

A woman in a vibrant red, flowing dress is captured in a dynamic dance pose on a stage. She is wearing high-heeled shoes and has her arms raised. The background features a large, stylized floral pattern in shades of red and white. The floor is covered with a large bouquet of red flowers. The overall lighting is warm and dramatic, emphasizing the red tones.

Flowers For Torgeir

Roberta Carreri



Flowers For Torgeir

By and with Roberta Carreri
Scenography, Video, and Lighting Design | Stefano di Buduo
A co-production by Roberta Carreri & Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium
(2020)

Text | W.H. Auden, Pablo Neruda, Drummond de Andrade,
Roberta Carreri, and Torgeir Wethal
Music | Ólafur Arnalds, Amália Rodrigues, Adolfo Ernesto
Echeverría Comas, Erik Truffaz, Joseph P. Webster, Wojtek
Mazolewski, and Alice Carreri Pardeilhán

Costumes and Props | Roberta Carreri & Karoline Banke
Dramaturgy | Anne Middelboe Christensen
Photography | Stefano di Buduo

Special thanks to Fausto Pro, Claudio Coloberti, and Simone
Dragone

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Holstebro.

Can Grief Become a Light?

Can grief become a light that guides our way through life?

In 2010, I lost my work and life partner of many years.

The loss of a loved one has two faces: grief and gratitude.

The joy that filled my life for so many years in his company shines through the grief and makes it transparent.

There is no cure for grief. One must learn to live with it, like a chronic illness.

I am not the same person I was before Torgeir died – and I never will be.

But I am still able to sing and smile while feeling the presence of his absence, which will always follow my steps.

It is said that one dies twice. The second time is when one is forgotten.

I do not want Torgeir to be forgotten.

Torgeir was born in Oslo, Norway, in 1947, and discovered the world of theatre in his school's drama club when he was eight years old.

He was only 11 when he started earning money performing on a traditional stage, and 17 when he met Eugenio Barba, becoming one of the founders of Odin Teatret.

At nineteen, he moved with Barba and the small ensemble from Norway to Denmark. There, he lived and worked, only interrupted by the theatre's many international tours, until his death on June 27, 2010. He was 63 years old.

Torgeir participated in the rehearsals for Odin Teatret's ensemble production *The Chronic Life* until a month before he passed away. His presence on stage was unique, and I have missed it ever since.

That is why I honor him with a performance.

Flowers for a great actor.

Flowers for a great human being.

Flowers for Torgeir.

— Roberta Carreri

Love sonnet XCIV

by Pablo Neruda

If I die, survive me with all your pure strength, so that you awaken the pale fury and the wrath of cold. From south to south, you shall lift your indelible eyes, from sun to sun, your guitar-mouth shall resound.

I do not want your laughter and your steps to falter, I do not want the legacy of my joy for life to perish. Do not knock on my chest, for I am not there. Live in my absence as in a house.

Absence is such a vast house that you can walk through its walls and hang your pictures in the air.

Absence is such a transparent house that, lifeless, I will see you alive - and if you suffer, my love, I will die once more.

Fragments from

Residue

by Drummond de Andrade

Of everything a little still remains.
Of my fear. Of your disgust.
Of the stammered shouts. Of the rose
a little still remains.

A bit of light remains
captured in the hat.
In the eyes of the seducer
some tenderness remains
(so little).

Little remains of this dust
covering your white shoes.
Some bits of cloth remain,
a few torn veils,
few, so few, so very few.

But of all things a little still remains.
Of the bombarded bridge,
of the two leaves of grass,
of the - empty -
package of cigarettes,
a little still remains.
For of everything a little still remains,
a little of your chin remains
stamped in your son's chin

Of your rough silence
a little bit remains, a bit,
on the irritated walls
in the mute, ascending leaves.

A bit of everything is left
in the porcelain saucer,
broken dragon, candid flower,
of wrinkles on your brow,
portrait.

Some bits remain floating
in the delta of the rivers
and the fish do not avoid them.
A little: not to be found in books.

Of all things a little is still left.
And of everything only a little remains.

Ah, open the bottles of perfume
and suffocate
the insufferable stench of memory.

But of everything, oh terrible, a bit remains,
and beneath the rhythmic waves,
and beneath the clouds and winds
and beneath the bridges and beneath the tunnels
and beneath the flames and beneath sarcasm
and beneath the mucus and beneath the vomit
and beneath the sobs, the prison, the forgotten
and beneath the performances and beneath the scarlet death
and beneath the libraries, the hospices, the triumphant churches
and beneath yourself and beneath your already rigid feet
and beneath the hinges of the family and of the class,
a little of everything still remains.

Translated to English by Francis Pardeilhan

Words for Roberta

There had to be flowers in this performance. Lots of flowers.

Roberta Carreri chose flowers as the central symbol in her celebration of Torgeir Wethal. These roses and sunflowers are a tribute to Torgeir's boundless curiosity and his anarchic talent—both as a skilled actor and as a philosophical human being.

The Norwegian Torgeir joined the Italian theatre director Eugenio Barba and co-founded Odin Teatret in Oslo back in 1964. The Italian Roberta joined Odin Teatret in 1974. These two gifted artists became a powerful pair, both on stage and in life—until 2010, when Torgeir passed away from cancer.

Roberta has now undertaken the raw and tearful journey through grief and sorrow. As a disciplined Odin actor, she has fulfilled her desire to transform her private grief into an existential work of art. During this same period, she has toured with Odin Teatret, performing, giving workshops, and coaching young artists around the world.

As a dramaturg, I have had the special privilege of accompanying her for short stretches along the exhausting and unpredictable road leading to this condensed performance. I have tried to keep pace with her as she searched for novels and poems about death and mourning. I have listened to her carefully selected pieces of music—and I have seen it all framed by Torgeir's own powerful words.

I have watched her juggle exquisite sentences about love and loss, effortlessly shifting from one language to another. I have heard her sing out her passion, and I have seen her create her own characters, filled with pain and seduction. And I have sensed her longing to reach...

...an aesthetic stage expression that would be just as powerful and uncompromising as Torgeir's artistic ideals - just as grotesque and bursting with joy.

Through the thin cords of the backdrop, Roberta steps into a world of memories. She creates a true conversation with the iconic photos and video glimpses of Torgeir on the screen, and he smiles back in the subtle and ever-changing video design by Stefano di Buduo.

Playful, just like a lover's game - surrounded by flowers. Just as Roberta wished for Torgeir to be remembered.

Anne Middelboe Christensen
Dramaturg

