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NEW DRAMATURGY

International Perspectives on
Theory and Practice

Edited by Katalin Trencsényi
and Bernadette Cochrane

B L O O M S B U R Y

Disruption as Revealing the Essence of Truth

Gad Kaynar in conversation with Ruth Kanner

Ruth Kanner has been a creator of experimental theatre in Israel since the early 1980s. Currently she leads her own group, an experimental theatre team, searching for a local theatrical language, interweaving storytelling, physical theatre and visual imagery. The group's re-examination of Israeli hegemonic narratives is performed through literary and documentary texts, creating innovative storytelling theatre. Kanner works internationally (Tel Aviv, New York, and Tokyo). Among her productions are: Discovering Elijah – a play about war (2001); Bathers – a project with actors, dancers and specially designed sound instruments, based on women's casual conversations in the dressing room of a swimming pool (2004); Dionysus in Dizengoff Center – a penetrating investigation of the historical layers of a shopping mall in Tel Aviv, performed as a storytelling theatre that engages various theatrical means to ask challenging questions about the roots of the Zionist existence in Israel (2004); Mother Courage by Bertolt Brecht (2005); Signals – an original interpretation of traditional and modern Hebrew texts, with vocal artist Victoria Hannah (2005); At Sea – an adaptation of two stories about love, life and death at the sea shore by S. Yizhar (2005); Disgust – a search into the anatomy of a basic human emotion, as expressed by ordinary people stopped and interviewed on a street (2006); Eumenides by Aeschylus (2007); Cases of Murder by Manfred Franke (2008); Sakura No Sono Nippon – a free adaptation of The Cherry Orchard by Yoko Tawada (2010); The Flight of the Dove – two parallel stories by Yuval Shimoni (2011).

Ruth Kanner serves as an associate professor at the Department of Theatre Art, Tel Aviv University. She also presents, in Israel and abroad, workshops on storytelling theatre, movement, semiotic techniques and pragmatic speech act theories as sources for staging and directing techniques.

Gad Kaynar:

What would you in general regard as dramaturgical elements in your work?

Ruth Kanner:

If I could mention one key word – it would be 'distortion'. I do find out that the more you disrupt or disturb the work, any element of the work – you find the true essence of whatever you deal with: a specific text or idea or movement. Walter Benjamin is writing in such a wonderful way about the concept of interruption. He claims that that's what Brecht is doing – to disrupt the continuum. I guess I am attempting to follow these inspiring ideas in my work.

GK:

Could you give me an example from your work?

RK:

The one that comes to my mind is the story *At Sea* by the great Israeli writer, S. Yizhar. It is a love story about two youngsters. They go together to the Sea of Galilee, where they begin to discover each other. It's a very pure story, also in the way we deal with it on the stage – the whole stage is a huge, white paper, suggesting the purity of the primary moments.

But when we were rehearsing, I felt that the story needed a countermovement, it needed to go against something. This purity and these innocent first moments – what would interrupt it? I was trying to find it in a visual image. I tried to discuss it with the scenographer – Roni Toren – we live in a very vulgar world, and we see all these vulgar images around us, so maybe this is something we should struggle with, with how we are searching for our point of purity, which was actually lost. But we didn't find an answer in a visual image.

And then I did the most impudent thing I ever did: I asked one of the actresses to start the performance by sitting, holding a microphone, looking at the audience coming into the hall and counting the expected income from the box office. She is doing all kinds of calculations. She says: 'There are such and such seats in the hall and each ticket costs this and this, and students get reductions, so we lose such and such money.' So she does a very clear down-to-earth act. And it goes on! At the most fantastic moment, the very peak of the story the most sensitive and erotic moment – the dissonant voice of counting the money earned is invading the scene again. These noises of calculations are indeed something that exists in our world, although we strive to reduce them. But they are there. A part of my own conflict, too. So, this story with this provocative counterpoint is an example of what I would call an important dramaturgical 'disturbance'.

GK:

You choose to work with non-dramatic texts. What are actually the benefits of choosing a literary text and rejecting texts which were actually written for the theatre?

RK:

The painful truth is that the more I work with non-dramatic texts, I realize how good the dramatic texts are for the stage. They want the stage and the stage wants them, and it's so appropriate. And every time when I start again with literary or documentary texts – I suffer a lot, because it takes many, many weeks to find the dramaturgical line. Because it is as if the stories resist, they don't want to, they are not meant to.

GK:

So why all this stubborn insistence on taking them?

RK:

Because what I learnt again and again is that when you deal with these things that don't fit – it forces you to renew or expand your theatrical language. Somehow I think this very challenge is quite brutal: it's a force you invite for yourself, and then – you can't avoid it, you can't escape

from it, because the story doesn't work, so you have to ask challenging questions, especially questions about modes of representation.

For example – we worked on a story by Orly Kastel-Blum. She is a contemporary, postmodern Israeli writer. Her writing is very surreal, dream-like structures. Things are not stable, such as the story of this woman who is searching for food in an apocalyptic world. Everything is ruined – including human values. And this short story takes us from place to place. Places change repeatedly, also characters, like in a dream. Suddenly this woman meets a fish, then she goes into the bank of 'let-downs', then into a field of carrots, etc. You can't do that on stage, you can't build a bank and then a field of carrots. So it is wonderful, because it forced us to realize that the magic of the writing is the magic of a dream – the power of transformation. So we developed our ability to transform, and to transform within the rationale of a dream. We have to find these techniques of giving voice to unusual texts.

GK:

What are your criteria of choosing a specific text? Do you have any preferences for certain, specific texts over the others?

RK:

I feel that a choice of a text is always a political choice. Even more so, because we live in such a hectic place – every move turns to be a political move. Sometimes in a hidden way, not always in an explicit way. But I think my choice is always dealing with some dilemma, some wrong that is being done here. One of many, many wrongs that are being done here.

GK:

But this political approach is what defines only a part of what works you are doing, like Discovering Elijah or Dionysus in Dizengoff Center. Other things are a little less obviously political.

RK:

They are, but not always obviously so. My choices are also very instinctive. I choose something and somehow I tell myself: 'I have to do

it, I'm burning to do it.' But then I check myself, the dramaturgical side of me is checking the more intuitive childish side of me.

I'll give you an example, something which was not at all political to start with, but then. ... My work *Amos* is a story about a field mouse that finds himself locked up in a trap, in a system of irrigation pipes. And the whole story is his struggle to get out. I love animals and the story is written in such a fantastic beautifully rich language, yet, I was not really aware of my motivation of choosing it. Only afterwards I heard people speaking about the essence of the story: that you are trapped by a force which is much, much bigger than you, which is blocking your freedom. So there were people talking about Palestinians and Israel, but also people talking about the Holocaust, and people who were trapped in tunnels, in the underground sewage system there.

GK:

Or being trapped in and by memory.

RK:

Yes. On the face of it nothing seems political, it's rather a very personal story in the fields of the Kibbutz, and all the colours and everything is very Israeli. But maybe because it is located here, your mind starts to search for something beyond and you take the mouse as a metaphor.

So one aspect of the choice is the political one, and its relevance for our lives. The other aspect is the quality of the text. I would choose a text only if it is written in a language that has truth; not pretending, not imitating, but something that has its own inner truth. And also – a text through which I can hear speech actions. Some texts just describe things, and this for me becomes so boring. For me a good text for stage – even the ones not written for the theatre – is rich with actions. And this is crucial for me.

Only lately I realized that the very search for speech actions – is in itself a sort of a political act. I read *The Human Condition* by Hannah Arendt. There is a fantastic chapter entitled 'Action.' The way Arendt

describes action is a very broad definition of it. For her an action is always something you do to someone, it's not something which only stays within yourself. So it's always an opportunity to change something in the world.

So, a true action is something that you can never know where it is leading to. You start something. If you trust your fellows, the human beings, then it echoes. Something will happen to it, you can't control it – true actions can't be controlled. And this is such a fantastic lesson for theatre, for acting.

So it comes to the point, eventually, that I guess the dramaturgy of the theatre that I'm searching for, is hidden in texts that form practical and professional techniques and ways of doing. They do carry ideology, they do carry ideas, so actually – I began to speak about two different points that underlie my textual choices. One point is the political, the other is the existence of inner actions and action. But while talking, eventually realizing what Hannah Arendt is writing about, I begin to think that they are actually the same point.

GK:

Your dramaturgy seems to be first and foremost a dramaturgy of form and not of theme.

RK:

My father was an architect. I think I grew up with a very strong sense of form and structure. So my tendency would be working with colours, with movements, with patterns, with compositions. Sometimes the order of the working process would be playing with forms to start with, and only then beginning to structure the dramaturgical thought – listening to what the forms are talking about.

For example my work *Discovering Elijah*. This is a story about war. A specific war that happened in Israel in 1973, but also about any war. But, one of the first things I did was the decision that on stage there will be no weapons, no war machines – no tanks and war apparatus. And it's actually insane because the text is full of it – naturally it's dealing with

bombs and noises etc. But it was obvious that I won't use it – because for me it's a ridiculous way of representation. When I see an actor holding a gun, I can't believe it, I can't trust it, I know it is fake. I can't trust this faking reality. So it was a very obvious decision not to use any weapons and so on.

But then – what? I played with several options in my mind, and it was hard to choose, but I kept telling myself: 'You have to be consistent and choose what is the one and only level of reality'. But something in me rebelled against this tyranny of a one and only logic, and I realized that I don't really want to go with one single principle during the whole play, so, eventually, for the ten different scenes, I created ten different ways of representing the weapons and apparatus of war. And while working, I understood more and more that the choice of representation is also a sort of a discussion about the issue itself. So in the course of the performance there are ten different signifiers, thus ten different discussions on different aspects of the use of weapons. It's like opening a discussion about morality through theatrical forms.

GK:

This is a very interesting aspect. What I remember from that production is using limbs, different limbs – like the arm as a gun. To objectify the body, alienate it. As if this is what war does to soldiers. And working with intermedial means, like using concrete music on stage, I felt as if there was an attempt to use the different medium as a kind of a commentary from a different point of view, not a human kind of view. It's like a dialogue between human elements on stage and the music, the sound elements.

RK:

Yes, I can mention two or three representations or signifiers. It started by the way that the first performer was just using the word 'fire'. This is actually what they do in the army, they take the real weapons, but without their ammunition. They run but they only shout 'fire, fire, fire!!' instead of actually shooting. It is called a 'dry exercise'. And then

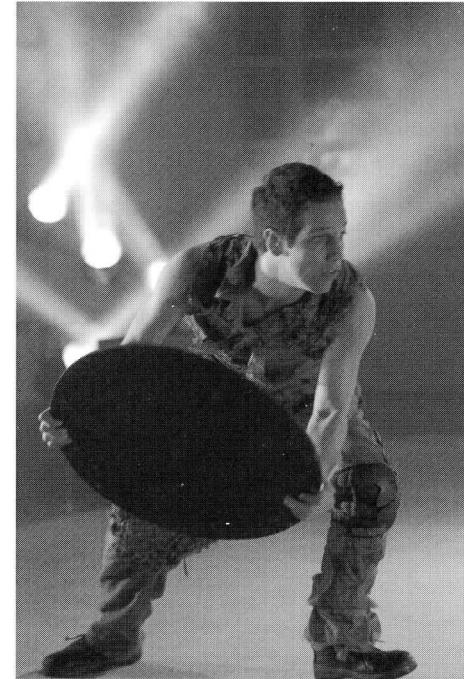


Figure 3 Bombardment from *Discovering Elijah* (Ruth Kanner Theatre Group). The actor Yussuf Sueid with a big 'black hole' representing the holes left by a bombardment in which the fallen, in the next scene, will be swallowed up. Photography: Gadi Dagon.

I remembered a play by Eugene Ionesco, *The Lesson*, where the word 'knife' is killing. And then you begin to think – the word can kill. And the same is with the isolated limbs – when it's my own hand doing to the other arm this cyclic action of charging the rifle. So it's me, it's realizing something about the personal responsibility. This is one side of the use of weapons in the performance.

The other part is, when the actors take cover under fire. Of course I didn't want to imitate the bullets – but there is this kind of play balls that are made from a special rubber, that move randomly – you can't control their movements. So for me it wasn't the bullet, but the uncertainty

principle, the horror of being there and not knowing if your eye will be lost, or your head, or your leg, or your whole life.

When I worked on this scene with the random balls jumping on stage, I wanted the actors to discover the real horror of fear of death. I evaluated that the conventional techniques of finding the horror in yourself – would never be enough. So what I did was to ask the actors to learn the same text – which is a wonderful monologue and when one actor gets hit by the ball, he stops the monologue, and the other one will carry on. So it's actually the death of the actor. Since the movement of the balls is random – this principle creates a real horror. It may sound nothing compared to really losing your life, but – the reactions were amazing. It was very powerful in rehearsals and then we did the same 'game' on stage. Sometimes we had soldiers in the audience, soldiers that have been to the battlefield, they told me: 'I could feel the war' – and this is so interesting that they felt a sense of reality although we didn't use an imitation of reality.

I'd like to say something about the music you mentioned before. Of course a war – and especially the war which is described in this novel of Yizhar – is a very noisy thing. But the last thing I wanted was to use recordings from reality. Because again, it doesn't work for me. So I approached the musician Ori Drummer and told him: 'We need noise. How can we produce a very big noise?' And he was so fantastic. He built a construction of pipes, and in it he worked with a torch of fire. The fire in the pipes created horrible sounds of scratching, of suffocating. So the sound is very physical, and it happens here and now. He also had two vacuum cleaners, and he blew their air into the pipes. So he had air and fire mixed in the work. This was for me a very powerful solution.

GK:

I also remember the rhythm. There is a scene where they run and shoot that's what I remember the most. The sound of running; of not being able to stop the running. That's actually what recreated the memory of war in the strongest manner.

RK:

This is also my way of trying to use language not as something which describes but as the action itself. When the actors repeat the same text, 'running and shooting, running and shooting' again and again – the repetitive text plus the repetitive physical action creates the pulse of the event and this is something that has an autonomous significance which is beyond content.

GK:

The dramaturgical work of structuring the project, the thought about the techniques you described, thought about images and so on – are these pre-production deliberations? Do they emerge before you meet the actors, or is it something you devise while working with the actors? How much do you draw from their suggestions and intuitions?

RK:

There is still a gap between my true desire and the course I have taken so far. My dream is to come totally open to the rehearsals. And the dream of dreams is to come with nothing. But you need a lot of courage for this, so I'm growing and I'm collecting my courage. Up to now usually I would not start to work with actors before I had a very solid approach. First of all, the text – structuring the text – and at least the basic approach of what theatrical devices would be engaged. Because when I take a text from literature I don't transform it into dialogical words or a play, so actually the surrounding – the idea of how the theatrical world will surround the text – is highly important.

I usually come with a very solid idea, but then the actors never know what will happen. I don't talk with the actors beforehand. On the contrary, the actors usually don't even know what the text is going to be; I only come with little fragments and encourage them to explore freely. Within my vision I try to open as much as I can to their creative suggestions. But not through talking. It's always through work, through very physical work. I try to shake the actors' bodies, their minds, with words or with objects. And then, when I get more

and more material from the actors, I try to see whether I can include it or whether it changes the original approach. So it's two parallel processes, I guess.

GK:

You work with a more and less permanent ensemble. So you have your own codes, a language of your own.

RK:

That's true. I am blessed to be able to work with amazing people whose expertise is to penetrate into the unknown. They are real artists that can come open to the process and remain open throughout. We conduct long processes, quite a lot of months for these projects, sometime even a year or two of rehearsals. So the first weeks or months of the work are a period where we open things. Then, the actors move to the other aspect of the work – when I begin to structure very exact phrases. Eventually every breath, every action of the words, and every moment is crystallized and composed.

GK:

Would I be mistaken if I would say that the most predominant level in your work is movement, or choreography of movement? Can you tell us how that movement relates to the text?

RK:

The movement and the body are very important for me. It's the deep essence of humanity. I work a lot with actors around movement and the body – but it's not a goal in itself. Although my work is very physical, the physicality is a support of the text. Eventually, my main interest is the text, and the text receives its amplitude from the body and the movement. But it's true, each rehearsal starts with – I would even say – a violent way of working on movement and body. We're working in a way that shakes the body. The Israeli *Shabak*, the Intelligence Service, does this horrible thing: when they find a suspect and want to get the truth out of him, they shake him. It is a violent thing because when a person is shaking, he can't pretend. The truth will come out of him.

And that's what we do with actors in a way: take the body out of its natural balance. And in the moment of unbalance there the text starts to flourish.

GK:

Is it a kind of an inspiration of Jerzy Grotowski?

RK:

Of course. This is a very deep part of my education. I grew up in the 1960s, I was a theatre student in the 1970s, so Grotowski was a very powerful mentor.

The main feature of my method is the deep work of the actors. But most of the energy is invested in things that you would not see on stage. Because on stage it is very structured – you would never see us shaking. But if you go to the rehearsal you would think we are all a bunch of nuts, because we do such strange things. But it remains as a hidden level under all the other elements. It echoes. So I think that the real dramaturgy that I am doing is the hidden dramaturgy. Because I work on these streams of events, actions, flows in the body, in the text, that you don't directly see on stage.

GK:

Can you illustrate it?

RK:

There is this moment in the story 'Swimming in the Sea' that is the second part of *At Sea*. It's the story of a man that is drowning in the water. Of course on stage we don't have no water, no nothing. The performance starts with a flow of words. In a way the fear of the actress who had to learn so many words, so much text, is the thing that is threatening her. The stream of words is standing for the streams of water.

But then, my way to continue and create the dangerous surrounding, is working with a group of actors that oppose this actress. So that there are people, which puts the whole story on the level of people and not of waves. And then, there's a sentence about the sun: 'And even the sun was suddenly filling his eyes with the wickedness of a direct glare, too

bright to handle.' This is the text. What I try to do on stage is to take the actress out of her balance through another actress, who is coming on and slapping her in the face. A real slap, not a theatrical slap – it hurts; it really hurts, and it throws the actress back into a very shaky moment. It is also an important moment, because of a person realizing that the world is indifferent to her suffering, to her misery. And then there are no words, no movements, she's not doing anything but the whole stage vibrates with all this inner hidden givens working for her – and we experience a very powerful moment from the depth of her soul.

GK:

Tell me something about how you combine music, non-human elements in the show. How do you combine all these subsidiary elements which I think are equal elements, egalitarian moments in your work, like choice of space, sound, lighting. In which stage of your work do these things come in? Are they integral to your process or do they come after you work with the actors?

RK:

I do work with these elements altogether and they do have equal value. Let me jump for a moment to the end. I strongly reject what I hear sometime in the theatre: they call the last weeks 'the technical weeks'. I resist the term 'technical' in this context. Lighting is the moment where light meets a body of an actor on stage, and thus it deeply influences the whole process. When I work with fellow partners, designers, musicians, I try to start to meet them as soon as possible, so we can dream together this mutual interweaving of the theatrical elements. Usually in my works there is not much on stage, but whatever is there, it's used to the maximum.

GK:

Can you describe one of your works in which these other elements, non-histrionic elements, influenced the work in a very special way?

RK:

I did *Mother Courage* in Tokyo. This is unusual for me, to work with a play and not with a story. My first instinct was: I don't want a wagon. It has become such a cliché. The stage should consist of a simple element

that could be multiplied, so everything could be made of everything – to reflect the idea that you are not functioning as an individual but within a specific social context.

I had a long conversation with Roni Toren, a wonderful Israeli designer whom I invited to work with me in Tokyo, and he came out with the idea of a suitcase. If I would do this play in Israel, I wouldn't use a suitcase because it's too overloaded as a symbol.

GK:

Too overloaded with the Holocaust connotations?

RK:

Yes. But I knew that we were going to do it in Tokyo, and that these connotations don't exist there. So a suitcase would be just a signifier for travelling, for changing locations, which is very relevant to the play. The whole stage became – we had around hundred suitcases – a wall of suitcases. And then one of the actors destroyed this wall. This was really a big gift from Roni, because the set became so active and valuable in the way it aroused the creativity.

GK:

Did you have to make changes in the text because of this idea?

RK:

No. Because to change means: 'I can't'. And I like these moments when it clashes, that, for example, the designer's idea clashes with the text. These are the moments that call for a creative jump.

GK:

In what ways do you consider the spectator?

RK:

I consider them more and more, but maybe in a different way than they are considered around me. In my group I never use the word 'audience', not because it is a bad word in itself, but because it has become a symbol, it signifies this master-slave relationship. So in my group I would say 'guests', and my tendency is to work more and more in small spaces, so

the guests are seen, they are left with a little bit of light and we see face – it's more and more important to me to reach, to touch the minds of people. And most important – I think about it in terms of a dialogue.

The text is a dialogue; we don't carry out a monologue. Especially when you deal with storytelling theatre, the dialogue is not with another character but with the audience. So it's very important for us to talk to the people. And one part of my, or my actors' attitude, is to treat them as if they were another voice of ours.

GK:

You are working very much with Israeli texts, and they are overloaded with very indigenous local associations, emotional burdens and so on. And you are in a way dependent on this audience. When you go with the same play to, let's say, New York to perform, then New Yorkers don't have this local associative background.

RK:

Of course, there are some things that are lost in translation, but others are gained. For example, there is a work that we did – *Cases of Murder* which is a text by a German writer, Manfred Franke. The text is about the Reichskristallnacht in 1938 in Germany. He collected testimonies from people who attended this horrible night. But when we performed it in Israel it was something like – I do it here and now, in my society, for my people. It was about what we experience here – in order to explore the mechanism of us as a society witnessing the wrongs that are done around us.

For example there was one scene in the original text with people laughing at an anti-Semitic joke about a Jew. I didn't change the text at all, in my work the actors told the same joke about a Jew – yet their costumes were contemporary Israeli costumes, and they were cracking sunflower seeds, which is one of the most conspicuous of social Israeli habits. It's something many, many Israelis would do when they sit and watch television or when they sit with their friends. So when we performed this piece in New York, I knew that this hint wouldn't be understood – but eventually the disposition of the text and the visuality

is developed throughout the whole play – so there are all kinds of hints: visual hints, textual hints, etc. about these parallel societies.

It's not only the Hebrew language that I love, but I try in our works here to let the influence of the whole place seep into the work. For example, the actors would never wear black suits – that belongs to Europe. I try to bring to stage the colours of this country, the forms, the sounds. Thus I try to make the works very local. And in that sense the codes could be fully understood only for Israeli people.

On the other hand, only a few months ago we performed our work *At Sea* in Beijing. And at the general rehearsal there the technicians began to cry. Although they didn't understand the codes, other structures or human events could be understood, and it was so very significant for them!

GK:

*One of your last enterprises was the Brecht's *Lehrstück* He Who Says Yes, He Who Says No, which started actually as a communist parable, which is also something more complex. What's your approach to this quite well-known piece?*

RK:

I went back to the original source, a Noh play, entitled *Taniko – The Child of a Valley*, and I compared it with Brecht's play. It was very important for me to play it here in an Israeli context, where the question of consent is a very delicate question, because we're all the time in crisis or emergency. We have to obey all the time: have to be good children, go to the army and do what we need to do. And the play is challenging these thoughts. So my way of bringing it to the here and now was first of all to combine it with a folktale that we tell here in Israel. It is called *The Story of the Golden Heart Flower*, and it is about a child whose mother is sick and he has to bring her a remedy. The story ends with a happy ending: the child finds the flower, and the mother is healed. What I did was to confront on stage the happy ending with the very harsh and terrible ending of Brecht's play in which the child is thrown to the valley and dies.

This is one dramaturgical way: letting the play collide with our hidden demands – the child should bring remedy to his mother and risk his life for his mother/his country. The other strategy of the work was to play with the gestures of a teacher and schoolchildren, and through working with these gestures, encourage the actors to switch roles. So the teacher is someone who had, at a certain moment, the authority to be a teacher. But if he loses his authority for any reason then he loses the role, and somebody else becomes the teacher.

Into all of this mess I also asked the actors to bring their real school reports from elementary school with their notes from their teachers and it became part of the text. So eventually we incorporated the original texts, the Brecht texts, the folk story, and the actual documents from school, dealing with oppression in the family, in the class and in the society.

GK:

What are your main inspiration sources?

RK:

My inspiration is not so much from theatre. I rather open up more and more to other fields, for example, literary criticism and analysis. Maybe because I'm dealing with storytelling theatre and not with dramatic texts. I also gain enormous inspiration and nourishment from reading about science.

I started with reading about physics. It sounds strange and unrelated – but I talked to you about the uncertainty of the soldiers in the field and that concept comes from the uncertainty principle of Heisenberg which is a very intriguing principle in physics. When I first read it, I just enjoyed it, but then it came to the work somehow.

In the work of the theatre you have to be passionate for influences. I think you can never get prepared for a specific project, all your life is a preparation and you never know what will come out.

I'm very much interested in ethology, reading a lot about animals. There is an Israeli scholar, Amotz Zehavi, who wrote a wonderful book called *Peacocks and the Handicapped Principle*. He actually discovered

a principle in nature that seems to go against the Darwinist principle. He discovered that sometimes animals would do things that are not good for their survival. And you ask yourself: 'why?' For example, the peacock has a huge tail, but it hinders him while running. So what is the signal that is being given by having this big tail? It says: 'I'm so powerful, that I can cope with such a big tail and not get caught by an enemy.' Or think about rich people, they usually have white carpets at home. And you ask yourself: 'why?' Because if you don't have enough money for a maid or energy to clean it every day, it would be dirty. So the carpet is a signal that you are either a hard worker or you are very rich. Or a young woman that walks on very high heels. It signals that she has a great balance.

Zehavi is writing about this phenomenon: that animals give signals that they are doing something which is actually very difficult, but they have a reason to choose to do it. It made me understand some of my choices. Usually I would choose the more difficult thing, like to get trapped.

In a way taking this hardship is to say: 'my dramaturgy is strong enough to cope with very bad conditions'. So the attempt is to deliberately look for uncomfortable situations on stage and yet – create a significant dramatic world. And with all that – have the people – audiences, visitors, guests – get caught in a dramatic human situation, because the theatre I try to do is not an abstract one. It deals with human beings, with their sufferings, their desires. So it's really like this handicapped principle: to do it, but with as little help from external or conventional measures as possible.

(The interview was made in Tel Aviv on 2 April 2013.)