

Journée du Théâtre Mondiale

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MESSAGE QUÉBÉCOIS

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English version

As a child, I discovered theatre through my play. I played what I observed and imagined. I played to understand the mechanisms that rule relationships between people, by taking them apart and putting them back together. I played to decide whether I would comply with or reject these rules. I played to interiorize the outside world, criticize it, reinvent it. In short, I played to discover myself, and to find my place in the world.

When I grew up, I continued to play to understand the world, which I still didn't understand, and I was overwhelmed to realize that theatre, of all the arts, most resembles life. It is contradictory, paradoxical, different every day, with a strangely precarious balance between the private and the collective, the material and the human, the temporary and the definitive.

Theatre germinates in the deepest privacy, born of the secret desire to find the words and images to speak, laugh, shout, rejoice, be indignant, weep. But paradoxically, in order to reach others out there, theatre needs the mediation of the collective: from the stage, where there is teamwork, and from the audience, a society in miniature. Its form has changed greatly through the centuries. It is classical or romantic, modern or contemporary, of the past, the present, or the future, grotesque or burlesque, tragic or dramatic, for adults or for children... It is, and will always be, the testimony of one human being before other human beings, who are as great in their hopes as they are mortal in their fate.

Theatre has changed as technology has changed, though its dialogue is inscribed in the era of its birth. It has been lit by tallow, candles, or oil. Today, it shines like fireworks, plays with light and shadow with a science that is equalled only by tools that the century gives it... And yet, the most sophisticated technology will never equal the ring of truth and strength that meaning and the urgency to speak give it. It is the direct words of a single person, who takes the risk of sharing with others her vision of the world, that keeps theatre as vibrant as it was at the beginning.

We read it in the news every day: these are times of crisis, and public support is being cut back. Audiences are tightening their belts. And yet... We have never seen a new generation as courageous and vigorous as the one that is invading private and public spaces to reach out to these audiences. By the twos, the fours, the dozens, theatre artists bring alive and make vibrant lobbies, passageways, seats that are upright and hard. Temporary in the means that it receives, temporary in how it reinvents itself night after night, as temporary as life and daily moods, theatre is definitive in expressing the need that we have to speak and to share.