

## Communicative Aspect in Theatre Art

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### Abstract

*This article analyzes the problem of the authorship of theatrical visuality. As stage design is only a part of visual language created in the contemporary theatre, the focus is put on the identification of the artist. Functions of theatre artist and his identity issues that arise in cooperation are explored. The problem is being solved invoking communication theories. Visuality is presented from the social aspect, as a result of authors' communication through visuals.*

**Keywords:** co-authorship, intention, identification, dialogue, monologue.

Stage designer's creation – is an exclusive area of artist's creation which occurs in the collective of creators'. Such questions as how the artist's creative process in the collective proceeds, how the artist is recognized, may the stage designer, whose processes are organized by the director, initiate a creative idea in theatre, arise in the analysis of theatre art and in explaining the role of the artist in theatre. In this article the equality of stage designer's creation in theatre is explored through social methodological access and communication theories.

Theories of collective creation that emerged in the 7<sup>th</sup> decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were related to the search of nonverbal expression in theatre, dramaturgy is given more visuality (Knut Ove Arntzen, Hans-Thies Lehmann) and space (Valentina Valentini). This movement is also concerned with the ambition to escape from theatre as temple, to get free from creating masterpieces (Antonin Artaud) and any dictate of single creator in collective art, because theatre is “not a language of one individual”<sup>1</sup>. Hereby the inviolable 20th century theatre (named as director's, i.e. one author's theatre) boundaries were moved and equal possibilities for all creators were entrenched in collective art, they became equal partners. Perception of scenery equality is associated with artist's, as well as any other theatrical field representative's, opportunity to interpret drama independently - the artist distances from the primary function of decorative or illustrative scenery creation (to mount, to decorate, to indicate the place of action) and starts to complement the actor, to reveal the purport of staging<sup>2</sup>.

The artist begins “to scenographise”- he defines necessary proportions between the space of stage and text, structures every system “in himself” and also has in mind “the other”<sup>3</sup>. Thus, a representative of independent creation - the artist - only by acknowledging authors' tight collective creative process, which reveals in complicated authors' creative communication atmosphere, has a chance to preserve the identity, without losing his individuality. Therefore on purpose to thoroughly explore the identity of the artist as an author in theatre, it is worth to analyse in greater detail the mechanism of co-authorship, which encourages considering communicative problems, incident to creative team.

Investigation of these social questions employs general models of sociology and psychology, as according to media scholar John Fiske “culture is an active, dynamic, living organism only because its members actively use its communication codes”<sup>4</sup>. Recognizing that “social space is now saturated with the culture of visual”<sup>5</sup>, the authorship of imagery is familiar to all culture spheres, it brings them together and allows using the analysis and achievements of all fields, which help to reveal the social content of imagery.

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<sup>1</sup>. Patrice Pavis, *Dictionnaire du theatre*, Paris: Messidor Editions Sociales, 1987, trans. red. К Разлогов, Москва: Прорпекс, 1991, s.343

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>4</sup> John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, Second edition, London and New York: Routledge, 1997, trans. Vilija Gudonienė, Elena Macevičiūtė, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1998, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern (1983-1998)*, trans. Aukšė Mardosaitė, Vilnius: Lithuanian Writers' Union Publishers, 2002, p. 134.

## The Factors and Levels of Author's Communication in Theatrical Practice

Acknowledging probability of sociological processes in theatre, it only remains to agree with conclusions made by specialists of this field. Researches show that communication is not only information, messages and certain signals transmitting process, an inter-influence or an impact, but the whole chain of factors. Determination of proceeding is inherent to communication process, its place of operation and direction<sup>6</sup>. Intentions of the artist (as well as the designer), who is creating in a group, are related to a particular group, which, according to sociologists, is united by a common purpose. The fact, that any operation in the group is described as tight cooperation<sup>7</sup> by sociologists and psychologists, explains an extraordinary influence they make on each other. Joint work, the aim and operation at one validates the group as a closed organism, capable to identify itself as "we" rather than "they"<sup>8</sup>. Thus the gathering of representatives of different art fields, solidified by various agreements, is described in theatre. Noteworthy are major, formally and informally organised, creative theatre groups, where different creative relationships and resulting imagery character settle.

In formally gathered theatre collective the artist gets a defined role. The formal group appears due to the assignment of higher central authorities, which impose certain requirements: the order, rules, the structure, social and creative guarantees, which provide a sense of security in community. In such group the collective consists of creators of different aesthetic beliefs and often of different education. Although the author, belonging to such group, gets requests, he has restrained creative ambitions. The order, formed in the formal group, is beneficial to high ranks that are established in advance. Each area of creative field has its ruling instance. The Soviet theatre had established positions of chief director and chief designer that outlined hierarchical, invariable order and certain forced relationships, which in the formal group determine inertia and apathy. Here opportunities are limited, creative process is adjusted ideologically, independence is lost and the artist, suffering from pre-determined obstacles and facing active resistance, is forced to agree to a compromise; the risk, that the image will become official and already discovered solutions will recur, appears.

When analysing the possibilities of artist's self-expression in formally rallied theatre organisation, more cases of creative adaptation can be found. However, especially in the last stage of the totalitarian regime, examples of uprising, tinges of political images emerging from resistance can be observed. In the Soviet theatre the artist often used the superiority of his non-verbal language, possibilities of plastic forms and activated the ideological concept of visual decision. In such cases, directors did not limit artist's decisions; often they could not even imagine the completeness of performance without them. Such is the example of director's Henrikas Vancevičius practice (1957-1974). He could not manage without artist's Feliksas Navickas creative suggestions, was attached to him (leaving Kaunas, the director and invited the artist to go together). Most probably such a trust Navickas earned due to his sketches, which he used to provide in advance, even before the rehearsals of performance had started - his sketches did not require any change from director<sup>9</sup> and thus reinforced the priorities of plastic language.

The artist has more freedom in informally created creative group, which is not restricted by any official obligations and is gathered for a single production, project or is acting as a private theatre. The first creativity encouraging feature of such group is creative freedom. The group is brought together by personally and creatively allied creators who rely on unified aesthetic estimations and self-management. They are connected by common beliefs towards performance or theatre creation idea, repertoire or mechanism of performance direction that are already tested in previous creative practice. The second feature of the informal creative group - less social security, therefore one of the bonding features is human factors: the same strain to take risks, the ability to share responsibility, openness to innovations, material incentives. However, material loss that such groups undergo is counterweighted by freedom of author's creative expression. While exploring the informal theatre groups, a wider range of choices for the artist can be seen, also features of individualism and collectivism can be discovered that are consistent with group and individual's interests, uninhibited spiritual and creative power, the role of sex in creation to can be taken into account. The way of consolidating interaction between plastic and mis-en-scene view can also be analysed.

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<sup>6</sup> These questions are thoroughly explored by sociologist and psychologist David G. Myers in the book *Social Psychology*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> David G. Myers, *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> John C. Turner, *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-categorization Theory*, New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987.

<sup>9</sup> From interviews with artist Feliksas Navickas (2001-12-11) and director Henrikas Vancevičius (2002-04-20).

At this point, noteworthy are creative duets of artist Jonas Arčikauskas and director Jonas Vaitkus, Jonas Arčikauskas and composer Vidmantas Bartulis, artist Juratė Paulekaitė and director Oskaras Koršunovas, which are not restricted by any official working bonds. It is interesting to study the evolution of their artistic solutions, the way they balance on plastic, sonic and directorial visuality level. Pursuant to the practice of different groups, it is easy to ascertain that artistic creation is an integral element of social structure, influenced by specific social institutions. According to Judith Butler, the subject is the effect of external forces and, at the same time, lingual condition of individual's existence and functioning capability. Subjectivisation, which means subordination to force, makes individual the subject. The subject is ambivalent because any subordination encourages resistance, but it also leads to the emergence and existence of the resisting subject himself<sup>10</sup>. Thus an active creative sphere of theatrical partnership and a variety of theatrical imagery, its private and official draft can develop.

Going deep into the artist's communicational skills in the theatre, not only communication of group members in general, purposeful communication of creators is relevant. According to sociology science, communication can be defined as a purposeful process of exchanging messages between two or more individuals, aiming at common understanding. It is sociology where the highlighted process helps to understand theatre, where creation in community is not ongoing continuously. Here is a clear work distribution into several phases, in which communication happens at different levels: "Dyadic, interpersonal communication shifts to communication in the group and further - to collective work, i.e. "co-operation"<sup>11</sup>. Such functioning of three levels in society is close to theatre community and demonstrates the unity of individualisation and sociologisation. According to French theatre theorist Pavis, the work in the theatre is done gradually - from personal experience and quests to the proper solution in group. It is identified as work in several phases.

The first is independent, individually experimental, in which, during improvisation, individual plastic characteristics, unique plots are discovered. "Each member of theatre work has a chance to analyse drama material individually and to search for his own solution, - it is only in the end of work when separate creators join into ensemble"<sup>12</sup>. Prominent German director Michael Thalheimer, who has visited Lithuania, confirms the following procedure: "The first phase of work is independent and very intense. [...] The second stage can also mean certain vulnerability. [...] If preparation has been successful, the third stage begins [...]. And only then the accents are put"<sup>13</sup>. He identifies the latter stage as intellectual, which changes the emotional stage. Director takes responsibility only when it is necessary to summarize all material "that everything would be put in the right place"<sup>14</sup>, as "the need to coordinate improvised elements ripens"<sup>15</sup>. However, according to Pavis, "centralisation not necessarily requires to identify one person"<sup>16</sup>, so this role can be performed not only by director.

Connection can occur due to common efforts of the whole collective, in the shift of leadership positions between creators - the artist gets an opportunity to become a leader. The leader, as well as other members of collective, at this stage has to distance himself from his personal idea and solution. This is the factor determining the dynamics of development and whole collective's work success. In Lithuanian scenography this statement is illustrated by the practice of Liudas Truikys - one of the most prominent theatre personalities and a pioneer of modern stage. He created evocative scenography, based on monumental, dramatised *grand opera* language (Giuseppe Verdi's *Aida* (1975), *Don Carlo* (1981), Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* (1986) and etc.). Truikys asserted that "in fact, decorative decisions in opera stage play greater role than the director"<sup>17</sup>. However, not always artists and performance producers could implement his lofty standards (e.g., transparent clothes, high stage, indicated in sketches) - eventually the artist had to adapt to existing conditions and to change his solutions (e.g., *Aida* was created in 1963 and produced only after twelve years). Thereby, the leadership of any member of collective is justified only if he is tolerant.

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<sup>10</sup> Judith Butler, *Psyche der Macht: das Subjekt der Unterverfung*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2001, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Beata Grebliauskienė, Nijolė Veličkienė, *Komunikacinė kompetencija*, Vilnius: Žara, 2004, p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> Patrice Pavis, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

<sup>13</sup> „Ištikimas veikalui. „Sirenų“ svečias – režisierius Michaelis Thalheimeris“, *7 meno dienos*, 2008-07-25, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Patrice Pavis, p. 342.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

<sup>17</sup> Vytautas Tumėnas, „Menų sintezė operoje“, in: *Kultūros barai*, 1987, Nr. 7, p. 12.

## Dissemination of Scenographer's Creative Message

The artist joins creative process only when he accumulates entire or at least almost entire information of his creative conception. In the initial stage, “scenographer begins to study moving actors. It has to be an active phase of actor's, director's and stage designer's interaction – designer, as well as other participants in the play, can shape the future of all directional aspects”<sup>18</sup>. The artist becomes the participant of initial, but active creative and social process in theatre space. He transmits his message (explains the designed visual) to other members and receives appropriate answer from them, which may expand, complement, enrich his original idea. However, enriching creative message in such a way, results in a partial loss of its originality - it is unavoidable in collaboration even for like-minded artists. According to sociology textbooks, “cooperation or expedient work in group (team) is impossible without agreement, mutual concord”<sup>19</sup>. Cooperation can ensure not only performance but also theatre and entire performing art persuasiveness. According to Giddens, who is citing Janette Rainwater “agreement is a well-functioning relation, in which each person is autonomous and confident of his worth”<sup>20</sup>.

However, in this case, it must be taken into account that two different types of artists meet in theatre: representatives of collective art (director, actors and musicians), who constantly work in a group, and the artist, who usually works individually. Consequently, it is worth to describe common features of these representatives. Definitions, used in inter-cultural communication theories, are probably the most suitable here - individual autonomy, independence, personal goals, competition are typical of individualism and thus the artist. According to the description of collectivism, constant theatre creative group features unity, adjustment, belonging to group and cooperation<sup>21</sup>. Thus, cooperation of theatre creators is based on the principle of dialogical communication of different partners, which is observed in information exchange, message transmission and reception. In modern communication theories, dialogic intercourse is not just a way of speaking. Martin Buber, the representative of dialogic philosophy movement, who analyses dialogic relations, says that “it [the dialogue - *R. B.*] includes meeting, support of creative relations and reciprocal understanding”<sup>22</sup>, whereas the new philosophy of dialogue also encompasses relations that emerge in preconceived experience - the knowledge, messages and their transmission are appealed. Buber, discussing dialogic relationships, identifies main types of dialogue – the genuine dialogue and the monologue - that will be invoked in the analysis of creative process within theatre collective.

Theatre artist in theatre has to learn the genuine dialogue. Genuine dialogue, whether spoken or silent, happens, when each of the participants has in mind the other or others, individually defined and actually existing, and turns to him or to them with his intention in such a way, that a living mutual relation emerges between dialogue participants, which is consolidated by the process of message transmission, and reception<sup>23</sup>. Considering not only Martin Buber's, but also cognate theories of Mikhail Bakhtin and Yuri Lotman, this process can be described as the transition of information from “I” to “other” and backwards, focusing on message transmission in the hinge of addresser-addressee<sup>24</sup>. The “I” space, according to Lotman, the founder of Russian and Estonian school of semiotics, is named as “own”, the space of “their” – “stranger's”. If modern theatre production is impossible without director and actor, then they become representatives of theatre space as “centre”, “own” space, whereas other fields of individual creation (such as music and art), supplementing theatre collective, find themselves in the zone of “their” - the “stranger's” or the periphery. Hence, representative of individual creation (the artist in this case) becomes “them”, the sender of the message, which is encoded by means of individual expression. The recipient of this message (the addressee) is a theatre, named as “centre”. Theatre artist's idea during dialogic communication can be accepted unconditionally. It happens when message sender is trusted.

<sup>18</sup> Robert W. Corrigan, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> Beata Grebliauskienė, Nijolė Veličkienė, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>20</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the late Modern Age*, Cambridge: PolityPress, 1997, trans. Vytautas Radžvilas, Vilnius: Pradai, 2000, s. 123.

<sup>21</sup> Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organisation: Software of the Mind*, London: McGraw-Hill, 1991.

<sup>22</sup> Martin Buber, *Das dialogische Prinzip*, Heidelberg : Schneider, 1992, trans., preface written Tomas Sodeika, Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulis, 2001, p. 80.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> Лотман, Юрий Михайлович, *Статьи по семиотике и типологии культуры*, ed. Arūnas Sverdiolas, trans. Donata Mitaitė, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2004, p. XII.

Giddens notes, that “trust cannot be considered “spontaneous”: it, like other aspects of relationship, must be worked at - the trust of the other has to be won. In pre-modern era, when personal relations were often stabilised by external criteria [...], trust tended to belong to established positions”<sup>25</sup>. In modern times, trust is determined by technical and emotional capabilities, education and conceptual competence. Technical capabilities are skills based on creator’s knowledge and practice to use modern means. These are the features that are needed for the leader to be conciliated and for his rules to be accepted<sup>26</sup>. This corresponds to Lotman's motive of personal competence - a high value of language (in this case, the artistic expression). It is created by professionalism, experience of actualisation, which leads to reasoned formulation, because the aim of dialogue is “to optimise the principle of communication, to speak efficiently, briefly, clearly”<sup>27</sup>. Often it determines creative ideas of the whole collective. For example, clearly individual, balancing between farce and tragedy, visual performance solutions of artists Jonas Arčikauskas and Gailius Kličius noticeably deforms psychological characteristics of the performers. Drastically rebellious director's Jonas Vaitkus directorial style easily changes when Arčikauskas' ironic slapsticks invade his performances.

Theatre artist's creative message is frequently accepted for its modern (typical of that time) plastic language, style and other specific means. For example, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after the Bauhaus, a school of a new field of art - architecture and design - emerged, functional art takes the dominant position. The fine arts start to honour constructions and scenography ends up in the hands of architects. Then, architectural logic began to affect the thinking of other theatre artists. Thus architectural scenery solution was incorporated into overall context of performance direction, in which “stranger” is treated as an expert. It is a reform of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century theatre. Edward Gordon Craig – an actor, who worshipped art and could perfectly use a pencil - assessed the art changes of that time and, after adjusting them in scenography, renewed the acting art. This way a strange artistic language in theatre “played the role of catalyst in the whole mechanism of the semiosphere”. And in contemporary Lithuanian theatre scene scenographic solutions of recognized representatives of visual arts become significant: unusual at that time projective scenery, proposed by sculptor Mindaugas Navakas to the official opera and ballet scene of Bronius Kutavičius' opera *Lokys* (The Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre, 2000), also domestic retro, offered by performance creators Gintaras Makarevičius and Eglė Rakauskaitė to Justinas Marcinkevičius' drama *Mažvydas* (The State Youth Theatre of Lithuania, 1997), atypically pictorial painters' Sigitas Staniūnas and Rasa Staniūnienė scenery of Albert Camus' play *The Stranger* (The Lithuanian National Drama Theatre, 1995), provoking combinations of novelty and repetition, which have already “circulated” in art, but little known to theatre scene.

Theatre artist often adapts to collective idea. His solution is determined by collective force of majority or hierarchical order and passive properties of representative of individual creation, personal expression. Throughout the analysis of creative process of different art fields, the possibility of misunderstanding is also observed. Intercultural communication practice, where the element of interpretation is important, states that “information may be understood not as it was expected by sender”<sup>28</sup>. Only material evidences of artist's creation - the sketches - are a useful material to check alterations that happen during the creation of performance. Extant sketches, done at different times, often propose his dissociation from individuality. However, this may increase the tension between visuality and functionality, scenography risks to become decorative. Nevertheless, in modern theatre many cases of successful artists' adaptation may be found. These are performances which, from beginning to end, are formed by the director and the artist involves in this process only in the middle, professionally implementing director's visions. Director's Eimuntas Nekrošius theatre, which eventually became the familial, can be attributed to such type of successful co-authorship - the artists, his wife Nadežda Gultiajeva and his son Marius, split in different areas of set design (costume and scenery), became perfect performers of visual accompaniment.

The analysis of artist's recognition and his positions of adaptation in theatre collective revealed asymmetric communication. It appears when one of creators is dominating.

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<sup>25</sup> Anthony Giddens, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>26</sup> William B. Gudykunst, Young Yun Kim, *Communicating With Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995.

<sup>27</sup> *Большой толковый психологический словарь*, Москва: Вече АСТ, 2000, p. 236.

<sup>28</sup> Helen Spencer-Oatey, *Culturally speaking: managing rapport through talk across cultures*, London: Continuum, 2000, p.

Recognition of his competences and force to decide devalues the function of others. Gilles Deleuze such strategy of function downgrading” or tactics of separate elements’ neutralization regarded as an opportunity to display playful creative relations that provide dynamics to a theatre piece, i.e. a chance to change<sup>29</sup>.

If dialogical communication appears in arts, as in other areas, there is a mutual changeover of parties, communication in different aspects happens. Collectivity, according to Buber, “is based on atrophy of personal existence”<sup>30</sup>, that participants experience in any dialogue. Different opinions are recognized here, a chance to tell own story, where everyone uses the language of expression of his own field, his private vocabulary, at the same time remaining open to the other, being ready to accept the idea of the other, because “the text conveyed, in anticipation of a response, must contain in itself elements for transition into the alien language”<sup>31</sup>. This reorganization happens in recognition of personal “I” loss, accepting complements, compensating each other, when in the same performance, means of expression are taken over from another field of art: in art – music polyphony, time measurement or dynamism of action; in direction - colourfulness of art; in music - bulk volumes of art; in acting - directorial perception of *mise-en-scene*. Creators' relationships are constantly changing and thus create non-hierarchic order and develop dynamic structure.

According to playwright Gertrude Stein, “every element is associated to any other element”<sup>32</sup>, and conversions or adaptations increase when links are changing. It creates difficulties in identifying author's, in this case - artist's, creative identity. This reciprocal creative relation of artist and director in Lithuanian theatre practice is illustrated by a lively cooperation between artist Juratė Paulėkaitė and director Oskaras Koršunovas. The artist herself says: “Working with Oskaras is easy. He involves you into performance creation, has a very specific vision and at the same time remains open to any proposals or complements from outside, to accidental provocations”<sup>33</sup>. The artist becomes the participant of such creative partnership and, after recognizing the fact that creative ideas of every performance producers have an opportunity to develop, his mission is to find the other and to identify him (the other) in oneself.

The artist in theatre is sometimes creating in monologues. The monologue based on a dialogue takes place when two or more individuals, converged together in space in strangely tortuous and circuitous ways, speak each with himself but still nobody cares that everyone is left to himself<sup>34</sup>. Communication with yourself is called intra-personal communication when the sender and the recipient is the same person. Psychology science affirms: “Every relationship is an emphasis of personal “I”. Most of communication - is not so much about the exchange of information, as about the support of ego”<sup>35</sup>. Such theatre model, when each creator retains his independence, was established by Bertolt Brecht. He said that “stage expression of the plot is created by the whole theatre collective: actors, director, artist, costume designer, composer and choreographer. All of them combine their creative efforts in one work, but remain independent”<sup>36</sup>.

The “defamiliarization effect” theory, formulated by Brecht in 1930, denied the idea of interconnection of separate theatre components (today it is called intermediality). According to him, various fields of art which are synthesized “will inevitably degrade, because each of them has to adapt to another”<sup>37</sup>. Brecht's epic theatre distances not only individual artists but also theatre production as creation from literary work and theatre form the audience. Thus the audience was granted the right to criticize theatre creator's interpretation of play and activity of each creator. At the same time the sense of responsibility of every collective member increased, which, turning into the trust, often triggers monologue messages in theatre, provokes avant-garde, rebellious challenges. Lithuanian theatre, which is close to the equality tactic, in regard to analysed aspect, opens more intricately. Similar features of independence can be sensed in director's Povilas Gaidys psychological plays, which are interfered with decorative scenographic solutions of artist Dalia Mataitienė.

<sup>29</sup> Gilles Deleuze, „Un manifeste de moins“, in: Carmelo Bene, Gilles Deleuze, *Superpositions*, Paris: Les Editions du Minuit, 1979.

<sup>30</sup> Martin Buber, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>31</sup> Jurij Lotman, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> Gertrude Stein, *Look at Me Now and Here I Am: Writings and Lectures 1909–1945*, London: Penguin Books, 1990, p. 78.

<sup>33</sup> Taken from the interview of article's author and artist Jūratė Paulėkaitė (2005-01-31).

<sup>34</sup> Martin Buber, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>35</sup> Maria Fürst, *Psichologija*, trans. Sprindžiūnaitė, Vilnius: Lumen, 1998, p. 312.

<sup>36</sup> Bertold Brecht, *Petit Organon pour le theatre (1948–1954)*, Paris: L'Arche, 1970, p. 26.

<sup>37</sup> Бертольт Брехт, *Театр: в 5 томах*, т. 1, 1965, Москва, p. 302.

Artist's self-sufficiency and opportunities of his monologue expression show up in a number of works of Lithuanian theatre artists who, due to their position of individuality recognition, are close to the world theatre avant-garde representatives of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Italian futurist theoretician poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in 1919 proposed a theatre without an actor. In his scenarios he suggested a need to change the understanding of what is a scene; it must comply with the understanding of visual world. One of the most prominent Italian theatre artists Prampolini in his *Manifesto of Futurist Scenography* (1915) wrote: "the scene will not be a pictorial background, but an electromechanical neutral architecture, revitalized through a powerful light. Combining light and darkness, the sounds of modern machinery and its accompanying movement will burst."<sup>38</sup> This is how the dynamic era, the change of the world, the glory and the threat should be visually summarized and a new tense of stage act should be created. It may also be an actor, but he must not imitate life and mingle with the artificial world, where the actor becomes the energy of the matter. A similar theatre vision, based on visuals, was also seen by Stasys Ušinskas, a founder of the first Lithuanian Artist's Theatre, who established The Marionette Theatre (1934). Theatre artist Vitalijus Mazūras is also unique to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who, after turning into director, anchored a material theatre of mythological origin, uplifting pagan spirituality of the matter and its visual suggestibility. Nowadays avant-garde quests of mechanical theatre artists are continued by artist Irma Balakauskaitė (The Living Pictures, 2008).

The idea of theatre artist raised in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century opened opportunities for the artist to manifest himself in theatre performance, to fulfil a monitoring function of that time, to generate new approach, to assert personal images and author's power. Consequently, one of the new directors, theatre creators of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Vsevolod Meyerhold admitted: "New directors have found a key of new pageant, the new generation of artists brought innovative motives of decorative arts to scene. Though, directors and artists argue over the leader's wand. This, yet secret and strangled dispute eventually will intensify, revealing horizons of the new theatre building."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Enrico Prampolini, *Scenographie futuristi-Manifeste* (1915), in: *Die Maler und das Theater im 20. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt a. M.: Schim-Kunsthalle Frankfurt, 1986, p. 514.

<sup>39</sup> Всеволод Мейерхольд, *Статьи, письма, речи, беседы*, Москва : Искусство, 1968, ed. Ramunė Marcinkevičiūtė, trans. Austėja Merkevičiūtė, Vilnius: Apostrofa, 2008, p. 90.