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## THEATRE IMPORT-EXPORT

The controversy is already raging, with heated questions : why allow foreigners to work on public funds ?

A Pole in Florence, an American in Rome, a German in Sicily, a Franco-Guatemalan in Milan : Tadeusz Kantor, Richard Foreman, Klaus Michael Grüber, Mario Gonzales. The Italian theatre, like the basketball teams, want foreign directors this year. What will they teach us on an artistic level ? Does this fondness for everything that is foreign stem from provincialism, or from its opposite ? The debate is open. Meanwhile, there is someone who is satisfied with his work : Andres Neumann, responsible for the abovementioned projects (except for the one in Milan). For those who do not know him, we will say that Neumann is a young man who was born in Uruguay, trained at the Festival of Nancy, and now resides in Florence, where a few years ago he opened the most efficient of theatrical agencies. For better or for worse, it is to him that we owe the greater part of the foreign theatrical productions to be seen in Italy : the Theatre Festival in Taormina, the shows at the Teatro Tenda in Rome, at the CRT in Milan or at the Affratellamento in Florence. And also the international fame of many Italians is due to him and his refined techniques of cultural marketing : from Perlini to Vasilicò, to Remondi e Caporossi etc. Furthermore, this year Neumann has made the big leap into the public institutions. Renato Nicolini, the irresistible councilman for cultural affairs in Rome, has entrusted Neumann with the organization of the "Special project of the Theatre of Rome". No one knows exactly what is hidden behind this mysterious heading, not even those who are initiated into the secrets of the Italian theatre. But it is a fact that Neumann is now considered to be Nicolini's special adviser, and for him he is now organizing this great kermesse of foreign theatre.

### Here is what awaits us

Tadeusz Kantor, painter, poet, director, the inspirer of "Cricot 2" in Krakow, is one of the best known avant-garde personalities in the world. His "The Dead Class", an enchanted ballet of chalky old people waltzing to memories, has had an extraordinary success all over the world. Kantor will work in Florence for two years as the guest of the Teatro Regionale Toscano. During the first semester (beginning at the end of October) he will direct a theatre workshop about the military. The result of this will be a show with ten Italian and ten Polish actors. After the debut in Florence in the spring, the show will take parte in the major international festivals. Meanwhile, an

exhibition regarding "Cricot 2" and the Polish avant-garde will be held in the desecrated church of San Frediano, while the editors "Il Formichiere" will publish Kantor's theatre scripts.

Richard Foreman, animator of the "Ontological Hysterical Theatre" and a recognized genius of off-off Broadway, will create a show at the Piramide theatre, under the patronage of the Teatro di Roma. Italian actors will take part in it and it will begin rehearsals early in October, opening around November 20th. Its title is "Luogo e bersaglio" ("Place and target") and it is written by Foreman himself, who is the prophet of a theatre based on free mental associations, images from the subconscious brought to the stage, and "theatrical travel notes".

Michael Klaus Grüber's place in the German theatre is the same as that of Luca Ronconi in Italy. Grüber is a fond reader of the classics, which he transposes onto unusal settings (stadiums, ill-famed neighborhoods etc.). For the Festival of Taormina during the coming summer he will stage the "Empedocles" by Friedrich Hölderlin, with Italian actors and a German, Bruno Ganz, in the leading role. The rehearsals in Sicily next spring will be preceded by an intense work of seminars and research on the myth of Empedocles. This will take place in the area of Mount Etna, into whose crater the philosopher from Agrigento threw himself.

Mario Gonzales : people with a good memory will remember him as the most extraordinary Pantalone in recent years, in Ariane Mnouchkine's "L'age d'or". Now he will pour all his passion into the direction of "The Birds" by Aristophanes, which will be performed in mid-February at the C.R.T. (Centre of Theatrical Research) in Milan, with Italian actors.

Meanwhile, for the audiences of Rome and Milan, the theatre season will begin to speak foreign languages. In Rome, in Via Sabotino, from September 19th to 26th, Peter Brook will present "L'os" and "La conference des oiseaux", the best shows from the Festival of Avignon. In Milan, during the last week in September, the Piccolo Teatro will host, at the Teatro Lirico, two important productions of works by Brecht, performed by the Berliner Ensemble : "Puntilla and his servant Matti" directed by Peter Kupke, and the "Life of Galileo Galilei" directed by Joachim Tenschert. And also in Milan, at the C.R.T., September 24th to 30th, "Circus Alfred" from Brno in Czechoslovakia will present a pantomime entitled "Shipwreck".