



OPEN MAZE

A contemporary performance ritual

ARTISTIC SHEET



Ailuros - Hive Division & inVRsion production (2017)



OPEN MAZE

CONCEPT

Nicola Cecconi, Valentina Paggiarin, Barbara Riebolge

SCRIPT

Nicola Cecconi, Barbara Riebolge

VIDEO WITH:

Nadia Brian, Nicola Cecconi, Paolo Rampin, Lorenza Trentin

VIDEO

PanoptikonVR

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Valentina Paggiarin

VR SUPERVISOR

Erik Caretta

DIRECTOR

Barbara Riebolge

PLAYWRIGHT

Nicola Cecconi

VOICE-OVER

Barbara Riebolge (Italian version), Kim Handysides (English version)

SOUND

Jhon Montoya, Geremia Vinattieri

LIGHTING DESIGN

Nicola Cecconi, Barbara Riebolge

COSTUMES

Barbara Riebolge

PERFORMANCE

with Paolo Rampin, Lorenza Trentin

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Open maze is a performance that comes to life in the moment and that seeks to develop a relationship between the spectator, the performer, and the space within which the action takes place, thanks primarily to the use of virtual reality technology. In this way the audience becomes a direct participant in a contemporary ritual that revolves around the concept of “the maze”. During the performance spectators are subjected to a powerful experience in which their senses are projected into a contemporary maze and in which they encounter Ariadne, the Minotaur, and other characters taking part in the same ritual. Spectators wear a Gear VR headset while another performer accompanies them throughout the entire sensory journey, enhancing it with a physical performance that flanks and reinforces their virtual experience. The VR video was shot with a camera built and patented by Hive Division & inVRsion that is capable of recording a 360° field of view.

Theater began as the expression of a collective and civil ritual. The “here and now” that has always been its defining characteristic, is now being enhanced by the latest technology. 360° Virtual Reality (VR) video is an opportunity to dramatically change the way in which spectators are involved in performance. The audience, wearing a VR headset, can now participate in this contemporary ritual, with their own senses helping to create a dramatic theatrical experience in which they themselves are the protagonist. A performer interacts with the individual spectator, complementing the visuals from the video and feeding the inner experience. The spectator’s body becomes the stage itself, projecting him or her into alternative realities based on the video being shown. The headset, therefore, becomes the scenic tool through which this totally unique initiation ritual is made possible.

The performance revolves around a contemporary maze that is based on the mythological Cretan labyrinth. A theory connects the maze to the dance, transforming it into a choreographic space, a kind of moving visual design. According to this interpretation, Theseus, the hero who won over the Minotaur, was the very first dancer of the “Gerano”, a dance that represents the tortuousness of and escape from the

labyrinth of Crete: one by one, holding onto a rope or each others hands, the dancers would move as if in a procession, continuously changing direction as they snaked around a fixed central point. When the first in line (Theseus) arrived at the end of the sequence, the rest of the chain was wound so tightly around him that there appeared to be no way out, as if he were in the center of a labyrinth. This sense of isolation may be the reason why the maze represents the idea of prison. It may also explain the meaning of Ariadne’s thread: as first in the line, in order to escape the segregation in which he finds himself, in order to find the way out, he has to retrace the thread of dancers in reverse. According to the Greek myth, Theseus enters the maze easily, but then must use the thread to find his way back. Why doesn’t he need the thread to enter? Theseus is the only one to reach the center of the labyrinth: it is he alone who must face the challenge, it is he alone to penetrate the mystery.

Referring to the myth of the labyrinth, architect Jan Pieper writes, “This myth represents the new idea of ‘the city’ as a brilliant spectrum of never-before-seen architectural elements, considered to be both terrible and amazing, both sinister and fascinating at the same time, elements with a beauty that attracts and repulses.” The city has retained a sense of monstrosity. It is a place filled with movement, surprise, and unthinkable diversity; one of amplified complexity and breathless artificiality. Its landscape is defined by invisible borders and confused markings, an intricate network of interwoven streets. The Greeks must have felt this sense of wonder when they stood before Knossos for the first time. This performance investigates the disorientation one feels in the city and in the civilized world, which is part of modern humanity as well. The spectator, as Theseus, faces the Minotaur and finds a world full of wonders and unexpected twists, then must choose whether to follow Ariadne’s thread and leave the maze or not.

Why does Theseus need to kill the Minotaur? Is it easier to enter the twisted labyrinth or to find the path to freedom? Why is it so difficult to escape from this intricate maze?

CONTACTS

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