Introduction

Bojana Kunst\textsuperscript{1} contextualises her lecture for the conference ‘Thinking on/of the stage’ (Müller-Schöll et al. 2013) by retelling the beginning of choreographer Hooman Sharifi’s performance \textit{Who are the aliens?} In this performance, the audience is left seated without an official beginning. Nobody opens the curtain to the stage. No music begins. The play just doesn’t seem to commence. ‘After twenty minutes of uneasy restlessness’, she comments, ‘one of the audience members finally gathered enough courage to stand up and pry open the curtain on the side of the stage. ‘There is nothing there whatsoever!’ he yelled triumphantly’ (Müller-Schöll et al. 2013).

I enjoy this anecdote as a discussion of theatre and thought, because it offers a glimpse at the pre-reflexive moment of theatre reception: what is theatre? Who are we as audiences? And, fundamentally, where can we locate performance: on stage or in our heads? Inspired by such fundamental concerns, Part I of this chapter extends the theoretical narrative of this entire volume by discussing issues of aesthetics, ethics, and reflexivity in performance and artistic traditions. It does so with a focus on the ethnographic and social scientific study of such phenomena as they crystallised in the recent formation of a ‘new sociology of art’. Part II then zooms into my ethnographic fieldwork and offers various pathways into the ethico-aesthetic conundrums of an applied theatre project with a focus on internal discipline, reflexivity, and thought. I will be discussing a site-specific theatre and installation project called \textit{Ruhrorter}. The project took place in an abandoned post-industrial multi-storey refugee asylum camp with and about the memories, dreams, and desires of relocated refugees in the West German post-industrial Ruhr.
Valley. Under the aegis of the Theater an der Ruhr, the project’s young
Turkish director Adem Köstereli has been ‘socialised’ into a particularly
self-disciplined and self-reflexive form of theatre practice based on his
directorial authority, gestural discipline, and a strict emphasis on theatre-immanent thought-processes. I mobilise my ethnographic narratives to
reveal the intense imbrication, interweaving, and interdependence of
aesthetical, ethical, and political queries in this project.

The argument of this chapter is that disciplined forms of self-reflection
and aesthetic cultivation can be mobilised as themselves political
moments during the creative process of a theatre project. Such a process
of discipline and self-cultivation represents an ethico-aesthetic technol-
ogy, which is passed down via patronage and tradition. Furthermore, it
is my intention to highlight the reflexive moments during the process
as all the different dimensions of reflexivity on the ethico-aesthetic
aspects of theatre were in fact a central part of this project: reflection
and knowledge about what it is that one was doing on stage was equally
important as why one was doing it. My contribution to the project, in
writing, was itself another dimension of reflexivity, as this very text has
been discussed in and fed back into the project.

Extending this book’s conceptual framework, this chapter therefore
also describes and analyses the immanent forms, methods, and theo-
risation of reflexivity in theatre. Key to the relation between relational
reflexivity and theatre is the distinction between performance and per-
formativity; and an elaboration of the ethical dimension of aesthetic
practice. In our introduction, Alex Flynn and I argue for a differentia-
tion between an analytical focus on the effects of performance (its per-
formativity) – how to do things with acts, so to speak – and the reflection
on performance – its metaperformative dimension, one might say. We
distinguished between these two foci because we felt that literature on
political performance and political art had not sufficiently and thor-
oughly done so. And if it has, as in the reception of Butler, Bourdieu,
Foucault, Reckwitz, and others, it has been done with the intention to
unmask previously ‘invisible’ acts of subjugation or resistance.²

In particular, literature on development (contexts), it seems to us, has
emphasised the former (performativity) at the expense of the latter (self-reflected performance). We believe, however, that the ethical dimension
of political performances, i.e. those seeking to criticise or instigate discus-
sion about transformation, offers more complex pathways into under-
standing and studying political subjectivities, the relation between art
and activism, cultural politics, and the neoliberalism of the creative
industries and the creativity paradigm (cf. Boltanski and Chiapello

By the ethical dimension, I refer to scholarship emerging as part of an 'ethical turn' (in particular Faubion 2011; Laidlaw 2014; Lambek 2010) and an ethnographic turn in arts scholarship (Born 1995, 2010; De Nora 2003; Matzke 2012; Rutten et al. 2013; Siegenthaler 2013; Tinius 2015a) that foregrounds persons’ and groups’ concerns with their lives, their acts, their virtues, and moral systems – in short, their evaluative and self-reflected labour on their own subjective existence and relational intersubjectivity. In this chapter, I am concerned with the heightened intensity of such ethical behaviour in the context of political theatre rehearsal processes; that centrally anthropological practice according to Helmuth Plessner, where ‘one person embodies another’ (1982). Three central questions arising from my propositions thus are: how can we conceptualise the reflexive and self-cultivating dimensions of performance, rather than reducing political theatre to its performative and iterative dimensions of the (re-)production of power? What are some of the teloi of self-consciously reflexive practices in political performances and theatre which do not have a ‘visible’ impact or act of resistance in mind, but self-cultivation, discipline, self-observation? In what kinds of precarious social spaces and under what conditions of relational reflexivity do such practices take place?

Part I: Aesthetics, ethics, and reflexivity in tradition

The following section discusses some of the key debates concerning ethnographic engagement with aesthetics, ethics, and reflexivity in the context of political art (see Pilz 2012; Tscholl 2010). I emphasise the importance of concepts of artistic ‘labour’ (or the work of art), as I believe that an analytical focus on creative work is a productive pathway into understanding the intense processes of introspection, self-reflection, and self-discipline that go into what is often idealised as a horizontal, harmonious, and unconscious process. Aesthetic practices and concerns (how is my work to be performed, evaluated, received, and experienced) always go hand in hand with ethical concerns (what kind of a person do I want to be), both of which are predicated upon reflexivity and artistic labour.

The new sociology of arts

It appears common doxa in anthropological literature to relegate aesthetic experience in Western institutionalised contexts into the realm of private and individualistic hermeneutics in order to denounce it as a class-based bourgeois concept (Bourdieu 1993; Coote and Shelton 1992,
Johnson 1996). In some cases, this is elaborated to make interesting observations about the similarities of pre- and post-dramatic emphases on audiences, collectivities, and the metaperformative experiential dimensions of theatre events (see Foster, this chapter) or the socialisation into ritual social behaviours (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994), mythological cosmoi and exclusive political systems (Marsden 2005; Sax 2002), or gendered performative spaces for alternative political negotiations (Cowan 1990). Only more recently has the so-called new sociology of arts begun to take up serious concerns for the subtly ethical and powerful role of collective aesthetic practices in European institutions. These concerns are ultimately tied to relational reflexivity; the introspective and collective self-observation of individuals or groups engaged in performances that seek to transform thought and practice.

Coined by Eduardo De La Fuente (2007, 2010), ‘the new sociology of art’ articulates a shift away from what ex negativo emerges as ‘the old sociology of art’, that is, most explicitly the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1993) and Howard Becker (1982). ‘One of the characteristics of the ‘new sociology of art’ is a desire to take the aesthetic and affective properties of art-objects seriously’ (De La Fuente 2010: 6, my emphasis). This contrasts the sociology of Bab, Becker, and Bourdieu, which insisted on an ‘approach to the arts [that] is social organisational, not aesthetic’ (Bab 1931; Becker 1982: xi). This brings to mind Gell’s contribution to the seminal collection Anthropology, Art, and Aesthetics (1992); therein he describes his approach as a sociology, and not a theology, of art. The editors, Coote and Shetson, bring this stance to the point: ‘[a]esthetics as a universal moral discourse about art has no place in anthropology’ (ibid. p. 8). This strikes me as either ignorant or as the unsubtle set-up of European art traditions as a straw man, as such a view of aesthetics as a universal moral discourse has not seriously been held since Kant’s ‘Critique of Judgment’ (2000 [1790]). The concept of aesthetics, both in Baumgarten’s original sense of the perceptible, sensible experience (2007 [1750]) and as a codified set of norms for evaluating and receiving art-forms (Bourdieu 2013; Geuss 1999), implies almost as varied a reality as moral norms or ethical practices (Laidlaw 2014). Thus, a study of aesthetics, similar to that of ethics, especially when studying art institutions, requires attention to the complex set of internal formations of aesthetic traditions, which always also go beyond the ‘mere’ objects to include practices, rituals, and assumptions.

One of the central motives for De La Fuente’s understanding of the new sociology of art is a corrective to previous sociological accounts of art, which have avoided questions of the artwork itself and its aesthetics.
and reception (Zolberg 1990: 29) in their tribute to a neo-Durkheimian
emphasis on the social. De La Fuente and other proponents of this new
sociological approach react against social explanations that should really
be opened up to questioning themselves. Jean Duvignaud’s comment in
his Sociologie du Théâtre (1965) is an indication of such an explanatory
approach: ‘Theatre has long been, in France at least, an object of predi-
lection for aesthetics. ... Until now, sociology has not taken any inter-
est in theatre – the art form which is most evidently a system of social
relations’ (Duvignaud in Isambert 1967: 572). Helmuth Plessner already
stated in 1948 that it was surprising anthropology had not yet con-
cerned itself with the actor, since he, after all, ‘demonstrates the human’
(1982: 146, my emphasis) and his capacity and analogy to the human
potential for exceeding and transcending his own ‘positionality’.

‘Aesthetics as the mother of ethics’
The collective, self-cultivated, and teleological labour of groups is also
a productive focal point for the study of the confluence of ethics and
reflexivity (Boyer 1990; MacIntyre 1981, 2001[1988]; Muelder Eaton
2001). Conceptualising the relevance of aesthetic traditions heightens
this concern, as aesthetics (understood as the experience of as well as
the rules for the creation and evaluation of art/performance) necess-
itates a phenomenological interrogation of one’s own experience with
art, its effects on one’s subjective state, and one’s relation in that experi-
ence to others.

Philosopher Muelder Eaton (2001: v) proposes ‘that the nature and
value of art cannot be understood in isolation from a wide range of
human endeavours and institutions’.3 For her, a corrective view of the
nature of aesthetic experience implies a theory of aesthetic properties,
which, she argues, requires ‘the integration of aesthetics and ethics’
(ibid.). Since the philosophically posited causality between ‘being good’
and ‘looking good’ had arguably escaped sustained and critical scrutiny
until Adorno and others proposed that a study of moral and aesthetic
principles also requires an analysis of their potential negation (cf. Geuss
1999, 2005; Tinius 2012), moral judgement and aesthetic judgement
have had a long (analytical) affair. Yet, much like the study of morality,
the analysis of aesthetic judgement frequently and historically relied on
the distinction between two opposing ideas: some believed that it was
useful and possible to devise a set of universal standards for the judge-
ment and study of morality (or aesthetic judgement for that matter),
while others suggested that such a compilation would in itself form just
another form of morality or aesthetic ideology and we should instead
be looking for an analysis of the particular features and qualities of the subject or object under study. Formalist theorists grounded their distinction between aesthetics and ethics on Kant and thus precluded a 'full understanding of artworks, confusing the interests of the dominant group with universal interests' (ibid., p. 82). Against formalist theorists of aesthetics who insist that genuine aesthetic experience depends on what is presented, not on how or why, Muelder Eaton proposes that aesthetic experience usually is 'tied to the context in which they occur – to aspects of the history of an object or event, to its cultural setting, to the interests, beliefs, and attitudes of the persons who have them' (ibid., p. 1). More importantly, she criticises formalists for ignoring the roles that artworks play in the existence of a community and 'conversely, [for ignoring] the ways in which communities determine the very nature of what counts as artistic or aesthetic experiences that exist within them' (ibid.; see also Bermúdez and Gardner 2003). For her, 'a work of art is an artefact that is treated in aesthetically relevant ways, at least when it is being considered a work of art, not as a doorstop or an alarm, ... [i.e.] considered worthy of attention (perception and/or reflection) within that culture' (ibid., p. 3, my emphasis). As poet Joseph Brodsky proposed in his 1988 Nobel laureate address, 'On the whole, every new aesthetic reality makes man's ethical reality more precise. For aesthetics is the mother of ethics' (Brodsky in Muelder Eaton, p. 81).

But if we are going to study a particular institution, how do we go about studying those aspects? How are people expected to work on themselves to fit in and support an aesthetic tradition? What are the specific aesthetic references and standards by which especially aesthetic traditions generate a certain style? If we think of a contemporary intellectual theatre tradition as a 'particular conjunction of contemplative thought, reasoned action (praxis) and creative production (poiesis)' (Lambek 2000: 309), then we do need to understand the dynamics of the generative process by which theatre as art and as performance emerges. The conundrums surrounding the problems of 'applied theatre' hit the nerve of ethical and aesthetic discussions.

Part II: Adem Köstereli’s refugee theatre project

The aesthetics of applied theatre

One of the key problems with understanding socially engaged, applied, or other forms of supposedly particularly political theatre is the very notion that theatre can ever not be about social relations, alternative political opinions, and socio-political imaginations.
Among practitioners and scholars, applied, social, or political theatre, as it has, I find, misleadingly become known, refers to the use of theatre or elements of theatrical practice with either outright political intentions and ends (‘to apply theatre to’, as in ‘to apply theory to’) or theatre with marginalised actors. The former understanding of theatre (as an instrument for political ends) stands in the tradition of Theatre for Development, which is rooted in the work of neomarxist grassroots community engagement. Theories that underpin more progressive uses of theatre performance began to evolve in the 1970s, based on Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal’s reconceptualisations. Penny Mlama has identified what she terms as ‘Popular Theatre’, a mode of expression based on people’s genuine participation to ‘assert the culture of the dominated classes… making people not only aware of but also active participants in the development process’ (1991: 67). The use of theatre in this new and radical context of empowerment has attracted much interest from scholars, practitioners and activists, notably drawing on the work of Richard Schechner (1977, 1985) and Jan Cohen-Cruz (2010). This tradition relegates theatre (and art) into the realm of pure and interchangeable instrumentality, where a performance on a stage could just as well be replaced by a dance, music, or a ritual occupation – to name just a few popular therapeutic and applied performance instruments.

The latter understanding of applied theatre – seeking engagement with alternative representations through uncommon actors, also in traditional theatre contexts, and with serious attention to the artistic quality of the work – has provoked a more sophisticated and longer-lasting legacy than the former, which evanesced with the coming-out-of-fashion of performance studies. Political or applied theatre understood as theatre that engages with the problem of representation creates both a different understanding of the performative signifier (the actor) and the performed signified (the multiple meanings of the performance) and thus of the theatrical world to its ‘real’ context. It also urges a consideration of the dominance of conventional corpori or means of theatre production, such as standard canons of classic literature or particular dialects on stage. Engagement with disabled actors falls into this category just as well as labour with lay actors, persons of the public services (policemen, firemen, teachers), related family of the actors, or theatre with refugees and migrants. This appearance and multiplying of approaches emphasising the stage in its original sense of an agora, a space of encounter between politically diverse groups, has been paralleled by the rise of so-called ‘artistic’ or ‘performative research’. This approach describes collaborations between artists and (usually) social...
scientists on topics such as urban regeneration, gentrification, and precariousness, but also religion, power, and authority, to name but a few common topics.

**Internalised politics of the Theater an der Ruhr**

The refugee theatre project I will be discussing in the following sections of Part II took place under the aegis of the Western German Theater an der Ruhr. This institution, directed by charismatic authority Roberto Ciulli does not advocate or follow either of the above approaches. While also engaged and political in the sense Flynn and I outline in the introduction to this volume, it follows and perpetuates a philosophical and aesthetic ideology, which regards theatre as an ambivalent, mythical, unsettling, and also sacred work of art. The Theater's artistic philosophy also shows strong signs – which are internally coherent with a strong aesthetic tradition – of sophisticated high-cultural elitism, rejecting theatre which subjects or subordinates itself to an overarching political, social, or commercial cause (see introduction to Part I). I mention these aspects of institutional aesthetic ideology as they inform strongly Adem Köstereli's theatre practice with refugees.

The Theater an der Ruhr was founded in 1980 by the Italian émigré and Hegel scholar Roberto Ciulli, the philosopher Helmut Schäfer, and the stage designer Gralf-Edzard Habben. It pioneered thinking in theatre institutional transformation and international theatre cooperation in the latter decades of the 20th century. The international work of the theatre is motivated and driven by a profound conviction and artistic philosophy, well summarised by its director, Ciulli, in an interview with me:

> We do not travel into other countries only to show our plays, but because we want to convey the idea of theatre as an artistic and cultural political institution to the base of every city, group, and society we visit.

In June 2014, I witnessed the Theater's so-called ‘conceptual conversations’ (Konzeptionsgespräche) for a coproduction with the Istanbul-based theatre company Kumbaraci 50, a small theatre whose funding was withdrawn following their support of the Gezi protests from May to September 2013. Their ensemble had been working with the Theater an der Ruhr before, whose engagement with the Turkish fringe theatre scene had led to the establishment of a Scene Istanbul, a regular showcasing of free Turkish theatre outside state institutions. These conceptual conversations serve as fora for discussing the artistic direction of a new
work of art, conceptual decisions regarding dramaturgy and philosophical or historical background, and the formulation of hypotheses for the interpretation of aspects of a play, should a dramatic text exist. Not just in this case, but in order to initiate each production process at the Theater an der Ruhr, such meetings are held usually over the course of three or four days, with intense discussions lasting several hours in the mornings and the evenings. The entire ensemble (directors, actors, seamstresses, technicians, prop designers, stage designer, pedagogue, assistants, secretaries) is asked to attend. Although they also serve to enable conversations and criticism, these conversations are strongly focused on the establishment of a common telos of the production, a unified intellectual and philosophical background, and an agreed methodological approach to acting and directing.

I am not mentioning this, however, to talk through the creative process of a theatre production between two groups of artists; rather, I wanted to highlight a particular part of the conversation which took place at the end of the second day; first, because it introduces an important emic distinction between the political and the aesthetic in the thinking of the Theater an der Ruhr and, second, because it foreshadows Adem Köstereli’s refugee theatre methodology: a methodology premised upon discipline and the cultivation of the self. Over the course of the day, the two groups had already discussed (in consecutive translation done by a former ensemble member of the Theater, Recai Hallaç) for about eight hours aspects of their adaptation of Sicilian Nobel prize laureate Luigi Pirandello’s I giganti della montagna (Eng. The Giants from the Mountains, 1937), which they had rewritten by Yigit Sertdemir, a Turkish author also present at the table. At one point in the play, a group of actors appears to ‘free’ the people slaving away for the giants in containers – slaves whose former lives still resonate in traces in them, but crippled from forced labour. At one point in the conversation, Yigit Sertdemir, the author, talked through each character of his play.

Sertdemir: ‘The “actors” in the piece are a family. “The director” [a specific character by that name] is the brain, the father of the group [several actors and Ciulli laugh]. When they realise that their acting is just not good enough to attract audiences, of which they are very aware as they are not doing “boulevard-theatre”! – they decide to withdraw from the world. It was the director’s decision. That they only withdrew from the
world, but didn’t kill themselves – after all, art was all they had – shows their Haltung towards their art. “The actress” [a particular character by that name] already wanted to kill herself, but “The director” stopped her. He said: we have two alternatives, either we withdraw and hope that things will improve, or we kill ourselves. They decided to withdraw. So the best phrase to characterise them might be: ‘They fell asleep in hope of better times.’

Roberto Ciulli (director, Theater an der Ruhr):

‘In this case, my reading is entirely different from yours. To start with, I think it is better to portray the actors as entirely dissolving (aufgehen) in art. They have become art themselves. We have to distinguish a psychologising gaze on their characters from an artistic-gaze (Kunstblick) on their inner posture (Haltung): as actors, they should not be concerned with the psychological categorising of each other and the world. The subject of their disputes should always be only one: the striving towards art, theatre, perfection.’

Helmut Schäfer (dramaturg, Theater an der Ruhr):

‘One also has to inquire whether the metaphor of the family is appropriate here, since it always already implies fixed roles. Theatre ensembles have nothing to do with bourgeois families, if we regard it sociologically. Theatre is a counter-proposal (Gegenentwurf) to an unreflected petty-bourgeois moral life striving only towards its immediate graspable surroundings (Umfeld and Umwelt).’

An actress from the Turkish ensemble interjects, explicitly irritated:

‘Can I ask, have the actors been brought together by art or by their solidarity for each other as a quasi-family?’

Ciulli/Schäfer, simultaneously:

‘By art itself.’
Schäfer continues: ‘The German playwright Friedrich Schiller describes this already in his Aesthetic Education of Man, 200 years ago: Only when man acts, only in the play (Spiel), is he entirely free. Today this means: in a rehearsed space. For us that means: during the rehearsals. As in real life, the actor can learn to become someone else, can take on roles, and thus cultivate himself.’

‘So their decision to withdraw from society is purely an artistic ritual and not a political one?’

‘Yes, actors don’t always need to intend to do something political. They are political. What they do are political acts. It’s a trap to think that as artists we would need to commit to a particular politics a priori: that’s self-instrumentalisation. Of course their decision was political. When Bartleby, in Herman Melville’s short story, says “I’d rather not”, then that’s political too.’

Another Turkish actor, after a short silence in the group, exclaims (rather than asks):

‘So the actors don’t have political opinions, then!’

‘That doesn’t matter. Through and in their art, they have become works of art – they have become art-subjects, subjects to/of art (Kunstsubjekte). And as artworks, these actors can take any position. They don’t choose a political Haltung, rather, the process of developing a reflective Haltung is political. We have to internalise that they are not psychological instruments for our own political message: they are artists, not of this world, they are beyond reason.’

A third Turkish actress raises her hand and says: ‘I am a little confused. Can I ask a question? Do we at least find some parallels on the dimension of the characters, if not as actors? So, is “The Director” more of a revolutionary, while “The Stagedesigner” is more of a proletarian'}
Schäfer: ‘No, of course not. Roberto and I sat down and we radicalised the second part of the play to speak more about and to make possible the autonomy of art. We have to remind ourselves of Adorno’s dictum that “the personal is the political”. Everything is political, so the only space where we can radically question politics is fiction, the fictitious, the imaginary.’

Ciulli continues: “If we explain everything by reason and explain everything psychologically, what do we then still have in common with Picasso or Artaud? We and the audience need to endure theatre’s own reasoning, perhaps we even need to force them to endure it.’

Doesn’t the human side of the characters get entirely lost if they become only art-subjects (Kunstsubjekte)?

The same Turkish actress responds: ‘So how does art change the world, then?’

Ciulli throws his arms up in the air, gathers his papers, and directs his view towards the ensemble before getting up: ‘Well, with that question I’ll send you home. See you all tomorrow.’

This discussion is representative of many others that were held during regular rehearsals of the German ensemble, or conversations with Ciulli. They also, I contend, mark the particular attitude towards and philosophy of acting and theatre put forward by Ciulli and his dramaturg Schäfer with the Theater an der Ruhr: an attitude and philosophy which foregrounds the inner thought processes of the actor and those intended to be stimulated in the receiving audience. Ciulli et al. propose to view the political nature of their work of art not in the external gestures they sketch or the ideological slogans they proclaim, but in the self-cultivated reflexivity of the characters they create. This proposition is motivated by a scepticism regarding the ideological instrumentalisation of aesthetics and political populism in theatre and art.
As the following sections elaborate, the Theater an der Ruhr’s philosophy of theatre and attitude towards political aesthetics profoundly informs the work of Adem Köstereli and in particular his approach to theatre with refugees which created complex ethical and aesthetic dilemmas. Adem Köstereli’s situation in the Theater is unusual and yet perhaps programmatic for the charismatic authority emanated by Ciulli and his institution. Born in Oberhausen in the Western German Ruhr valley to Turkish parents in the mid-1980s, he began acting in the young ensemble led by theatre pedagogue Bernhard Deutsch at the age of 17. Then, after starting to direct his own plays, first with fellow actors of the young ensemble, he has moved in the last five years to producing his own performances not based on literary antecedents, and with lay, marginalised persons. Adem regards Ciulli as an aesthetic and intellectual role model for his work and Ciulli, in turn, is interested in giving advice and supporting the aesthetic education of the young director. Thus, when Adem finished his schooling in the impoverished district of Oberhausen-Styrum, he sought Ciulli’s advice on what to do: Ciulli, interestingly, convinced the then 20 year-old to become a businessman and to emancipate himself from the trend-driven and exhausting artistic milieu of German theatres – and to continue developing his aesthetics and skills with productions at the Theater an der Ruhr, thus creating a particular form of dependency and patronage. Since 2007, Kösterli works without pay, i.e. voluntarily (ehrenamtlich).

The Ruhrorter project
When I first met Adem Köstereli in late 2013, while conducting fieldwork at the Theater an der Ruhr, he was about to develop ideas for the second part of his refugee trilogy. I was interested, then, in his strong interest not to follow a pedagogically driven methodology, but one that foregrounds the aesthetics of a reflexive theatre.

‘A theatre’, Adem told me back then, ‘which reduces its actors, its characters, and its imagery merely to documents, to singular fates (Einzelschicksale) based on the categories by which they are discriminated against destroys more than it can construct’. Therefore it was not surprising that he reacted sceptically when Sven Schlötcke, one of the managing artistic directors of the Theater an der Ruhr approached him with the suggestion to apply for additional funding to expand and professionalise the second part of his trilogy.

I told him that I was interested in his attitude and the proposed application Schlötcke had in mind, so Adem took me along to a meeting...
with him. Since Schlötcke knew me from previous introductions by Ciulli, I was allowed to take notes. In fact, I was encouraged to do so: Schlötcke was struck by the idea to document and communicate some of my observations of the entire project to a wider public. Schlötcke thought that my work could also become part of the process, as documents about the intricate social and creative process of making such an engaged project would be beneficial and interesting for the artists as well as the theatre more generally. This involvement gave me access to discussions and procedures, meetings, and information that I would not otherwise have been able to access. ‘Theatre with so-called problematic or marginal groups (Problemgruppen) yields many ethical and aesthetic dilemma, both in documentary and participatory theatre and in traditional, internally reflexive theatre’, Schlötcke admitted. ‘These issues are, at heart, about the subject of your work, Adem.’ ‘But’, he continued:

If you are working on and with refugees, what are you going to do about their situation if you don’t want to refer back to the much hackneyed idea of Schiller’s emancipatory aesthetic education? How can you do artistically challenging work and yet take part in the public discourse that decides their fates?

Adem felt upset and pushed to politicise his work in a way he didn’t appreciate. He later said to me:

My work is political in different ways: my way of doing theatre is fundamentally based on the search for new forms of engaging with severed and relocated subjectivities, emotional and affective memories by bringing together previously unrelated people. I don’t pretend to do therapeutic work and I don’t assume a policy-relevant end-product: I offer the participants of my group space and time to work, with discipline and my guidance, on their own situations, exploring their own concerns, their worries, their nightmares, to distance themselves from them, creating new performative imageries and relations on stage. That’s political, but not in the pseudo-activist and interventionist sense in which much documentary theatre utilises and instrumentalises marginalised fates to produce avant-garde productions which build the director’s reputation in the scene.9

Despite all these controversies taking place just days before their grant application was due, Adem and I sat down to see how he could reconcile his interest in a theatre piece with Schlötcke’s propositions to enlarge
the scope, means, and ways by which this project would coordinate an
artistic process with a marginalised group of lay-acting refugees.
Additionally, Schlötcke and Adem had decided that the project would shift
from 'merely' theatre to a multimedia, site-specific project.10 They looked
into the possibilities of renting a space in an abandoned post-industrial
multi-storey nearby warehouse on the Ruhrorterstraße, just down the
road from the suburban and wealthy neighbourhood of the Theater. This
building used to house an asylum-seeking centre and a small society for
traumatised female victims of the Yugoslav wars – all of which had been
abandoned some nine years ago and left derelict since (see Figure 7.1–7.5).
Below is a shortened version of the Ruhrorter project's abstract submitted
to a federal grant from the state of North Rhine-Westphalia:

This project engages with the problems and the stigmatisation of
refugees. It seeks new ways to contrast the abstract categories by
which they are often categorised with their own experiences, stories,
and hopes and to make those visible to and experienceable for a city-
society: refugees as part of a city-society (Stadtgesellschaft). By means
of research, intervention, and documentation, as well as theatre, this
project traces and works with the stories, histories, memories and
dreams of young and adolescent refugees in Mülheim. One of the
core theses of this project is that the process of becoming an agent
of one's own right to human existence, as well as the act of situating
oneself in new places and spaces, can only or best take place through
the work of self-reflection, memory, and narrative self-(re)creation.
Therefore, the project collects and works with these processes in
order to produce a theatre piece, communicative interventions, and
a site-specific theatre installation. In addition, the process will be
documented and described, creating an interactive archive as well as
other forms of communications of and about the creative and social
process, which don’t merely provide the participants a possibility for
reflection and remembering, but also the audience (Publikum), the
‘public' (Öffentlichkeit), and the citizens of the city – thus making
them a part of the project's engagement.

At this point in late November, Adem had already contacted
several refugee camps in Mülheim Oberhausen, seeking out integra-
tion councils and notifying teachers in schools dedicated to
international migrants. From previous work, his network of contacts
extended well beyond those of the theatre and the political authori-
ties in the responsible municipal integration offices in Mülheim.
Figure 7.1  The Ruhrorter building in the industrial harbour

Figure 7.2  During rehearsals on the Ruhrorter stage
Figure 7.3 Adem instructing participants after rehearsals

Figure 7.4 During a dress rehearsal on the Ruhrorter stage
It didn't take very long for him to establish a group of 15 people, ranging in age from 13 to 39 and encompassing seven different nationalities, stories, and languages – all of whom he asked to come to the Theater for rehearsals on Monday and Thursday evenings from six to ten. Given that their ‘hometowns’, Mülheim and Oberhausen, have different municipal policies regarding refugee housing, the former adopting a single-apartment stance whereas the latter houses in camps, Adem would often pick up those from the camp and ask those from Mülheim to come by bus, necessitating frequent travel to the camps in Oberhausen. I would sometimes accompany him to pick up participants, thereby getting to know how he got people to participate, with whom he spoke, and how much it all depended on personal
ties to his approach to theatre – which didn’t see language as a barrier
or seem associated with any pedagogic political or social agenda that
may have appeared suspicious to some potential participants.

Over the ensuing four months, I accompanied the entirety of the aesthet
ic and social process of this project, which opened to the public on
6 May 2014. Since my anthropological research became not merely an
additional aspect of the process, which I needed to negotiate in order
to gain access or trust, but an integral collaborative aspect of it (with its
own limitations). I was immediately entangled in a host of decisions,
disputes, and dealings that I doubt I would otherwise have witnessed
and not all of which were easy to negotiate. Soon, my fieldwork con-
stisted not merely of writing rehearsal diaries in which I documented the
assembling of and organisation of the work of art, but also in meeting
with Schlötecke to talk about the potential linkages of the project to
the local press and discussing Adem’s relation to the aesthetic tradition
with the Theater. What is more, Adem soon began turning to me for
observations of his practice, advice for dealing with Schlötecke’s urging
to make this project more public, and help with communications to
the press.

These kinds of entanglements invited me to ponder the kind of work
that theatre projects comprise, their openness to other kinds of enquir-
ies, and other aspects of collaborative fieldwork practice and ethics.
However, I found these to be interesting contextual strands of research,
which framed some of the other inquiries that I continually connected
back to the study of the Theater and its tradition.

Problems with applied theatre

What it means to conduct theatre with people who are not staging some-
one else, but instead themselves, Adem finds deeply problematic. New
forms of interactive, documentary theatre – by celebrated groups such
as the Berlin-based Rimini Protokoll or Signa from Copenhagen – have
reintroduced a concern for forms of realistic representation in the
aesthetic of performance art and theatre (see Tinius 2015a). Although
these practices touch upon issues at the heart of philosophy, they are
centrically anthropological issues important for Adem and Ciulli: how to
combine ways of seeing, ways of showing, and ways of representing?
In this regard, documentary theatre with marginalised people offers
particular problems yet not necessarily new ones: where does research
come in-between creation, the self with the fictional character, recrea-
tion with creation? However, the role of the normative artistic director,
as observer, as judge of what can become ‘proper’ representation, is more
than ever present in forms that seek to behold a particular relation to reality (see Bertram 2010). Every single traditional practice – rehearsing, improvising, representing/memorising – is problematised in theatrical practices that claim more than mere fiction. How does one rehearse, improvise, or represent/memorise oneself? The question of aesthetics, then, becomes a problem of ethics: who am I? Who do I want to be? Who can I be? Who allows me to develop my personality? The latter is a question of emancipation that is central to so-called applied theatre, and, for that matter, of the aesthetics of applied theatre. Can representation of the self be emancipating and should it strive to be?

These ethico-aesthetic issues with political theatre troubled Adem, which is why he sought a different form of theatre work. For him, the work with refugees can only rid itself of these ethical dilemmas if it doesn’t seek to expose or exhibit the participants. Therefore, he decided to make use of extensive improvisations and rehearsal processes to figure out what each person would like to talk about – often asking them three central questions: what do you think about when you cannot sleep? What was the first ‘image’ you saw in Germany? What are your last memories from your ‘home country’? Asking them to narrate those stories, not through words or narration, but through different performative scenes – weddings, funerals, music – he would then slowly but steadily abstract from those very personal scenes in order to work on each person’s theme, asking them what they thought their performance was about, what the core of their ‘problem’ or situation was. He did so in order to crystallise a theme, which was personal and yet abstract, explaining that this would help each performer relate to the story in thought and emotion, but not as their story. This process – personal narratives, performative narratives, abstraction, re-appropriation – was the modus operandi of Adem’s practice. For several months, he worked on individual scenes, working closely with one person first, then moving into relations between people, always paying attention to what could be described as the ‘transmutation’ of feelings and stories into performative images or situations. This process culminates in a sketch of each scene’s attitudes and development, which I outline further below.

**Actor and audience**

Adding, from one rehearsal to the next, such fragmented ‘situative’ scenes to each other, Adem created a pool of scenes, seeing what they could ‘tell each other’, or ‘letting people improvise’ to find new ways to tell a story
in that particular scene. In contrast to the professional work at the Theater
done by Ciulli, Adem neither works with text nor with a preconfigured
conceptual framework for the theatre piece. It is notable, however, that
he approaches every scene with meticulous care about the kind of attitude
(Haltung) each performer has to and during the performance of the scene:

Each person has not merely to know what to say or where to go, but
precisely why and how he does these things. Our problem, or the
problem of every project that lasts a longer time, three, four, five or
seven months, is that things become a routine: you and things start
to function automatically. That is not good for theatre, because even
if you play it six times in a rehearsal, you have to play as if it were
the first time, you have to think and reflect. Otherwise, the audience
is going to notice and think: ‘Aha, they know what they’re doing and
they’re doing it just for us’.

When we invited a friend of Adem’s, also a theatre director, to see a
performance, he noted a few moments at which he couldn’t figure out
what was meant on stage. He asked some of the performers themselves
what they thought they were saying with several particular scenes.
One scene had developed from conversations with Sara, a Moroccan
refugee, who left Casablanca as her family became a target for violence
from criminal members of her extended family. Having decided that
she wanted to speak about the sexual harassment she was subjected to,
she improvised a very calm and slow scene, which Adem subsequently
worked on. Sitting on a chair, another actor walks towards her from the
side and shines the light of a torch onto one side of her face, exposing
her in the previously dark room. Her hands and arms perform only two
alternating movements: in one position, one of her arms is held up to
block the light, while the other is placed, in the shade, between her
legs as if at rest or to protect herself. She then switches arms, exposing
her face and her protective hand. She does so for nearly two minutes,
showing, as she put it:

the brutality of being exposed and trying to protect me in plain light,
the difficulty of not being broken by this exposure while remaining
strong and still, confident and decided.

Our guest at the rehearsal questioned the length of this scene, saying
that he doesn’t understand why she would put her hand between her
legs, saying it reminded him of a sexual act, of masturbation. Adem listened patiently until he remarked:

I see that you may not understand it, but that is not an argument not to perform this scene. This is the luxury on stage – the audience has the time to think about what is happening. This slow silence may become awkward, but it’s only then that we get people to internalise and to reflect upon their own fears and limits of understanding. If you [speaking to his friend and our guest] don’t get what they are doing on stage, then that isn’t necessarily the problem of the performance, but yours. In fact, it should and must not matter to the actor or actress to what degree the audience understands what they are doing – as there isn’t one way of understanding it. The performers have their own reason to perform and that should remain theirs – each member of the audience has to do their own work – we don’t tell them what to think. Such stories are poor and only used by directors who have to produce endlessly and therefore rely on cheap theatrical and dramaturgical instruments such as an explanatory narrative. We want to provide images that everyone can decipher for him- or herself. If we explain our theatre to them, we don’t need to do it.

Discipline, authority, internality: ethico-aesthetic technologies

Adem’s response, uttered in the presence of the other performers and partially directed towards them, exhibits several interesting aesthetic attitudes: a levelling of interpretive authority with regard the audience and the performer; perhaps even a disregard or disinterest towards reception, reverting claims about the existentially constructive power of reception in art theories, which propose that the artwork exists only in the eyes of the beholder. Art historian Arthur C. Danto (What Art Is 2013) suggested that for us to see something as art requires an art world that defines it as such: a set of ideas for which Ernst Gombrich’s Art and Illusion (2000[1960]) is a notable precursor. The argument applies equally to the economic as to the moral and the art historical elements of an art world. I would even suggest it nearly always applies to each and all – and more aspects. Some contrasting suggestions, such as those of the French curator and art historian Nicolas Bourriaud (Relational Aesthetics 2002 [1998]), argue that the theoretical paradigm of the art world since the 1990s has been ‘the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of a private symbolic space’. The intersubjective encounters of relational art are thus negotiated
collectively and not consumed privately and individually. One of Bourriaud’s reference artists Rikrit Tiravanija suggested, ’[m]y work is like the light in the fridge. … [i]t only works when there are people there to open the fridge door. Without people, it’s not art – it’s something else – stuff in a room’.

It appears to me – and this applies in a similar way, perhaps even more than for Adem, to Roberto Ciulli – that the art historical and theatre historical trend to criticise the creation of private symbolic places does not properly represent the extreme attention to private symbolism in the making of theatre for such slow-producing theatre institutions as the Theater, in whose tradition Adem and the significance of his claims with regard to such constructivist relational theories are to be situated.

After a more recent rehearsal, one in which we performed the entire script as it stands, Adem asked the actors to sit down to talk about the trial run. Sara, the French-speaking Moroccan actress, remarked that the different scenes felt a little bit like individual, abstract images, ‘tableaus’, meaning literally ‘painting’. Adem responded by noting that this description was entirely apt:

The scenes are indeed snapshots and memories, abstract excerpts from your stories, which have turned into our own artworks. That’s why it is so important for all of you to be absolutely perfect and focused, as these images are not you, they are situations you know intimately. You are no longer a private person on stage, but you become part of an artwork, part of a fragment, which you know how to decipher. That’s when we begin to create those sacred moments that I strive to create. Nobody can interfere with you or your situation on stage, you are dedicated to a purpose that only you understand for yourself. That’s why you need to know exactly what you are doing and why you are doing it. Never do things technically, or merely repeat – always do it just for this moment.

Paradoxical about Adem’s stance and practice is that while he wishes and indeed requires and checks whether each performer knows why and what s/he is doing – not with regard to technical details, but to meaning – he is the normative judge about when reflection or improvement is performed well or when it fails. Put differently, he demands constant conscious self-reflection from the actors, yet he sees himself as a prerequisite judge of the right kind of reflection. I am citing from early notebook entries, also displayed in an installation archive room
accompanying the theatre piece, to illustrate such moments from the early stages of the creative process:

Monday, 20 January 2014. Rehearsal, 6pm, Theater an der Ruhr. Marvin’s right to stay has been extended to March 27, 2014. Our premiere is planned for beginning of May. Adem says: ‘Everyone on their own. You are alone – and remember: you are on stage. This means that you have to know precisely what you want to communicate; but you are not telling anyone what you are communicating. Therefore, please think; think about what you are thinking, what you are communicating, and how. I want to hear you speak to yourselves.’

Tuesday, 21 January 2014. Rehearsal space at the Theater an der Ruhr, 6pm. Adem asks everyone to sit down. ‘Recep has been deported, early this morning. He didn’t want us to know.’ The other participants are outraged. Adem calls everyone together: ‘Listen everyone. I want to tell you something absolutely key to what we are doing. We are on stage and we improvise. Improvising is the most beautiful thing on earth. To improvise means to be free. You can do just about anything you want – as long as you think! Think! What that means is you have to reflect upon what and why you are doing something. Never, really never, just do because you think “Adem has told me to walk around”. Talk to yourselves, in your own language. Don’t tell us your stories, they are your secrets. But promise me to think.’

Both of these excerpts exemplify how much Adem foregrounds the analysis of thought on stage, the discrepancy between the stage and privacy, but in particular Adem’s emphasis on constant immanent self-reflection of the participants. These entries are merely excerpts from many months of similar rehearsals, in which Adem consistently refers to particular dialectical processes, which he often describes to me after rehearsals.

My theatre piece is about dreaming, memory, and relating to each other. ‘What do you think about when you cannot sleep?’ The participants of this project have to negotiate these things all the time, but with themselves: they have to analyise their own relations to this question and decide how to react to it; then they have to distance themselves from their own experience by abstracting from memory to speech, gesture, and movement. Then, in a final step, they are re-appropriating these abstract movements as an external experience (Fremderfahrung) of more general signification and connecting it to their own stories.
This procedure, he explains to me, is meant to play with abstraction and personalisation in a way that creates archetypal images on stage that the actors can relate to as originators of these abstractions yet without feeling that they are telling their own stories.

In a conversation we had with an actress of the Theater an der Ruhr, who came to witness one of the project’s dress rehearsals, one participant, Marvin, a Serbian Roma and autodidact musician who toured the world in a ‘Roma Orchestra’, said to her:

When I am sad, I play the trumpet. My problems are transmuted into tones, especially when words are failing me. I don’t need a particular song, I just play. But what motivates my play is the question: ‘What kind of a person am I and what kind of a person do I want to be?’ I don’t mean the country I am from or the language I speak. I was never merely Roma, Serb, or German – and yet I cannot be all of these at the same time. When I play theatre, I can be a thousand people at once. Theatre, for me, is liberation. Even when the stage may be small, other worlds exist in it for me. Even when I am improvising, everything is a part of my memory. The question driving my improvisation, however, is not how painful my memories are, but how I can develop a conversation from them. These conversations I am leading first with me, then with an audience, via my play.

These very intimate multilingual negotiations that Marvin refers to were central to many conversations we had about rehearsals with the group. Most of the time, I didn’t even need to ask questions about these internal thought processes, because Adem would require them to explain to him what they thought about an aspect of a rehearsal. Often, he would then problematise himself what he saw as a central problem: how do I deal, as director, with the issue of wanting to approach a political topic and such sensitive issues as painful memories of escape and deportation without submitting oneself to political activism? In one post-rehearsals conversation, Adem told the group that he had been to see Roberto Ciulli to discuss this issue with him. And this conversation had helped him understand that what constituted intensely ethical acts of political emancipation during this project were his constant provocations to self-reflect – for him on his own practice and for his actors on their practice. ‘To observe oneself, and thus to distance oneself from one’s own expectations, emotions, worldviews and to be open to the ambivalences and fragments revealed in improvisation – that’s the process I want to instigate in all of you’. Marvin responded
to this comment by describing his own experience of rehearsing and standing on stage:

Language is not central when I play. When someone regards me with care, they will notice and understand what and why I am doing what I do on stage: they will not understand it in a linear way, however, it will be revealed to them, in fragments, like a dream. That's why I am not escaping or ignoring my memories when I am abstracting from my own story in improvisations led by you [Adem] – I am playing with them.  

Over the next month, Adem moved into the final stages of the production process. He has, with my help and notes, established detailed drafts of every single moment and movement on stage, including technical and property instructions. These facilitate trial runs (Durchlauf) of the play as it stands. At that moment, the play appeared complete, running at just over an hour and with a seeming conclusion. Yet Adem commented on this observation of mine by saying that ‘this is the point where we must work hard to battle laziness and repetition. If we stop here, at a recognisable conclusion, we deliver an easy evening. Just at the moment when the audience least expects it, we need to pick up pace’. Over the course of the next four weeks (the project premiered on 6 May 2014), Adem planned to do as many trial runs as he could so that he still had some time remaining for free improvisations to find a suitable ending. ‘We need to make sure we don’t overdo it. We cannot exhaust things. Last year, I switched major things around after each public performance, of which we usually do only six. And things got better. We mustn’t get lazy.’  

Just a week later, he invited Roberto Ciulli to watch a trial run – ‘to see if we’ve made any mistakes. Maybe it’s all flawed because we didn’t look at it critically enough. Ciulli’s gaze is extremely important for me’. After the initial trial run, Adem also prepared a four-page text, which he titled ‘Sketch of Attitudes (Haltungen) and Thoughts’. Therein, as he explained to each participant, he outlines the motivations, history, personal connections, development, origins, and attitudes of each scene with respect to the persons involved in it. We discussed these for well over an hour after the trial run, with frequent remarks from participants adjusting and complementing what Adem had written. ‘Everybody needs to know’, he said, ‘why and what they are doing on stage. We developed these thoughts together over the last six months. In some places you may not recognise your own stories in them immediately – and that’s
not per se a bad thing, since we deliberately abstracted from your personal stories. We don’t want to expose you, we want to play with the expectations and clichéd stereotypes circulating about refugees. That’s why you, Marvin, don’t play your trumpet. ‘At first’, Adem said to Marvin, ‘you appear as the Roma boy whom they expect to perform and entertain, but when they see that their own entertainment perpetuates your exhausting effort, they will rethink their own interpretation of the scene. That’s precisely when we move on.’

Concluding remarks

Engaging with the ethico-aesthetic traditions of artistic institutions offers particularly challenging pathways into what Flynn and I refer to as the relational reflexivity of political performance. Among questions of political and interpersonal patronage, artistic labour and self-cultivation, and the management of creative processes, this chapter has specifically sought to throw light upon the role of discipline, authority, and thought in so-called political or applied theatre. I have situated the ethnographic description of various processes, decisions, and negotiations that were central to the refugee theatre project Ruhrorter in an account of political aesthetics and the tradition of the Theater an der Ruhr. This embedding of one person’s artistic work in the context of an established high-cultural institution serves to highlight the importance of relational aspects of aesthetic communities and the role of patronage in artistic traditions.

As I outlined in the first part of this chapter, concerns for reflexivity and ethico-aesthetic traditions are a recent and vivid concern for social scientific engagement with the arts, yet it speaks to practitioners and scholars beyond the sociology or anthropology of arts. In particular, I sought to engage, if indirectly, debates on the anthropology of ethics, demonstrating the extent to which aesthetic and artistic queries are deeply and philosophically linked to questions of self-cultivation and transformation. This concern for self-reflection and discipline, voiced by the key informants involved in the artistic processes I discuss in this chapter, does not stand in contrast to an aspiration to act politically or to reduce the role of antagonism and collectivity in the performance arts. In dialogue with Clare Foster’s chapter on pre- and post-dramatic theatre, I have hoped to show instead the significant and intense elaboration of the immanently political nature of aesthetic decisions, of discipline and authority in closely knit groups of theatre practitioners. Their focus on meaning-making and self-reflected action does indeed
exhibit aspects of an introvert, _avant garde_, and elitist dismissal of the role of audiences, mainstream theatre productions, and the state; yet in doing so, they themselves engage subtle and nuanced negotiations of political subjectivity, reflected sociality, and ethico-aesthetic sensibility.

Congratulating the refugee actors in the project on the evening of the premiere, an actress of the _Theater_ advised:

Don’t try to be a good actor while forgetting about being a good human being. You cannot be a bad person and a good actor. When you act, you should strive to become a perfect human being. Perfection in theatre, though utopian, is ultimately nothing other than empathy for others and reflection upon your own acts.

Notes

1. Professor of Choreography and Performance at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies at the University of Gießen and dramaturg.
2. See also Baert (1998), Korom (2013), Laidlaw (2013), and Rabinow and Rose (2003) for further in-depth discussion of this matter.
3. See also Danto (2013) and this obituary: ‘[The term art] would be bestowed not according to any putatively intrinsic, aesthetic qualities shared by all artworks but by general agreement in the “artworld,” a community that included artists, art historians, critics, curators, dealers and collectors who shared an understanding about the history and theory of modern art.’ (Johnson 2013).
4. This problem pertains particularly to the German theatre scene, as it has earned a reputation for being non-commercial, highly (self-)critical, and almost unbearably politicised. One detailed historical reading (Gilcher-Holtey 2009) attributes this tendency to the legacy and traces of the so-called _Regietheater_ (literally directing or director's theatre): a term describing the emergence and edification of the social and aesthetic authority of the director in and after the 1960s. A more sophisticated reading (Daniel 1999; Eikhof 2009; Ther 2012) understands the very possibility of such a _Regietheater_ (and its reverberations in the present) as the outcome of a complex array and development of political and economic perspectives and reactions to the role of aesthetic education or _Bildung_ (Adorno 1955; Geuss 1999), ‘culture’ (Lepenies 2006), and the liberalisation of theatre arts in German society (Ismayr 1977; Jeschonnek 2010; Mitteletal and Pinto 2013; Stegemann 2013).
5. Similar conceptual issues apply to ‘applied theatre’ (or art for that matter) as they do for the attempt to ‘apply theory’ (Latour 2005, ‘A Socratic Dialogue’).
6. For an in-depth discussion of the international theatre philosophy and theatrical imagery, see Tinius 2015b.
7. Ciulli’s citations are drawn from two interviews, which I conducted with him in November 2013 and April 2014. An extended interview on rehearsals,
visual imagery, and international theatre collaboration will soon appear in an edited volume accompanying a longer piece on the Theaterlandscapes of the Theater an der Ruhr (Tinius 2015b).


9. I elaborate these and further aspects in an interview that appeared on the website of the ERC-funded project The Aesthetics of Applied Theatre convened by Professor Mathias Warstat at the FU-Berlin (Tinius 2014b). Dominic Boyer has elaborated these issues in his brilliant article ‘Thinking through the anthropology of experts’ (2008). I also elaborate the discussion about ethnography in the arts and performance based anthropological research elsewhere (Tinius 2015a).

10. Site-specificity, here, refers to a trend and practice in contemporary theatre to move the performance outside a prepared and institutionalised ‘black box’ theatre space. The specificity of a particular site would be dependent on the project’s focus, so plays have taken place in refugee centres, shopping malls, prisons, etc. (see Thompson 2009 and Matzke 2007 on Rimini Protokoll).

11. These remarks were reworked into newspaper articles on the project (see Tinius 2014a).

Bibliography


