

PIE' di PANCIA

Compagnia Il Melarancio

Written and performed
Tiziana Ferro e Vanni Zinola

Directed by
Mariachiara Raviola



THE PLOT

*Giro giro piede,
chi cammina non si siede,
ogni bimbo viene al mondo
per portare i piedi in tondo!*

Once upon a time there were a mum and a dad.

Or rather, a man and a woman that are going to become a mum and a dad.

The mum has got a big belly and the dad is always nice and kind to her.

At night, before going to sleep, the two will-be parents recall the first time they met, when they had dinner at a restaurant and then went to dance. Together, they play the "game of the future" and picture how their child will be like, his/her eyes, when he/she will start taking the first steps, eating food, what he/she will do in life, etc.

But the "waiting" brings with itself also a lot of questions and the first of them is "Where was any child before being born?"

He was in his mother's belly, wasn't he?

Certainly not in his daddy's!

He swam, rolled over, breathed like a fish, played with his toys, had his feet close to his mother's heart and... kicked.

The father feels the child kicking but doesn't see him/her ...

Is it the child's foot that announces his desire to be from the ancestral world of the before and the inside?

Is the child's foot aware of being a foot?

Doesn't he dream, in that dimension where everything is still possible, to be a cloud, a bird, a butterfly?

Can he imagine how many steps shall mark the time and experience of his life to come?

Twelve steps to go and play with Lucia, 59 steps to learn how to write, 87 steps to go and see the sea... Once again, the step is the unit of measure that accompanies us since humanity's childhood to mark the slow progress of knowing, loving, living. Steps that are scattered throughout the world to tell the aspirations and dreams of every living creature, starting from that small unmistakable sign of the desire to live.

*...Giro giro tondo,
quant'è bello questo mondo,
per ogni bimbo che è arrivato
ancor più bello è diventato!*

THE MAIN THEMES

In our performance we tell the story of all children: a man and a woman, even before their child's birth, fancy what their child will be like and try to act as a mum and dad.

The main themes are:

time and space: the doubtful expecting time, the actions of past and future.

The body: his discovery and the bodily scheme.

Feelings: love and tenderness, jealousy and irony, wishes and fears.

Life: before and after-birth

Time and space: past and future; the expecting time.

In the performance we speak about time indirectly, (a concept that begins to form at the age of three), a past time and a future time, quite near the experience and the age of our public: the scenes we propose answer some basic questions: where was I before my birth? what was I like when a

was a baby? what will I be like when I'm grown up?

The temporal space we propose has got a peculiar unit of measure: the step.

The two protagonists-parents wonder how many steps they had taken before they met and how many their child will take before riding a bicycle, becoming an astronaut, a dancer a cooker, a florist, before being a mum or dad.

The situation of expecting a child creates a peculiar, uncertain atmosphere and it allows temporal Jumps among today, yesterday and tomorrow.

The idea of space finds lots of expressions in the performance.

The children, sitting on the stage inside the scene, are enclosed by a soft white material and sheltered by a tulle roof similar to a large cradle or to a tent of a small circus.

As the story evolves the scenic space changes and it changes unceasingly letting the public see the whole body, only the inferior part, the feet, only the superior part. On this way we propose the concepts of: above and under, on top and at the bottom, tall and low, in full and the unsettlement of the human body.

There is also an inside and an outside space which children can imagine thanks to the presence of the mum's belly and to the references to the uterine world.

Moreover the performance starts and ends with a round dance of the actors and children to describe the circle of life and the repetition of vital rhythms.

Stamping feet hand in hand is a play which has no longer the archaic meanings of encirclement of evil as in primitive societies, but even nowadays, in some cultures, is a propitiatory and imitation ceremony, symbol of brotherhood and union.

The body: his discovery and the bodily scheme

The children, before the performance, draw and cut out their foot-print, then they take off their socks and pass on a sonorous and sensorial carpet.

During the performance the actors often get into touch with them creating an affective and tonic communication.

Children begin to know the world using their feet and this fact has induced us to choose this part of the body to tell our story. Through the attitude of their body and the movement of their feet and some

simple words our protagonists explore the human mobility from kicking in the belly to toddling, to crawling on all fours, to walking, to moving with ease and confidence.

During the performance we give great care to all the parts of the body, so that the child has a clear idea of his corporal image, in the whole and in its parts.

Feelings: love and tenderness, jealousy and irony, wishes and fears.

In this performance we underline the idea that a mum and a dad, to have a baby, must love each other.

We give a section of family life, maybe an idealized every day life, of which everybody dreams, also children, as the achievement of happiness, and affirmation of identity.

The actors show their love towards each other and towards their fancied baby, always present and alive in their play, with acts of tenderness.

Life: before and after-birth

Piè di pancia is a homage to the simple and natural things that happen, in a lifetime.

Sometimes such simple things assume a symbolic meaning and represent the main stages of human evolution.

Each spectator, through easy images, can get the idea of what his parents were like before his birth, realizes their feelings and the desire of his arrival, observes the practices of his growth, his learning to walk, feed, wash, play, become a man and repeat the story.

THE LANGUAGES USED

Piè di Pancia is a performance of movement and interaction, where the language amalgamates harmoniously with the action of the protagonists, a dancer and an actor, and the animation of some objects.

The whole story passes through two parts of the body, the feet and the belly, symbolic elements since the prehistorical period.

The footprint has borne witness to the man's presence; a baby begins to explore the world starting from the discovery of his feet, objects easily attainable, by which he can play, know his body, his boundaries the external environment, different sensations.

So feet have seemed to be a good symbolic means to speak to our young spectators in an easy language, very near their experience and their understanding.

In the performance we have tried to get over an adult vision and to recover imagination and the childish desire of exploring.

Barefoot, also the two actors are transported with plays and let their feet become something else.

In the performance we never mention birth, but the presence of the mum with a big belly always makes us think of the imaginary baby; a clear and delicate tale about how everybody comes into the world, a subtle and poetic explanation of the difference between a man and woman.

Nella pancia della mia mamma...

*Nella pancia della mia mamma
nuotavo come un pesce rosso*

...i miei piedi erano vicini al suo cuore

... con i piedi toccavo il soffitto

... tiravo calci per farmi voler bene

Nella pancia della mia mamma c'eri tu

che aspettavi di crescere

e diventare il bambino che sei

The actor and the dancer often interact with the quite young public sitting all around and communicate with nonsense-rhymes, simple sentences and onomatopoeic exclamations to underline the different moods and describe various situations.

Filastrocche

Questo va per legna

E questo va per acqua,

questo fa le tagliatelle

e questo se le mangia tutte!

E al più piccino, che era nella pancia,

non è toccata neanche un'arancia

Questo è l'allucetto

E questo è l'amichetto,

questo è il fratellino

e questo è il birichino

e il mignolino dove lo metto?

Aham!

Il primo vuole pane

Il secondo dice 'non ce n'è'

Il terzo dice 'ne vado a comprare'

Il quarto dice 'ce n'è un pezzetto!'

'Datelo a me, che sono piccoletto!'

THE SCENOGRAPHIES

Before the performance the children are invited to draw and cut out their footprint on a little sponge; this will be their admission ticket.

The image is repeated by a polychromatic circle of babies' feet laid on the blue carpet on which children will be sitting.

All around a light tulle shelters them in a magic and bright environment.

Few simple symbolic objects, moved and animated, go across the story and materialize the two protagonists fantasy becoming something else: socks, shoes, hats, butterflies yo-yo, feeding bottles, talcum powder and soft white lengths of material, draw the viewers' attention accompanying them to imagine the situations that are suggested from time to time by the actors' play.

Music too becomes a sonorous carpet that creates a very real scenery, underlining the tale and stimulating sensations.

The sound track includes a selection of musical excerpts by Hugues Le Bars, Andre Pop, I Pascals, Ensemble Rayè.

LENGTH AND RECEIVERS

Children from 3 to 7

Nursery school

Primary School/first course years

Performance of 45 minutes

Technical requirements/ minimum space
mt6x mt6, children (max.70) are gathered
inside the structure

Electrical connect 220 volts 3 kw

Babies from 1 to 3

Nursery-school

Performance of 20 minutes

SOURCES

-Alexander Lowen,
Il linguaggio del corpo

-Giulia Baronchielli-Celia Carpi Germani
Coccole e filastrocche (Giunti)

-Christopher Knill
*Contatto corporeo e comunicazione
(Erikson)*

-Odilla Veronesi
*Il mistero della vita- Un libro di
educazione alla sessualità (fatto da
bambini per i bambini I.R.S.E.F.)*

-Josef Stahl
*I bambini ci interrogano-Educazione
sessuale dei bambini sino a 6 anni
I bambini ci interrogano-Educazione
sessuale dei bambini 6/12 anni*



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For teachers:

Draw and cut out the footprint of every child using a kitchen sponge (of square, colored type, only a few millimeters thick).

The footprint shall be the ticket to the show and shall be handed in by each child before being taken to the scene space.