

Evaluation of my trip to Ibadan University, Nigeria (31st Jan.–16th Feb., 2024)

WORKSHOPS and LECTURES at IBADAN UNIVERSITY presented by Dr. Eva Brenner/Austria

Of central importance to the presentations was the interconnection between planned lectures on experimental-political theater and theater workshops, i.e. that the practical exercises reflected and further developed the historical-theoretical overview given in the lectures. Copies of lectures can be obtained upon request from the Dep. of Theatre Arts.

Each workshop was attended by roughly 40 participants of students coming from various classes and grades of Ibadan University (theater, film, acting, dance, directing and design students, freshmen as well as more advanced); groups much bigger in size than is usually the case for workshops in Euro-American contexts. For purposes intensive training and in order to allow maximum benefit from the work, two groups were at times formed with groups working simultaneously in the same space on the same tasks.

Interest of Nigerian students in experimental theater techniques was generally very high, participation concentrated, lively, full of energy. The learning success of these extraordinarily talented, intelligent young students was visible after each session – it can be documented with results of discussions rounding up each session. Parts of the workshops were video-filmed; videos can be viewed at the Department of Theatre Arts.

Although most exercises have their origin in the Euro-American theater movements of the 20th century, African students were able to quickly pick up the threads and integrate them into their accustomed disciplines of acting, dancing and performing. For example, many exercises were readily accompanied by instantaneous clapping, singing, dancing which erupted in the group/s and greatly added to the joyous excitement with the work; this momentum generated group-cohesion and produced the spirit of togetherness which is considered a major aim and concern of experimental theater as a whole.

1) THREE THEATER WORKSHOPS (3-4 hours each with final showing) Wole Soyinka Theater, Department of Theatre Arts, Ibadan University

- 1. Warm-up Techniques – Exercises and practices for Experimental Theater, the US/European context (derived from experiments by Richard Schechner, Steve Wangh, Jerzy Grotowsky, Augusto Boal)**

Sequence:

shakeout, clapping circles, isolations, sound-and-movement group exercises, crossings, flocking, mirror exercises, space-and-spatial relationship training, group tableaux, improvisations in group, combining warm-up techniques introduced.

2. Six Viewpoints of Performance (Mary Overlie): Space. Time. Form. Movement. Emotion. Narrative

An alternative technique of training dances and actors, suited also to effect performance structures and prepare for performances. The Six-Viewpoints-system was initiated and named in the 1960s in the U.S. by noted choreographer, dancer, and performer Mary Overlie and widely spread and practices in acting schools, universities as well as performance companies throughout the US, later also in Europe. Loosely reminiscent of functionalist artistic experiments at the famous Bauhaus in the Weimar Germany of the 1930's (Oskar Schlemmer and others), the Six-Viewpoint (VP) technique rests on deconstructing basic elements of performance into raw components which are isolated, researched and trained in group (in separate sessions), and then reconstructed in abstract or thematic improvisations at a second stage. Thereby two or more „viewpoints“ are mixed, matched, and overlapped and may also be completed with music, texts or other literary elements to create stunning compositions which are partially based on chance operations.

Sequence:

short warm-up, Introduction to Six Viewpoints of Performance (Theory,Practice), Practice solo and in groups, (Break), solo performances and in groups

3. Creation of Performance – the system of Parcours as created by Eva Brenner/Projekt Theater STUDIO, Vienna **(including showings)**

Sequence:

Short Warm up – space and movement training

Introduction of parcours as ground patterns with A_B_C structures (beginning, middle, end of any performance).

Choice a personal topic

Structuring central places in space (A, B, C)

connecting these places in various sequences

Performances in Solo – each student presents his/her short performance

adding movements with different qualities

adding text/s, songs. Performances: Performing Solo, performing in overlapping structures (Duos). Closing with **Augusto Boal group-exercise: „building a machine“**.

**2) THREE LECTURES on Experimental and Political Theater
(each 60-90 minutes including audience discussion)
Wole Soyinka Theater, Department of Theatre Arts, Ibadan University**

The lectures were widely publicized and announcements distributed way in advance, both within and outside of Ibadan University. This resulted in very good attendances up each to 100+ participants. Lectures were hosted, introduced, and moderated by a set of noted Theater Professors as well as one African Studies/Cultural Studies Professor from Ibadan; some were guests from Lagos University. After-lecture discussions proved that within this audience previous knowledge of Euro-American experimental-political theater preexisted, yet additional information seemed highly welcome, particularly when coming from former student of the matter in New York, and collaborator with some of the most recognized exponents of experimental art/performance-movements since the 1960s.

1. TOWARDS A NEW POLITICAL THEATER IN COMMUNITY beginning with Brecht – a brief history

Stages in Experimental-political Theater, Brecht as a leading originator of 20th c.m experimental theater, some of his contemporaries from the Russian and American Avantgarde, followed by a special focus on the theater concepts of Jerzy Grotowski, Richard Schechner, Augusto Boal, as well as American dancer/choreographer Mary Overlie. The historical overview was accompanied by initial personal memories and reflections on the work of these visionaries.

With Bertolt Brecht – uncontestably the most decisive influence on the development of experimental and political theater since – the focus lies on his concept of epic theater, the alienation-effect, his use of stage design, music, and gestus (epic acting), as well as his articles on Experimental Theater and the Street scene. Concerning Polish visionary, Jerzy Grotowski, his innovative, broadly received concept of Poor Theater, his rigid training methods, laboratory formations and meta-performative experiments in open air, whereas Forum Theater stood exemplary for the work of Argentinean director, Augusto Boal, who created a plethora of new political theater formats (Forum Theater, Image Theater, Invisible Theater, Rainbow of Desires, amongst others). Boal's approaches currently represent the most widely practiced forms of political and educational theater worldwide. The survey went on to outline American scholar, director and founder of the discipline of Performance Studies, Richard Schechner's creation of Environmental Theater and its influence on site-specific experiments since and finally introduced the work of dancer/choreographer Mary Overlie and her innovative system Six Viewpoints of Performance as major example for postmodern dance and performance movements originating in the USA in the 1960s with far-reaching impact on performance, dance, and interdisciplinary practices internationally.

2. „SOCIAL TRANSFORMANCE“: In defense of political performance/art (2012-2014)

Report with video-screening on a new performative model developed by Eva Brenner and her experimental theater troupe Projekt Theater/SPRUNG.wien in Vienna, Austria, which is partly based on street theater projects and other activist theatrical experiments. Social transformance synthesizes elements of avantgarde performance with moments of political activism, suggesting several performative structures for this intersection – merging or/and confronting activist purposes for social change with aesthetic performance. In this context movements of the international Euro-American avantgarde since the early 1900s are considered as pertinent influences.

It designates experiments undertaken since the late 2000s in central districts of Vienna, including in outskirts areas bringing together artists, migrants, homeless, unemployed, and representatives of small businesses. The activities were centered around literary material, e.g. excerpts from plays by Heiner Müller, Elfriede Jelinek or Aimée Césaire. The multicultural performances encompassed up to 30-40 participants of all backgrounds and cultural traditions whereby also people from the local community – residents, passersby, students, even tourists – spontaneously participated.

Social transformance as new performative praxis was first presented at an international Performance Studies conference honoring Richard Schechner in Israel in 2010/2011, as well as at a performance festival in Shanghai, China.

3. Funding for (independent) Theater in the European context; bilateral exchange programs between Europe/Austria and West-Africa

The first and longest part of the lecture was based primarily on internet research into funding sources by the European union, independent organizations and agencies. This was complemented by a special focus on bilateral Exchange programs and grant possibilities between Austria/Germany and Nigeria - whereby most internet sites specify Nigeria and pertinent funding options as part of West-Africa. It is quite surprising that quite a lot of funding options exist and recent statements by European officials stress increased importance of Africa as area of economic, social and cultural development. It is to be hoped that these are not empty words, that concrete deeds will follow. The lecture impressed on the necessity for students from Nigeria/Ibadan to use the list of internet sites quotes - plenty of links were given- and continue individual research into individual areas of interest. The closing discussion pointed towards the importance of students securing foreign exchange aid and spend at least a semester - or longer periods - abroad in order to learn about other cultures, widen their horizons and improve future career possibilities. Furthermore the lecture outlined the managerial option of creating independent agencies for foreign Exchange subsidies offering individualized services to artists and/or smaller organizations incapable or unwilling to file their submissions. Such agencies help write proposals, advise on funding options, and function as a relay station.

This field has - in Europe for example - developed in recent years into lucrative career venues for young cultural managers.

Special Event: READING SESSION at Tunde Odunlade Arts & Culture Connexions, Ibadan in Cooperation with ANA (Association of Nigerian Authors)

This Special Saturday-night event was co-organized by Ibadan University/Dep. of Theatre Arts and ANA, Oyo Chapter to bring together Nigerian authors with visiting scholar and artist, Eva Brenner, in an intensive intercultural exchange. The reading session took place upon invitation of Prince Tunde Odunlade Arts & Culture Connexions situated in the heart of Ibadan. At the onset of the evening, ANA-members read from their own works thereby giving examples of the current literary production in Nigeria, whereupon Eva Brenner read selected texts from her own work.

Eva Brenner focused on her new book to be published in the fall of 2024 (edition lexlistz12, Austria), entitled YOU MUST DO IT FOR ME (Du musst es für mich tun) which presents a memoir about her family's hidden Jewish history. A narrator (the author) dialogues with her dead father, mother, and great-grandfather, the latter unknown to her. This history un/covers significant parts of Austrian war- and postwar society which precluded that people of mixed heritage (half Jewish/half non-Jewish) admit to their true origins. After 1945, none of them ever spoke about their backgrounds to their families, covering up their actual biographies from children and great-children. As the author contests, this deadly and all-enveloping „silence“ had, and still has, a stronghold on Austrian society with detrimental consequences on the body politic and culture. However, particularly those „born-after“, to quote Bertolt Brecht, have since the 1980s begun to research and unearth the stories of their parents and grand-parents. Brenner's account is representative of up to a few hundred thousand Austrians of mixed-Jewish/non-Jewish backgrounds.

The ensuing discussion following the reading testified to great interest in this kind of research with one professor of Theatre Arts announcing his intention to offer a new class to students for research in their family-histories by means of performance. In fact, this kind of oral history-experiments constitute a major part within the fields of socio-political and performative disciplines. It was suggested that in the future emphasis should be given to this sector of performative material as source of potent dramatic material in upcoming semester/s at Ibadan University/Department of Theatre Arts.

WORKSHOPS AND LECTURES WITH DR. EVA BRENNER

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|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <p>THURSDAY
1</p> | <p>12:00 PM (WORKSHOP)
WARM-UP TECHNIQUES FOR EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE (derived from experiments by Richard Schechner, Steve Wangh, Jerzy Grotowski, Augusto Boal)</p> | <p>FRIDAY
9</p> | <p>11:00 AM (PRESENTATION)
TOWARDS A NEW POLITICAL THEATRE IN THE COMMUNITY (From Performance to "Social Transformation": Theatre at the grassroots... Arts for everyone!)</p> |
| <p>MONDAY
5</p> | <p>11:00 AM (WORKSHOP)
SIX VIEWPOINTS OF PERFORMANCE (an alternative technique of training dancers and actors; effecting performance structures and preparing for performances)</p> | <p>MONDAY
12</p> | <p>12:00 PM (DISCUSSION)
FUNDING FOR (INDEPENDENT) THEATRE: a. Independent, b. European level, c. exchange with Africa/Nigeria – Bilateral cultural exchange (France, Germany, Austria)</p> |
| <p>WEDNESDAY
7</p> | <p>3:00 PM (LECTURE)
EXPERIMENTAL-POLITICAL THEATRE: THE NEW TRAJECTORY (From Bertolt Brecht – Augusto Boal – Jerzy Grotowski – Richard Schechner – Mary Overlie – The Present)</p> | <p>WEDNESDAY
14</p> | <p>10:00 AM (WORKSHOP)
CREATION OF PERFORMANCES (The System of Parcours) – Performances in Solos, Duos and Groups</p> |

~ FEBRUARY 2024 ~



DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

INTERNATIONAL GUEST LECTURE SERIES

WED. FEBRUARY 7, 2024
3.00PM-5.00PM

EXPERIMENTAL-POLITICAL THEATRE: THE NEW TRAJECTORY

SPEAKER
DR. EVA BRENNER
(ARTISTIC DIRECTOR SPRUNG.WIEN, AUSTRIA)



VENUE: WOLE SOYINKA THEATRE



DR. EVA BRENNER
Artist Director,
Projekt Theater Studio,
Vienna--New York / SPRUNG.wien

EXPERIMENTAL-POLITICAL THEATRE: THE NEW TRAJECTORY
From Performance to Social "Transformation"

WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2024

WOLE SOYINKA THEATRE
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

START AT 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM





PROF. KAYODE ADEBOWALE
Vice Chancellor, UI
(Chief Host)

PROF. S. O. OYETADE
Dean of Arts

DR. BASHIRU LASISI
Ag. Head (Theatre Arts)



DR. EVA BRENNER
Artist Director,
Projekt Theater Studio,
Vienna--New York / SPRUNG.wien

FROM PERFORMANCE TO "SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION": THEATRE AT THE GRASSROOTS... ARTS FOR EVERYONE!

FRIDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2024

WOLE SOYINKA THEATRE
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

11:00 AM



PROF. KAYODE ADEBOWALE
Vice Chancellor, UI
(Chief Host)





PROF. S. O. OYETADE
Dean of Arts

PROF. 'DELE LAYIWOLA
(Institute of African Studies, UI)
(Chair)

DR. BASHIRU LASISI
Ag. Head (Theatre Arts)



TOPIC:
Funding (Independent) Theatre

a. Independent, b. European level, c. Exchange with Africa/Nigeria – Bilateral cultural exchange (France, Germany, Austria)

WITH DR. EVA BRENNER

PROF. KAYODE ADEBOWALE
Vice Chancellor, UI
(Chief Host)

PROF. S. OYETADE
Dean of Arts

DR. BASHIRU LASISI
Ag. Head (Theatre Arts)

PROF. SOLA FOSUDO
Dept. of Theatre Arts & Music, LASU
(Chair)

Monday 12 Feb. 2024
12:00pm

Wole Soyinka Theatre, UI

Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) OYO STATE CHAPTER

In Conversation With:

EVA BRENNER (PhD)
(Austria/USA)
(Author, Political Theatre Artist, Documentary Filmmaker, Theatre Scholar & Director)

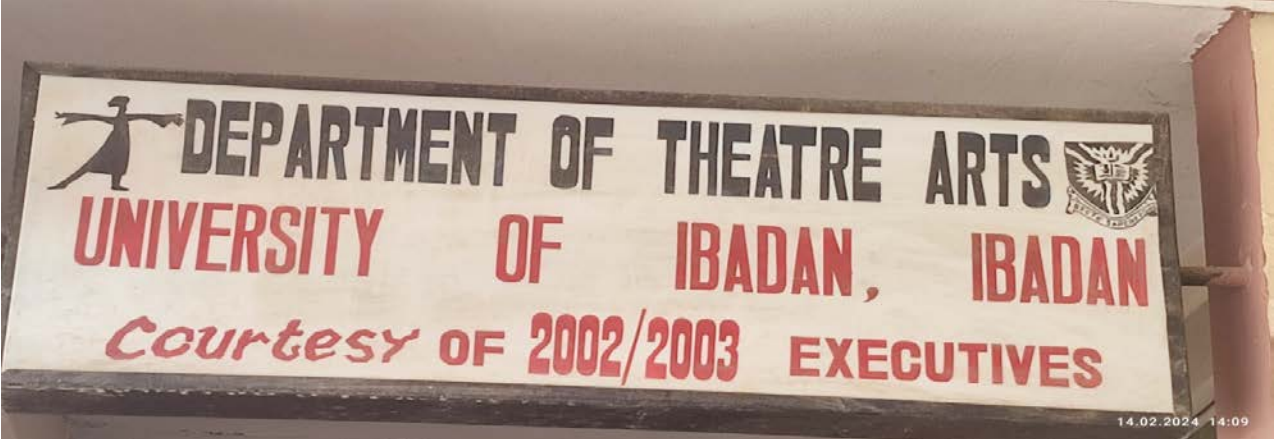
Mr. Biola Layonu
Chairman,
ANA Oyo State Chapter

Mr. Anthony Ebika
(Anchor)

SATURDAY
10 FEBRUARY 2024

4:00pm

Tunde Odunlade Arts & Culture Connexions
2, Ladoke Akintola street, Aare Avenue, New Bodija, Ibadan



01.02.2024 16:00

14.02.2024 14:09

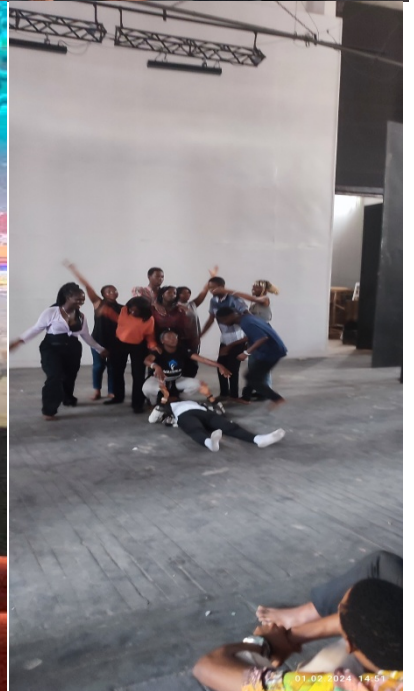
















Some final reflections

Life – whether in the realm of the everyday, at work, in science, in the arts or culture – is becoming more and more difficult for all of us, social tensions are rising as well as military conflicts, in some parts of the world to appalling levels. Societies as a whole are drifting apart, splitting into rich and poor, with growing radical-right-wing movements and parties springing up like mushrooms and gaining momentum in many areas. The world as we know it is changing, it is moving towards a critical state, including the climate change which, as some say, is already at tipping point. This overall appraisal applies politically, economically, socially and culturally. It signals an end point of a post-enlightenment, Eurocentric historical development with a long-time assumed hegemonic culture dominated by Euro-American countries. Pessimistic voices claim that the Euro-American model of life inextending to economic, social, and cultural criteria– has nothing or little more to contribute to the future of the human species; in many ways, Europeans and Americans defend old forms of existence, are to large extends resistant to change. Societies of Europe and the USA have become tired, saturated with waealth and power, culturally decadent!

On Campus

During my trip to Nigeria I had the opportunity to maek different experiences and gain a new outlook on our collective future (after spending only two short weeks in a small part of Western-Nigeria, this must remain fragmentary): Here is a continent on the move, an extremely young population, a people with great openness to learn and develop, a people full of resilience and hope for the future. I encountred a youth which is hopeful, with lots of energy, optimism and confidence, all of this despite poverty at partially shocking levels. I found that my vague, perhaps overly romantic, expectations about Africa belonging to the future were substantiated – no matter what and how this future will come about and what it may look like. The rest of the world should look to Africa in order not to miss the train.

I also learned that clear conditions must be forged to make a sustainable development for Africans possible. i.e. that they must take the country's rich means of production into their own hands and to end the dismal state of exploitative affairs where central rессources of continue to be appropriated by neo-colonial powers and large corporations. Africans must decide for themselves about the development and fate of their societies; this autonomy is not only of eminent importance economically and socially, it also applies to culture. For example: in order to gain sustainable means from multilateral exchange programs, grants and other sources for development, African cultural actors must negotiate on equal footing with institutions and organizations from Europe and the USA. In this context, renowned universities and departments such as the Department of Theatre Arts at Ibadan University take on a prominent role. The theater venue of its Department, bearing the name of Africa's first Nobel Prize Winner (1986), the honorable 90-year-old playwright,

poet, literary scholar and activist, Wole Soyinka, who once studied at this very Department, could become a chief player in this respect.

Trips "outside"

My excursions to the „outside world“ of campus were sparse and limited. I was accompanied to the Ibadan city museum, to three restaurants, a supermarket as well as some smaller markets. And I undertook several car rides through town, always in company of course. This closed circle of activities doesn't account to anything worth calling "visits to the country". I was painfully aware of my privilege residing in a secure place, a gated university campus, largely relegated to encounters with students, professors and staff, half of them living on campus. The other half travels in and out every day to get to work, sometimes from far-away outskirts areas. Along the streets surrounding campus I witnessed thousands of simple stalls (or shall I call them shanties?) where small merchants offer their daily wares: tomatoes, yam's, clothes, cosmetics, machine parts, many of them looking non-functional. Along the same streets travel just as many downtrodden cars, motorcycles and trucks, imeshed in a horrific traffic which appears to follow no rules. I asked my friend who took great pain to maneuver the car through this entanglement while looking up at a hazy sun which barely makes it through the dusty sky, if the uncontested climate- and resources-crisis plays a role in Nigeria. ... No concrete response is also a response.

There's no public transportation to speak of and little expectations that government will ameliorate the situation – and thus no acute climate awareness. Everyone, well-to-do or poor, buys a car. As much as in the West, cars are status symbols, and so are academic and professional degrees or ownerships of houses. ... It looks as if Nigerians are intent of becoming "Westerners", the youth follows American models of lifestyle and music, smartphones are ubiquitous. I wondered about signs of resistance to autocratic tendencies, exploitative corporations, rampant turbo-capitalism? „Too bloody“, „too dangerous“, were some of the answers given. When in the past protests have erupted, I was told, they were instantaneously brutally crushed, with numerous deaths. People are weary of launching protests since nothing substantially ever really changes.

Reading the history of the country which is tainted with dictatorships, this general sentiment of pessimism appears lawful. Nevertheless I couldn't refrain from strong feelings of sadness about this defeatist state of affairs. However, I asked myself: „Who am I to afford nostalgia?“ ... What have we as representatives of the „glorious West“ – heirs to imperialism, colonialism and slavery – done to propel real change in post-colonial Africa? We (Euro-Americans) very well know the answers and look the other way – in shame.

Taking it from all the people I met, the overwhelming general impression was – awareness of shortcomings notwithstanding – one of optimism and confidence in a positive future of the country. Nigeria will soon be the African nation with the largest population on the

continent and, next to South-Africa, boasts of its strongest economic growth. It affords an impressive film industry, second to Hollywood, and holds myriads of political opportunities for democratic development in future social, political, and cultural transformations.

My quest in visiting Africa was not only to visit a new continent, but to do so by bringing some of what I've learned in 50 years of studying and working in the arts and theater – history, traditions, skills, know-how – to young students of Ibadan University. I must be hoped that this will, in the long run, bear fruits and amount to more than a drop in the bucket. There's not much that one can accomplish in short two weeks, but still - this intensive intercultural encounter will reverberate strongly with us; we've all learned a lot from each other. I've learned about the overwhelming generosity of the Nigerian people, their genuine interest and willingness to learn, I was taught about their welcoming attitude, and I've gotten a glimpse of Nigerian cultures, traditions, hopes, wishes, and anxieties. It's up to us all to build on these experiences and continue our efforts of exchange over the next few years in order to make this first experience more fruitful and sustainable.

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Biographies

Eva Brenner (A/USA), Ph.D., M.A., mag.art, political theater artist (director/stage design/production)), author, documentary filmmaker, theater scholar. Eva Brenner studied theater studies, art history and directing/dramaturgy as well as performing arts in Vienna and New York. After engagements at major German and Swiss stages, she completed a Ph.D. in Performance Studies under Richard Schechner in New York, where she worked for several years in her profession and was active in cultural policy (including co-founder and artistic co-director of the Castillo Theater (All Stars Project)). Since returning to Austria in the mid-1990s, she founded the project Theater STUDIO (1998) and the FLEISCHEREI (2004), staged current political and women's plays/texts as well as site-specific performances, including for the Wiener Festwochen, Stadttheater Klagenfurt, Schauspielhaus, dietheater Wien as well as for independent projects in public spaces. Appearances and tours in At home and abroad (including the USA, Poland, Israel, Ireland, Spain, France, Mexico), establishing socio-theatrical working models with artists, migrants, asylum seekers and small businesses. Development of the new performance genre "Transformance" (2011–2013). Interfaces between art and social action. Co-founder of the PETER KREISKY_Europa Talks. Multimedia performances and festivals, most recently (e.g. a.): Transformance Festival "Political Theater Today" (2016), "We are all Marienthal" – multimedia performance about work and unemployment (2016), "side by side apart" – based on texts by Elfriede Gerstl (2017), "MARIJA" – based on the play by Isaak Babel (2017), "Refugee Conversations 21 – Value of Man" – Community project based on texts by Bertolt Brecht with refugees and people from the district, "On the disappearance of the fireflies & dialectics of liberation – Pasolini * Marcuse* Brecht (2019). Artistic (overall) management of the SCHIELE fest NÖ since 2002. Publications include: "Adaptation or resistance. Free theater today. On the loss of diversity" (ed.), 2013. "Dare to break. Texts by and about Peter Kreisky" (ed.), 2019. Her new book about her family's partly Jewish history, *You have to do it for me*, will be published in 2024 by edition lexliszt12. 2020 and 2021 productions for video (without audience) TAGASYL based on Maxim Gorki's play *Nachtasyl* and *KASSANDRA DER CITIES*, performance on war, peace, migration and environmental protection. Has been working as culture editor for the monthly magazine *Volksstimme* since 2017. Artistic (overall) management of *SPRUNG*: <https://sprung.wien/> Since 2020 she has been working on the continuous theater cycle based on ancient texts about the prophetess *KASSANDRA*, supplemented with texts from Svetlana Alexiewitsch's novel "War has no female face" and Marlene Streeruwitz "Handbook against War", which was since performed throughout Vienna. In 2024, she is embarking on a new endeavor, a scenic translation of he

famous novel, *AESTHETICS OF RESISTANCE*, about the rise of German fascism in the 1930s by noted dramatist, poet, and artist, Peter Weiss.

Augusto Boal (1931-2009) was a Brazilian theatre educator, theatre theorist and political activist. He was the founder of the Theatre of the Oppressed, a form of theatre originally used in radical left-wing popular education movements. From 1993 to 1997, Boal was a Vereador (the Brazilian equivalent of the city council) in Rio de Janeiro, where he developed the Legislative Theater.

Jerzy Grotowski, born in 1933, graduated with a degree in acting from the State School of Theatre in Cracow. He went on to pursue directing at the Lunacharsky Institute of Theatre Arts (GITIS) in Moscow, where he studied the acting and directing techniques of Stanislavsky, Vakhtangov, Meyerhold, and Tairov. After returning to Poland, Grotowski began working as a teaching assistant at the Theatre School in Cracow. He continued to study directing, and the year 1957 marked his directing debut while forming his interest in developing a unique relationship to scripts. An interview conducted on account of the opening of the *Gods of Rain* is one of the first records of exposes Grotowski's emerging views on directing theater: "As far as the director's relationship to the dramatic text goes," Grotowski says, "I believe the text should only serve as a theme for the director, on the basis on which he should construct a brand new work of art, his spectacle." (*Towards a Poor Theater*, 1968). Afterward he founded a small laboratory theatre in 1959 in the town of Opole in Poland and the company began to tour internationally, developing his notion of „a poor theater“.

Mary Overlie (1946-2020) was an American choreographer, dancer, theater artist, professor, author, and founder of the Six Viewpoints technique for theater and dance. The Six Viewpoints technique is both a philosophical articulation of postmodern performance and a teaching system that deals with directing, choreography, dance, acting, improvisation and performance analysis. The Six Viewpoints have been used since their inception (1978) in the curriculum of ETW/Experimental Theater Wing at New York University, and many other institutions. Overlie was a cofounder of several art projects (Dance Project, Studies Project, Movement Research), toured widely with her own company (1978-1986) in the US and Europe, and received twice the Bessie Achievement Awards. She has worked amongst others with Lee Breuer, JoAnne Akalaitis, David Warrilow, Ruth Maleczek, Anne Bogart, and Yvonne Rainer.

Richard Schechner is Professor Emeritus at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and editor of *TDR: The Drama Review*. From 1962 to 1969 he was editor of *The Drama Review*, formerly the *Tulane Drama Review*; and again from 1986 to today. Schechner was one of the founders of the Department of Performance Studies at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. He founded the Performance Group of New York in 1967 and was its artistic director until 1980, when TPG changed its name to The Wooster Group. The home of TPG and TWG is the Performing Garage in New York's SoHo district, a building that Schechner acquired in 1968. That year, Schechner signed the Writers and Editors War Tax Protest Pledge, in which he pledged not to pay taxes in protest against the Vietnam War. In 1992 Schechner founded the East Coast Artists, with whom he still works today. In the 1990s, Schechner developed "Rasaboxing," a technique of emotional training for performers and others. In his groundbreaking 1993 work; *The Future of Ritual* (1993), Schechner examines how human faith, artistic expression, and cultural belonging come together in human societies to express authenticity and promote identity. Since 2007, the Richard Schechner Center for Performance Studies at the Shanghai Theater Academy has published the biannual magazine *TDR/China*.