

“LUCIAN BLAGA” UNIVERSITY

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DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

SUMMARY

DOCTORAL THESIS

**IMPROVISATION: TECHNIQUES AND METHODS IN THEATER
RESEARCH PROJECTS**

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In the doctoral thesis *Improvisation: techniques and methods in theater research projects*, we have tried an in depth research of the elements that define and influence the improvisation process by analyzing the techniques and methods in drama, used and reinterpreted by representative actors and pedagogues of the theatrical realm.

Improvisation is a state of being and creating action, of emanating an active energy without planning it in advance. It is an untimely or spontaneous moment of creativity and ingenuity that can appear mentally in body and soul in the form of inspiration, without the need for training or preparing. However, improvisation in any form of art can occur with an increased frequency if it is practiced as a way to encourage creative behavior (1).

For the theatrical realm, Florin Zamfirescu (2) calls it *invention – a very particular, subjective, special invention – an exercise of specific creativity*, claiming that it involves previous training, conscious and uninterrupted training, adequate and purposeful exercises, personal solutions.

The present research, although a scientific work, has a character which is also subjective, it was born out of an urgent desire to answer a few questions about a talent that was given to me, to improvise on the stage in ways that often capture me too.

What does improvisation mean? What role does imagination have? How does the process appear, what triggers it, what inhibits it? What changes happen to the artist, physically and spiritually? How does it influence it in everyday life? How do you change the quality of your relationship with the public? Is it pure inspiration, does it need preparation, and if so, what does it consist of? Can it be metered? Are there differences from show to show? What does the actor give in improvisation?

These questions have guided me through a vast research material, but they have transferred me back in time, in remarkably personal remembrances of how and why this gift has been revealed in me (see chapter six).

It is my belief that imagination is a treasure for an actor, it keeps him alive on the stage, it is the antidote of the craft theater and keeps the actor in the truth - the scenic truth.

I believe it's a grace, it's not something gained from professional experience - it's in my mind since I know myself, or from the moment I became conscious of it, slowly.

I do not know how it occurs - that is, how the image is formed - but I suddenly see it, and then see another and the other, and relate to each other, it has to do with the present, with what I see in front of me. It is not something that comes from the past - that is why I say it is alive - is connected with the present, but especially with the future, but not with the past.

The image must be projected both external (physical, body) and inner (soul), and the body

needs to be in harmony with the psyche, with what you think, with your way of thinking; but also the psyche must be trained because I can not always improvise on a given subject, sometimes I have to wait a longer time for the image to be born; or I come up with thoughts and parasitic images that just mess me up and remove me from the theme. I do not know how the image is born and then the improvisation, I repeat the theme in my head until suddenly it is revealed to me...

It's difficult to describe faithfully in words, but it's my inner engine, like at Isadora Duncan, and now I feel it as my most important gift in my profession, maybe in my life, and with this talent I also serve on stage in the same form in which Tarkovsky recalls in the motto of the beginning of the paper. This work and the present research made me think for the first time analytically about this process of imagination / improvisation, starting, especially, from the theoretical analysis of the main techniques and methods used in modern theater.

Man, the multiplication of the divine being, the microcosm, is born with the ability to create, and is creator from early childhood; he wants and follows creation to free himself, to know, to enjoy. Every little creation fills the soul of joy and constitutes its fulfillment. The artist, whether actor, dancer, musician, painter, after deep searches and numerous metamorphoses, sometimes painful, creates a unique, new work in which he expresses his personal perception. In his book *Man and Values - The Phenomenology of Arrogance*, Gheorghe Ceaușu speaks of two kinds of people: "the disciplined, who is marked by conservative spirit and who is attached to continuity as a verified and approved thesaurus" and "the initiator, who starts on another road than the known one."

Therefore, it is imperative to talk about certain rules, but also deviations in the stage process, because the artist / actor, the owner and the connoisseur of the rules of the theater act, ventures and violates rules, giving birth to new scenic conventions. When I talk about norms and rules I refer to traditional theater, and deviation from norm refers to improvisation. The artist, as a man of his age, is always under the empire of fashion, of the momentary tendencies he is trying to overcome.

Scenic art can not exist without rules; at the same time, more than in any other cultural field, the deviation from the norm is frequent. Any literary flow was born by denying the preceding; in our case, the methods of forming the actor were derived from one another: Stanislavski's aesthetics, theory and activity were influenced by the theatrical beliefs and the activity of the great actor Mihail Șepkin (1788-1863), the reflections of the great philosopher Denis Diderot (1713-1784), the plays of Chekhov, Gogol, Griboedov, Ostrovski and the stage presence of the dancer Isadora Duncan; the system created by the great pedagogue, actor and director K. Stanislavski, which has gone through several stages of consolidation throughout the life of the master, has been the main source of affirmation or denial of the principles of the creations of several disciples and followers,

both Russian and American: Vsevolod Emilievici Meyerhold, Evgheni Bagrationovici Vahtangov, Michael Checkov, Lee Strasberg, Sanford Meisner, Stella Adler, Robert Cohen, etc.

My personal stage and pedagogical experience until so far, and the meetings I had with great personalities from theatrical culture, from actors, teachers, colleagues, to directors and teatrologists, at the International Theater Festival in Sibiu, were an opportunity to explore the principles which guide the formation of the contemporary actor and, especially, for the interest of the present work, the elements that help the birth of the improvisation process. The present paper aims to present the interaction between the personal experience and the scenic thinking with that of the theories accumulated through the study as an actor and a teacher.

The aim and objectives of the thesis

The thesis proposes both an inventory study of the modern techniques and modern improvisation methods, with a preamble of the genesis of improvisation in a transdisciplinary context, as well as a practical analysis of the improvisation approach in the professional pedagogical projects and in the context of the performance space of the International Theater Festival from Sibiu, a dynamic space for creativity in the performing arts.

The aim of the paper is to decode and analyze the improvisation process in the art of acting.

The personal contribution to the research was focused on creating performances in pedagogical work, using improvisation as a working technique for their construction and work with students in acting, starting with the theoretical approaches of Konstantin Stanislavski, Robert Cohen, Anne Bogart and Tina Landau (Viewpoints).

Research questions and objectives

The main question of this study is *How do the theatrical improvisation take place and how does it influence the quality of acting?*

The objectives set forth are **to identify the main key elements in triggering the improvisation process**, those elements that may be common to a labor that often by its spontaneous nature does not seem to possess any set of recognizable codes, and on the other hand, **the analysis of techniques and methods of the various games proposed by the great theorists and actors of the modern theatrical space as an approach in the improvisation of the actor both in rehearsals and in the performance itself**. Elements from domains such as complementary art, film, music, psychology, theater history, elements of the social and political contexts (defining the form and nature of the improvisation process), details of theater anthropology, scientific and interdisciplinary research were mentioned in the paper.

Methods and research instruments

I opted for a research that explores concepts in action, because I operate through play, which is eminently alive, but also taking into account the theoretical context of the discipline and the social context in which the theme approached has developed over time. Therefore, the methodology of every research included practical workshops, personal shows, documentary analysis of information on the concepts and topic studied, taking into account the literature (publications, magazines and archive documents, interviews).

Structure of the paper

The thesis has six chapters: Chapter 1 – *The Genesis of Modern Improvisation: a summary of the theoretical and practical orientations in art. Preamble for theatrical improvisation*; Chapter 2 - *Improvisation and training of acting in rehearsals and performances with an audience - Konstantin Stanislavski / Meyerhold Biomechanics*; Chapter 3 - *Artistic construction, imagination, improvisation and ensemble at Michael Chekhov - about acting technique/ The actor's Freedom at Zeami*; Chapter 4 - *Truth, Emotion, Imagination - concepts and practices of improvisation in Western acting school (Group Theater - Group Theater)/Eugenio Barba and Theatre anthropology*; Chapter 5 - *Practical Approaches to the Methods and Techniques of Improvisation in Pedagogical Activity. Three shows: Jubilee, Colors of music / Abribus and Coro nero*; Chapter 6 - *Conclusions*.

The first chapter, *The Genesis of Modern Improvisation: Summary of Theoretical and Practical Orientation in Art. The preamble for theatrical improvisation*, inventories a series of definitions for the improvisation process and proposes an analysis of its genesis taking into account the social and political contexts from an inter-disciplinary perspective.

Improvisation Theater, often called Improv or Impro, is a form of theater where most performances are created when they are played; in its purest forms, dialogue, action, story, and characters are collaboratively created by actors during the course of the action.

The Improvisation Theater designates a type of performance played in a variety of improvisational comedy styles alongside some non-comedic theatrical performances. It is sometimes used in film and television, both for shaping and developing characters and scenarios and occasionally as part of the final product.

Improvisation techniques are often used, even extensively, in the training of actors for stage, film and television and can be an important part of the rehearsal process. However, the skills and

processes of improvisation are also used outside the context of performing arts, in classrooms, in the business environment as an educational tool and as a way to develop communication skills and brainstorming knowledge. Moreover, at present, improvisation is used in psychotherapy as a means of knowing a person's thoughts, feelings and relationships.¹

The chapter presents the period before 1945, starting from the Homeric tradition of the oral story involving a form of stereotypical improvisation, passing through the analysis of medieval juggles, the Elizabethan epoch, the Commedia dell'arte, but also the period after the Second World War, both in historical and artistic context, but also socially and culturally, reminding in particular the relation of the improvisation process to the field of jazz music.

The chapter shows that games of modern theatrical improvisation began as children's acting exercises, representing a niche in the theatrical education of the early twentieth century, partly due to the progressive educational movement initiated by John Dewey in 1916. The exercises were further developed by Viola Spolin in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s and encoded in her book *Improvisation in the Theater*, its exercises and its approach being widely described in the last chapter.

In 1970 in Canada, the British playwright and director Keith Johnstone writes *Impro: Improvisation and Theater*, where he presents his ideas about the improvisation process in general, inventing the Sport Theater which has become a model for the modern improvisation comedy and inspiration for very popular television shows.

The attention in the second chapter of the paper *Improvisation and training of acting in rehearsals and performances with an audience - Konstantin Stanislavski / Meyerhold's biomechanics* goes to the one who definitely marked the theatrical thinking and practice: Konstantin Stanislavski.

Through the system, Stanislavski gave acting the scientific regularity that could be support it through an orderly and conscious acting language. Stanislavski believed that the actor was made up of two halves: one full of daily troubles, of fears and problems, of the preoccupation to earn a decent living, the other meant to express great passions, feelings in dramatic texts. In a wish to secure the audience's reaction, the actor most of the times uses simple solutions, ordinary gestures, spectacular intonations, a whole arsenal of signs and signals leading to a conventionality of feelings, without them being deeply pervaded. How can the nature and the elements making up the creative state of mind be mastered? How can this issue be solved? There is a subtle mechanism that has to be discovered, specific to the "brilliant actor" and which has to be available to every professional actor.

Stanislavski realizes that physical easiness, muscle relaxation and full obedience of the actor's bodily mechanism to his will play an important role, and that the creation process is first and foremost a complete concentration of the entire physical and spiritual being which takes over the five senses, the body, thought, mind, will, feeling, memory and imagination; that the attention focused on

¹ Hazel Smith, Roger T. Dean, op. cit, pag. 10

a certain thing, a certain action on stage, frees the actor of the power of the dark abyss (the hall and the spectators). The feeling of truth represents an element of the system which is extremely important in the creation process and in inducing inspiration: you have to believe in what you do on stage like a child believes in the spiritual reality of a doll and of everything surrounding it.

Stanislavski actually defines the subconscious nature of the creation moment. But the subconscious cannot be controlled, reality is the only one which truly builds and creates. The actor's task becomes to discover the ways and the methods through which to get to work in reality, with reality. When preparing a role, conscious actions have to be coherent, structured in such a way so that to create the conditions in which spontaneity and creative intuitions are born.

At the turn of the century, Konstantin Stanislavski looks to break theatre performance from a traditional regime based on stereotypes, on the accidental creation of the actor. He discovered the theater man's grammar; he observed the great actors' performance and analyzed his own problems, thus discovering that acting has its laws: this is how the Method was born – a guideline in the first years of an actor's novitiate, as, while the acting technique is consciously assimilated, self-control is also acquired.

Konstantin Stanislavski defined his System as an actor's work method. The system does not comprise recipes showing how a certain feeling, a certain glint of reality should be interpreted on stage. The System's force and topicality consists precisely of the fact that it belongs to the actor's very organic nature, it is connected to life. It reinvents itself and enriches with every actor who, assimilating it, finds his own way.

The chapter ends with a presentation of the techniques in Stanislavski's Method to naturally stimulate feeling, this being the only one certifying the presence of truth in the actor's performance, alongside the information of the emotional memory, which makes the creation organic, alongside with the presentation of Meyerhold's biomechanic technique.

Biomechanics seems at first sight based on traditional exercises, but they are highly stylized movements that Meyerhold has choreographed as exercises for his students. An actor before he starts studying these exercises and can appreciate them, he needs to get a balance, flexibility and a well-trained muscle system. At the basis of these exercises are all the psychological acting techniques and the emotional responses, but with expressionist argumentation. The actors trained in Mayerhold's biomechanics are athletes able to enter from an encoded outer physical form into an emotional inner form. Igor Ilynsky, one of Mayerhold's best actors, said: "Technique gives a form to Imagination."

In the third chapter, *Artistic Construction, Imagination, Improvisation and Ensemble by Michael Chekhov - about the technique of acting/* The actor's Freedom at Zeami is presented the approach to the improvisation process in the actor's art and the elements that contribute to its triggering, Chekhov's method being the closest to my working technique, alongside Zeami's

teachings for the training of the actor, one of their related requests being that of seeing oneself in a detached manner when acting.

As a remarkable actor and author of one of the best acting textbooks ever published in the European scientific tradition, Michael Chekhov is one of the pillars of theatre tradition of the last century. His ability to transfigure on stage was noticed by the best known theatre directors and professors of the time since he was a teenager: Stanislavski, Vakhtangov, Meyerhold or Reinhardt.

Michael Chekhov elaborates a training system for the actor, different from that of his mentor, K. Stanislavski, based on Steiner's principles, experimented in his own apartment in Moscow (1918-1921) and completed in his theatre, Chekhov Players in the United States of America.

Chekhov's actor moves away from the Stanislavskian actor through the way in which the character is approached. Chekhov's actor has to develop a sense of the artistic construction, to use his imagination consciously, to study the great works of the past and imaginarily develop certain segments in these. Once created, the images need to be let to break away, sinking in the subconscious and accepting any transformation which happens the moment when they come back, as, when he acknowledges and accepts the independence of imagination, the actor opens the perspective of the superior ego, the generator of his creativity. In order for these images to become physical, the actor has to have a well-trained body, receptive to all the impulses coming from the inside.

In his opinion, the actor's tool is his body, which has to be so well trained to become a sensitive tool through which he can express his ideas and feelings in a profound manner. Chekhov's technique was meant to train an actor who struck out when getting on stage. The development of the actor's body and his harmony with the physical following the special requirements of acting can be achieved through a set of nine physical exercises: *Awareness of the body and the body in space, Imaginary center, Shaping the surrounding space, Floating, Flight in space, the Inner Forum, Skillfulness, Form and Unity, Beauty.*

At the end of the exercises, Chekhov makes short observations regarding the constant alternation between giving and emitting and receiving on stage. The correct alternation between giving and receiving on stage makes up the true work of art. The actor does not have to be passive on stage in this respect, so as not to give the sensation of psychological emptiness.

In order to "investigate" a character, two methods can be employed: an analytical one, rational, which Chekhov believes to be difficult, with a long and hard way, with no intuition and thus, a cold and abstract one, and the method of applying the psychological gesture. This method is more productive as it directly employs the actor's creative forces. The actor's profound intuition, his creative imagination and artistic vision will always give him a certain idea of how the character is.

Chekhov, through partially different concepts, recalls that the actor must form the habit of seeing himself objectively as an external, his inner freedom and clarity being influenced by this special ability, by this detached vision. Zeami describes, in his teachings, a much clearer way of gaining this detached relationship, this freedom and creativity of an actor's play.

The sense of freedom that allows the actor to be inspired, to access new forms of manifestation, opens his horizons through the training (Keiko), which aims to obtain the flowers (Hana) that flourish along with the artistic steps (Gei-i) .

At Zeami, the metaphor of flowers specifically designates a beauty that is expressed through the play of the actor on the stage, and in abstract mode it designates an "ideal" or "essential attribute" of the dramatic Noh art that must be acquired at each stage of the training through the life of an actor.

In Zeami's view, actor's training is crucial in obtaining the flowers. "Even if the actor reaches an artistic stage naturally, it is useless, it has no value without training," says Zeami.

The purpose of the training is to get the flowers. Knowing the flowers in Noh is the priority, the essential, but flowers should not be obtained to improve in the artistic stage because, he says, "To train as an actor to improve artistic play is ... inappropriate."

Acquiring the various ways of playing for the actor's body in Noh training means removing the imbalance between mind and body, or rather "dissolving" the ambiguous character of our mind and body to restore the primordial identity.

If we observe training in the art of Noh Theater in this manner, lifelong cultivation involves completing, finalizing the appropriation of the various movements of the body in such a way that the movements of the body and those of the mind enter into a full agreement; or, as Zeami says: "For a true flower, the principle of both blooming and fading away, its passage should be in agreement with the person" (quoted in Yuasa, p. 52).

In this sense, the process of appropriation is characterized, according to Yuasa, as the process of "subjectivization" (Shutaika) of the body. This characterization captures very well an aspect of the training process, that an unscrupulous body is gradually absorbed in the way the mind works during the actor's progression to reach the artistic stages, creating discipline.

The status of our mind and body in our daily routine is ambiguous, both at the existential and axiological level, and is based on the ambiguity of the concept of "freedom of will". In the light of this ambiguity, our body exists as something "hard" that opposes mind orders.

However, the body gradually becomes "easier" due to the process of acquiring various techniques in such a way that its own movements become autonomous, independent of the struggle of consciousness to acquire "flower," or otherwise said, the body as what is perceived is gradually transformed , in that which perceives; the body becomes the true initiator of the action. The

primordial identity between mind and body is restored, harmonizing the incongruity that we experience in our daily life.

The fourth chapter, *Truth, Emotion, Imagination - Concepts and Practices of Improvisation in the Western School of Acting (Group Theater - Group Theater)*/ Eugenio Barba and Theatre Anthropology, mainly presents the pioneering journey of the American acting school, basically of the iconic company “Group Theatre”, where Robert Lewis, Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler and Sanford Meisner, remarkable acting teachers, contributed to modern acting theories, bringing Stanislavski’s System in the frontline of American actor training. The subchapter dedicated to Eugenio Barba's theatrical anthropology completes the analysis of the conditions necessary to achieve a level of effectiveness in actor's play.

Lee Strasberg developed a number of approaches to acting, but three aspects of his work stand out: relaxation, concentration and affective memory. For Strasberg, the fundamental effect of the actor must be directed towards the ‘training of his internal skills’ through a process of ‘relaxation and concentration’. The dual process of relaxation and concentration leads performers to personalization.

Stella Adler thought that the study of acting should focus completely on the training of the actor’s imagination, voice and body, learning that the actor’s own life represents an unfruitful distraction from the given circumstances and obligations of a play. She often repeated that, normally, the actors did not live the lives of the multiple characters they interpreted – kings, queens and generals. Therefore, as an actor, relying on your own life as an inspiration source was an invalid and destructive process, opposed to Strasberg’s work method, who took his actors in a very deep personal dimension from an emotional point of view, procedure which traumatized them.

Robert Lewis was the one who “coded” Stanislavski’s System through his assiduous note taking, which he did his whole life, especially in that period. He especially took notes during Churman and Strasberg’s lectures about Stanislavski’s system, but also during his own experiences as a member of the Group.

Acting is action, behavior. Only on stage or during active classes preparing a scene (rehearsals) can a novice become very good in this art, the author says. Robert Lewis’ book is not “pro method” or “anti-method” or “pro technique” or pro emotion“, but an approach to acting as a continuous and different evolution, depending on director and professor, and does not only support a single way to realize this trade. Robert Lewis shows that Stanislavski’s system is a technique, not a dogma, a style or a theory – but a technique practiced by different artists all over the world (according to the author, there were differences and disparities even inside the Moscow Art Theatre).

Robert Lewis mentions that Stanislavski did not “invent” the system; he formulated his own conclusions after having studied the best actors of his time and immediate past. Robert Lewis admits his eclecticism and does not suggest a prioritization of the pedagogical instruments used, but a series of exercises which he tested during a long period of time with his students and which had extremely valuable results (relaxation and energizing, improvisation, sense perception, inner action etc.) For Meisner, acting first and foremost meant “doing”; this was the source where every other aspect of acting began. In his classroom, expressions such as “Act before you think” and “An ounce of behavior is worth a pound of words”² could be seen. Active behavior represents the raw material of Sanford Meisner’s theory. Sanford Meisner did not fully reject the use of emotional memory or substitution (replacing the play’s events with those in the actor’s own life), but he mentioned that substitution had to be done as “homework”. Once the feelings and physical tasks the director asked for were sketched during rehearsals, the actor acts spontaneously, with subtle changes in accent and attention. In other words, when the actor has to play, everything he has to do is action and reaction itself.

As a practitioner of the theater, Barba contributed with many new ideas, directed towards a physical approach to the theater. The most significant addition, which integrates smaller ones - but vital ideas - is the idea of theater anthropology.

During the first year of ISTA, Barba developed the new field of Theatrical Anthropology. This discipline involves the study of "man's physiological and sociocultural behavior in representation situations". Theatrical Anthropology is the study of pre-expressive scenic behavior on which different genres, styles, roles and collective or personal traditions are based.

Barba identifies two types of techniques, one everyday and the other extra-daily, claiming like Zeami that the daily ones are not conscious techniques: the way we move, sit, embrace someone, say "no" or " yes, "they are all determined by culture. He recalls that "day-to-day techniques of the body are opposed to extra-day techniques, that is, techniques that do not respect the usual conditioning of body use." So, in Barba's vision, actor's technique involves a special use of the body.

Within ISTA, the western performance ideas are compared and contrasted with the ideas of the Orient show. This comparison helps practitioners and theorists to recognize their own traditions and their own culture of performance in a defined way by studying the behavior of the human being when using their physical and mental presence in a theatrical performance in accordance with principles that are different of those used in everyday life.

In its essence, the theatrical anthropology studies the "technique of the technicians" in a situation of representation.

²Allison Hodge, op. cit., p. 26

The fifth chapter, *Practical approaches to the methods and techniques of Improvisation in pedagogical activity. Three Performances: Jubilee, Colors of Music / Abribus and Coro nero* represents my personal contribution to this research, which focused on performing performances in pedagogical work, using improvisation as a working technique for their construction and working with students, having as starting point the theoretical approaches of Konstantin Stanislavski, Robert Cohen, Viola Spolin, Anne Bogart, and Tina Landau (Viewpoints).

The chapter brings as novelty a new approach in the improvisation technique, the Viewpoints method. Unhappy with the limitations of the Stanislavskian and poststanislavskian system that reduces the actor's expressiveness to the psychological dimension, Mary Overlie and then Anne Bogart together with Tina Landau created a democratic theatrical method based on choreographic principles by which the actors can work collectively to perform a show. I mention in this chapter the motivation for choosing this method: the actors students could create work material improvising collectively not based on a text, but only on idea or images. The narrative should not be coherent; the discourse could be based on the principle of kaleidoscope or assembly. The Viewpoints method is perhaps the newest method in performing arts, was born and conquered the American theater in the 1990s, is a method by which the actor learns to work with the whole body, with the subconscious and implicitly with his emotions. Like the Meisner method, the actor is encouraged to follow his impulses, use all his senses, the entire psychophysical being, and teaches that there is no mistake to make, only discovery.

The choreographer Aileen Passloff, who taught composition in the early 1970s, asked students to base their creations on dreams, objects, advertisements. Mary Overlie has devised a personal method of structuring improvisation in dance based on time and space and theorized it in 6 fundamental viewpoints. Anne Bogart and later Tina Landau took this choreographic method of structuring and generating the movement and applied it to the theater. For 10 years they have experienced and developed a system, a method made up of 9 *viewpoints - points of view*.

It is a philosophy translated by a training technique for actors, for building a welded work team and a method of creating the stage movement. It is also a set of names given to principles of movement through time and space, a language for verbalizing the movement, which is used by a creator while creating the movement. Through Viewpoints, group awareness as a whole and ability to move in unison is practiced. No one drives or it is driven. A state of awakening and a state of collective presence must be cultivated.

The final chapter, *Conclusions* recalls the starting point of the research, the motivation, and presents, in a very personal note, the genesis of the personal labor of the improvisation process, referring also to two performances performed on the stage of Radu Stanca National Theater in Sibiu: *Life with an idiot* by Andriy Zholdak and the *Time of Love, the Time of Death* - director Radu Nica.