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La Gaia Scienza. La rivolta degli oggetti (1976)

With Giorgio Barberio Corsetti, Marco Solari, Alessandra Vanzi

Space e stage material consultants Gianni Dessì and Domenico Bianchi

Premiere, Rome, Beat '72, March 24, 1976

Repeats: May 1976: Rome, Castel Sant'Angelo – Salerno, Festival della Post-Avanguardia. November 1976: Cosenza, Palestra dello spirito Santo.

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by *Stefano Scipioni*

La rivolta degli oggetti ('The Revolt of the Objects') takes its cue from Mayakovsky, but references to him, besides being within the text, are used as fragments in certain constructivist choices of reference. The staging coordinates are the Meyerhold Theater and the Peking Opera, but also new American dance and Steve Paxton's contact improvisation. From these references the group seeks its stylistic measure, based on the actor as physical concrete presence linked to movement and gesture. Barberio Corsetti, Marco Solari and Alessandra Vanzi at times seem like acrobats and at times like dancers, but actually their actions are an effective way of acting in a non-mimetic theater. Speech itself is given an anti-interpretive measure, delivered in phrasal fragments repeated and overlapped with alternating registers and different intonations. Equally transgressive is how the body is used to abolish physical conditionings imposed by the laws of gravity, to freely expand in space and explore it in all directions. The Beat '72 space (repainted white for the occasion) is crisscrossed by hanging ropes, which the actors work upon to produce a long sought sense of lightness and liberation, preferring to *hang* from ropes instead of surrendering to the *gravity* of the ground. The lighting (slides, neon and modelers) set off the actors' bodies, highlighting them in all their physicality and enlivening the stage action, marked by a luminous pitch through the progressive lighting of lamps and neon. *Objects are in revolt*: an out of tune violin (which poetically counterpoints the poignant strains of Paganini's music), a suitcase, a hanging chair, an overcoat. Cables are strewn across the space marking off its spatial limits, as if they were rebelling to the concrete impediments of the environment by continually attempting an impossible flight. In this situation, which seems to exist under the sign of instability and precariousness, each actor does his or her part with absent-minded innocence, almost randomly seeking and fleeing from contact with the others, which occurs only sporadically, on the hint of a glance or a gesture, and it is at once eluded, in an atmosphere of affectionate complicity. The action takes place following the impulses of extemporaneous improvisation within certain obligatory passages scanned above all by the light and neon rhythms, which seal the finale with progressively intense lighting in an apotheosis of glare. The same principle of chance aggregation controls speech as well: each performer freely chooses a sentence to recite and the moment and manner in which to speak it. Each performance, in some way unique and unrepeatable, is renewed each evening differently, thus avoiding the logic of staleness that afflicts traditional theatrical products, and keeping it near the source of the performance concept.