

Spectacle

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

Dante's Hell

written by and starring: Matteo Belli

text: Dante Alighieri

dialogues: Matteo Belli

scenery, lighting, sound: Luigi Sermann

masks and puppets by: Roberta Antinori

organization: Maurizio Sangirardi

photography: Vittorio Bergamaschi

graphic design: Mirella Pagin

A school desk on the centre of the stage.

Around it, the events – experienced, dreamed, imagined – marking the life of a undistinguished schoolboy who would go on to become an actor bringing Dante Alighieri's Hell to the stage.

This journey is undertaken by the actor Matteo Belli through some of the situations of the first of the three parts of the Comedy with the pleasure and emotion due to a personal challenge that can no longer be put off, in an attempt to convey some of the greatest poetry in the history of Italian literature to the modern eye and ear.

The actor recites from memory and respects the musicality of the hendecasyllables in terza rima, but he does not forget that a subject like this is always the site of a demanding yet exciting theatrical 'game' where both speaker and listener allows themselves to undergo a profound transformation that transports them from reading the words on the page all the way to the scene of events that are acted out and interpreted – are, in a word, relived.

What is attempted is, in fact, to offer Dante as the poet of the ultimate representation of a cultural universe that no longer exists yet is nonetheless still alive and responsive to attempts at realistic and 'material' restitution of humanity immortalized in its own forms of exemplary frailty.

This is the key in which episodes of Dante's work are interpreted: the entrance into the dark wood; the meeting with Virgil; the drama of Paola and Francesca's love; the pride in Farinata degli Uberti's political passion; the heartbreaking sadness of Pier della Vigna's suicide; the diabolic tortures meted out to a barrator; Ulysses' 'mad flight'; Count Ugolino's macabre end.

This, then, is a chance to try and find once again the motivations of literature, away from the printed page, in immediate, direct, communication between performer and spectator.

• **length: 110 minutes** (*An interval is possible*)

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