

Talking *about* Theatre  
*The* **NARRATIVE** *Conversation*



# **Talking about Theatre**

## **The Narrative Conversation**

This booklet is designed to structure a conversation about your experience of theatre or dance. Operating through a series of questions or instructions it asks you to think and reflect on a performance you have just seen. You can have the conversation with yourself, with someone else, or with a group of people.

This is the Narrative Conversation, focusing on story, plot and narrative as the entry point to a conversation that should be shaped by the particular performance you are talking about.

Other booklets in this series are themed in order to structure different conversations – generic, experimental, scenographic, performers and music & sound.

# Let's Begin

You don't need an art background or any specific information in order to have this conversation – you just need to have seen a performance and be in the mood to talk about it.

There are no right or wrong answers, no incorrect conversations.

Each page contains a question or instruction.

If you like, you can use the blank pages to write down your responses.

# One

Did you like the performance? Why or why not?

There are ten questions in this conversation.  
Please move on to question two.

## Two

Did the performance have a narrative / story?

Could you summarise it in no more than six bullet points?

When you have finished, move onto question three.

# Three

What were the crucial turning points in the narrative?

As soon as you are ready, move to question four.

# Four

What was the structure of the narrative?

Was it linear or circular or repetitive?

Could you draw a line representing the shape of the narrative?

What was the impact of this structure on the narrative?

When you are done, please continue to question five.

# Five

How was the narrative communicated?

Was it primarily through speech, movement, action, objects?

Illustrate your answer with an example.

When you've finished, turn to question six.

# Six

Did anything you see happening in the story remind you of your own story – or of another story that you know?

Did you feel the story was true to life?

Please remember that there are no right or wrong responses  
in this conversation.

# Seven

Did the story have an underlying meaning (moral, message, theme)?  
What was this and how was it communicated?

When you have finished, move to question eight.

# Eight

If the performance had lasted longer, what else might have happened?

What would have happened next?

How would this have changed your experience of the performance?

Turn to question nine.

# Nine

Were there any subplots, loose ends or alternative narratives within the narrative as a whole?

Could you describe one of these and give it a title as if it were a story in its own right.

When you are ready, turn to question ten.

# Ten

Think back on your answers to previous questions.

What have you discovered from thinking about this performance?

Has your opinion about it changed?

Have you learned anything about your own life story or the stories of others?

Please turn over.  
There is one last thing before you have finished this conversation.

# Post-Conversation Question

What additional question would you like to ask yourself or other people about the narrative?





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It was inspired and adapted from the Project MUSE,  
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