



Working Texts

For workshops and projects

Advice, comments, examples, suggestions

If you are looking for a text, and like one of the ones commented here, do not hesitate to take it on as a working text.

These pages are in PDF format for printing (A4 European settings)
<http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-programme-textos.pdf> (español)
<http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-programme-textes.pdf> (français)

Classic request:

- 1 Participants are asked to choose and bring at least one text of minimum 300 words or more, learnt by heart. (For weekends the text can be 150 to 200 words.) For longer workshops it is good to have a long text : the day a big improvisation is set up you will enjoy the long perspective - otherwise you might have to loop back to the beginning: a pity!
- 2 The work starts with the fantasies and realities of this choice - the text you chose is in many ways your **working artistic contract**, the challenge you give yourself and bring to the work.
- 3 The choice of text is free: it does not have to be a theatre text. Best in English or French for general comprehension (but also Spanish and Italian.) Avoid texts that are too poetically condensed or linguistically complex. We encourage contemporary texts. (Enrique Pardo's especial request : please refrain from Shakespeare – see below.)
- 4 If you decide to bring more than one working text, be cunning about the contrasts between them. For example: genre (maybe bring a theatre monologue and a piece of prose); dramatics (one, full of exclamation marks, the other, dispassionate); cadence (one, written in short percussive phrases, the other in rhetorical prose, etc.)
- 5 Finally: The better one knows one's text 'by heart', the freer one is... to free the text, to let it play. Also, you will have your hands full while on the floor, so it is essential to be free of memory struggles.

Do not hesitate to consult us on these matters.

TEXT CHOICE ADVICE (by Enrique Pardo)

Text advice : I tend to refrain from too much advice for, "the choice is yours and the work starts with your choice". I would encourage greed (ambition) and whim (cunning) in choosing. Mind you, some people chose by casting lots! - like in the old days, when one would open at random Virgil's Enneid (the I Ching was not around). But there again, such a procedure implies a library, with choices. I include a compilation of technical responses to texts proposals. It might help.

"What is contemporary?": here again, I must let you decide. I hear in the question more than 'chronology', possibly also questions of "modernity", "avantgarde", in other words artistic criteria (coherence, emotion, narrative, etc.)

Dada poems: the danger with a 'dada' text (whatever that means to you) is an a priori attitude that can void the text of content (logical, psychological & sentimental) by using a metalanguage which gives you, as an actress, little emotional feedback.... But I like surprises: dada texts certainly have humor, and usually great rhythm.

Shakespeare: the density, complexity and archaic nature of Shakespeare's language does not lend itself to choreographic theatre work – plus, being a 'foreigner' my Shakespeare is as good (or as bad) as my German. This might not be the case for Linda Wise's projects (consult her directly for projects she directs.)

Extracts from comments for the Workshop cum Cabaret Project at Cambridge Drama Centre: choices are influenced by 'cabaret' performing framework: they tend to be shorter than for experimental / pedagogical workshops.

Example 1

Requiem - Kathy Acker, from "Euridice in the Underworld" 1994(?)

Electra's monologue reporting her reactions to learning she has cancer, including a reported dialogue (in actual dialogue form) with George, her woman healer.

Very strong text (plus the author died very recently of breast cancer). Sad, rebellious, serious. In terms of the "Shadow Boxing" project, you are facing a heavyweight confrontation (I am all for it) - your opponents will be Death and Breast Cancer - large shadows! You, me and all the participants will need lucid courage on this one! The text is long (too long) for the project. You must do the editing, it is part of your work in the project. I would advice you edit and halve its length. I look forwards to seeing what you decided. The final decision to chose this text is also yours - I will fight right along you.

Example 2

"I put down my rifle and climbed out of the trench. The Greeks did not shoot at me. I reached Francesco and saw that the side of his head had been blown away. The pieces of skull looked grey and were coated in membrane and thick blood. Some of the fluid was bright red, and some of it was crimson. He was still alive. I looked down at him and my eyes were blinded with tears. I knelt and gathered him into my arms. He was so emaciated from the winter and the hardship that he was as light as a sparrow. I stood up and faced the Greeks. I was offering myself to their guns. There was a silence, and then a cheer came from their lines. One of them shouted hoarsely, 'Bravissimo.' I turned and carried the limp bundle back to my lines. In the trench Francesco took two hours to die. His gore soaked into the sleeves and flanks of my tunic. His shattered head was cradled in my arms like a little child and his mouth formed words that only he could hear. Tears began to follow each other down his cheeks. I gathered his tears on my fingers and drank them. I bent down and whispered into his ear, Francesco, I have always loved you. His eyes rolled up and met mine. He fixed my gaze. He cleared his throat with difficulty and said, I know.

I said, I never told you until now. He smiled that slow laconic smile and said, "Life's a bitch, Carlo." I felt good with you. I saw the light grow dim in his eyes and he began the long slow journey into death. There was no morphia. His agony must have been indescribable. He did not ask me to shoot him; perhaps at the very end he loved his vanishing life."

From Louis de Bernihre's "Captain Corelli's Mandolin" - Comment : the text is great - very poignant - a deep dive, like Francesco's "long slow journey into death" . It is also a good length (for a cabaret piece - maybe short for a training context). With such a text the onus will be on everyone around you (including me) to come up with substantial 'contexts', and lets see if we can live up to the beautiful glimpse of humor in the last exchange between Francesco and Carlo!

Example 3

"A Woman's Guide to Adultery" by Carol Clewlow (1992?)

First : the "adult / adultery / adulteration" trilogy is one of my favorite working ones; it is a tough one, and definitely adult. Second, a warning: be ready to be betrayed in your very choice! In other words, we are likely to subvert the comedy tone with which the text presents itself. You might end up in tragedy because shadows take over. This is only a warning, especially since we are using the "cabaret" model, which might too easily suggest light and hermetic humor, or standup comedy.

Conclusions, after these warnings: you send me 14 paragraphs in all, each an autonomous vignette on the theme. Each one on its own is a bit short. They are difficult to stick together. Each one is a joke of sorts, and has a comic point built into its structure, usually appearing at the end of the paragraph. These are drawbacks: the 'author' (I mean the text authority, the cultural figure speaking the text, 'voicing' it) is trying to pull you into its literary rhetoric, quite tyrannically (as is usually the case.)

Example 4

"Tale of the Two Dreams", from the Thousand and One Nights.

A wellknown, goodhumored story. To describe it technically I would say: "a text built as a morality fable, with a surprise finale, narrated by a relatively 'cool' and 'knowing' character. Most of the grammar is in the 3rd person (detached) with only 3 or 4 direct 1st person quotes. It has religious references to another character, Allah. Its ' cliché rendering' would call for a 'cunning orientalizing rendering', with lots of funny impersonations and slightly irreverent references to Allah. Too easy!

So, because of this charming veneer of light and wellbehaved humor, it will probably be difficult to pin down its 'deeper' shadows Allah's Shadows! which one might see for instance, and to be quite brutal, in today's Algerian throat slitting.

You can guess what strategies might emerge from your text choice: are you ready to go at "the brutal shadow of Allah's charm, and the corresponding 'shiftiness' of the narrator's tone"?

Example 5 (3 choices - participant finally chose the first proposal)

1 Roddy Doyle, "The Woman Who Walked Into Doors" (238 words) - Good working text good length directly interesting from a dramatic delivery (1st person "I" and "them", and rhythmic repetitive rhetoric). Plus ghost ("nobody saw me") and shadow overlap ironies. An interesting challenge: a man saying a woman's text, especially this one involving an 'effaced' woman... In all these aspects there can be interesting "shadow" work.

2 Jack Kerouac, Poem (82 words) - I also like this poem a lot its condensed impact can make up for it being short only 82 words. Here Kerouac takes a shadow stand, challenging 'humanity' as it were. And we might, on the other hand, end up exploring the shadow of this projected shadow, Kerouac's loneliness, vulnerability, despair...

3 George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia (201 words). - A very reflective text reflecting about an enforced reflective time: when force to wait (Orwell was expecting immediate war action...). Reflective syntax: longish phrases, with forms of reflective double subjects almost like in dreams when one says "I dreamt that I... " (2 subjects, one person). A guess of course would be that shadows (and ghosts) would rise precisely out of his being stalled in his wish for action (what he calls his "interregnum"). Encounters he might have been running away from, or into (though not those he expected the outside enemy fascists.)

Example 6

Archy and Meluhabel (sp?) by Don Marquis the observations of a poet reincarnated as a cockroach. It is a great text (especially because of its free verse nonpunctuation speed and colloquial slangy tone.) It will be quite demanding to perform, to do justice to both its ranting quality and its precision of imagery to get one's tongue round the words will imply good corporal discipline.

listen to me i have
 been mobbed almost
 there s an old simp cockroach
 here who thinks he has
 been to hell and all
 the young cockroaches make a
 hero out of him and admire him
 and he sits and runs his front
 feet through his long white
 beard and tells the story one
 day he says he crawled into a yawning
 cavern and suddenly came on a
 vast abyss full of whirling
 smoke there was a light at the bottom billows
 and billows of yellow smoke
 swirled up at him and
 through the horrid gloom he
 saw things with wings flying
 and dropping and dying they veered
 and fluttered like damned
 spirits through that sulphurous mist
 listen i says to him
 old man you ve never been to hell

at all there isn't any hell
 transmigration is the game i
 used to be a human vers libre
 poet and i died and went
 into a cockroach's body if
 there was a hell i'd know
 it wouldn't i you're
 irreligious says the old simp
 combing his whiskers excitedly

ancient one i says to him
 while all those other
 cockroaches gathered into a
 ring around us what you
 beheld was not hell all that
 was natural someone was fumigating
 a room and you blundered
 into it through a crack
 in the wall atheist he cries
 and all those young
 cockroaches cried atheist
 and made for me if it
 had not been for freddy
 the rat i would now be
 on my way once more i mean
 killed as a cockroach and transmigrating
 into something else well
 that old whitebearded devil is
 laying for me with his
 gang he is jealous
 because i took his glory away
 from him don't ever tell me
 insects are any more liberal
 than humans
 archy

I NEED, I NEED poem by Theodore Roethke (1908-1963)

As a first text to work with in a "choreographic theatre" context I would not recommend it. The text's "caprice" is so enormous that it will be a fickle partner, very difficult to keep up with. It uses so much "capricious" disjunction, dislocation, tripping and changing. It will either exhaust you (and make YOU feel heavy and numb), or it will draw you into its style and rhetoric: i.e. turn you into the free light child of caprice and interstellar freedom philosophies. The danger is in the free genius of the flying philosopher's child-soul, in the un-catchable volatile elusive Pierrot, hinting at everything but fixing nothing, ungraspable, flighty and melancholic (because un-rooted), refusing to collaborate in any form of stability of meaning or emotion. (You see it already turns me into a conservative commentator!) The work in the workshop will be a lot about the problem of "freedom". At first I tend to say "the sooner you, as actor, lose your freedom, the better!" And this text is archetypally about poetic freedom. Yet, as always, I tend to say the choice is yours and challenge is what we are in this business for!

Extract (opening verses)

1.

A deep dish. Lumps in it.
 I can't taste my mother.
 Hoo. I know the spoon.
 Sit in my mouth.

A sneeze can't sleep.
 Diddle we care.
 Couldly.

Went down cellar,
Talked to a faucet;
The drippy water
Had nothing to say.

Whisper me over,
Why don't you, begonia,
There's no alas
Where I live.

Scratched the wind with a stick.
The leaves liked it.
Do the dead bite?
Mamma, she's a sad fat.

A dove said dove all day.
A hat is a house.
I hid in his.

December 2004

Advice to a young actor about to engage in the 7 weeks 2005 professional workshop. A friend recommended Ezra Pound or Charles Olson. Enrique's response:

"Your choices are too complex. No poetry – its too condensed. My advice: Sam Shepard - there is a monologue in one of his plays, very funny and poignant: a young man listens to the sounds of the country (the sleeping tractor in the field among the coyotes) and then his father's car returning (he beats everyone etc.) It is colloquial, psychological, emotional, etc. Excellent for a young actor. He should learn a long one (300 words absolute minimum.) Tell him to do some contemporary theatre searching - and maybe he will come across something that hooks him. He should start nearer Marlon Brando than Ezra Pound!"

October 2005

Text proposals / consultation by Annouchka Bayley – for the PANTHEATRE ACTS training programme.
Responses from Enrique Pardo (EP)

All words composed by Annouchka Bayley apart from *Zarathustra* which includes excerpts from *Ecce Homo* by F. Nietzsche.

Zarathustra

I prefer to be a satyr rather than a saint. The last thing I would promise would be to improve mankind. I erect no new idols. Perhaps, if I may venture to indicate it, because I possess an uncanny sense of smell. I have in this sensitivity invisible antennae with which I touch and take hold of every secret- all the concealed dirt at the bottom of many a nature. The smell- the proximity- to the point of entrails. The last thing I would promise would be to improve mankind. Let the old idols learn what it means to have feet of clay. To overthrow idols rather, now that is my business. To overthrow the Emperor himself! All sickness and sinews, his skin green and gold and smooth, like the inside of a shell robbed of its jewel, and its bed and its other half now falling 50,000 leagues away! The smell of Emperors cannot be hidden by incense. Oh how I could reek of havoc! A kind of kitchen viciousness, a female insensitivity, all scrambled eggs and birthday parties. The cannibalism that is English cuisine.

I do not refute ideals, I merely- draw gloves on in their presence. I live on my own credit. It is perhaps merely a prejudice that I am alive at all.

Ah- you men! I see an image sleeping in stone, the image of all my visions, of my youth. That it must sleep in the ugliest, hardest stone! I want to take a hammer to the icons, smash the lightbulb that pulses you into being,

drown the mirror that has made me invisible, turn my tears into an oil that burns forever!

You say you believe in Zarathustra? But of what importance is Zarathustra? Oh go away from me, lose me and find yourselves and only, only when you have denied me will I return. Go away and guard yourselves from Zarathustra- perhaps he has deceived you.

EP: terrific text to work with, not only because of the satyr's presence (one of my favorite creatures), but because of the mixture of image and philosophical language – i.e. the presence of ideas. Pity it is a bit short for a long term project. In a big improvisation you might find yourself arriving at the end too quickly. On the other hand, it could be the basis for a great "cabaret" sketch. Anyway (and we tested it already), it's a great text for you.

The following texts all have great qualities, but maybe too short on their own. Maybe you can learn those you prefer and start stringing them together, or create an edited collage (especially since some start with strong person location; "my body", "you", "there is", "The Emperors"...). If you did that, and if these writings hold your attention and can channel what you want to express at the moment, I would encourage you to start thinking of a performance-cabaret piece with them. Long term – for next summer. The project could also have the discipline of keeping them all in and in sequence (could also be a methodological starting point – ambitious – why not?)

My advice on moving towards a piece would be to establish different starting points. You have the texts and their images. Other starting points, which need not be related directly to the texts: costume, objects, musics (sang and recorded.) Get the fantasies of all these elements going and then put them together. You might also find colleagues to help you (or work with) at all levels.

The Ship

My body is a windmill all made of hooks
 Jealousy cuts in like a shard of ice
 Digs deep like a thumb pressed into the heart.
 I thrive on the inward turning circle
 Like a long thought traced out as far as heaven
 Winding backwards in
 On this spool all made of wire and turmoil.
 Somewhere inside me
 There is a boat long moored up
 White as a milktooth
 Polished as a new penny-copper.
 The rope loosens slack
 Frays like the edges of heaven
 That fall down into this world
 In a fibre of saints
 The prow rises
 Opens to the dawn
 That pulls the water towards it
 In a frenzy of pinks
 The tide turns its face away
 And sinks deep into the opposite pillow
 The sails breathe in
 And billow into fleece.

Paper

You have turned my heart into paper
 Not flesh and blood,

All red and strong
 Just paper.
 That falls down quick
 That lights up the dawn like a terrible sun
 Undulating and exposed like a snake crossing the curtain.
 Just paper
 That folds into a footnote.
 Whose diamond spine creases like water in a wall
 Or like the shell of a walnut
 Sweetening from the inside.
 Just paper
 That traces meaning like a fisherman's line after nightfall
 Trembling like a glove
 Or a ghost before the dawn.
 Just paper
 That sits in my body like a square moon in the dark
 Brittle as a bright white porcelain
 Before the stain of speech moves on.
 Just paper
 That rises like a zeppelin
 And falls like a garland of stones
 All pulped and tarnished and bitter
 Expectant as yellow dough.
 Just paper
 Whose edges are endings
 Curling back into the promise of love
 Sinking further into the floor crease
 Beating like a broken, silver fish.

The River Bed

There is a river of regret
 That winds away
 From the soft blue bowl of childhood
 Like a long gold snake in the heather
 Its eyes glittering like crystal in chipped rock.
 Its belly knows the smell of earth
 Which cracks and falls
 Like ancient walls
 Lying forgotten
 Like depleted balloons
 Weighed down by too much ribbon.
 The grasses sigh,
 And the sunlight bleaches the day like crumpled linen
 Wound out from under my rib- thread by thread.
 Silence slips from my fingers
 in a hush of ashes
 and somewhere
 deep in the past
 a little girl with sad brown eyes
 dreams of nothing
 but brightly coloured candy.

The Emperors

The Emperors are dying.
 Their skin, green and gold and smooth
 Like the inside of a shell
 Robbed of its jewel and its bed and its other half now falling
 Fifty-thousand leagues away.
 Their beards have been shorn
 Their crowns hung up
 Their lips kissed raw and red and moist
 By a procession of princely kisses
 Still resistant.
 Now the oil pours down its musk
 Their listless bodies
 crackle and hiss.

Small Words

Small words bite
 Zig-zagging on invisible ladder rungs
 That move and choke
 Like a pair of agitated hands
 Rolling around and around
 Word upon word.
 Tonight I will crack
 Tonight I will send myself up like red smoke.
 Into this small blue sky
 Whose highest hope is to perforate its edhes
 And lose itself to the stinging meat of dawn.
 The grass is wet
 And full of small things
 Crawling in small worlds
 Knowing at the ankles of bare-broken summer.
 There is no room for breath.
 No puncture in the thick side of night
 that holds heaven close like a black stitch in the skin.
 The heather sings shrill,
 The air is inert
 The humpbacked houses stink like hospitals
 The darkening streets lengthen and fill with yellow teeth.

Icons

If I write about you once more
 I think my heart will stop
 I don't dare risk it.
 The door handle is your right eyebrow
 The line of the table- your straight jaw
 The linen hanging on the line is your back
 The curve in the corridor
 Your inner thigh.
 I want to take a hammer to the icons
 Burn the page that shapes you in ink

Drown the mirror that has made me invisible
Turn my tears into an oil that burns forever.

All words composed by Annouchka Bayley apart from *Zarathustra* which includes excerpts from *Ecce Homo* by F. Nietzsche.

December 2005

Text proposals / consultation by Steven Levine – for the PANTHEATRE ACTS 2006 Professional Workshop.
Response from Enrique Pardo (EP) after the poem.

DEATH FUGUE

Paul Celan

Black milk of daybreak we drink it at evening
we drink it at midday we drink it at night
we drink and we drink
we shovel a grave in the air there you won't lie too cramped
A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes
he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland your golden hair
Marguerite
he writes it and steps out of doors and the stars are all sparkling
he whistles his hounds to come close
he whistles his Jews into rows has them shovel a grave in the ground
he orders us strike up and play for the dance

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at morning and midday we drink you at evening
we drink and we drink
A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes
he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland your golden hair
Marguerite
your ashen hair Shulamith we shovel a grave in the air
there you won't lie too cramped
He shouts jab this earth deeper you lot there you others sing up and
play
he grabs for the rod in his belt and swings it his eyes are blue
jab your spades deeper you lot there you others play on for the
dancing

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at midday and morning we drink you at evening
we drink and we drink
a man lives in the house your goldenes Haar Marguerite
your aschenes Haar Shulamith he plays with his vipers
He shouts play death more sweetly Death is a master from
Deutschland
He shouts scrape your strings darker you'll rise then in smoke to the
sky
you'll have a grave then in the clouds there you won't lie too cramped

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at midday Death is a master aus Deutschland

we drink you at evening and morning we drink and we drink
this Death is ein Meister aus Deutschland his eye it is blue
he shoots you with shot made of lead shoots you level and true
a man lives in the house your goldenes Haar Margerite
he looses his hounds on us grants us a grave in the air
he plays with his vipers and daydreams
der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland

dein goldenes Haar Margarete
dein aschenes Haar Shulamith

tr. John Felstiner

EP: Dear Steven – it is a great challenge to have Celan come into the work – the “black master”. One is tempted to say that one does not have to seek for the shadows of such a text since it is all shadows; and yet... such an impression is itself probably full of shadows and blind spots. The text’s authority challenges our mobility, and the danger is that we are frozen into the black ice of its monumentality, or fall into its broken shifts and crevasses. Get ready for some strange moves! It will also be hard work to make the poem explicit, to make it speak and say what it is saying. Its syntax is shadowy and elusive, with overlaps, strange cuts, holes, etc. I look forwards to the challenge!

March 2006

Choice for Farnham workshop (Arts Council UK) – exchange with Beth Sheldon.

> For the first text I was planning to put the poems ‘Medusa’
> and ‘Yearn On’
> together to work with as one piece. Is this alright to do?

>
> The second piece is non-fiction and may be a little long so I was
> considering cutting at ‘...the mirror steamed over, reflected nothing.’

>
> Text 1.

> ‘Medusa’ – Carol Ann Duffy

>
> A suspicion, a doubt, a jealousy
> grew in my mind,
> which turned the hairs on my head to filthy snakes, as though my
> thoughts hissed and spat on my scalp.

>
> My bride’s breath soured, stank
> in the grey bags of my lungs,
> i’m foul mouthed now, foul tongued,
> yellow fanged.

> There are bullet tears in my eyes.

> Are you terrified?

>
> Be terrified.
> It’s you I love.

>
> And here you come
> with a shield for a heart
> and a sword for a tongue
> and your girls, your girls.
> Wasn’t I beautiful?
> Wasn’t I fragrant and young?

>
>
> ‘Yearn On’ – Katie Donovan
>

> I want you to feel
 > the unbearable lack of me.
 > I want your skin
 > to yearn for the soft lure of mine;
 > I want those hints of red
 > on your canvas
 > to deepen in passion for me:
 > carmine, burgundy.
 > I want you to keep
 > stubbing your toe
 > on the memory of me;
 > I want your head to be dizzy
 > and your stomach in a spin;
 > I want you to hear my voice
 > in your ear, to touch your face
 > imagining it is my hand.
 > I want your body to shiver and quiver
 > at the mere idea of mine.
 > I want you to feel as though
 > life after me is dull, and pointless,
 > and very, very aggravating;
 > that with me you were lifted
 > on a current you waited all your life to find, and had despaired of
 > finding, as though you wading through a soggy swill of inanity and
 > ugliness every minute we are apart.
 > I want you to drive yourself crazy
 > with the fantasy of me,
 > and how we will meet again, against all odds, and there will be tears
 > and flowers, and the vast relief of not I, but us.
 > I am haunting your dreams,
 > conducting these fevers
 > from a distance,
 > a distance that leaves me weeping,
 > and storming,
 > and bereft.
 >

(307 words)

Main plus : passion, and in first person singular (especially second poem - first one is more "you and I") Work-wise second poem is written simpler (less poetical aliterations.) Good choice and good for tragic work. We'll tell some Medusa stories...

>
 > Text 2.
 >
 >

'Once in a house of fire' -

> Andrea Ashworth
 >
 >
 > My mother loved to dance, swirling her skirt in circles, sashaying
 > over the
 > carpet: shy hip swings and clever, hopping toes. She led me by the
 > tips of her fingers, whirling me under the arch of her arm like a
 > tree, a weeping willow whose branches sway down to meet you.
 > 'Lorraine' My stepfather called my mother away to refill people's
 > glasses.
 >
 > By now, I was hot behind the ears and down my back, twisting my hips
 > into small, smooth circles like my mother's.
 > 'That's enough dancing, Andrea' my stepfather told me.
 > 'Oh, let her twist Pete' Auntie Doris laughed, tipsy. 'She's doing no
 > harm.'
 >
 > The Music was still playing; people's feet were tapping in time; my

> sandals twisted and shuffled against the carpet's dull green until hot
 > breath whispered into my ear: 'Upstairs!'
 > My stepfather's anger was hidden from the party under the music, the
 > flushed chatter and clinking glasses.
 >
 > On the stairs, he pressed a large, cold hand against my back, shoving
 > me up into the bedroom. Inside, he locked the door and twisted the
 > taps until the water gushed into the sink and was sucked belching,
 > down the plughole. The cascade drowned out the sound when his hand
 > came down to slap my face.
 >
 > 'Don't you dare defy me!' My stepfather's lips moved while my ears
 > rang full of the slap and the water and the party downstairs. Behind
 > his head, I saw my own face in the bathroom mirror, red and blotted
 > where steam was rising from the taps to mist over the reflection. I
 > went to say, 'I won't Dad' but the words were muffled under his hand,
 > pressing down to stifle my tears.
 > Faint petroleum seeped from his palm, choking me.
 >
 > When my eyes bulged, my stepfather peeled back his palm and washed his
 > hands before twisting the taps shut. Everything stood still in the
 > bathroom. The mirror steamed over, reflected nothing.
 >
 > He took a flannel and wiped my face with a shaking hand.
 > 'Now then, go on downstairs to the party.'
 > The party was still brimming with smoke and chatter and spilling
 > drinks.
 > Bubbling with wine, people asked me to twist for them. I pressed my
 > back against the wall, smiling out of sore eyes.
 > 'I'm tired of dancing,' I told them. The music sounded flat and tinny.
 > I stayed close to the wall.
 >

(391 words)

This is a much more descriptive text - with a central narrator, and some direct quotes.
 More complex to perform, different challenge.
 Choice is yours: for instance whether you want more of a direct passionate challenge, or
 one switching modes and levels of rethorics.

See you soon
 Enrique

September 2006

Choice for the Paris Professional Workshop (October 2006) – A poem by Sylvia Plath, proposed by Elisa Matula.

Dear Elisa,

Two things. First, you know now well the text work we do – how we work with meaning, against literature, breaking patterns, syntaxes, etc. Second: you admit a fascination with this text of Plath's – not an easy one at all, especially because of its fragmentation. Breaking a "fragmented" text is obviously a sort of mad task. To make "choreographic theatre sense" with this text, out of this text, will be tough. My question is : are you sure? Do you think it will be worth it? I would not only respect your choice (based presumably on some kind of necessity – the best thing to have! an obsession) but I will enter the fight gleefully (we might be defeated, mind you!) I think there is also a fight to have with Sylvia Plath herself : the pathos she is surrounded with, Ted Hughes, her suicide, and all the gossip. We must include maybe those who cannot stand her aura and poetry – I have a couple of friends... You decide, as always! Enrique

Sylvia Plath

"Fever 103degrees"
 Pure? what does it mean?

The tongues of hell
are dull, dull as the triple

Tongues of dull, fat cerebrus
who weezes at the gate. incapable
of licking clean

the aguey tendon, the sin, the sin.
The tinder cries.
The indelible smell

Of a snuffed candle!
Love, love the low smokes roll
From me like isadora's scarves. I'm in a fright

One scarf will catch and anchor in the wheel.
such yellow sullen smokes
make their own element. They will not rise,

But trundle around the globe
Choking the aged and the meek,
The weak

Hot house baby in its crib,
The ghastly orchid
hanging in its hanging garden in the air,

Devilish leopard!
Radiation turned it white and killed it in an hour.

Greasing the bodies of adulterers
like hiroshima ash and eating in.
The sin. the sin.

Darling, all night
i have been flickering off, on, off, on.
The sheets grow heavy as a lecher's kiss.

Three days. Three nights.
Lemon water, chicken
Water, water make me wretch.

I am too pure for you or anyone.
Your body
hurts me as the world hurts God. I am a lantern--

My head a moon
of japanese paper, my gold beaten skin
infinitely delicate and expensive.

Does not my heat astound you. And my light.
All by myself i am a huge camellia
Glowing and coming and going, flush on flush.

I think i am going up,
I think i may rise--
the beads of hot metal fly, and I, love, I

am a pure acetylene
Virgin
Attended by roses,

By kisses, by cherubim,
By whatever these pink things mean.

Not you, nor him
 Not him, nor him
 (my selves dissolving old whore petticoats)--
 To Paradise.

September 2006

Choice for the Paris Professional Workshop (October 2006) – A text by Anaïs Nin, 2nd proposal by Elisa Matula.

Dear Elisa, □ This is the opposite of the Plath text in many ways, though it has its moments of compact surrealistic metaphors. But it is talkative, almost chatty. And it gives you two characters, the narrator and the ragpicker, and interesting switches from 1st to 3rd person. It also has a very direct, defiant way of addressing the reader/spectator. Ambitious. At this stage, if you have not already started learning it, I would choose it. Learn it by pieces so that you make sure you know a good chunk for the beginning of the workshop. We should assemble a “work in progress” with this piece during the workshop and present it at the end. And maybe later you develop it. Enrique.

“Ragtime” Anaïs Nin

The city was asleep on its right side and shaking with violent nightmares.
 Long puffs of snoring came out of the chimneys. Its feet were sticking out because the clouds did not cover it altogether. There was a hole in them and white feathers were falling out. The city had untied all the bridges like so many buttons to feel at ease. Wherever there was a lamplight the city scratched itself until it went out.
 The ragpicker walked among the roots, the cellars, the breathing sewers, the open pipe works, looking for odds and ends, for remnants, for rags, broken bottles, paper, tin, and old bread. The ragpicker walked in and out of the pockets of the sleeping city with his ragpicker’s pick.
 His bag was swelling. ..
 The ragpicker looks at me with his one leaking eye. I pick a basket without bottom. The rim of a hat. The lining of a coat. Touch myself. Am I complete?
 Arms? Legs? Hair? Eyes? Where is the sole of my foot? I take off my shoe to see, to feel. Laugh. Glued to my shoe is a blue rag. Ragged but blue like cobalt dust. The rain falls. I pick up the skeleton of an umbrella. Sit on a hill of corks perfumed by wine. A ragpicker passes, the handle of a knife in his hand. With it he points to a path of dead oysters. At the end of the path is my blue dress. I had wept over its death. I had danced with it when I was seventeen, danced until it fell to pieces. I try to put it on and come out the other side. I cannot stay inside of it. Here I am, and there the dress, and I forever out of the blue dress I had loved, and I dance right through air, and fall on the floor because one of my heels came off, the heel I lost on a rainy night walking up a hill kissing my loved one deliriously.
 Where are all the other things, I say, where are all the other things I thought dead?
 The ragpicker gave me a wisdom tooth, and my long hair which I had cut off.
 Then he sinks into a pile of rags and when I try to pick him up, I find a scarecrow and a high top hat with a bullet hole through it.
 The ragpickers are sitting around a fire made of broken shutters, window frames, artificial beards, chestnuts, horses’ tails, last year’s holy palm leaves. The cripple sits on the stump of his torso with his stilts beside him. Out of the shacks and the gypsy carts come the women and the brats.
 Can’t one throw anything away forever? I asked.
 The ragpicker laughs out of the corner of his mouth, half a laugh, a fragment of a laugh, and they all begin to sing...
 Nothing is lost but it changes
 Into the new string old string
 In the new bag old bag
 In the new pan old tin
 In the new shoe old leather
 In the new silk old hair
 In the new man the child
 And the new not new
 The new not new
 The new not new

All night the ragpicker sang the new not new the new not new until I fell asleep and they picked me up and put me in a bag.

September 2006

3 propositions for the Paris Professional Workshop (October 2006) – by Jacklyn Bassanelli.

Dear Jacklyn – all three texts have ‘performative’ qualities. The first two are a bit short (at least for the substantial set-up / improvisations we are likely to reach after some weeks’ work - they would be fine for a short workshop.) You could envisage bridging the two Duras texts.

I notice, of course, that all three texts include the voice, mainly laughter. This is an interesting point since we work mainly with disassociation (i.e. avoid vocal illustration.) In this sense Kundera’s small parable-like text would be fun to work with (two vocalisers!) I hope you can learn them all. Maybe start with the first Duras which presents the biggest varieties of tempo and dynamics. But also Kundera’s, a text that will present a nice challenge to all involved with it (not just you as the speaker.) Great. Enrique

Suggestion 1

From Milan Kundera – *The book of laughter and forgetting*

(On Two Kinds of Laughter)

The first time an angel heard the Devil’s laughter, she was horrified. It was the middle of a feast with lots of people around, and one after the other they joined in the Devil’s laughter. It was terribly contagious. The angel was all too aware the laughter was aimed against God and the wonder of His works. She knew she had to act fast, but felt weak and defenceless. And unable to fabricate anything of her own, she simply turned her enemy’s tactics against him. She opened her mouth and let out a wobbly, breathy sound in the upper reaches of her vocal register and endowed it with the opposite meaning. Whereas the Devil’s laughter pointed up the meaninglessness of things, the angel’s shout rejoiced in how rationally organized, well conceived, beautiful, good and sensible everything on earth was.

There they stood, Devil and angel, face to face, mouths open, both making more or less the same sound, but each expressing themselves in a unique timbre – absolute opposites. And seeing the angel laughing, the Devil laughed all the harder, all the louder, all the more openly, because the laughing angel was infinitely laughable.

From Marguerite Duras - *The Lover*

It’s one of the long avenues in Vinh Long that lead down to the Mekong. It’s always deserted in the evening. That evening, like most evenings, the electricity breaks down. That’s what starts it all off. As soon as I reach the street and the gate shuts behind me, the lights go off. I run. I run because I’m afraid of the dark. I run faster and faster. And suddenly I think I hear running behind me, and suddenly I’m sure there’s someone after me. Still running, I look round, and I see. It’s a very tall woman, very thin, thin as death, laughing and running. She’s barefoot, and she’s running after me to catch me. I recognise her, she’s the local lunatic, the mad-woman of Vinh Long. I hear her for the first time, she talks at night, during the day she sleeps, often here in the avenue, outside the garden. She runs, shouting in a language I don’t understand. My fear’s so great I can’t call out. I must be eight years old. I can hear her shrieks of laughter and cries of delight, she’s certainly playing with me. My memory is of a central fear. To say it’s beyond my understanding, beyond my strength, is inadequate. What’s sure is the memory of whole being’s certainty that if the woman touches me, even lightly, with her hand, I too will enter into a state much worse than death, the state of madness. I manage to get into the neighbours’ garden, as far as the house, I run up the steps and fall in the doorway. For several days I can’t say anything at all about what happened.

I forget everything, and I forgot to say this, that I was a child who laughed, laughed fit to burst, fit to die.

Suggestion 2

From Marguerite Duras - *The Lover*

She's on the banks of the rice fields on either side of the track, shouting and laughing at the top of her voice. She has a golden laugh, fit to wake the dead, to wake anyone who listens to children's laughter. She stays outside the bungalow for days and days, there are white people in the bungalow, she remembers they give food to beggars. And then, one day, lo and behold, she wakes up at daybreak and starts to walk, one day she goes, who can tell why, she turns off towards the mountains, goes up through the forest, follows the path running along the tops of the mountains of Siam. Having seen, perhaps, seen a yellow and green sky on the other side of the plain, she crosses over. At last begins to descend to the sea. With her great gaunt step she descends the slopes of the forest. On, on. They're forests full of pestilence. Regions of great heat. There's no healthy wind from the sea. There's the stagnant din of mosquitos, dead children, rain every day. And there here are the deltas. The biggest deltas in the world. Made of black slime. Stretching towards Chittagong. She's left the tracks, the forests, the tea rounds, the red suns, behind, and she goes forwards over the estuary of the deltas. She goes in the same direction as the world, towards the engulfing, always distant east. One day she comes face to face with the sea. She lets out a cry, laughs her miraculous bird-like coo. Because of her laugh she finds a junk in Chittagong, the fishermen are willing to take her, she crosses with them the Bay of Bengal.

Then, then she starts to be seen near the rubbish dumps of the outskirts of Calcutta.

And then she's lost sight of. And then later found again behind the French embassy in the same city. She sleeps in the garden, replete with endless food.

She's there during the night. Then in the Ganges at sunrise. Always laughing, mocking. She doesn't go on this time. Here she can eat, sleep, it's quiet at night, she stays there in the garden with the oleanders.

One day I come, pass by. I'm seventeen. It's the English quarter, the embassy gardens, the monsoon season, the tennis courts are deserted. Along the Ganges the lepers laugh.

We're stopping over in Calcutta. The boat broke down. We're visiting the town to pass the time. We leave the following evening.

January 2007

Choice of a text for a performance piece – by Benedicte Blix

From **"The volcano lover"** by Susan Sontag

It's a dinner party – sophisticated people who have dressed up in handsome and revealing clothes are enjoying themselves in the atmosphere in which such dedicated partygoers enjoy themselves best – something of both brothel and salon, minus the exertions or risks of either. The food, whether chewy or delicate, is bountiful; the wine and champagne are costly, the lighting is muted and flattering; the music, and the aromas of flowers on the table, enveloping and suffusing; some sexual tomfoolery is taking place, both of the wanted and of the other kind; the servants are efficient and smile, hoping to get a good tip. The chairs are yielding, and the guests profoundly enjoy the sensation of being seated. There are treats for all five senses. And mirth and glibness and flattery and genuine sexual interest. The music soothes and goads. For once, the gods of pleasure are getting their due.

And in comes this guest, this alien presence, who is not here to have fun at all. He comes to break up the party and have the chief reveler down to hell. You saw him at the graveyard, atop a marble mausoleum. Being drunk with self confidence, and also a little nervous about finding yourself in this cemetery, you made a joke to your sidekick. Then you halloed up to him. You invited him to the party. It was a morbid joke. And now he's here. He's grizzled, perhaps bearded, with a very deep voice and a lumbering, arthritic gait, not just because he is old, but because he is made of stone; his joints don't bend when he walks. A huge, granite, forbidding father. He comes to execute judgement, a judgement that you thought outmoded or that didn't apply to you. No, you cannot live for pleasure. No. No.

He reaches out and dares you to shake his hand. The earth below rumbles, the floor of the partying room gapes open, flames start to rise –

Perhaps you are having a dream and you wake up. Or perhaps, you are experiencing this in a more modern way.

He enters, the stony guest. But he is not going to kill you, and he's probably younger, even young. He is not coming to take revenge. He even thinks that he wanted to go to a party (he can't be a monument all the time) and he is not above wanting to enjoy himself. But he can't help being himself, which means bringing along his higher idea, his better standards. He, the stony guest, reminds the revelers of the existence of another, more serious way of experiencing. And this, of course, will interfere with their pleasures.

You did invite him, but now you wish you hadn't, and if you don't take the necessary precautions, he will break up the party.

After meeting a few of your guests, he starts giving up on the evening. Too quickly, perhaps. But he's used to scything through such matters. He doesn't think your party is that much fun. He doesn't dissemble – mingle. He keeps to corners of the room. Perhaps he looks at the books, or fingers the art. He doesn't resonate with the party. It doesn't resonate with him. He has too much on his mind. Bored, he asks himself why he came. His answer now: he was curious. He enjoys experiencing his own superiority. His own difference. He looks at his watch. His every gesture is a reproach.

You, one of the guests – or, better, the host – make light of this scowling presence. You try to be charming. He refuses to be charmed. He excuses himself and goes for something to drink.

(Is he moping or getting ready to denounce you?) He returns, sipping a glass of water.

You turn away and make common cause with the others. You make fun of him – he's easy to make fun of. What a prig. What an egotist. How pompous. Doesn't he know how to have a good time. Lighten up, stony guest!

He continues to contradict what is said to him, to make plain that he is not amused. And he can't really get your attention. You flit from guest to guest. For a party is not a tête-a-tête. A party is supposed to reconcile its participants, to conceal their differences. And he has the bad manners to want to expose them. Doesn't he know about the civilizing practice of hypocrisy?

You can't both be right. The fact is that he is right, you are wrong. Your life is revealed as shallow, your standards as opportunistic.

He wants to kidnap your mind. You won't let him. You tell yourself that frivolity is a noble pursuit. That a party, too, is an ideal world.

Sooner or later he leaves. He shakes your hand. It's chilling. You settle back. The music is louder again. What a relief. You like your life. You're not going to change. He is pretentious, overbearing, humorless, aggressive, condescending. A monster of egotism. Alas, he's also the real thing.

Response from Enrique

Sontag. A kind of pompous Pan crashing into a party. The first thing I ask myself is how are we going to create his presence. It is this confrontation which I find most interesting: will you impersonate him? You know how I say that caricature is hard work because you have to get into someone else's body. There is also the woman / man exchanges, a strange Eros that Sontag ends up calling "the real thing." Is "The Volcano Lover" a book of hers? Volcano, of course, brings in Hephaestus and his strange lover's behaviours (most known is his gigantic jealousy fit against Aphrodite.) In a strange way the piece, if transferred to theatre, has "socialite" theatre connotations, Chekhov, Ibsen even. Party fantasies. Maybe we should explore other parts of the book – after establishing a central fantasy (I would propose this character.) If you go for this text, and I would encourage you to, I would like to read the book. Let me know. Enrique

October 2007

Choice of a text for the Paris professional workshop – by Audrey Pernel

Prologue
Audre Lorde

Haunted by poems beginning with I
 seek out those whom I love who are deaf
 to whatever does not destroy
 or curse the old ways that did not serve us
 while history falters and our poets are dying
 choked into silence by icy distinction
 their death rattles blind curses
 and I hear even my own voice becoming
 a pale strident whisper
 At night sleep locks me into an echoless coffin
 sometimes at noon I dream
 there is nothing to fear
 now standing up in the light of my father sun
 without shadow
 I speak without concern for the accusations
 that I am too much or too little woman
 that I am too black or too white
 or too much myself
 and through the lips come the voices
 of the ghosts of our ancestors
 living and moving among us
 Hear my heart's voice as it darkens
 pulling old rhythms out of the earth
 that will receive this piece of me
 and a piece of each one of you
 when our part in history quickens again
 and is over:

Hear
 the old ways are going away
 and coming back pretending change
 masked as denunciation and lament
 masked as a choice
 between eager mirrors that blur and distort
 us in easy definitions
 until our image
 shatters along its fault
 while the other half of that choice
 speaks to our hidden fears with a promise
 that our eyes need not seek any truer shape –
 a face at high noon particular and unadorned –
 for we have learned to fear
 the light from clear water might destroy us
 with reflected emptiness or a face without tongue
 with no love or with terrible penalties
 for any difference
 and even as I speak remembered pain is moving
 shadows over my face, my own voice fades and
 my brothers and sisters are leaving;

Yet when I was a child
 whatever my mother thought would mean survival
 made her try to beat me whiter every day
 and even now the colour of her bleached ambition
 still forks throughout my words
 but I survived
 and didn't I survive confirmed
 to teach my children where her errors lay
 etched across their faces between the kisses
 that she pinned me with sleep
 and my mother beating me
 as white as snow melts in the sunlight

loving me into her bloods black bone –

the home of all her secret hopes and fears
 and my dead father whose great hands
 weakened in my judgement
 whose image broke inside of me
 beneath the weight of failure
 helps me to know who I am not
 weak or mistaken
 my father loved me alive
 to grow and hate him
 and now his grave voice joins hers
 within my words rising and falling
 are my sisters and brothers listening?

The children remain
 like blades of grass over the earth and
 all the children are singing
 louder than mourning
 all their different voices sound like a raucous question
 but they do not fear the blank and empty mirrors
 they have seen their faces defined in a hydrants puddle
 before the rainbows of oil obscured them.
 The time of lamentation and curses is passing.

My mother survives now
 through more than chance or token.
 Although she will read what I write with embarrassment
 or anger
 and a small understanding
 my children do not need to relive my past
 in strength nor in confusion
 nor care that their holy fires
 may destroy
 more than my failures

Somewhere in the landscape past noon
 I shall leave a dark point
 of the me that I am
 and who I am not
 etched in a shadow of angry and remembered loving
 and their ghosts will move
 whispering through them
 with me none the wiser
 for they will have buried me
 either in shame
 or in peace.

And the grasses will still be
 Singing.

Outside
 Audre Lorde

In the center of a harsh and spectrumed city
 all things natural are strange.
 I grew up in a genuine confusion
 between grass and weeds and flowers
 and what coloured meant
 except for clothes you couldn't bleach
 and nobody called me nigger
 until I was thirteen.

Nobody lynched my momma
 but what she'd never been
 had bleached her face of everything
 but very private furies
 and made the other children
 call me yellow snot at school.
 And how many times have I called myself back
 through my bones confusion
 black
 like marrow meaning meat
 for my soul's hunger
 and how many times have you cut me
 and run in the streets
 my own blood
 who do you think me to be
 that you are terrified of becoming
 or what do you see in my face
 you have not already discarded
 in your own mirror
 what face do you see in my eyes
 what you will someday
 come to
 acknowledge as your own?

Who shall I curse that I grew up
 believing in my mother's face
 or that I lived in fear of the potent darkenss
 that wore my father's shape
 they have both marked me
 with their blindness and terrible love
 and I am lustful now for my own name.

Between the canyons of my parent's silences
 mother bright and father brown
 I seek my own shapes now
 for they never spoke of me
 except as theirs
 and the pieces that I stumble and fall over
 I still record as proof
 that I am beautiful
 twice
 blessed with the images
 of who they were
 and who I thought them once
 to be
 of what I move
 toward and through
 and what I need
 to leave behind me
 for most of all I am
 blessed with my selves
 who are come to make our shattered faces
 whole.

Response from Enrique

Prologue (first text) : some 640 words of a dense meditation, that arrives on first reading/hearing as sets of explicit, dense but gentle waves on the sand of our attention, each one depositing a layer of an overall review, assessment and judgement of her heritage, especially through the persons who hand down that heritage, her parents. Each wave feels clearly demarcated and makes its own point: it is received with its sediment of information, complex and poetic, which takes time to filter and work out.

The prologue is long - too long for workshop exploratory work only. But, of course, not too long if it is part of some kind of performing project, beyond the pedagogical experimentation of a workshop. I would say it is enough for a full performance !

Nota: you must dialogue with Naima Phillips who assembled, with me, a very special and strong 25 minutes performance this July, along similar content lines. See her overall comments on <http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/2-commentaires-projects-gb.pdf>

Now for the rhetoric : to 'master' this text will be quite a work. Thoughts are complex and come in complex waves, with quite a lot of poetical grammatical inversions, allowing conclusions to assemble in layered assemblages. Conveying the thinking to an audience in choreographic theatre will be very demanding, require a strong build-up of craft (projection, elocution, syntactic control, timbre, etc.) and modesty in acting (part of the 'protagonist' work in choreographic theatre.)

Conclusion : as always, it is your choice now. Measure your ambitions and go for it if you want to climb, not Mount Everest, but a nearby peak. For me this text is all the more interesting because of the question of judgment of one's parents. My own mother died some days ago, and I have had so many thoughts on the question of judgment of one's parents, and one's parents 'society'. I hope to write more on this soon.

"Outside"

Much more direct text - including the shock of the sudden "you" (when she addresses "you" in full second person, which does not happen in the prologue, although the addressee is there all the time.) Both texts have a 'sermon' aspect which we will have to work carefully (and probably go totally against - against all the 'authorities' of these texts, all the politically correct reactions that stifle theatre..

Learning both? Maybe, but if you are to learn 2 working texts I would put you in front of a real artistic alternative : chose a second text which would be the *opposite* of Audre Lorde's.

Looking forwards to working with you and your choices. Enrique - Paris September 7, 2007

Exchange and text proposals by Lainie Hart (Australia) for the 2007 Paris Professional Workshop.

(from Lainie Hart) : I did want to let you know, that one of the things I hope to experience and learn through the workshop is a way to find opportunities to meaningfully and powerfully integrate movement, voice, text on stage. However, I am also seeking (personally, theatrically, professionally) a dynamic balance between and integration of body, mind and soul..., leaving nothing out. It is important to me that the piece (and the working of the piece) does not leave behind my soul. □[EP] Dear Lainie, I take good note of your words and wishes. In an adult professional context like ours, I have often said that Psyche is my main interest - her logos, her logic, her insights... I look forwards to dialogues on this, in and out of the work.

Regarding texts: they must come in as working partners: it is important to set them free, to give them autonomy, to allow them to rebel against us (against what we want them to say) so that they can take their part in the 'part-nership' - even to the point of divorce ! They must not be made acolytes to our manifestos, confirmations of our convictions - 'subjected'. This is what I have sometimes called "shadow boxing" - shadow work. It can be awkward, deranging, but also incredibly exhilarating and full of insights. I say all this because sometimes it is difficult to let go of texts which are very close to our heart - especially texts written by us. Difficult to be iconoclastic with them. It can also be the most revealing work, the best theatre.

All three texts you propose make a point - round up a point, maybe a bit briefly for the work. I would suggest you take one or two and know them fully by heart - ready for real experimentation. And maybe look around for an alternative in terms of rhetoric's (style, dynamics, ways of presenting ideas, etc...) This need not be immediately. Maybe someone else's text might intrigue you and you might ask to work with it !

Here are my suggestions.

The Wattle-Tree

Judith Wright

The tree knows four truths -
 earth, water, air, and the fire of the sun.
 The tree holds four truths in one.
 Root, limb and leaf unfold
 out of the seed, and these rejoice
 till the tree dreams it has a voice
 to join four truths in one great word of gold.

- Oh, that I knew that word!
 I should cry loud, louder than any bird.
 O let me live for ever, I would cry.
 For that word makes immortal what would wordless die;
 and perfectly, and passionately,
 welds love and time into the seed,
 till tree renews itself and is for ever tree -

Then upward from the earth and from the water,
 then inward from the air and the cascading light
 poured gold, till the tree trembled with its flood.

Now from the worlds four elements I make
 my immortality; it shapes within the bud.
 Yes, now I bud, and now at last I break
 into the truth I had no voice to speak:
 into a million images of the Sun, my God.

4 Beds

Eleni Fourtouni

On the night of wash-days
 my mother would line my quilt
 with a freshly laundered sheet.
 Squatting in front of the blazing hearth
 she'd fold the edges of the sheet over
 the sides of the quilt, then
 with large stitches quickly
 baste the two together.

I'd hover next to her
 drowsy with heat, handing her
 lengths of thread
 watching her deft hands
 folding the corners.

When I was a married woman
 daily I'd spread fresh sheets
 on the king-size bed -
 fine percale, printed
 with silver birch trees
 with fields where monarch butterflies hovered
 over blood-red poppies.

Nights

I'd choose the thickest book
 or start an intricate pattern
 on my loom.

Our bed -
 a mattress on the marble floor
 in the centre of a white room

Our quilt -
 patches of gold-spun cloth
 and old velvet, blood red
 and midnight blue -
 a spiral bordered
 in sky blue brocade.

Your breath on my face
 like sunlight.

My mother
 her bones stacked neatly
 lies inside a velvet-lined 2 x 4 tin box
 kept in a sanctified hut
 among hundreds of identical tins
 containing the bones of those
 who have no plot of their own
 at the southeast corner of the old cemetery
 on Repose Street
 3rd lane, 5th row
 to the left.

One her name-day
 I light a candle
 I pay the Town Hall
 a small fee each Spring.

Pandora
 Diane Fahey

From her comes all the race of womankind,
 The deadly female race and tribe of wives
 Who live with mortal men and bring them harm...

Hesiod in *Theogony*

What is it about her?
 Her first breath provokes slander,
 then the slanderer accuses her of slander...
 Scapegoating seems, by comparison,
 an innocent affair.
 So all the ills of men
 originate from her?
 Naturally, she will need to be
 stoned and mutilated and confined and silenced
 as often as possible...
 till all the ills of women
 seem to originate from him?

It is, to say the least,
 a recipe for mutual paranoia.
 She suggests - very tentatively, of course -
 that there may have been
 some misunderstanding... He agrees,
 meaning something quite different.

What, then, can Pandora do

but step into the gulf between them
 becoming wisdom-seeker, self-healer,
 iconoclast, mythographer?
 In one of her moods, mother wit
 surrounds here like a halo of wasps;
 in another, she draws into herself
 the image of light radiating
 from depthless water in a well...

She is the one who will not live
 captive to another's fear, disgust.
 She is the maker and shaper,
 dreamer and breaker,
 and she is the one
 who is holding the mirror.

October 2007

Proposal of a text for the Paris professional workshop – by Brenda Armendia (Mexico)

2. Fairly-Land [I]

Dim vales - and shadowy floods -
 And cloudy -looking woods,
 Whose forms we can't discover
 For the tears that drip all over.
 Huge moons there wax and wane -
 Again - again - again -
 Every moment of the night -
 Forever changing places -
 And they put out the star-light
 With the breath from their pale faces.
 About twelve by the moon-dial
 One more filmy than the rest
 (A kind which, upon trial,
 They have found to be the best)
 Comes down -still down- and down
 With its centre on the crown
 Of a mountain's eminence,
 While its wide circumference
 In easy drapery falls
 Over hamlets, over halls,
 Wherever they may be -
 O'er the strange woods -o'er the sea-
 Over spirits on the wing-
 Over every drowsy thing -
 And buries them up quite
 In a labyrinth of light-
 And then, how deep! - O, deep!
 Is the passion of their sleep.
 In the morning they arise,
 And their moony coverering
 Is soaring in the skies,
 With the tempests as they toss,
 Like -almost any thing-
 Or a yellow Albatross.
 They use that moon no more
 For the same end as before-
 Videlicet a tent-
 Which I think extravagant:
 Its atomies, however,
 Into a shower dissever,

Of which those butterflies,
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
(Never-contented things!)
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.

Edgar Allan Poe

EP : a long and calm description (calm even though it has some exclamation marks) of a marked water / mist poetic landscape. Like with your Coranic text on the devil (in Spanish) it has a grand deployment rhetoric. This text is much more complex, and condensed in its language. Complex English; a bit archaic: not easy to manoeuvre to achieve clear communication with an audience – it has the danger of a river-like reverie, of grand flow poetry. Big challenge in that sense (how to make the river leave its rhetorical 'bed' and go elsewhere?)

October 2007

Proposal of a text for the Paris professional workshop – by Debora Balardini (Brezil / USA)

Death and the Maiden

by Ariel Dorfman

1991

I suggest we reach a compromise. Compromise, an agreement, a negotiation. Everything in this country is done by consensus, isn't it. Isn't that what this transition is all about? They let you have democracy, but they keep control of the economy and of the armed forces? The Commission can investigate the crimes but nobody is punished for them? There's freedom to say anything you want as long as you don't say everything you want? So you can see that I'm not that irresponsible or emotional or...sick, I propose that we reach an agreement. You want this man freed without bodily harm and I want – would you like to know what I want?

When I heard his voice last night, the first thing that rushed through my head, what I've been thinking all these years, when you would catch me with a look that you said was – abstract, fleeting, right? – you know what I was thinking of? Doing to them, systematically, minute by minute, instrument by instrument, what they did to me. Specifically to him, to the doctor... Because the others were so vulgar, so...but he would play Schubert, he would talk about science, he even quoted Nietzsche once. It's his voice. I recognized as soon as he came in here last night. The way he laughs, certain phrases he uses. During all these years not an hour has passed that I haven't heard it, that same voice, next to me, next to my ear, that voice mixed with saliva, you think I'd forget a voice like this?

I was terrified at myself. That I should have so much hatred inside – but it was the only way to fall a sleep at night, the only way of going out with you to cocktail parties in spite the fact that I couldn't help asking myself if one of the people there wasn't – perhaps not the exact same man, but one of those people might be... and so as not to go completely off my rocker and be able to deliver that Tavelli smile you say I'm going to have to continue to deliver – well, I would imagine pushing their heads into a bucket of their own shit, or electricity, or when we would be making love and I could feel the possibility of an orgasm building, the very currents going through my body would remind me and then – and then I had to fake it, fake it, so you wouldn't know what I was thinking, so you wouldn't feel that it was your failure.

So when I heard his voice, I thought the only thing I want is to have him raped, that's what I thought, that he should know just once what it is to...and as I can't rape him – I thought that it was a sentence that you would have to carry out. But then I told myself it would be difficult for you to collaborate in that scheme, after all you do need to have certain degree of enthusiasm to – So I asked myself if we couldn't use a broomstick. But I began to realize that wasn't what I really wanted – something that physical. And you know what conclusion I came to, the only thing I really want?

I want him to confess. I want him to sit in front of that cassette recorder and tell me what he did – not just to me, everything, to everybody – and then have him write it out in his own handwriting and sign it and I would keep a copy forever – with all the information, the names and data, all the details. That's what I want.

I can speak - it's been years since I murmured even a word, I haven't opened my mouth to even whisper a breath of what I'm thinking, years living in terror of my own... but I'm not dead, I thought I was but I'm not and I can speak, damn it – so for god's sake let me have my say and you go ahead with your Commission and believe me when I tell you that none of this is going to be made public.

The only way to dissuade me is for him to confess. Tell him if he doesn't confess, I'll kill him. If he is innocent? Then he is really screwed.

I was mad because I stayed silent and now I'm mad because I can speak.

EP : Strong text ! To take it on as a working text is brave and stirring. It has all a text can offer, especially in choreographic theatre: starts with direct address, folds into reflection, addresses someone else there but not hearing, etc. In this sense it is full of 'spirits', haunting memories – and seeming madness – never 'solo' ! Plus, it has a great underlying reflection on the voice – the voice in its real human dimension. Big challenge – I look forwards to it.

Nota : in PANTHEATRE's recommended bibliography there are two books that relate to "the voice politics" – both very philosophical (quite a bit of jargon) but superb books. Adriana Cavarero's and Mladen Dolar's. Check on <http://www.pantheatre.com/6-reading-list-gb.html>

June 2008 - proposal for the Paris Professional Workshop / by Nate Spears

This first selection is from *The Woods* by David Mamet. I interpret it as a young man struggling to connect with his lover; using a dream to share his innermost thoughts and feelings because he's been suffering from a kind of emotional impotence:

"I sit here. Wait. I sit here. It gets dark. I cannot read. I need you to be up here. I need time. Do you hear me? I need time. Down in the city everything is vicious. I need time to be up here. Everything is *filthy* down there. *You* know that. I come up here, I see things. I cannot sleep. I have these dreams at night. I dream. No, wait. I'll tell you. I see the window, and the shades are blowing. There has come a breeze and all the curtains blow. They are on fire. It laps around the window. On all sides. Someone is calling my name. Nicholas. I hear them in a voice unlike a man or a woman. When I look, I do not want to know. I know there is something there. I look I see a bear. A bear has come back. Do you hear me, Ruth? Do you know what this is? To crawl beneath my house. This house is mine now. In its hole it calls me. In the earth. Nicholas. He is standing upright on his legs. He has a huge erection. I am singed. He speaks a human language, Ruth. I know. He has these thoughts and they are trapped inside his mouth. His jaws cannot move. He has thoughts and feelings, BUT HE CANNOT SPEAK. If only he could speak. If only he could say the thing that he wants."

This next one is from *Hamletmachine*. A final monologue given to Ophelia (very short):

"This is Electra speaking. In the heart of darkness. Under the sun of torture. To the capitals of the world. In the name of the victims. I eject all the sperm I received. I turn the milk of my breasts into lethal poison. I take back the world I gave birth to. I choke between my thighs the world I gave birth to. I bury it on my womb. Down with the happiness of submission. Long live hate and contempt, rebellion and death. When she walks through your bedrooms carrying butcher knives you'll know the truth."

I will begin to look outside of theatrical texts, but this should give you an idea of where my search is heading.

EP : Both Müller and Mamet are great writers for contemporary theatre – and I'm only referring to style, rhythm and 'talking psychology'. Both texts you chose have powerful sexual anxiety, full of ghosts and schisms. Great stuff. Yes, they are a bit short for working in a long workshop – you will be frustrated after a few weeks and want a longer perspective of text (at least double Mamet's.) But, sure, this kind of text fits totally into the work.

September 2008 - proposal for the Paris Professional Workshop / by Carissa Toro (USA)

The Story of Us written by Alan Zweibel & Jessie Nelson

Katie: I think we should go to Chow Fun's.

(Ben stops.)

Ben (sotto): Chow Fun's? I thought we agreed we couldn't really talk at Chow Fun's.

(Katie looking deep into his eyes, responds.)

Katie: I know.

(Ben crosses over to her.)

Ben: What are you saying?

Katie: (with resolve) I'm saying Chow Fun's.

Ben: Are you saying Chow Fun's because you don't want to face telling the kids? Because if that's why you're saying Chow Fun's, don't say Chow Fun's.

Katie: That's not why I'm saying Chow Fun's. I'm saying Chow Fun's because we're an "us". There's a history and histories don't happen overnight. In Mesopotamia or Ancient Troy or somewhere back there, there were cities built on

top of other cities, but I don't want to build another city. I like this city. I know where we keep the Bactine, and what kind of mood you're in when you wake up by which eyebrow is higher. And you always know that I'm a little quiet in the morning and compensate accordingly. That's a dance you perfect over time. And it's hard, it's much harder than I thought it would be, but there's more good than bad. And you don't just give up. And it's not for the sake of the children, but they're great kids aren't they? And we made them - I mean think about that - there were no people there and then there were people - two of them. And they grew. And I won't be able to say to some stranger, "Josh has your hands" or "Remember how Erin threw up at the Lincoln Memorial?" So what if that stranger listens to me? I mean, Lucas Adler listens but then he always says "between you and I" and it should be "between you and me" because "between" is a preposition. And it's not that there's not a charming part about you not remembering the washer fluid - which I don't understand why you can't - but that's not ultimately important. I'll try to remember that those things can be mildly endearing at times and really not worth not having sex over. And I'll try to relax. I mean is it the end of the world to have sex when you don't totally feel like it? There are all kinds of sex, aren't there? Comfort sex, tender sex, relief sex, "I'm not in the mood, but you are" sex...And let's face it, anybody is going to have traits that get on your nerves, why shouldn't it be your annoying traits? I'm no day at the beach, but I do have a good sense of direction so at least I can find the beach, but that's not a criticism of you, it's just a strength of mine. And you're a good friend and good friends are hard to find. Charlotte in "Charlotte's Web" said that and I love the way you read that to Erin - when you take on the voice of Wilbur the pig with such commitment even when you're bone tired. It speaks volumes about character. And ultimately isn't that what it comes down to? What a person's made of at the end of the day? Because that pith helmet girl is still in here - "BEE-BOO, BEE-BOO!" And I didn't even know she existed until I met you. And if you leave, I may never see her again - even though I said at times you beat her out of me - Isn't that the paradox? Haven't we hit the essential paradox? Give and take, push and pull, yin and yang, the best of times, the worst of times. I think Dickens said it best. It's the Jack Sprat of it, he could eat no fat, his wife could eat no lean, but that doesn't really apply here. Does it? I mean I guess what I'm trying to say is - I'm saying Chow Fun's because I love you.

(After a beat, Ben explodes with sheer joy, grabs Katie and kisses her passionately. We see Josh and Erin watching their parents stunned at their behavior.)

(Ben and Katie start getting into the car, as do the kids.)

EP : Dear Carissa – I'm all for this text, but in terms of the 7 weeks workshop and knowing something of where you come from, I would compensate / complement it with a very differently styled text. Let me give my impressions in an obviously descriptive manner : the text is a 'domestic' loving text (couple, children, restaurant, marriage & sex, etc.) in very contemporary American realistic style. We are likely to tear it apart and away from its setting and drag it into 'otherworldly' renderings. Nevertheless I would advice you find a second text – non-realistic, maybe non-theatrical in terms of contemporary theatre realistic style (especially American prosaic street pop-psychology.) I was thinking of something baroque, poetically more elaborate and dense (though not too much.) Just back from Haiti, I've been immersed in French Creole Caribbean poetry. Epic, exotic, baroque, mythic. Maybe you know of something that links with Puerto Rico or Cuba (the 'father' of it all for me is José Lezama Lima – but no – don't take a text of his, too baroque!) Maybe something like Ted Hughes' Tales of Ovid which are very popular for the quality of their language and images (see comments to Adrienne on Hughes.) Or Garcia Marquez? Or Derek Walcott?

September 2008 - proposals for the Paris Professional Workshop / by Adrienne Mackey (USA)

1) From Phaedre (Racine trans. Ted Hughes)

They love each other!
 What sort of witchcraft did they use
 To delude me?
 How long have they loved each other?
 Where have they been meeting? How often?
 You knew! You knew it! Oenone,
 Why did you let me be fooled?
 Couldn't you breathe one whisper of their secret?
 Wasn't it plain?
 Weren't they forever

Running around looking for each other?
 Heads together in corners, thinking themselves unnoticed
 In plain view of everybody?
 Ah! They were free!
 Heaven was pleased with their innocent affection.
 Wherever their love led, they went light-hearted.
 For them the days dawned calm.
 But for me, rejected by nature,
 I dreaded every sunbeam.
 I buried myself.
 Daylight was a horror to me.
 Death was the only god I prayed to.
 I waited only for death.
 Nothing but gall sustained me, and tears.
 Surrounded by spies
 I did not even dare
 To unburden my grief.
 I concealed it.
 I sank
 Into the horrible secret luxury of it.
 My sobbing was soundless.
 My weeping was dry.
 I trembled with calm.

You say their love is futureless.
 You say it has come to nothing.
 You say they will never meet again.

Yes, but their love exists.
 It exists. And it will last.
 I cannot bear to imagine it.
 Even this moment, as I speak,
 They have not a thought for me,
 They are heedless
 Of the fury of my love -
 It is meaningless to them.
 But I have to endure it -
 I have to burn in it.
 Banishment may separate them
 But it cannot injure their love,
 Only intensify their million vows
 To love each other forever.
 No, it's their happiness - it's their hope
 That torments me.
 Oenone, I am going mad with jealousy.
 Aricia must die.
 Theseus must be made to kill her.
 No punishment is enough.
 She has outdone her criminal brothers.
 I'll use every bit of rage in my body
 To persuade him to kill her.
 Oh God, what am I doing? What am I saying?
 I think I'm losing my senses.

Me jealous? Me beg Theseus
 To avenge my jealousy? Implore my husband
 To remove my rival
 From my monstrous passion for his son?
 Everything I say makes my hair stand up.
 My life is so bloated with my crimes
 There's no room for another. I stink
 Of incest and deceit. An worse -
 My own hands are twitching
 To squeeze the life out of that woman,
 To empty that innocent blood out of her carcass
 And smash her to nothing.
 Yet I stand here facing the sun.
 The light of heaven, my greatest ancestor,
 Is the father and ruler of the gods.
 The whole universe is full of my forebears.

EP : Certainly a superb text – both classic and contemporary (sometimes translations fit the work better than originals: I would plead against a French actor bringing the original Racine to choreographic theatre!) Perfect.

2) From Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte:

I had forgotten to draw my curtain, which I usually did, and also to let down my window-blind. The consequence was, that when the moon, which was full and bright (for the night was fine), came in her course to that space in the sky opposite my casement, and looked in at me through the unveiled panes, her glorious gaze roused me. Awaking in the dead of night, I opened my eyes on her disk—silver- white and crystal clear. It was beautiful, but too solemn; I half rose, and stretched my arm to draw the curtain.

Good God! What a cry!

The night—its silence—its rest, was rent in twain by a savage, a sharp, a shrilly sound that ran from end to end of Thornfield Hall.

My pulse stopped: my heart stood still; my stretched arm was paralysed. The cry died, and was not renewed. Indeed, whatever being uttered that fearful shriek could not soon repeat it: not the widest-winged condor on the Andes could, twice in succession, send out such a yell from the cloud shrouding his eyrie. The thing delivering such utterance must rest ere it could repeat the effort.

It came out of the third storey; for it passed overhead. And overhead—yes, in the room just above my chamber-ceiling—I now heard a struggle: a deadly one it seemed from the noise; and a half-smothered voice shouted - "Help! help! help!" three times rapidly.

"Will no one come?" it cried; and then, while the staggering and stamping went on wildly, I distinguished through plank and plaster:-

"Rochester! Rochester! for God's sake, come!"

A chamber-door opened: some one ran, or rushed, along the gallery. Another step stamped on the flooring above and something fell; and there was silence.

EP : Given the 'perfect' dramatic quality of the Hughes' Phaedra, I'm not sure you need a second dramatic text (though it is an interesting moment cameo to experiment with – at the same time descriptive and subjectively dramatic.) You might (like I've advised Carissa Toro) "compensate" the Hughes translation with a totally different text – especially non first-person dramatic. Maybe something poetically soft in its tense, person and rhythm. American romantics ? Emerson, Thoreau,

Dickinson? I am not sure this appeals to you. Only a suggestion: it must absolutely be your choice, either by liking or calculation.

January 2008 - proposals for ACTS winter training / by Corianna Moffat (USA)

EP : Corianna : two superb texts. I comment more in detail below. No, they are not too long for your 10 week training. Yes, learn them both. Maybe the Anaïs Nin text you might want to edit a bit, but not really necessary.

The death of the chamberlain Christoph Detlev Brigge at Ulsgaard

By Rilke from *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*

The few servants who had remained inside sometimes stole a glance at the big darkening heap in the middle, wishing that it were nothing more than a large suit covering some ruined thing.

But it was still something. It was a voice, the voice that seven weeks before no one had recognized: for it was not the voice of the chamberlain. It was not Christoph Deltev to whom this voice belonged, it was Christoph Deltev's death.

Christoph Deltev's death had now been living for many, many days at Ulsgaard, and spoke with everyone and demanded. Demanded to be carried around, demanded the blue room, demanded the small salon, demanded the large hall. Demanded the dogs, demanded that people laugh, speak, play, and be silent, and all at the same time. Demanded to see friends, women, those who had died, and demanded himself to die: demanded.

Demanded and screamed.

Christoph Detlev's death screamed, screamed and moaned, roared so long and incessantly that the dogs, who at first howled along, fell silent and did not dare lie down but, standing on their long, slender, quivering legs, were afraid. And when those in the village heard him roaring through the far, silver, Danish summer night, they got up as for a thunder storm, dressed, and sat around the lamp without saying a word until it was over. And the women who were near to giving birth were put in the most remote rooms and the most shielded bedcupboards; but they heard it, heard it as if it were in their own bodies, and they pleaded to get up too and came, broad and pale, and sat down among the others with their blurred faces. And the cows that were calving at this time were helpless and withdrawn, and the dead fruit was torn out of the body with all the entrails and it wouldn't come

EP : the challenge from this text will likely come from the dispassionate tone of the narrator, with the ominous massive repetition in the 2nd paragraph and the use of "screaming" words and apocalyptic events in the third. It's the challenge in dealing with the density of implied emotions, without lapsing into expressionistic sensationalism, while surrounded with the potential of panic. I like the highly qualified nature of the text, the quality of its specifics, and its underlying rhythmic rhetorics. Good challenge – especially given the 2009 theme of "emotion"...

Anais Nin from Diary, Volume II (660 words)

I love the world so much, it moves me deeply, even the ordinary world, the daily world, even at the bar table, the tinkling ice in the glasses, the water, the dog tied in the coat room...

Levels and levels. It is as if I were in an elevator, shooting up and down, hundreds of floors, hundreds of lives. Up to heaven, terraces and planetariums, gardens, fountains, clouds, the sun. On the next to the last floor, dance halls and restaurants, and music. In the rooms, bars of shadows on the walls from the casement windows. A bower. A confessional. A couch to lie on. Something to lie on, to rest on, to cling to. Faith. Red lights! Down! Down! The telephone operator announces: a man who limps, a man who is

paralyzed, a man in love with his mother, a man who cannot write the book he wants to write, a woman deserted, a woman blocked by guilt, a woman crying with shame for her love of another woman, a girl trembling with fear of a man. Free the slaves of incubi, of ghosts and anguish. Listen to their crying. A tough political partisan says "I feel soft and iridescent." Another one says "It is a weakness to listen to the complaints of the child within us." I say: "It will never cease lamenting until it is consoled, answered, understood. Only then will it lie in us, like our fears. It will die in peace and leave us what the child leaves to the man - the sense of wonder." The telephone announces: "A cable for you, shall I send it up?" "Yes, yes" "Happy birthday, happy birthday, love." Red lights! Down! White lights! Going up! Playing at being God, but a god not tired of listening, all the while wondering how the other god can watch people suffer. Music, the solace. Through music we rise in swift noiseless elevators to the heavens, breaking through the roof. Red Lights! Down! At the drug store I buy stamps, mail letters, ask for a coffee. Physically I am cracking. It is not the change in the floors, the sudden rise and descents which make me dizzy, but the giving. Parts of my life, parts of my energy are passing into others. I feel what they feel. I identify with them. Their anguish tightens my throat. My tongue feels heavy. I wonder whether I can go on. I have no objectivity, no indifference. I pass into them to illuminate, to reveal, but I cannot remain apart from them, be indifferent to their bad nights, or their hopes, or their cries, or even their happiness. I look out my window as Rank looked out of his window. People are skating in the Park. The band is playing. It is Sunday. I could be walking through the streets of Paris, joyous, lively streets where people are in love with life and even with their tragedies. I could be walking along the human and beautiful Seine. I did not recognize my happiness then. I yearned for adventure. The children's laughter rises to the twenty-fifth floor, to the window at which I stand. Red lights! Down! All the way down I am thinking of the problem of emotional symmetry. People's needs of retaliation, revenge, need to balance anger against anger, humiliation against humiliation, indifference against indifference.

EP : Beautiful piece of writing – Anaïs Nin does not get the adulation she gets for nothing, nor the writer-lovers ! It reminds me of a film I liked a lot: "So far, so close" by Wim Wenders (it was the sequel to the highly successful "The Wings of Desire", and I liked it even better... Angelology and hot coffee trivia.) Pulling this text off in choreographic theatre is almost a virtuouse task. Learn it inside out, in rhythm, against rhythm (never breathe of punctuation for instance, break the tonic inflections, etc. – mechanical excices, so that when you work with it you can easily get out of its syntactic rethorical grooves.)

Now, a study challenge - a quote from a recent email exchange with Kristin Linklater : "The participants I aim for are professionnals, or truly risk-taking students. I've been somewhat dissapointed recently with USA students: 'insecurely' sure of themselves, off the mark culturally. I asked some a curricula: "from Schoenberg to Janov's Primal Scream." They knew neither."

I send you this to sting your cultural curiosity and because the bridge span from Schoenberg to Janov could be considered an ideal cross-cultural background curricula for choreographic theatre in the voice / music / therapy landscape. It does not include iconography though.

Kyuja Bae, first year student from NAT, Norway – March 2010 Training Programme

monologue for an onion by suji kwock kim

**I don't mean to make you cry.
I mean nothing, but this has not kept you
From peeling away my body, layer by layer,**

**The tears clouding your eyes as the table fills
With husks, cut flesh, all the debris of pursuit.**

Poor deluded human: you seek my heart.

**Hunt all you want. Beneath each skin of mine
Lies another skin: I am pure onion--pure union
Of outside and in, surface and secret core.**

**Look at you, chopping and weeping. Idiot.
Is this the way you go through life, your mind
A stopless knife, driven by your fantasy of truth,**

**Of lasting union--slashing away skin after skin
From things, ruin and tears your only signs
Of progress? Enough is enough.**

**You must not grieve that the world is glimpsed
Through veils. How else can it be seen?
How will you rip away the veil of the eye, the veil**

**That you are, you who want to grasp the heart
Of things, hungry to know where meaning
Lies. Taste what you hold in your hands: onion-juice,**

**Yellow peels, my stinging shreds. You are the one
In pieces. Whatever you meant to love, in meaning to
You changed yourself: you are not who you are,**

**Your soul cut moment to moment by a blade
Of fresh desire, the ground sown with abandoned skins.
And at your inmost circle, what? A core that is**

**Not one. Poor fool, you are divided at the heart,
Lost in its maze of chambers, blood, and love,
A heart that will one day beat you to death**

EP : I would call this a morality poem – in the tradition of VANITAS. Strangely, Korean baroque ! There is a great show (I hope it is) just opened in Paris on the theme of Vanity, including Damian Hirst's diamond studded skull. It is a favorite theme of baroque esthetics – and of mine. I like the poem. But let me describe the obvious in order to help you chose. First, the main voice: it's the onion speaking, giving a massive baroque nihilistic lesson to the optimist, romantic spectator lover cook. It puts you as performer in a weird place; again, this is interesting. You are the performer speaking for the onion, describing the action that the spectator is supposed to be doing (peeling-cooking-romantic-loving.) So what are YOU doing - in terms of acting, action, acting out? Interesting freedom, again – like “what is the choreography of the actor speaking for the onion?” The subject (the onion) has big moral authority – which in my work means massive danger for the actor: the danger that she/he becomes a cynical philosopher peeling away the supposedly romantic spectator. I certainly do not like performers who throw contempt at the audience – as if the audience were deluded idiots and the performer had moral superiority. I would probably start looking for the onion's shadow, its regrets, its rancour, its lost or impossible romantic desires... This is where the interest probably lies for me. But of course it depends on you, your ambitions, the challenges you want to give yourself. Are you, or do you wish to be, more of an onion than, say, a peach, or as the French say “une poire” (a pear, meaning a naïve round gullible optimist...) ?

An association on peeling, peeling the skin, flaying, almost the opposite of the disassembled onion. *The Flaying of Marsyas*, a mythological theme I particularly like, full of blood and passion – and music. If you chose this poem I will include Marsyas in one of the mythology talks. Check out the painting by Titian on Marsyas (its in Prague) – to me one of the greatest paintings of all time. Esthetically (i.e. ethically) between Suji Kwock Kim's poem and Titian painting you have a great gap for performative reflection. Its where I would go risk my performance. Afterthought: I would not mind dying beaten by my heart - & maybe will. If you like philosophy check out James Hillman's "The thought of the heart".

Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2010 12:07 AM

dear enrique,

thank you very much for your answer.

it took some time to think and research about your tips .

i do really agree with most of your opinions about the text i sent last time.

but i still can't decide if i really want to work with the text; monologue for an onion.

i got an other text which i am interested as well.

it is a part of book; the unbearable lightness of being by milan kundera.

i read this book (translated in korean) a few years ago and i like it a lot.

luckily i found the part i would like to use in english on the internet

so i am sending it to get some feedback on it from you.

if i choose this one,

i would like to try to change " sabina" and " franz" into " i" and "he".

because i observed myself that i felt much more connected with the text to say "I" than " sabina".

it seems fine in english version but the korean version, it sounds strange to change the point of view from "she/ he" into "i" in a way.

what do you think about it?

again, i have not made my mind yet:)

i will read and read both of texts so i can remember,while i keep searching some other if i can find.

thank you for reading this.

best regards,

kyuja

The unbearable lightness of being by Milan Kundera

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Living for Sabina meant seeing. Seeing is limited by two borders: strong light, which blinds, and total darkness. Perhaps that was what motivated Sabina's distaste for all extremism. Extremes mean borders beyond which life ends, and a passion for extremism, in art and in politics, is a veiled longing for death.

In Franz the word light did not evoke the picture of a landscape basking in the soft glow of day; it evoked the source of light itself: the sun, a light bulb, a spotlight. Franz's associations were familiar metaphors: the sun of righteousness, the lambent flame of the intellect, and so on.

Darkness attracted him as much as light. He knew that these days turning out the light before making love was considered laughable, and so he always left a small lamp burning over the bed. At the moment he penetrated Sabina, however, he closed his eyes. The pleasure suffusing his body called for darkness. That darkness was pure, perfect, thoughtless, visionless; that darkness was without end, without borders; that darkness was the infinite we each carry within us. (Yes, if you're looking for infinity, just close your eyes!)

And at the moment he felt pleasure suffusing his body, Franz himself disintegrated and dissolved into the infinity of his darkness, himself becoming infinite. But the larger a man grows in his own inner darkness, the

more his outer form diminishes. A man with closed eyes is a wreck of a man. Then, Sabina found the sight of Franz distasteful, and to avoid looking at him she too closed her eyes. But for her, darkness did not mean infinity; for her, it meant a disagreement with what she saw, the negation of what was seen, the refusal to see.

Hello Kyuja

The decision is yours. You might want to do both. We have four weeks and you could try both texts. My thoughts on Kundera's extract: it's not that different from the "monologue for an onion by suji kwock kim – in its rhetorical philosophical tone. Kundera's is more straight, you could say, also in my view more psychologically complex (mature, deeper?) Quite calm also, which brings up the question of passions (and "Sabina's distaste for all extremism" ...) A probable move of mine (this is telling speculation on my part) will be to make you say it from the point of view of an uncontrollably passionate woman who hates Sabina's composure... for instance. This anti-Sabina character will probably go for sarcasm, and nasty irony, as well as suffering (she cannot protect herself by distancing like Sabina.) Sabina's 'superiority' will still be there – it is in the text and quite beautifully – but the danger is again the moral lesson. I tend to be allergic to any moralizing in theatre.

Josephine Kylén-Collins, first year student from NAT, Norway – March 2010 Training Programme. 2 proposals

Roberta II monologue from Eugene Ionescos' play "JACK OR THE SUBMISSION".

**I am by nature very gay. You could see it if you wanted to...I am eccentric...I am the gaiety in sorrow...in travail...in ruin...in desolation...AH! AH! AH!...bread, peace, liberty, mourning and gaiety... They used to call me gaiety ready to hand..the gay distress...
Are you reflecting? Me too, at times. But in a mirror. I am the gaiety of death in life... the joy of living, of dying. They used to call me also gaiety the elder... It's because I'm taller than my sister...sir,**

**In all the world there's not another like me.
I'm light, frivolous, I'm very serious.
I'm not so serious, nor very frivolous,
I know all about making hay,
And there is other kinds of work I can do
Less well, as well, or even better
I'm just the tonic for you.
I'm honest, but don't trust me,
With me your life will be a ball.
I can play the piano,
I can arch my back,
I've been properly housebroke.
I've had a solid bringing up...**

Ah! I understand you, you're not like the others. You're a superior being. Everything I told you was false, yes. Here is something that will interest you.

Once I felt like taking a bath. In the bathtub which was full almost to the brim, I saw a white guinea-pig who had made himself at home there. He was breathing under water. I leaned up in order to see him close up: I saw his snout quiver a little. He was very still. I wanted to plunge my arm into the water in order to seize him, but I was too afraid that he would bite me. They say that these little animals don't bite, but one can never be sure! He clearly saw me, he was watching me, he was on the alert. He had half-opened a tiny eye, and was looking at me, motionless. He didn't appear to be living, but he was though. I saw him in profile. I wanted to see him full face. He lifted his little head with his tiny eyes towards me, without moving his body. Since the water was very clear, I was able to see on his forehead two dark spots,

chestnut colored, perhaps. When I had a good look at them, I saw that they were swelling gently, two excrescences...two very tiny guinea pigs, wet and soft, his little ones were coming out there...

EP - We will be using these texts to train in "choreographic theatre", which is a militantly particular approach to theatre and texts. Interestingly the word "submission" plays a very important role : finding the sub-mission, the mission 'under' - as opposed to the heroic 'missionary' declamations one finds in much theatre... Ionesco operates this subversion in his genius nasty pseudo-naïve way. So: great text and very interesting confrontation with Ionesco's 'authority' (what he wants as an author... or what we think he wants - and his authoritarian anti-authoritarianism...) We will also be confronting Ionesco's satire of French Boulevard theatre - with characters and their overdone (sur)realism.

The extract you propose, for our purposes, contains two separate pieces, and styles - with a very abrupt introduction "Here is something..." Also a challenge.

Check out if you can a piece of writing I did (in French...) on The Rhinoceros and Ionesco (which I saw by mistake!) on <http://www.pantheatre.com/pdf/6-reading-list-rhinoceros-fr.pdf>

A part of " The shared patio" in the book " No one belongs here more than you" by Miranda July.

If you are sad ask yourself why you are sad. Then pick up the phone and call someone and tell him or her the answer to the question. If you don't know anyone, call the operator and tell him or her. Most people don't know that the operator has to listen, it is a law. Also, the postman is not allowed to go into you house, but you can talk to him on public property for up to four minutes or until he wants to go, whichever comes first.

Vincent was on the shared patio. I'll tell you about this patio. It's shared. If you look at it, you'll think it is only Helena and Vincent's patio, because their back door opens to it. But when I moved in, the landlord said that it was the patio for both the upstairs and the downstairs units. I'm upstairs. He said, Don't be shy about using it, because you pay just as much rent as they do. What I don't know is if he told Vincent and Helena that it is a shared patio. I have tried to demonstrate ownership by occasionally leaving something down there, like my shoes, or one time I left an Easter flag. I also try to spend exactly the same amount of time on the patio as they do. That way I know we are each getting our value. Every time I see them out there, I put a little mark on my calander. The next time the patio is empty, I go sit on it. Then I cross off the mark. Sometimes I lag behind and have to sit out there a lot toward the end of the month to catch up.

Vincent was on the shared patio. I'll tell you about Vincent. He is an example of a New Man. You might of read the article about the New Men in True Magazine last month. New Men are more in touch with their feelings than even women, and New Men cry. New Men want to have children, they long to give birth, so sometimes when they cry, it is because they can't do this; there is just nowhere for a baby to come out. New Men just give and give and give. Vincent is like that. Once I saw him give Helena a massage on the shared patio. This is kind of ironic, because it is Vincent who needs the massage. He has a mild form of epilepsy. My landlord told me this when I moved in, as a safety precaution. New Men are often a little frail, and also Vincent's job is art director, and that is very New Man. He told me this one day when we were both leaving the building at the same time. He is the art director of a magazine called *PUNT*. This is an unusual coincident because I am the floor manager of a printer, and we sometimes print

magazines. We don't print PUNT, but we print a magazine with a similar name, *POSITIVE*. It's actually more like a newsletter; it's for people who are HIV-positive. *Are you angry? Punch a pillow. Was it satisfying? Not hardly. These days people are too angry for punching. What you might try is stabbing. Take an old pillow and lay it on the front lawn. Stab it with a big pointy knife. Again and again and again. Stab hard enough for the point of the knife to go into the ground. stab until the pillow is gone and you are stabbing the earth again and again, as if you want to kill it for continuing to spin, as if you are getting revenge for having to live on this planet day after day, alone.*

EP - This is a sort of 'flow' piece - flow-narration. Framed, as an extract, by the two italic paragraphs. Not knowing the book (we word out of literary context) I take them as a psychological voice. Its quite an enterprise to take on something like this as a training text. I mean that it's a long 'flow' text with two framing statements. Given that we have four weeks and that we are a small number, it could be very interesting to take it on. I'm not sure you can productively do both (this text and the Ionesco) but maybe. My advice : chose one to learn thoroughly for the beginning of the project and prepare the other one (if you want to do both) parallel and gradually. To work with these texts in choreographic theatre requires knowing them 'by heart' (otherwise you will lose your energy with memory problems - which will be there anyway...) Your choice.

Maja Clementsen Hansen - first year student from NAT, Norway - March 2010 Training Programme.
3 proposals

SUN DRIED

by Edna Ferber

adapted for the stage by Walter Wykes

MARY LOUISE: I don't know. I don't know what the problem is. I've been trying to write about the city, you know, my experiences here. Then I decided to write a love story, but that's not working out either. My hero sounds more like a clothing store dummy than a real live human being, and, from what I hear, editors aren't fond of black-mustachioed figures nowadays. I've been fighting with him for a week now, the stubborn mule. He won't make love to my heroine. He refuses. I've tried to put red blood in his veins, but the two of them just won't get together—they're as far apart as they were the day I sat down to write. I'm at my wit's end. I've bitten off nearly half of my fingernails—look—see? There's nothing wrong with my heroine—I'm sure of that. She's a fascinating, mysterious, graceful creature, full of wit and passion and adventure, but not once has he clasped her to him fiercely or pressed his lips to her hair, her eyes, her cheeks. He hasn't even had the guts to "devour her with his gaze" as we writers like to say. This morning I thought he might be showing some signs of life. He was developing possibilities. But nothing came of it. He wimped out. That's why I decided to wash my hair and come out here—to get away from him for a little while. Back home? I taught school—and hated it. But I kept on teaching until I'd saved five hundred dollars. All the other girls teach until they've saved five hundred dollars—then they pack two suit-cases and go to Europe for the summer. But I saved my five hundred for New York. I've been here six months now, and the five hundred has shrunk to almost nothing, and if I don't break into the magazines pretty soon ... Then, I'll have to go back and teach thirty-seven young devils that six times five is thirty, put down the naught and carry six, that a rhetorical question requires no answer, and that the French are a gay people, fond of dancing and light wines. But I'll scrimp on everything from hairpins to shoes, and back again until I've saved up another five hundred, and then I'll try it all over again, because I—can—write. I'm going to make it! I'm going to make this town count me in as the four million and oneth! Sometimes I get so tired of being nobody at all, with not even enough cleverness to wrest a living from this big city, that I want to stand out at the edge of the curb and just scream! Take off my hat, and wave, and shout, "Hey, you four million self-absorbed, uncaring people, I'm Mary Louise Moss, and I like your town, and I want to stay here! Won't you please pay some attention to me! Just a little bit!" No one even knows I'm here except ... well ... myself and the rent collector!

EP 1 - Chatty funny meanderings - with ghost characters appearing in the first half. In the work we will do we will manoeuvre to cut across the text's predicted styles (here a sort of TV casual confessional with a bit of the "dumb blonde" take) - and we will often call on opposites (I call them "contra-dictions"). The opposite of "chatty funny meanderings" ... sour salted hot rancour for instance - hating the "dumb blonde" syndrome and sentimental seduction. The text is well written in its bouncy everyday rhythm so it will surely cooperate with us in searching ways of going 'underworld' with it...

MATERNITY

A monologue from the play by Eugène Brieux

ANNETTE: First he pretended not to understand me: he forced me to say it quite plainly: he did it on purpose--either to torture me, or to give himself time to think. You'll never guess what he said--that it wasn't true. Yes, that it wasn't true! He got angry, and he began to abuse me. He said he guessed what I was up to; that I wanted to make a scandal to force him to marry me--oh, he spared me nothing--to force him to marry me because he was rich. And when that made me furious, he threatened to call the police! I ought to have left him, run away, come home, oughtn't I? But I couldn't believe it of him all at once like that! And I couldn't go away while I had any hope. You see, as long as I was with him, nothing was settled: as long as I was holding to his arm it was as if I was engaged. When he was gone I should only be a miserable ruined girl, like dozens of others. Then--I was afraid of making him angry: my life was at stake: and to save myself I went down into the very lowest depths of vileness and cowardice. I cried, I implored. I lost all shame and I offered to go with him to a doctor tomorrow to prove that what I told him was true. And what he said then I cannot tell you--not even you--it was too much--*too* much--I didn't understand at first. It was only afterwards, coming back, going over all his words, that I made out what he meant. He didn't believe what he said. He *couldn't* have believed what he said. At any rate he knows that I am not a girl out of the streets. But at first I didn't understand. Then--at last--he looked at his watch and said he had only just time to catch the train. He said goodbye and started off at a great pace to the station. I followed him imploring and crying. I was so ashamed of my cowardice. It was horrible and absurd! I couldn't believe it was the end of everything. I was all out of breath--almost running--and I prayed him for the sake of his child, for the sake of my love, of my misery, of my very life; and I took hold of his arm to keep him back. My God! what must I have looked like! At the station entrance he said, "Let go your hold of me." I said, "You shall *not* go." Then he rushed to the train, and jumped into a carriage, and almost crushed my fingers in the door; and he went and hid behind his mother, and she threatened to have me arrested. And Gabrielle sat there looking white and pretending not to know me. I came back. I haven't had courage enough to kill myself, but I wish I was dead!

EP 2 - Harsh humiliation text - emotional, pathetic, human, engaged... As such it brings strong substance to the laboratory. I like also the fact that she tells a friend. One tack I tend to train in is a neurotic approach : here it is full of regret (another salty business) to the point of wishing she was dead. Great heavy soap. I'll tell an amazing neurotic "acting out" scene I saw once - not as "horrible" as this one - pregnancy is no joke. Neurotic in this case is basically running the original film (in which she is humiliated) and playing out all the alternatives - what she could, should, might have done. Scenarios. Good & mature challenge.

Knut Hamsun : "Hunger", part IV (1890)

"Picking my way over the uneven cobbles in the yard, I still felt uncertain and very nearly turned around at the door. I clenched my teeth. NO! None of your misplaced pride now! If worst came to worst, I could always give the excuse that I had dropped in to say goodbye, take proper leave, and to come to an agreement concerning my small debt to the house. I opened the door to the hall.

Once inside, I remained stock-still. Right in front of me, two steps away, stood the landlord himself, without hat and coat,, peeping through the keyhole into the family room. He made mute gestures with his hand to make me stay quiet and peeped through the peephole again. He was laughing.
"Come over here", he said in a whisper.

I approached on tiptoe.

"Just look", he said, laughing with quiet, excited laughter. "Take a peep! Hee-Hee! There they lie! Look at the old man. Can you see the old man?!"

In the bed, right below Christ's oleograph and directly opposite me, I could see two figures, the landlady and the strange mate; her legs gleamed white against the dark quilt. And on the bed by the other wall sat her father, the paralyzed greybeard, looking on, hunched over his hands and curled up as usual, without being able to move.

I turned around to my landlord. He had the greatest difficulty keepin from laughing out loud. He was holding his hand over his nose. "Did you see the old man?" He whispered. " Oh lord, did you see the old man? The way he sits there looking on!" He put his face to the keyhole again.

I went over to the window and sat down. This spectacle had thrown all my thoughts into merciless confusion and upset my rich mood. Why, what was it to me? When the husband himself put up with it, was even greatly amused by it, there was no reason why I should take it to heart. As far as the old man was concerned, the old man was an old man. Maybe he didn't even see it, maybe he just sat there sleeping; God knows, he might even be dead. It wouldn't surprise me if he was dead sitting there. He could have died this morning around four.

I got up and hurried to the door without heeding the landlord's furious signs to me to step lightly

EP 3 - Interesting vein of choices you have done - actually all 3 proposals are in similar rhetorical territory. Here there is a sort of indignation from the speaker. One of the challenges is the voyeuristic keyhole, the visual "eye of the needle", through which the other scene takes place. This will be interesting to take on - how and where can the audience "see" the room, the old man and the wife. I like the "voyeur" problem. I look forwards to finding out which text you chose. All three are interesting.

Liv Pflug - first year student from NAT, Norway - March 2010 Training Programme. 2 proposals

"Falling In Like" by Niel LaBute

...but he can be ... there are times when he's a bit late. Or ...yes, late. There' s not really another name for it . He's late.Tardy, at least . Isn't it called th at, "tardy," when a persondoes arrive for something but they're late for it? I think that'sit . They used to say th at in school, and it 's what I always tookit to mean. That some student was late. Tardy. For classes.(Beat.) And he's always so nice about it, and flushed fromrunning down the st reet , and he'll explain it all and it'll maketotal sense, complete and absolute , since thi s is a crazy townfor traffic and the public transportation is awful, so I knowwhat it can be like ... I really, really do know. It' s ju st thatthi s is a, you know, special day-did I mention th at?- so I'mhoping that he'll be ... once or twice he ju st didn't show up.At all. No. I've sat at the movies before, waiting, and seen thewhole film, and he's come in at the end, over the . . . youknow, with the words up on the screen and the music, andbeen so sorry but work got in the way or th at kind of thing, butthat's very rare. It seems to happen less and less these days,so that's fine; as embarrassing as it can be, it' s st ill fine. Because we're . . . we are in like. That's what he calls it . "Inlike ." (Smiles again.) Isn't that sweet? I told you he's . . . he says things, some things at times that just about take your breath away, or break your heart . . . and that' s where the phrase came from, "in like, " because he wanted us to be sure that we knew what we were doing - we're not two kids running around the yard out back, chasing each other at recess . . .we are adults and we should do this right. How it' s meant to be done. Like people have done it for thousands of years . . .through the ages. (Beat.) You meet someone, you connect or you don' t, and if you do, if it' s meant to be, then you fall ...fall toward each ot her in a steady and true way. First in like.Then in . . . well, you know; I don't need to tell you how it goes. Or feels. And that's where we are right now . . . firmly and utterly in like. (Lets out a loud sigh.) Goodness! To even talk about it is , well, it' s . . . yes. That . Amazing . . .

Studies her watch again. Starts to talk, then checks it one more time.

WOMAN He said on the phone that . . . he was quiet, whispering almost , and said he might be a touch late but that I should . . .and it is our anniversary, so I'm going to sit here and wait for him. Because I know he will. He *will*, absolutely and without question. (*Beat.*) You see? I have faith in him. As a man and a friend and as a person that I'm beginning to give myself to. Not because I feel good around him or that he has accepted Timmy - that's my son, Timothy, but he just hates it when I call him that, so it has to be "Timmy" -not for any reasons like that. No. It' s because I trust him. Feel like I can actually trust a man again and I do, I do trust him and care for him and just, I just ... well , it' s true. I do like him. I am in like with him. I like him so very, very much . . . and that's why I'm here right now, waiting for him. Because I am in like with the man. I am . . . (*Beat.*) I mean, just in case you were wondering . . . that's why I'm . . . Yes. I *am*. So . . .

She smiles at us again-turns slightly to watch the door.

WOMAN I'll tell you what I'm going to do: this. I'm going to give him another two minutes before I go - signal for my check and use that time to give him a chance. And he'll come, that' s the thing of it , I *know* that he'll come! He always does - two minutes and he'll be here, you watch . (*Signals to the waiter.*) Well, we'll say three. Three just to be safe , and it' ll take that long for them to organize the bill . . . three minutes and he will come skipping in through that door, you mark my words.Starting now . . . (*Glances at watch.*) No, wait until we're straight up and down. All right . . . and *now*. There. Three minutes . I'm serious . This is like clockwork, it is . . . here we go. I'll count it out, on the half minutes, just so you know that I'm not - you watch. Watch and learn . . . He's on his way right now ... he' s just about here. I know it . I can feel it .He is . . . he's coming . . . yes.

She continues her vigil as the lights slowly fade.Silence. Darkness .

EP 1 - This comment builds on the ones already sent to Kyuja, Josephine and Maja. The work we are going to train in and research with – choreographic theatre - is not protagonist-based i.e. psychological realism, like in most cinema today, i.e. filming the protagonist as subject carrying the 'subjective' emotions. In the case of a text like this one, by Niel LaBute (very much a cinema maker), we will research into what counter-actions (and contra-dictions) we can explore. These actions will be the artistic choice of another performer (not your's as the protagonist) – and often searching an antagonistic counterpoint (antagonizing your – or the text's - protagonizing...) The question is not to be contrary for oppositional sake – too easy - but to bring out the undercurrents, mainly emotional, of the text and of your position (and in a special way of your acting.) For instance, maybe "he" does turn up but she is actually hiding. In terms of working with words - and the text is "chatty" (again) - it's an interesting enterprise, but a tough one. Not an easy text to learn by heart I would guess, and then not easy to pull it away of the book / film – its inherent style and its wish to rule acting and have its rethoric enacted. Clearly we will train in something like "anti-illustration", in pulling the texts into something like an "after-death" to hear its depth and repercussions its reflections from the other side.

"This Person" by Miranda July

They are all waiting by a picnic table in a park this person has driven past many times before. There they are, it's everyone. There are balloons taped to the benches, and the girl this person used to stand next to at the bus stop is waving a streamer. Everyone is smiling. For a moment this person is almost creeped out by the scene, but it would be so like this person to become depressed on the happiest day ever, and so this person bucks up and joins the crowd.

Teachers of subjects that this person wasn't even good at are kissing this person and renouncing the very subjects they taught. Math teachers are saying that math was just a funny way of saying "I love you." But now they are simply saying it, I love you, and the chemistry and PE teachers are also saying it and this person can tell they really mean it. It's totally amazing. Certain jerks and idiots and assholes appear from time to time, and it is as if they have had plastic surgery, their faces are disfigured with love. The handsome assholes are plain and kind, and the ugly jerks are sweet, and they are folding this person's sweater and putting it somewhere

where it won't get dirty. Best of all, every person this person has ever loved is there. Even the ones who got away. They hold this person's hand and tell this person how hard it was to pretend to get mad and drive off and never come back. This person almost can't believe it, it seemed so real, this person's heart was broken and has healed and now this person hardly knows what to think. This person is almost mad. But everyone soothes this person. Everyone explains that it was absolutely necessary to know how strong this person was. Oh, look, there's the doctor who prescribed the medicine that made this person temporarily blind. And the man who paid this person two thousand dollars to have sex with him three times when this person was very broke. Both of these men are in attendance, they seem to know each other. They both have little medals that they are pinning on this person; they are badges of great honor and strength. The badges sparkle in the sunlight, and everyone cheers.

This person suddenly feels the need to check her postoffice box . It is an old habit, and even if everything is going to be terrific from now on, this person still wants mail. This person says she will be right back and everyone this person has ever known says, Fine, take your time. This person gets in her car and drives to the post office and opens the box and there is nothing. Even though it is a Tuesday, which is famously a good day for mail. This person is so disappointed, this person gets back in the car and, having completely forgotten about the picnic, drives home and checks the voicemail and there are no new messages, just the old one about "passing the test" and "life being better." There are no e-mails, either, probably because everyone is at the picnic. This person can't seem to go back to the picnic. This person realizes that staying home means blowing off everyone this person has ever known. But the desire to stay in is very strong. This person wants to run a bath and then read in bed.

In the bathtub this person pushes the bubbles around and listens to the sound of millions of them popping at once. It almost makes one smooth sound instead of many tiny sounds. This person's breasts barely jut out of the water. This person pushes the bubbles onto the breasts and makes weird shapes with the foam. By now everyone must have realized that this person is not coming back to the picnic. Everyone was wrong; this person is not who they thought this person was. This person plunges underwater and moves her hair around like a sea anemone. This person can stay underwater for an impressively long time but only in a bathtub. This person wonders if there will ever be an Olympic contest for holding your breath under bathwater. If there were such a contest, this person would surely win it. An Olympic medal might redeem this person in the eyes of everyone this person has ever known. But no such contest exists, so there will be no redeeming. This person mourns the fact that she has ruined her one chance to be loved by everyone; as this person climbs into bed, the weight of this tragedy seems to bear down upon this person's chest. And it is a comforting weight, almost human in heft. This person sighs. This person's eyes begin to close, this person sleeps.

EP 2 - A second proposal of a text by Miranda July. The stylistic device of using "this person" which then turns out to be a "she" compasses the text, and will be a great landmark to train with - i.e. repetition, leitmotif - which I like. It is incisive and loaded. But, check what I wrote to Josephine: chose one text first - and learn it so that you get rid of memory problems as much as possible, and are free to explore all sorts of renderings and 'versions' (subversions, perversions, etc.) of the text. Later you might bring in your second choice.

Jessica Berg - first year student from NAT, Norway - March 2010 Training Programme. 2 proposals

Elfriede Jelinek THE ELEGANT YOUNG WOMAN: The woodcutters are ready. They consider their work, work on nature. But there are people sitting in front and on top of the trees to put them out of work. And those national park sitters have the greater task. They establish the space in which the wetlands actually become reality. Really. It is they who ultimately make the landscape, those New Age sitting bullies in their designer sweats. [Their timeshare cabins are nice and comfy.] They cast themselves upon the land and the sky is also overcast. After all, that is where those who have passed on are joined in seclusion. And those down below pass judgement on good and bad pollution. How do I avoid the paths traveled by other wanderers? Would we have ever experienced our nativeness without those nature guards, who have planted themselves firmly in everything they own? And for our wholesome offspring we, the wet nurses of the wetlands, claim everything that should no longer be claimed: Spring water! Rain forests! Moors! The rivers that run through! Virgin woods and

peckers! Tufa tortes; peat pies! Isn't it the tourists who create our foreign countries, without which we would always be at home? Only by going away and finding the same everywhere do we arrive back home again. We want to be in foreign lands to be lifted beyond us, to stretch across the unknown. Every place we go is worth our reflective gace. Avoid what's close, and distance will call. It would also be possible to stay at home and create the foreign right there, but no, we have to get away to create a home for ourselves.

But I ask myself: Do we mourn the death of nature just to make her into something alien right here in our native land? Two solitary distant farms, if they still exist, still consider themselves neighbors, while in the city the closeness of door to door can mean a vast foreign territory. The closeness of neighbors does not depend on space and time. It is space and time that prevent closeness. If we want closeness, we have to carry it within ourselves. Yet we tear into each other with tender teeth and destroy what's home to the other. And the wilderness always is too wild, and sameness is always too much the same. The land greets us with gestures in the shape of monuments, lighthouses, citadels, cloisters, but the reason we understand them is that we know them from back home and can claim them as our home abroad. And all that foreign space keeps turning us away. Therefore we construct the foreign among ourselves everywhere; concrete injected into the swaying soil. Not at home, yet home. We stay inside ourselves. Who can deny us what? Where does nature get her power to always be more than those who live in her? Healthier, more beautiful than they. She is our environment. It is her function to serve as our backdrop, which sets us off as the stranger ones. But our might is man-made. Nature is everything that makes itself. What are we doing there? She is everything there is. She excludes conflict because she is in everything. Why should we now fight for her intactness. That fight will also be tracelessly absorbed by nature. The place under the apple tree where we used to rest has become much more open since we cleared it. What if that landscape didn't exist anymore? Even the result of complete destruction would still be nature, because nature is always all there is. And it is precisely this unity of contradictions within nature that propels us outside of nature, because we want to sit outside in our damaged, jagged places, so that we don't have to be nature, but rather: pacified, satisfied *in* nature. I say, the visitor wants to appear as mere appearance, an apparition apparently, while nature must be absolutely real. So that the visitor can let himself be embraced by reality, which in turn illuminates him as an illusion. And everything thus illuminated is already rendered obsolete by what we know. We don't look. We know! We know! Is it out of selfishness that we still want to go into the woods? The enormous star-studded heavens and a storm outside. Shouldn't we rather stop all our experiments and view the world as it is, in its exemplary greatness?

EP - Hi Jessica, I had a glance at your text.

The thing now (3 days before we start) is to learn it by heart - at least the first part, or the first paragraphs.

It is long. And its not a 'theatrical' text - ok by me. Its thinking is quite accute, with what seems like an uncanny irony. This gives entrance into 'voices' - who is speaking? - some kind of cutting-edge nature new nymph ?

You will have to work hard to get the ideas through. Good training - the balance between theatricality and complex ideas is not an easy one, especially in the 'new' territories of eco-political utopias.

Check out the material on Pastoral and Ecology I am proposing.

<http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-PW10-gb.html>

<http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-MT-gb.html>

Patricia Sanz – proposal for the 2011 Paris Professional workshop.

LAST OF THE RED-HOT LOVERS. Neil Simon.

You hypocrite! You soul-searching, finger smelling, hypocritical son of a bitch!
Who are you to tell anybody how to go through life? What would you have done if I came in here all fluttery and blushing and “Ooh, Mr.Cashman, don't put your hand there, I'm a married woman”? Were you going to tell me how much you respect me, admire me, and, at the moment

of truth, even love me? You know damn well tomorrow you'd be back behind that counter opening clams and praying to Christ I'd never come back in your restaurant. And you know something? That's the way it should be.

Forgive me for the terrible, sinful thing I'm about to say but I happen to like the pure physical act of making love. It warms me, it stimulates me and it makes me feel like a woman - but that's another ugly story. That's why I came up here for and that's what you were expecting. But don't give me, "When I was nine years old my mother ran off with the butcher and I've been looking for someone to love me ever since". I don't know your problems and I don't really care. Keep you seafood stories to yourself. No one really cares about anything or anyone in this world except himself, and there's only one way to get through with your sanity. If you can't taste it, touch it or smell it, forget it! If you want a copy of that speech, send fifty cents and self-addressed envelope. (.....)

Look, I'm forty-seven years old and for the first time in my life I think about dying. The thought of death has now become a part of my life. It's going to happen someday, maybe sooner than I think.

And I ask myself, "Have you enjoyed it Barbara? Was it a really terrific forty-seven years?" And you know what my answer is? "Well, I wouldn't say terrific. It was nice." ...The sum total of my existence is nice. I will go to my grave having led a nice life. And I will have a nice funeral and they will bury me in my nice blue dress. And my husband will weep for me and mourn for me and in six months he will marry another nice woman...maybe even give her my brown, favourite coat. And I wouldn't condemn him for it. It's the natural order of things, life must go on...But while it's going on, shouldn't it be better than just "nice"? Can't I just from time to time give in to my fantasies, my secret dreams, experiencing things, emotions, stimulants, and then go back to my daily routine - but knowing that for one brief afternoon, I have changed the pattern of my life. And feel that I don't just exist - I live!!

EP - Patricia: this is the ultimate "confessional" psychological-realistic speech – at the perfect moment for a mid-life crisis, 47. There is, on the other hand, no 'perfect' text for choreographic theatre, where the point is the challenge a text presents. And if you take this text on, I look forwards very much to the challenge. It opens a door to death, and in that sense, it is movingly tragic. My current research I call "post-tragic", and this text leans towards that possibility, that kind of melancholy. In some ways I like this text better than the Camus you proposed (in French) – but that is my own psychological preference. Great choices both.