



in association with the Polish Cultural Institute NY and Korean
Cultural Institute presents

Han!

By Theatre No Theatre
Directed by Thomas Richards



The Downstairs
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
Feb 23 - March 5, 2023

Han!

By Theatre No Theatre

Directed by
Thomas Richards

Assistant Directors:
Cécile Richards, Jessica Losilla-Hébrail

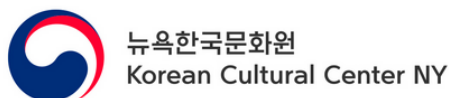
Performed by
Hyun Ju Baek

The show is in Korean with English subtitles

Running time 60 minutes with no intermission

theatre no theatre

Where Tradition Meets Innovation



In January of 2022, Thomas Richards, apprentice of Jerzy Grotowski, closed the doors of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, of which he was Artistic Director for 23 years. Throughout its existence, the Workcenter was hailed as an outstanding and unique performing arts research centre, a place of constant experimentation and innovation. In February of 2022, Mr. Richards and several ex-colleagues of the Workcenter opened the new Cultural Association, Theatre No Theatre, which has inherited its artistic existence directly from the Workcenter, since it is dedicated to supporting the new theatre research of Thomas Richards.

Jerzy Grotowski, considered one of the most influential theatre practitioners of the 20th century, revolutionised contemporary theatre. Grotowski changed the way theatre practitioners conceive of the audience-actor relationship, staging and the craft of acting. Perhaps best known for his notion of «poor theatre», Grotowski's practice extended beyond the confines of conventional theatre, assuming a long-term and systematic exploration of the possibilities of the human being in a performance context. The Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski was founded in 1986 in Pontedera, Italy. There, Grotowski developed a line of performance research known as «Art as vehicle» until his death in 1999. Within this investigation, he worked closely with Mr. Richards whom he called his «essential collaborator», eventually changing the name of the Workcenter to include that of Richards. During those years, Grotowski transmitted to Richards the fruit of his lifetime research, what he called «the inner aspect of the work».

Theatre No Theatre, founded in February 2022 by Jessica Losilla-Hébrail, Hyun Ju Baek and Cécile Richards, long-term Workcenter members, is registered as a non-profit Cultural Association according to Italian law. Its' members reflect: "Without a specific attention to the human being involved in a craft, despite the striving for high level and exemplary work, the craft will not find the means to renew itself. Renewal does not stem from changes of form, but rather from the craft uncovering its "opposite" within, that hidden aspect aspect which whichpays paysattention to how the human being who practices the craft may, through the practice itself, develop and evolve. Theatre may secretly long to find that aspect of itself which is not just "theatre" per se, that which is not simply destined for an audience and consumption. Thus, as a practice, Theatre may decide to strive to rise from its foundations to its essence. Theatre No Theatre does not belong to or represent any one performance style. We strive to create from and for the artist in such a way that the artistic excellence which appears and is shared, serves not only the general public, but as well the artists' knowledge, understanding, and the appearance of that mysterious aspect of life which some traditions refer to as "being." We are dedicated to tradition and innovation, and pose our attention on ancient performing arts

traditions as if hidden within them may be elements that are transcultural. Such elements may not only be hidden within traditions themselves, but within the lives of individual artists, through their past experiences, personal practices and memories. We strive to create art that forges a palpable relation with such sources, giving new life and meaning to the act of performing.”

Thomas Richards (B.A. Yale University, M.A. the University of Bologna, Ph.D. University of Paris VIII) was Artistic Director of the research of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards from 1999 to 2022. He began his apprenticeship with Jerzy Grotowski in 1985, and their work together developed until Grotowski’s passing away in 1999. Thomas Richards arrived in Italy in 1986 with Jerzy Grotowski from the University of California, Irvine, where he had participated in Grotowski’s “Focused Research Program in Objective Drama”. In Italy, at first Mr. Richards worked as Grotowski’s assistant, but soon he became the leader of one of the work teams, and then Grotowski’s “essential collaborator”. Eventually, Mr. Richards became Director of the Research Program on Performing Arts at the Workcenter. Richards was a fundamental driving force in the research developed at the Workcenter that came to be known as “Art as Vehicle”. In 1996, Grotowski decided to change the name of the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski to Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards, because, as he specified, the direction of the practical work already concentrated itself in the hands of Thomas Richards. Concerning Richards, Grotowski stated, “The nature of my work with Thomas Richards has the character of ‘transmission’; to transmit to him that to which I have arrived in my life: the inner aspect of the work.” Richards was the main creator and doer of the performative opus within the Workcenter research “Art as Vehicle” entitled *Downstairs Action* (filmed by Mercedes Gregory in 1989); he was the creator and main doer of *Action*, and the creator and a doer of *The Letter* (formerly: *An Action in creation*), the initial stage of which was called *The Twin: an Action in creation*. He co-directed *One breath left, One breath left – Dies Iræ, Dies Iræ, and Dies Iræ: The Preposterous Theatrum Interioris Show*; performative opuses created at the Workcenter inside *Project The Bridge: Developing Theatre Arts*. Mr. Richards was the Artistic Director of the Workcenter’s project *Tracing Roads Across* (April 2003 to April 2006), supported by the “Culture 2000” Programme of the European Union. He was also the Artistic Director of *Horizons* (2007-2009 - Wrocław), a Workcenter project which culminated in the *Zero Budget Festival* (2009), organized under Richard’s direction. From 2008, Thomas Richards was leading the Focused Research Team in Art as Vehicle at the Workcenter. With his team, he directed and conducted work on the opuses: *The Living Room* (premiered in 2009), *L’heure fugitive* (premiered in 2015), *The Underground* (premiered in 2016) *Sin Fronteras* (premiered in 2017), *Gravedad* (premiered in 2018) and *Han!* (premiered in 2021).

Hyun Ju Baek was born in South Korea. Her career developed mainly as a musical theatre actress for a decade in Korea. She traveled to London to study theatre directing and earned a master's degree in Theatre and Performance at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK. Before joining the Workcenter Hyun Ju worked as an actress, director, and playwright in both Seoul and London. She wrote, produced and directed many theatre pieces including: *Flatmates V Zombies* (Tristan Bates Theatre UK, Camden People's Theatre UK - a piece that won a fund of the Arts Council of England); *The lady of Burma* (Moon Light Theatre Korea); *Today and* (commissioned by Kyunggi Cultural Foundation); *The Sound Factory* (commissioned by the Pusan Cultural Foundation). In 2017, she participated in the Workcenter's Master Course, supported by the Korean Arts Council. After attending another pedagogic encounter with Thomas Richards in Hong Kong, she organized a theatre group: The association for Craft and Creative Process GB, and held the Seoul Work Encounter to Korea the Focused Research Team in Art as Vehicle. The following year, she joined the Workcenter's Focused Research Team in Art as Vehicle.

Jessica Losilla Hébrail (Assistant to Director) was born in France. She was first interested in the field of social work, and worked with children for some time, though eventually, she returned to her studies. She entered the University of Nice where she studied Performing Arts for three years. During her last year in Nice, she learned about and became interested in Grotowski's research through a practical and theoretical class with Mr. Serge Ouaknine. She spent her next year in the department of Performing Arts of the Turku Art Academy, in Finland. After her studies, she participated in different workshops and collaborated with different companies and individuals in Europe. In 2007, she joined the Theatre de L'Acte in Toulouse where she pursued further studies in acting with a group of selected artists. In 2008 she entered the Workcenter and became a member of the Focused Research Team in Art as Vehicle, led by Thomas Richards. Jessica Losilla-Hébrail is a performer in *The Living Room* and in *The Underground*, both opuses directed by Thomas Richards.

A full program with information on this
production can be found on the
Han!
page of the La MaMa website.

In addition you can scan the
QR code Poster located in the theatre
lobby for access to the digital program.

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July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

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Ellen Stewart Theatre

Han!
February 23-March 5, 2023
The Downstairs

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and Thomas Richards
March 4, 2023
The Downstairs

Radio 477!
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Ellen Stewart Theatre

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The Club

La MaMa Kids:
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March 25, 2023
The Community Room

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