

#TRENTANNIDIFORTEZZA - 2019

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In this cell, which has welcomed me for the first time, I have been spending most of my time, awake, since today. Thirty years are the soft weight of a lived story and the impulse to a future full of hope, but the present moment escapes while we observe these two edges being burdened by their own unreality. I have never thought of these thirty years as the passing of time since the day of their anniversary.

Suddenly, actions have shown their mad determination, the necessity driven by a peculiar desperation, the one of a young artist who wanted to question reality to find a refuge among its folds and a non-violent battlefield, capable of reviving places and people, capable of renaming them and projecting them under a different but concrete sky.

I needed walls to be contained, an insuperable obstacle to overcome. The opposition, the harshness, the lack of another chance, I had to live them all in every moment of my life. I didn't want subterfuges, ways out and illusory oasis of peace.

A wound should have been an open and vivid wound, the sensitivity of an artist couldn't be enough, the body should have been thrown in the battle without any filter or intellectual mediation. In prison, theatre doesn't allow itself illusions; reality is always ready to offend you, to vomit over you all its impossibility. Theatre is reinforced by this continuous clash, it steals with its nails the ground to that endless continent that life is. It steals life from life and it transforms it. These walls, they protect me, from myself, from tiredness and from laurels, in their own way.

Here, I always have reality at my disposal, at the best of its expression: violent, limpid and unequivocal.

Prison didn't expect me and I took it by surprise. I saw the prison defending its identity with its teeth, locking itself in, refusing every opening, offended, livid with rage because the prison was discovered in its meaner and worthless reality. Like a mother who is beside herself with madness for revenge, prison would

rather throw itself into the void of life, in a suicidal embrace with its children. Our fight doesn't stop. Thirty years mean nothing. If it doesn't really deny itself with all its power, theatre here is going to die any time soon. Compagnia della Fortezza has to continuously earn its space, every day is a new beginning. But never-ending fights are the measure of determination. A million times I have toyed with the idea of leaving, but while I think of it, I am climbing the hill, to enter the prison's gates.

Armando Punzo

THIRTY YEARS OF COMPAGNIA DELLA FORTEZZA'S SPECIAL PROJECT

Artistic Direction **Armando Punzo** | management Carte Blanche | curated by **Cinzia de Felice**

The THIRTY YEARS OF FORTEZZA's project is promoted by MiBACT – Ministero dei beni delle attività culturali e del turismo, Regione Toscana, ACRI – Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio Spa, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Volterra, Comune di Volterra, Comune di Pomarance, Enel Green Power, Ministero della Giustizia – Casa di Reclusione di Volterra

In 2018, Armando Punzo's Compagnia della Fortezza turned thirty.

30 years of endlessly building Impossible Architectures make this Impossibility a concrete Utopia. From inside Volterra's prison, the company's practice, generative of new worlds, grows, regenerates and generates with the transformative energy of a volcano.

The serene gaze rises up and looks beyond a desert of ruins, and, limpid, it mirrors a future of crystalline water and sky, set in industrial archaeologies of civilization.

These thirty years are a unique goal, for a unique experience, which, for the first time in Europe, has created a new genre, a new way of imagining and making theatre. It has opened new ways, becoming an artistic, cultural and operating paradigm that has been studied and referred to from all over the world.

Through the exercise of an everyday practice of experimentation, Armando Punzo's work with Compagnia della Fortezza has proved that theatre is permeable to every possible form of contamination and that by mixing your knowledge you can create new languages.

Over time, this exercise has come to codify an original methodology that was never translated in an univocal topos, a fruitless commodity thanks to a special feature: the essential practice of beauty in all its forms, to activate a cultural revolution in theatre's history and international cultural policies.

The goal of this 30th anniversary is both an occasion to celebrate and one for introspection. To think of it as a company that has done a lot but can still do a great deal.

The need to sublime Compagnia della Fortezza's story in a series of events which retrace all these 30 years goes together with the urgency of going beyond what has already been done, to activate new research practices that combine theatre, literature, poetry, philosophy, aesthetics, sociology, anthropology, architecture, to go beyond the limit of our universe and human condition, in search of an archetypical meaning.

This line of thought is translated in a special project which will transform pathways and practices, results, sounds, words, emotions of these 30 years in iridescent artistic gestures composing a huge Total Work of Art that regenerates itself continuously through the everyday practice of Compagnia della Fortezza.

Starting from an archive of memories made of gestures, places, bodies, relations and gazes, Compagnia della Fortezza offers its work through beauty, poetry and dream.

During a three-years multi-layered and visionary project, Compagnia della Fortezza will transform the memory of a 30 years artistic experience in a journey through life and theatre, across limits and the unknown in search of a sublime and prophetic beauty, embodied through the company's everyday practice. Through this process, people will become works of art, generating beauty and spaces for thought, together with the Artist that first created them.