



# Rena Mirecka

## (Actress)

Rena Mirecka was one of the key figures in Jerzy Grotowski's theatrical and paratheatrical experiments from 1959 to 1982. She was instrumental in the conception and development of the Plastic Exercises and created all of the leading female roles including *Acropolis* and *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*. Since 1982, she has pursued her own personal research in physical and spiritual theatrical expression. Since 1993, she has directed her own Theater Center in Sardinia, Italy. Her current work is called *The Way*.

### From Rena Mirecka:

During the 20 last years of my work I was traveling to and teaching at different theaters, drama schools and groups of actors around the world. I tried to open individual creative processes and the structures of personal technique.

Since Grotowski “left” us I feel that it is very important to transmit the basics of as well the creative work to the young students.

I have had many different experiences during my pedagogical work with people from different cultures and I know that the technique of Teatr Laboratorium can open creative energies of actors and serves to penetrate deep and can open up the sources of the of total actor.

I feel it is my duty now to give this technique to the young people and help them to explore the hidden energy so that they can transform it into the dramatic action.

The beginning of the great school of my profession was in the Teatr Laboratorium with Jerzy Grotowski and the group of my colleagues during 25 years. I worked in every performance, I performed all female roles. Pushed to great challenges by Grotowski, I was in a process like that of a diamond in the rough, that through particular work has become a precious stone.

I arrived at the Teatr Laboratorium after attending the National Academy of Drama in 1959 in Cracow. In my nature by which I mean; my reaction in my way of being, a particular form was present since the beginning: the art of form and composition. It was closed deep inside myself, but Grotowski realized at once the value of this potential and knew how to open and expand it. Our former performances were based on creating form and composition through study of body and voice, later we developed the “*organic processes*”.

When I was involved in Teatr Laboratorium, I created a very useful part of the training that we used to discover creative energy: *Plastic Exercises*. They are actually like a dance directed through every part of the body. The structure of the training is very precise: it is like an alphabet written in the body, and through it I could open myself and the many actors I work with. Through the *Plastic Exercises*, the apprentice prepares his psychophysical body in order to become a performer.

The work of the actor is like a search for harmony in order to give one's force to open oneself up to the group. The actor has to tune his body, mind and psyche. He has to lead his life in a different way, so that he can work every day. Every day is a new one and the new is to be the basis of his personal training. In his life and work, he has to be honest, authentic, he must not be commonplace, not ordinary, he has to be spontaneous, because if he does not give a space to his pure organic impulses, he will cause false actions, imitation instead of communication. The way of the actor who uses his life and his craft as a journey to investigate the laws of life and great Nature, is not just a product of talent. One needs courage, because it takes an immense amount of work and effort without compromises, and with determination, discipline, interior order, precision and concentration. One needs knowledge. One has to be prepared and be in touch with Energy.

At the beginning of the research, improvisation is always a time of fight. One knows what one must not do, but what is to be done is the object of the research itself. During this research, this fight is present, but the moment of creation has not yet come, because control of the mind, and effort are strong. But when both control of the mind fades and the ego start communicating with deeper layers, the body is no longer armed. Impulses and reaction become free and organic. Authentic. It is the beginning of spontaneity, of the inner process, something deep and intimate becomes available and that is the moment of creation. We are in the real living experience, here and now, in the present. The event belongs to individual and to the group in the same time. Through this kind of experience one can recognize one's own power, dreams, ideas, creative forces as well as negative forces. The creative process is a total act, the different forces of man unite themselves: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual forces. The actor opens his life to extreme ground and impulses, sacrifices himself and during this process, fully experiences his own joy and pain, starting to be whole instead of fragmentary.

In the principles of collective work we try to discover the language of non-verbal communication. During the work, I lead and share in the activity of the group. We speak through our own being-body voice, our center, creating symbols, archetypes, signs and structured action.

We sing vowels and special syllables that open the resonators of voice and its vibration so that we can listen inside the body and in a space. We realized that man's voice, when a note is sung with the right resonance, transmits a special vibration and at the same time it is possible to hear more than one tone. This is an ancient technique, the harmonic sound that is now called overtone.

Man's body is like laboratory. We have got to control our senses, our thoughts, our actions. I mean that every thought, not only action or words, vibrates. This way of our work is also research on creativity in our life.

Creativity is not only basic and useful to the actor. When I talk about "the actor", I mean human beings. He has to be in his own center. Interior individual energy is the great book we should start to read. A personal technique, work for oneself, may open ones mind to greatest of mysteries, that reveals itself every day at every time.

It is important that Grotowski's work and that of our group can always serve and be alive in theatre of the world. Through mental and physical training and spontaneous acts every actor has a chance to meet his personal path – to do.

I will be more than happy to transmit my knowledge to the young artists.