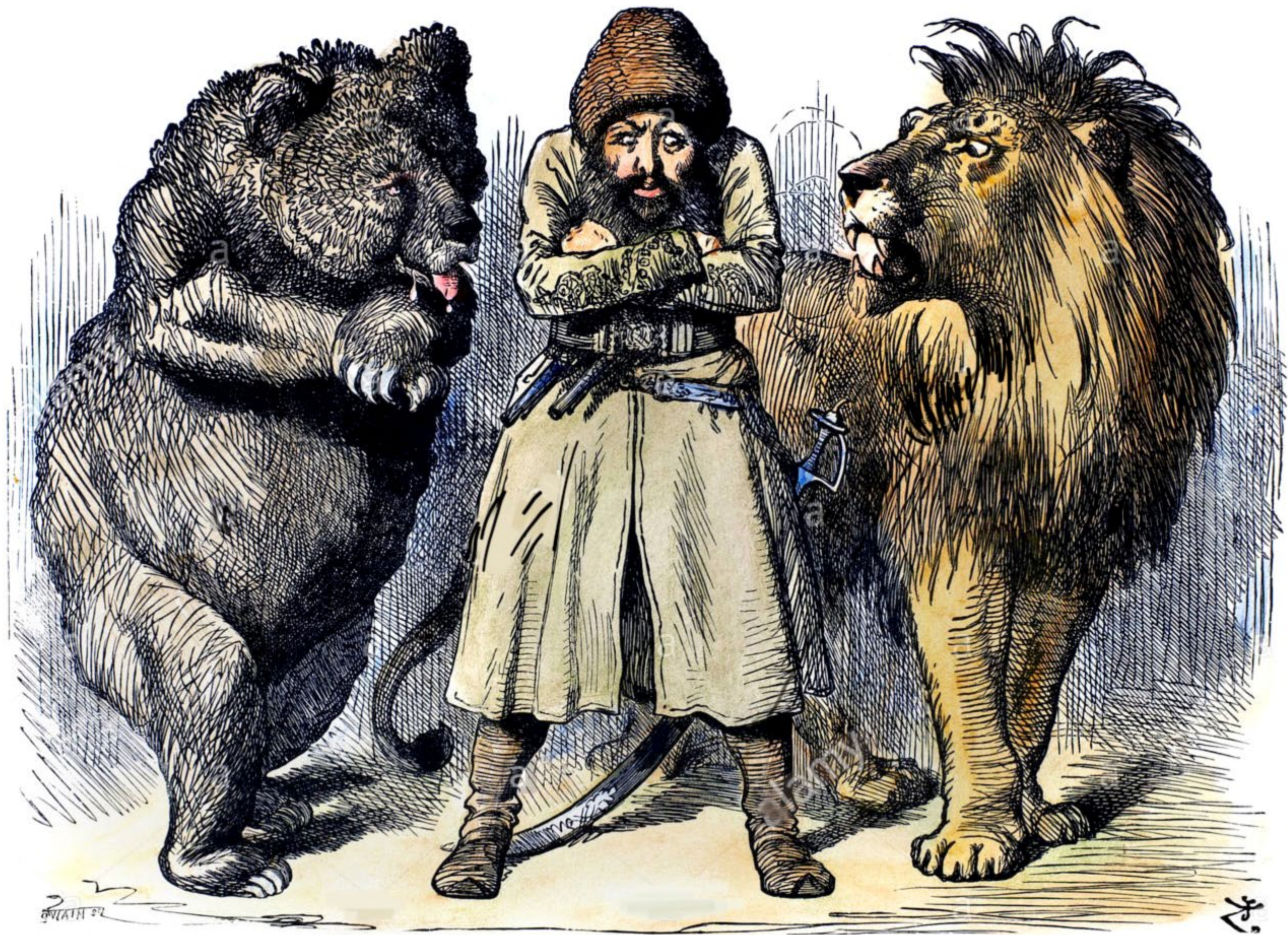
POSTPONE THE GREAT GAME

Richard Schechner



‘The Great Game’ sounds pleasant, playful — maybe the Olympics. But, in fact, the Great Game signifies the bloody, brutal nineteenth-century struggle pitting the British Empire against Tsarist Russia for access to India, including both economic and political control. As Danish Zahoor describes it:

The theatre of the Great Game was the vast, dusty and untamed Central Asian region lying between the expansive Russian empire in the north and British India in the south. [...] The game was characterized by reconnaissance missions undertaken by officers of either side [...] seeking glory and advancement in their careers. They would navigate the treacherous towns and bazaars under the disguise of pilgrims, doctors, and merchants, using their knowledge of local tongues like Persian and Pashto to their advantage. Their purpose would be to explore and sometimes map the hitherto unknown terrain, especially strategic mountain passes and rivers of the region, and also to gather intelligence about the political inclinations and motives of the Emirs. Above all, the mutually paranoid rival officials would be most interested in trying to gauge the influence that the other side had been able to achieve amongst the Emirates. (Zahoor 2021: para. 1-2)



“SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS!”

Figure 1 The Great Game: The Afghan Emir Sher Ali Khan with his ‘friends’ Russia and Great Britain. Cartoon by Sir John Tenniel, first published in *Punch* (magazine), 30 November 1878.

The Great Game was played most intensely in Central Asia, Afghanistan, and surrounding territories, more than in India itself. But the moves were strategised by overlords occupying seats of power in London, Calcutta, and St Petersburg (Fig. 1).

The phrase ‘The Great Game’ was first used with regard to Central Asia in 1840 by Captain Arthur Conolly of the 6th Bengal Light Cavalry who served Britain’s East India Company by gathering intelligence in Afghanistan and surrounding regions. On 24 June 1842, Conolly and fellow British officer Charles Stoddart were beheaded for spying in Bukhara, today’s Uzbekistan. Sixty years later, in 1900, Rudyard Kipling made the phrase famous in his novel *Kim*: ‘Now I shall go far and far into the North, playing the Great Game. [...] When everyone is dead the Great Game is finished.’ (Hopkirk 1990: 368). And sometimes it was very like a game. “‘We shall shoot at each other in the morning,” one Russian told [Colonel Frederick] Burnaby, handing him a glass of vodka, “and drink together when there is a truce”’ (ibid.). That Great Game officially ended with the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. But of course, it didn’t end. The region was a theatre of war for centuries and remains so.

After several governments’ faltering attempts to modernise Afghanistan, a coup brought the Communists to power in 1978. They were immediately attacked by Mujahadeen Islamists. To bolster the Communist government, the Soviets got into the act in 1979, unsuccessfully occupying Afghanistan until 1989 when the militant Islamist Taliban took over. The Americans upped the ante in 2001 with the George W. Bush administration’s Operation Enduring Freedom, invading Afghanistan in response to the 9/11 attacks on New York’s Twin Towers and the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Twenty years later, US forces retreated, and the Taliban took over Afghanistan for the second time. After nearly two centuries of conflict, can we imagine all will be peace and quiet from now on?

In 2009, Nicolas Kent, artistic director of Britain’s Tricycle Theatre from 1984 to 2012, commissioned twelve short plays collectively titled *The Great Game: Afghanistan* (Tricycle Theatre, 2010). These ran the gamut from verbatim theatre to fictionalised historical plays, from the first Anglo-Afghan War of 1838–1842 to contemporary narratives. *The Great Game: Afghanistan* was performed with high success in the UK and later in the USA on single days or over the span of a few days.

The Great Game is not over, though its theatre of operations keeps shifting. Today’s playing field is Eastern Europe, focused on Ukraine, the rivals are the NATO powers and their proxy, Ukraine, versus Russia; democracies versus a dictatorship. But that binary is way too simple. The Ukrainians, whose courage we admire and whose cause many of us strongly support, are no angels. Prior to the Russian invasion, the Ukrainian government was called by *The Guardian* ‘the most corrupt nation in Europe’ (Bullough 2015). Even Ukraine’s great hero, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, is implicated (Harding 2021). Before the brutal Russian invasion, neofascism was on the rise in Ukraine (Golenkin 2019). Add to this that often the fine-sounding word ‘democracy’ masks global neoliberalism, with its structural inequities and neocolonial exploitations. From another vantage — given the suffering, the displaced civilians, the damage to dwellings, infrastructure, and the environment — the villain of the piece is warfare itself, at least war as humans have waged it from time immemorial.

We need some performance theory here. What is the difference between ‘is’ performance and ‘as’ performance? Something ‘is’ a performance when historical-social context, convention, usage, and tradition say it is. Theatre, dance, music, rituals, play, sports, the roles of everyday life, and so on are performances because context, convention, usage, and tradition say so. From the vantage of performance theory, every action is a performance. But from the vantage of cultural practice, some actions will be deemed performances and others not; and these will vary

from culture to culture, historical period to historical period. On the other hand, anything can be studied ‘as’ performance. That means asking performance questions of whatever is being studied. What happens? What is it called? Where does it happen? How is it performed, staged, and/or displayed? How does it change over time? How is it received by participants, observers, and scholars? In terms of performance theory, there is no limit to what can be studied ‘as’ performance. It is with this in mind that I return to war and the Great Game.

War is a great subject in Eurasian literature, theatre, and performance from the earliest days: *The Iliad*, *The Ramayana*, *The Mahabharata*, Greek, Roman, Elizabethan-Jacobian theatre, Japanese noh and kabuki, Chinese martial arts, down to contemporary popular culture in countless films, documentaries, television shows, and games. The very first word of Vergil’s *Aeneid* is ‘arma’, weapons: ‘Arma virumque cano’ (Of arms and the man I sing). Treatises on how to wage war go back at least to Sun Tzu’s *Military Method* (孫子兵法), fifth century BCE. I assume that peoples everywhere — not just in Eurasia — have made war since time immemorial. At least they have engaged in deadly fights to acquire or keep power, space, mates, and resources.

No one epitomises the celebratory pride and joy of war better than Shakespeare’s King Henry V:

He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
And say “These wounds I had on Crispin’s day.”
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he’ll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day. [...]
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me

Shall be my brother; be he ne’er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin’s day. (*Henry V*, iv. 3. 47–69)

Henry covers all the bases: survival, pride of the war wound, holiday commemorating the battle, great deeds performed, glory, sacrifice, comradeship, social cohesion, elevation of status, manhood.

War also brings dedication to something beyond the self. In the *Bhagavad Gita* Krishna counsels Arjuna: सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ | ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि (Fight for the sake of duty, treating alike happiness and distress, loss and gain, victory, and defeat) (2.38). From Troy to Kurukshetra to Agincourt — and at multitudes of other battlefields — war elevates the warriors. War unifies the in-group (family, tribe, community, nation, alliance of nations) against the out-group (variously designated, but always ‘not us’). In the social imagination, actual wars are symbiotically joined to their representations in literature, performance, and visual arts. Back and forth, from battlegrounds to playhouses and books, bloodfields to canvases and movie screens, wars waged and wars depicted or imagined give meaning to both individual and collective lives. Yes, often enough, the horrors of war are described and depicted — think Francisco Goya’s *The Disasters of War* and Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica*, Norman Mailer’s *The Naked and the Dead*, Ken Burns and Lynn Novick’s *The Vietnam War* — but despite all objections, the surpassing narrative is of glory, sacrifice, and accomplishment.

A masculine gender privilege underscores warring in fact and in its representations. Although Amazon women warriors and their pop-culture avatars are there; and although today many armies deploy women on

an increasingly equal footing, including going into battle, the narrative remains masculine. Women warriors are ‘as if’ men when they fight. Perhaps this will change over time, but from the past to now, making war is men’s work.

War contributes to society in ways other than generating art and pop culture. Under the pressure of war, new technologies emerge. For example, from World War II: radar, jet engines, computers, microwave ovens, synthetic rubber, antibiotics — and the two-edged invention, nuclear power. War focuses peoples’ attention and enhances social cohesion (often at the expense of perceived internal threats or enemies). As a metaphor, in English at least, the ‘war on’ crime, drugs, poverty — you name it — implies a concerted collective effort, a positive social force.

War, like every other cultural practice, has changed over time, and varies greatly from culture to culture, and one historical period to the next. War comes in many kinds: lightning war, ‘blitzkrieg’, aka ‘shock and awe’; raiding, raping, looting; surround, siege, capture, sack; endless war such as in Afghanistan; ‘total war’ targeting civilians and military alike; precision war with drones and pinpoint targeting; ‘unthinkable’ nuclear war, the MAD War of ‘mutual assured destruction’. The aims of war are variable: defeat the enemy then go home; temporarily occupy the conquered land; dominate and colonise, as with the British Empire; exterminate and settle, think of Jericho and millennia later ‘Manifest Destiny’ decreeing Europeans settling Native American lands ‘from sea to shining sea’. Many times over, everywhere, and as far back in human history as we can go, wars have been and are being fought.

All of the above can be illuminated by theatre lights. That is because war is often conceived as theatre made for spectating. At one level, this is professional viewing. From line commanders to generals, developing battles are seen and analysed as performances-in-process. From the

noncombatant point of view even more so, war is theatre. As Elizabeth D. Samet writes:

the theatricality inherent in the experience of watching actual battles [was] for centuries a common European practice. Before technological innovations such as rifles, long-range artillery, and airpower dramatically expanded the battlespace, spectators could with a reasonable expectation of safety attend a battle in progress as if it were a kind of theater. History is replete with accounts of spectators—military as well as civilian—observing battles as they unfold. (2013: 78–9)

For example, on 18 June 1815 as Napoleon was losing the bloody Battle of Waterloo numerous noncombatant tourists watched. Napoleon’s adversary, the British Duke of Wellington, complained: ‘The battle of Waterloo having been fought within reach, every creature who could afford it travelled to view the field’ (quoted in Samet 2013:79). On its 200th anniversary, Waterloo was reenacted by five thousand performers before an international audience of sixty-four thousand.¹ On 21 July 1861, the first major engagement of the American Civil War, the Battle of Bull Run, drew a multitude of spectators from nearby Washington, DC. Union Captain John Tidball witnessed a ‘throng of sightseers’ approach his battery:

They came in all manner of ways, some in stylish carriages, others in city hacks, and still others in buggies, on horseback, and even on foot. Apparently, everything in the shape of vehicles in and around Washington had been pressed into service for the occasion. It was Sunday and everybody seemed to have taken a general holiday; that is all the male population, for I saw none of the other sex there, except a few huckster women who had driven out in carts loaded with

¹ The 2015 reenactment was so successful as an event and tourist draw, that Waterloo is now performed annually (Living History Archive 2022).

pies and other edibles [think Brecht's *Mother Courage*]. All manner of people were represented in this crowd, from the most grave and noble senators to hotel waiters. (quoted in Burgess 2011: para. 3)

The US phase of the Vietnam War, 1964–73, was dubbed ‘the living room war’ because video journalists embedded with the troops filmed the war as it was being waged and the footage was shown on TV during or very shortly after the action. The Ukraine war is broadcast continuously on US commercial television whose owners profit handsomely from selling advertising. Social media also disseminates war-as-spectacle, and war-as-gruesome-entertainment, a pornography of violence.

Those who theorise war understand it performatively. In his 1832 classic *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz conceptualised the ‘theatre of war’: ‘Theatre of War. This term denotes properly such a portion of the space over which war prevails as has its boundaries protected, and thus possesses a kind of independence [...] Such a portion is not a mere piece of the whole, but a small whole complete in itself’ (Clausewitz 1832: para. 2). ‘Theatre of war’ designates not only the literal space where the war is staged, but also the conceptual wholeness of war understood ‘as’ theatre. Manoeuvres are rehearsals; each rank demands specific role-playing; uniforms and medals are costumes; military parades are carefully rehearsed staged spectacles; battles, missile strikes, and air raids are choreographed movements of people, materials, and ordnance; intelligence and spying deploy deceptions often involving masquerades designed to create complex fictions, plots, and role-playing. At the dramaturgical level, war narrates a story of magnitude, conflict resolved by action, with a clear beginning, middle, and end: as neat a parallel to Aristotle as one can find. But also Shakespearean, as subplots proliferate. And performance art replete with improvisation and spectacular solo acts. If war is theatre, it is also a game played by opposing teams resolving themselves into winners and losers. The players, at least theoretically,

obey the rules of the game, which are enforced, more or less, by international tribunals. War, both in its details and in its entirety, can be studied as a theatricalised Great Game. Once the curtain goes up, once the contest begins, the Great Game of war is its own engine of inevitability.

Or so it seems. The fact is that even such an engine of inevitability as the Great Game of war can be — and has been — postponed, as the Chinese did from the 1930s to 1940s.

In 1927, the Chinese civil war began pitting the rebel forces of Communist Mao Zedong against the ruling Nationalists led by Chiang Kai-shek. In 1931, the Japanese conquered Manchuria creating Manchukuo, a puppet state. From that date forward, there were many skirmishes between Chinese and Japanese forces. By 1936, Mao recognised that the Japanese were an existential threat to China; and so he proposed to Chiang that they suspend their civil war and join forces against Japan. But Chiang wanted to eliminate the internal enemy, the communists, before fighting the Japanese. It took the ‘Xi’an Incident’ of December 1936 to bring Chiang on board.² The Xi’an incident was when two of Chiang’s subordinates, Zhang Xueiliang and Yang Hucheng,³ held Chiang captive until he agreed to suspend the civil war and join his nationalist army with the communists to fight the Japanese. This action was orchestrated by Zhou Enlai, Mao’s close associate and a former

². The narrative regarding the Mao-Chiang agreement is based on the research of Kathy Chang, TDR’s editorial assistant who used Itoh (2016) and Zhang (2005) as her principal sources.

³. The fate of these two key players could not be more different. After the Xi’an Incident, Chang surrendered to Chiang Kai-shek who put him under house arrest — for more than fifty years — taking Chang with him to Taiwan. Chang lived well in captivity. His garden house was full of paintings and calligraphy honouring the Chiang family, including some by Madame Chiang Kai-shek. From the mid-1980s, Chang was allowed to travel. He settled in Hawai’i in 1995 and died in 2001 at the age of one hundred. Zhang’s partner in the Xi’an Incident, Yang Hucheng, did not surrender to Chiang. In 1937, he was lured back to Nanjing, imprisoned until 1949, and then executed (along with his family) on orders from Chiang.

military academy classmate of Chiang. The agreement, called the ‘Second United Front’, worked out by Zhou and Chiang, was finalised in August 1937. And just in time too, because after the July 1937 Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the Japanese launched a full-scale invasion of China, swiftly taking control of Beijing, Shanghai, and Nanjing.

The Second United Front stipulated: The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will cease conflict with the Nationalists (KMT); all CCP troops will be unified with the KMT army to combat the Japanese; the CCP will not circulate communist ideologies, politics, and propaganda within the national army; the KMT will not confiscate or seize CCP weapons; the KMT will free all CCP prisoners; after the Japanese defeat, the CCP and KMT will both dissolve their armies and the KMT will recognise the CCP as a legally legitimate party (See Zhang 2005: 73-74).

Did this momentous agreement to suspend the Chinese Great Game succeed? Yes and no. There were plenty of violations; trust between the communists and the nationalists was low; neither dissolved their armies once the Japanese surrendered in September 1945 (Fig. 2). As soon as the Japanese were defeated, the Chinese civil war resumed — and, to some degree, continues to this day. In 1949, Chiang and what was left of his army retreated to Taiwan, where he and then his son, Chiang Ching-Kuo, ruled Taiwan until 1988. The KMT remains a strong force on the island, which is still formally regarded by many as part of China. Mao and his successors rule the mainland and still officially designate Taiwan as a province of China. Only thirteen nations and the Vatican recognise Taiwan as the independent Republic of China, the KMT rubric. Taiwan is not part of the UN.

What I want us to carry in our minds regarding the outcome of the Xi’an Incident and the Second United Front is that, imperfect as the agreement was, the combatants of a long and bitter civil war put their fight aside to

face what they acknowledged was an existential threat to both of them. They realised that it would not matter who won their civil war if Japan conquered China. So they postponed their Great Game until the threat at hand had been dealt with. They suspended one war to fight another.

As the Ukraine war rages — a continuation, as I have noted, of the Great Game — the whole world lives under the existential threat of climate change and its consequences: rising oceans, super tropical storms, floods, heat waves, pollution, and species extinction. The Ukraine war, like all wars, produces vast amounts of greenhouse gases, pollutes the land and air, and once reconstruction begins will further pollute because one pound of cement produces nine tenths of a pound of CO₂.⁴ As a bulletin from the Sierra Club notes:

Armed conflict in cities not only displaces, kills, or gravely wounds civilians, the infrastructure necessary for the functioning of basic services is damaged or destroyed. Damage to wastewater and drinking water may lead to contamination of water resources. Explosions from rockets or fires generate huge volumes of debris and waste. The release of hazardous materials such as asbestos, industrial chemicals, and fuels compound the effects of environmental contamination. (Martinezcuello 2022: para. 10)

Another consequence of this war — of all wars — is the disruption of farming and trade, which leads to hunger and famine. War adds to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change. In June 2022, the *New York Times* reported:

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia — two countries that were estimated to produce enough food to feed 400 million, and to account

⁴. Information on the environmental impact of war is compiled from Martinezcuello (2022), Subbaraman (2022), McCarthy (2022), and CEOBS (2021).



Figure 2 Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek in Chongqing, China, in September 1945, toasting the victory over Japan.

for as much as 12 percent of all globally traded calories — has made [...] hunger considerably more acute. [...] That worsening is the result of the war but the underlying crisis is both larger and more structural [...]. Mostly thanks to Covid-19, climate change, and conflict [...] 49 million people are on the edge of famine, 1.1 billion in extreme poverty, and 1.6 billion are experiencing food insecurity [of a global population of 7.9 billion]. (Wallace-Wells 2022: 10)

Taking a broader perspective, Brown University's Cost of War Project estimates that from the onset of its War on Terror in 2001 to 2022, the US's war-related fuel consumption released four hundred million tons of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere.

In the USA at least, the Ukraine war has captured the attention economy: war reports, human interest stories, heroism, war crimes, pathos, destruction, heroes, villains, victims, strategic analyses, predictions, nuclear fears, NATO, Putin. I realise the war plays very differently in Russia, China, and North Korea, though even these bastions of unfree speech have a hard time reigning in social media even as they covertly propagate corrosive social media. And when the war is no longer 'breaking news' as it settles into a routine and those selling ads consider it boring, there is a mass shooting, a Congressional hearing, a scandal... ABCC, 'anything but climate change'. I watch from New York, but I assume this avoidance of climate change is widespread. That's because climate change is too slow-moving to capture peoples' attention except when a disastrous weather event happens — a cyclone, killer heatwave, out-of-control fire, flood, and so on. Even then, the catastrophe is presented more as the 'hand of God' than as a direct consequence of human (in)action about climate change.

Indeed, climate change is not where the world's attention is focused. This existential threat is both obvious and stealthy. Governments fail to

meet even the modest goals of the Paris Accord while hoping for a *deus-ex-technologia*. The fact is, most people just want to get on with their lives, acting as if the future of the world will take care of itself. It's enough to worry about Covid, the well-being of one's family, pay the rent, and have a little leftover for a good time. There aren't enough Greta Thunbergs. Even many suffering from inundation, fire, drought, cyclones, and so on, do not connect local weather to global climate. Climate change happens relatively slowly, like the frog in the pot hardly noticing the flame on the stove heating the water to boiling. Nor do most people connect species extinction to habitat loss, exploitation, deforestation, desertification, and monocrop agriculture to climate change. Corporations pursue profits and sell their operations as progress. The struggle to own the attention economy, both as it plays out in media controlled by corporate monopolies and our consenting collaborative participation in it, is literally destroying the planet and its inhabitants.

In brief, the world cannot afford to play the Great Game, at least not in the way humankind — or should I more accurately say, 'mankind' — has played it for millennia. The postponement of the Chinese civil war is a compelling model for how warring parties can work together temporarily to overcome an existential threat. The fact that Chiang had to be forced to recognise that the Japanese were an existential threat is key.

So if not the Great Game, what? The first step is for both ordinary people and the powers-that-be to recognise that climate change will deeply degrade human civilisation, if not destroy it altogether, and recognise as well that climate change will also punish the non-human world. We are, I believe, well on the way toward this recognition. What's lacking is devising and putting into action a global plan to slow and then reverse climate change. Kim Robinson in his 2020 *The Ministry for the Future* offers a well-researched plan ensconced in a utopian story. Robinson's ideas are getting a lot of play,⁵ but there's a big gap between

fact and fiction. There's been plenty more lip-service than action; and thousands of hours of media hypocrisy sponsored by big oil and other against-doing-much actors. Turning that around depends on climate change getting its rightful share of the attention economy. Enough to galvanise governments and even corporate boards.

If that happens, the next step, and it's a giant leap, is to postpone all wars, the Great Game, declaring a worldwide truce so that humankind can focus on climate change and its linked catastrophes of species extinction and pollution. I say 'postpone' and 'truce,' not 'end' because I do not think that our primate selves can stop struggling over territory, hierarchy, physical resources, and control of 'values' (ideological resources). It is enough for all the world's powers, corporate as well as governmental, to postpone the Great Game until humanity has dealt with the existential threat that will make all such gaming irrelevant. Once the Great Game is postponed, all warfare energy — and remember how creative making war has been — can be focused on the climate problem. How can this possibly happen? In my 'Can We Be the (New) Third World' (2015), I argue that Jawaharlal Nehru's twentieth-century idea should be adapted for the twenty-first century: 'Today, artists, activists, and scholars are a New Third World. Nehru's Third World had a specific geographical location. Today's New Third World is a proportion of people present everywhere with a majority nowhere. What unites the New Third World is a community of purpose, a mode of inquiry (the experimental [...]), and a sense of being other. [...] The New Third World is incipient, seeds, not yet fully self-aware' (2015: 9). It is time to become urgently self-aware. We of the New Third World must make our leaders realise that, if enemies as bitterly opposed as Mao's communists and Chiang's nationalists could postpone their civil war, then we can and must stop playing the Great Game until the climate threat has been dealt with.

← 5. See Alter (2022) and Rothman (2022) among many.

I propose resuming the Great Game *after* we 'solve' the climate problem — but when war resumes let it be as virtual warfare, bloodless yet consequential. A suspension of Artaudian aesthetics-politics in favour of Brechtian aesthetics-politics that recognises every human being as players in a drama that heretofore has been controlled by governmental and corporate elites. You ask me, as I ask myself: exactly how do we get from where we are to where we need to be? That enormous decisive question I cannot answer. Robinson's narrative in *The Ministry for the Future* is one concrete proposal, even if it is also fiction (as the great war narratives mostly are).

Be that as it may, let's make the giant leap. A crazy leap. The wars stop. The whole world focuses on the existential threat. There is of course some back-sliding, just as there was in China. But, if the alternative is the disruption if not the end of civilisation along with the extinction of untold numbers of species, the challenge will be met. Then what? What will the Great Game be when play resumes?

Not warfare as we now perform it, harming people and nature. Instead, something virtual but consequential, like sports, or banking. A genuine 'theatre of war' and global spectacle. Already we live lives of actual consequences governed by virtual systems. We go to restaurants, order and eat, then pay with a card. Ditto for just about everything else we do, from rent to travel to banking... just about everything. Barter and cash exist, but as nostalgic operations with cash swiftly fading away. Cash itself is an arrangement constructed of agreements to honour what paper and coin represent. As AI and algorithmic programming mature — already cell phones and the internet are effectively universal — and as we approach the singularity, when self-conscious digital entities reproduce themselves and evolve, we flesh humans will become increasingly entangled in an existence that is more about the movement of information than it is about interacting physical objects.

What if war is brought into this domain? What if war was waged with the same efficiency, based on the same assumptions? The historical development of warfare is of ever-increasing distance separating combatants, from hand-to-hand blades to rifles, cannons, air bombs, rockets, and now drones. What if drone warfare, which resembles video games in terms of operation, were to be made completely a game? Virtual battles in virtual space but with actual consequences: if you lose, you lose something specific in terms of control over territory and resources. At another level, warfare already deploys nonlethal virtual weapons: economic sanctions and cyberattacks, for example. At least some aspects of this virtual warring are available for viewing; more than that, actively marketed as a kind of entertainment, as was Waterloo (both the original and the reenactments) and the Battle of Bull Run. If warfare was once made for spectating, as well as for conquering, why not return to this classic mode?

Thus nations, or whatever entities replace or act on behalf of nations, go to war. They use whatever virtual weapons they can — some already existing, some invented for the ‘war effort.’ These range from stuff we are familiar with from countless virtual combat games to cyber weapons cloaked in various ‘dark operations’: manipulation of financial markets, supply chain disruptions, scrambling of navigation controls, disruption of the electrical grid, propaganda, deployment of internet memes, trolling, etc. Real stuff, but no combat with guns, tanks, bombs, drones, missiles, mortars. Yes, people probably will die in the chaos of a downed electrical grid and other disruptions. But the casualties will be orders of magnitude less than what is suffered from the bullets, cannons, rockets, and bombs of ‘traditional war.’ Furthermore, virtual warfare will spare the habitat and not add greenhouse gasses to the atmosphere. The kind of New War I am proposing is governed by performance rules, a ‘great game’ indeed, at least partly performed for a global public.

What’s decisive is that outcomes are binding. When an entity loses a battle, a virtual operation, the entity gives up territory, governance, and resources just as now happens in physical war. And as happens in sports and politics. Big money is involved in FIFA, the Olympics, and political campaigns. People try to bend the rules, game the Games, even cheat. But on the whole, the systems work. Most people trust the outcomes.⁶ That is, we humans already live according to virtual realities. What I propose is that we bring our most self-destructive behaviour into the shelter of virtuality. Of course, I have not worked this out — I do not know if it can be worked out — but the alternative is even more unthinkable: to continue playing the Great Game as we have been playing it will end human civilisation as we know it, destroy much animal and vegetable life, and scar the planet.

We are creatures who live in the mind of god. That is, we live in the imaginary. The higher our intelligence as a species evolves, the more imaginary our existence. Yes, we are physical too: we eat, excrete, laugh, talk, meet, mate, procreate. But as humanity approaches the singularity, it converges on and becomes more solely imaginary: pure connectivity. Sooner or later the biophysical vanishes or lives alongside the self-reproducing digital intelligence. The advent of the digital is neo-Cartesian, a *cogito* of pure idea, a Platonic masterpiece. The computing electron is the new synapse; instead of the ‘word made flesh’, the word makes itself. I am not sure this is a good thing; but it is taking place, ‘our place,’ literally.

I am an intelligent being from another world. My field of study is earth human behaviour. We, who are not you, are placing our bets on what you will decide to do. •

⁶. What’s most distressing about Donald Trump and his allies is that they do not accept outcomes; they want to subvert the process — cheat and get away with it.

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THE CRASH OF PERFORMATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES

A MODERNIST DISCOURSE
ON POSTMODERNISM
1981



Richard Schechner

The Mother of Pondicherry, India, was felt by her followers to be immortal. This very old French woman — wife of Sri Aurobindo — was said to be rebuilding her body cell by cell. ‘Come back in ten years and you will see a young woman.’ That was in 1972. A few years later The Mother was dead.

On the walls of her ashram south of Madras hung exhortations. One of them has stuck with me: ‘The future of the earth depends on a change of consciousness. The only hope for the future is in a change of man’s consciousness and the change is bound to come. But it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced on them by the power of crashing circumstances.’ I wondered what it meant to ‘collaborate for this change’, and what the ‘crashing circumstances’ might be. To collaborate ‘for’ — if it’s not just a grammatical mistake — implies that people must collaborate with each other in order to bring about change. And if they don’t, the change will come anyway: some kind of nuclear or ecosystem apocalypse. I thought of Artaud’s short definition of his theatre of cruelty: ‘We are not free. And the sky can still fall on our heads. And the theatre has been created to teach us that first of all.’ (1958: 79) All this seems to be saying that the Age of Humanism is finished. Man is no longer the measure of all things, the cosmos is multicentred, which means it is centred nowhere, or everywhere: everything from holism to narcissism is sanctioned. At The Mother’s ashram I lay my head on that old lady’s knee, as was the custom in having *darshan* (literally, a vision) of her. Upon leaving her, I wrote in my notebook: ‘She looked at me. I left trembling. I am confused, unknowing. Her look penetrated. She did not know, she saw.’ Saw what?



Study the gaze, but
especially the mouth.
Who does she want to please?
Notice how the mouth
Steadily Advances.
Also both Youth and Age
have steady eyes. The
middle is MAD, OR
Auditioning.
Actress?

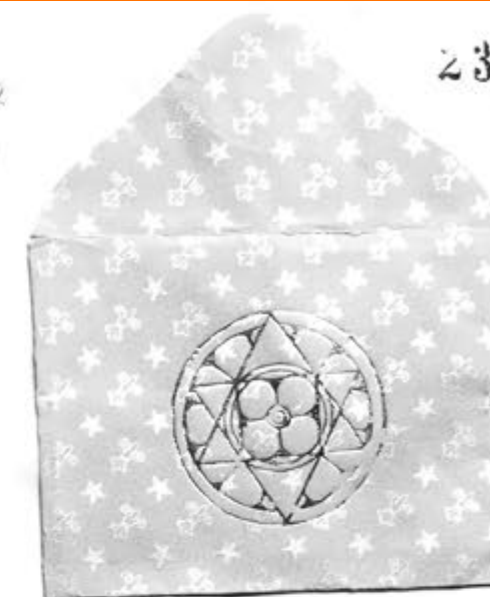


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PACKET
FROM
THE MOTHER
24 DEC 1971



Navajata
General Secretary & Treasurer
SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY

PONDICHERRY-2
India

Phones-382, 668
Gram-SOCIETY

2nd visit Pondicherry
24-25 DEC 1971
PRANAM with the Mother
24 DEC 1971

First meeting w/

The Mother on her balcony. The card from Navajata, General Secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Society, the governing body of Auroville.

I ask now ten years later [1982]. My notes from that day continue: 'Doubts — fundamental denials, remain, but something has happened, is happening.' And I hear now an old Buffalo Springfield lyric: 'Something's happening here | what it is ain't exactly clear.'

Yes. We've been told by our visionaries, our demographers, our artists, and our ideologues. Change is upon us.

Our Mothers, Malthuses, Artauds, and Marxes agree on that. Our only liberty in the matter is whether we shall collaborate in effecting this change or be its passive victims/beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries of nuclear holocaust? Of ecological catastrophe?

And will the change be from consciousness or from circumstances?

And what kind of change are these dreamers dreaming of? Does anyone believe in the stateless society of Marx? Or any other paradise?

The Mother tried to demonstrate in her own body how consciousness can triumph over circumstances. She failed. Is her failure definitive?

Marx, the perfect modernist, saw history as man-made, and within our control. Brecht tried to push this idea of humanist responsibility in his plays. But Brecht couldn't even control Mother Courage: she turned tragic right on the Berliner Ensemble stage. And our species collectively — as communities, nations, or associations of nations — has not succeeded in reconstructing human history any more than The Mother succeeded in reconstructing her own single body.

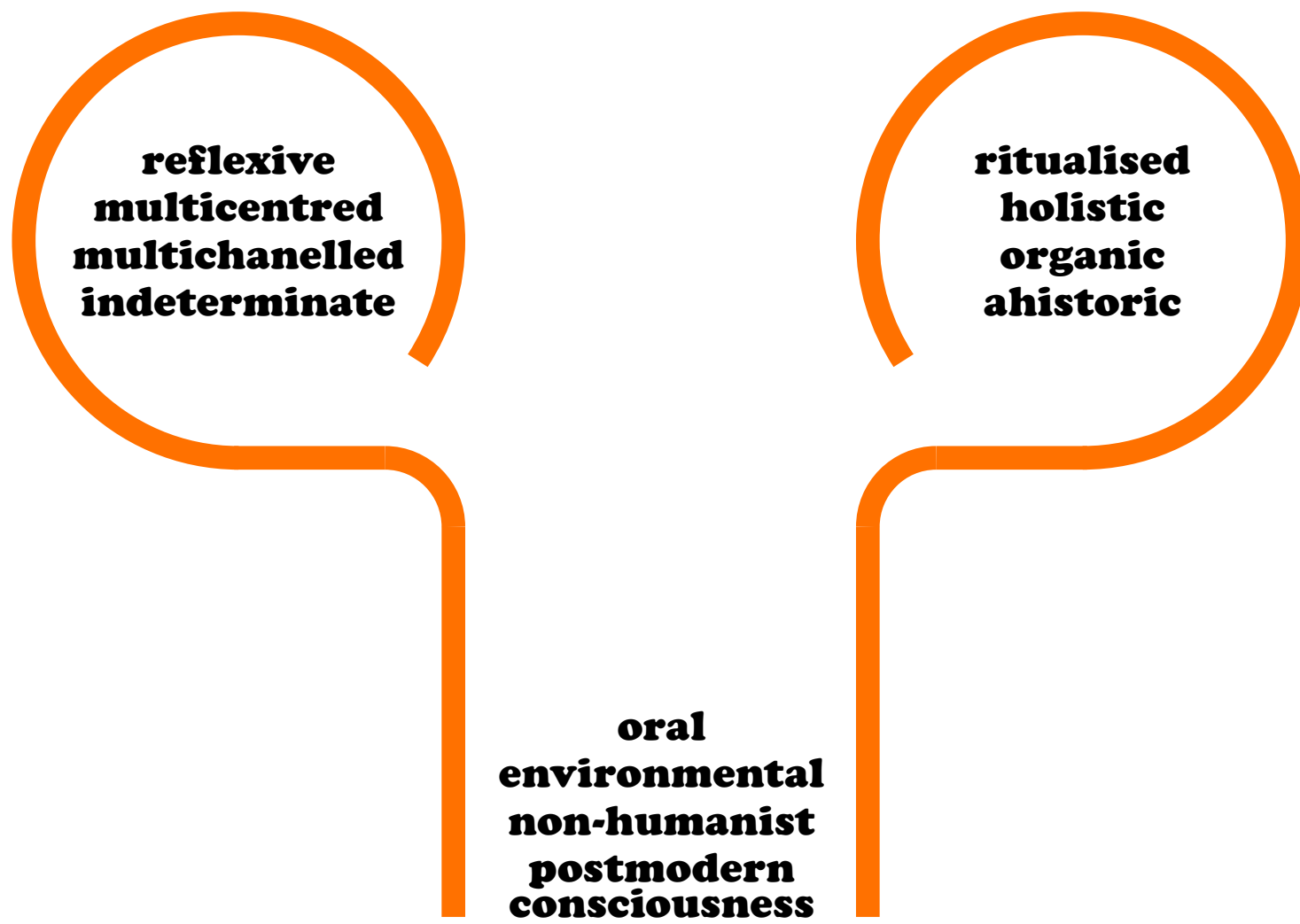
This kind of thing is giving the future a bad smell.

I am a person = a mask, a multiplicity, a process to sound through. I live on and in the limen separating and joining the modern from and to the postmodern. All those linked prepositions seem necessary. Pre/positions: the places I'm in before I'm in place — places that are not simply defined but lead in at least two directions. The attention given by so many to Zen and its insistence on 'present consciousness', the centre, the now, is partly explained by the terrible drag of both past and future.

What I mean by 'modern' and 'postmodern' I've tried to explain in another writing, *The End of Humanism*. But I'll add some more here.

My furious obsession with writing — I've filled sixty-five notebooks with more than twenty thousand pages over the past twenty-six years — is a modern obsession with 'getting it all down', of catching the flopping fish of experience. Yet my very existence as a 'theatre person' who 'makes plays' — experiences that can't be kept, that disappear with each performance, not with each production but with each repetition of the actions I so carefully plan with my colleagues; each repetition that is never an exact duplication no matter how closely scored, how frozen by disciplined rehearsals — this very existence in/as theatre is postmodern. For the theatre is a paradigm of 'restored behaviour' — behaviour twice behaved, behaviour never-for-the-first-time — ritualised gestures. And if experience is always in flow, theatre attempts, in Conrad's words to wrest 'from the remorseless rush of time' precise moments of experience. And the domain of theatre is not, as Stanislavski thought, psychology, but behaviour; writing, of course, also tries to immobilise experience — but writing translates experience into this system of graphemes you are now reading. And film, a trickster, is another system of writing: a behaviour agreeably locked into a mechanical process where it can be edited on a table. Only theatre — live performance, from dance to circus to rituals to plays to sports — works directly with living persons. In theatre, the flux and decay of ongoing living is asked to halt, become conscious of itself, and repeat. A paradox Heraclitus already knew about, and so did the author(s) of the Sanskrit treatise on performance, *Natyashastra*.

The postmodern is possibly a liminal bridge in history, a period conscious of itself, its past, and its multiple potentials as future. By postmodern I mean:



These tendencies are not ‘resolvable’ into a noncontradictory whole. Postmodern holism more than tolerates contradictions. In some of its tendencies we have the hilarious and scary monologues of Spalding Gray and the incredibly energetic performative outflowing of Jeff Weiss, both superbly narcissistic, truly looking deeply into the waters and seeing only themselves worthy of the fullest love. In other manifestations the postmodern births collective works like Mabou Mines’s *Dead End Kids* whose range extends from Faustus to J. Robert Oppenheimer, from alchemy to nuclear apocalypse. The postmodern includes both environmentalists helping people gain the consciousness of global ecosystems necessary for survival and one logical outflow of that consciousness in action, an Orwellian world of total information/action control.

Why, you ask, must knowledge of systems lead to tyranny? *Scientia est potentia* is an old saying, still true.

Or to put it another way: why, I ask, must knowledge of systems lead to paradise?

I keep a file of clippings called *Doomsday*. It’s my common book of despair. Some of the titles: ‘Causes of Cancer Called Numerous’, ‘32 Nations Close to Starvations’, ‘Toxic Trace Elements: Preferential Concentration in Respirable Particles’, ‘House Report Fears World Starvation’, ‘Help is Urged for 36.000 Homeless in [New York] City’s Streets’, ‘Stratospheric Pollution: Multiple Threats to Earth’s Ozone’.

The gloomiest of all is the *Global 2000 Report* issued by the Carter Administration in July 1980 and summarised in *Science* (Carter 1980: 575-6): ‘If present trends continue, the world in 2000 will be more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically, and more vulnerable to disruption than the world we live in now [...] Despite greater material output, the world’s people will be poorer in many ways than they are today.’ (Carter 1980: 575) *The Global 2000 Report* confirms what we already know, but infrequently stare in the eyeball: that \$450 billion a year is spent on arms, against \$20 billion on economic aid; that the gap between rich and poor is increasing; that resources are being depleted; that the global environment is losing life-support capabilities:

By 2000, 40 percent of the forests still remaining in the less developed countries in 1978 will have been razed. The atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide will be nearly one-third higher than preindustrial levels [...] Desertification (including salinization) may have claimed a significant fraction of the world’s rangeland and cropland. Over little more than two decades, 15–20 percent of the earth’s total species of plants and animals will have extinct — a loss of at least 500.000 species. (Carter 1980: 576)

If true, this is a prediction of more than a genocide — but of some mean neologism like ‘globacide’.

Yet the ecology movement can’t get many people out into the streets. The disarmament movement is just getting off the ground in the USA. Is it that people don’t believe predictions? That doomsday is too gross to be incorporated into consciousness? That people, fearful, are trying to take care of Number One, letting the rest go rot?

All of the above.

Already in *Tristes Tropiques*, published in 1955, Claude Lévi-Strauss saw what still only a few, relatively speaking, accept:

Now that the Polynesian islands have been smothered in concrete and turned into aircraft carriers solidly in the southern seas, when the whole of Asia is beginning to look like a dingy suburb, when shanty-towns are spreading across Africa, when civil and military aircraft blight the primeval innocence of the American or Melanesian forests even destroying their virginity, what else can be so-called escapism of travelling do than confront us with more unfortunate aspects of our history? Our great Western civilization, which has created the marvels we now enjoy, has only succeeded in producing them at the costs of corresponding ills. The order and harmony of the Western world, its most famous achievement, and a laboratory in which structures of a complexity as yet unknown are being fashioned, demand the elimination of a prodigious mass of noxious by-products which now contaminate the globe. The first thing we see as we travel round the world is our own filth, thrown into the face of mankind. (38)

Travel around the world? Try any New York street. And yet the rage to clean it all up has fascist harmonies: Mussolini making the trains run on time; Reagan eliminating social programmes and preaching that everyone must sacrifice — as if asking the executive to do with only two cars is equivalent to asking unemployed to do with only two meals.

Lévi-Strauss’s India is not that of Baba Ram Dass, or any of the others who have returned to America saffroned with holiness. No, the French anthropologist looks with earlier, modern, rational eyes, and feels with a heart pumping material blood as he describes conditions in Calcutta:

at Narryanganj, the jute workers earn their living inside a gigantic spider’s web formed by whitish fibers hanging from the walls and floating in the air. They then go home to the ‘collie lines,’ brick troughs with neither light nor flooring, and each occupied by six or eight individuals; they are arranged in rows of little streets with surface drains running down the middle, which are flooded thrice daily to clear away the dirt. Social progress is now tending to replace this kind of dwelling by ‘workers quarters,’ prisons in which two or three workers share a cell three meters by four. There are walls all around, and the entrance gates are guarded by armed policemen. The communal kitchens and eating-quarters are bare cement rooms, which can be swilled out and where each individual lights his fire and squats on the ground to eat in the dark.

Once, during my first teaching post in the lands area, I had visited poultry yards specially adapted for the cramming of geese: each bird was confined to a narrow box and reduced to the status of a mere digestive tube. In this Indian setting, the situation was the same, apart from two differences: instead of geese, it was men and women I was looking at, and instead of being fattened up, they were, if anything, being slimmed down. But in both instances, the breeder only allowed his charges one form of activity, which was desirable in the case of the geese, and inevitable in the case of the Indians. The dark and airless cubicles were suited neither for rest, leisure nor love. They were mere points of connections with the communal sewer, and they corresponded to a conception of human life as being reducible to the pure exercise of the excretory functions [...]

Nowhere, perhaps, except in concentration camps, have human beings been so completely identified with butcher's meat.
(ibid.: 128–9)

Nowhere? Try the toilets at Penn Station, Manhattan, two blocks from where I live and write this. Here's a little description from the *Sunday New York Times*, 8 March 1981, describing the nightly rituals of some homeless 'bag ladies':

At 11 p.m. the attendant goes off duty and women rise from separate niches and head for the bathroom. There they disrobe and wash their clothes and bodies. Depending on the length of the line at the hand dryers, they wait to dry their clothes, put them in their bags or wear them wet. One woman cleans and wraps her ulcerated legs with paper towels every night.

The most assertive claim toilet cubicles, line them with newspapers for privacy and warmth and sleep curled around the basin. Once they are taken, the rest sleep along the walls, one on a box directly beneath the hand dryer which she pushed for warm air. One of the women regularly cleans the floors, sinks and toilets so that no traces of their uncustomary use remain. (Bird 1981: 44)

Maybe you're thinking poverty has always been with us — Dickens described scenes that, subtracting their sentimentality, were every bit as dehumanising and brutish. I look at this same *New York Times* issue and find numerous advertisements on page two for diamonds. In fact, newspapers — like TV — are our best evidence of the gap between the experience of the poor, the rich, and the middle classes. The stories focus on what it's like to be poor — to suffer urban life with its violence, filth, insensitivity — while the ads abound with luxury items: furs, perfumes, lingerie, cars, vacations; or with remedies that drug the middle class — sleeping pills, nasal sprays, stomach soothers, bowel movers.

I know I'm 'oversimplifying', but I need to do it. Why? Because a good part of my daily life is spent attempting to negotiate among these 'simple' experiential contradictions.

Not yet have I found the way to include — not negotiate around — these contradictions in my work, in my theatre, my writings, my teaching.

None of the political menus — the Marxists, the capitalists, the democratic socialists, the terrorists, the dropout communalists — is right for me. That is, I don't believe in their programmes, promises, outlooks. And I don't like the people who run their organisations. Ditto for the religious solutions and the solutions of 'consciousness', wherein I get my act together, and you get yours, and yours, and yours ... until history turns around. I don't buy that approach either.

Frederick Turner, co-editor of the *Kenyon Review*, a poet and author of the science fiction novel about the theatricalised future, *A Double Shadow*, has communicated to me, in a letter, a more hopeful future:

We are capable of accurate prophecy, subject only to the co-prophecy of other minds and other organized realities; and that prophecy is the same as action. To put it all more simply, it's up to us which alternative will come about. There is no such thing as the future yet and this realization makes us public men, and forces a kind of civic piety upon us. Because if things do go wrong, we are to blame. The plea of powerlessness is no excuse: the power of others is created by our own opinions of it, and nothing more. We can change our opinion, and we do it by making one alternative more beautiful than another.

If we destroy ourselves in a nuclear holocaust or eco-catastrophe, it won't be because of some kind of technological determinism, or innate drive or conspiracy of the powerful or economic forces of history; it will be because we chose to, collectively, and we chose to because we considered that future to be the most beautiful, and we considered it to be the most beautiful because we imaginatively

constructed it to be so. Art has the exalted function, the world-saving function, of imaginatively constructing other futures which do not involve the *gotterdammerung* of mass suicide. I don't mean namby-pamby assertions of moral principle or nonviolence. They only increase the desirability of what is forbidden (Blake). Most ecology freaks are imaginatively mass-murderers. They would like to cleanse the filthy, desirous, complicated, upsetting, demanding, loving vermin of humanity from the face of the earth. They're the obverse of the Strangeloves, and less attractive because less straightforward. The appeal of nuclear holocaust is that it upstages history. Without the expense of imaginative effort it instantly makes our generation more important than Homer's, or Christ's, or Shakespeare's. It's the ultimate oedipal put-down, the final punk concert. If you want my opinion about what I think will happen if we (I mean the artists and imaginative creators in all the fields) do nothing, then I think we will destroy ourselves because we dearly, pruriently want to. It's such a cheap rush.

Feeling is so hard to construct that instead of doing the work of construction we've spent a couple of centuries cracking out the feelings stored in the old sociocultural structures like oilmen pumping steam into old domes to get out the last trickles [...] We've not much left, we fear. Our image of the universe has been of entropic systems that radiate crude energy by destroying themselves and others. The nuclear holocaust is a perfect picture of our self-excusing version of the universe. If the universe is running down, if there's only so much energy and value to go around, let's use it all up in one go, go out with a bang not a whimper. Better that than have to invent, love, work, take risks. Nuclear holocaust is dead safe. You know exactly where you are with it. It's a future with no variables: the Marxist/Capitalist ideal.

Of course the universe isn't running down, if we realize that it's made of information not of energy. Energy is simply information divided

by an unreal measure, space. The world is growing and learning to speak, like a baby, and its information is increasing all the time. We are the chief agents of that increase; in terms of information rather than space, we are the biggest objects in the universe and the galaxies are little specks upon our skins. But the risk is, we could choose to deny our opportunity.

So it's up to us. I predict that we will create subjunctive worlds, not the death-bang. The fact that that prediction is a resolve, an intention, doesn't make it any less of a prediction, but more of one. The road to heaven is paved with good intentions.

Yes, it's the old Protestant Ethic standing on its head. But Turner understands The Mother's 'change of consciousness', and Arthur Clarke's *Childhood's End* too. Turner comprehends that the postmodern epoch is one of information. But, as anthropologist Ray Rappaport reminded me, information and meaning are not the same. An abundance of information uncomprehended, or transformed into ritual formulae, is not meant, but either ignored or felt.

An excess of uncomprehended information over the past two hundred years has bred a prodigious science without a comparatively robust religion — or morality, if you will. So here we are, armed to our nuclei, and just about permitted to throw radioactive pies in each other's faces. For farce is what it is: an excess of violence that no one really believes is real. But wait till it explodes. But is Turner right in prescribing 'subjunctive worlds' — a heavy dose of theatre? Is our moral balance to be found among the clowns and acrobats?

Before taking up that one, a caveat about the 'cheap rush' of nuclear holocaust. It won't be so cheap. It won't be a big death bang but a series of painful whimpers. There are films of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — and a booklet, printed in Japan, entitled *Give Me Water — Testimonies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*:

What I saw under the bridge was shocking: Hundreds of people were squirming in the stream. I couldn't tell if they were men or women. They looked all alike. Their faces were swollen and gray, their hair was standing up. Holding their hands high, groaning, people were rushing to the river. I felt the same because the pain was all over the body. [...] I was about to jump into the river only to remember that I could not swim.

When I was about to get to our home, a middle-school student in our neighbourhood told me that my son Shiro had been spared. It was almost unbelievable [...]. I examined him and found that his left hand from the elbow to the finger and upper half of his head above his nose were burnt. I too felt that he would be all right soon. I thanked her and carried him on my back to the hospital. My son was only given ointment for his burns. And he started a high fever in the morning of August 9. [...] At about 4 in the afternoon, Shiro threw up some stuff which was as dark as coffee several times and passed away in two minutes.

Then I realized for the first time how my mother looked. She had been hit by the blast as she was picking eggplants to feed us at lunch. She was almost naked. Her coat and trousers were burnt and torn to pieces. Her hair had turned to reddish-brown, and was shrunken and torn as if she had had too strong a permanent. She got burnt all over the body. Her skin was red and greasy. The skin of her right shoulder, the portion which bore and lifted the bears, was gone, revealing bare flesh, and scarlet blood which was constantly oozing out. Mother fell exhausted on the ground. [...] Mother began to feel pain. After groaning and struggling, she passed away that night.

On the day of August 6 ... I was three months pregnant. Since I was carrying a baby, my chore was to take care of lunch some distance away from where the bomb hit. That's why I was spared ... A week later the often-mentioned atomic disease hit me. All my hair was gone, and I had a rash all over my body. My teeth were shaken up as bloody pus kept coming out from the gums. Because of vomiting

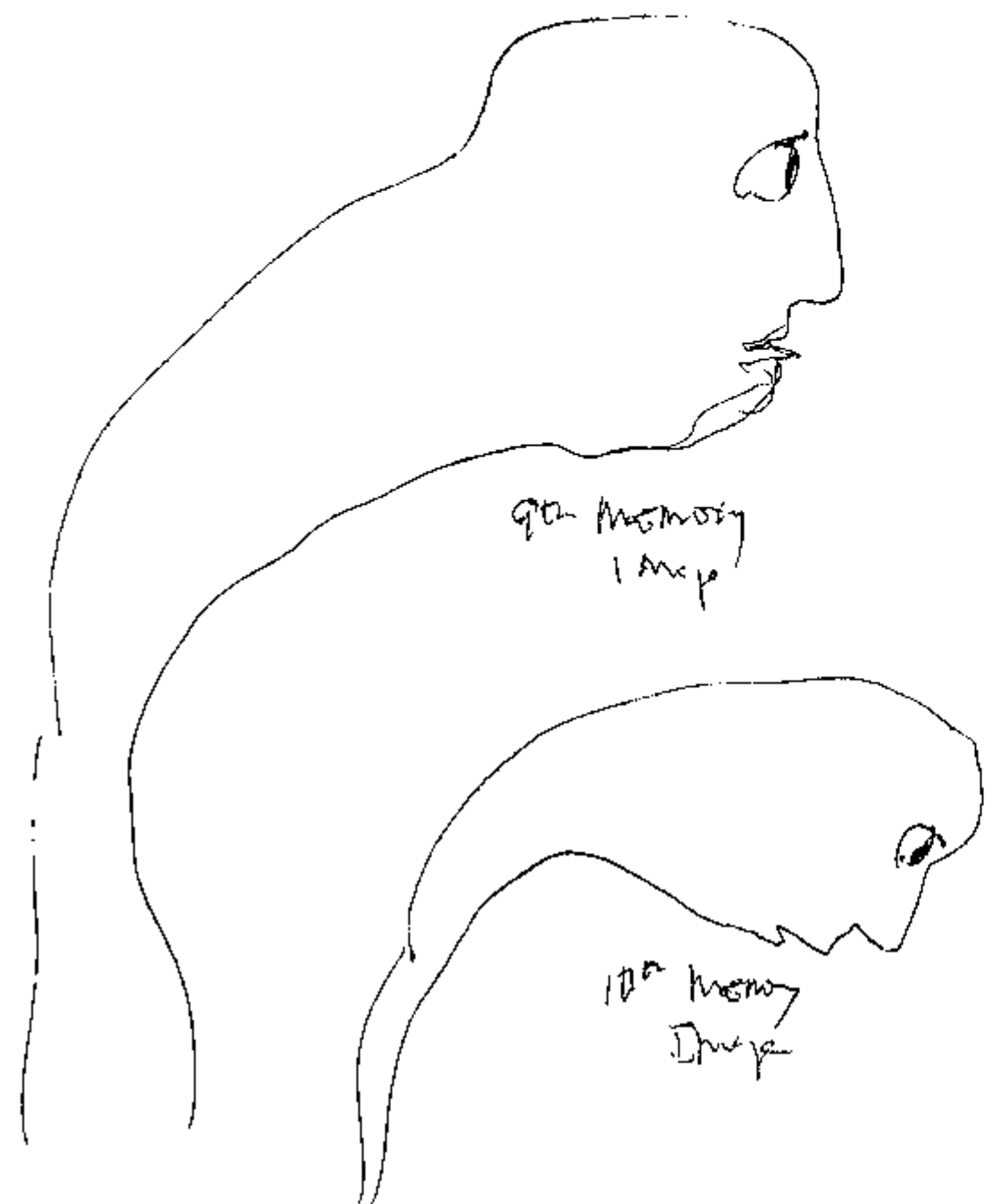
blood and bloody excrement I felt so weak that I almost gave up. [...] I may have been lucky. I survived and made a steady recovery. I delivered Yuriko on February 24 next year without much trouble. She was small indeed and the midwife told me, 'You really have to take care of this baby.' She was brought up mostly on milk. When her first birthday came, she could not say a word. At the second birthday it was the same except that she could barely manage to crawl. When she was four or five years old I tried hard to teach her to walk and she started walking, but she was lame. [...] She came to school age. But I thought she could not keep up even in kindergarten. [...] We kept our hope every year to no avail. The sixth year came and Yuriko was exempted from schooling. Around that time doctors of the Hiroshima University Medical School came to survey the survivors in the Ohtake area. They examined her and took her picture. She was found to have the small-head syndrome cause by the atomic bombing. Up until recently I thought Yuriko was the only example. [...] Having had no pleasure in her life, she became very fond of movies [...]. She must look strange — standing lame, muttering something to herself in front of a movie poster. People look back at her from curiosity. School-children play lame before her or try to drive her away as if she were a dog. Yuriko herself seems embarrassed to be stared at or have somebody around. Nowadays she tends to stay all day at home and spends time with TV and radio. That makes her physically weak; she gets easily tired even by just taking a short walk [...]. She is so occupied with movies, TV, and radio all day, from morning till she goes to bed, that she can't make it to the bathroom on time. [...] I have a grandchild who is three years old. I think Yuriko is a little bit more immature than him. She is now twenty years old.

Well, there are as many testimonies as casualties, multiplied by the number of people who knew persons who were there. Millions. Thus the

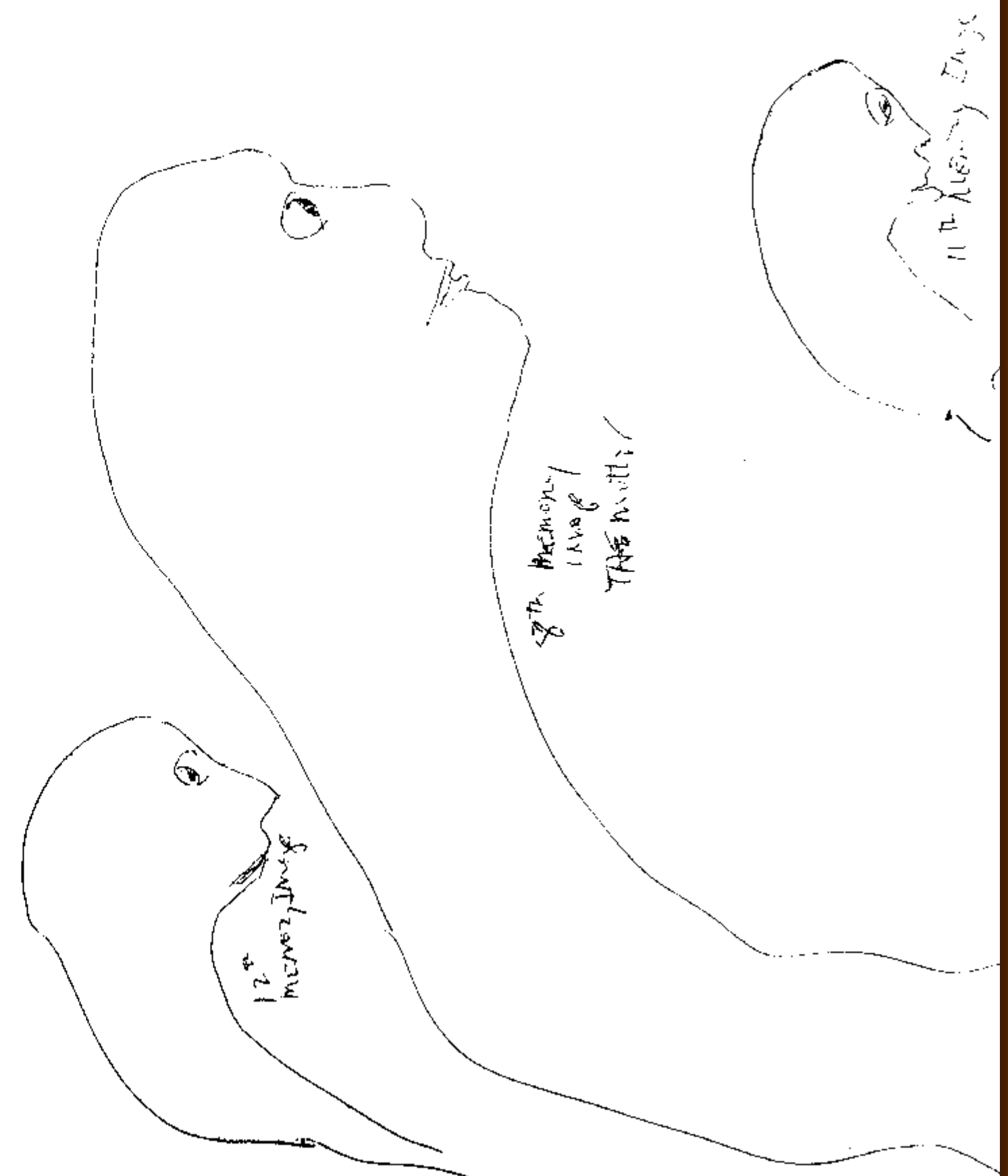
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Write to Porter McCoy
Grant Avenue

his address 50 Rock Plaza
10020



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My drawings immediately after I laid my head in The Mother's lap, November 1971.

inheritance of the twentieth century: the concentration camps of Europe, the atomic bombs of Asia. 'Of' Asia? No, in Asia, but of Euro-America. So, though Turner almost convinces me with his optimism, these daymares return. For the horrors of war are not night-time things but the outcomes of our most scrupulously rational thinkings, of our most highly exercised cerebral cortexes. More nightmares might be among the remedies recommended for the generals, the Haigs, Weinbergers, and Reagans. I don't exempt the warriors of other nations; I just don't know their names.

The final scene of *Dead End Kids* — the Mabou Mines performance piece that's all about nuclear energy, experimentation, and holocaust — is a parody of a sleazy nightclub act. The comic invites a young woman (a plant) from the audience onto the stage. He makes sex jokes with/against her. He uses as a prop a dead plucked chicken — the kind you get at the supermarket. This prop is naked flesh, dead yet vulnerable, not being used to feed anyone but to stand for the penis, the vagina, the insides of the body, the victims of atomic bombs, the raw meat we are when we are nothing else. And have you ever noticed how chicken skin is the colour of some Asians? The audience reacts strongly to this scene. Some offended, some amused, some sickened. This scene — which people advised director JoAnn Akalaitis to drop — is a scary commentary on the current level of consciousness not only about things nuclear but the whole drift of our species toward globacide.

Having lost a sense of the sacred, we also lose awareness of the terrible. So what's so bad about atomic warfare, lead in the air, ozone depletion, extermination of nonhuman species? Everything can be talked about, understood, dealt with, defended against.

I'm not talking about the technological imperative: our almost automatic belief that for every problem there's a solution.

I'm talking about something happening to language, including the languages of art. To 'look something in the face' — to end taboos, to be able to discuss it openly — is believed somehow to be equivalent to solving

the problem. Or at least rendering it less dangerous. But really this openness is a way of deadening.

Again it's an invasion of the rational into spheres of nonrational — what word can I use? certainly not thought — process. The deep process of imagination has been contaminated.

Now back to Turner's future of subjunctive worlds, which is a call to re-imagine. Can it be done as efficiently as scarred landscape is reforested or depleted fisheries farmed? Are we arriving at the paradox in human self-directed evolution when the unconscious, the primary process, is to be directly fertilised? Having spent so much energy in training the cortex to control the rest of the brain, are we now to seek out a limbic resurgence?

There's no way back to a genuine premodernism. Who wants it anyway? Human life then was threatened by the environment. Today human life threatens the environment. What we need is a balance.

In the sixteenth century, after some bloody battles using rifles and cannons, the shogunate in Japan decided that this method of warfare was costing too much. Too many lives were being lost, brute firepower was replacing the elegant earlier ways of warring. So firearms were banned, and for nearly three hundred years Japan continued its former traditional ways of doing battle.

In today's Papua New Guinea, warriors arrive by motorbike at the battle grounds. They park their vehicles and fight with bows, arrows, and spears. They know about guns, but know too that their small populations would soon be decimated if guns were used.

Peace loving? No. But there are limits to war. These are very low. War, if not abolished, needs to be made a handcraft again.

How can performance assist in this? And in the other transformations necessary for human social survival?

Experimental theatre in America — and in Europe, too, from what I can gather — is in a bad way. Experiment means, literally, to 'go beyond

the boundaries'. There's not much of that going on these days. As things have gotten desperate outside of theatre, they've become more conservative within it. The great period of experimentation that began in the fifties ended by the mid-seventies. In my essay 'Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-garde', I discuss the history of this period and the reasons for the decline in detail (1981: 13-77). No need to belabour the story here. What I want to focus on is the phoenix aspect: what's rising from the ashes. For the experimental period has given us a foundation in practice for what Turner calls for in his letter.

This foundation is a performance art based on postmodern consciousness. A consciousness that relies on bundles and networks, on spheres, modes, and relations. It is a performance world reminiscent of medieval totalism, where actions are instantly transformed into relations. This performance world is the source of renewals of religion — and by religion I don't mean only the known creeds, most of which are frozen, nor do I mean theology. I mean sacralising the relations among people: creating special, sacred, non-ordinary — you pick your descriptive adjective — space and time. And enacting within, or in relation to, such space/time events that resonate significance not only to the audience but also to the performers.

Ironically, the modern period, which made 'man the measure of all things', proposed an idea that could not yet operate openly. Forget for now whether this programme was projecting a social order dominated by males at the expense of females, and whether there is enough innate difference in aggressive potential to make the male-female argument worthwhile at the level of 'who rules'. The modernist programme was humanist — extraordinarily noble and optimistic. But it didn't work out so well for whales, forests, and billions of human beings born outside of Europe, North America, Japan, and a few other domiciles of superiority, economically/militarily speaking.

Maybe, if you like Turner's scheme of reality, the humanist world was a subjunctive possibility dreamt in the fifteenth century, a few epochs before its time.

The posthumanist, postmodern subjunctivity we are in the first moments of dreaming these days may be better suited to our capabilities. I see ten qualities of this postmodern subjunctively projected future.

1. It is multicentric. Everything, or nothing, is at the centre. Experiences exist without frames, giving time/space a sense of 'insideness', of being-in-it. Experience — flow alternating with reflexivity, an awareness of flow even while not stopping flow — replaces analysis. This multicentricity demands the construction of holistic, global systems. Because there is no centre there must instead be an order of relations, not a hierarchy or a pyramid or a circle with a centre point, but more like what the earth's atmosphere looks like from close space: whorls, and constantly shifting but totally interrelated patterns of movements. Socially, such comprehension of a global eco-system leads to a feeling of limitedness, of feedback, recycling, inner-focusing. It's not too big a leap from there to ideas of reincarnation, which is a way of saying there is feedback of personal-being-soul-stuff as well as of the more obvious material stuff.

But.

Actually, the concept of multicentricity and holism do not contradict but need each other. Both indicate fully significant worlds, and both indicate the dominance of rhythmicity over all other kinds of space/time orderings. Not lines, which mean single-point perspective, but rhythmical relations, which mean dance.

This danced universe is opposed to the modernist ideal of an ever-expanding — that is, receding — point of origin or frame of reality, and an equally expanding human consciousness that regularly 'breaks through', leading to 'new fields' that sooner or later are 'known'. Clearly, that world is the one from the age of great discoveries by Euro-American

navigators and astronomers, the line from da Gama and Galileo to Glenn and *Voyager*.

This line need not end for multicentricity to take over. Multicentricity is just that, multiple.

2. The ability to support, even delight in, contradictory or radically paradoxical propositions simultaneously. From the sound of one hand clapping to a frameless yet limited cosmos. Here's where clowns and shamans come in. And theatricalism as the realm of reality founded on projecting experiences that are true/not-true.

3. The process of knowing that the 'thing' is part of the 'thing and the experiencer of the thing'. All observations are participations. And all participations are creations. The modern ideal:



becomes the postmodern:



Also, reflexivity develops as each global reality is experienced both from within and from without simultaneously. The experiencer is also that which experiences herself experiencing. Dizzying, fun, subjunctive (as if, would, could, should); terrifying, hard to hold onto, uncertain, relative.

4. In the modern period people could correctly speak of absolutes. In the postmodern, each set of relationships generates transformations that hold true for this or that operation. As modern seeing becomes postmodern experiencing, postmodern performance leaves the proscenium theatre and takes place in a multiplicity of spaces. The proscenium theatre is known for two qualities: there is a best seat in the house; there are clearly defined areas for different activities — stage, backstage, house, lobby. Half the structure belongs to the performers, half to the spectators. The postmodern performance space is strictly relational: you don't know what it is until you use it for whatever you are doing. Although it seems that now we're in a reactionary period where the proscenium theatre appears to be making a comeback, this is only an illusion. Of course orthodox spaces are being used, but so are countless new spaces that twenty-five years ago weren't. Like galleries, lofts, clubs, courtyards, beaches, roofs, streets. The environmental possibilities of performance have expanded to include dozens of new territories. Not only space, but time too. I mean time as a when and time as an experience of. Again, this emergence of rhythmicity.

5. The use of multiple channels of communication. This goes beyond the human. Everything from genetic codes to lasers to body language to pulsars seems to be 'saying' something. An aspect of the totality of significance. And, in performance, it is no longer necessary to rely on the linguistic channel as the dominant one. There is multicentricity of communication as well as of experience and cosmic construction. This is the operational feature of Turner's subjunctive worlds. As many worlds as can be imagined can be communicated. Or maybe it's more interesting the other way: as many worlds as can be communicated can be imagined.

The artistic mind — the mind that specialises in inventing possible worlds — is emergently important.

How does this jibe with Lévi-Strauss's painful witnessing of humans reduced to meat and excretion? The horrors he writes of are the products of humanism. The delights of the connoisseur and the luxuries of the rich are resting on the backs of the poor. These horrors will not just go away. But I doubt whether revolution as conceived of from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries is the answer either.

How to eliminate or at least reduce these horrors is the main thing this writing is playing with.

Playfulness may be part of the answer.

6. The alternation of flow and reflexivity. Sometimes we're in it, sometimes we're out of it. Even when we're out of it, we're in it; and even when we're in it, we're out of it watching ourselves in it.

A very theatrical way of doing things. Rehearsing, stopping, repeating, taking the action up in the middle, playing around with it, making it 'better'.

Also a way of theatre-going, wherein spectators do not agree to disbelieve in what's going on. This disagreement to disbelieve preserves individual experience in a collective act.

The alternation of flow and reflexivity leads to fragmentation as well as holism.

The postmodern transmutation is not of gold but of experiences, not to perfect heavy metals but to offer new ways of being, which are ways of doing, ways of performing.

7. Dreams are not considered only secondary reflections of hidden primary processes. Dreams are not automatically in need of interpretations that strip them of their imagery.

In 1977, I ran a dream workshop at American University. During two hot weeks, about a dozen of us shared sleeping space and performance workshop space. We observed each other sleep and dream, and experimented with controlling our dreams and performing dreams immediately upon

being awakened from them. Systematically some of the differences between waking and dreaming consciousness were elided. Persons experienced mutual dreaming (where two or more dream the same dreams, or elements of the same dream) and lucid dreaming (a dream where you know you are dreaming — an ultimate in reflexivity). Finally, we staged for ourselves a sequence of dreams, and acted out within the Washington area aspects of our dreamlives.

The workshop was scary. But I'd like to resume its experiments.

Also to look more to dreams as Aborigines experience them. As gateways to the first time, as a way of making present that first time.

Interestingly, dreams in several cultures are the sources of dances. Dreamers learn dances while dreaming, and bring the dances back.

Dreams, vision quests, trance.

The nightlife of the brain. What worlds are there waiting to be staged. But not dreams in their mystical sense. Dreams, rather, as a continuation and elaboration of day — brain activities. In other words, along with the expansion of brain activity to include both noncortical and cortical languages — body languages as well as verbal languages — a parallel integration of the night brain and the day brain. This has been going on a long time. The theories of Freud are based largely on his investigations of dreams. But he attempted to interpret dreams rationally, to see them as texts presented by the unconscious to be sorted out, understood, by the conscious. Such interpretation needed the assistance of another, the analyst. So that, in fact, there were three or four interactants in Freud's scheme: the conscious and unconscious of dreamer and analyst. I don't want to abandon Freud's process, but add to it the ability to apprehend the dreaming directly, without translating it or reducing it.

To a degree, this is what Robert Wilson and Richard Foreman have been doing. Wilson in regard to time, the showing in space of different rhythms of time, different ways of thinking-doing, including the ways of dreaming. And Foreman, by his insistence on trying to represent in the theatre as clearly as possible the primary process of his own thinking

unedited. And, as it is becoming increasingly clear, some day thinking is like night thinking, if we let it come through unedited. Writers have known this, but it is taking longer to get through to the theatre. Cultures other than Euro-American have also known, and practice, performances based directly on primary process activity.

8. This relates to accepting body thought alongside cerebral cortex thinking. As the concept of body thought is unpacked, people will discover how many different modes of thought our species can do. We already know that learning and artistic expression can occur autonomously, like dreaming.

Again dance is a good model, for much dance learning is at the neuro-muscular and subcortical brainstem levels. The development of body thinking is not threatening to cortical thinking, anymore than the discovery of leftbrain, right-brain tendencies threatens word language. What I'm arguing for is the coexistence of many different kinds of thought, and a discriminating use of different kinds of thinking for different kinds of tasks. This means, for me at least, that cortical — rational — thinking is, and remains, very, very important. It is the kind of thinking used in making the discriminations necessary to use other kinds of thinking, it is the kind of thinking used in writings like the one you're reading, and it is the kind of thinking used in doing the reading. It's the same in making theatre. I don't want to throw away words, text, dialogue, narrative, character relationships. I want to use them in a fuller range of theatrical expressions. Certainly, the finest works of postmodern theatre show this wish to include, not exclude, to expand the range of thinking, theatrical technique, language — all kinds of languages.

9. Process itself is performance. Rehearsals can be more informative/performative than finished work. The whole structure of finishedness is called into question. If the world is unfinished, by what process are the works of people finished? Why should these works be finished?

The world is a reality we are making and changing as we go along. This is the nub of Turner's optimism. The virtual futures we construct are predictions, some of which are being translated into actualities. And this is what a rehearsal does, how it works.

It is not an excuse for sloppiness, lack of discipline, self-indulgence — any of the errors so often associated with process work. It is not a mask for mysticism or self-serving obscurantism. It is more like the scientific method, through which every assertion is the basis for further investigation, counter-assertion, more experimentation, and/or observation, further work.

Kaprow's pieces and Grotowski's series of explorations — Holiday, the 'active culture' phase, Theatre of Sources — are examples of process performance. This work is always prey to preciousness, indulgence, exploitation. Nothing stinks worse than rancid sincerity. But still, it is worth the mess. Because process work is the true leading edge of knowledge. Not the historical avant-garde, which is an art movement along with all the rest, but open ways of approaching experience, methods of seeing and dealing with the world.

10. Interculturalism is replacing — ever so tenderly, but not so slowly — internationalism. The nation is the force of modernism; and the cultures — I emphasise the plural — are the force (what word can replace force?) of postmodernism. As a world information order comes into being, human action can be mapped as a relationship among three levels:

PAN-HUMAN, EVEN SUPRA-HUMAN,

COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS.

information from/to anywhere, anyone

CULTURES, CULTURES OF CHOICE,

ethnic, individualistic, local behaviours

people selecting cultures of choice

people performing various subjunctive actualities

PAN-HUMAN BODY BEHAVIOURS/DREAM —

ARCHETYPE NETWORKS

unconscious and ethological basis of

behaviour and cultures

This map may scare you. It sometimes scares me. It can be of a totalitarian society, an Orwellian world. But it can also — depending on what people ‘predict’ from it — liberate. It depicts three spheres, or levels, or actualities; but the perforated lines say that a lot of sponging up and down — transfers, transformations, links, leaks — joins these realms, making of them one very complicated system. I mean, without the overarching and the underpinning universals there is little chance for the middle — the multiplicity of cultures — ever achieving harmony, ever combining stability with continuously shifting relations among and in the midst of many different items.

Maybe the most exciting aspect of this map is the possibility for people to have ‘cultures of choice’.

People are born into a culture. They get that culture, maybe some of it before they are even born. Each culture has its distinct ways of doing things; and these ways as much as anything, from the experience of birth on, form individual human beings. Are infants swathed or allowed to run free? Are they nursed on demand or according to a schedule? Are they born into large families, even extended families, where many different people care for them directly, or into small families, even families of one person only, where there is a single caretaker? And so on, through what kinds of food are eaten, who the playmates are, what are the toys, etc. On through all the experiences of living. I don’t think this culturing will change. But I do think that very early on — I mean after two or three years — children can be given the experience of different cultures. Again, like second languages, there can be second cultures. And surely, as children grow to an age where they make choices for themselves — and I don’t know how my own sense of what this age is is actually determined by my own cultural habits, is not something absolutely fixed — as kids become people capable of making choices, one of the things they must be encouraged to do is to go into several cultures other than the one they were born in. This will be the groundwork for cultures of choice.

Our current view, I think, is soaked with a kind of belief in genetic racism, the assumption that only blacks can be African (in the full black African sense) or that kids from Brooklyn can’t be Amerindians. But as cultures more and more come to be performative actions, and information links among them emerge into view, people will choose cultures the way many of us now choose what foods to eat. I’m aware of the cruel irony here: altogether too many of the world’s people not only can’t choose what foods to eat, but even whether they can eat or not. ‘Cultures of choice’ may not be ‘of choice’ but a function of the political and economic turmoil of this century: many millions of people

have become refugees and/or immigrants. Wars, famines, need for cheap labour, exploitation, adventurism: there are many reasons why people have moved from one culture area to another. These moves, of course, are as old as human history — but I believe they have accelerated greatly over the past hundred and fifty years or so. Efficient means of transportation coupled with an ever more integrated world economy, and the particular cruelty and magnitude of this century's wars (not only the wars in/of Europe but wars in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East: everywhere), have combined to put dozens of millions of people on the road. Many of these people — along with the more fortunate ones, artists especially, who have chosen second cultures (or even third, fourth ...) are in a very unusual ontological and social situation. They are no longer part of their cultures of birth nor are they totally part of their cultures of choice. And if they return to their birth cultures — as many artists have done — they find themselves in a situation closely akin to Brecht's *verfremdungseffekt*: distanced even from the familiar. These people are, in a sense, strangers in whatever culture they are in. Or, conversely, they are 'almost at home' in more than one culture. In either case, these people are in the position of performers: they are always learning 'how to be' in whatever cultural situation they find themselves (by choice or by dint of 'crashing circumstances').

There is some actual culture choosing going on right now. Some of it forced on people. In New York City, at the McBurney Y on 23rd Street — about six blocks from where I live — the Thunderbird American Indian Dancers run powwows on a monthly basis. Powwow is itself a form of pan-Indian gathering that developed in the nineteenth century as the Euro-Americans annihilated the Indians and drove them to reservations where they were regarded not as Sioux or Kiowa or Cherokee but as Indian. As it exists in New York — and I think parallels can be found elsewhere — the powwow combines social dancing, ceremonial dancing, socialising, and the display and auctioning of artifacts. Ann Marie Shea and Atay Citron have been studying the McBurney powwow:

Ironically, despite the possibility that some of the Thunderbirds' ancestors might have inhabited [Manhattan] Island long before any non-native settler, the Y books the powwow under its 'international' activities, thus labelling the Native Americans intercultural in their own homeland. This is only one of the paradoxes of the Thunderbird powwows, where Cherokees and Hopis are indistinguishable from Irishmen and Jews, where Santa Claus arrives not to the jingle of sleigh bells but to the beat of an Amerindian drum. (1982: 73)

It can get complicated. At one McBurney powwow, some enthusiasts showed up for the dancing with top hats and tuxedo elements as part of their dancing costumes. These people had carefully researched what Indians wore to the powwows of the 1880s. The attire that included, eclectically, elements of Western clothing were more authentic historically than the 'all natural' feather works worn by many contemporary Indians. But what does authenticity mean? By the 1880s Indians had included in their ceremonial dress many things that weren't originally Indian. People are always doing that. What's different these days — with our ability to preserve on film and in photographs much direct evidence of 'how it was' — is also the ability to ransack different periods and select authenticity according to how the evidence is assembled and performed. The enthusiasts at the McBurney powwow were both more and less authentic than the 'actual' Indians. My point is that this kind of actuality will increasingly become a matter of choice for all of us — and not simply an unhappy residue of genocide.

To a degree I'm taking up Turner's challenge in this writing. I do not endorse in any sense what people have done to people, or what we as a species are doing to the biosphere. But I do think we have to incorporate our histories, our collective experiences, into our ways of being. That is, because genocide was practiced against the American Indians is no reason to reject the McBurney powwow. Or even to reject its means of culture of choice. That descendants of the ones who committed the genocide are

O, · goodness & life
And O, · Sadness & loss.



Victor and Edith Turner, winter in Charlottesville, Virginia, probably the winter before Victor's death.
I pasted this in my notebook after his death.

dancing side-by-side with descendants of the victims ... well, make of it what you will, I refuse to reject this kind of behaviour out of hand.

I think that the possibilities for the world are actually very grim. The future proposed by *Global 2000 Report* seems to be what most people are dreaming these days. But, Turner says, if we imagine, and work toward incarnating, embodying, making real what we imagine — and this is close to a working definition of what artists do — then we can bring into existence another future, not the one envisioned by *Global 2000*.

There is a politics of the imagination, as well as a politics of direct action. The politics of direct action is aimed at the injustices of the world. We need that kind of politics. The politics of the imagination is aimed at describing virtual or subjunctive futures, so that these can be steered toward or avoided. The politics of the imagination is real. That is why so much effort is spent by totalitarian regimes, fascist regimes, capitalist industry, and others, to gain thought control and control over human expression. You could almost say these people attempt to control dreaming, the primary process itself. They aim at depriving the people — masses and artists alike — of having imaginative alternatives. Imaginative? Actual alternatives.

For imagination, Turner is saying and I'm agreeing, is an actual alternative: it is the opening to any number of alternatives. Not the idle dreams that go up in smoke, that don't get translated into action, that are cheapened by interpretation after interpretation. But the kind of things I've been talking about: performative acts of great power.

Crashing performative circumstances = emergence of, subjunctive processual worlds = changing human consciousness = the inevitable and reflexive awareness of psychophysical evolution = the ability to restore behaviour = cultures of choice = free dreaming = ????

The alternative?

There are billions of alternatives. •

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NOTE

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From Richard Schechner's

INDIA NOTEBOOK 1978

10 September. 10:40pm.
How to write about
those past two days?
At first I wanted to speak
into the tape recorder.
There is a Hindu myth
about someone who
wanted the boon of
being able to write as
fast as he could think.
That's a tape recorder.
But maybe that's not
so good. Being able to
slow thoughts down
has many advantages.

Kashi, Banaras, Varanasi — across from Ramnagar. At first I did not want to come here now. The greatest flood of modern times — of all recorded times — is on the Ganga now. The Jamuna flooded parts of Delhi; the Ganga, fed by the Jamuna and other rivers, grows and grows. As we — Linda Hess and I — approached Varanasi by plane I could see the fat river spilling over their banks and into fields and villages. I could see its waters — mostly muddy beige, but sometimes in the fields of crops the water was bright green, transparent and glistening. It was like looking down at the Caribbean, except that farms and whole villages were submerged up to the roofs.



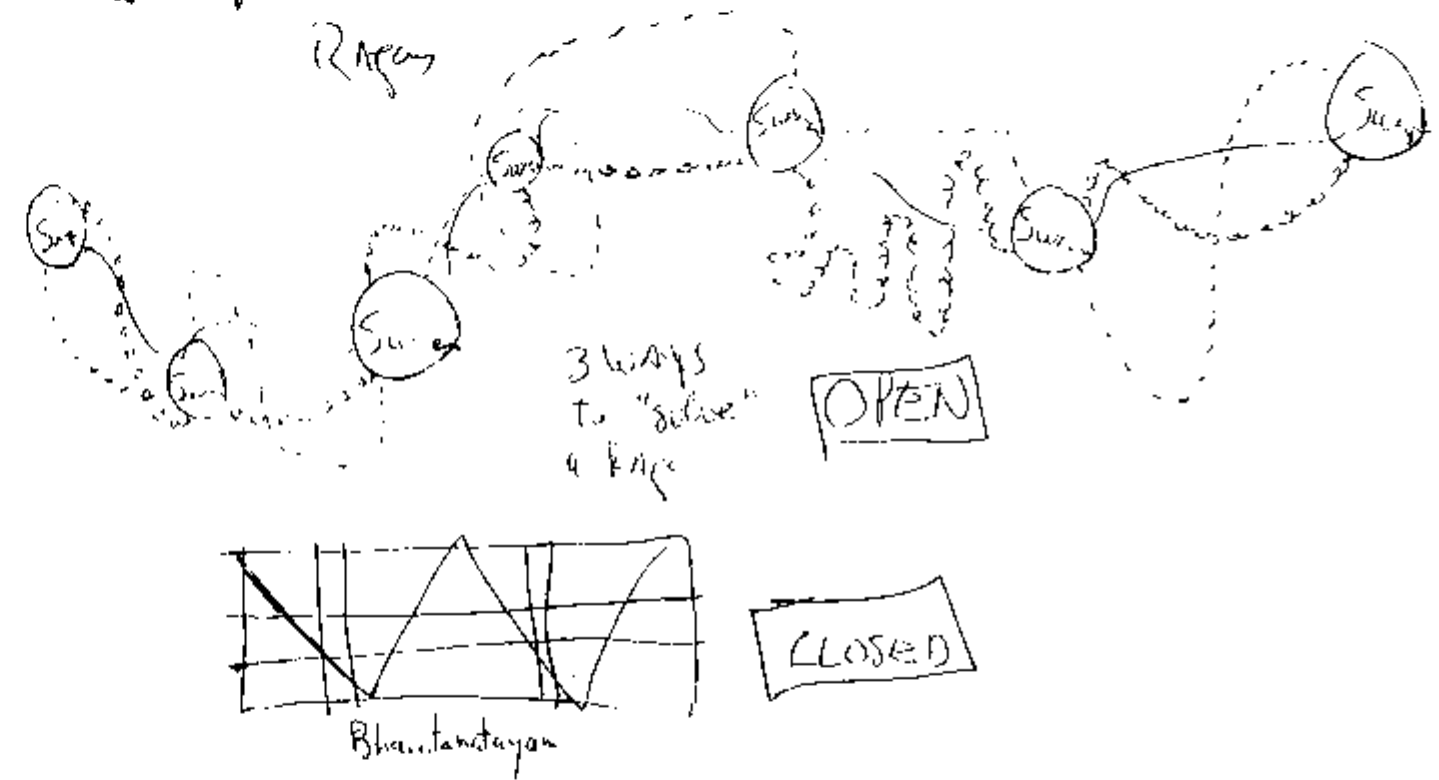
TIRUKOTAI KUNDRAM : City, w/ lots of Temples, mountains. Stop on bus route

8



16 Nov

Watched Bhambhaniyan advanced class at Darganjan's. Incredibly complex (y) steps & hand-finger gestures. Small technical details, & work which has been taught than to such details mean of one master every generation, & no room for personal invention. The layers are OPEN, & BN is CLOSED. It is an over-developed form. For J. to study it is OK - will give her a reference - almost an absolute reference - apt w/ to measure "disruption" & "External" or "imposed" scoring. But this lib/ what is not for us.



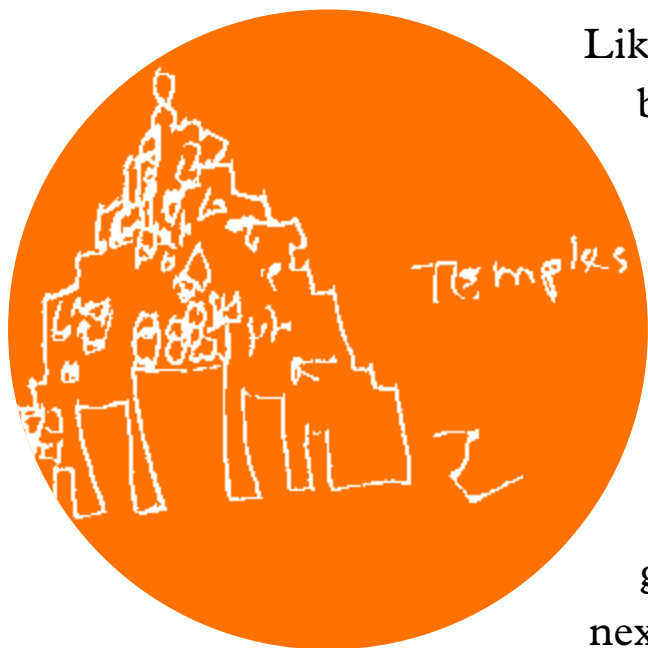
When an artistic system is closed it is in need of revelation, reconstruction. Also watching the BN class spend some ideas regarding "score." We obviously better than the theory. The theory is that all physical actions are part of the score - that ultimately, we do or say, is a phy - like to become we have - a score. This makes each performance more closed than BN. This theory was a reaction against the chaos of some Darganjan's performance & a general disliking of American actors. But in fact what are scores & "Anchor points" both with physical action & in association, for

When we [Linda Hess and I] got to Varanasi we made our way to the Cantonment and checked into the Tourist Dak Bungalow. We are hesitant about going down to the ghats. Riding in from the airport we asked how things are. 'Hanumanji is taking a bath!' our driver told us, meaning that even Sankat Mochan temple — a couple of kilometers from the Ganga — is underwater.

Soon enough, we knew we had to go to Assighat. After dicking around over the price, we hired an Ambassador, one of those chunky ubiquitous unstoppable cars. Off we went. But we didn't get far. At the Cantonment rail crossing we got stuck in a great traffic jam. The usual road across the tracks was flooded. So we paid the driver Rs.20, ditched the Ambassador, and set off toward the river on foot, stopping first at the railroad station for cold drinks and some oranges. After walking a while, we hired Kallu, a bicycle rickshaw walla. He was to become our companion and guide for 2 days.

We set off to see the city. Peddling past the half-finished Ananda Marg Temple, Linda told me this sect was deadly — Manson like — its leader ordering the slaughter of followers who had defected. Imprisoned, he lost adherents, and his temple was abandoned.

Like so much in Varanasi, the half-finished building did not seem out of place. Here much is unfinished, on the way up — not yet built; and much is half destroyed, on the way down — not yet abandoned. As the buildings crumble into the soil they turn green at the foundation where moss grows, and green half-way up the walls where shrubs, vines, grass, and even trees sprout. Some shrines next to or under or in trees have achieved the

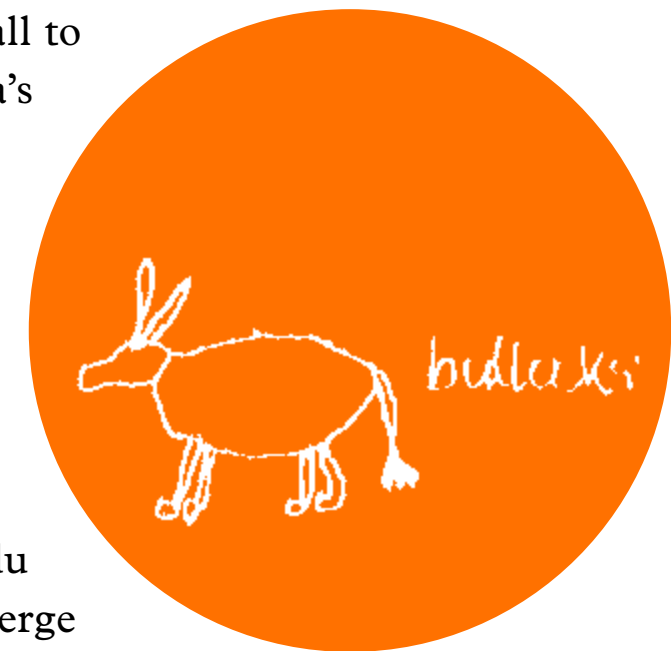


union between peopled and natural. Varanasi is growing from and mulching into the soil she rests on, roots in, and thrives with. It is all deeply and logically connected to the Ganga.

She — this river Ganga who the Puranas say came rushing out of the sky, her great fall to earth softened by coursing through Shiva's hair — his hair's many strands breaking and dispersing her powerful flow. As Shelley says: 'Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, stains the white radiance of eternity' or — as I redact it — the great white dome of eternity is shattered into the many-colored shards of experience; so the symphonic Hindu panoply-continuum of myriad gods converge to express the single force of life. In the process

of forcing life to become manifest, the balance, the poise, and the stillness of the uncolored unmanifest absolute is dispersed into the ups and downs, the ins and outs, the hots and colds, the livings and dyings of my experiencing, and yours. This is the great clothesline on which is hung all philosophy and art; and all else we do or imagine or think.

Coming down to the river on the bicycle rickshaw we passed a corpse bundled up in white silk — tied from head to toe like some terrific Christmas present; but tied so tightly that the forms of the body from the round head to the upright pointing of the 10 toes plainly show. With flowers under the head. All bound to a palanquin made from big green bamboo shoots and branches — a mattress for the corpse not unlike a charpoy that the living sleep on. Carried by 6 men chanting and sometimes laughing — not grieving — that is for later, at the burning ghat or for the nearest relatives. I remember meeting a weeping old man at



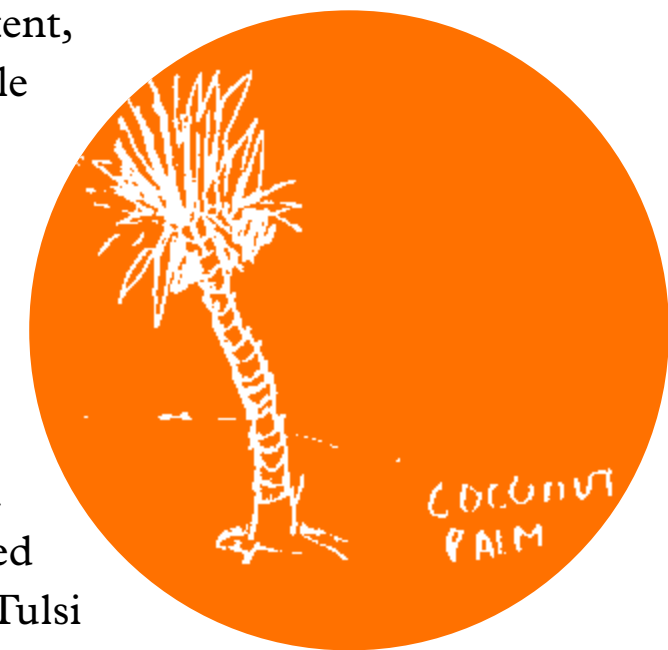
Manikarnika Ghat in 1976. He told me he was weeping because his son had died. ‘He should be cracking my skull and I will be cracking his.’ The order of nature was disrupted and inverted — a mistake had been made — or bad karma was working itself out — the tears were not against death but against injustice, this cosmic payback.

Linda now wondered what would happen to the corpses during the flood. There is no way to get through to the burning ghats. The bodies are now just dumped into the Ganga. ‘Why not burn them someplace else?’ she asks Kallu. ‘And be deprived of paradise?’ To be trusted to the Ganga — that is the important thing. It is good to be burned, but if that’s not possible without leaving Ganga’s shores than the bodies will not be burned. It was at this time — riding down toward the Ganga that we noticed the lack of panic. There were no great crowds fleeing from the direction of the river; there were no trucks rolling in with soldiers and supplies — there was none of the activity associated with disaster — no loudspeakers or hovering helicopters or inquiring reporters. Later we read that more than 35,000 villages are flooded. What a story! How the US press and TV would play it, almost creating the panic and crisis it was describing; hourly bulletins giving the impression that something that needed hourly updating is occurring. But that was not the sense we felt as we bicycled down to Assighat.

Merchants are in their shops, those open boxes so much like the box sets of 19th and 20th century realistic theatre. People moved in all directions with that multiplex surge of pedestrians, bikes, rickshaws, Ambassadors and Fiats. The riot of metropolitan India. Amidst all this, chai was being served in small clay mugs dashed to the ground after one use; lunghis were being sold; plastic lunchboxes displayed; and freshly deep-fried samosas and other chaat bubbled in boiling oil. Everything seemed — no was — normal. Kallu told us the flood was high — but he pedaled toward it jauntily, turning his head over his shoulder to inform

us of this or that. Sometimes I peered down a side street and saw water: Ganga was moving her fingers through Varanasi’s hair. And I realized that this was no flash flood — no breaking of dams releasing a wall of water, no tsunami. Here the river rose centimeter by centimeter, hour by hour, just coming on in her own way. At the center of the channel I knew the water would be swift — but by the shore it would just be. I recall now the great Brahmaputra in flood at Guahati in 1976: how at the center of that massive channel a couple of miles wide whole segments of land — islands with trees — rushed by in a brown seething whirling deluge as if a great angry patriarch had ripped Assam up roots and all and flung the land into the water. But the Ganga is no patriarch. She is strong, persistent, and sustaining. Her flood is unstoppable but subtle. She does not need to impress these people who live on and near her; who worship her. They know her force. She just comes on as she needs to, rising to where she will go.

When we got near to Assi we realized the flood was not as bad as we imagined it would be. The entrance alley up to Tulsi Mandir and Tulsighat was open. I was in the full flush of knowing that Ganga, having been assured that Sam [my 2-year old son] would someday see her, was now beginning to go back to bed, to recede. Linda ran up the alley — we dismounted from Kallu’s rickshaw — and shouted. She was in ecstasy. I walked forward knowing Tulsi Mandir was on a small hill. When we got there, it was high and dry, barely. The big tree’s trunk was out of water, but its eastern bows were tickling Ganga’s waters. As we got near to Tulsi Mandir, we heard kirtans being sung to Hanumanji. The repetitive almost screaming voices, the clash of symbols, the thud of the drum. We entered and



saw that the water was within 4 inches of the murti, up to next to the last step — but Ganga hadn't entered. Later [Mahant Professor Veer Badra] Mishra showed us how the high water level was about 10 inches higher than the high flood mark of 1948, the previous record flood. He

pointed out how the water today was within a few inches of his ground-floor. 'But up till now nothing here has been flooded.' He pointed to the stones. 'This is all foundation — there is no room under here.' Other houses were not so lucky — other architects were not so wise.



We look down the street toward As-sighat and saw water. But we decided to wade in and look at Linda's flat. We would put her stuff on higher ground if it was not already flooded. 'This morning the water was this close,' Mishra said, squeezing an inch or less between his thumb and forefinger, 'but not in your flat.' Linda was very excited. 'I thought for sure the water would be up to the ceiling.' We borrowed a sari for Linda; I had bought a lunghi on the way so my jeans would not get wet. Still wearing my Adidas running shoes, we set off.

Earlier Kallu brought us to the edge of the flood near Assi. That's where I bought the lunghi and took my jeans and socks off leaving them with Kallu. We entered the water with hundreds of others. It was a festive feeling — something we got in New York in 1977 winter when the great snows came. Here no one had evacuated their places — or very few. We read later in the papers that 90% had stayed. Some moved to upper floors. Many hundreds were in the streets. I took photos — people laughed and posed. We walked through water knee-deep. It was Ganga water and sewage and whatever else there was all mixed and

floating. After maybe 100 yards, the water was gone — the land rose ever so slightly, but enough to lift it out of the water. It was there that we began to celebrate. We knew that more was out of the water than we'd thought; that maybe the apartment by some miracle, some slight elevation, was dry. This was Saturday afternoon around 5pm.

By Sunday afternoon, 100 yards of water was gone. We cycled to Tulsi Mandir directly. But I'm getting ahead of the story. I left the narrative with Linda and me dressed to wade down the back lane to Linda's place. Everywhere we went in this neighborhood Linda knew people. She greeted them and they greeted her with love, with surprise, with wonder. At last I understood the signs I had seen around: 'Europe and America returned.' These were not just a kind of street diploma but a statement of faith in the country. As if someone would return from those lands from whose bourne no travelers return. To be born in India is one thing, to visit it another, to visit, leave, and return, still deeper. To be an expatriate and then return to India still more substantial. To choose India — and especially this special Kashi — probably the oldest of humanity's still dwelled-in cities — is truly 'something else.' And to return when the flood publicity is scaring everybody away, even me, for I wanted to stay in Delhi until the floods passed, I'd made every argument in that direction: what good could we do, we'd be a burden, we might get trapped, disaster was no fun, there were floods still coming, and diseases, etc. But Linda insisted and deep inside I was excited and wanted to go. Nissar Allana looked at us sharply; he is a doctor and knows the danger — but he wanted us to go. 'There is where your work is, this is why you came to India.' So we went. •



SELECTIONS FROM

A YEEERS WORTH



Richard Schechner

1.

**Who is this writing?
Me not me. I swear not
to tell the truth, no way
near the whole truth, and
certainly not anything
but the truth. This is not
testimony. It is not even
what happened, or what
I think happened. It's a
daily of my head with
no dates. Not a journal.
No film montage, pages
flipping by.**

**No appointment book day-
by-day, hour by hour. It's
a yeers worth, possessive
without the apostrophe,
sounding real but spelled
in fiction. Yeer leaped into
my head, sibling of queer,
leer, steer, beer. And lots
that won't parse. I don't
know when I began.
I want to be young again.**

To be always young.

2.

Death is around this winter. Stefan Brecht, Bertolt's only son, with a face like Helene Weigel, his mother, a reticent man. I never discussed his famous parents with him. I heard on a Wednesday or Thursday that Stefan had died. I set off for Stefan's wake at his home on the far west side of Greenwich Village. Down a few steps to enter. There on a table, dressed in an old suit-jacket, white shirt open at the neck, was Stefan. Dead as a doornail, cold as ice (as I found out when I touched his forehead). Soon after, his wife Mary put on some music, set out food and drinks, and asked people to party. She came up to me, 'Let's dance,' she said. And we did. Two-stepping around the back room of the townhouse and then in the backyard, with Stefan laying there dressed up and dead. Me holding Mary his wife around the waist steering her through the dance.

3.

'Cave of my brain', nice metaphor that. Very Platonic. Maybe his cave was the brain, the black box of thought, the nighttime sky of dreams, the interior space that opens when we close our eyes. Also, naturally, feminine, the vaginal cave, the rivulet running in a line through a thin crevasse cut from ... you guessed it ... 'mother earth'. So that river leads to the cave of the womb, a cave we inhabit *in utero* but cannot remember. This afternoon past, talking with Joseph Ledoux about the brain, he discussed his favorite organ, the nut, the amygdala. 'It really does not mature until about age two or three. So memory, in the usual sense, before that is not possible.' I wonder about that — we have experiences earlier, even before birth, which somehow are engraved in what becomes 'me'. Ledoux agreed. But these whatever

we want to call them, pre-memory engravings or connections, are not recallable in the way that I am recalling the conversation with Ledoux. These experiences do not enter into 'working memory'. All this I take on faith from the famous researcher.

'I remember,' I told him, 'that on my one and only acid trip I experienced my own birth.' I did not tell him what I see now, fold after fold of my mother's inside — her birth canal — unfolding, a soft elephant-skin, but beige not gray, me being squeezed through this unfolding flesh, pushed forward and out. Out into what? The world. The isthmus of consciousness between two continents of oblivion. Could my eyes have been open when I was on that journey? Of course not. So this is a memory-not-memory, a projection on the screen of the cave of my brain, this feeling myself being born, the pressure on the surface of my skin, on the top of my head as my mother excreted me, birthed me. 'Push! Push!' the doctor must have exhorted her ... and push she did, taking an enormous shit. 'But love has pitched her tent | in the place of excrement' — not quite Yeats but what I would have written. Love and shit and piss and dampness and erection and vagina all come together. Fused organs, confused geography of the lower body. Again, Plato's cave and mother's hole; the wall of primal ignorance onto which the illusions of human reality are projected. Also a slice, that slit. A wound, as Freud gynophobically said, a lack, a no-know.

A lot more mysterious than my cock which just rises and falls, and which I handle a dozen times a day when pissing, and many more times when just playing around touching myself for security's sake. The little boy for all time just squeezing his thing. For goodness' sake.

4.

Prometheus was cursed to have his liver eaten each day not because he gave people fire but for taking from them the knowledge of the exact day of their deaths. My intention is to live to 116. Is this a fear of death?

5.

The doctor turned to us. 'If you will leave the room, we'll make him a little more comfortable.' My mother wanted that. She could not stand his suffering. Less than five minutes later, the doctor came out of the room. 'I'm sorry,' was all he said. My mother asked, 'He's dead?' Or did she say, 'He's gone?' 'Yes.' We all burst out crying. I took my mom in my arms. Skin and bones, eighty-five or ninety pounds, nothing more. 'You can go in and be with him now,' the doctor said. My mother said, 'No, I don't want to see him.' Later she told me how much she hated that memory of him with all those tubes and wires — breathing, IVs, monitors, catheter. At first, I said I did not want to go either. I wanted to support my mother. But I was curious, more, compelled.

I went in, parted the curtain, as in a theatre, and there on his deathbed was my father. All quiet, no tubes or lines running in and out of him. I noticed that his mouth was agape. I fixed my gaze on the small bruises at the corners of his mouth, where there had been ribbons tying in place the breathing tube that was forced down into my father's throat to the trachea so that air could be machine-pumped into his lungs. And his eyes were not quite closed. I went to the head of his bed and touched his bald pate. It was warm. This father, so active in life, was now perfectly still. Then, electrically, I thought I detected a little movement! Yes, he was breathing! He was alive! I knew I was mistaken, that what

I perceived was the incarnation of my desire to keep my father among the quick. Again I touched the corpse's head, kissed it gently, but felt even as I did so the fear of pollution, the contact with dirty death, as if death were a cold I could catch. I mumbled something like, 'Goodbye, Pop' and started to leave. But I could not leave the room. I circled near the foot of the hospital bed. I went back to the head of the bed. And, yes, this second time was when I touched him. Not the first time. The first time I stared at his body with awe and fear. I had never seen a dead person who I knew before. I touched him the second time and kissed his almost bald head.

6.

Suddenly, an explosion, light! 'Let there be light, and there was light.' In my face, the whole room, everywhere.

Before being anesthetised, I remember laying on my back in the operating theatre. There is a phalanx of bright white lights overhead, glass cabinets to the side, medical equipment of this and that, and a few people bustling about. No surgeons yet. Just those who are going to put me into painless oblivion. As I lay there on the table, the very table I will be opened up on, I think that if I do not wake up I've lived a long and good life; and if I do wake up I will do my best to recover all my vigour. I recite my mantra from Krishnamacharya: common words, but words I must not write out or share with anyone. This mantra was given to me, and only to me — even if the guru gave it to others as well. That's the way it is with mantras — they are extremely personal, a transmission, a promise. Every time I say my mantra, I think of ... what? Mortality,

immortality, dying, living. Then I began reciting the Shema. I am repeating the ritual that ends my yoga practice where I do my mantra three times and the Shema seven times.

I look up. Lights out.

Then the explosion of light. No longer the quartz monsters of the operating theatre, but the divine illumination of the ICU. Everything is clear. I am on the other side of whatever has happened to me. I have new challenges, new possibilities, and new dangers. Soon, my eyes close and I sit in bed playing chess on my iPad. But I don't have my iPad with me and I can't sit up. I move my left hand as if I am controlling a computer mouse. Figures move but not according to the rules of chess. There are too many knights. Figures capture the wrong pieces. Some dissolve in my hand as I try to move them. Moves are repeated over and over. I know it's an important game, but I cannot figure out the rules. Someone is playing me.

7.

I am in a room whose walls and ceiling are of pressed stainless steel, a steel that is rich brown. My consciousness flows into this room and presses up against its edges. The room's walls are cracked. I see light through cracks, orange-yellow light, fire. But the fire is not hot. The cracks open to become rectangles. I can go through, if I want to. Very inviting. I know I have to resist passing through the windows into another world, my own dying, the 'country from whose bourn no traveller returns'.

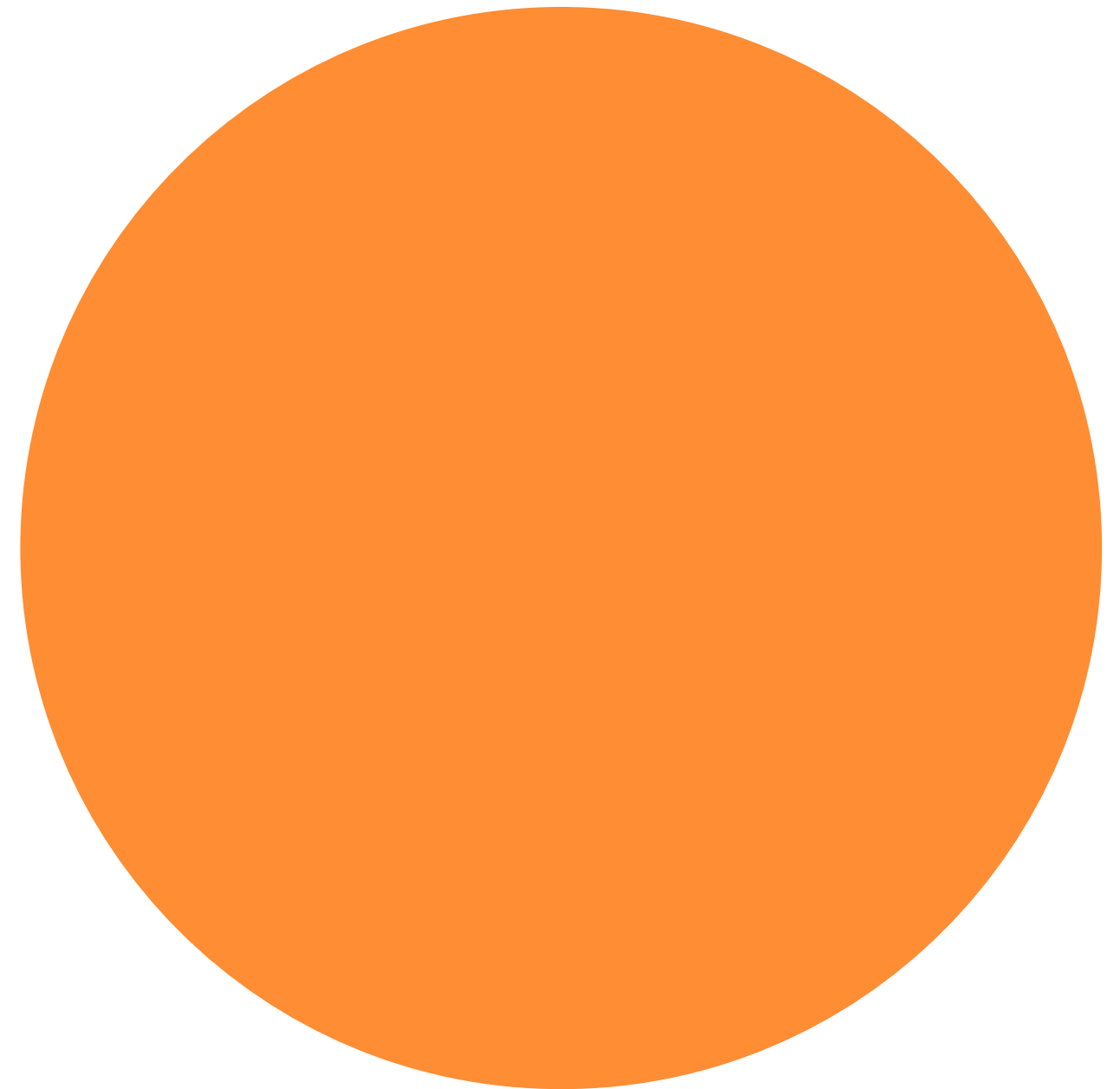
I think of Dante led by Virgil through the rings of his *Inferno*. Who will be my Virgil leading the poet down the rings of hell? I recognised, deeply, inside myself, the need for one poet to lead another — a guide in this land at whose border I stood and which beckoned me to give my whole self to it, never to return. I didn't exactly fight this feeling, but I didn't give in to it either. I knew that giving in would be the end of something and I wasn't ready yet to end. Yet I couldn't bring myself to go away from these windows opening to the fiery landscape beyond — or maybe it was a bright dancing city beyond. I couldn't stay where I was either. Gazing into the tongues of flame, I was frozen.

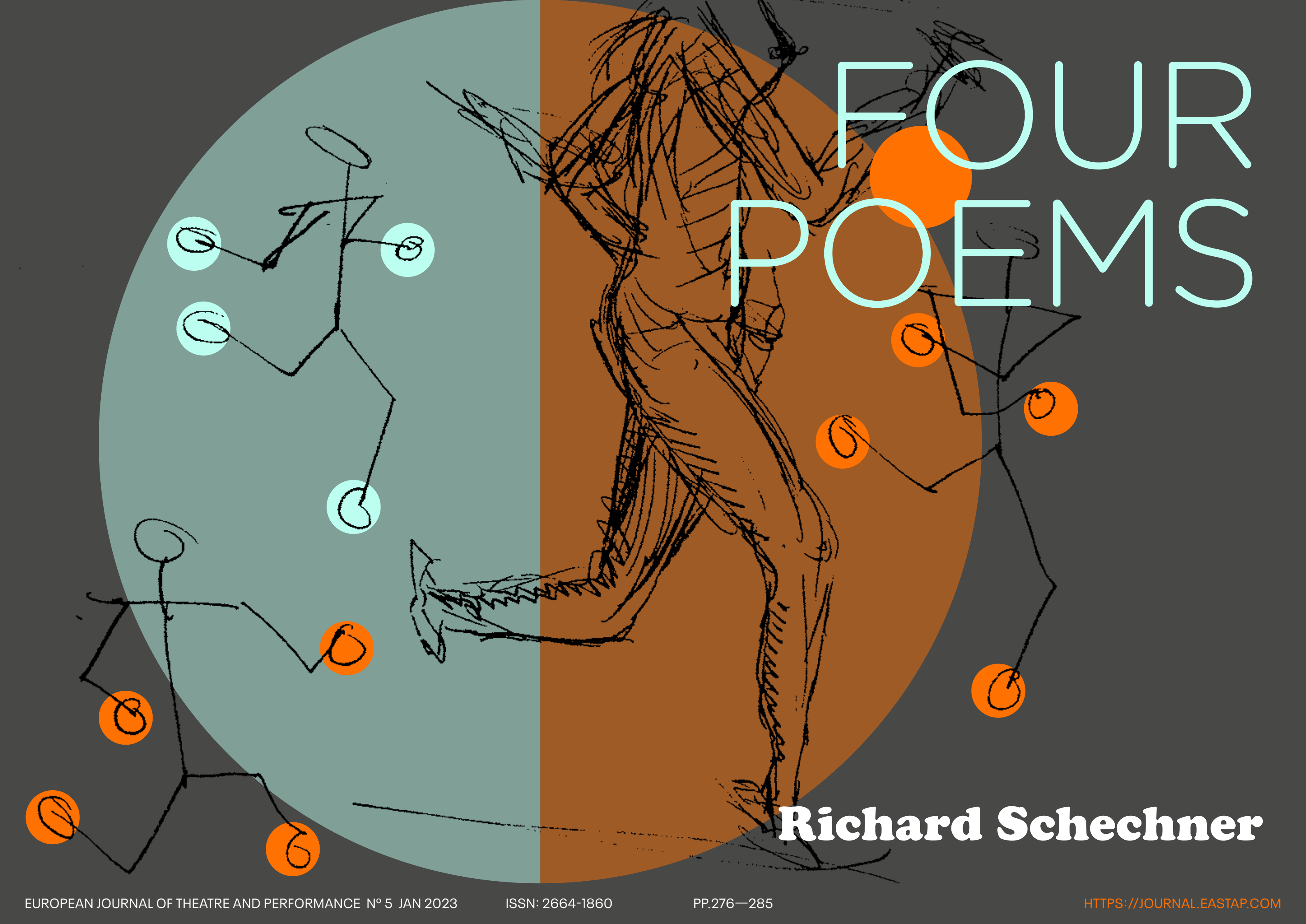
8.

'Listen to the birds singing, mommy!' 'Yes, it's spring. The birds are happy.' 'Are you happy, mommy?' 'Of course! Aren't you?' 'I'm not as happy as the birds.' 'Really? Why not?' 'Just because.' A pause. 'Look at the squirrel, mommy!' 'Do you want to feed it this cracker?' 'Yes, give it to me.' 'Be careful. Hold your hand still. Don't let the squirrel bite you.' 'I'll be real careful, mommy.' Longer pause. 'What will happen if the squirrel bites me?' 'Your finger will hurt. You will bleed. The squirrel may be sick. You might get sick. You could die.' The longest pause. 'Are you going to die, mommy?' 'Everybody dies, one day or other.' 'But are you going to die now?' 'No, unless the squirrel bites me.' 'Am I going to die, mommy?' 'Probably.' 'Please don't say that, mommy!' 'Then be very careful. Keep your mask on. Don't feed the squirrel. Put your hands in your pockets. Walk straight ahead. Stop laughing. Stop imagining the birds are singing for you.'

9.

It's a leap year, after all. Let's go to a roaring seacoast. Let's stand at that windy place at the end of the African continent. The wind makes so much noise that we shout our lungs out but no one hears. The roar of the wind, the roar of the waves, outroars our roar. We roar and roar. We shit into the wind. We scream and tear our hair and throw stones and wish to hurl our screaming bodies out into soaring winds to crash with crushing force onto the rocks below, blasted into fragments by those rocks, washed destroyed smashed by the waves the rocks. The sea just briefly bloody red with our passing, for a flash. Then, shrugging itself clean, it resumes its incessant ancient action.





FOUR POEMS

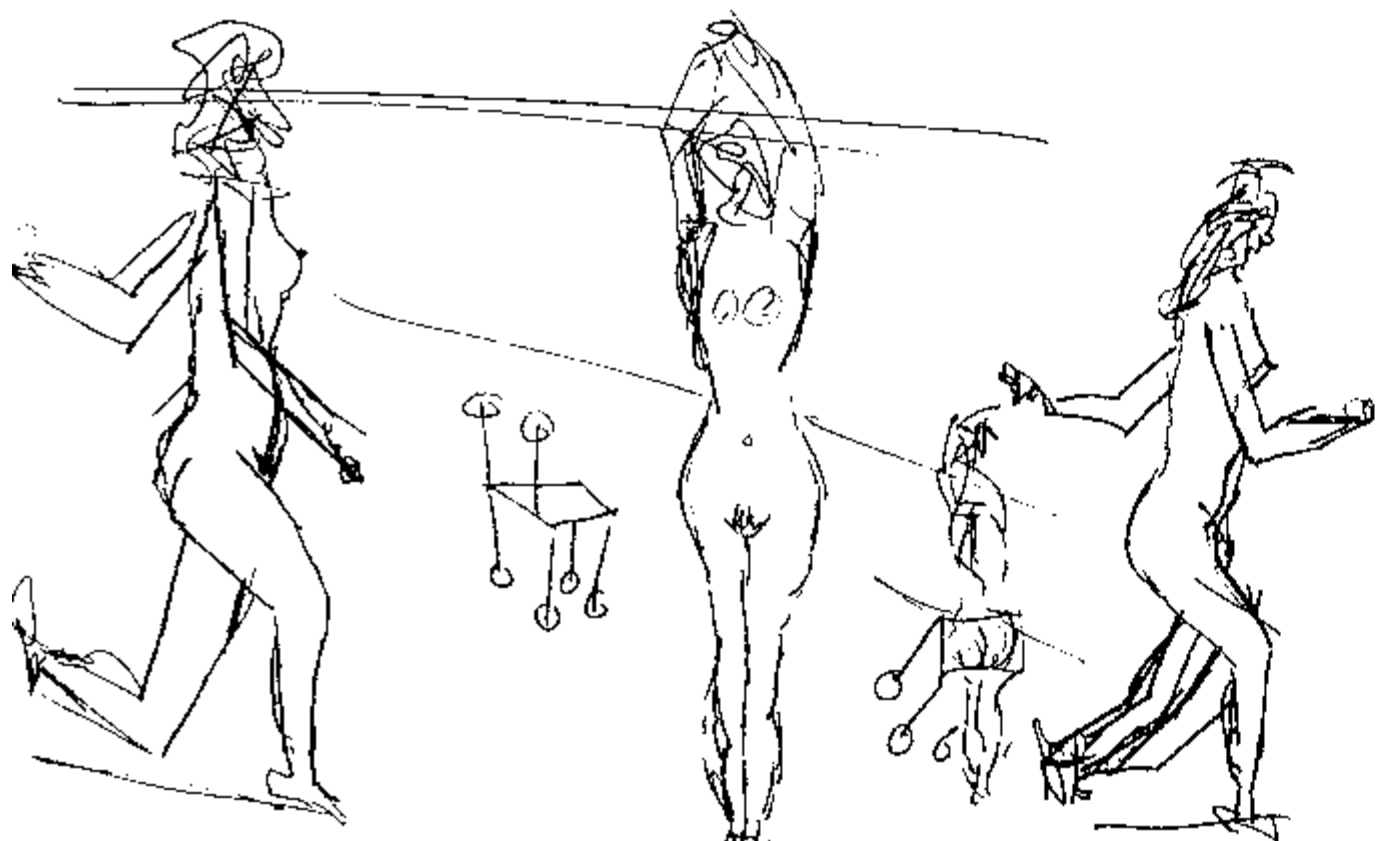
Richard Schechner

Poem
 good
 line
 The rest -
 needs work

Soundful suchness struck out inside -
 Whispered in rhythms, slow, as I died -
 Known only in the underground that makes
 in my depths, heard only as it marches,
 in requited style, through my soul -
 filling no top - nor deepening my hole.

Personae of internality! echo of mirrors -
 Bouncing images of noise from one
 side of me (bulged out) to the other
 (stove in). Sounds that I can't interpret,
 And no one else can hear - reported
 because they beg, not sing.

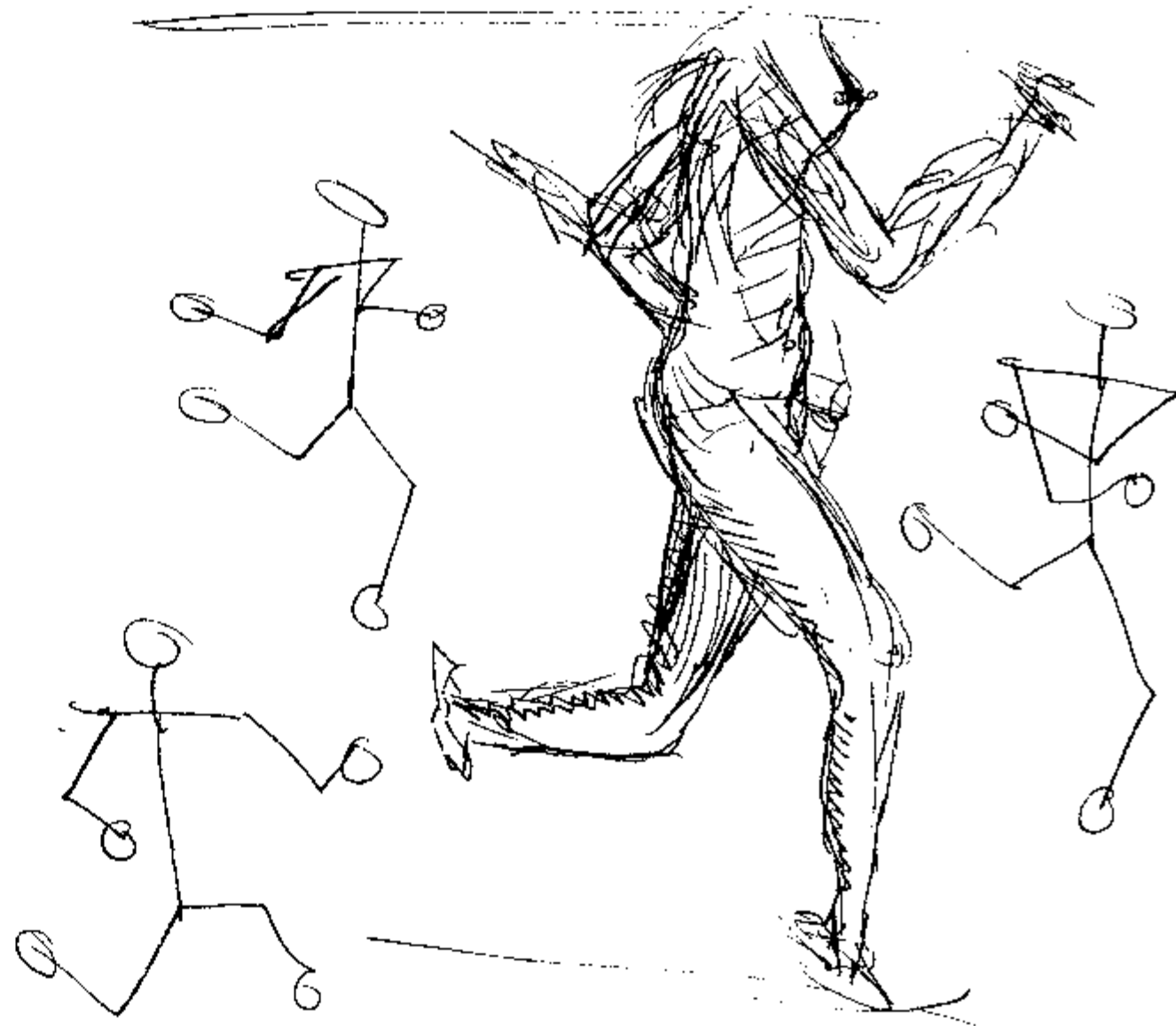
Chorus of sorrow, melody shattered out,
 what good does it do to hold still, or shout?
 For outer silence, outer noise neither eases
 the pain nor broadcasts it. Nothing pleases
 where nothing is known - And I crash on
 where sound is soundless and noise is
 mourning a pulse.



Poem

(69)

Soundful suchness struck out inside,
 Hurting rhythms, noises yet untold -
 Deepened volume, increased shall
 Ebb'd, ebb'd, ebb'd till
 The crash slaps to senselessness my soul -
 Where knowledge was, is a hole
 Of ~~the~~ dense dark and nothing - inaud,
 Of despairing silence (breed of noise),
 Reflecting the end of an Antithesis, and nothing more,
 Nothing more now, as the sound sinks
 To unmyth'd manner, sullen whisper,
 Disjointed creak and, finally, empty, it, too, dies.





1

**In another life the old
Will grow young,
The young wise,
The wise happy,
And the happy old.**

2

**all that rises must descend,
what lofts on high seeks its end.**

**you ruled with glory by your side,
fought to the top, rode the rising tide.**

**but number now your days on top
recognize soon your horizons drop.**

**seek modest places among the grasses
where humble animals flash their asses.**

3

Finally, we could see the creature.

A mangy dog,
dear thing,

it's neck stretched almost to breaking
being dragged, dragged, dragged
across the concrete slabs of the station
next to the trains.

The trains steamy and snorting
the people rushing to and fro
the hawkers selling oranges peanuts
newspapers toys tea themselves.

Over it all
the howl of the dog
Its eyes bulged out
blood bursting from the corners
of the eyes
its teeth bared

its tongue hanging out
its throat extended

dragged dragged dragged dragged
by a rope around its neck.

With all its weight resisting
to being pulled

Its back body a triangle
against the cement

Its legs with claws scraping

The man pulling this in pain beast
was indifferent.

Get this dog out of my station
was in his manner of pulling.
His soul was deaf to pain
of this dog.

He was doing what he was doing.

In the days of Homer
before leaving Ithaka for Sparta,
the lovely Polykaste, youngest
of Nestor's daughters, bathed
and anointed Telemachos with oil.
From that bath Odysseus's son stepped
looking like an immortal.

Telemachos came to Menelaos's
high-roofed home where maids bathed him,
anointed him with fragrant olive oil,
dressed him, and brought him to a chair
next to Menelaos, son of Atreus.

In Troy, Helen recognized Odysseus
but she did not give him up. She bathed him,
anointing him with scented olive oil.
Nausikaa too rinsed resourceful Odysseus
who had not been so well handled since
rafting from fair-haired Kalypso's island.

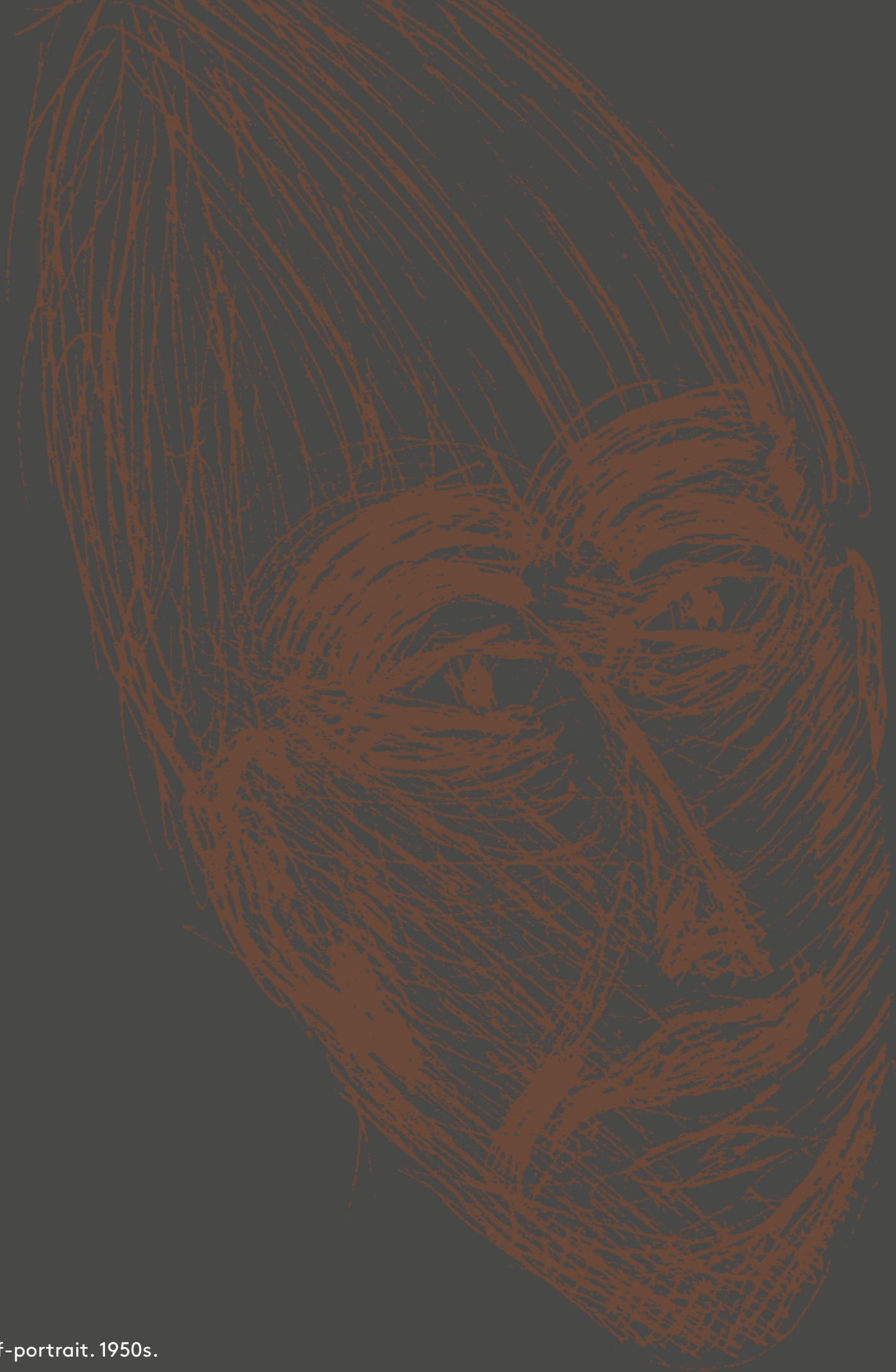
The fourth maidservant of Circe built
an abundant fire under a cauldron
heating the water to a steamy boil.
Seating Odysseus in the deep bath
she washed the weariness from his body
mixing hot with cold as he desired.

In the days of Homer
When Agamemnon sailed the wine-dark sea
from the blood dust of Troy home to Argos,
Klytemnestra gave him the bath of his life.

PORTFOLIO

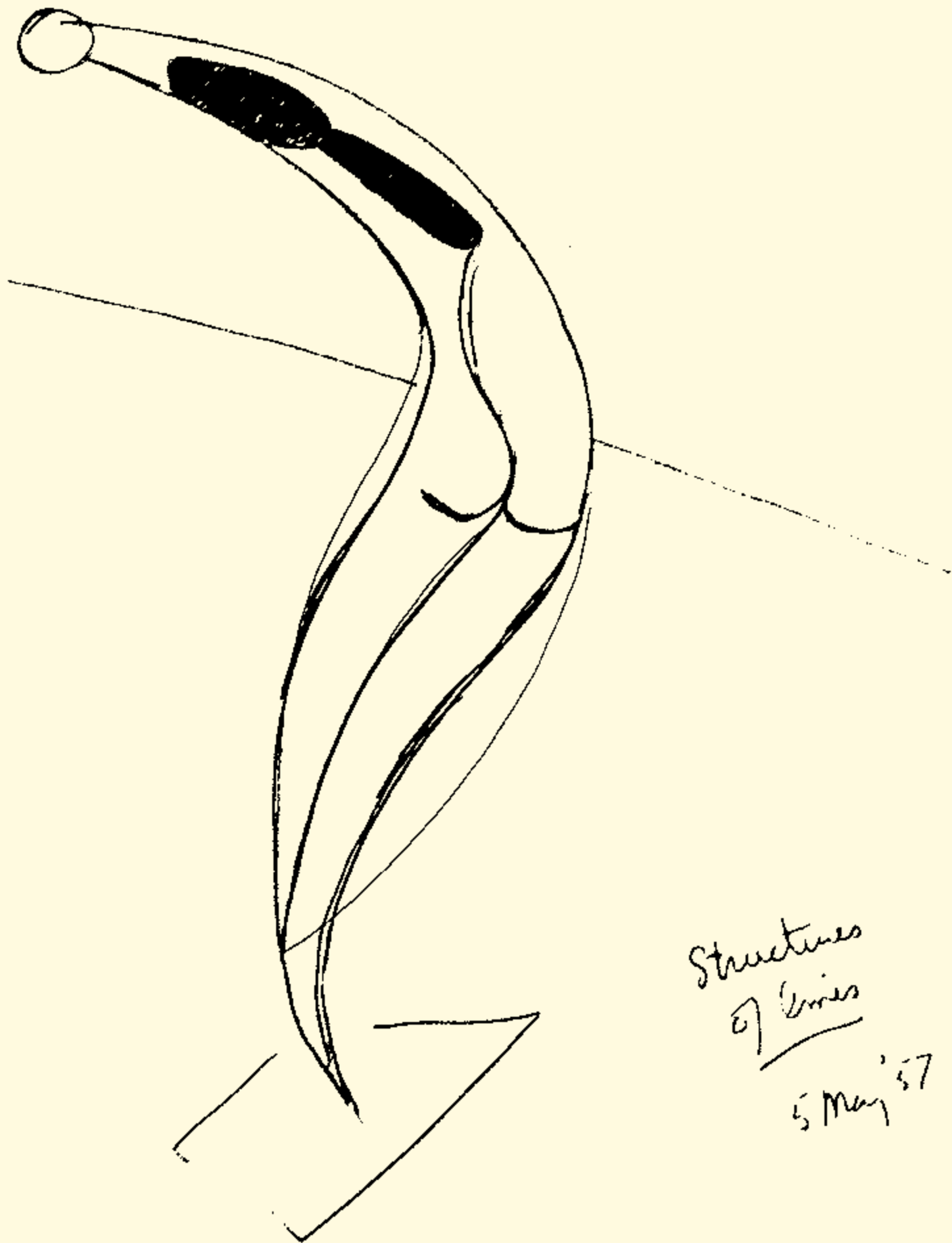


Richard Schechner

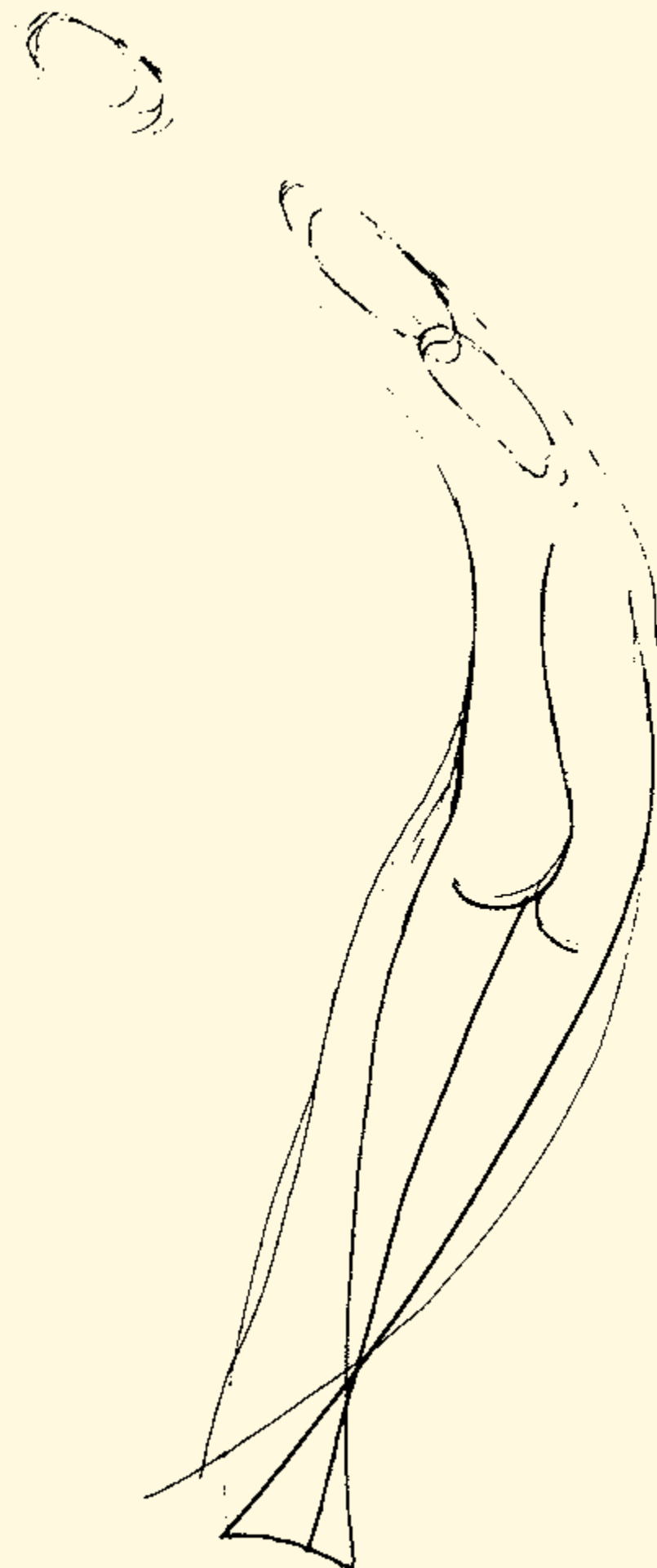


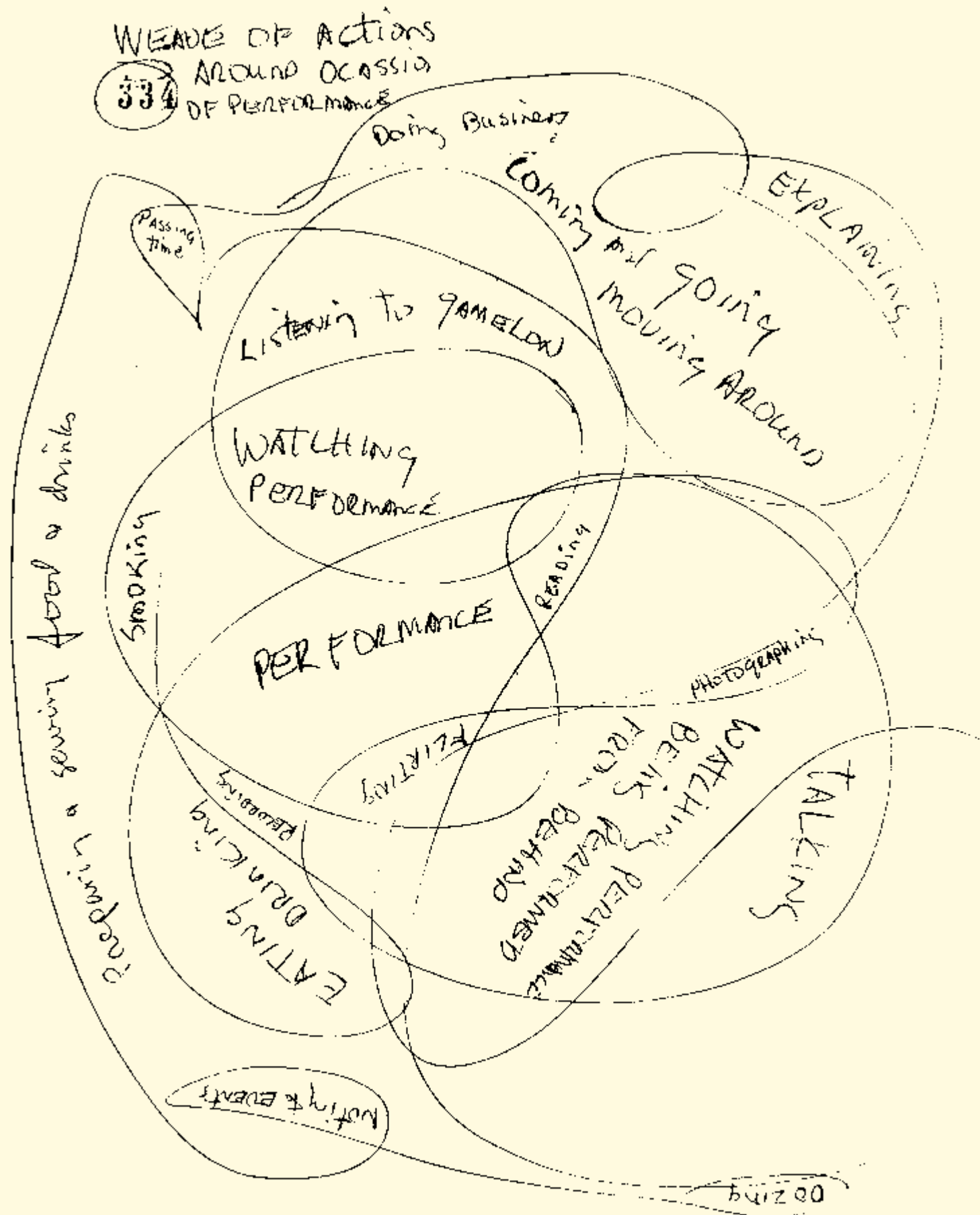
Self-portrait. 1950s.





Structures of lines, 5 May 1957.





Jogjakarta
1 FEB 1972

Weave of actions around occasion [sic] of performance. Jogjakarta, Indonesia, 1 February 1972.



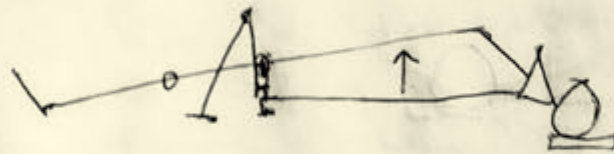
Doodles and dreams. 1970s.

2nd Variation

Side bridge - w/ either leg
 Keeping same place as at start of Desk Pose w/ palms beside thighs
 heels tucked near buttocks
 Stretch one leg, point toes



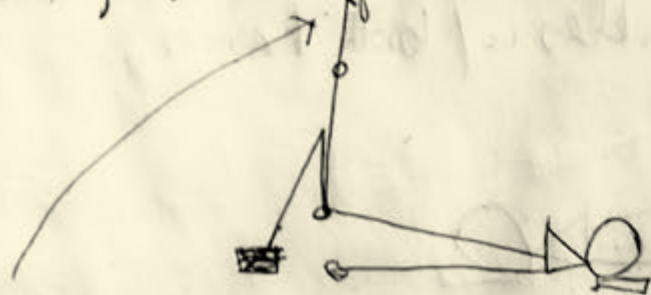
IN lift body, make trunk like arch, press down w/ arms, palms.
 Stretch from head to toe while lifting. Keep stretched knee straight



Keep palms, foot flat
 on floor

EX, let down trunk. Suck in tummy
 Do not hurry or force.
 Rest & take normal breath.

IN, raise leg & trunk together



Keep palms, ~~foot~~ foot
 flat on floor

Repeat for other leg.
 After completing, rest.

888

Nov 18, 8:30. K. tells me that he thinks I will be able to complete one course in the time I am here. "There are 7 courses to yoga," he says. He is warming to me. Also he is old in some respects: He shows me the letter from the French couple I wrote 2nd time, he is very pleased w/ his "testimonial" letters & letters asking him to teach. He gives me his card. "Prof. T. Krishnamacharya." Acharya = Professor. He was nearly 40 when he got his degree to teach. Also I think he expects - or at least knows - that I will teach what I learn. During an exercise this morning he tells me that the exercise is good "for backache" - in a way that recognizes that I will tell others so.

Phone: 72416

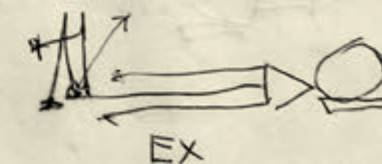
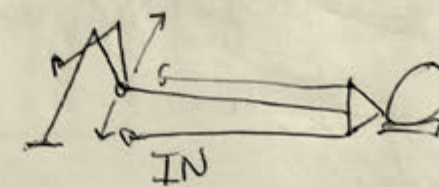
Prof. T. KRISHNAMACHARYA
 Yoga Acharya

10-B, 4th Cross Street
 School Road, R. K. Nagar
 MADRAS-28

Continuation of Desk Pose Variations

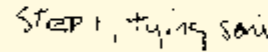
3rd Variation

AFTER bringing knees up, heels next to buttocks,
 cross right leg over left thigh
 keeping both knee caps in a straight line
 IN lift up trunk
 EX down
 Repeat left leg.



888

"Sari: doubled lengthwise (so to $4\frac{1}{2}$ yds long), middle placed 3" below's waist. Back & 2 open ends, 11 held out front." (15.)



§ 17.2 -

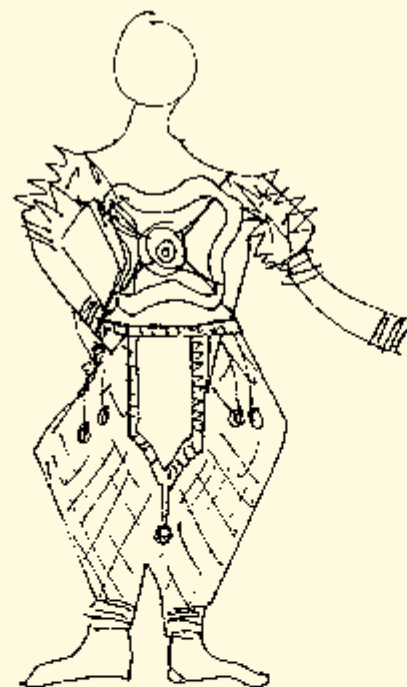


Step 3

SAPI Ends Thrown
over shoulders;



بہارِ شریعت



BASIC MALE
COSTUME.

Yakshagana performers getting their costumes and headdresses in the state of Karnataka (India, 1976)

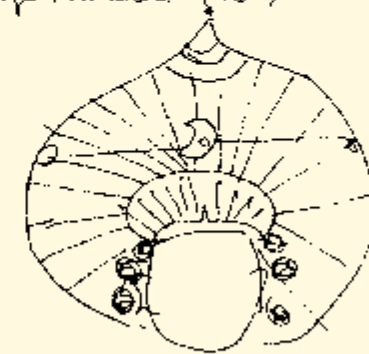
KEHGE munoole: built step by step on - performer's head. One coil after another, layers on top of each other. L: small tail - back & neck. RS: V-necking of "prelaminated" - or even make for a cardboard armature.)

Coil after coil: built up, depending on - size & performer - - head does not suit by size. After 1/2 sec. - black cloth w/ - allowed (very loose) tied over. with in - performer winds silver, orange, red, yellow ribbons in a fan motif. (See photos) In ornaments II attached. of very for character character.

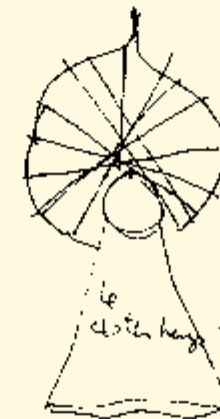
"• Mundassu - 6 large versions, • Kevage mundassu." (166)



لعلہ علیہ السلام

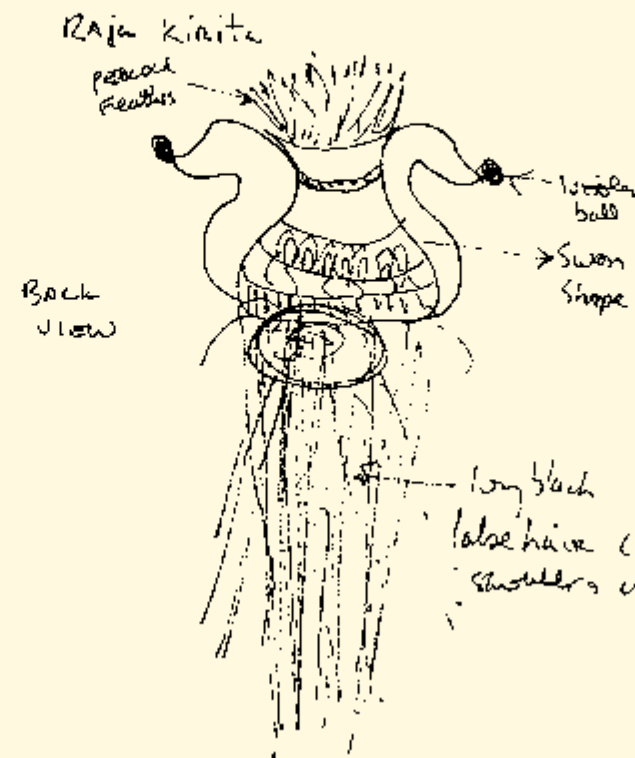


— 22 —



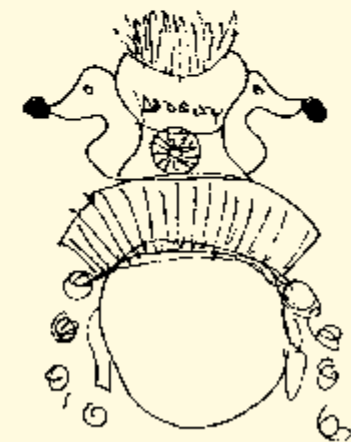
3200

40th long $\frac{3}{4}$ way down
person's back



Back
View

6 down, 17 wood, gold paper (or paint) in incisions.
Carved like an urn flanked by 2 swans.

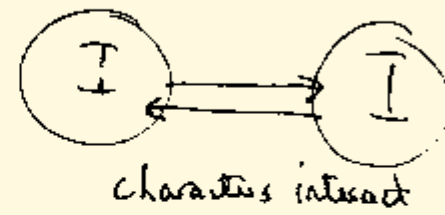


Front

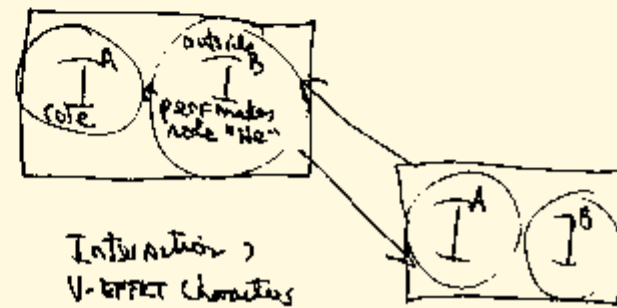
Spectators

PERFORMING

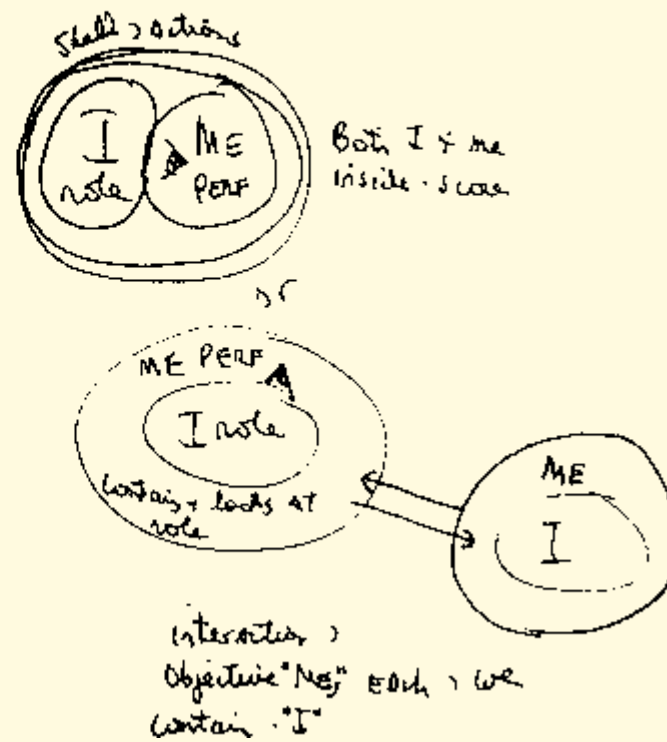
Stanislavski



Brecht



Mabou Mines

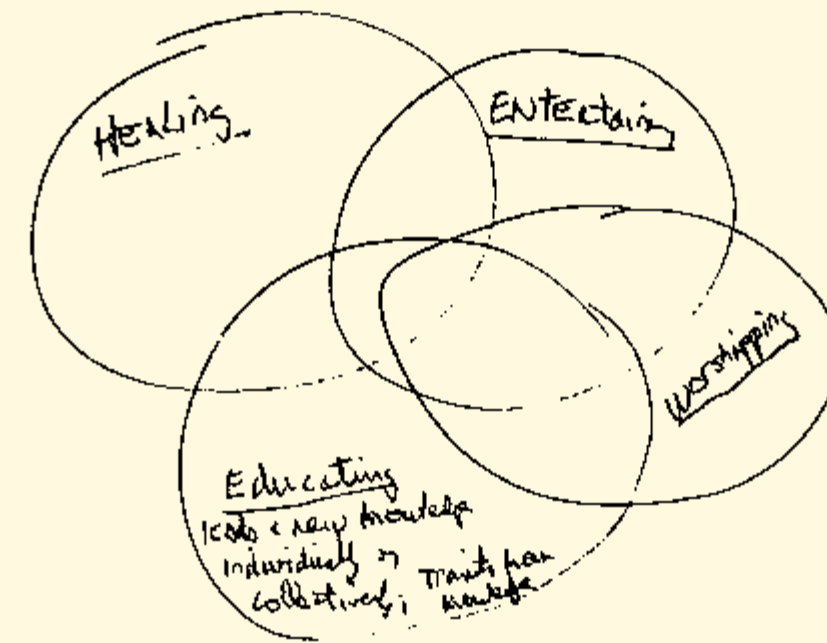


How Stanislavsky, Brecht, and Mabou Mines treat the relationship between spectators and performers. With Stanislavsky, the spectators watch the characters interact. With Brecht, the performers objectify — distance themselves — from their roles. With Mabou Mines, both the 'I' of the character and the 'me' of the performer are inside the score of the performance — but also the 'me' contains and regards the 'I'. Very complex.

genres can also be looked at as a continuum:

play — games & sports — aesthetic PERFORM — ritual

Or as a set of overlapping "wheels or discs" function



Examples:

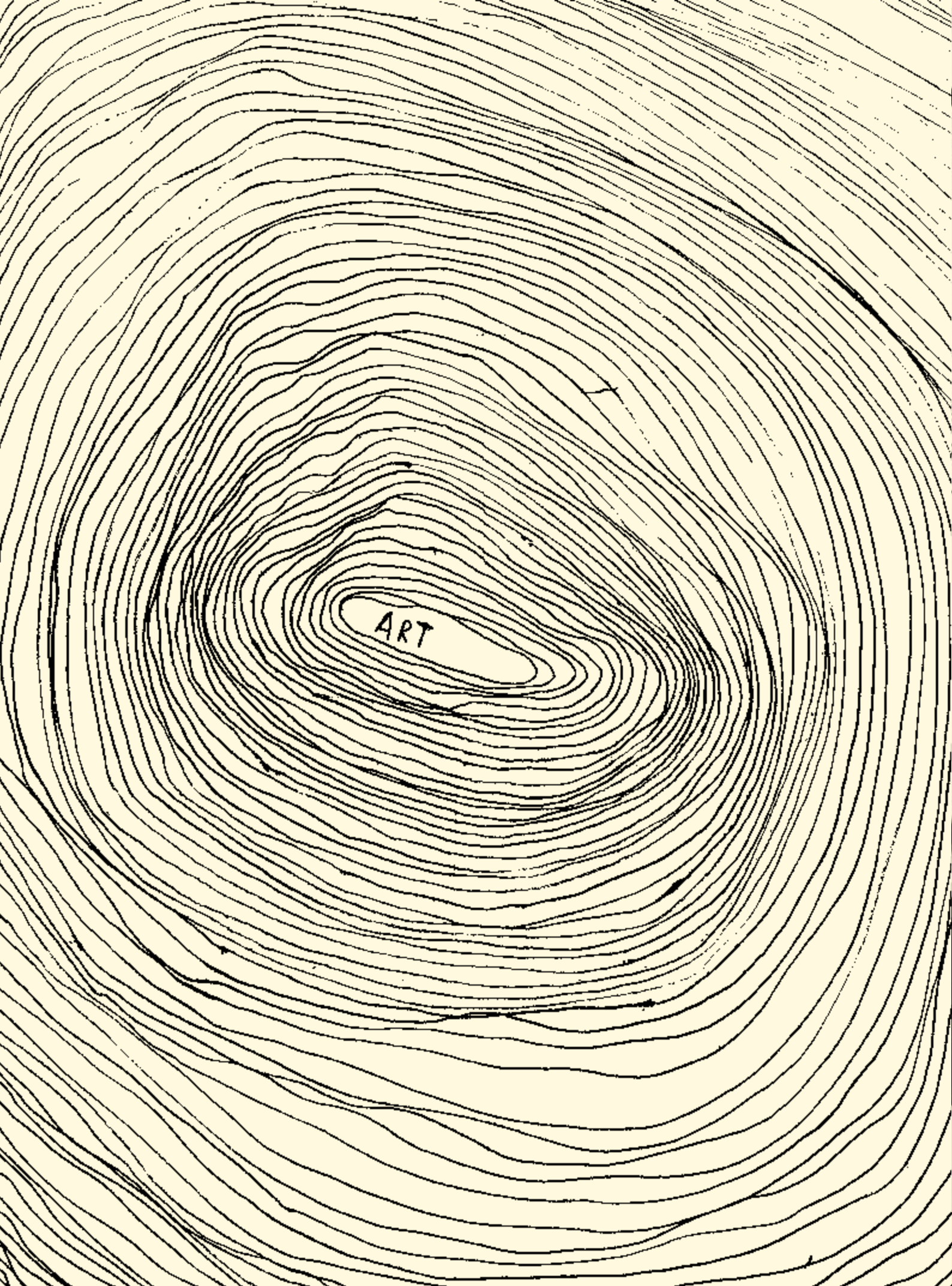
A Thai dance in Sri Lanka: heals & entertains, mostly but it also somewhat educates & worships

The Yogini Vachana: worships & entertains; somewhat educates & heals

A Broadway show: mostly entertains; may educate. 6 features or relatively thin

Experimental perf: entertains, educates (leads & new knowledge) & entertains

Early 1980s. The overlapping interactions of the 'spheres of performance' — healing, educating, entertaining, and worshipping. These interactions give rise to the broad spectrum of performance: play, games & sports, aesthetic performances, and ritual. Later I would include the performances of everyday life in the broad spectrum.



➤ Art is like silk.
 ← Art encircled.

Sam posed nice & quiet 1 1/2 picture.
He is still.

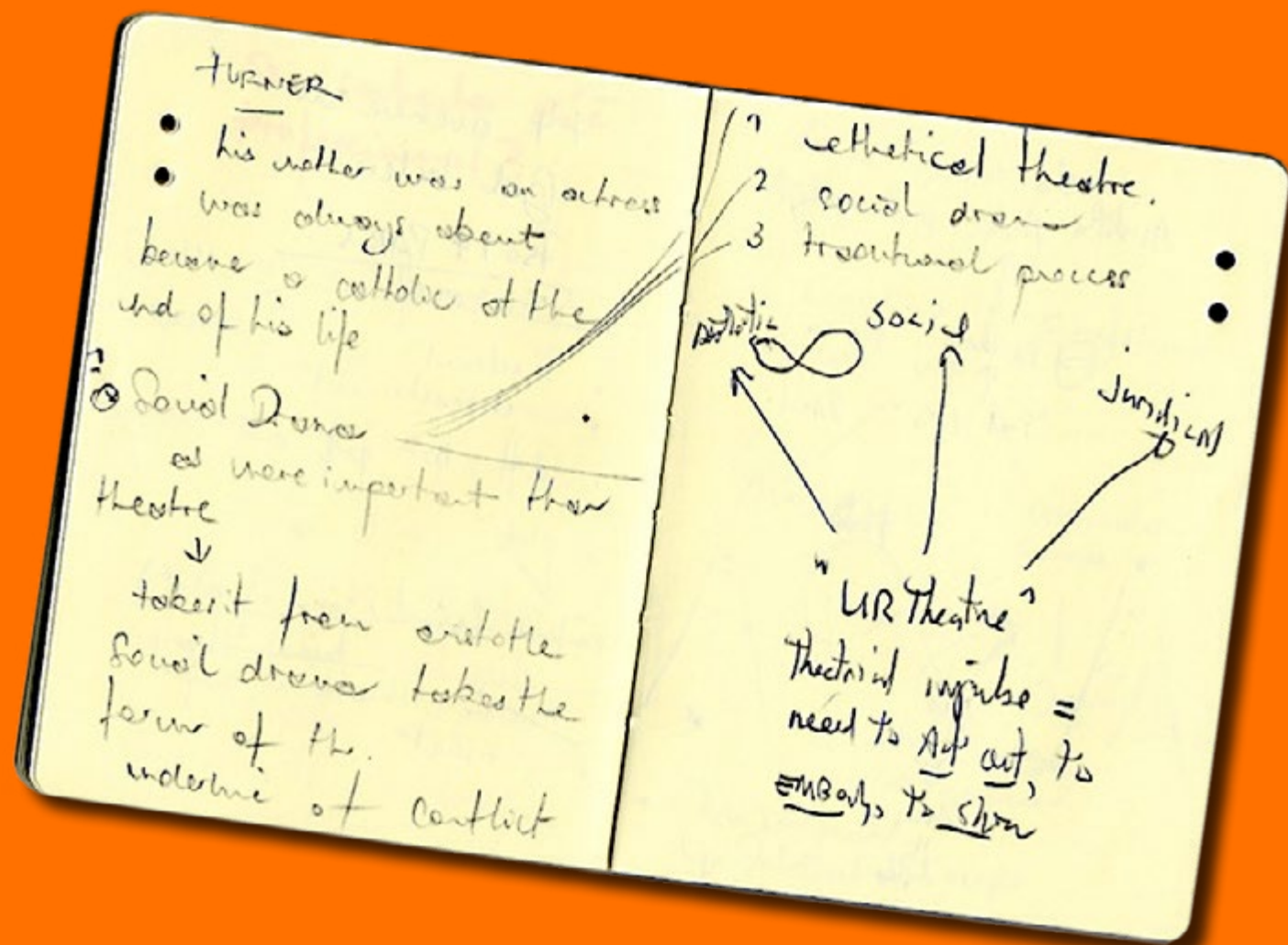
He stopped watching cartoons on TV.
It is fun drawing him.
He wanted me to write about drawing him.

This is me, Sam.
I had fun.



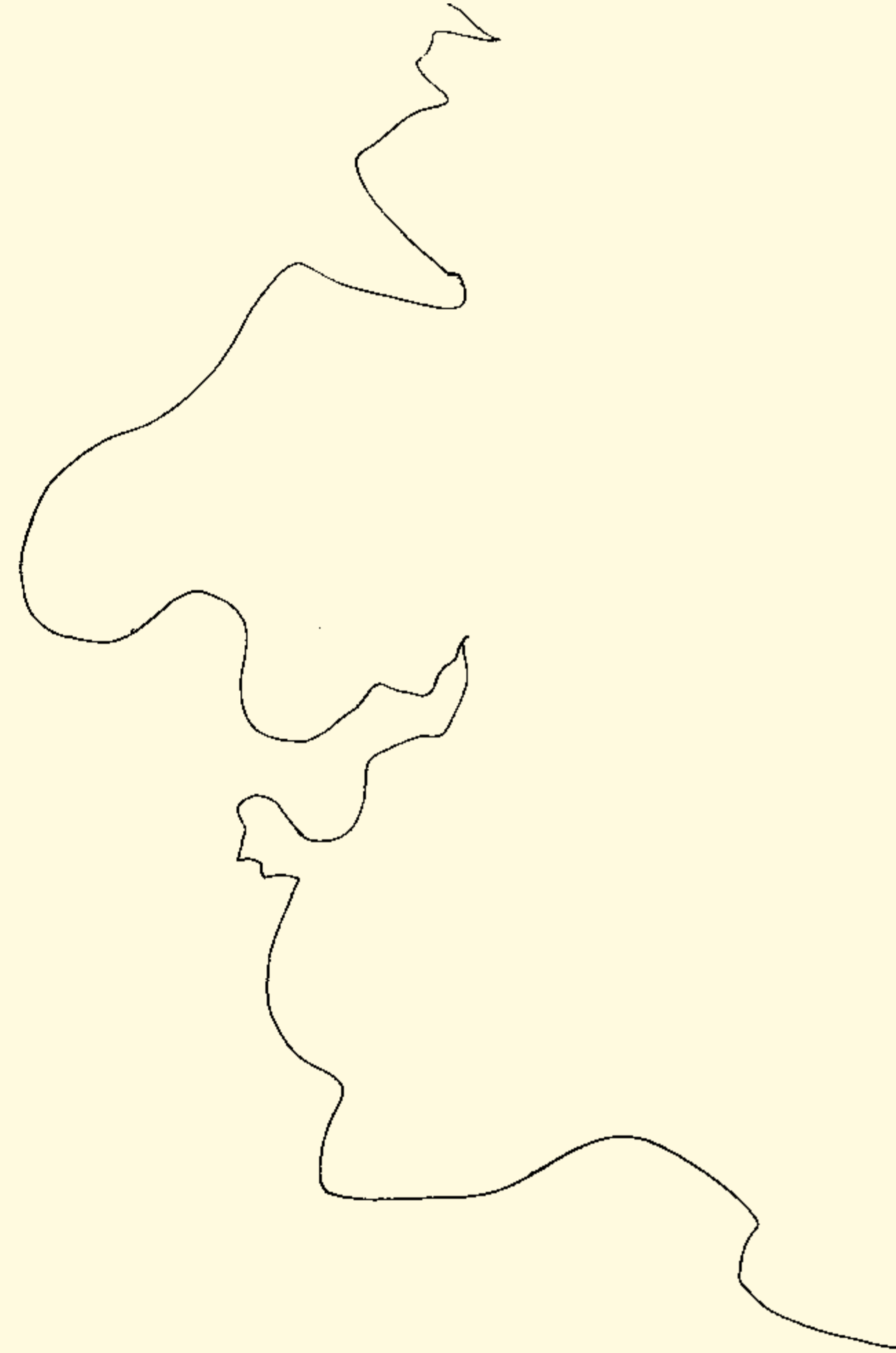
Sam at
Holiday Inn
Sat 21 Jan 84

My son Sam at Holiday Inn, 21 January 1984, when Sam was 6.5 years old. The text on the page facing the drawing: 'Sam posed nice and quit for this picture./He is very still./He stopped watching cartoons on TV./It was fun drawing him./He wanted me to write about drawing him.' In Sam's writing, 'This s me, Sam./I had fun'.



➤ 1980s. 'Ur theatre' is the underlying theatrical impulse/drive to act out, embody, and show. This ur-theatre gives rise to all kinds of performances: aesthetic, social, and juridical.
→ Two figures full front.





Profiles. Not sure of the date, but probably early 2000s.