

# THE DANCE OF THE ELDER



Atelier for the Creation of Theater led by Alessandro Serra  
Compagnia Teatropersona

*For the substance consists of perfect serenity,  
The execution of this kind of enjoyment  
Is similar to that which could be  
The blooming of a flower on an old tree  
Zeami*

*I couldn't wait to grow old: that way, I thought,  
I will no longer need to wear makeup.  
What's more, if I start acting old from now, I can carry it on.  
If instead I start acting young, soon they'll say: "He's grown old"  
Eduardo de Filippo*

## PREMISE

Playing the Old Man, like children who play adults, with a fiction devoid of psychological implications but entirely devoted to creating an empty form. A fiction which is not deceit but fun; to play, not to act. Building figures to insert into imaginary landscapes, so as to then let them live freely in various situations and circumstances.

*The dance of the elder* is one of the styles of Nō Theatre, one of the most important ones according to Zeami. It is firstly about taking on the aspect of old age, building the outer shell of a condition of the soul: outlining the figure of the elder.

It is a serious type of fun which pushes the actor into turning to forming form.

Creating the elder without pretending to be the elder.

Resisting the temptation of stuffing that figure with the supposed emotional state of its author.

Having the courage and the art of making oneself old, hero, ghost, saint or prostitute without giving in to the temptation of showing off in public.

Creating and sustaining an empty form through the ancient game of scenic fiction which, said Eduardo, has always been and will always be the ultimate truth.

## PREPARATORY PHASE

Each actor must bring along:

1. Comfortable training clothes
2. The necessary makeup to age one's face
3. Elderly clothing
4. An object which evokes old age
5. A brief monologue regarding the current theme
6. A source of light

## THE ATELIER

- Physical warm-up
- Relationship between hips and spine: managing and directing energy
- Utility and form – pose and posture
- Gesture – action – act
- Face – visage – mask
- Creating and sustaining the void
- Construction and composition: relationship between actor, character and figure
- Voice: song and polyphony
- Listening to oneself and the choir
- Objects: relationship between actor, object and stage space
- Dramaturgy of the image: composing and building the scene
- Light: the carnal relation between actor and light sources