

## **Korridorer og rom / Corridors and rooms / Coridoi i cameras**

August 2016 - by Tale Næss

### About the piece

This piece was written as a sight specific production during the festival Quartieri dell'Arte and the Moai project. The Moai project took place in the medieval village of Vitorchiano in Italy. It was produced by the festival together with the Oslo National Academy of the Arts in August 2016 and the text was performed in Norwegian and Italian – as part of the project's focus on poly-vocality.

The performance took place in an abandoned hotel which was situated in an old convent. In the late eighties it had been closed due to economic problems and for a period of 15 years legal charges were brought against the owner. The Hotel had been sealed off by the authorities.

On the opening night, the building was again open to the public.

Several of the audience members had memories from their childhood, when the nunnery also functioned as a school.

During the performance, the audience moved from location to location. In this version, the performer functioned as a time witness or a guide traversing events, space and time.

### About the space:

This text is written with a specific place in mind. But it can also be performed in other locations. For example in a stairway. In a corridor. Between two rooms, in an empty restaurant, in a grand kitchen or a reception hall.

This room, this hall, or this area should have the ambience of a space where the private and the public meet and mingle.

About the actor:

One can imagine her being a head higher than everybody in the audience, or smaller. Like a child.

This text can also be performed by several actors, or by a man, a girl or a boy.

About the text:

This text is an event, a place in its own right and a space imagined.

It is warm and aloof at the same time.

Virtuoso and matter of fact.

The text and the place in which it is performed are connected.

Time flows, not through it, but from it.

A possible way to start:

The audience enters as a group. The performer can enter the space together with them or be there to greet them as they arrive.

At a given moment, she walks straight through the group. Dividing them in two lines, on each side of her. In the process, she can touch a shoulder, hold a gaze and connect. She could stroke Someone's cheek or forehead. Rest her hand on an arm or/and make eye contact.

## **1. Corridors**

Shall we?

Shall we move on through?

Come

Let`s enter

Can you see her?

**Una suora -**

She stands by the doorway

A little stooped perhaps.

She stops for a moment. Resting her hand against her stomach, as if to protect it.

*Listens*

**Un corte nuziale.**

Hear how they sing!

*Turns her head*

**Un ragazzino dai capelli ispidi**

He stands wide awake in the middle of the room

His mother has barricaded the door to the hallway

There is a man lying on the floor by the door. Face down on the sand coloured carpet

*Listens - moves*

**Nella stanza di fronte dorme una coppia. Sono abbracciati stretti l'uno all'altro nel letto matrimoniale.**

- Hush.

- **Fai silenzio. Non svegliarli.**

- Its morning soon. You need to sleep.

*Listens - moves*

**Vedete?**

**Un uomo collassa sulle sue memorie.** One hand holding the pen, the other grasping at the chest. It is a cement mixer – churning the present into the past. Striving to hold all of this together - like my hands

Can you feel them?

Can you feel my hands?

How they struggle to keep everything together?

How they strive to hold on to all this: A wedding, the wedding guests arriving. A sickle in the grass – as it cuts through the thickets

*Listens*

**Loro sono qui adesso.** Those who can pay, and those who cannot

Those dressing up for dinner

Those refusing to dress up for dinner, refusing to sleep – to get up – They are all here  
now

The newly born and the departed

They await us behind closed doors. On this floor. On the second floor, on the third. In  
room number two, room number eighteen, room number seven.

**Apriamole!**

*A beat*

*Silence*

**Stanza numero uno** – All the furniture covered with sheets – the walls wet with  
cement

**Stanza numero due** – prayers, a cross, a cat, its shadow chasing a ray of sun along the  
basement wall

**Tre** – All the windows are open

**Quattro** – a politician on his knees.

Shards of glass everywhere

**Cinque – una confessione**

**Sei** – an ongoing transaction

a dog barking

down in the street –

a red ball

*A beat*

Room number seven – **Niente**

Room number eight – **un ragazzino sveglio. Si pisciato addosso.** The boy is standing up now. He does not dare to tell his mother. He listens. All is quiet. No one is shouting any more. And then he sneaks out of bed. We are there. We can see it. How he tiptoes across the room. Stands by the door. Looks at the barricades: chairs, suitcases, boxes of books – and we are there. Standing straight behind him as he pushes a suitcase to the side, as he climbs the nightstand, as he puts his eye to the keyhole.

**Guarda – niente.**

**What can he see?**

The wall across the corridor.

Everything else is out of view: The man on the floor, his swollen eye. The ring he clutches in his left hand.

*Watching a ray of light across the floorboards*

**Numero nove – sole sulle tavole del pavimento**

*Listens - moves*

**Stanza numero dieci – un matrimonio non ancora consumato** – The groom half undressed on the bed. He is hiding his face in his hands. Overwhelmed by desire maybe, or shame

Downstairs there is a party. One of the wedding guests is showing off his muscles, swinging his shirt above his head, as the others are cheering him on

**Una generazione cresce.**

**Conti vengono aperti e chiusi.** As the courtyard is suddenly filled with mourners.

Can you see me, there? Amidst the crowd?

I am looking for you.

**In uno specchio viene dato il benvenuto ad un neonato.**

**Ci sono anche io.**

**Riesci a vedermi?**

My face is a gate constantly slammed open – a gate between that which is public and private

*Listens*

**E' notte.**

**I morti vengono portati fuori.**

**Un ex giudice della corte suprema si è seduto con le sue memorie. Scrive:**

- I am here at my desk – writing.

I awoke in the middle of the night with this feeling. Like a perpetual fall. I keep on falling. Down through the corridors. As I write - All my life – It does not matter. I never really made a difference. All I've ever done, every conviction I had – It all lead to nothing

Am I -

He writes: - **Sono solo un puzzle che non finisce mai?**

- Yes.

*Listens*

*Silence*

Could you hear that?

The weight of it?

The judge thumped across the desk. One hand grabbing the pen. One clutching his chest. Just a mass of dead matter now. His body no longer a dwelling place for the dreams of others. A leftover only –

Can you see me?

I am a child running barefoot on these tiles. Can you see me tracing footsteps, trying to catch up with the past –

and there is floor upon floor above us

*Turns her head*

*Lowers her voice*

**' il tempo che si muove.**

It is hiding in the stairwells. Barking like a monkey. Rushing through the corridors and passing straight through us. Traversing one body – entering another.

The war is here!

The war is over

Finally peace!

The rooms empty.

Dust on the headboards.

The air hot and heavy.

This is it.

Us.

*Silence*

*Listening*

*She moves*

**Una ragazza di 17 anni  
a piedi nudi in una cella del chiostro  
- Non sono stata io.  
Non sono stata io ad urlare.  
Non avete sentito?**

*Listens*

A child.

**E' stato un bambino.  
Perché non dite niente?**

Did you not hear it?  
**Perché mi guardate così? Cosa volete qua?**

- Why are you looking at me like that?

- What are you doing here?

Why did you call out? – we ask.

- Who called out?

- You. You were calling for your mother.

You were afraid.

- **Non avevo paura.**

That was not me.

- **Volevi andare a casa.** You were shying away as if protecting your belly.

- **Non voglio andare a casa.** That`s not true. Who said that? I was not shying away!

- **Non ti guarderemo.**

Silence

What are we going to do?

Comfort her?

Say – don`t worry – we are here now?

That everything will be all right. That she will never again feel cold, left out, lonely?

That never again will the night undress her? That never again will she shout, cry –  
despair?

– No – we shall not look at you.

- We promise.

- Look. We are closing our eyes.

- **Guarda – ora abbiamo chiuso gli occhi. Guarda, ora siamo in un altro posto. Ora non ti guardiamo più.**

- **Non la guardiamo più.**

*Silence*

This space is so bright -

**- Aspettate. Non toccate.**

Just keep your eyes closed.

**Venite.**

Can you see that open door?

The carpet?

**Un piede forse.**

**Un odore, forse.**

It is still here, isn't it?

You can smell it too, - can you not?

**L'odore di**

**Spazzatura**

**Corpo**

**Donna**

*Silence*

Now you can open your eyes.

*She waits*

*Listens*

*A beat*

Or – shall we just leave it alone?

All these locked doors?

Voices whispering?

Saying : **Entra**

- **Vai via**

- **Finalmente siamo arrivati**

- **Finalmente siamo solo noi due, noi tre, noi quattro**

- Finally – I am the only one here – and room number twenty-two is no longer a room, but a garden

*A beat*

A fall

A shout

A body falling – and the silence that follows

cocaine-white

like a 17 year old girl

She wanted to come home

She will never come home

*Listening*

**E un ragazzino in punta di piedi appoggia l'occhio al buco della serratura**

At first – he sees nothing

**Poi vede suo padre alzarsi.**

There is no sound left in him.

**Rimarrà?**

**Se ne andrà?**

**Tornerà mai?**

*Listening*

Time moves swiftly – like the shadow of a choir boy across the terrace

- and we stand here in the doorway

watching it pass

All that was

and all that will be

**Siamo ciò in cui il tempo si specchia**

as time takes on another face

Yours

Mine

Yours

Mine – And room number eleven is filled up with instruments  
the floor all of a sudden overflowed by kittens  
with whatever you like

See, as the road unwinds  
crackles and sparkles like the lights on an old arcade game  
Like a puzzle that will never be completed

Here a piece

There a piece

This picture, constantly being both filled and emptied

I am the room

You are the key

What do you see?

I am the room

You are the key

What do you see?

**Io sono la stanza.**

**Tu sei la chiave.**

**Cosa vedi?**