

Trap Door
Theatre
presents

Discourse Without Grammar

fragments
from
"Cabaret
of Words"

by
Matej
Višniec

Translated
by
Jozefína
Komporalý

directed by
Skye Fort

Artistic Director
Beata Pilch

See it virtually at TrapDoorTheatre.com

Starting April 22nd

DISCOURSE WITHOUT GRAMMAR DIGITAL PROGRAM

History

Founded in 1990, Trap Door began as a nomadic troupe, thrilling the European theaters of Stockholm, Berlin, Zakopane and Paris with our grassroots, avant-garde expressionism. It was on these stages that our trademark style of myth, ritual, and revolution first crystallized. In March of 1994, Trap Door came home to the United States, bringing with us the exotic sensibilities we had developed on our low-budget, international tours. Now in our 27th season, we continue our ground-breaking work. We offer our deepest thanks to you, our audience, for joining us on this remarkable journey.

"No other theater can consistently suspend reality to create overwhelming and oftentimes otherworldly atmosphere, usually before the action or dialogue even begins, like Trap Door Theatre. To say that they are the foremost purveyors of avant-garde theater in Chicago is to understate this portal to alternate realms. Hidden down a narrow walkway, next to a bar, behind a restaurant, on a side street in Bucktown is a black trap door that opens into the extremes of theatrical imagination."

-Venus Zarris Chicago Stage Review



Mission Statement

Trap Door Theatre is committed to seeking out challenging and obscure works.

Whether a forgotten European classic, an international project rarely seen in the United States, or an untarnished piece of

American literature, Trap Door seeks diverse voices and presents them through innovative expression. We mix established and imaginative techniques to illustrate the absurdities of living in today's society. Visit our site for more information: <https://trapdoortheatre.com/>

BEATA PILCH **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Beata founded Trap Door in 1994. A native of the Polish district of Chicago, she holds a Bachelors' degree in Acting from the USIU in San Diego, CA, and a Master's degree in Acting from CalArts in Valencia, CA. As a frequent European traveler, she cultivated her life-long fascination with the avant-grade and the obscure. Beata created sister company, Trap Door International, which produces out of Barcelona, Spain. She is a featured performer in the work of multimedia visual artist Catherine Sullivan. She has performed in over 80 Trap Door productions and has toured abroad annually with the company to France, Romania, Hungary, Poland and was the first ever theatre company to perform in the Republic of Moldova. She is currently working on the final edit of her first ever documentary film, House of Gods, based on a man who left modern society and lives on the Camino de Santiago path in Spain.



TRAP DOOR INTERNATIONAL

A dynamic and diverse group of international artists have come together in the last few years under the wing and direction of artistic director Beata Pilch to produce theater in Barcelona, Spain, and tour throughout Europe as a new ensemble –Trap Door International. Visit our site for more information about the company members and latest productions:
<https://trapdoortheatre.com/trap-door-international/>

THE
REVA & DAVID LOGAN
FOUNDATION

The Trap Door Theatre is honored to be a recipient of a matching grant from the Reva and David Logan Foundation for three consecutive years!

You can help us receive this challenge grant next year!

Here's How:

Donate at www.trapdoortheatre.com or paypal.me/TrapDoorTheatre or make your check payable to Trap Door Productions and send to: Trap Door Theatre / 1655 W Cortland / Chicago IL 60622.

All donations are tax deductible and greatly appreciated!



NICOLE WIESNER **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Nicole joined the acting ensemble in 1999, and currently serves as the Managing Director. Directing credits for the company include Minna, The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls, Phedre, Monsieur D'leon is a Woman, The Old Woman Broods and The White Plague. Regionally, she has appeared at Court Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Huntington Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Next Theatre, and Yale Rep.

ABOUT DISCOURSE WITHOUT GRAMMAR

“

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WORDS FAIL US?

For those disappointed by debate, Discourse Without Grammar is a joyful exploration of active listening and experimental communication. Eleven performers in five countries create video performances that investigate hollow words, empty promises, and collaboration without connection.

DISCOURSE WITHOUT GRAMMAR

WRITTEN BY: MATEI VIȘNIEC

TRANSLATED BY:

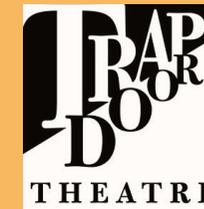
JOZEFINA KOMPORALY

DIRECTED BY: SKYE FORT

SEE IT VIRTUALLY
STARTING APRIL 22ND

<https://vimeo.com/ndeman/d/discoursewithoutgrammar>





CAST

Venice **Averyheart**

Jenny **Beacraft**

Anarosa **Butler**

Marzena **Bukowska**

Magdalena **Gera**

Assaf **Hochman**

Neema **Lahon**

Emily **Lotspeich**

Tia **Pinson**

Matty **Robinson**

Carl **Wisniewski**

CREW

Costume Designer: Rachel Sypniewski

Lighting Designer: Richard Norwood

Sound Designer: Michael Mejia

Make-up Designer: Zsafia Otvos

Graphic Designer: Michal Janicki

Stage Manager: Natalia Kliszczyk

SPECIAL THANKS

Matei Vişniec, Jozefina Komporaly,
Esteban Bringas, Peter Bukowski, Michael Garvey, Akira Knightley,
Bartłomiej Kubica, José Alberto Rodríguez, Teatre de l'Enjòlit

DISCOURSE
WITHOUT
GRAMMAR
THE TEAM

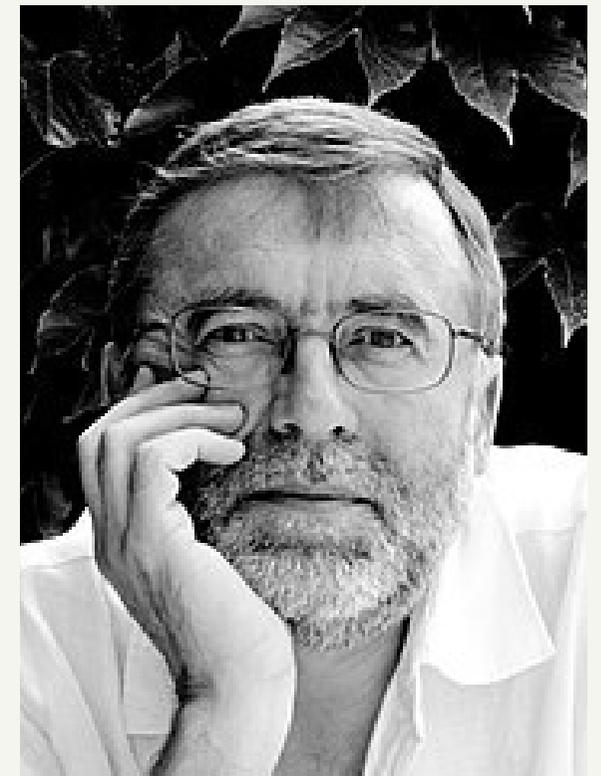
DIRECTOR

Skye Fort is a director, performer, and musician originally from New Mexico and currently living in Maryland. She spent 8 years in Chicago, and is a proud member of Trap Door Theatre, where she has directed, acted, and stage managed, among other roles. Previous directing credits include *Strange As It Seems* (Tricklock Theatre, Abq NM), and *Childhood Beauty* (Trap Door Theatre). Skye is a founding member of the performance art group *So This Is Art*, and plays bass in the bands *Big Mermaid*, and *The Garvey Train*. She is currently pursuing an MFA at Towson University, where her focus is on directing and video performance. Skye is interested in exploring new ways to communicate, collaborate, and create, both in and out of a global pandemic.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In 1974 artist Nam June Paik imagined the collaborative possibilities of an “electronic super highway” which could connect people across the world on color television conference calls. Forty-seven years later, directing people in five different countries, I marvel at the ways technology both enhances and inhibits connection. I was curious how a personal and collaborative creation process could take place across time zones. To this end, I sent each performer a package containing several items, a piece of text by Matei Visniec, and a few prompts. I then asked them each to create a performance piece using the contents of their package. What you see is the result of personal creation, workshop collaboration, and very creative filming practices. I am deeply grateful to everyone involved in this project, for unflinchingly embracing the experiment. How can we use technology to share stories, and communicate ideas? What happens when words/systems/our bodies/people/the internet fails us? Most importantly, how can we find room for humanity in a world full of screens?



PLAYWRIGHT

Matei Vişniec playwright, poet and journalist, was born in Romania, and now lives in Paris. He began writing for the theatre in 1977. Early in his career Vişniec’s plays were banned by the Romanian censors. In 1987 he was invited to France by a literary foundation. While there, he asked for and received political asylum. After the fall of communism in Romania, in 1989, Vişniec became one of the most performed playwrights in the country. Vişniec gained international attention in 1992, with productions of *Horses at the Window* in France, and *Old Clown Wanted* at the “Bonner Biennale”. Since then, Matei Vişniec’s work has been produced in France, Germany, United States, Denmark, Austria, Poland, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Brazil, Romania, and Moldavia. Most recently, by a decree signed by French President Emmanuel Macron, Matei Vişniec became a Knight of the National Order of Merit.

VENICE AVERYHEART

A native of Chicago, Venice made her debut with Trap Door Theatre last winter in Karel Capek's *The White Plague* directed by Nicole Weisner. As a new ensemble member with Trap, her recent performances have included *Alas* directed by Michael Mejia, Matei Visniec's *Decomposed* Theatre with International Voices Project directed by Josiah Davis, and *Decomposed Theatre Episodes* segment. She's a fruit enthusiast and a lover of teas and chocolate!

JENNY BEACRAFT

Jenny is an actress, director, native Chicagoan. She moved to Barcelona 14 years ago and has worked extensively in theatre, film and voiceover. She is a member of Teatre de l'Enjòit and has performed in their productions of *Realpolitik*, *Seté Cel*, *Corruptia*, *Si no ens Paguen No Paguem*. Cinema credits include work with Cesc Gay, Antonio Chavarrías, Bigas Luna, Gabriela Cowperthwaite among others. Her most recent work as a director was *Footnotes*, a devised theater piece for Independent Little Lies and The National Theatre of Luxembourg. She is currently filming as an actress in Alejandro Amenabar's new series *La Fortuna* in Madrid and directing the English Voices for the sarcastic and popular French youtube cartoon *Don't Die Dumb*. Member of Trap Door International since performing in *Blood on the Catsneck* and looks forward to many more crazy adventures with the company.

ANAROSA BUTLER

Anarosa is a Spanish / Irish actor. Originally from Madrid but has lived between Ireland and Spain her whole life. She graduated from Liverpool university and commenced her professional in the UK before moving back to Dublin and completing her Masters in Theatre Studies from University College Dublin. After a very wet Irish summer she decided to move to Barcelona where she's been ever since. Her 3rd FMV is out now, *Dark side of the Moon* and she's currently voicing a number of video games at the moment. For further info you can find it here on her website, www.anarosa.rocks. She's extremely excited to be involved in this project!



DISCOURSE WITHOUT GRAMMAR



CAST BIOGRAPHIES

MARZENA BUKOWSKA

Marzena is Trap Door Theatre principal actor. She was last seen in *White Plague*. She also appeared in *The Lockateer*, *No Matter how Much We Try*, *La Bete*, *Blood on the Cat's Neck*, *A Couple of Polish Speaking Romanians*, *The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant*, *Amerikafka*. The role in *People's Annihilation* or *My Liver is Senseless*, earned her Actress in Outstanding Performance, After Dark Award. Marzena was also a nominee for Jeff Award (Actress in Supporting role) for the role of Baba Yaga in *A The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls*. Other Chicago theatre credits include works with First Folio, *A Red Orchid*, *Eclipse*, *Pegasus*, *Borealis* and Fourth Wall Productions, *Provision*, *The Old World Theatre* and Piven Theatre. Marzena is a native Pole. She holds MFA degree in Performance from University of Georgia and BA in Theatre from University of Illinois at Chicago.

MAGDALENA GERA

Magdalena is an actress born and raised in Poland. She began her acting career in 1999. In 2004 she stepped on to the professional stage and began work with public theatres in Bielsko-Biała, Olsztyn, Rzeszów and Katowice. She works as an actress, director's and set-designer's assistant. Acting for her is just a small part of a huge machine which theatre is. She is also a lecturer in Waldorf High School and interdisciplinary speaker for a Cinema Education Program run by the Kino Szkoła foundation.

ASSAF HOCHMAN

Assaf worked and collaborated as performer, artistic contributor and dramaturg in various international dance-, theater-, performance-, and film-projects with artists and companies including: VA Wölfl/Neuer Tanz, Catherine Sullivan, Big Art Group, Keren Cytter, Wilhelm Groener, Bruce LaBruce, Peaches, Télémachos Alexiou, Colette Sadler and Scottish Dance Theatre. Holds a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) with a major in North American Studies from Freie Universität Berlin, where he currently pursues his Master's degree at the interdisciplinary program of the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies.



TIA PINSON

Tia is a Flint, MI Native who wishes to spread light, love and compassion through art. As a teaching artist who graduated from Western Michigan University's Theatre program with a degree in Music Theatre Performance, she continues to search for ways to encourage underprivileged youth to find their way creatively. She has been seen on various stages during her time in Chicago.



MATTY ROBINSON

Matty is an avid storyteller and a stand up comic who has performed across Chicago and Thailand. He was last seen in Trap Door's virtual production: Decomposed and on South Side airing on Comedy Central. He is Currently an artistic associate with Oak Park Festival Theatre and has performed with Urban Theater, Boho, Steppenwolf, The Raven, The Annoyance, iO, Second City and CiC theatres. Follow @Mattydor11 on Instagram for more updates.



CARL WISNIEWSKI

Carl has been a proud company member of Trap Door Theatre since 2001. Favorite past productions include: The Old Woman Broods, They, Phaedra, Blood on a Cats Neck, Minna, Katzelmacher, and The Shoemakers. Outside of the Trap Door, Carl performed at Angel Island, Oracle, Prop, Red & Chopin Theater(s). Film credits include: Slave, Yellow, Graffito, The Woman Behind The Wall, Pilgrim, and Mandala. He has had the pleasure of working with international artist Catherine Sullivan's Ice Floes of Franz Josef Land, Triangle of Need and The Chittendens.



NEEMA LAHON

Neema is an actor and director from London. She's lived in Barcelona since 2015, puppeteering and storytelling for Catalonia's biggest theatre in education company, IPA Productions. Whilst in Spain, she has worked with Escapade Theatre, Thrive Musical Theatre, Trap Door Int. and Play in a Day BCN. In London, Neema is an experimental Youth Theatre Director and Drama TA. She trained at the National Youth Theatre and has taken on different roles at The Yard Theatre, Trap Door Chicago and Page One Theatre. In 2019 she started her own theatre company, HURT Theatre; where she takes minor female characters in male driven plays and turns them into protagonists with their own narratives. She's captivated by the playwright Matei Visniec and is overjoyed to be collaborating with Trap Door for their third virtual production.



EMILY LOTSPEICH

Emily is humbled to be a part of this international event. Emily is a proud Trap Door Theatre Company Member. Trap Door acting credits: Decomposed Theatre, Alas, Lipstick Lobotomy, Reality Theatre, Love & Information, Monsieur D'eon is a woman, Sad Happy Sucker, Locketeer, Phaedra, Fantasy Island For Dummies, The Duchess of Malfi, AmeriKafka, 12 Ophelias and Anger/Fly. Trap Door Director credits: Reality Theatre, Universal Wolf and Tango. In addition to Trap Door, Ms. Lotspeich has worked with Prop Thtr, Silent Theatre Company, Polarity Ensemble and Cornservatory.



TRAP DOOR 2021

A Statement of Support and Solidarity

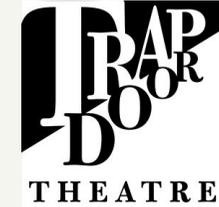
Since we made our last statement, we have been reviewing policy and starting to put our staff through anti-racism training.

Going forward, we want to use our platform not only to amplify our BIPOC artists but also to provide our community and patrons with educational materials, organizations to donate to, and ways to engage meaningfully. To be transparent and hold ourselves accountable, we also want to share the actions we've taken within our organization so far:

- We're growing our company to better reflect the world we live in.
- We're prioritizing BIPOC artists, including for the next production in our Trap Open series, our annual International Voices Project, and our next main stage show.
- We're seeking BIPOC board members.

- All staff members and incoming artist teams are required to receive anti-racism training within the next few months. Some already have attended workshops with ROAR and Erasing Racism through the League of Chicago Theaters.
- We've been working with our international contacts to find playwrights and directors of color.
- We're in the process of hiring training consultants to work with our staff to foster open dialogue within our company and ensure we are providing a safe space for everyone.
- We've continued to make donations as our funds allow.
- We've implemented more transparency in hiring and the stipends available for staff and artists.
- We're reviewing our understudy policy to ensure that we are able to offer our artists MRE.
- We've prioritized the need of BIPOC artists for the distribution of COVID-19 related funds.

These are just the first steps and are committed to improving. We will continue to listen, learn, and institute long-term and structural change both in our organization and community.



For more info visit:

<https://trapdoortheatre.com/>

Tickets available:

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/discoursewithoutgrammar>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/TrapDoorTheatre/>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/trapdoorthtr/>

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