

Proceedings of the colloquium

Diversity of Street Arts in Europe

Circostrada Network

November 2007

Yohann Floch (coord.)



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FIRA TÀRREGA
TEATRE AL CARRETER

Opening of the colloquium

Jordi Colominas i Solanes Artistic Director of Fira Tàrrrega

After having served as the administrator of several artistic companies, including the Catalanian company Els Comediants, he was appointed Artistic Director of Fira del Teatre al Carrer de Tàrrrega for the period of 2006-2010. Els Comediants participated in the creation of Fira in 1981, and ran the festival at its very beginnings for three years. Jordi Colominas' commitment to the street arts goes back to the eighties. As a member of the company Pamipipa, he took part in over 200 performances throughout Spain. His professional profile combines management experience with modern performance creation and audience engagement.

Dear Friends, welcome to Tàrrrega!

I'm especially pleased to open this international debate at a moment when La Fira de Tàrrrega is looking toward the future and emphasizing its commitment to street theatre, to creation in open spaces, in non-conventional spaces.

La Fira de Tàrrrega was born in 1981 under the guidance of one restless mayor and Els Comediants, who directed the festival for its first three years. It is the oldest festival of its kind in Europe, with the street as centre stage.

It appeared at a very specific time. Newly-emerged from Franco's dictatorship, we were reclaiming the street as a space for gathering, living, acting. We came from nowhere and we had everything still before us to invent. We knew what we did not want, and in our innocence we explored every space, every niche, every possibility.

Twenty six years on and the Fira has become established as a huge showcase event for theatrical creation, like a large market for the performing arts. The Fira has solidified its expertise and international scope, expanded its variety of artistic languages and become a model that has been exported to other communities.

The Fira must reaffirm itself in its condition as large showcase in which diverse artistic idioms converge (text, circus, musical theatre, dance, cabaret, marionettes and objects) with a particular priority placed on visual performance, shows which employ universal languages, presented in optimal conditions.

Most importantly, the Fira must uphold its commitment to its distinguishing characteristic, the facet that represents our identity and the element that international organisers have always come for: street theatre, with its broad, generous, diverse and rich scope. Outstanding performances that flee from conventional spaces and give rise to a new relationship with the spectator, a new game, a new ritual. Performances that call upon our imagination. Creations for public spaces. Constantly avoiding clichés and all things predictable.

We also want to assume more responsibilities beyond that of being a creative display window: we want to enhance the aspects that enable our artists, our companies, to grow. This means supporting the acts of creation, production, dissemination and training;

working hand in hand with the various street arts-related institutions; promoting partnerships and exchange, such as with HorsLesMurs or Circostrada Network in this international debate, with the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona or with FAI AR, with the various European festivals comprising, along with us, the new network, Meridians, or with other Catalan or Spanish festivals; with anyone with whom we can weave a network of partnerships that will enable us to support the artists who have opted for the road less travelled in the dramatic arts: those who avoid orthodox, predictable ways of doing things and those for whom the wind isn't blowing favourably.

And a solid team of professionals working year-round for the Fira de Tàrrrega is what makes all of this possible. Allow me to call attention to the work of one person who makes the Fira's professional activities possible, activities such as, for example, this meeting. A person that works toward ensuring Tàrrrega's international scope. This person is Mike Ribalta, who has worked closely with HorsLesMurs to make this meeting possible.

Ladies and gentlemen of HorsLesMurs and Circostrada Network, thank you for thinking of us, for proposing Tàrrrega as the site for this debate. Thank you also for choosing these topics for debate, being as they are issues that currently concern us: the lack of institutional and public recognition of artists whose medium of expression is open space; production processes and distribution channels; European cooperation (networks, circuits, exchanges); street shows and the audiences for whom they are intended.

Throughout the day you will chat, debate, doubt, speak, conspire and contradict each other and I hope that the gods inspire you with brilliant reflections and pertinent conclusions.

And in the afternoon, explore the city. The streets, squares, corners and theatres of Tàrrrega all await you. I would especially like to invite you all to the opening party to be held tonight at eleven thirty in an expressly-designed space for the professional sector of this year's Fira: the Club San Miguel.

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Tàrrrega, creative territory.

Introduction

Diversity ou inequality?

Yohann Floch

Yohann Floch is Coordinator of the Circostrada network, a European platform for information, research and professional exchange, dedicated to the circus and street arts (based in France). The network receives the support of cultural organisations that are active on the European level within the European Commission. Yohann Floch is also head of international relations at HorsLesMurs and has conducted many European surveys, including *Street Artists in Europe* for the European Parliament. He has also worked for the Union of the Theatres of Europe, has coordinated theatre festivals, and has accompanied performance companies in France, Spain and Canada.

The project behind this colloquium was born out of a desire to widely distribute the results of the *Street Artists in Europe* study among the professional sector that contributed so greatly to its realisation by relaying information, accepting to be surveyed, and being available for individual interviews and focus groups. We had only 80 days to complete this vast sector inventory intended for European policymakers.

Fira Tárrega is one event that particularly stood out as a fine example of a landmark street arts festival. It serves as a meeting point for many artists and programmers, is a recent partner of the Circostrada Network, and has become a festival of increasing importance as an international platform for the performing arts. Fira Tárrega is undergoing a particularly interesting renewal with the arrival of Jordi Colominas as its artistic director. Mike Ribalta, our artful host, helped in making our arrival in Catalonia a reality. We offer our sincere thanks for their attentiveness and efficiency.

The study to be presented today was given to the European Union at the end of March 2007. The English version may be downloaded for free on Internet, and a French translation will soon be made available. On August 27 of this year HorsLesMurs submitted these results, along with a series of recommendations, to the European Parliament, as per its request. It is important to begin this day on a positive note by saying that the study's results and subsequent recommendations were received with great interest on the part of the euro-deputies. Entire artistic surges can be created on an impulse from that same European Union that cultural professionals are so often accusing of foot-dragging bureaucracy. However, the Union could be in a position to offer concrete responses to questions often asked by those in our sectors.

The word "definition" may frighten some street arts professionals who are concerned about being trapped within aesthetic boundaries that go against the interdisciplinarity that we all defend. However, it is precisely this concern of definition(s) that troubles us, as we often under-estimate the importance such a definition may have. How can we help an artistic sector to grow if we do not know its contours, content, history, or players? How do we involve policymakers in the structuring and professionalizing of the street arts if the definitions do not enable us to identify artistic projects dedicated

to the public space? The direct result of this is an ignorance regarding the specificities of the sector, which thus finds itself lost in the category of "performing arts".

In the *Street Artists in Europe* study, we have taken the definition given by David Micklem (Arts Council England, 2006) and have broadened it in order to take into account certain realities within the European territory. The definition is long and detailed, but currently contains three precise elements. First of all, the street arts are committed to including all existing art forms (theatre, dance, music, opera, visual arts, multimedia, etc.). Therefore, an artistic sector is not characterised by the techniques and disciplines put to use, but rather by the place where the creative act comes to life, or by the place of the actual performance, which is the public space. This public space can be a church square, a field, or a boulevard. But it can also be an abandoned factory, a metro station, or any space taken outside the context of its original, functional purpose, or purpose other than to host a performance. Lastly, in the street arts there is certainly a unique relationship with the audience. Participants in the third round table discussion will share their thoughts on this based on their own experiences and analyses.

To acknowledge something is to name it, as one would name a newborn child. But it is also an act that lends a thing a certain value. Yet, what value do policymakers, intellectuals, and even artists themselves currently accord to the street arts? We cannot help but notice that the street arts are not seen as equal to other artistic sectors.

If the sector's definition states that it presents all forms of artistic expression in the public space, and these forms already enjoy a certain intellectual and institutional acknowledgement, we can then wonder at the level of appreciation for performances in public spaces. Is an actor's performance less skilful if he acts on an esplanade instead of in a theatre? Would a soprano's performance be any lesser if she were singing outdoors and not in an opera? Of course, the answer to these questions is no.

So let us take our questioning even further. Does the value of an artistic expression depend on the amount of money spent on it? In other words, does the notion of value only come into play when financial interests are involved? Nothing could be further from the truth. The processes of recognising a project's artistic value have shown that it is the content, or the artist's message that determines the value of the project's existence.

Perhaps we need to re-examine the very basics in considering the "street" arts. Could the performance space itself be at the root of our art forms' perceived illegitimacy? To be "in the street" is to place oneself outside of official Art buildings (theatre, operas, dance centres, museums, etc.), that is, outside of the venues that are subsidised by the state and municipalities as the pearl of a form of culture seen as elitist by a large part of the general public. So legitimacy seems to come not with the right content, but with the

right venue. Is it therefore best to take interest in artistic forms when they are presented in a prestigious framework? It is a provoking yet pertinent hypothesis. What is at the root of this perceived illegitimacy? It is difficult to say, and each one of you will have the opportunity to offer his or her own piece of the response.

It is true that there is a deep need for more critics, journalists and specialists on emerging art forms, who contribute greatly to the quality and exposure of artistic work. Not many are able to develop a synchronic analysis of these forms, and even fewer refrain from commenting on street theatre the same way they would a performance of dance, music or "traditional" theatre. Street performances have their own codes, conventions, variations and means of development. We serve as mediators to these specialised journalists, so that they may have broader access to the street arts. For, although the general public seems to have spontaneous access to these works, the critic does not always dispose of the necessary references for appreciating the breadth of aesthetic research, or the dramaturgical and scenographic innovation. Therefore, a growing number of event organisers working in public spaces are looking for the best way to heighten the media's awareness of these artistic works. On top of looking for the necessary exposure to renew their budgets (patrons, partners and sponsors, grant-providers, etc.), organisers also find that they must inform the critics, at times bringing them out of their shells and fighting against certain prejudices, so they may appreciate the incredible diversity of this sector.

Why is political and institutional acknowledgement so important? Why are cultural professionals today struggling to receive the same acknowledgement as do the sectors of dance, theatre and opera? It is because the street arts are still in a developmental phase. This sector is both diverse (aesthetics, impacts on the local economy and social cohesion, audience turnout, etc.) and fragile (varying levels of artistic quality, precarious state of professionals and festivals, etc).

Street artists need training, yet there is currently only one initial training programme in Europe. Artists wish to present shows of high quality, but there are hardly any residencies or production centres, and hardly any grants dedicated to their work. Sometimes they don't have access to the individual grants and scholarships existing within their country. Street artists wish to present their shows abroad, but only rarely get the opportunity to do so outside of festivals. It remains difficult to achieve a certain degree of mobility both in and out of Europe due to a range of technical and administrative constraints.

Without proper recognition it is impossible to imagine cultural policies that would take into consideration the specificities of the street arts. And it is good to point out that all the artists and cultural professionals questioned in the *Street Artists in Europe* study have expressed their wish for new tools and means of production. It seems important that policymakers be made aware of the broad stature of the street arts in Europe. In other words, the street artists must be taken into consideration in the qualitative and quantitative studies carried out by the research institutes and the national and local observatories. Their presence should appear in the statistics, as well as in the distribution of public performance grants. These artistic works in the public space should also be the subject of academic studies.

We realised in the course of this study that the more street arts professionals federated at the local or national level, the higher their level of development. This may also be the case among their colleagues in other artistic sectors. They therefore have every reason to defend their own interests, as evidenced in the like-minded initiatives taken in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany and Belgium. It is important to encourage new performances in the member countries of the European Union, as well as local networks and resource centres (or specified departments within centres generally intended for the performing arts) so that policymakers may meet people able to provide them with information on the sector. This will serve as a gauge for a better appreciation, more fluid communication, and more responsive cultural policies. The goal is to bring the information in off the streets so that it might hold greater influence.

Throughout this process, the European Union could prove to be a powerful ally. By working on the status of artists, taking into account culture professionals' mobility, remaining committed to the open circulation of works, and privileging cooperation between member countries of the community, particularly through the programme of Culture 2007-2013, Europe allows us to overcome certain obstacles, and turns out to be a useful tool. If the European Parliament pursues its goal of a greater appreciation of the street arts, and produces an initiative report, it will have a considerable impact on local cultural policy. On the other hand, the European Commission has published an *Communication for a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world* in the hopes of establishing a strategy to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in Europe, promote culture as a catalyst to creativity and innovation as stated in the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment, and to make culture an essential component in relations outside of the Union. By their very definition, the street arts have preoccupations that are similar to those of this *Communication*, and it is now up to them to participate in the current cultural debate as well as in the Europe of culture.

First round table : What Levels of Artistic and Political Recognition in Europe?

Speakers

Stéphane Simonin (HorsLesMurs, France)

Since 2003, Stéphane Simonin has been Director of HorsLesMurs, the national resource centre for the circus and street arts. HorsLesMurs is one of four French resources entirely dedicated to the performing arts (along with the National Theatre Centre, the National Dance Centre and the Information and Resource Centre for Contemporary Music). He began as head of the administrative and legal boards for those proposing artistic projects within the organisation. Stéphane Simonin was also the administrator of the Salma-nazar Municipal Theatre in Epernay (France), and assistant director of the French Cultural Centre of Groningue (Holland).

Luigi Alcide Fusani (Il Polo Culturale dei Navigli, Italy)

Since 1994, Luigi Fusani has been the Coordinator and Artistic Director of Cultural Activity for the city of Abbiategrasso. He has therefore been responsible for managing events such as the "Festival internazionale di mimo, pantomima e teatro in strada" and "Polo culturale dei Navigli de la Province de Milan". He coordinated and managed the international meeting "In the Streets – Esthetics, Organisation and Legislation for Urban-Space Theatre", which brought together over 200 cultural professionals from all over Europe. In 2002, he was elected President of the National Committee for the Development of Street Theatre. He is also the Founder and Artistic Director of the company Viaggiatori Metropolitan, and collaborates with the Pane e Mate street company. Luigi Fusani is a professor at the School of Fantasy at the University of Pécs (Hungary), where he teaches courses on contemporary Italian theatre and cinema. Since 2006, he has headed the Mantoue theatre festival's urban theatre programming.

Frank Wilson (Stockton International Riverside Festival, ISAN, United Kingdom)

Frank Wilson is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Stockton International Riverside festival. Aside from working all throughout the United Kingdom with 'Event International', the organisation which he manages, he has also brought cultural projects to Lisbon, Dubai, Beijing and North America. Frank Wilson is also sponsor of the public space programming for Expo 2008 in Saragossa (Spain). He is President of ISAN, the Independent Street Arts Network in the United Kingdom.

Nicole Ruppert (kulturbüro GbR, Germany)

Born in Düsseldorf in 1962, Nicole Ruppert studied History and German language and literature. For 3 years she worked in event planning and public relations for the Cultural Office of the city of Wolfsburg. She has been a freelance consultant since 1992 with kulturbüro, where she is responsible for elaborating concepts and setting strategies to bring cultural projects into being. Kulturbüro is a private, international consulting and management firm that works on cultural projects. Nicole Ruppert has therefore lead major projects such as the International Theatre Festival of Rue Detmold (2004, 2006, 2008), and the International Theatre Festival of Rue Holzminden (since 1991).

Synthesis of debates

Chairman

The main objective of this round-table discussion is to understand the degree of recognition enjoyed by street arts in your countries. So I suggest that each participant explain the situation in his or her country. First question: In each of your countries, what recognition do street arts receive?

Nicole Ruppert

If the title of this debate is *Diversity in street arts*, then that is precisely the situation in Germany. There is great diversity on the regional and local levels of structural organisation. There are many street arts festivals, most of which are held mostly in the western and southern regions of Germany, but not so much in the east, as a result of reunification. In general, appreciation of street arts hasn't evolved much. Our image of it is actually rather negative. If we're talking about Straße Theater, we refer primarily to street shows, juggling. This image is only starting to slowly evolve in the places where festivals are held.

There is no national nor institutional recognition of this art form.

Luigi Fusani

In general, cultural politics in Italy are going through a rough patch.

To begin with, this is due to the fact that politicians look for quick, highly-visible results without any solid work, consolidated over the long term, to support them.

The new Italian Minister for Culture has made a proposal to the bodies governing cultural affairs in Italian cities: he wants to have a huge theatre festival in Italy, one to equal France's Avignon festival. To meet that end, he has given two months for them to present a project. The result is that each city has studied the activities carried out by the theatres in their areas and they've put together a document enumerating these activities. Naples is the city that won the project. It's a city where the people have fantastical imaginations, so the project was drawn up with quite a bit of fantasy. They even included companies that didn't know they had been put into the programme. The project won. But now, what is really going to happen next year in Naples? This is an example of how cultural policies are handled at the present time in Italy.

On the other hand, we are undergoing a period of transition due to government change. Berlusconi was obliged to form a coalition with the Lega, which, in exchange, required that he yield institutional powers. The powers were handed over to the regions. At the time that this law went into effect, the regional authorities did not have any specific legislation regarding cultural policies, and the state cannot continue using central laws. At the moment, we don't know who it is that we need to speak to get political representation. The only political representatives we can identify are the mayors and city councils. The festivals that I am head of are financed by the city council since currently neither the central nor regional governments possess either the legislation or the political power to finance such events.

Regarding street arts, a proposed law dealing with this sector is now being reviewed. This project is the result of an association formed by some 500 companies, the National Federation for Street Arts (FNAS, in the Italian initials). The first section proposes open access to the squares in the historic district of each city and town, since the law of 1936 (Mussolini) is still in effect. This means that free assembly in public is still banned, even for entertainment purposes. As long as this law is in place, it will be very difficult for us to invest in long-term projects.

Frank Wilson

With the arrival of the new millennium, street arts got an important boost from Arts Council England. As of 2001–2002, we've been able to talk about a shift on behalf of the institutions in cultural politics and discourse concerning the sector. It was at this time that the first study on street arts in England was carried out. As a consequence of the findings, the Arts Council decided, among other measures, to create a specific section in the general council that would include street arts. That council was given the title of Combined Arts.

After the stir caused in London by, and public acclaim of, Royal de Luxe, the Ministry acknowledged the importance of street theatre and gave it a privileged ranking in its programmes. For the Ministry, this is a very accessible and democratic art form which favours social unity.

This institutional recognition has led to a notable increase in grants for the sector.

Stéphane Simonin

know it might seem that France enjoys a privileged situation. We hear our friends from other countries saying that the conditions for street arts in France are fantastic. In reality, it's only a relative recognition and the sector's situation is very fragile. So we must downplay the supposedly good situation of street arts in France. While it might be true in comparison with other countries, it isn't when taken in the context of French culture. Street arts receive feeble institutional recognition as compared to other areas of the arts.

For example, subsidised street arts companies comprise 3% of the 900 companies that receive the French government's three-year financing programme.

How has street theatre in France gained recognition?

Though it may sound banal, it must be said that, primarily, the quality of street performances in the seventies in France is what paved the way for the current recognition of this sector. We could say that there would be no possible recognition of the sector without solid, high-quality artistic endeavours. There can be no artistic recognition where there is no artistic innovation.

It is on this foundation that the body of a true sector has been solidified. A professional, united sector that has been identified and recognised in its own right. The identification of the sector is basic for acquiring a certain degree of recognition.

There has also been work of observation and analysis, an intellectual examination of the type of art form seen in the sector. HorsLesMurs has contributed, and contributes, in this field with the research they've conducted over the years. The Ministry of Culture has also played an important role in symbolic and artistic recognition in the cultural sector. Since the 1980s it has economically supported the sector (although, as I pointed out earlier, in a small way). This fact has been one of the fundamental points in ensuring that street art has acquired its title of nobility in France.

However, I insist on the fact that there is a long road yet to travel.

We aren't so far-removed from the countries where there is still a great deal to be done in order to gain recognition. Therefore I think that the problems, and the difficulties in identifying and clarifying them, are common to us all.

Another important topic is the prejudices toward the sector due to certain forms of purely entertaining or festive street performance devoid of all creative work. In effect, it could give rise to a confused image of the sector when compared to much better organised groups with a more solid theoretical training, such as in indoor theatre, dance, etc.

Chairman

Thank you, Stéphane. You said it; we all have the same obstacles, which are nonetheless greater for some than they are for others.

The report *Street Artists in Europe* refers to "the absence of recognition of the artistic quality of this type of activity. It is normally viewed as diversion or entertainment, but not as artistic creation". Why does this happen? What sort of recognition comes from intellectuals and what is the result in the media?

Nicole Ruppert

The answer for Germany is quite easy.

The intellectuals know absolutely nothing about street arts, and therefore there is no recognition. The image from the 1970s still predominates: agit-prop theatre, theatre with no written text, no artistic training. At the university level, there really isn't any interest in that sort of art form. Europe is not familiar with this artistic expression. So the answer is very simple: it doesn't exist.

Luigi Fusani

I always have an amusing anecdote to tell. This year, I had two Xarxa Teatre shows programmed for two nights in my festival. Each night there was an enthusiastic crowd of some 7000 spectators. The programme also included a Polish company that had a very hard-core, powerful show that dealt with violence. At the end of the show, the head of the press department calls me and says that this was the sort of show that interested her for reviewing in the newspapers. Xarxa's show, on the other hand, isn't the type of event that can arouse media interest. The tragic, hard-knocks shows that shock audiences are the ones that get reviewed.

In Italy, in the '80s, a journalist from the leftist paper *Espresso* wrote an article entitled *Street Theatre's Stilts Should Be Shortened*. In Italy, when you discuss street theatre with journalists, they tell you that after *La Fura dels Baus* there hasn't been any more street theatre in the world. So, the critics, journalists and intellectuals don't know anything about street theatre today.

Frank Wilson

The media don't devote much space to it. Their critiques hold no specific weight in our society. At this time, English critics and intellectuals show no interest in a field which on the other hand they hardly know anything about.

Stéphane Simonin

In France, there are increasing numbers of universities taking interest in this art form. We've been fortunate enough to have university students and researchers (not very numerous, nor highly considered by their colleagues) who became quickly interested in this sector. There are very interesting research projects on different aspects of the street arts in France.

But we also have our fair share of problems with critics and jour-

nalists. They aren't well versed in this field and they don't have the necessary tools for analysing a street performance. Nonetheless, part of the problem is that, aside from the exceptions, street artists don't generally theorise nor affirm their work with intellectual discourse. This is possibly their strongpoint as well as their weak point when compared to artists in other fields. They, the artists, should be the first ones to be able to talk about their work, over and above the journalists and critics. It is crucial for legitimising intellectual recognition.

Our great strength, in short, is the recognition we receive from the public, the spectators. It's a foundation on which we can stand in order to reach further recognition.

Chairman

This last reflection on the difficulty that street artists have in utilising intellectual discourse and theoretical analysis of their work leads me to the following question: What is the artists' background in educational training in each of your countries?

Nicole Ruppert

There is training in theatre, in dance, in the professional academies, but there is no specific training for street artists. The companies train themselves in the street by watching other companies, in other countries. It's one of the strengths of street artists who have travelled abroad to learn.

Luigi Fusani

Professional training is a complicated situation in Italy.

In the year 2000, I organised a series of conferences focussing on the situation of street arts in Italy. The problems that the companies cited can be summarised in three points: the need for aid in training, production and dissemination.

There is a real need for training but there is no centre, no place, where artists can turn, with the exception of certain festivals that occasionally offer short workshops. Nor is there any kind of schooling for the circus arts. The Fnas offers short two- or three-week courses, but it's always on something almost anecdotal. We have presented an educational programme and requested funding from Europe and from the region. We don't have European funding at the moment and we're working with the regional authorities. We already have the place, but there really isn't anything else yet. So, any training that now exists is carried out within the few companies that there are, almost all of which are associated with "third theatre".

Frank Wilson

The situation in the United Kingdom is very much like that mentioned by the previous speakers. The politics of arts education takes absolutely no notice of artistic creation in public space, and so people still receive their training within the companies themselves, with all the limitations that this often involves. We are gradually witnessing a policy change and, for example, the Royal Academy has made their students take a short course on the street arts. The goal is to get artists from other disciplines interested in the possibilities offered by artistic expression in non-conventional spaces.

Stéphane Simonin

This topic is particularly relevant to our debate. Education plays an essential role in the issue of intellectual and artistic recognition because, to begin with, education is a means for transmitting the know-how of the first artists, for creating a History of street arts and,

secondly, because it encourages a new generation of street arts.

There are specific courses in France. The FAI AR (Formation Avancée et Itinérante des Arts de la Rue, or The Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts) is an 18-month programme and the only one of its kind in Europe specialising in artistic creation in public space. There are also short programmes organised within some street arts companies.

In other areas of education in the arts, such as the official dance and theatre conservatories, there are specific courses on street arts. It's an excellent initiative in which directors and choreographers are invited to work on specific aspects of the genre.

Corporate logic also has its limits and just as the sector's union has enabled a certain degree of recognition, we have to be careful to not shut ourselves off. Street arts, which is a space of representation more than a discipline in itself, must be open toward other disciplines and must be present in the other centres for arts education.

Chairman

I have three more very specific questions dealing with the recognition of street arts professionals. We'll begin with the actors. Is there a system which enables actors to claim unemployment benefits in a way that differs from the standard practice in your country?

Nicole Ruppert

When we talk about street artists in Germany we're actually referring to about a dozen companies, each with about a dozen actors. They are independent workers that spend the summer working in the street and, in the winter, in theatres. There is a special unemployment system for artists, but in order to qualify you have to have a fairly long professional career. There are also subsidy problems for street arts companies because the criteria are the same as those applied to indoor work; this means that there are criteria that cannot be fulfilled, so, therefore, these companies cannot apply for those grants.

Luigi Fusani

Artists must pay contributions on a minimum of 150 days per year, which is a huge problem for street artists. In the winter, these artists do indoor theatre, animation, classes, but for most it's almost impossible to meet the required 150 days. FNAS has requested that this number be reduced to 50 annual contributions so that artists can be eligible to collect unemployment benefits.

Frank Wilson

The English system is quite different, and the system as it's understood in the rest of Europe cannot be applied. So the answer to your question has to be negative.

Stéphane Simonin

Artists must pay contributions for 43 days per year in order to qualify for unemployment benefits. In France we have the system of "intermittent performers", which is not exclusive to street arts, but which concerns all workers in the entertainment and audiovisual industries. Without this system, it would not have been possible for the work of many street companies either to exist or evolve. So it's true that this system plays a fundamental role in the creation of French companies.

Chairman

My second question has to do with recognition of the creators. Is the authorship of street arts recognised? To what degree do the

authors of street shows have the same rights as the authors of indoor theatre?

Nicole Ruppert

Due to the absence of previously-written texts, the view is that there is no author. No, in Germany we do not use the term "author" in the street arts sector. I, personally, am obliged to explain when French companies come to perform in Germany why we must pay the Sacd, since nobody understands in Germany why you have to pay author's rights if there is no author in street theatre.

Luigi Fusani

No. The situation is exactly the same in Italy.

Frank Wilson

No, but we should try to unify this issue throughout the European Union. There is an association of dramatists but the same does not hold true for the street arts, which leads to a state of inequality.

Stéphane Simonin

Specific provisions pertaining to street arts have only been in place in the Sacd for two years in France. This is a step forward, although we should bear in mind that it's still a fairly recent initiative.

Up until now, they were recognised as dramatists on par with authors of indoor theatre. Now that street creation is specifically recognised in its own right, the recognition of authors even in the absence of a written text is allowed. This complicates the identification of the author. It gives rise to questions about what the "work" is that must be registered and protected, about the boundary between the director and the actor as author in street creations. These issues are not easy to understand in other areas of theatre. Recognition of the author is fundamental; if we claim to not be able to identify the author we might somehow come to the conclusion that there is no real work. I'm making a caricature of the situation, although it is true that even in the case of a collective work of art, it is crucial that the artists reflect upon who it is that really created the piece and what exactly each member contributed. All of these questions are fundamental in identifying each person in the performance. The existing confusion does not help in ensuring that the piece is recognised as a work of art.

Chairman

And finally, I wanted to discuss the Culture 2000 and Culture 2007 programmes. The companies find themselves in inferior conditions for receiving the aid that has mostly gone into festival networks since the year 2000. This marks a substantial shift from the Kaleidoscope programme, to which theatre groups themselves used to apply. A similar situation occurred during the Spanish period of democratic transition. Financial support was mostly channelled to the recently-created Drama Centres, and that managed to do away with the independent theatre movement. The Drama Centres chose the best actors, directors, musicians and dancers from the companies, which in effect did away with the companies. Some of these networks of festivals have commissioned work in a manner similar to that of the old Drama Centres: each component of the project came from a different collective or country and, irrespective of the artistic quality of the show, it would disappear at the very moment that the project came to a close. Each actor returned to his or her country and nobody was any longer interested in putting the show on again. There is no company after the fact that wants to continue performing it. And in the absence of a company involved in

any subsequent dissemination of the work, it disappears with the conclusion of the project. Wouldn't it be better to open different channels of relationship in order to prevent the companies' projects from competing with the networks of festivals?

As of the 2000 programme, festival networks are the ones that have benefited from almost all of the subsidies, while direct funding for the companies has disappeared.

Do you think that there should be two possible networks, one for festivals and another for companies?

Nicole Ruppert

It's a very complex question for which a simple yes or no answer is impossible. I'm not familiar with the Culture 2000 programme, but in my experience the documents to be filled out and the requirements to fulfil comprise such an enormous task that a good administrator is required for bringing the project about. Most companies cannot take on that job. Another problem is that you need a large financial base. Most German companies don't have this base. It's hard enough as it is to come up with the financing for the production itself. All of these factors make this question too complex for me to answer.

Luigi Fusani

The issue is indeed complex, and I'm not exactly sure how it should be addressed. I think that the European Community should work directly with the companies because, in the end, they are the ones who deal face to face with the audience in the street. Therefore, in my understanding, it's more reasonable for the European Community to be directly involved with the companies, rather than with the festivals, which are often invented so that companies can access money from the European Community.

In any event, I am aware that it is a complicated issue.

Frank Wilson

I don't think I fully understand your reasoning. I feel that both festivals and companies should work together and in no way are festivals an intermediate step for allowing companies to gain access to European funding.

I have no objection to the fact of companies being directly financed by the European Community. The problem is exactly who should do the evaluation and on the basis of what criteria should the evaluation be done. Someone who is unfamiliar with the sector and its complications cannot evaluate all of this work.

Indeed, the work of the artist is fundamental and lies at the basis of all our discourse, but the work that we do at this end also has an artistic basis. It's about working on a foundation of cooperation between production and dissemination frameworks and the companies. From the way the question was phrased, it seems that this spirit of cooperation on our part is being called into question.

What we do is put our work and our know-how at the service of developing artistic creation.

Stéphane Simonin

For me the question is not specific to street arts, since the issue is similar for all of the dramatic arts companies in Europe. It's a recurring theme in cultural politics as much on a European level as on the level of each government or region. Should the money be given directly to the companies or is it better to go through an intermediary? It's a question that's repeated throughout the entire European cultural milieu.

The only thing that I would like to add is that on the European level there is only one programme that affects culture: what was up to now Culture 2000 and from now on is called Culture 2007. It's not a lot of money, and that means that certain norms have to be put into effect. A company can actually directly present a dossier, not for the creation of a show by the company itself, but rather for a European project. However it's true that, at the moment, being the only one, it's a very limited programme.

Chairman

Which would lead us to another topic of debate, such as the dissemination of the European Union's information. However, as I mentioned, we are short on time and we have to give the audience a chance to speak.

Questions and comments from conference attendees

Dominique Trichet (FAI AR, France)

Two questions that interest me:

- The first is in reference to the existing specialised street arts press in your countries.
- The second question is: Is there a repertoire? That is, shows that have become repertoire that are performed by other companies, as is common in the history of theatre or dance, for example.

Stéphane Simonin

TEAM-Network is a trans-disciplinary European platform that brings together magazines and specialised press dealing with cultural themes. Stradda is part of this platform and all of its publications can be consulted on the internet.

Regarding print media, it is true that we need magazines, specific publications, although it's also important to permeate all of the cultural publications, since pieces have already been written about street arts.

Nicole Ruppert

There is documentation, but only festival publications.

Luigi Fusani

Some companies have edited their own books, although we nevertheless lack a specialised magazine. Many companies send newsletters via the internet. It's a very dynamic way of documenting the relevancy of their creations and work.

Frank Wilson

We have little published material. Right now the only thing I can think of is a book called Total Theatre, about non-text-based theatre.

Manel Pons (d'Aigua Teatre Ciutadà, Spain)

I think that the people posing the need for recognition within street arts aren't representative of everyone in the sector. Rather, they are a smaller group that has developed a more conscientious form of street art, one striving for more contemporary work, far removed from traditional or well-worn methods. My question therefore is if it might be necessary to separate these sectors; that is, disassociate this more novel approach to the concept of street arts and give it another name. Among other things, the problem is that the concept "street arts" in and of itself in most countries generally calls to mind images of fire, stilts and juggling. This is so even in France, where

cultural advances and greater experience regarding other art forms within the street arts are a foregone conclusion.

Anne Tucker (Manchester International Arts, United Kingdom)

For companies who feel that they should qualify for author's rights for their work in England, I suggest they increase their fees per performance to the amount that the corresponding authors' association must receive. In our country, the problem isn't so much paying authorship as it is making use of the mechanisms that have been granted to other European countries. I think that establishing a common system for all European countries is necessary.

Chairman

I think if one thing is clear from this discussion, it is the enormous diversity that characterises street arts in Europe and the long road that still lies ahead in achieving equality with the rest of the arts and a similar recognition among the countries of the European Union.

Second round table : *What Means of Production and Diffusion for this Sector in Europe?*

Speakers

Fabien Audooren (Internationaal Straattheaterfestival, Belgium)

Since 1990, Fabien Audooren has been the Artistic Director of the Internationaal Straattheaterfestival in Ghent (Belgium), one of the most important festivals in Western Europe, and a part of 'Meridians', the production and distribution platform supported by the European Commission as part of its support to cultural and cooperative activities. Fabien Audooren is also the Coordinator and Artistic Director of other street arts events in the Flemish Region (Leuven in Scène, Belgium), as well as co-founder of Vlaamse Federatie voor Kunsten op Straat (Flemish federation for the street arts), the former platform Eunetstar and the Ploot production platform between Holland and Flanders.

Roser Vilà Puig (23 Arts-Brothers Projections, Spain)

Roser Vilà Puig is head of the International Department of 23 Arts-Brothers Projections, which organises tours abroad for Spanish artists, as well as tours in Spain for foreign artists. These past seasons, the 23 Arts shows have travelled throughout Europe, the United States, Brazil and Canada. In Spain, 23 Arts has organised tours for companies from Russia, Canada, Australia, France, Belgium, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Since its creation, the organisation has collaborated with Clowns Without Borders, and has been a member of ADGAE (Asociación de Empresas de Distribución y Gestión de las Artes Escénicas), where it has served as President of the Directive Board since August of 2004.

Rafael Salinas Serrano (Festival de Teatre i Animació al Carrer de Viladecans, Spain)

With a degree in Philosophy and Educational Science from the University of Barcelona, he worked in the cultural sector with a local administration until 2003, when he was nominated to head the public firm SPM Viladecans Qualitat. He is the Founder and Director of the Festival Internacional de Teatre i Animació de Viladecans, of which he is currently the Coordinator. He has been asked to speak at numerous international events as an expert of the theatrical sector, particularly regarding street theatre, and has participated in many professional juries.

Since April 2003, he has managed the municipal firm SMP Viladecans Qualitat SL, which handles the cultural and athletic facilities of the city of Viladecans, and most notably the Atrium Auditorium.

Jean-Sébastien Steil (In Situ/Lieux Publics, France)

Since 2003, Jean-Sébastien Steil has been Coordinator of the In Situ project, a European creative platform for the street arts (Culture 2000 project). He has also been Head of European Projects at Lieux Publics, the National Centre for creation in the street arts (Marseille, France). From 1999 to 2003, he was Administrator and then Director at the Usine (Tournefeuille, France), the creative centre for the company Le Phun (Phérraille, Artistic Director) and for La Machine (François Delarozière, Artistic Director). He has a graduate background in Geography and is a specialist on rural societies in Southern Morocco.

Synthesis of debates

Chairman

At the first round-table discussion, we ascertained the great difference separating France from the rest of the countries. Perhaps something similar might occur in this second discussion. Let's begin with a comment from Jean Sebastian Steil.

Jean-Sébastien Steil

I am participating in this debate as the coordinator of the In Situ programme. Based in Marseilles, the programme is headed by Lieux Publics National Centre for the Creation of Street Arts. In 2002, Lieux Publics, brought together a network of street arts organisers in an effort to raise European funding for production and dissemination. That was the first year that street arts (in parentheses) was explicitly mentioned during the meeting.

The first project was coordinated by a network of six co-organisers (the project's main co-financiers). The idea of this project was to place the idea of Europe as the moving force behind artistic creation in public space. Europe is not just a supplementary financial resource and broad territory for dissemination. Rather, Europe is, first and foremost, the site for artistic exchange between different countries. A European project can become a formidable tool for promoting innovation in artistic creation.

The aim was to bring together a certain number of festivals in order to ensure the dissemination of the productions. The reality has been somewhat more complex and, after evaluating the first three years of the project in 2006, we implemented certain modifications and rectifications in respect to the first programme. During this second phase, In Situ 2, the primary aim has been to guarantee a certain number of projects in their entirety; that is, from the moment of writing to the moment of dissemination, and to come up with the financial means for doing so.

From 2003 to 2006 we have financed projects from 50,000 to 200,000 euros. Nine projects all told. In Situ 2 works in a different way. This time we created five different tools or measures for each stage of the process.

The first measure is called "Hot House" and it provides the opportunity for up-and-coming artists from all European countries and festival directors to come together and exchange ideas. Afterwards, each artist receives a grant for writing their project.

The second measure is support during the production process. From 2006 until 2009 we will be providing aid for between six to twelve projects.

The third is support for artists in residence. This enables festivals to welcome a certain number of artists in their creation centres with the purpose of adapting a piece to the language and context of the country to which they've come to work.

The fourth measure is to support mobility for projects on tour throughout Europe. This activity is designed primarily for the projects that have been produced by In Situ. In total, we will be supporting some twenty companies in their European tours.

The fifth and final measure are the professional meetings for bringing together pan-European festivals and institutions.

After three years, we have learned how to get to know each other and understand the exact functioning and context of each country.

The economic possibilities, the public financing contexts, vary greatly from one country to another. One of the bedrocks of the network is its multicultural nature and its mixture of different realities. In Situ's secondary title is The European Platform for Artistic Creation in Public Space.

The goal is a very open concept, one that does not strictly adhere to the idea of street arts as they are understood in France, but rather one that is open to varied viewpoints and possible options.

The second big question is that of the relationship between production and dissemination.

In the end, the efficacy of a project is not measured solely by the number of projects funded, but also by the entire circulation of exchanges, relationships, meetings and information which the platform promotes.

Chairman

How can companies get in contact with a project like In Situ?

Jean-Sébastien Steil

In reference to the first stage of the initiative, we put out a great deal of advertising with open invitations to artists. We ourselves studied the dossiers sent by the companies and we made a selection after a lengthy decision-making process. The problem arose when we found that we were funding projects that our very co-producers were not in agreement about. This was a stumbling block in disseminating certain projects.

This is why, for the second stage, we have decided that it should be the co-producers themselves who should propose the projects that they consider relevant for In Situ. This way, with the consensus and involvement of the co-producers, the projects are going to have guaranteed dissemination. Therefore, interested companies should get into direct contact with the festivals that are participating in the project.

Rafael Salinas

I have over twenty years' experience as a manager in local administration. Working in administration has given me a highly varied experience and a different perspective on public financing when it comes to cultural issues. From the perspective of private enterprise, we are exposed to a constant appraisal of the citizenry.

Among the various functions of our company is dramatic arts management, both indoor and outdoor, on the professional level.

In the early stages of Viladecans, in the late '80s, there was no public cultural establishment, which is why a street festival was created. It could be said that the choice of the street was not, at first, an end in itself, but rather a substitution for what we lacked.

Over the course of the years, the fact that the 70,000 inhabitants of Viladecans have taken to the streets during the days of the festival has made this event a point of reference in the city. Viladecans now has a large theatre, although the legitimacy of the street festival is no longer questioned. It is one of our city's identifying characteristics.

The problem that we now face is that we have a 6-million-euro theatre which needs a function and content in order to legitimise its existence.

Indoor theatre management, as opposed to outdoor theatre, needs results and responses: an economic and artistic result and a public response.

Nonetheless, in the organisation of street performance, there is no economic result because there is no ticket office, the artistic value is difficult to evaluate and audience response is finally the only

answer that we can give the institutions to justify their funding. Twenty years ago in Catalonia the differences between indoor and outdoor theatre were not so vast and the companies of one sector or another were equally recognised. Today, the street has been all but drowned out in comparison to indoor theatre. We can therefore state that, for now, there is a large void in street theatre.

I arrived at the same reflection this summer after visiting the European street festivals. Most of this year's projects displayed little creative content and were done with very little investment. Why is this so?

I think that each agent in this sector blames others instead of working together and cooperating: the companies blame the organisers, the organisers blame the suppliers, the director blames the producers.

Finally, the public administration clearly does not have the necessary knowledge or instruments of evaluation for recognising and funding street art productions and festivals.

I feel that theatre companies should become private companies. This, as far as I understand it, would stimulate a more demanding attitude among street companies, and their professionalism would be on a par with that of indoor companies.

What are the possible solutions?

- Improving and increasing the amount of shows produced.
- Putting audience appreciation to use by promoting the street arts as an instrument for social unity and as an identifying element in the life of the cities.
- Opening creation centres specialising in street arts.

In the last several years at the Festival de Viladecans we've gradually implemented different activities for working toward the advancement and recognition of street arts. I would like to cite some of these activities:

- Combining indoor and outdoor programming throughout the entire year,
- Using greater selection criteria when hiring companies in order to maintain the level of artistry as well as audience interest,
- Working certain shows into the indoor programming,
- Offering incentives for co-production: this means that we get involved in the creation process and that we closely follow all stages of production in order to ensure the project's viability and its level of interest. When we take on a co-production, we evaluate the proposed project and provide a certain percentage of the overall production costs. We also help out with a percentage of the costs of dissemination. What we request in exchange is public exposure to our festival.

Roser Vilá

First of all, I want to congratulate Fira Tàrrrega and its director on the new direction the festival has taken in its commitment to the non-conventional arts.

I am going to focus on the topic of production and dissemination of the arts in the street. I personally prefer the term arts "in" the street, rather than "of" the street (translator's note: the customary term for Street Arts in Latin-based languages, if translated literally into English, would be Arts of the Street).

23 Arts is a distributor that serves companies as well as organisers. Among other activities, and in spite of our small company size, we have created a network of distributors (in a country with a context such as ours).

The current scene has undergone a tremendous shift in the last five years. With the onset and growth of the internet and other means of dissemination, it might seem that the role of the distri-

butor, crucial until now, would be called into question or else not be necessary. I firmly believe that our role is more necessary now than it ever has been.

Event organisers deal with an enormous mass of information which is difficult to evaluate, verify and study. That, I believe, is our task and our function when working alongside organisers: building a bridge between creators and organisers.

At 23 Arts, we bring shows from other countries and we organise their tours in Spain. These tours are quite complicated in the street arts sector, and incur very high economic and logistical costs which are practically impossible for the companies to handle on their own. That is where our work is crucial. Most of the street arts in Spain are organised outside of the festival framework. Most of the contracting is done for the traditional regional festivals; this is problematic for scheduling, because those dates are unchangeable.

Companies like ours also carry out the important work of dissemination and publicity for the companies participating in the dramatic arts fairs in our country. These activities involve a substantial economic risk, although in the end it is one of the best options for promoting new productions and their organisers. We would like to be able to export this strategy to other major European festivals.

Our second area of activity is in promoting Catalan and Spanish companies abroad. In order to have an effect in other countries, we take one or two productions per year to the main European festival

Chairman

It seems there's never enough time to deal with issues in depth. In summary, in today's discussion we've talked about public and private (endeavours), about tour organisation, about quality in programming, a topic that seems to me particularly relevant. We've also discussed union solidarity and another fundamental aspect, which is the dichotomy between mass programming and programmes organised on the basis of proximity, and out of love.

I wonder what sort of modifications these issues will undergo on the European scale. As Fabien Audooren said a moment ago, Europe, more than a market, is a place of convergence.

Fabien Audooren

The experiences we've had at my festival in the areas of production and dissemination are varied. The most well-known of the projects in which my festival has been involved is EUNETSTAR.

The principles are similar to those of In Situ. Various European festivals decided to come together at a given moment to give a boost to the new creations. In three years we produced around thirty small and mid-sized creations. At the beginning we thought that these productions were going to receive wide circulation among the project's member festivals. These festivals were very diverse and this presented a great difficulty in dissemination. The wealth and fragility of this network was precisely its great diversity. In Flanders the situation of street arts in general is not very good. In order to produce a certain amount of shows, we form partnerships and in this way commit ourselves to dissemination each time that we support a production.

There is now a new platform, Meridians, which comprises, among others, Fira Tàrrrega, Cognac, Ana Desetnica, etc. This time we decided to support only three productions with a minimum involvement in three festivals per production. Our experience over the years has been that each time we are involved in a production we are also out of necessity involved in the dissemination. Both issues are ultimately indissoluble. If we don't accept this, the endeavour could fail.

Third round table :

Street Arts and Territories: Specific Links with the Audiences

Speakers

Anne Tucker (Manchester International Arts, United Kingdom)

She's artistic director of outdoor festivals and events in Manchester and the North West of England. Since 1994 we have staged several street and park festivals including Ona Catalana (1994), Streets Ahead (1995 – 2000), Garden of Delights (2003 – 5) and Feast! (2006 – 7) We also work closely with the important British showcasing organisation x.trax. Additionally we have presented many spectacular shows for large audiences, bringing companies from across Europe, Asia and Australia to Manchester.

The focus of our work is to create events that attract visitors from many different cultures and across all ages to enjoy coming together to share a common experience. We make efforts to target minority communities, refugee and asylum-seeking families, elderly people and people with disabilities, and plan our programmes to contain features of interest to the widest possible range of audience. Our events are always free or nearly-free.

Anne Gonon (France)

After working with some French street theatre companies (26000 Couverts, Deuxième Groupe d'Intervention), Anne Gonon finished her doctoral thesis, which she defended in June 2007. In it, she discusses the particularities of the spectator's role in street theatre as well as the questions and risks involved regarding the street theatre's audience. She collaborated with HorLesMurs in compiling a survey of *street artists in Europe* for the European Parliament as well as a preliminary survey of the public policies in favour of the circus and street arts in Europe for the Circostrada network.

Manel Pons Romero (d'Aigua Teatre Ciutadà, Spain)

Manuel Pons Romero studied Political Science in Barcelona, specialising in the theme of citizen participation. He trained in the Theatre Arts in Italy and followed the specialised curriculum of FAI AR (Advanced Itinerant Street Arts Learning Programme) in France. In 2001 he created the performance company d'Aigua Teatre Ciutadà, with which he developed a methodology of theatrical participation. Amongst other projects, he is currently developing a Laboratory of creation in public spaces and is a part of Ex-Voto, the artists' collective based in France.

Goro Osojnik (Ana Desetnica Festival, Slovenia)

Goro Osojnik is actor and artistic director of Ana Desetnica, International Street Theatre Festival in Ljubljana (Slovenia). Since 1996, he has been Director of Ana Monro Theatre Group which has since produced more than 40 different shows and performances.

Since 1998, the festival has taken place in Ljubljana as a stand-alone festival dedicated to street and urban arts and in Maribor, as a part of the big Lent Summer Festival. Around these two mayor festival parts there are also smaller events and festivals in different Slovene cities which form an informal network called Ana Desetnica.net. Lately the festival has also joined international street theatre festival production network "Meridians" as a co-organiser.

Since 2001, he has directed several shows for the London based Sign Dance Collective. From 2003 to 2006 was a board member of EUNETSTAR, the European street arts network for production and dissemination. Still is a board member of Circostrada Network, the European street arts and new circus platform for information, research and professional exchanges.

Synthesis of debates

Chairman

Jel have to say that prior to the debate we were speaking at length amongst ourselves and several topics and questions came up, such as, for example: Is street theatre popular art? Can it be said that this form of expression attracts all spectators? We spoke about the prejudices the spectator has toward street theatre, about a certain nostalgia for the '60s and '70s, about the current interest shown by politicians in street theatre. Has street theatre been domesticated? The current trend in participatory theatre, the plurality of proposals, the role of the media in publicising street arts were all also discussed.

Now each member of the round-table has time to contribute to the debate.

Manel Pons

The audience! From the beginning stages of our collective, the audience was a central question. Our desire was to bring about the disappearance of the audience. The audience as active and reactive material, scenographic and interactive material without guided participation. Profligacy and orgy with the audience. All of which led us to an interest in the concept of the "party".

The origins of the d'Aigua collective. It was created in 2001, formed in the beginning by two political analysts and an economist with artistically restless tendencies.

We designed a strategy based on our own analysis of social reality. The conclusion we came to was that social relations are full of barriers, barriers that separate people by socio-economic class, by culture, by age. We looked around us and saw that the people in our midst at the university looked like us. We would go to an exhibit: the same people. A protest: the same people. In a bar, at a social gathering: always the same people. One of our objectives was to explore the possibility of transcending these barriers. We thought that there was a possible dialogue from which we could extract a henceforth untapped creative potential.

Our desire was to work in contemporary artistic creation fed on exotic fruit, canned tuna, popcorn, salmon, all in a single space: the street.

At the start we didn't know what taking the street as a creative space meant. We found out later. And, among other things, we found that in the street contact with the audience is unavoidable: you see them, you see every one of their reactions (as opposed to in indoor theatre).

Aside from space, time is also important: we decided to work on the time of the "party". How to contribute to a renewal of the "party".

We define all of this as Citizen Theatre. You can take it as one more label. What we were looking for with this name was to mark a difference from what is known as social theatre.

Methodology of theatrical participation: the basic aspect of this encounter between political analysts, artists and citizens is the fact that we started from zero. From an empty space. Everybody starts off in the same state of being lost. This notion of equality is basic. How do we approach our creations?

The first phase, lasting around three months, is a period of publicising and communication. Two or three people communicate in

order to find this group of around fifty people who will comprise the creation. How do we contact the people? In neighbourhood association meetings, ads posted in shops, the internet. We always try to form groups of people of different ages (between ten and sixty years), from different social classes and cultural backgrounds. Then we begin a period of work lasting around six months, seven hours of work per week, during which we set in motion a series of workshops with the artists, always with improvisation, creation and brainstorming as the basis of the work.

At the end of this stage, the whole group meets for a weekend to draw up a broad outline of the show.

The result is a piece that is performed only once. With visual language and live music as the basis, it is registered in the neighbourhood's festival calendar.

As a consequence of grouping together people from very diverse backgrounds, the audience at these performances is highly varied. We certainly have not managed to "annihilate" it. When I speak of the annihilation of the audience, the end goal is to remove the barrier that separates the spectator from the performance itself. We hope that everyone feels that they are involved in thus doing away with the traditional notion of "audience".

Anne Tucker

To a certain degree, my contribution is related to what Manel Pons talked about, since many of the ideas he put forth, and which he brings together in the creation of something called "a show", are the same foundations on which we are trying to build something which in the end we call "a festival".

My experience is as a festival director in Manchester and the surrounding areas. I will use Manchester as an example. The setting and analysis of what occurs in this city seems particularly interesting to me for discussing marketing issues and how to attract certain markets and audiences.

Manchester is a large city in northern England with a very wide-ranging population. There is a large poor population, there are many people whose first language is not English. There are many refugees and political asylum seekers, as the City Council is leftist and has an open policy toward receiving this sector of the population. There are many unemployed and single-parent families, with many children and very little income. Manchester is truly an immense multicultural city.

Many cities in England have exactly the same city centre, with the same shops, the same shopping centres for people with money. What do we see in these centres? That most people are white with purchasing power; and anyone who isn't white, or who is poor, does not come to the city centre. They don't feel comfortable or good here. Therefore, to organise a festival here is to hold a festival for only a very small part of the population. We observed this phenomenon and we pondered on how we could organise a festival for everyone; a festival that would attract everyone. It's one of the issues that Mercé Saumell brought up: street arts are for everyone. I wonder, is that true?

In Manchester we have a huge diversity of art forms, so our challenge is to create events that compete for space in the local papers and on TV. Manchester is well-known for its football. There are at least 10 or 12 pages on football in the newspaper and maybe a quarter page for culture. In that quarter page, we have two or three very prestigious theatres, large concert halls, lots of cinemas and many other things. Music in Manchester is also very important. There have been very prestigious groups for the last thirty years.

If I've chosen Manchester to discuss our work, it's because it clearly

shows that the question of whether street art reaches everyone is not a reality and that, to make it so, we have to work very hard, especially in the socio-cultural setting of cities like Manchester.

In England, we now have what we call community art. These are projects which offer incentives, through various means of artistic expression, for working with the less-privileged sectors of the population, such as the elderly, children, the handicapped. For years there have been truly enthusiastic, powerful projects with frankly interesting results. And this is where a great deal of public financing goes, over and above street festivals.

This is our background. From here on, our question is: How can we build something that will hit home, something that will attract all of these people and that will allow us to work together? I believe that street festivals can do it and also bring new aspects to the work begun with community art.

In England, people are becoming more and more divided, society is becoming more and more compartmentalised. There are activities especially for children, others just for adolescents, something for every musical taste, for every urban tribe. If you dress a certain way, you go to certain bars, drink certain things. Everything is truly very separated, and there are many subdivisions among the youth. The more the internet develops, the more people shut themselves in with their computer and communicate via their computer: myspace, youtube. So the chance for them to get together, to laugh together, do things together seems more and more difficult, more reduced. What we try to do is analyse and study each of these phenomena. We believe that what we do through our festivals strives to go beyond this situation and propose alternatives to this problematic issue.

At the same time, we have huge problems in many cities in England where Friday and Saturday nights are dominated by heavy-drinking youth. So the atmosphere isn't very pleasant; it's quite sad. How can we reach these people? How can we approach them? How can we get families to feel like spending time together, going to the city centre and enjoying it?

We try to instil this desire in families, creating a fun, pleasant time for sharing.

Another one of our objectives is to approach the "invisible" communities that have their own culture and that we only ever see at their celebration times, weddings; they have magnificent dances, music, numerous artistic expressions and they remain hidden and invisible to the rest of the city. When we approach them and ask if they would like to be involved in our festival, they're delighted. It's wonderful for them and they ask why we don't do this sort of thing more often. Most of the communities are still "invisible".

Summarising, all of this is our experience, everything we are trying to do.

What I would like to bring to today's debate is that simply calling an event "street festival" and offering free access in Manchester doesn't mean that everybody is going to come. It's not so simple or immediate. To bring that about, much work is required as well as a large number of initiatives.

I would just like to point out two or three interesting things that we do to make this happen. The key points of our work:

Providing cultural entertainment that represents the different communities. This is demanding work: going to see the groups, asking where they come from, researching, documenting, going to see the people that work with refugees in order to understand the newly-arrived communities, going out onto the street to ask people where they live, who their neighbours are. We call this door-to-door, and it's a chore for one day and another and another. The aim

is to know our public.

The second point is to contact the communities and invite them to participate in our festival, integrating all of the communities and creating a place within our festival for their artistic expression. It enables them, in turn, to be recognised, to share their traditions with the rest of the public and become acquainted with other traditions and communities. This is what enriches our festival.

Finally, the issue of communicating our festival. We print out an official programme and flyers. We have a big communications campaign, but it's not enough. We have to invest more means and money in order to reach all sectors of the population. Looking for new strategies, for example, communicating in their languages. Right now, our publicity is done in 17 different languages in addition to our general programme printed in English. We post information in their doctor's offices, in their shops, their associations. It's a sensitive way of approaching other audiences.

At the same time we also have a large sign campaign, in parks, on the streets and roads. They are highly visual signs because some people don't know how to read or they just don't pick up informational leaflets, flyers, newspapers, etc.

It's a truly difficult job. So in conclusion I'll reiterate that it's not so easy to say that street festivals reach everyone. You've got to work at it, because it can be done.

Anne Gonon

I'm going to introduce a fairly different vision from the two that have come before me at this table. I am a researcher, and I recently presented my thesis on street theatre and its relationship with the public. I worked exclusively with French companies, but I am aware that in the end the difficulties are common to the companies in other European countries.

The idea of working with street arts audiences arose at the very start of my experience and observations as a spectator.

As opposed to other artistic fields, if there's something that we will always find in the street arts, it's an audience, a large one. The size is not the problem. What we have not yet been able to do is identify that audience. We don't know its sociological profile and, going still further, we don't know if they really see the shows, what their reactions are, their opinions. All of this inspired an enormous curiosity in me.

The second thing that I was able to verify while working within the street theatre companies is that the audience is an omnipresent figure in discourse as much among street artists as in institutions and organisers in the sector. In other disciplines, the audience is obviously also referred to, but not in such a systematic way.

What was fundamental for me in completing my research was ascertaining that:

- The audience is interested in us,
- The audience is at the very heart of the creative process and dissemination,
- There is a specificity in the relationship that is established with the audience.

Up to this point, everyone is in agreement. It's when you try to pin down just exactly on what that specificity is based when things start to get complicated and confusing.

This is why I decided to launch into this study and to try to understand what's behind that huge myth.

I'll try to summarise my procedure in this study: when discussing street arts, you cannot separate the question of creation from the question of dissemination. It's an artistic field where the question of cultural democratisation and the question of aesthetics and the

art forms are intrinsically linked. There is a real will to go toward the other. By this I don't mean that artists from other sectors don't have the same desire. Simply put, this fact is highlighted in a uniquely sincere and fundamental way in street creations. It was in the 1970s, the first motor impulse that spurred artists to go out onto the street, when artist thought that by the simple fact of being in the middle of public space, the encounter with that audience that doesn't ordinarily go to theatres, concerts or arts galleries would naturally come about. In reality, this doesn't happen so naturally, nor is it so simple. This issue of the democratisation of the audience leads to many difficulties that have been aired throughout the day: the issue of accessibility, the fact that it is free. Placing a free show in the middle of the street is not enough for reaching everybody. We are now aware that it's not as simple as that. And it must be said that the means of dissemination for bringing this about require intense work.

The second issue is the writing of the performances. What strategies do the artists use to bring the spectator into the show in an exceptional way? I've worked on this theme through the analysis of numerous shows and by interviewing the spectators in order to understand to what degree there was a specific writing and, most importantly, to what degree the spectator had a different status as compared to other dramatic art forms.

I'd like to, once again, point out the importance of the fact that both axes are actually connected. There is no need to try to separate the issue of creation from that of the relationship with the public. The artists have invented an artistic idiom with choices and aesthetic decisions along that line of work.

Although my study is focussed primarily on qualitative forms of analysis, there are now a certain number of studies and statistics that provide us with some data concerning the audiences of street arts. HorsLesMurs has published out a study on the nine European EUNETstar festivals. There are other regional and national studies that have been carried out in France and in other European countries.

As always in these cases, it is difficult to come to conclusions, but they do provide a different vision from the one we previously had of our work. They are excellent tools for work and evaluation for festival organisers and directors.

As a conclusion to these studies, we know that street arts audiences do have specific characteristics.

It is a mixed public in terms of social background and age; which is to say that, in effect, the street arts have "non public", as we say in France, that public that we don't find in other artistic and cultural sectors.

The downside is that we still have certain social determinisms and that, yet again, as in the other sectors, there is a large number of spectators with a very high socio-cultural level.

In itself, this is not negative, the fact that this type of public is also present here. It simply serves as a reminder that we must continue working if we really want to reach all types of public and hold true to what we say.

Goro Osojnik

I have been invited to this discussion as a festival organiser. The festival is called Ana Desetnica and it takes place in Ljubljana (Slovenia).

From the outset, the objectives of this festival have been:

- To create a favourable framework for the companies and their creations.
- To ensure a good presentation of the performances and shows for

the audience and professionals.

- To maintain a sense of fidelity and dynamism among our audience and achieve active participation.

- To create a connection with the city, meaning: with its citizens. The study conducted by Eunetstar gave us the opportunity to find out who our public was. It was rather surprising, as we had previously thought our audience was made up of every type of person. We soon discovered that it was actually only a small part of the population. Even though it was a more diverse public than that of the opera or other sectors, it was still less diverse than what we had thought.

We also ascertained that our public was one of the youngest audiences of all the festivals that were being held.

We were still convinced that the street arts must be for everyone, so we decided to work toward making this a reality.

To do so, we developed four strategies.

We found that the people living in the city's suburbs were not coming to our festival, and nor were certain social sectors belonging to other cultures.

As a consequence, we decided to create a Cultures Fair, a mid-point between social and cultural event. The first one was held last year.

In the next one, the participants have extended their activity and their involvement to our street arts festival.

Another objective was to reach students, and young people in general. It's difficult to explain what we did. To summarise, we invited everyone between 20 and 30 years of age in Slovenia who wanted to present something in the street, even if it hadn't been specifically created for the street or even if it wasn't a dramatic piece. The public's response was excellent.

We then set up a training programme, a school for the street arts. The course lasts one year, and there is a production at the end.

We have also worked toward bringing about a connection and cohesion among the various audiences. To meet that end, we created the "friends of Ana Desetnica" programme, whose purpose is to have the spectators choose part of the programming. Perhaps through this process, the connection with the public will be stronger.

The final question is: why do all of this?

I feel that there are certain essential issues in street arts. The relationship between actor and audience. The unity of all of the people comprising a single audience. And, as Anne pointed out, this shared experience gives people the chance to speak, to get closer to each other.

Conclusions

Stéphane Simonin

Director of HorsLesMurs

Amanda Díaz-Ubierna Casariego

Artist and co-ordinator of the Catalonia meeting

First of all, we would like to thank the Fira Tàrraga team for hosting the colloquium on this, its first day. The festival's 27th edition, with its more than 9,000 participating professionals was the ideal context for the three *Diversity of the Street Arts in Europe* round table discussions.

The colloquium had two main goals, the first of which was to present the *Street Arts in Europe* study, which symbolises an important move forward for the sector within Europe. The second goal was to continue to deepen our knowledge and bring to light the various realities the street arts are confronted with in the different member countries of the Union. While our intention was to analyse our differences and highlight our common issues, we move ahead together in creating concrete alternatives so as to overcome our obstacles. It appears that the problem of artistic and political acknowledgement for the street arts could be resolved by the Union's involvement, as well as by cooperation between cultural operators within the countries of the Union. The artists need this acknowledgement in order to improve their work conditions and their artistic productions.

This colloquium has been organised by the Circostrada Network, the first European network of information, research and professional exchange. The network, which is founded and coordinated by HorsLesMurs, includes around 30 correspondents from the circus and street arts. Circostrada Network receives support from European-based cultural organisations on behalf of the European Commission. This financial and political support is very important because it contributes to an improved organisation as well as better representation for these sectors within Europe. The Circostrada Network's work calendar includes one annual colloquium, three professional meetings, and one comparative study.

These last few years have seen projects involving co-productions and co-distributions on the European scale. We have already mentioned Meridians, In Situ, etc. Their very existence proves the benefits and necessity of working side by side. The

difficulties encountered and the sector's current situation in each country represented at today's colloquium leave no shadow of a doubt as to the extreme diversity now present in Europe. However, the issues brought up at the round table discussions, the avenues explored in the work of each country, as well as the possible actions to be taken in order to advance the sector are fundamentally the same.

It seems that in order for a sector to grow it must first undergo a preliminary step of deepening the general awareness of its own context, history and the main players who allow that sector to exist. We have therefore noticed that the countries where statistical studies were carried out were the first to work towards an improvement in the street arts' working conditions, a definition of specific policy, as well as clearer identification of its main players.

At the same time, the notion of a lack of acknowledgement sometimes implies a lack of commitment, or a poor understanding of the sector itself. On the other hand, the institutions do not always have the necessary analytical perspective for an accurate qualitative evaluation of the projects or accompanying measures to be invented. After all, the specialised critic is often absent and the street artists, who are mostly self-taught, do not work sufficiently on reflecting upon and communicating their practices.

Training is one of the sector's most fragile aspects when compared with the different artistic sectors. Here, training implies a wider concept than the artists' acquisition of certain artistic foundations and specific techniques. A training programme also offers theoretical foundations, critical and intellectual perspective, as well as analytical and evaluative tools. This is why it is not only important that specialised schools exist, but also that specialised or optional curricula be introduced in existing coursework (conservatories, universities, etc.). This would allow for an increased level of professionalisation in the street arts, creating careers not only for artists, but also for critics, theorists, teachers, researchers and managers, just as was the case in the development of other artistic sectors.

Among the specificities of the street arts that are emphasised throughout the European territory, two major points stand out:

- The inherent and indissoluble relationship between the notions of production and distribution. The common denominator for all the performances is the performance space, which is the public space. This explains the diversity of artistic ideas offered to the audience but also that the conception of a street arts show is directly linked to its distribution. We must therefore avoid general strategies of production that might apply to all performance creations in the public space. We must instead imagine communal strategies within centres of production and distribution.

- The question of the audience is omnipresent. This includes the matter of its place during the conception of a performance work to its very role, also dealing with the validation or acknowledgement it brings to the work and sectors, given the large number of spectators who "consume" the street arts today. Let us also point out that the audience is one of the most common subjects in the studies carried out to this day. Despite all that, this audience, like urban populations themselves, is becoming increasingly sectorised, compartmentalised, or "communitarianised". It seems essential that we get to know this audience better in order to better integrate it and allow it to participate in cultural life. The street arts are capable of taking on this great task of social cohesion.

If Europe is a large meeting space, a place of intercultural dialogue, then we may conclude this day by stating that the street arts just might represent the artistic discipline which best reflects this spirit of communal construction...

Contribution

A Highly Diversified Recognition

Manuel Vincente Vilanova Guinot, chairman of the first round table

Founder and director of the performance company Xarxa Teatre, whose work has been performed in over 40 countries, Manuel Vilanova is also Editor of the revue *Fiestacultura* and the website www.teatrodecalle.com. He also heads the Vila-Real Street Theatre Festival and the Magdalena Circus. Manuel Vilanova collects and writes essays for *La escena callejera, historia de las artes de calle en el Estado Español*. He is co-author of *Teatro de calle: 20 años aprendiendo* and gives conferences on the street arts and management of private cultural firms.

The question of obstacles

Stéphane Simonin stated that, "all of the European countries place obstacles in the way of considering street arts as being equal to the rest of the dramatic arts". In spite of the fact that I, as moderator, could not express my opinions in the debate, it is no less true that I answered, "True, Stéphane, but in some countries the obstacles are greater than in others". And believe me when I say, just as I did when wrapping up the discussion, that I would have preferred to actively debate instead of moderating, biting my nails out of not being able to condemn our situation, that of the Spanish artists who choose the street as the place for performing our art. The company that I belong to, Xarxa Teatre, does not work primarily in the street because we feel condemned to do so, but because it is our choice as artists. We feel at home putting on the shows that we create, and observing the response of spectators all over the world. Nonetheless, the obstacles to be overcome are very high. Perhaps this is why the major Spanish street theatre companies, who defined a trend and an aesthetics for all of Europe, have gradually abandoned the street and enclosed themselves into indoor spaces. Although the reader might find this a logical progression – having found success on the street, they can gain access to the theatre – I must say that the reader would be wrong. We street artists are first and foremost artists, and although we may have decided to perform on streets, in squares, on mountains, cliffs, the facades of cathedrals or in underground passages, we are still artists – which is why we don't reject acting in indoor spaces either.

The problem for artists in some countries, among which is Spain, is that it is very difficult to obtain institutional funding for producing street shows; it is, however, easier to gain access to that funding if the show is being planned for theatres. This is why the big Spanish companies have had to move indoors; nobody helped them produce for the street. And the obstacle suddenly became so high that artists couldn't get past it. At least in France substantial unemployment coverage is provided, thus enabling artists to be more demanding with their work; it is much easier for them to make a living from it. The over 250 annual contributions required in Spain for being eligible for unemployment is a very far cry from the 42 that are required in France, or from Italy's 150. So, in Spain, without funding for creating shows and with one of Europe's toughest systems of unemployment coverage for artists, the obstacle becomes practically insuperable.

A matter of spelling

In answer to the question on the recognition of the authors of street shows, Nicole Ruppert said, "For Germans, there is no author in street arts"; to which I pulled an incredulous face, unfitting of a discussion moderator, prompting Nicole to add, "Especially the circus arts". "My God! So much for Germany!" I thought, but didn't say. And I was suddenly reminded of an email exchange that I had had that dealt with the production of my show *Veles e Vents* in Germany with the agent provided by SGAE (Authors Society) for defending my author's rights in that country. According to this agent, the German festival that had been kind enough to contract my show had to pay 10% of all expenses incurred. These expenses included the basic fee, the company's travel expenses, food for the actors, the hire fee for the stage on which we were to perform, the fee for hiring sound and light equipment, security, the hotel (including hotels during the trip there) and even the cost of the insurance that the organisation had prepared for us to put the show on. As a result, the author's fee was similar to the amount that the company was charging for putting the show on. This system struck me as disproportionate, and I viewed it as a protectionist barrier to keep foreign authors from being able to debut in Germany. Who is going to hire a foreign street artist if the author's rights are two or three times the basic fee itself? No one, obviously.

The formula presented by Anne Tucker (Manchester International Arts) during debate with the public was that it was the companies that must take the quantity due for author's rights into account when calculating the basic fee for the show. This, too, was a shock to my concept of author's rights; likewise, it showed that, while not denying the existence of an author, whether individual or collective, it was clearly still very difficult to draw author's rights in the United Kingdom. The information given by an organiser of an English festival to an SGAE agent ran through my mind: How did we expect to collect authorship if *El Foc del Mar* was a castle of fireworks? My soul in a pit. And in Spain when the head of SGAE says, "All street shows receive the same minimum amount, irrespective of whether there is just one actor or the choirs of the Russian army". Then when he sees your look of disbelief at this erroneous statement, he adds, "But each author can charge whatever he wants". So, if you don't agree with the minimum, the street author must hurl himself into the ocean without a life jacket and accept that the organisers will all be exchanging the comment, "There goes that money-grabbing author that wants to collect a percentage of his rights instead of accepting a minimum payment".

Oddly enough, that isn't the answer they give an indoor theatre author. There, payments are matched on the basis of box-office earnings or theatre capacity if there is no entrance fee. They all receive the same percentage. Not the same amount. Even Pau Llacuna, manager of Fira Tàrrrega, admitted to me that it isn't fair to pay the same amount for an opening-night show as that paid for a smaller-sized show. Once again, France is the country that is furthest ahead in the recognition of street arts authorship. The inclusion of a representative of the street arts on the administra-

tive board of its authors' association has put an end to doubts and differentiations of authorship. No author can be penalised for the place where the show is performed.

Legislative issue

Anyone who has been present at one of the many forums on which Frank Wilson and I have both participated knows that our opinions generally coincide. So I was very puzzled when, in answer to one of my lines of reasoning – the need to differentiate European Union funding on a basis of whether it is intended for festival networks or for companies – Frank said that he was bothered by the way the question had been phrased. My reasoning was that the European Union's new culture programmes, Culture 2000 and Culture 2007, had managed to edge theatre companies out of the programmes themselves, while festival networks predominated. As a result, companies had to get in contact with a festival in order to receive aid from the European Union or, what would be even worse, fictitious companies might be assembled for each project, taking components from already existing companies. A similar situation in the first years of the Spanish democracy effectively dismembered the Independent Theatre companies, the country's largest theatre movement of the 20th century.

In Spain, in order to avoid this problem, calls for proposals are issued on the basis of two different categories of funding. The first is open to theatres and festivals; the second to companies. My question was if they thought that the European Union should also open two separate doors when requesting proposals. However, the translator must have incorrectly interpreted my meaning when opting for the English word "mediation". This word is used for professionals who work as advisors, promoters or managers, which meant that my reasoning had become a direct attack on a group of experts for whom I have tremendous respect. Fortunately, my words were correctly understood by those who were following the debate in any of the other three languages being used. As for me, I fully agree with Frank's statement in wrapping up the controversy, "Both companies and festivals must work hand in hand if we want to achieve greater recognition on behalf of the European Union". Stéphane Simonin, in turn, added that, aside from Culture 2000/7, the European Union sponsors other cultural programmes to which companies can directly apply. This led to another problem on the European level: the difficulty with which orders from the European Union reach the administrations. The faulty information behind cultural aid goes against the spirit of the very norms that they wish to promote.

Media issue

Italy is one of the countries of the European Union that boasts a centuries'-old tradition of street theatre. The companies, authors and actors of the Commedia dell'Arte have earned important recognition in the evolution of theatre on our continent. However, Luigi Fusiani lamented the persecution dealt street theatre by some intellectuals in the media. He even cited the article "The wings of street theatre must be clipped", published in *L'Espresso* by Rita Cirio in the 1950s. As a consequence, the street arts have not been able to recover the status they enjoyed for centuries. Similar cases must exist all throughout Spain. The flourishing of Catalan street theatre in the '70s and '80s would not have been possible without the constant support of a group of Catalan critics and theorists capable of taking that step into the underground of a defunct train line in order to

witness the performance of a completely unknown street theatre company (La Fura dels Baus). The critics who were present praised that new dramatic proposal and were instrumental in getting the show produced in Barcelona some months later. The existence of a renowned critic who defended their street work counteracted the opinions of the more conservative critics who defined the show, *Accions*, as a performance by hooligans. Comedians of La Fura dels Baus would have had a very tough time gaining renown without the intellectual support of critics, theorists and theatre scholars. Critiques are fundamental for intellectual recognition. However, by saying this I don't want to give the idea that there is a good critical review and a bad one. My reasoning has another aim. The critics have become very specialised and the standards of evaluation cannot be equally applied in all cases. Once again, let Spain serve as example. When musicals were starting to be produced in Spain, there were no qualified critics and the media sent their opera critics to cover musicals. The result was frightening. Analysed as opera, those musicals were rubbish, and the critics launched a savage attack on them. *Maricel*, one of the great musicals that has been produced in Spain, was ripped to shreds without mercy. Nonetheless, it ran for several years, it has been reproduced a number of times and it has toured throughout Spain. Something similar has happened to certain street shows, which, in spite of having been ignored by some critics, have been praised by others and booked time and again all over the world. For the aforementioned reasons, a critical form specialising in the street arts, one with educational functions, is urgently needed in the dramatic fields.

There were many other topics in which a different mode of operating was observed among the four countries represented at the table (Germany, Italy, the UK and France). And of course they are also different from the country of this moderator. I was left with the feeling that the content of the proposed theme, "Intellectual and Political Recognition...", required one or various sessions more, since the points of divergence became notable when different realities were discussed. It was not in vain that Hors les Murs had entitled this event *Diversity of Street Arts in Europe*.

Contribution

A Long and Evocative Road

Jordi Jané i Romeo, chairman of the second round table

Jordi Jané is a professor of Circus Theory and History, as well as a member of the Tribune of Cultural Journalism at Blanquerna-Ramon Llull University, and has published critiques and essays on the circus in periodicals such as the journal *Avui*. He is a member of the Italian revue *Circo's* editing committee and a consultant for Spain's national documentation centre for the circus arts. He has also taken place in numerous conferences and seminars on the circus and is a member of a prominent jury rewarding National Culture Prizes. Along with Joan Minguet, he served as steward of the *Circ contemporani català, l'art del risc* expo in 2006. His publications include *Centenari Charlie Rivel* (1996 and 2000), *Les arts escèniques a Catalunya* (2001), *Les arts del circ* (Art, geografia i societat, 2002), and *Li-Chang, el xinès de Badalona* (2004).

Before the colloquium on *Diversity in Street Arts in Europe*, we had a somewhat optimistic view about the future influence of street arts, perhaps the most popular of the art forms today, in Europe. However, the truth is that there are a number of stumbling blocks which we must strive to quickly overcome in order to harmonise the diverse realities of these arts on our continent. One of the positive outcomes of the three debates held in the Colloquium was the identification of some of those stumbling blocks. These not only concern production processes but also, and especially, the indispensable step of publicising shows to be performed in Europe, which, for various reasons, is still a far cry from being a homogeneous market.

Multicoloured Europe

At the first debate (Degree of artistic and political recognition of the sector in Europe), we ascertained the differences and similarities among the cultural politics of the different countries. Then, the discussion over which I had the honour to preside (Current state and existing means of production and dissemination in the sector) reflected a varied mosaic of experiences concerning systems for creating and distributing productions. The exchange of experiences left many fronts open and some questions hanging in the air (incidentally, this was precisely in line with the objectives of Jordi Corominas, Fira Tàrrrega's new artistic director: the first step in solving problems is to determine their profile and consistence).

The mosaic of which I just spoke was already present in the very composition of the round-table: four professionals hailing from France, Belgium and Catalonia, each working in street arts in a different field. At one point, I had the feeling that the discussion panel was too heterogeneous. The statements about the big projects coming from the region Catalans often refer to as Nord enllà (beyond North) contrasted starkly with the problems of functional immediacy in our daily southern life. However, another goal of the Colloquium was to compare experiences and realities between nations with unequal economic resources, different cultu-

ral traditions and also disparate audiences. The final objective was to come up with a framework for joint action under the auspices of Europe-wide programmes, such as the networks for production and dissemination In Situ and Meridians.

Creation Plus Dissemination

As coordinator of the In Situ partnership, the Frenchman Jean-Sebastien Steil stated that we should view Europe not as a show-financing entity, but rather as a territory where artists from different countries can meet, exchange ideas and work together. Steil asserts that Europe must be an instrument for renewal in artistic creation.

In Situ is a platform sponsored by the Marseille-based Lieux Publics National Centre for the Creation of Street Arts, which, thanks to support from the European Commission, has been in operation since 2003, in partnership with some twenty festivals. Among these are La Strada (Graz, Austria), Valladolid (Spain), UZ Events (Glasgow, U.K.), Oerol (Terschelling Island, Holland) and VivaCité (Sotteville-lès-Rouen, France). During its first three years (2003-2006) In Situ produced nine projects, which Steil classified as ambitious, eclectic and innovative. For the triennium 2006-2009, they plan to promote from six to twelve creations, accompanying the artists from the initial writing of the project until the show's international tour. The aim is to thereby facilitate an interaction between artists from different countries, their travels throughout the continent and experiences with different audiences and sensibilities.

Steil advocated broadening the concept of "street arts", defended plurality in creation and placed particular stress on the need to closely follow the creation and dissemination processes of shows (at the following round-table, the researcher Anne Gonon also referred to this last aspect, appealing to cultural democratisation and the evolution of street arts).

Fabien Audooren (director of the International Straattheaterfestival in Ghent, partner of the production and dissemination platform Meridians and cofounder of the network Eunetstar) also insisted on the importance of dissemination. He lamented that Eunetstar have produced many shows, while not applying themselves to distributing them. Based on his experience, he concluded that the festivals that collaborate on a production should be of a similar size and, in any event, that the number of productions should total no more than three.

Diverse Realities

If Steil and Audooren work toward building international networks for creation and dissemination, then the two Catalan speakers demonstrated the distance that separates us from the aforementioned Nord enllà. Rafael Salinas, coordinator of the Festival of Street Theatre and Animation of Viladecans (a town near Barcelona), spoke of the town council's cultural policies aimed at bringing indoor and

outdoor programming into line. In his speech (meaningfully entitled "Street Theatre: Quo Vadis?"), in addition to complaining about subsidies, he held the companies, distributors, organisers, media and public administrations all responsible, in like measure, for the future of street arts. He announced that his festival was planning on co-producing shows, while also regretting the disappearance of many street theatre companies (a fact confirmed in the debate by the Valencian Manolo Vilanova, of Xarxa Teatre).

Another realistic evaluation of current affairs in the sector was given by Roser Vilà, Chairperson of the board of directors of the Spanish Association of Companies for the Distribution and Management of the Dramatic Arts (ADGAE) and head of international relations at 23 Arts Brothers Projections, a Catalan company that has 20-years' experience organising international tours for Spanish and foreign artists. Vilà began by pointing out the huge change brought about by the internet in the mechanics of contracting: while until recently entertainment distributors were the obligatory reference for organisers, they now receive a constant bombardment of information from all corners of the globe, making the figure of the highly expert artistic advisor even more necessary. She spoke about how much effort and constant travel a private business must expend in order to increase its billing (in Catalonia, the autonomous government provides economic support). She stated that, in order to maintain presence in European markets, Spanish companies (organisers/distributors) frequently opt for modest productions which, furthermore, often oblige artists, technicians and promoters to renounce payment for their work. On this matter, she explained, "We cannot forget that we are in the private sector, and that the risk cannot be higher than business and human capacity allow".

Roser Vilà also introduced a differentiating factor in comparison with Europe. In Spain, street shows are normally organised for the "Fiestas Mayores" (traditional local and regional festivals); since these dates are unmovable, it is often difficult to optimise costs by coordinating the tour with other festivals and similar events. She concluded by stressing that associated networks and initiatives such as ADGAE are perhaps the best means for conveying information and projects, which must lead to a greater recognition of street arts, full professionalisation of artists and entrepreneurs and, finally, to the cultural enjoyment of the audience, which is the target and reason for being of all our efforts.

Personal conclusions

The Colloquium of Tàrraga has made it clear that Europe is no monolithic unity, not even in the production and dissemination of street arts. For historical, cultural, economic and social reasons, there are at least two different speeds. This is a factor that we must bear in mind when agreeing on community-based projects. We should take note of chapter 7 (Conclusions and Recommendations) of the study *Street Artists in Europe*, drawn up by Yohann Floch and his team. It insists on making the street arts a motivating force behind economic revitalisation, as well as an element for social and cultural unity in the search for a common European identity; and it includes courses of action designed as much for current member states as for future members. I would add a concept that I deem extremely important: this should all be done in a way that respects and preserves the cultural nuances of the highly diverse nations comprising our Europe. It is undoubtedly a long, thought-provoking road.

Contribution

Relationships with the Audience

Mercè Saumell Vergés, chairman of the third round table

Born in Barcelona in 1961, Mercè Saumell earned her PhD in 2001 from the University of Barcelona. Her specialty is the contemporary performing arts. She is a tenured professor at the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona and teaches graduate courses in the scenic arts at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona as well as Masters' courses in Communication and Art Criticism at the University of Girona. She has collaborated in numerous national and international publications and recently published an educational book entitled *El teatre contemporani* (UOC, 2006).

On September 6, 2007, a round-table discussion entitled "Street Arts and Territory: Unique Relationships with the Audience" took place as part of the Colloquium "Diversity of Street Arts in Europe". The panel of speakers was formed by four experts working in the field of outdoor entertainment. The interest of the debate lay not only in the proposed topic, but also in the different perspectives provided by the speakers, given their different professional careers. The main topic of discussion was: What is the state of street theatre at the start of the 21st century? What new relationships are being established with spectators?

In the '70s, the recuperation of the street on the international level was conceived as liberation from the annulment of the citizen as active participant in social life. Street theatre was ranked alongside democracy. The Situationists, in turn, (recall that Guy Debord's prophetic book "The Society of the Spectacle" dates from 1967) warned against media oppression in western society, which was recovering, economically and socially, from the disasters of WWII. In a now-distant 1972, and in view of the Situationists's rhetoric, Jean Baudrillard called particular attention to the new artistic activities that were taking place in the street: "The street, in this sense, is the alternative and subversive form of the mass media, as it does not constitute, as do the media, an objective medium for messages without an answer, a system of transmission at a distance" (Baudrillard, 1972). According to this intellectual, a symbolic, communal and participatory exchange between cultures of the past would still be possible in the street (just as was once the case in medieval and baroque festivals, on the streets, at Carnival). Today, such an exchange could only happen among small, almost marginal, groups in society, which would nonetheless retain the subversive power of yesteryear.

We need no reminder of how numerous European and American theatre collectives viewed, like Baudrillard, the taking of the street as a free communication zone with tremendous subversive potential. Highly politicised performances appeared on the streets in the United States (Bread and Puppet, Living Theatre) and Latin America (Augusto Boal in Brazil), while in Europe a more festive-anthropological form predominated (without undermining its equally subversive potential) through the work of Odin Teatre, Comediants, Footsbarn Travelling Company, etc. They all had one value in common: the rediscovery of the body of spectators, in the absence of which

this art form was unviable. It was, in short, a return to the vitality of "celebration".

In Catalonia, the poet, dramatist and plastic artist Joan Brossa (one of the group that unreservedly supported the creation of Tàrraga's Street Theatre Festival in 1981) wrote of the supplanting of Carnival for street theatre in his essay "Norms of Masquerade" (1981). In Spain, and with greater intensity in Catalonia, als Comediants assimilated that Carnavalesque, festive, grotesque body, revolutionising and founding the bases of street theatre in our country (the energy and spontaneity of the Mediterranean, the culture of the street and the subversion of Carnival) and gave it international exposure.

The world has undoubtedly changed a great deal since the '70s of the last century, and, by the same token, subversion strategies (still possible?) have changed.

Thus, after a brief overview of the explosion of street theatre in Europe during that epoch, the round-table turned to a comparison with the '80s and '90s, decades in which street theatre became official and more entertainment-based, through festivals, Capital City celebrations, the openings of sporting events, public commemorations: institutionalisation (with its consequent loss of subversive weight), financed in large part by public money, as opposed to other, more radical street shows, with their rocker, futurist or circus aesthetics, performed by professional companies, as well as by anti-establishment groups. In general, there is now a palpable increase in technology and virtuosity, as compared to previous times when pieces were more hand-crafted.

In their opening contribution to the debate, each of the participants related their ideas concerning the function of street theatre today. Manel Pons pointed out that, faced with the lethargy of our surroundings and the depersonalisation of the cities, the street breaks down the barriers between the physical and the cultural. Dramatic actions held in the street are an attempt to revive the traditional celebration and an exploration of how to participate in it. This idea of the citizen and street theatre taken together as community theatre was defended, not only by Manel Pons, but also by Anne Tucker. For her, street theatre can reflect the range of sensibilities coexisting in the European city, a city that is becoming more and more complex. It was interesting to hear her description of how the Manchester city centre is drained of "white inhabitants" at the weekend to be occupied by marginalised groups and tribes of adolescents whose only activity is drinking heavily. Can street events integrate them? And not in the social theatre or "helper" mould (inheritance of the Brazilian director and theoretician Augusto Boal), but rather as a search for ways of integrating different collectives through more personalised discourse.

For the chairperson, a central theme was the myth, or perhaps nostalgia, surrounding the idea of European street theatre in the 1970s, and also the prevailing prejudices (such as the supposed spontaneity or lesser rigour of this type of theatre in comparison with others). This theme was particularly stressed by Anne Gonon, who spoke of the lack of information regarding the audience: Who

are they? What are they interested in? On behalf of the creators, there is a democratising will to move toward and address the other. And if in the '70s, the counterculture (street included) reached a new, novice public, then today what stands out is the fact that street events' audiences are normally habitual consumers of culture and highly confined to their generation. These results, excessively realistic and even disappointing for some, show that the fact of an event's being free is not enough to attract people who are unaccustomed to cultural activities. Her study, of high methodological rigour, provided us with very valuable information and a wide range of realities: the sophistication of today's publicising of cultural events and the competition with other activities sometimes eclipses street theatre in its effort to reach a larger number of potential spectators. And on suggestions: Is there really a specific form of street theatre art that enables greater spectator involvement? Is there really a non-public, a virgin audience, in Europe today?

Following this line of reasoning, the chairperson brought up the question of whether the desire for participation and ideological commitment that is perceived among the most restless of today's creators in the dramatic arts (indoor theatre included) is visible on the street. Pons picked up the thread of this issue in his speech and spoke about his work based on the idea of neighbourhood, of community. He also spoke of linking artistic creation to daily life, to everyday things, and working with the holidays of the collectives living in any given neighbourhood, through the participation of the neighbours themselves (of varying ages, ethnicities, social classes). Pons highlighted the aspiration to understand outdoor dramatic creation as an intercultural dialogue, taking distance from the paternalistic, folkloric street theatre formulas favoured by institutions. Osojnik, in turn, also referred to his project for intermingling spectators from different generations and different religious creeds.

More public? Is street theatre in Europe experiencing a new golden age? Do the politicians now supporting it do so because of citizen demand or do they truly believe in its integrative power? How much influence do such shining successes as the French company Royal de Luxe's *The Sultan's Elephant* in London have? In dealing with these questions, Tucker said that the British government is now earmarking a lot of money for street arts, precisely because of positive citizen response. It is worth mentioning, however, the solid tradition of street theatre in Great Britain. Earlier, Anne Gonon had pointed out how quantitative and qualitative studies, such as the one conducted by HorsLesMurs, show that there is public interest, although it is difficult to come to determining conclusions.

Perhaps, as final reflections, it might be appropriate to take note of how the line between what is art and not-art has gradually faded, in the same way that the differences between high and low culture have become blurred. On this matter, street theatre, in our opinion, faces two challenges. The first is the strictly dramatic and aesthetic, which should lead to a greater capacity for re-elaborating a broad repertory of images. Particular attention should also be paid to the use of sound (the spatiality of sound is all too often overlooked in many productions). Let's not forget that modern spectators belong to the post-cinema generation (and its imagery, as much visual as acoustic, is a veritable reference archive). Secondly, there is the consideration of street theatre as an open dialogue toward other non-arts-based elements. And we are not talking about a nostalgic re-edition of 1970s political street theatre, but rather about finding new potentialities of subversion and about moving closer to, preci-

sely, the street and all that it involves (daily life and the necessary social function of art).

Finally, the chairperson introduced the issue of the televised broadcasting of street shows. What is the response of the public from their armchair at home? Is this aid or punishment for street art? Anne Tucker referred to the difficulty of finding airtime for street arts, the struggle to achieve even an echo on the radio or television and, also, in the printed press (the huge imbalance between barely a passing reference in a paragraph as compared to the twelve pages dedicated to football, for example). And, after questions and comments from the audience, the round-table was concluded.

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