

Esa Kirkkopelto

Professor of artistic research
Performing Arts Research Centre, Theatre Academy,
University of the Arts Helsinki (Finland)

Prosthesis of the soul: body, text, object

The aim of this lecture-demonstration is to problematize the relation between body, text and object in performance. In performance practices, text is at the outset normally considered as something exterior to other scenic entities. Despite the contemporary tendencies to overcome all kind of dichotomies, binary oppositions and dualisms in our ways of thinking performance, the opposition between text and bodies, no matter if these are “living” organisms or “dead” object or props, seems to hold. As this lecture-demonstration tends to show, that dualism can be overcome, but it presumes that our usual ways of understanding of what bodies, objects are textual entities “are” have to change radically. The intermediary zone opened by performance is based on the subsistence of intermediary virtual entities to which we should from now on give a priority not only in artistic contexts but also beyond them. On this basis we may discover, among other things, that between object theatre, acting and reading there is no basic difference.

Esa Kirkkopelto (born in 1965) is philosopher, artist-researcher, performer, former theatre director and playwright, convenor of *Other Spaces* live art collective. Since 2007, he has been working at the Theatre Academy (University of Arts Helsinki) as professor of artistic research. His research focuses on the deconstruction of the performing body both in theory and in practice. Since 2008, he has conducted a collective research project “Actor’s Art in Modern Times” on the psychophysical actor training. He is the responsible leader of the “Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research” (Theatre Academy, Academy of Fine Arts, Sibelius Academy & Aalto University), as well as “Asian Art and Performance Consortium” (Theatre Academy Helsinki & Academy of Fine Arts). He has made his PhD on philosophy in 2002 at the University of Strasbourg. Author of *Le théâtre de l’expérience. Contributions à la théorie de la scène* (Presses de l’Université Paris-Sorbonne 2008). He is a core-convenor of *Performance Philosophy Association*, a member of the editorial board of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* and the convenor of the “International Platform for Performer Training” which gathered for the first time in Helsinki in January 2014.