



PICCOLO TEATRO DI MILANO

PICCOLO

## Earth/Soil/Land...: with the Feet (and the Hands) on the Ground

December 18th – 20th 2023 | Milano, Italy

### WORKSHOP CONTENT

*This year's workshop was geared toward taking up the ideas and insights from previous meetings that have emerged and matured over the course of this past year; at their organization and planning one or more forms of restitution, which will then go on to be built upon in the next year's workshop.*

*The main lines of discussion thus developed along three axes: what themes are essential to bring to the public; to what types of audiences; and through what forms.*



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The thematic focus remained on the concept of soil, emphasizing its most significant characteristics: its richness, its life, its intelligence, but also its fragility; and its predisposition to place itself as a space of interconnections. These aspects are not so obvious to non-experts. The goal that this working group has set for itself has been to figure out **how to make these issues visible**, with the aim of increasing the consciousness of the ordinary citizen(s) about the importance of soil within such everyday phenomena as the climate and environmental crisis. Another key issue to work on will be that of **vocabulary**: giving certain words back their true meaning, separating them from what is instead attributed to them for (often economic) convenience. In the vast majority of cases, for example, we use the term "soil" to refer to the surface on which we place our feet; actually, soil is shaped by multiple layers, or "horizons," that determine its three-dimensionality and **depth**. Therefore, a re-literacy of the citizen(s) would be useful, even with the help of specially drafted primers; tools, these, very suitable to appeal to the schooling age groups.

Therefore, there was a long debate on the best forms to implement a communication strategy aimed at informing two different macro-categories of audiences: the world of childhood and the adult world. It was thought that the final outcomes of this path could take two different forms: the first is that of a performance for elementary school pupils, within the Piccolo Teatro di Milano's "Il teatro tiene banco" project, for the 2024/25 season; the second is that of an installation/performance event dedicated to all types of audiences, to be presented in the same season, but outside of conventional theater spaces. In fact, much has been said about the need to reach in a widespread way even those social segments of population that normally do not consider theater as a cultural option. In this sense, theater can present itself as a **didactic and playful device**, suitable for conveying in a meaningful but light-hearted way scientific knowledge that would be urgently needed to be disseminated. Particular attention was paid to the fact that both devices will have to take into account a participatory dimension of the audience, so as to avoid considering the spectator as a mere passive element in the fruition process, to stimulate instead their activity and allow a greater easiness of assimilation of concepts; in the wake of a kind of **applied relational aesthetics**. The call to take action must correspond, in this sense, to a call to do something to change the course of history, given the serious threat that today is represented by **unbridled land consumption**, which corresponds to an irresponsible consumption of our planet resources.



Credits - @Marta Cervone

*All this aims to develop new and more effective communication and education strategies, entrusting theater with the role of providing science with effective tools and forms of dissemination for a grip on the public; and science with the role of providing theater with interesting and urgent content to bring to its primary interlocutor, which is the society within which theater fits in and operates. This should take place in a symbiotic interchange that replicates, from many points of view, the symbiotic exchange in which human beings and soil are protagonists. And all this should show us the way out of a strictly anthropocentric view, to rethink human beings as co-inhabitants of a much more complex and fascinating organic system.*

*Davide Carnevali*

## **MAPPING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN A CREATIVE WORKSHOP:**

*Throughout the past year, the depth and interconnectedness of discussions surrounding emerging topics related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were further underscored during the second round of our workshop. To enhance our understanding, a shadowing exercise was employed to map the various SDGs discussed. This allowed for a meticulous filtration of all content, aligning it with the potential contributions to the overarching SDGs. This year, the convergence of the topics addressed towards the identification of performance devices and appropriate communication modalities aim at orienting the conceptualization and the design of a theater performance on the topic of soil. Five were the aspects that polarized the attention on SDG-related contributions as follows:*

- **SDG 15** - *Life on land: A common thread of the discussion was to reiterate that soil is life; soil is a treasure chest of biodiversity and holds a wealth of life forms, in a continuous work of sustaining life, communication between species, and the storage and stratification of valuable substances, nutrients and carbon stock.*
- **SDG 4** - *Quality education: increase awareness in society with respect to the role of soil in sustaining life (literacy on soil); the power of theater in creating and disseminating scientific content to a wide audience, but without assuming the role of top-down educator or mere passive conveyor of predetermined messages from the scientific world. Targets of this process are both adults and children, in order to cover a wide range and achieve greater impact in society.*
- **SDG 16** - *Peace, justice and strong institutions: confirming the relevance of the theme of education, theater is aware of its role in society, in a newfound mission of broad public involvement on contingent environmental and ecological issues. Theater is an institution rooted in the territory and with a strong capacity to construct evocative and engaging images and imagery. Collaboration with civil society and public institutions, in addressing environmental, ecological, and climate challenges, is carried out through the theater's own tools and devices.*

- **SDG 17** - *Partnerships for the goals: an expanded meaning of partnerships for sustainability concerns a renewed relationship with the non-human as a stakeholder in societal transformation processes. Soil can be a protagonist, can be heard and represented at the decision-making table. The soil is under attack today: it is consumed, sealed, depleted, exploited and polluted. Through immersion in the soil, or even through identification with the soil, theater makes itself a spokesperson for this instance in an attempt to overcome an anthropocentric view to ecological issues. Strengthening partnerships with nature, therefore, becomes a new way to promote sustainable development. For instance, theater can play an important role in determining original ways of intermediation between human and non-human.*
- **SDG 13** – *Climate action: soil has been recognized by participants as an ally against climate change. Indeed, soil sealing increases the destructive effects of climate change in cities, a process that must be stopped and reversed also thanks to increased public awareness, and in this, theatre can play a central role.*

## **BIOGRAPHY OF THE ARTISTS:**

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### **DAVIDE CARNEVALI: WORKSHOP COORDINATOR**

(Milan, 1981) is a playwright, director and theatre scholar. He is currently Artist in residence at Piccolo Teatro di Milano and tutor for the program “Authors under 40” of the Biennale di Venezia Teatro College.

He obtained a Ph.D. in Theatre Studies at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, after a semester at the Freie Universität Berlin. From 2013 to 2020 he was a member of the Dramaturgy Committee of the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya; from 2018 to 2021 he was Artist in residence at ERT Emilia Romagna National Theatre. In the period 2020/21 he was invited artist and tutor of the École des maîtres.

He teaches Theatre Theory and Playwriting at the Theatre Academy Paolo Grassi in Milan and Institut del Teatre de Barcelona and in different universities, theatres and international institutions. He’s member of the editorial board of the theatre magazines “Pausa” and “Estudis Escènics” (Barcelona), and he writes for different international journals, mainly about German and Ibero-american theatre. He’s also editor and translates from Catalan, French and Spanish.

He wrote, among others: *Variazioni sul modello di Kraepelin* (Prize Theatertreffen Stückemarkt 2009, Premio Marisa Fabbrì 2009, Prix de les Journées des auteurs de Lyon 2012); *Sweet Home Europa* (Schauspielhaus Bochum, 2012); *Ritratto di donna araba che guarda il mare* (Premio Riccione per il Teatro 2013); *Actes obscens en espai públic* (Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, 2017); *Menelao* (ERT, 2018); *Goodbye Europa. Lost Words* (Teatrul National Craiova, 2019). He wrote and staged, among others: *Maleducazione transiberiana* (Teatro Franco Parenti, 2018);

Ein Porträt des Künstlers als Toter (Staatsoper Unter den Linden, 2018); Suini (Teatro Sannazaro, 2019); Lorca sogna Shakespeare in una notte di mezza estate (ERT, 2019), Ritratto dell'artista da morto (Italia '41 - Argentina '78) (Piccolo Teatro di Milano, 2023). In recent years he has also been involved in creating plays specifically for young audience, staging about ten shows at ERT and, currently, at the Piccolo Teatro in Milan.

In 2018 he received the Prize "Hystrio for dramaturgy" for his artistic activity.

His plays have been presented in various international seasons and festivals and have been translated into a dozen languages.

Editions of his plays are published by Einaudi in Italy, by Actes Sud in French, by Arola in Spain; by Bicho do Mato and Livrinhos de teatro in Portugal, among others. He also published the essay Forma dramática y representación del mundo en el teatro europeo contemporáneo (Ciudad de México, Paso de Gato, 2017) and the collection of short stories Il diavolo innamorato (Roma, Fandango, 2019).

In recent years his interest has turned towards rebuilding the relationship between theatre and society and reimagining the role of the spectator. For the project Classroom Play (ERT), Davide created a series of small format shows, written to be staged by professional actors in middle- and high-schools; for the project PON Metro - Così sarà la città che vogliamo (ERT), he has curated the dramaturgy of theatrical events that involved the community of Bologna and integrated themselves into the urban fabric of the city, paying particular attention to the question of public spaces, ecological urbanism and environmental sustainability.

He is also one of the artists involved in Creative Europe's project UNLOCK THE CITY!, which comprehends 7 european partners and to which Piccolo is project leader, and will be writing and directing Limited Edition, 9th-11th May 2024.

### **LACASADARGILLA - ARTISTIC COLLECTIVE**

#### **(LISA FERLAZZO NATOLI, MADDALENA PARISE AND ALICE PALAZZI ATTENDED THE WORKSHOP)**

lacasadargilla brings together with Lisa Ferlazzo Natoli (writer and director), Alessandro Ferroni (director and sound designer), Alice Palazzi (actor and project coordinator) and Maddalena Parise (researcher and visual artist), a shifting group of actors, musicians, playwrights and visual artists who work on shows, installations, special projects, concerts, curation projects and festivals. When the Rain Stops Falling (2019) won three Ubu awards - including Best Director - and the National Theatrical Critics' award. L'amore del cuore made its debut in May 2021, with the widespread approval of critics and a nomination for the Ubu Award. In collaboration with Marta Cuscunà and Marco D'Agostin, lacasadargilla created the curation project Ogni volta unica la fine del mondo for our 2020/21 summer season. In the wake of Uno spettacolo per chi vive in tempi di estinzione



(STAGES restaging 2022), 2022/23 saw the ensemble producing its second show for the Piccolo: Anatomia di un suicidio by Alice Birch, staged in February 2023. Both works are published in the series by il Saggiatore.

The collective recently won four Ubu awards - including Best Theatrical performance, Best Director and Best foreign play represented by an Italian company.

## **BIOGRAPHY OF THE SCIENTIST:**

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**Scientists collaboration coordinated by Prof. EUGENIO MORELLO, Associate Professor in Urban Planning at the Politecnico di Milano, Italy. His research interest lies in the interaction between urban design and sustainable development, environmental quality, and adaptation to climate change. Since 2017 he has been appointed the Rector's Delegate for environmental sustainability.**

### **ANDREA DE TONI**

She is an urban and regional planner by training, currently a Postdoc Research Fellow and Adjunct Professor at Politecnico di Milano.

She has been working since 2019 on sustainability governance for territorial entities, research and cultural institutions, federations and foundations.

She holds a European Master's degree in Planning & Policies for cities, environment and landscape; a Master's degree cum laude in Regional, Urban and Environmental Planning; and a Ph.D. degree cum laude in Biosciences and Land Use. Her research interests concern the analysis of socio-economic and environmental data at local and regional scales to support decision-making processes in the selection of planning priorities and policies.

### **STEFANO MIRTI**

Designer, teacher, partner of IdLab, Milan. Has been working for years on new ways to teach and to share knowledge: Design 101, Relational Design, and several other projects. For two years, responsible for Expo Milano's social media team. Since September 2017, he is the head of Scuola Superiore di Arte Applicata del Castello Sforzesco in Milan; since July 2019, he is president of Fondazione Milano. On the 20th of February 2018 he started the Letterine projet.

@stefi\_idlab on Instagram; the Facebook page works as a big archive.

His full profile can be found on Linkedin.

IdLab / Letterine

### **FRANCESCA NEONATO**

Agronomist and Landscape Designer/ www.pnstudio.net

Founding partner of PN Studio PROGETTO NATURA conducts environmental consultancy and landscape design, also in an international context, in particular parks, green facilities, ecological networks, regenerative agriculture and landscape restoration. She has developed a high experience in Healing gardens design. AIAPP (Italian Association of Landscape Architecture) member, she is

delegated for the traditional rural landscapes, Chair of IFLA Europe (International Federation of landscape Architects) Working Group "Agricultural Landscapes" and representative of Europe region in IFLA World WG.

She is Visiting Professor at the Polytechnic of Milan of Applied Botany in Landscape Design Studio and Biophilic design in the postgraduate course in Healing Gardens.

She has published over one hundred scientific papers and articles for specialized magazines, several books, among the last in 2019 "Green Gold. How much Nature is worth in the city" and in 2021 "The cost of nature: implementation, management and maintenance costs for NBS, in NBS for more sustainable cities".

### **PAOLO PILERI**

Full professor of urban and ecological planning at Politecnico di Milano where he teaches both at the School of Architecture and the School of Environmental Engineering. His research focuses on deep ecology and sustainability on three axes: i. Soil in urban planning and zero land consumption (see book: L'intelligenza del suolo - Altreconomia, 2022). ii. Design the Slowness by the way of long tourist walking and cycling routes to regenerate and enhance territories (see VENTO project - [www.cicloviavento.it](http://www.cicloviavento.it); TWIN project - [www.twin.polimi.it/](http://www.twin.polimi.it/) and the last book Progettare la Lentezza - People, 2020). iii. Qualifying urban public spaces in front of schools (see [www.habitatscuola.polimi.it/](http://www.habitatscuola.polimi.it/) and the book Piazze Scolastiche/School Squares - Corraini, 2022). Author of more than 400 publications, columnist for the magazine Altreconomia ([altreconomia.it/author/paolo-pileri/](http://altreconomia.it/author/paolo-pileri/)), past advisor for the Italian Ministry of infrastructures and mobility.

### **SARA CALCAGNINI**

Public Engagement (PE) manager at Museo Nazionale Scienza e Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci, Milan ([museoscienza.org](http://museoscienza.org)); specialized in strategies for active involvement of citizens and stakeholders on scientific issues. She has experience in the design and management of national and European projects, expert and public dialogue activities, Public Engagement training of researchers, educational research in PE, development of cultural programmes for the "researchers' night" and other events.

She has published articles on Public Engagement, graduated in Conservation of Cultural Heritage, spent an academic year at Leicester University and collaborated with the Educational Services of the Musei Civici di Genova-Castello d'Albertis, Castello di Rivoli in Turin and the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich.

- About the institution: The Leonardo da Vinci National Museum of Science and Technology is located in Milan; opened in 1953, with its total of 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> it is the largest technical-scientific museum in Italy and one of the largest in Europe. In addition to permanent exhibitions, the museum complements its offerings to the public with interactive laboratories that make use of informal education to involve and interest every type of audience.

**UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) LINKED TO THE WORKSHOP**

