

Anne Bogart SETC Keynote Presentation
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Thank you so much. Dennis, I have to say, that is my new favorite introduction I've ever received. I'll tell you why: because usually when people do introductions they say, "Uhh, Guggenheim award, Bessie Award," you know, and it doesn't really mean anything. Actually when you said those actors were present together, it meant a huge amount to me. Thank you. I never actually heard the Bog-art thing before. (*NB- One of Anne's NYC friends, coming to see the performance of Sehnsucht told Dennis Wemm that they didn't know what to call Anne's work. Dance? Theatre? She said they just called it "Bog-art."*)

So, anyway, thank you, Dennis. Speaking of being present in the room together, I was sitting on the other side of this curtain out in the service hallway listening to the goings-on in this room, just before. It's interesting; we all come from different places, there were people who were in this room celebrating, singing, right? Those of us in the hallways heard that, and then we all come together. And it's the final full day of the SETC. And there's going to be some drinking and carousing.

So, the issue for me is for us to be together in this room, which is the privilege of our business.

Anyway, I'm going to deal with an issue right here that one deals with in the theatre, which is called time. I thought that I was going to speak for an hour and then there was going to be a half an hour of questions, now it's actually fifty minutes for all of it, so I have an hour prepared. But this is our deal, this is what we do in our lives. The theatre is compressed time, and our job is to find spaciousness inside of compressed time, and if we don't do that, then we're not doing our job. I was just outside talking with Keoni and Elizabeth, who've been wonderful helping me out, and Angelique, as well, and John since I got here this morning, about how hard we bust our butts. Is that English? Bust our chops or whatever.

In this business, we work really hard, we train really hard, we don't make a lot of money, we come to these horrible rooms sometimes. (No offense, but it's not a great room.) And time is compressed, and in the moments we have together when the door is shut and the rehearsal is happening, or the play is happening and there's an audience, the issue is to find freedom and space and joyousness even though we have to work our butts off. So it's a very strange dichotomy, to work really hard to be in the room and then to say, "Now, it's different, let's change the time signature." And I'm thinking, as Dennis said, I'm going to talk about the future of theatre. Theatre doesn't have a future, it's always present as we know. When I look at the present world we live in, this now in the last five years even, the time signature of our times has gotten more and more intense. I mean, how many voicemails did you have today? How many email messages, how many people have a Blackberry? Or a crackberry or whatever they call it?

And so the radical nature of theatre is to change the time signature. I remember actually a number of years ago there was a young director who was going to Yale at the time and her name was Juliette Carrillo and she called me or something, and I didn't even know her, and she said, "Would you come up and see my thesis production?" (Her directing thesis production at Yale.) So I said, "OK," and I took the train up to New Haven. It was an afternoon performance of an adaptation of a Borges' novel and it was in the big university theatre which was full. There were young people there - kids, an afternoon crowd. The play began, and it was Latin American time, it was South American time, it was different. It took this big guy, who played the lead, time to lumber up the stairway, but it was beautiful. We all felt great in the room; it was a beautiful performance. On the way back to New York on the train, I started thinking what a radical thing Julia Carillo and her company had done. I thought, and at this time this was a while back and I would change the terminology, but then I thought, "What a young director actually has to deal with is MTV time." What do you do with MTV time? Do you try to outspeed MTV time? Now I would say computer time, or Internet time or something which is even faster, but the radical thing we can do is change the time signature. If you look at new music, composers who change time (and I don't know what I'm about to say because I don't really understand this but 16 over 4 changes to 9 over 2, something like that) which is that the time inside of the measures changes and the experience of time changes. So this is our job, to change time, certainly to change space.

So, all of this is a preamble to say that I have an hour's worth of material that I'm going to try ...And I'm not going to panic! I'm just going to start and I will try to be finished by 4:00, and I will also try to find time for Questions and Answers. It's an opportunity to speak, and speaking is a radical act. As a matter of fact, I think the most radical thing you can do in this culture right now is complete your sentences. I see I have colleagues with me here. I think there are political reasons why we don't complete our sentences and I won't go into that, there's no time for that, but, "and she was all, and he's and then, whatever." Try finishing a sentence, it's a very, very powerful thing to do, and it's dangerous, politically

dangerous. So, in preparing this talk today, I thought, let me choose the hardest thing to discuss, and I hope you'll go with me on it, so I wrote the title before I had any actual idea as to what I'm actually going to say under it. So hang on. The title is, "What does theatre mean and what can it do in the context of our present global environment?" But, this is an opportunity; having the honor of speaking with colleagues is an opportunity to try to articulate something. So then I thought about it because I think it's an important issue, because for me, 9/11 changed everything. I know some people were smarter than me and knew before 9/11 how things were changing, but it took being in Manhattan on that morning for that radical change to occur. Things are different, and things have changed and we live in a different world. One of the things is about time, how time is.

So, this is what I would propose: I came up with seven things that the theatre does and what it can do and what it means. You don't have to write it all down because I'll talk about each one within a short amount of time.

It can create intensity, you can remember, you can resist certainty, you can be articulate in the face of uncertainty, you can produce catharsis, the theatre can expand the definition of what it means to be human, and the theatre can bring attention where needed. So, I'm going to talk about each one of these, a little bit.

During the turn of the millennium there was an article in the *New York Times* Sunday magazine, and a lot of smart people were asked about the next century. The Dali Llama was asked that if he could return in 80 or 100 years, would he want to? Even though pollution would overrun the Earth, the overpopulation, and things would be really tough. His answer, when he was asked if he would want to return, was, "If I could be useful." I found that very beautiful. You know we're in a business, what are we doing? What are our intentions? Is it about career? We're certainly encouraged to think it is. It's about making money and most of the young people here would say, "What's your definition of success?" What would be your parents' definition of success, TV perhaps? But I really encourage you to think about what's your definition of success, what does that mean? And the notion of being useful is radical, because in a sense, art and theatre, (and I think of the theatre as art, that's how I approach it); that art and theatre are ultimately a complete waste of time, and it's meant to be. But can it be useful? Of course it can be useful.

Intensity, create intensity. One of the things I found helpful after 9/11 was something that Leonard Bernstein, the conductor and composer said. He said, "An artist's response to violence is to make the music more intense." I find this very helpful. What does this mean? My colleague, Tadashi Suzuki, a Japanese director, he's a generation older than I am and is someone I look up to considerably. He talked about American theatre, and he said, "You know, the problem with the American theatre is you could just blow and it falls over." And he's right, you know, you just look at the stage and something's happening, you blow and it falls over. And he says, a little bit misogynistically I'd say, "You know, I don't care what you think about my theatre but you can't knock it over." I both hate and love what he's saying. I realize that what I'm looking for in the theatre is intensity. Have you ever been near an opera singer when they're singing? It's so beautiful, how they have to organize their bodies to stand up and make that sound come through that bone in their throat, is extraordinary. It's a poetic use of the human body and abilities. To me it's beautiful to stand near an opera singer. If there's anything wrong with our training, I would say, in general, in this country it's too easy. What we need to do is to do things that are very, very hard on a daily basis so that your habits are tested, so that you don't raise your arm the same way every single time, that you learn to actually do things that your body has never experienced. This starts to, in a sense, cultivate intensity.

Now I'm going to tell you the recipe for creating intensity. Ready? Well, actually, I'll tell you an anecdote about it, and I'll get to it. I was once at a dinner party and I was introduced to this guy, who I thought was introduced as an architect. I'm a real architect buff, I might note. I like architecture and I admire architects. At some point at the middle of the evening, I came up to him and said, "It's so wonderful, you're an architect." He looked a little embarrassed and said, "No, actually, I was an architect and I quit." I said, "How could you quit? I mean look at the work of Zaha Hadid and Daniel Libeskind, and Gehry and all these people who are doing amazing things?" And he said, "All those people have something I don't have," and I said, "What?" He said, "Enthusiasm." He said, "Actually, people who are paying a lot of money for buildings won't hire an architect who is not enthused by the art. It's just "Why would you pay that much money?" And then I looked up enthusiasm. Entomologically, enthusiasm means "to be filled with God." *Enthu, thu* as in *theo*.... To cultivate enthusiasm and a love for the art form is the beginning of the journey towards intensity. Without the contagious enthusiasm that you feel, which means that every time you experience something that gives you a *frissons de coeur*, which is like goosebumps.

And if you don't follow that immediately you die as an artist. It's true. If you make a decision because it's a better career move, instead of that thing you feel coursing up your spine, your work will die. I'm not saying it lightly. I've been very fortunate to be able to follow enthusiasm and *frissons du coeur*, the goosebumps, and it will take care of you.

All right. The second thing I wanted to talk about in terms of what theatre does and what it means is to remember. And I actually think that if theatre were a verb, it would be "to remember." Again, what are we doing? It's an extraordinary thing to do a play, because inside of a great play lives a great question. We touch that question, it's contagious, it lives in us. We spread that disease, that influenza, influence, into the world of our interest and our question. A great play lives because it's about a great question. Hubris - it still matters. So the Greek plays still make sense. I met a really wonderful writer, a South African writer named Antjie Krog. She told me about meeting a Senegalese poet on an island, who said that in his country, the job of a poet (and she meant this literally, and he meant this literally) is to remember where the water holes are. When the community forgot where the water holes are, the poet's job was to remember. I thought, what an extraordinary metaphor for what we do - to remember where the water holes are - the water holes being, in this sense, our culture, our civilization, our humanity. My favorite person in the world who's a writer is a playwright by the name of Charles L. Mee, Jr., better known as Chuck, who, whenever I'm upset and lose my way, I call. I was upset and lost my way after 9/11, and I said, "We have got to have dinner." Over dinner I asked him, "What are we gonna do? This is a bad time right now." And he said, "Well, there are two things you could do: You could either say 'It's never gonna get better' so you give up. That's one thing you could do. The other is you say, 'It will get better' and your job is to pick up everything that you value put it on your back and become a transport bridge to carry it forward." This is a kind of acting, this is active - to remember, to remember what matters. Another way to, and I'm going to try to be practical in terms of this, too, how to create intensity and how to remember, is to intensify the ancient magnetism of the theatre. In other words, there are ancient magnetic draws that the theatre provides. Use them. That is also another form of remembering. Look at theatre history. Start stealing from it - how did the medieval theatre exist? You know as Dennis was describing with the street car deconstruction. We used a medieval form of theatre which is mansions. The audience went from mansion to mansion, one was supposed to be hell and one was heaven in medieval time. But you can translate these ancient ideas. Let me tell you something that might delight you. Maybe some of you have heard this before, but there's a beautiful ancient Sanskrit saying which says that the theatre should do 3 things simultaneously: 1. It should entertain the drunk. 2. It should answer the question of how to live and 3. It should answer the question, "How does the universe work?" I know that there's a young woman traveling around this conference asking everybody, "What is theatre?" That's your answer.

Thirdly, so we've done intensity, so what does the theatre mean, what can it do? It can create intensity. It can remember. It can resist certainty. I go back to 9/11, that morning for me changed everything. I don't know, for each one of us in this room perhaps it's a little different. But there's a philosopher who teaches at Emory, whose name is Don Saliers, and he came up with a theory that the silence that follows a violent act is very similar to the silence that follows an intense aesthetic one. Do you understand that? It's kind of intense what I just said. There's a word in German, OK the Germans, they-them and violence, they get it, there's a word in German and the Germans say it better, in their more exact language and the word is *betreffenheit* and it comes from *treffen* which means "to meet." *Betreffen* is to be met, *betreffenheit* is the state of having been met. I think that happened for me after 9/11, for a lot of people. All of New York was in a state of *betreffenheit* where there is no certainty, where you do not know the future. It is a state where you are met by yourself and the situation. This moment is what for artists is pure gold. The opposite of that *betreffenheit*, that sense of lack of certainty, is certainty. And certainty when followed to its end always ends in violence. Look at Iraq. What replaced the *betreffenheit* in our country and the uncertainty was patriotism and the notion that any questioning of that patriotism is unpatriotic and that certainty of being in the right, when in fact we need to look at the world in a different way. We suddenly have different connective tissues on the global environment. To replace that sudden *betreffenheit* with a kind of certainty is destructive. It is the job of the artist to live between certainties, to live inside a paradox. Truth in art is never one thing, it is the space between two things. It's the space between two opposites. It's like a light bulb; you create the electricity in a light bulb by putting two filaments and it's the space in between the two filaments in which there's light, where the light happens. So, it is our job, and it's what the theatre can do is to create a sense of paradox, a living paradox, that we together are caught up in the contradictions of our life. We do not give in to certainty, and we are highly encouraged to give in to certainty. My stepdaughter, who is 22, if she doesn't understand something, she

doesn't like it. What do we do with that? I mean, I can't say you're wrong. This is a political reality and it's been caused by reasons I won't go into right now. So, the role of the artist is to resist certainty.

What's next? Create intensity, remember, resist certainty, next is to be articulate in the face of uncertainty. This is a big deal, which is find your words. This goes back to finishing sentences. Now I'm going to tell you a couple of little anecdotes and I hope they will be put together. Find your words, speak the thing. It starts with thought, word, action. They're combined; you know that as an actor. Thought, word, action. If you do word or feeling first, you're fucked because you obscure the thought and the word. Thought, word, action. So, I'm going to tell you a couple of little anecdotes. One has to do with the infamous Robert Bernstein, who has written all those little books that none of us could read, except for the last one. The last one he wrote to be understood, but then it was too stupid. Robert Bernstein, for those of you who don't know, founded-appointed the dean of the Yale School of Drama. When he went to Yale School of Drama, he said, "I don't believe in having a school without having theatre," so he began the Yale Rep, the infamous Yale rep. Ten years later, he had to leave and was invited by Harvard to start a theatre, not a school, but a theatre in Cambridge, Mass. He went to Cambridge with his company, everything was fine, but he felt very much that Harvard and ART, which is now the American Repertory Theatre, needed a school. He went to the then President of Harvard, and he said, "It's all fine and good, I really appreciate the theatre, but we need a school, where we can train actors, directors, dramaturges, playwrights on a graduate level. And we would like to have a school." The President of Harvard said, "No, at Harvard, we don't do art schools. No." So, Brustein went away and he was still insistent that he would start a school. A little while later he made another appointment with the president. He went in and said, "It's all fine and good to have a theatre, but what we really need is a conservatory. We need a conservatory for actors directors, dramaturges and playwrights, and then we'll be fine." The president said, "We don't do conservatories here at Harvard." He left and he was passionate about this need for a school and a theatre to go together and he went back to the president another time. He said, "It's all fine and good, we need an institute for advanced theatre training." And the president, this is true, said, "Oh, yes, we do institutes here at Yale."

Now, why I'm telling you this (and I'm going to be telling you a couple of anecdotes) is if there's anything I want to bring home today, in terms of finishing sentences, it is that it's important to be able to describe what you're doing and find your words. Because words are like keys, they unlock doors. If you can't describe a dream to somebody, nobody knows how to help you. You know, if you came to see me and said I dream this of my career, and if you were articulate enough about it, and I knew anybody in that area who could help you, I'd say, "I could get on the phone with so-and-so." But if you say, "Yeah, I'm kinda, sorta, I'm not sure," then who can help? But to find the thought, then to find the words, and then the action. Now, I'm going to continue this a little bit with words. It has to do with another dinner party. I love dinner parties. This was a number of years ago, and I was invited to a dinner party of these really wacky, crazy film producers. They were crazy guys, and they just like to throw parties and try to get people together. I like the parties because they always cater it and it's lovely. Anyway, so I went to this dinner party and I was seated next to a guy named Francois Girard. Yeah, I know, that's what I thought, too. And this was before he made "The Red Violin." He had made one of my favorite films of all time, which is called, "Thirty-two short films about Glen Gould." I don't know if anybody saw it. And I found myself sitting next to the guy, and I was completely thrilled! At one point in the middle of the evening, he turned to me, and he was in New York trying to find producers for his film, "The Red Violin." He turned to me and he said, "Would you like to hear the story of my film?" I said, "Yeah, cool," and he said, "There was a man and a woman, they were very much in love. The man made violins, he was a master craftsman. His wife died in childbirth, he was bereft. He took her blood, and painted the violin that he was working on with her blood." Francois Girard started describing to me the story of this violin, which you see in "The Red Violin" where it goes from continent to continent, century to century, and I, of course, sat there completely blown away. I could tell he was kind of checking me out, if I was listening, and he was telling the story, and I suddenly realized, at a certain point, that there was nothing special about me, that he wanted to tell me this story. He would have turned to anybody on his left and said, "Would you like to hear the story of my film?" I think the reason why that film was made is because he did that. I'm not a producer, I have no money to give him, but because he articulated, that he kept telling the story, that he talked it into existence. He was working, he was doing his job, he was doing our job, which is to describe, to articulate the thing. First, to have the thought, the thing, the vision, the idea, and then to find the proper words for it, and the words are keys. Eventually that film was made. So, do you see the importance of speaking?

Now, last thing on this issue of words, and this is even more important, so hang onto your hats. There's a woman named Jaan Whitehead, who's actually the board chairman of my company, SITI, and she wrote a very incendiary article in *American Theatre* about 5 years ago, which she got a lot of crap for. But, I think it's very important. In this article, she talked about how we describe ourselves as theatre artists. She said, "Why do we call ourselves 'nonprofit'?" That's like going up to somebody and saying, 'Hi, my name's Non.' That it's a terrible word to choose what we do. What about the words 'unearned income?' Since when is that unearned? That's the hardest money you're ever going to make!" She said, "We need to change the way we describe ourselves." I believe that, in our field (and it has reasons that date back to the middle of the last century) that we see ourselves as paupers, which is the wrong way to see ourselves. Why do we keep naming our companies On a String or Flea in a Box? I love this company and I don't know anything about them but they've named themselves The Theatre of the United States of America. They're like this tiny little collective in New York! But I think we need more thinking like that, to really examine the way we use words.

Now, I would also say on a very practical level, that words affect a rehearsal process like viruses. I think, for example, the word 'want' is killing the American theatre. If an actor says to a director, and I'm a director, so if an actor says this to me, "Anne, is this what you want?" I think, "I just want to go home." Or what I want is a little perverse but has nothing to do with the play. The issue is, what does the play want? So, if a rehearsal is all about saying, "Is this what you want?" or the director saying, "OK, now I want you to walk downstage," even that is dangerous. "I want you to walk stage right, and now I want you to take a break." It becomes a parent-child relationship, which is of no interest in our business. I promise you, it's a kind of hierarchy that is un-useful. There are ways that we talk to each other, the way we speak to each other in rehearsal is the beginning, it's the kernel, it establishes the politics of a room, which feeds out, how you talk to people, how you treat people. Your politics are important. OK, enough with articulate in the face of uncertainty.

So we've had what? Intensity, remember, resist certainty, be articulate in the face of uncertainty... Produce catharsis. OK, this is ancient, right? Aristotle talks about catharsis, but I would like to share with you something that, if you don't know it, it was such a pleasure for me to find out, it's the etymology of catharsis. Catharsis means to spread light in dark places. Isn't that amazing! Like cathode, *cath*, like a cathode ray, *cath*? That's as far as I go. Anyway, the notion of catharsis is, if you think about it, shining light in dark places, then you have to say, "What are the dark places of our soul right now?" I'm going to tell you another little anecdote, which is one of my favorites, and I think it has to do with context. What are the dark places? It was during the worst years of the Bosnian War in Sarajevo. In Sarajevo, there was a production of *Hair*, the musical. It was sold out every night, the city was bombed out, and the citizens would go across the city in danger of their lives to attend this sold out production of *Hair* which happened in a bombed-out building. I might be exaggerating a little, but it was such a success that a reporter from the *New York Times* went to Sarajevo to report on this production of *Hair*. He said it was amazing, these people would take their lives in their hands to come across the city and see this production. He said that one of the most poignant moments was the song, "Let the sunshine, let the sunshine in." Now, can you imagine what that felt like in the context of that moment? For that moment, that play had found its time in a certain way. Here's the payoff. The reporter said, at the end of the article (and this is before 9/11) this is 1990's New York. The reporter said, "A commercial Broadway producer is thinking of bringing that play, intact, to Broadway." Can you imagine how ridiculous that would be? And how absurd those actors on the stage would seem? Fortunately, it didn't happen, but you start to understand context.

Shining light in dark places. What are the dark places of our soul? I was talking to Keoni. He's been my guide since I've been here. He did a production of "Alice in Wonderland" and I think he cast it before Katrina. Then all of a sudden, Katrina happened and he was in Mississippi, then everything changed, the meaning of that play...right? That kind of issue, in terms of producing catharsis, is important. What play when? What are the dark places? What are we looking at? This is something that the theatre can do, to go there in a place that is not full of fear. But to look at it, and to live there together, and to come out better for it. I actually think that the theatre is a gym for the soul. This is more answering that person who wants that question answered. You go to the gym for your body, you go to the gym for the soul, the theatre. I want a workout; that's what I want. OK, expand the definition of what it means to be human. Oh, great. The thing that's unique for the theatre, is it's the only art form that is about the people in the room at that moment. In other words, the theatre is about social relationships. That is what it's about. It is asking the questions, "Here we are, can we get along? Is it possible that, in this room, something might happen?" It is a social event, and it is really, I think, the only one, or it is the one that capitalizes the most

on that notion. It's Richard Rorty, the philosopher, who says it's not the generals or the politicians who create the future, it's the artists, it's the poets, it's the writers, because, and you'll follow this on from Francois Girard, it's the articulation of the future that creates the future. Very important. "The Red Violin" happened because Francois Girard could articulate his dream of the film. The future of our humanity is determined by those who can articulate it. To create fictions about society, in the room, with the people in it, is an extraordinary thing. The way to open this up to redefine and expand the definition of what it means to be human, is to engage in content. That content changes you. Choose plays that mean a lot, plays that you don't understand. If you choose a play that you already understand, then what's the point? There's no growth there, there's no expansion. I just understood something this past week. My colleague Leon Ingulrsrud, who's in my company (we're working on a play right now in Louisville, come see it - Actor's Theatre, Humana Festival...) We're doing a play about Joseph Cornell, by Chuck Mee. Leon said, "You know," and it took him all these years to say this to me, I think he's known it all along, he said, "You know, when the Moscow art theatre came to this country in 1922-23 and blew away all those young artists, like Strasbourg, Coleman, Adler, etc. , and they were all knocked out by what they were seeing, it wasn't an acting technique that they were knocked out about, it was the state of being of a group of people on the stage." It is how they were together; it is the social relationships they had created. I think one of the reasons that things like the viewpoints or certain approaches to the theatre are causing a little revolution is it's changing the way people are together in a non-hierarchical sense, expanding the definition of what it means to be human, how you are sometimes communicating more than what you're saying, or what the acting technique is that leads to that way of being.

So, the issue of ways of being. It's really important in this issue of expanding the definitions of what it means to be human to ask, "What"- and I think I've said it 6 times already, "What are we doing? What are our intentions?" That is the first thing that is visible as an actor on the stage - what you're doing out there. Are you looking for safety, or are you tempting, in the best sense of a- It's something, you know, Stella Adler apparently said to her classes every, at the beginning of each session, not session for a day, but session for six months or something. She used to tell this story, I never was there, somebody told me this, and I thought it was beautiful. She told the story to her acting class; at the beginning of acting class. She said that she had been in a pool in Florida somewhere, and she was sitting in the pool, and there was a little girl on the diving board, and the little girl's father was trying to encourage the little girl to jump into the water. She was really frustrated, and finally the little girl turns to her father, who's encouraging her to jump, and says, "But Daddy, I'm trying!" Stella Adler would turn to the class and say, "Isn't that what we're all doing here?" But that question is "What are you doing when you get up on stage? What are you doing when you tempt a play? Or attempt a play." "What are you looking for?" will affect a great deal the way you think about expanding the definition of what it means to be human. For example, if you listen to a singer, are you listening to the singer or the song? There are singers (American Idol) who make you listen to the singer. The real artists, in my mind, make you listen to the song. That informs the way you sing. It's a very different intention. So you see your intentions change the way you sound. They change your body, the change your energy, they change the way you are, they change your states of being. So, to question that issue of "What are you doing?"... You know, I was asked once to write for- it was then called the *Yale Quarterly*, I think it's now called *Theatre*. They were doing an issue on utopias, and somebody from *Yale Quarterly* or *Theatre* called me and said, "Anne, would you write a little article?" I love writing articles. I write a little article on what theatre utopia is. I said "Yeah, that's a cool subject!" and every time I sat down to write about it, I got really angry. Then I'd say, "No, I'm not writing it," and then the deadline came, and they called and said, "Anne, have you written this article?" And I said, "No, OK I'll write it." And then I'd sit down and I'd get angry again." They finally, they called and said, "Anne, the deadline's really over, could you just write, like a few sentences?" Around that time there was an article in the paper with interviews of Chechnyan soldiers, and the interviewer asked the Chechnyans, "Look, why are you fighting? Russia is huge, you'll never win," and the Chechnyans said, "You don't understand, we are successful because we are fighting." It's a different way of thinking, I believe, and why I couldn't write this article on utopia, is theatre utopia isn't some beautiful theatre palace of the future that has technology up the kazoo-you know everything you need. But if you are making theatre you are a success. The act of making it is a utopian experience.

Which is why I always say there is no such thing as an unemployed director. Directing is making things happen. You don't say, "I can't get a job." There is such a thing as an unemployed actor, actors. That's true. It's different, you can deal with that.

I'm coming in to the final one, you ready? Bring attention where needed. Attention is extremely powerful. Quantum physics teaches us that it's worth studying, that there is no such thing as an objective viewer, that the act of looking at something changes it, literally. Molecules change because you look at them. You know all that, the Heisenberg's Uncertainty principle, there's Schrödinger's Box. In other words, you've studied that the act of attending to something changes it. That has huge repercussions for us in the theatre: that how you look as a director - the actors feel. Those of you actors, you could feel what a director's looking from, like how they're watching - are they watching from their ego or are they watching for the whole gestalt? You can feel that. Attention is a very powerful thing, and how you use that.

Some of you might know this: a really extraordinary woman named Morgan Juness is a writer's agent right now, but she worked with Joe Papp in the public theatre for years; she was his assistant. She's sort of at the heart of everything, like a maven. She's very quiet but you always find out she's at the bottom of everything, if you really look. You always find her carrying around huge piles of scripts, and she sees every play there is. You go to a play, she's there, in New York at least. Anyway, she's this amazing woman, but she's always depressed in a way because she always wonders if what she's doing means anything. She calls her playwrights "my" playwrights, and of course she's amazing, but years ago she was obsessed with Mother Theresa. When she was working at the Public Theatre, she got really depressed about her life, whether she was doing any good, and, one day she found out that Mother Theresa was in New York. She found out where Mother Theresa would be, she left work - (it was in the rain, I think, it makes the story better). She was in the rain, she waited outside the building, and the next part is true. (I don't know if it was raining.) Mother Theresa finally came out with her entourage and started walking by her. Mother Theresa turned around, looked her in the eyes and said, "What's going on?" True story. "Who are you?" And Morgan said, "I work for a theatre, and I want to come work for you in India, because I don't think my work does any good for anybody." Mother Theresa said, "In my country, we have a famine of the body. In your country, you have a famine of the spirit; you must continue." Maybe I'll end there.

Q&A:

Question- (Unintelligible)

Answer- Thank you very much. I just wrote a new book of essays, and there's a funny story about it, because this book, if that's the one you're talking about, is *A Director Prepares*. Well, I've written a post-9/11 book, in which I explore these issues a lot more in-depth, and I had a terrible title for it. I won't even tell you, it's too embarrassing. I went to have lunch with the publisher in London, Tanya Rogers, some of you might know her from Routledge, and she said, "I love the book and yeah we're going to do it, but I hate the title." And I said, "Yeah, me too, it's really stupid, isn't it?" She said, "But, I've got one for you." I said, "Great, tell me!" She said, "The title of your book should be, *And Then, You Act*." And I said, "Fantastic, because, you know, a director prepares, and then you act!" And, you know, I said, "That's great, let's do it!" So, wait, story's not over. So, we had lunch and at the end I said, "Thank you so much Tanya, and particularly, thank you for the title, thank you for thinking of the title!" She said, "I didn't think it up..." I said, "No?" She said, "No, it's the last sentence of your book." It will be appearing in September, I'm excited to say. So, thank you for your kind words.

Q: Unintelligible

A: You know, the beautiful thing about the theatre; I went to see a play once, and I won't name it. It was a one-woman show at the Humana Festival, a number of years ago, and I won't name it. Anyway I hated it, I just hated it. I thought it was just pedantic and I was sitting next to my dear friend Tina Landau, and when it was over, I turned to her and I said, "That's not theatre!" And Tina said, "You know what? It is. And that's the glorious thing about theatre, is it can be so many things." Then I realized she's right, that's exactly what I love about the theatre. I'm a big admirer of Max Reinhardt, who would do a tiny chamberwork, and then would do *Everyman* outdoors at Salzburg, and then he would do an opera, and then he'd do a classic play, then he'd do *pintosoleil*, and then he'd do a tiny little chamber piece again. And to me it's hard to answer your question, because so many things. I love Williams, I just think Williams is the most incredibly glorious writer. There are beautiful writers, but at times it's also not so much based on the play but sometimes you can start something based on an idea or a person. But it goes back to the issue of *frissons du coeur*. You know what gives you the goosebumps, you know, that's a sideways way around your... you know, one more and then we'll end on time, for drinks.

Q: unintelligible

A: Oh, I just think he talked down, I'm sorry to say this because I love Bob, I mean he drives me crazy and I love him, but I think it's overly simplistic and I think it talks down to the actors, from the distance of somebody who knows and has no intimacy with their issues. I think, it's weird when he goes from such dense writing to saying, I don't know if he said, "Oh, now I want to write something that everybody will read." And so he changed his point of view, and I find it disappointing, you know. I don't know if it's selling. You know what? When I was young, I never wanted to be talked down to and I never wanted things simple.