### FABRIQUE DE L'ART N°1 FABRICATE (FABRIC OF) ART

# FABRICATE (FABRIC OF) ART

TRIMUKHI PLATFORM I is a not-for-profit organisation founded in West Bengal, India. It is born from a desire to create a platform enabling to operate in three different directions: social action, artistic production and theoretical research. Art and thought need to be produced by all strata of society so there is not only a diversity of propositions but also relevance and accuracy. This yearly journal on contemporary arts practices (Fabricate (Fabric of) Art) is published in this context.

| est une association à but non lucratif fondée à Calcutta. Elle est née du désir de créer, au Bengale Occidental, une plateforme depuis laquelle œuvrer dans trois directions: action sociale, production artistique et invention théorique. C'est à la condition d'être produits par des individus venant d'horizons sociaux différents que l'art et la pensée acquièrent non seulement leur pertinence mais aussi leur acuité. La publication d'une revue annuelle sur les pratiques artistiques contemporaines est une association à but non lucratit tondée à Calcutta. Elle est née du désir de créer, au Bengale Occidental, une plateforme depuis laquelle œuvrer dans trois directions : action sociale, production artistique et invention théorique. C'est à la condition d'être produits par des individus venant d'horizons sociaux différents que l'art et la pensée acquièrent non seulement leur pertinence mais aussi leur acquité la publication d'une revue annuelle sur les pratiques artistiques contemporaines (Fabrique de l'Art) s'inscrit dans ce contexte.

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# we don't ever want to see this guy again

On 6th November 2004, I participated in Rennes (France) in an international conference about World Show Staging (Mises en scène du monde). I took part, with cultural and government representatives, in a roundtable about show staging and political order. Later, during the dinner at the end of the event, the director of the National Theatre of Bretagne, François Le Pillouër came up to me and said: "Lot of people are enthusiastic about your presentation, but not the politicians from the city – not at all. They asked me

why I invited you, and one of them said to me: "we don't ever want to see this guy again." As my text for this conference, transcribed below, didn't have a proper title, I decided to take advantage of this desire expressed by region of Bretagne's leaders.

Last night, I started to look for something that we, artists working for the stage, might have in common with politicians.



It was little disgusting to look for similarities with this class of people, but I concentrated and thought a lot about it. I mean: at least during about three minutes or so, and that's an eternity. I stopped everything and for those 180 seconds without the mobile phone ringing I thought, and finally I reached the conclusion that one thing that both we have in common is lying: we both lie.

That's the first link I found between these two figures: artist and politician. Both lie. And both lie to themselves.

Politicians lie to themselves when they say that they make lives better for others while in reality they work to improve the economic situation of a chosen few. And you should notice the distinction I introduced: once basic needs are covered, making life better doesn't necessarily mean improving it economically.

There is a small group of artists who claim to be above the lies of the political class and who elaborate the following false statement: someone has to repair the big mess that the politicians have brought upon the world and this mission, at least some part of it, falls upon them, artists.

Some artists believe that they are up on stage to banish the lie that public officials have planted.

It's a naive and caring attitude, which presents the artist as a nice guy.

At the end of the day, politicians betray the people who have trusted them.

And the artists betray themselves with their ingenuity.

The spectacularity of politics is not comparable with that of theatre.

The spectator who goes to theatre generally pays an expensive ticket to reconnect with his past (the mere fact of going to the theatre is already an affirmation of this tradition). While the spectator who votes, has some kind of hope in the future. He speaks about citizens, which they are, until the moment they go and give their vote. Then they convert themselves into passive spectators of the decisions taken by a minority who smuggles

money to governments and expect a profit.

Theatre does not offer a future, I say this in spite of myself. Politics, yes. And this future is clear: a false welfare situation for a chosen few in detriment of millions of naked people. We buy theatre to forget what we do on Election Day. And what we do on Election Day is no more than authorizing a group of buddies to take us far from misery and to carry it as far as possible: first to other continents and then to neighbours, raising borders of course, real walls, with bricks and cement and pieces of broken bottles.

We know that the President of the United States authorised bombing according to the dictates of economic and geopolitical interests. It's not news to anyone. Who expects anything else? Citizens voted for him, not persons. The *polis* has transformed people into brutes, the *polis* has anesthetized its inhabitants. Who, in ancient Greece, would have thought that would happen? We don't come across anyone anymore, because in the street we wander like translucent bodies.

It's true that the Americans are translucent beings, but it's no less true that we Europeans are translucent beings too.

We can demonstrate that an American is identical to a European and that centuries of history have been destroyed by gold fever.

And gold fever was not born in America. Greed is inherent to man.

An American – I say – is as stupid as a European, please, let's not forget it.

Otherwise, in France and in my country, Spain, these strange spots in the landscape filled with buildings terrifying in their simplicity and grandeur (I mean in terms of square feet, the total surface area) would not be growing like mushrooms, surrounded, guarded like fortresses for car parks and supermarkets and enormous shops, out of range of the human scale: container ships striving to become dense continents of movie theatres without real films, restaurants without real food, clothes to get warm without real materials, plastic cars without real security, music without even one real note and easy-to-read

books stacked in piles while hidden in the corner of the shelf under the stairs, a volume of Schopenhauer full of spider webs.

Woody Allen asked Americans to vote against George Bush. Clamorous demonstration that the artist is a naive being without real malice. If he was attempting to remove power from this madman, it would have been better to proclaim from the rooftops that he was an unconditional Bush supporter. Hundreds of thousands of light-invisible-American citizens would have thought: if a guy who makes such disgusting movies is for Bush that means that Bush does not suit us at all. And they would not have voted for him.

But it was Britney Spears who campaigned in favour of Bush. And huge results ensued, because who would not want to be like B. Spears? Which woman does not want to have the hips and smile of B. Spears and which man does not want to fuck B. Spears and which woman does not want to fuck B. Spears?

I don't know B. Spears. If you showed me a picture of this girl next to the picture of another girl, hell, I wouldn't be able to distinguish between the two.

I mean: we are what we eat. And what we swallow (through the mouth, the eyes and the ears), interestingly, I insist, make us become always more transparent, translucent, and weakens us.

A large proportion of the First-World population struggles to control its weight and it's a surprise that with more kilos of fat comes a thinning of the being.

Accumulation of trivial data has nothing to do with knowledge. What we call information makes us weaker.

I was annoyed that in the introduction of the overall program of this meeting, they compare the artist and the politician, that's why I started saying by saying that both lie, that what they share is being liars. But I said it out of anger and I don't believe at all in what I said. Because of the scope of the actions of one or the other. An artist, with his lies, improves the lives of almost no one.

But, using his lies, any crappy politician ruins, the fate of millions.

Democracy has become a cold, dark and sinister place.

In Spain, we say in reference to problems with difficult solutions, that those problems always relate to another cause: it's the *snake biting its tail*.

To get fair governments, people must be well informed, know what they choose.

To get well-informed people, governments must be fair.

Now do not ask me how we've reached such a point of disorientation.

Arriving at governments that are trying to govern us: useless and ruthless beings, sons of bitches.

When I write *trying to govern* it's obvious that I am mentioning and even paying homage to any small core of resistance core.

A person who works for free in a soup kitchen for poor people in Tucuman, Argentina, is part of a small core of resistance.

On the other side, no politician can resist because his party would sweep him out immediately: for his stupidity and naivety.

And there are people who release bombs and kill others, and even if you now start to say things that would offend my mother, these fighters of real armed struggle, are also historically eloquent resistance groups.

Terrorism is a stupid word to describe a multitude of armed actions that are irreducible: we cannot call terrorism war. It's ruin. The occupation of Iraq is war. And when a prisoner is held at knifepoint, it's also war. But some have taken to reverse the terms. And they call terror what suits them. And many have believed them. Here you have the results of the elections in the United States, and there you have the media continuing to paste over real events any labels they desire. As a citizen I know perfectly well that I am almost dried up and that I am fighting like a wild man for density in the disinherited

being, dazed, turned away from land, turned away from making things that I use every day, dehumanized to the bones.

I believe that very soon, children will not be able to understand that a lettuce is a great bud that grows from the earth, that usually has worms between its leaves, that is something fragile, something needing careful washing.

The new inhabitants of the First World will think that a lettuce is born in clean, cut leaves in a plastic bag and in turn grows into a large fridge which in turn contains other plastic bags with tomatoes all the same size, radishes that no longer tingle in the mouth anymore, and dark green bits of a thing called spinach since time immemorial.

And they will not see the relationship between getting vegetables and making a minimal effort.

Packaged products are inherited, you don't have to fight, to work the land or wait for them.

They arrive by themselves.

Well, those boys and girls, the ones who grow up with cut, washed wormless lettuce in plastic bags, are the ones who are going to choose in the near future every new prime minister, following the dictates of fashion, speed and a false idea of welfare.

On a more positive note, I predict that we will no longer have any more traffic jams because thanks to our light weight we will float down cities in those hours needed to reaffirm ourselves as productive beings, i.e. people who manage information and practically do not touch anything with their hands throughout the day, people with no relation to literature and whose language is diminished.

And if you multiply the daily emptiness for a whole lifetime, the result is that you will be the only animal in the world that treads without leaving any footprints.

When I say that as an artist I am aware of this disappointing reality, I am not singling myself out as more sensitive or insightful than others; I'm more like a candid being who needs to know how to carry this kind of load including the core of his craft passion: I am a craftsman

who flows the opposite way, who generates discomfort and, at the same time, flashes of beauty, and I feel compelled to confuse people.

Regarding certainties, we know already what there is: there is television, Danone and Coca-Cola policies, the education system and anything that can become fashionable for three days straight: no matter if it is a shoe, a singer or a false writer.

Certainty dwarfs us and if you are already bored with my repeating and repeating that we have lost thickness, that we are animals that tread and leave no prints, I can change gears and state that next to density they also take from us our mystery.

To start, they anesthetize you. You work for years as an anesthetized being. And when you wake up, you feel that something is missing in your perception of reality: they have removed from you the mystery.

A society without mystery may exist and I care very little about it.

Each man must carry his secret as something sacred.

I think there is an opportunity for poetry.

And let's go back to differentiations: when, as an artist, I deliver something, if there is confusion in a theatre hall, something from me is revealed as ruined and deceitful.

But when I reach an instant of poetry in my daily life, I abandon myself and recreate again.

Poetic ability is in man and we must train it.

It's more important to share a real moment of poetry in my daily life with someone else, than to do it in the theatre with thousands of strangers along several representations, as the latter is always faked. Instead, real action can modify the behaviour of whoever walks beside me.

Of course here I speak of poetry associated with the term 'resistance' again.

Poetry is everything that you do not like and does not seem good to you.

Poetry is what you preach and never do.

It's what delights you in art (i.e. in a glass case) and scares you to death in your real surgical lives.

Beings without a capacity for poetry, you should leave this room now.

I had great hope. I found extraordinary force to create without respite, without realizing that the work was enormous for a guy like me.

Now has come the moment of frustration, doubt and trembling.

I do not find, however I look for it, any relationship between my work and the improvement of a sick world.

I am deeply sceptical about those who pay to seemy creations: peoples weptaway by fashion, people who have serious problems like: my Macintosh broke down or things like that.

I work for a new generation of Europeans who have forgotten the aftermath of war, people with home heating, and I insist: with big problems that make me laugh.

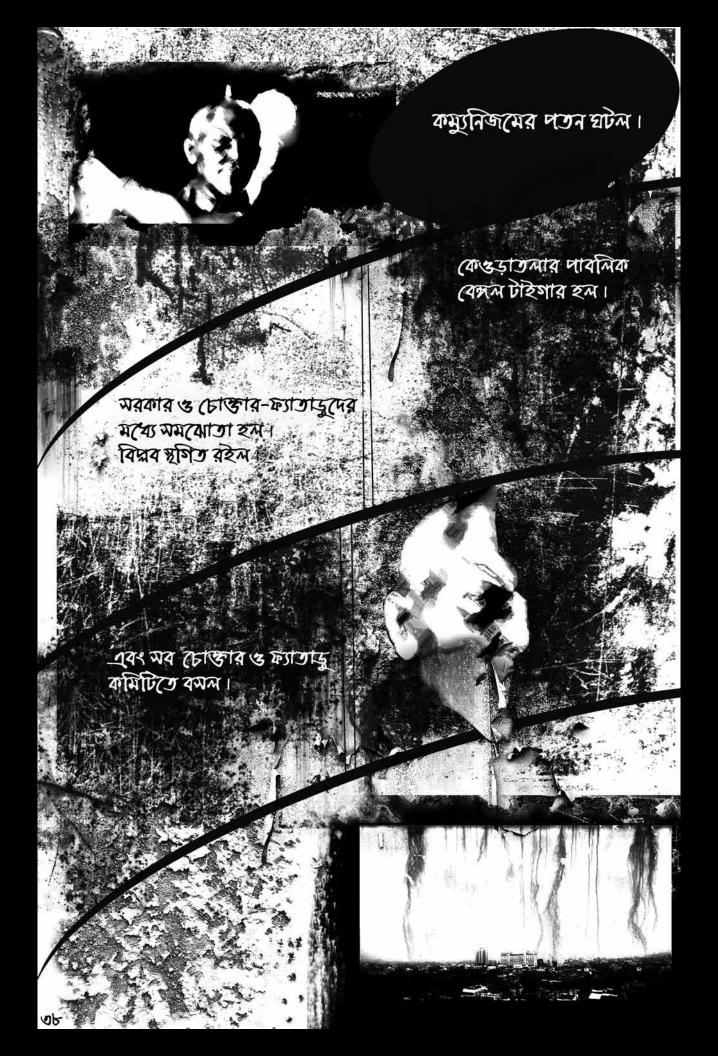
It's hard to breathe in the microcosm of abundance and continuous dissatisfaction. There is abundance of shades. Of chimeras that can only be bought with money. And I say that there are very few things able to rescue us from boredom and lethargy that are paid for with the Visa card.

Finally I feel I am part of a great brainwashing machine.

I myself wash my conscience with my maverick speech and the public does the same, and together, creator and his audience, we do nothing other than grease the same wheel that is crushing us.

You already know the book of *Ecclesiastes* in the Bible: "everything has its time under the sun. There is a time to speak and another time to be silent." This conference has caught me right at the beginning of my time to be silent. But I had committed myself months earlier.

Born in 1964 in Argentina, where his parents had immigrated from Spain, Rodrigo García returned to Madrid in 1986 to begin his career as a director and play writer - and unwittingly embarrassing the somewhat conservative local Spanish scene. But he found fame only ten years later, in France, where several State theatres supported his theatrical productions. After multiple theatre performances such as Alfter Sun, Ronald the clown from McDonald, I bought a shovel at Ikea to dig my grave, and Human gardening, he won the New Reality Europe Theatre Prize in 2009, honouring the most subversive works on the European stage. His theatre company, La Carniceria Teatro (i.e. The Butcher Shop Theatre) pays tribute to the trade of his father who was a butcher. Rodrigo García has been recently appointed by the French Ministry of Culture as director of the National Drama Centre (CDN) of Montpelliers.



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