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Giorgio Barberio Corsetti – biographical notes

by *Valentina Valentini*¹

Giorgio Barberio Corsetti, director, author and actor, founded La Gaia Scienza with Marco Solari and Alessandra Vanzi in 1976. The group broke up in 1984, when Barberio Corsetti created his new company, which since 2001 he called **Fattore K**.

Giorgio Barberio Corsetti has been exploring for many years as a director, through his theatre, the frontiers between theatre and other arts: visual arts, poetry, writing, music, circus games, video art, dancing ... His researches and works in Italy and abroad are defined each time by very different yet equally powerful styles, as the writing of Kafka, Goethe, Kleist, Ovidio, Shakespeare, Pirandello, Chrétien de Troyes, Labiche, Renaissance and Baroque painting, contemporary dramaturgy, Barker Dimitriades, Lohle, Rossini's melodrama, Verdi, Donizetti, Bellini, Guarnieri, Adams, Hoffenbach... Beside his theatre activity, he dedicated his research to operas and to the connection between music and theatre. His first confrontation with an opera was in 1999, when he directed Donizetti's *Maria di Rohan* at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice. Some others were Poulenc/Cocteau's *La Voix Humaine* and Schönberg's *Ertwartung* in 2000. In October 2005 he started off at the RomaEuropa Festival with *Iniziali BCGLF*, a musical creation shared with Giovanni Lindo Ferretti, and in 2005 he staged Claudio Monteverdi's *Orfeo* for the Opéra of Lille. He directed Rossini's opera *La Pietra del Paragone* at the Teatro Regio in Parma in 2006, and at the Théâtre Châtelet in Paris in January 2007. Equally engaged in classical and contemporary writings, he has always interpreted them as live texts, active enigmas to decode the surrounding world.

Barberio Corsetti's directions

One of the characteristic features of Giorgio Barberio Corsetti's theatre is the experimenting of video in dramaturgy, a founding mark of many of his plays, like *La camera astratta*, performed with Studio Azzurro in 1987. Another outstanding feature of his artistic biography is the re-reading and the re-writing of Kafka's works, which he began in 1985 with *Descrizione di una battaglia*, followed by *America* (1992), *Il Castello* (at the Théâtre National de Bretagne, 1995) and *Il Processo* (1998). In 1995 he directed *Faust*, *Mefistofele* and *L'histoire du Soldat*, an unpublished work by Pier Paolo Pasolini, performed with Mario Martone and Gigi Dall'Aglio and presented at the Festival of Avignon. *La nascita della tragedia un notturno* is a wandering play performed in the multiethnic area Esquilino in Rome in 1966. Of the same year is the direction of *Il corpo è una folla spaventata* from Majakovsky, and of 1997 that of *Notte*. In 1997 Barberio Corsetti directed also his first performance in Portugal, Pirandello's *I giganti della montagna*, at the Teatro Nacional São João de Oporto, followed by a classic text by the Portuguese writer Gil Vicente, *Barcas*, in 1999. The above quoted *Il Processo* (1998, Ubu Prize in 1999) marked, for him, the beginning of a teamwork with the Teatro Stabile dell'Umbria, that would result in the realization of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in 1999, staged at the Festival of Avignon, and also Büchner's *Woyzeck*. In 2000 in Rome, within the celebrations of the Jubilee, he created a new performance, *Graal*, inspired by Chrétien de Troyes' and Wolfram Von Eschenbach's texts. In February 2004 he realized the play *Metafisico Cabaret*, written together with some of his actors, at the Teatro Palladium in Rome, and *Paradiso*, inspired by Milton's work, at the Teatro India in Rome. The following year he was at the Cavea of the Auditorium of Rome with *Argonauti*, from Apollonio Rodio's *Argonautics*, and at the Teatro India with the monologue by and with Filippo Timi *La vita bestia*. In February 2006 he staged *Il colore bianco*, taken from the tales of northern myths, and commissioned to him by Turin's Fondazione Teatro Regio for the Olympic Games of Culture, that took place within the Olympic Games of 2006 in Turin. In the summer Barberio Corsetti with his company Fattore K staged *Dioniso nato tre volte*, at the Ortigia Festival in Siracusa, and in December he directed the project *Porto Palo. Nomi su tombe senza corpi*, inspired by the tragedy of the shipwreck of 1996, at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome. In June 2007, for the first edition of "FestiVAI", in the splendid frame of the Grandi Terme of Villa Adriana in Tivoli he staged *Dionisiache*, inspired by the epic *The Dionisiaca* by Panopolis Nonno and in August, at the "Festival Benevento Città Aperta" *La storia di Ronaldo il pagliaccio del Mc Donald's*, a provoking and intelligent text by the Argentine author Rodrigo Garcia, interpreted by the Genoese actor Andrea Di Casa. In January 2008 he staged Carlo Goldoni's *La Bottega del caffè* at the Teatro Nacional de São João de Porto in Portugal, and in September at the Festival di Benevento Città Spettacolo *Tra la terra e il cielo*, of which he was both the author and the director. This play was produced by the company Fattore K as well as by the Ente Regionale Teatro Massimo Vincenzo Bellini of Catania, that took care of the execution of the music and the scenes of the show. On January 8 2009 he staged Howard Barker's *Gertrude*, commissioned by the Théâtre Odéon of Paris. On April 28 he was in Rome with Olivier Py's performance *Epistola ai giovani attori*, played by Filippo Timi and Mauro Pescio, at the Teatro Piccolo Eliseo. On May 21 in Singapore (World première) and on June 6 in Naples (Italian première) he directed *Le città visibili*, written by the Chinese playwright Chay Yew, and produced by Napoli Teatro Festival Italia, Singapore Arts Festival and Fattore K. The performance, created in Singapore for a traditional theatre, was re-staged in the open in the star-shaped courtyard of the Real Albergo dei Poveri in Naples. On May 14 2010 he was in Paris with

¹ Catherine Anne MC Gilvray, *Analisi del processo costruttivo e dello spettacolo Descrizione di una battaglia di G. Barberio Corsetti*. Undergraduate thesis, Sapienza University of Rome, academic year 1989/1990. Supervisors: L. Mariti and V. Valentini

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the play *La ronde du carré*, from the text of the Greek playwright, poet and translator Dimitri Dimitriadis, and commissioned by the Théâtre Odéon. On November 13 he staged *La città di pietra* in Matera, with the production of Fattore K., Associazione Zétema and Associazione Arteria. On December 16 the performance *Commedia*, a monologue which he wrote and directed, accompanied by Danilo Rea at the piano. *Commedia* was produced by Fattore K. and Fondazione Musica per Roma. 2011 saw the realization of *Il Castello. Trittico*, an adaptation for the theatre of Franz Kafka's novel, staged on occasion of the 2011 edition of the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto. After several stages at OperaEstate Festival and in the scenery of the Castello of Barletta, he went back to the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto in 2012 with the final version *Il Castello. Tre parti senza fine*.

In January 2012 *Nineteen Mantras* started off, directed by Barberio Corsetti, with music by Riccardo Nova and choreography by Shantala Shivalingappa. It was a representation of some ancient mantras of the Indian religious tradition. It was staged at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome and then at the Piccolo Teatro Strehler in Milan. In December he was in Italy again presenting *La Guerra di Kurukshetra*, an adaptation-reduction that Francesco Niccolini made of the ample Indian poem *Māhābhārata*. It was a production of Fattore K., L'Uovo Teatro Stabile de L'Aquila and the Teatro Stabile delle Marche, with the support of the Teatro Pubblico Pugliese. It went on in May 2013 in Bari, then in Patras, Greece, then in L'Aquila, in Vicenza at the Teatro Olimpico, and in Ancona.

Barberio Corsetti's artistic directions 1999-2010

In 1999-2001 Barberio Corsetti was the artistic director of the Theatre Division of the Biennale di Venezia, where he staged George Büchner's *Woyzeck* in July 2001. During the three years of his direction, he opened the Biennale's program to different forms of contemporary creations, including circus games. Since then circus games would be a constant part of his artistic research. He started a collaboration with the French circus artists Les Colporteurs, which brought to the creation of two performances taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, *Le Metamorfosi* in 2002, presented at the Biennale di Venezia, and *Di animali, uomini e dei* in 2003 created inside the archeological area of Dyonisius ear in Syracuse, for the Ortigia Festival.

In 2002 the company Fattore K. accomplished its project, *Metamorfosi – Festival di confine fra teatro e circo*, a festival of contemporary circus supported by the Municipality of Rome. The performance *Le Metamorfosi* opened the first edition of the project, while for the second edition, *Di Animali, uomini e dei* was presented in the splendid frame of Villa Borghese.

In 2004-2009 Barberio Corsetti was consultant for theatre and dancing at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome.

In 2007 he was artistic director of the first edition of "FestiVAL", which took place in the gorgeous Grandi Terme di Villa Adriana in Tivoli.

In 2010, with the company Fattore K., he organized and directed the international festival "Vertigine" dedicated to the emerging Italian theatre. The event was produced by Fondazione Musica per Roma and supported by Regione Lazio, and took place at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome.