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Simone Carella. *Viaggio sentimentale...ed oltre* (1976)

By Simone Carella e Ulisse Benedetti

With Corinne Young, Charlene Bogen, Antonello Neri

Stage reconstruction by Domenico Bianchi, Gianni Dessì, Marco Pistolesi

Debut Roma, Teatro Beat '72, 27th May 1976

Simone Carella. *Viaggio sentimentale... ed oltre*. Presentation

by *Francesco Panaro*

In Simone Carella and Ulisse Benedetti's *Viaggio sentimentale... ed oltre* ('Sentimental Journey... and Beyond', shown for the first time at Beat '72 on May 27th 1976, performed by the company Gruppo Teatro Stran'amore), sound was the dominating element. The performance contained an investigation into sound that tied together the three pieces that formed the whole. The first element was *Feu d'artifice* by the Italian futurist Giacomo Balla with music by Igor Stravinsky, an abstract mise en scène from 1917 in the form of a dancerless ballet of four minutes and a half. The second element was Simone Carella's own *Feu d'artifice*, which involved sixty light changes: effectively a symphony of colours which perfectly and synchronically matched the music. Once again, Carella did without the actor here, preferring to treat the theatre as an abstract entity and employing the origins of abstract theatre as a line of research: the futurist theatre had also worked on the absence of the actor, in pieces such as Depero's *Colori* from 1916 or some of Prampolini's pieces from the *Pantomima Futurista*, in which the actor was substituted by "jolts and luminous shapes".

The abstract futurist theatre proposed by Carella also did without the spectator's physical-psychological investment in the performance; as if riffing on Boccioni's idea to "put the spectator at the centre of the picture"¹, Carella worked towards lowering the temperature of the image. The second part of *Viaggio Sentimentale... ed oltre* was divided into two: the texts *Food and Murder in the Kitchen* by Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas. The two pieces, read in perfect American English by Corinna Young and Charlene Bogen², were examples of yet another mode of experimentation with the idea of the word-sound. The third and final section was Alberto Savinio's piano-suite *Les chants de la mi-mort*. The performance's three parts sketched out a sentimental journey into the history of the avantgardes, a mental jumping back into the childhood of experimentation.

¹ U. Boccioni, *La pittura futurista. Manifesto tecnico*, in U. Boccioni, *Gli scritti editi e inediti*. Milan: Feltrinelli, 1971.

² Carella observes: "...I think the American sound is the sound of this historical moment..." in F. Quadri, *L'avanguardia teatrale in Italia*. Turin: Einaudi, 1977.