

***Margolis Method***  
**AN ACTOR TRAINING REVOLUTION**

**BARCELONA**

**INTERNATIONAL MARGOLIS METHOD  
CONFERENCE  
JANUARY 13-14, 2018**



***Margolis Method BCN***

Margolis Method Center Int'l and Margolis Method BCN  
present the first:

## **International Margolis Method Conference January 13-14, 2018 – Barcelona**

**Contact:** [margolismethod.bcn@margolismethod.org](mailto:margolismethod.bcn@margolismethod.org)

**Main venue:** Fabra i Coats / Carrer Sant Adrià 20  
Fàbrica de Creació (third building) Sala 2, 3rd floor

Google Maps:

<https://www.google.es/maps/place/F%C3%A0brica+de+Creaci%C3%B3+Fabra+i+Coats/@41.4337377,2.1886437,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x12a4bcdb09d70733:0x6bfdb8c8a071548c!8m2!3d41.4337377!4d2.1908377>

### **Directions:**

- Metro Stop SANT ANDREU and take the exit named Plaça Orfila.
- Walk toward the church and turn to your right for about 750 feet.
- You'll see a big tent that holds the market and right in front of its entrance you'll see the main gate to Fabra i Coats. Fabra i Coats is an industrial building complex reconverted into art facilities.
- Enter the main gate and walk straight ahead. You'll pass two buildings to your right, and when the walkway turns slightly right you'll see a third building, where the conference will take place.
- Enter the building and go up the set of stairs in front of you one flight and go through the door at the top, you'll see Margolis Method signs.
- Then take the elevator to the third floor, and turn right when you exit.
- There you'll find Room 2 (Sala 2), where the conference takes.

**Contact:** You can call or Whatsapp anytime the conference organizer  
Boris Daussà-Pastor at (phone) +34 639 935 266.  
(email) [margolismethod.bcn@margolismethod.org](mailto:margolismethod.bcn@margolismethod.org)

### **Technical aspects and Wi-Fi**

There will be a laptop with Microsoft Office and Apple software, as well as a simple projector and sound system. You can also connect your own laptop to the projector and sound (in that case, please bring your own adaptor to connect your laptop to a typical basic projector). The computer will be connected to the internet. There will be Wi-Fi access in the facilities, but only limited to people with a phone that can receive a text message (in Spain) to activate the Wi-Fi access.

### **Full papers and publication**

We will not ask presenters to send in their papers in advance. We only require the abstract and bio. After the conference, we will open a call for submission of revised versions of the papers to be considered for publication in a collection of essays. We will give plenty of time for the process of revision and submission of papers.

# General Conference Schedule

**Friday Jan 12<sup>th</sup>** – Pre-conference activities in Poble Sec, see NOTE) –

16:30h (4:30pm): Meet outside Poble Sec Metro Station (see NOTE)  
16:45-17:45: Walking tour to Ciutat de Teatre, MNAC, and Teatre Grec  
18:00-19:30: Theatre Outing (contemporary circus at Mercat de les Flors)  
19:30-20:00: Visit Institut del Teatre facilities  
20:00-21:00: Suggested: Tapas and pinchos at Carrer Blai area (Poble Sec)  
End of Pre-conference activities

NOTE: Poble Sec Metro station is on the green metro line, called L3. When you arrive at Poble Sec station, take the exit named Teodor Bonaplata, we will meet right outside that exit.

**Saturday Jan 13<sup>th</sup>** – At Fabra i Coats Fàbrica de Creació (Room 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor) –

10:00: Conference venue opens  
10:00 – 10:20: Conference Registration (pick-up your conference materials)  
10:20 – 10:30: Welcome Address by Boris Daussà-Pastor, and Kari Margolis  
10:30 – 11:30: Keynote Address (Michal Kobialka)  
11:30 – 12:00: Coffee Break  
12:00 – 13:30: Conference Panel 1 (Denise & Katie, Kym, Espii)  
13:30 – 15:30: Lunch Break (on your own)  
15:30 – 17:00: Conference Panel 2 (Anna DeMers, Constanza, Xana)  
17:00 – 17:30: Coffee Break  
17:30 – 19:00: Conference Panel 3 (Susana, Boris, Anna Vendrell)  
End of Day 1

**Sunday Jan 14<sup>th</sup>** – At Fabra i Coats Fàbrica de Creació (Room 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor) –

11:00: Conference venue opens.  
11:00 – 12:30: Conference Panel 4 (Aleix, Ana Bustamante, Jennifer)  
12:30 – 13:00: Coffee Break  
13:00 – 14:30: Conference Panel 5 (Lexi, Christina, Kate)  
14:30 – 15:00: Closing Remarks (Boris Daussà, Michal Kobialka, Kari Margolis)  
15:00 – 17:00: Farewell Lunch  
End of Day 2.  
End of Conference

## List of Participants and Papers

| SATURDAY – JAN 13 <sup>th</sup> |                                                      |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Time                            |                                                      | Participant                | Paper Title                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 10:30<br>11:30                  | <u>Keynote</u>                                       | Michal Kobialka            | Of Space and Objects: A Historiographic Preamble to Margolis Method                                                                                                                 |
| 12:00<br>13:30                  | <u>Panel 1</u><br>Directing and outside perspectives | Denise Myers & Katie Meyer | Using Margolis Method Hope and Despair exercise for directing                                                                                                                       |
|                                 |                                                      | Kym Longhi                 | Margolis Method and Brechtian Theater in Practice: A Director's Notebook                                                                                                            |
|                                 |                                                      | Sadah Espii Proctor        | Bridging the Divide between the Real and the Virtual: Margolis Method treatment of space                                                                                            |
|                                 |                                                      |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 15:30<br>17:00                  | <u>Panel 2</u><br>Case studies in acting principles  | Anna DeMers                | Embodying Margolis Method: Research in Cognitive Science and Actor Training                                                                                                         |
|                                 |                                                      | Constanza Garabatos Funes  | Can Actor Training Help Discover the Self? A study of common features in Pina Bausch's anti-method and Margolis Method                                                              |
|                                 |                                                      | Xana Sousa                 | The Soul of Acting Technique: Comparing Margolis Method's <i>seed</i> , and Noh Theatre's <i>hata</i> (according to Yoshi Oida's take on it)                                        |
|                                 |                                                      |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 17:30<br>19:00                  | <u>Panel 3</u><br>Theorizing Margolis Method         | Susana Egea                | The Margolis Method and the late Stanislavski: Connections and reviews                                                                                                              |
|                                 |                                                      | Boris Daussà-Pastor        | Theatre training through principles of nature and principles of the social/political object                                                                                         |
|                                 |                                                      | Anna Vendrell              | Training in Universal principles with Western and American theatrical structures                                                                                                    |
| SUNDAY – JAN 14 <sup>th</sup>   |                                                      |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Time                            |                                                      | Participant                | Title                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 10:30<br>12:00                  | <u>Panel 4</u><br>Margolis Method and music          | Aleix Duarri               | A comparative between musical structure of "phrase" and Margolis Method's "packets", and how this design level is critical in order to create a theatrical language based in action |
|                                 |                                                      | Ana Bustamante             | The <i>internalized singing</i> and the voice of the actor                                                                                                                          |
|                                 |                                                      | Jennifer Madsen            | The use of the Margolis Method in teaching vocalists musicality, interpretation, timing, and performance skills                                                                     |
|                                 |                                                      |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 12:30<br>14:00                  | <u>Panel 5</u><br>Play structures and Puppetry       | Lexi De Sollar             | The Actor-Playwright: Using the Margolis Method as a Tool for Creating Actor-Centered Text                                                                                          |
|                                 |                                                      | Christina Schmutz          | Text usage, and the critical autonomy                                                                                                                                               |
|                                 |                                                      | Kate Brehm                 | Margolis Method for puppetry and object theatre training                                                                                                                            |
| 14:00<br>14:30                  | Closing Remarks                                      | Boris, Michal, Kari        |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 14:30<br>16:00                  | Farewell Lunch                                       | All conference presenters  |                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## **Abstracts and Bios**

(alphabetical order)

### **Kate Brehm**

(Independent Artist)

Title: Margolis Method for puppetry and object theatre training

Abstract:

Theater training is ready for a revolution. The performance skillsets of actors, musicians, dancers, and puppeteers are each unique from one another. Though the scales of the musician or bar exercises of a dancer are established methods of basic training, the mastery of which prepares the student for advanced artistic endeavors, the western actor and puppeteer has no such vocabulary. Through sixteen years of training in the Margolis Method with its founder, Kari Margolis, I have learned the foundations of an actor skillset. Over the same period of time I pursued the art of devising, directing, designing, and performing puppetry. This cross-training inspired me to create a list of performance skills specific to the puppeteer. In this paper I inspect which Margolis Method exercises most fully address them and how. This research and my teaching of it seeks to revolutionize puppeteer training. Additionally, it unexpectedly opens a window onto a theoretical inquiry into the phenomenological nature of the performance of puppetry.

Bio:

Kate Brehm is a movement director who performs and devises original works of visual theater using puppets, scenic dramaturgy, and physical acting. Her NYC-based company, imnotlost, has been producing theater and events since 2003, including: *Things Fall Apart*, *Discrepancies*, *The Eye Which We Do Not Have*, *Dark Space*, *The Poofs*, *Fireside Chats*, *Dance Halls*, and *Slutty Puppets*. She regularly performs and develops work for MacArthur genius Basil Twist including: *The Rite of Spring*, *Sister's Follies*, *Dogugaeshi*, *Symphonie Fantastique* and *Petrushka*. She teaches visual thinking and performing through her classes, *Moving Objects* and *Performing Design*. Her essay, *Movement is Consciousness*, is published in the Routledge Companion to Puppetry and Material Performance. She has 1750 hours of training over twenty years in the Margolis Method.

### **Ana Bustamante Rosero**

(Independent Artist)

Title: The *internalized singing* and the voice of the actor

Abstract:

This study has its origin in a previous research on the pedagogy of the Corporeal Mime, specifically in the teaching of Corporeal Mime's repertoire at Moveo, the mime school of Barcelona. The path travelled and the observation drew my attention into a specific

aspect of the teaching of the technique: the "internalized singing." That is to say the particular use of the voice during the exercises: through onomatopoeias, unarticulated sounds or variations and deformations of words in tone and harmony, to make evident the muscular intensity and the resistance in each movement. This vocal mime "was a kind of choreography of dynamo-rhythm: to feel and hear the way time, tension, and intensity work and to imitate it in movement" (Alaniz, *Mime Journal* 24, 2013, 18). I realized that Margolis Method also uses voice in a similar way. It resorts to specific phrases that help us to do what we say we do, to integrate voice and body, in order to understand the subtleties of the dynamics and even the anatomy and articulation of the action. This way of singing the action engages breathing which is linked to the actor's organicity, and gives account of the alternation between effort and relaxation, helping the actor to work and live the gesture in its material reality. This analysis will lead us to see how in Corporeal Mime the idea of dynamo-rhythm and real effort lies at the center of this internalized singing, while in Margolis Method the use of the voice creates a vulnerability on the actor's energy, as well as in his voice, preparing the organicity of the intention in movement and in vocal gesture.

Bio:

Ana Bustamante Rosero is an actress and theater teacher born in Ecuador. She graduated from Berty Tovías, Gestural Theatrer School on Lecoq's pedagogy and Moveo, Corporeal Mime's School, both in Barcelona. She continued her academic studies at the University of Vincennes Saint-denis (Paris 8) where she obtained the Theater Studies Degree. In 2017, she earned the Theater Studies Master's Degree at Universidad Autónoma of Barcelona and Institut del Teatre. She has performed in diferent companies from Ecuador, France and Spain. She works in Cía. Sonámbulos, and she is an active member of Colectivo El Panal, Ibero-American Association of Art, Culture, Science and Education that develops projects where art is the starting point to create social and educational impact in Spain, Mexico and Ecuador.

## **Boris Daussà-Pastor**

(Institut del Teatre de Barcelona)

Title: Theatre training through principles of nature and principles of the social/political object

Abstract:

This paper builds on my work developed in the last three years looking at the particularities of Margolis Method and its core set of principles that. I've argued elsewhere that looking at general principles of physics and nature to develop a methodology for actor training is a more successful approach than those of former researchers such as Barba or Grotowski, who looked at specific cultural expressions to find the general principles that are at the basis of performativity. I will expand the notion of using the principles of physics, adding to the discussion a second set of principles that I believe is essential to Margolis Method work but hasn't been articulated until now. I argue that the principles of physics and nature as presented in Margolis Method provide us with the methodology to understand how everything behaves, and thus help us manifest behaviors in ways that are perceived as natural

(and conversely, in unnatural ways, if this is what we want our characters to do). But I also argue that we need another set of principles in order to be able to manifest on stage something that speaks to the nature of humanity. I propose that the relationship between inside and outside inherent in Margolis Method adds the social and political dimension to the work. The clear understanding and manifestation of the relationship inside/outside help us delineate the self and the other, and thus provide a clear understanding of the world as we usually experience it as conscious humans. Thus, the principles of physics and nature will help us manifest everything in a way that is perceived as viscerally natural or real, and the principles of inside/outside relationships will add the dimension of human consciousness, thus finding in these two sets of principles the basics of theatricality.

Bio:

Boris Daussà-Pastor is a performer, director, and theatre scholar from Barcelona. He is currently professor and Head of the Theatre Theory and History Department at Institut del Teatre in Barcelona. He earned a Theatre MA degree from Hunter College, and taught at Hunter College and Brooklyn College for four years. He earned an MPhil in Theatre, and reached ABD status at the Graduate Center-CUNY Theatre PhD Program before moving back to Barcelona from New York. He started training with Kari Margolis in 2005 and he has been involved ever since in a number of creative, pedagogic and research projects linked to Margolis Method. He has published several articles in academic journals as well as a training guide for *kathakali* body-exercise routine. He is an active member of the international academic community, having served as a board member of the Association for Asian Performance (AAP), and currently serving at the Executive Committee of the International Federation for Theatre Research (FIRT/IFTR), where he is also Chair of the Working Groups Subcommittee. Boris is active in theatre in Barcelona and abroad. He is assistant director and movement assistant for the Barcelona award-winning theatre company Dei Furbi. He certified as Margolis Method Faculty, and became the founder and director of the Margolis Method BCN school, where he is also main faculty.

## **Anna DeMers**

(Middlesex County College / Kean University)

Title:           Embodying Margolis Method: Research in Cognitive Science and Actor Training

Abstract:

This essay analyzes the effectiveness of Margolis Method through the lens of research in theatre, linguistics, philosophy, neuroscience, and phenomenology, by examining recent discoveries in the area of cognitive science that contradict the long held notion of a mind-body duality. Dating back to philosophers like Plato, Descartes, and Diderot, Western philosophers have held on strongly to a mind-body division. This duality is deeply embedded in our traditions and our languages, and has resulted in many actor-training techniques that divide the mind and body.

Cognitive science proposes that there is an inherent connection and inseparable nature of the mind and body, providing evidence that human processing of



thoughts/emotion/reason, is indeed, deeply embodied. By applying research in processes such as conceptualization, metaphors, and sensorimotor systems, this essay provides a methodology for comparing acting techniques to better understand how we can train actors to utilize these cognitive processes.

The essay concludes with an analysis of Margolis Method and a proposed theory for identifying how and why the method's practicable exercises are embodiment and based in the utilization of cognitive processing functions. Margolis Method is successful because it provides a means of "consciously" practicing aspects of acting and the expression of thoughts/feelings/actions that most often occur at the sub or unconscious level. By understanding cognitive human processes, Margolis Method scholar/teacher/artists can continue to develop approaches to the technique of acting and the way in which this knowledge is transmitted through embodiment.

Bio:

Anna Sycamore DeMers is an acting, movement and ensemble theatre educator. She is Head of the Theatre Program at Middlesex County College in Edison New Jersey and Adjunct: Movement Specialist at Kean University. She approaches theatre making and teaching from multiple perspectives as a director, dancer, choreographer, playwright and new media designer. Her pedagogical practice is based on developing the total actor: body, voice and mind through psychophysical methods. This is deeply influenced by her training and certification with Margolis Method along with the practices and theories of teachers Lecoq and Grotowski (Steven Wangh lineage). Her course work also includes training in body awareness through the lens of Laban/Bartenieff, Viewpoints and contemplative practices such as yoga and meditation. She specializes in developing new work through collaborative, devised and self-generative approaches grounded in practices from Margolis, Moment Work, Action Theatre and dance composition. She has a Master's of Fine Arts from Sarah Lawrence College with a focus in directing and movement, and her B.A. in Theatre from Rollins College. Please visit [www.AnnaDeMers.com](http://www.AnnaDeMers.com) for portfolio materials of professional and academic work.

**Lexi DeSollar**

(Millikin University)

Title: The Actor-Playwright: Using the Margolis Method as a Tool for Creating Actor-Centered Text

Abstract:

One of the primary purposes of the Margolis Method is to create actor-director-playwrights who are not only able to act within the limitations of a given story, but to create new pieces of theatre. Principally, focus has been placed on devising new works by beginning with actors "in the space," often using the Method's exercises and devices to explore themes and relationships. However, when writing my verse drama, *The Hour of Peace*, I began to understand that the same exercises could also be used to bring more intention to traditional scriptwriting (i.e. beginning from the page). By using the physics of language, internal and external worlds, and fluctuation between Hope and Despair to inform my construction of language, I sought to create a text that was clear and multidimensional.



Without the actor to give it breath and purpose, of course, the script alone is not a piece of theatre. But, by inherently including Margolis Method principles, it becomes a springboard for the performer and a strong foundation on which a piece of theatre can be built. When paired with dramatic physics, poetical devices gain dramatic potential, momentum, and purpose. The story is not only one audience members can see in the actor, but one they can hear and feel embedded in the language.

In other words, even when beginning the creative process from the script, there should be no isolation between playwright, director, and performer. In order to create a holistic piece of theatre, playwrights should consider their actors and vice versa (a concept which the Method so clearly enables). The following paper is an exploration in the ways we can continue to bring specificity to storytelling onstage—knowing that it will elicit creativity.

Bio:

A 2016 graduate of Millikin University with a BFA in Acting, Lexi has recently begun her professional theatre career in Chicago – most recently touring with Theatre Unspeakable as a part of The American Revolution. She has engaged with the Method in various immersions and workshops hosted by Millikin, through Millikin’s Movement curriculum, as an active member of the online community, and by attending the summer session in Barryville in 2016. She also had the opportunity to explore the Method from a pedagogical perspective with Millikin faculty member Denise Myers in the summer of 2015 as a part of a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship grant through Millikin.

**Aleix Duarri**

(Independent Artist)

Title: A comparative between musical structure of “phrase” and Margolis Method's “packets”, and how this design level is critical in order to create a theatrical language based on action

Abstract:

The object of this paper will be to open a debate about how Margolis Method offers the possibility to design, research and think in action-oriented terms about a specific structural level that is often underestimated by theater theory and acting technique and how this level is relevant from a dramaturgic/playwriting point of view. It will be argued that the design level is critical in order to elaborate a performative language that roots in the main idea of action. In order to point out this structural level and to think about its role in a performance I will make comparisons with Western musical language. Specifically, this paper will compare the objective notion of measure or bar in western music and its relationship with the more subjective and reception-oriented concept of phrase and how this relationship also exists in the design level of beats/packages as they are called in Margolis method. The paper will also conjecture why musical structural terms are more appropriate than literary ones when applying them to performance and why Margolis structural terms are closer to those from music than those from literature.

#### Bio:

Aleix Duarri is a director, writer and performer born in Barcelona in 1986. He studied Dramatic Art in Institut del Teatre, specializing in stage direction, and is currently attending to Margolis Method. He has been awarded with the *Marqués de Bradomin* prize for his play *Jo sóc Penteu* and has recently done dramaturgy for dance (*Bonito y qué mas*) and theater projects (*Happy Birthday Toñito*). His works as a stage director include collective creation (*La fiesta en paz, Bonzo*), stagings his own plays (*Seré carronya per als dofins que ara em somriuen*), a Shakespeare adaptation (*Up all night*, after *Midsummer Night's Dream*) and a collaboration with a circus company (*Aaaart*). As a teacher he has conducted a script workshop that took place in a squatted bank office. He is nowadays researching narrative aspects of movement and action.

### **Susana Egea Ruiz**

(Institut del Teatre de Barcelona / Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya)

Title: The Margolis Method and the late Stanislavski: Connections and reviews

#### Abstract:

During his last 20 years Konstantin Stanislavski worked with opera singers. His work with this kind of performers helped him realize that his system failed in one specific point: the training of the body. It was at this moment and through his work with the singers that he invited again Meyerhold to work next to him, and he began to focus on a more physical work. It was at this time when concepts as *radiation* would begin also to appear in his language. In fact, his work with singers helped him extend new points of view to his work with actors. It is from this late Stanislavski that I establish points of connection with Margolis Method, considering also the general framework of the Stanislavski system. Considering Margolis Method not only as a way to train the actor's body, but also a way to build subtext and emotions, I analyze some aspects from Margolis Method in the training of the live body, such as: the extension, or the relationship to gravity, attending to relations with concepts as *radiation* from the late Stanislavski; or with ways in the creation of the subtext; and proposing also some new points of view from elements of the *stanislavskian* system that can be developed from Margolis Method.

#### Bio

Susana Egea Ruiz (Barcelona, 1968) actress, stage director and researcher in performing arts. She obtained her PhD in Performing Arts at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (2016). For her work entitled "Actor training in opera: Analysis of a specificity" she was granted the *Artez Blai International Award for Performing Arts Research* (2011). She graduated in Romance Philology at the University of Barcelona (1996) and received training in music, dance and drama. As an actress she worked with directors such as: Adolfo Marsillach, Calixto Bieito, Ferran Madico, Hansel Cereza, Antonio Simon, Hasko Weber or Malena Espinosa, amongst others. As a stage director, her work is mainly interdisciplinary. She has been invited to attend several courses as a teacher of acting training as the Guildhall School of Music and Drama or the Gnesin Academy of Music of Moscow. She is professor at the Escola Superior de Música de

Catalunya, where she currently teaches Lyric Theatre and Acting Skills for Singers and where she has been in charge of the stage direction of the Opera Workshop since 2009; and she teaches also at the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona. She is the author of titles such as *Actor training for opera* (ed. Artez Blai, Bilbao: 2012), and *Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Chaliapin: operatic interpretation* (Madrid, 2017)

## **Constanza Garabatos Funes**

(Independent Artist)

Title: Can Actor Training Help Discover the Self? A study of common features in Pina Bausch's anti-method and Margolis Method

### Abstract:

Neuroscientist António Damásio heads the Brain and Creativity Institute at the University of Southern California, where he explores the relationship between brain and consciousness. His research has shown that emotions play a central role in self-consciousness. He also claims that working with body language, creativity and perception could approach us to the self. In this paper I explore whether different actor's training or creative processes could provide us with tools to gain insight about the self. I center my research in Margolis Method as actor's training and *tantztheater* as a creative process, aiming at the identification of a common set of features which can be useful for self-consciousness. Why? Because performers are people who train themselves to learn how to manage emotions and become an "emotion provoker" *with* or *in* their own "actor's instrument": the addition between the physical body and the whole mind. Although Pina Bausch never spoke about having a method (she rather rejects it) and Margolis tries to avoid any aesthetic limitation, they actually try to open performers' minds. Upon studying the theoretical and practical points of view of Pina Bausch's *tantztheater* anti-method, I experienced in my own instrument Margolis Method, allowing me to conclude that both systems have common features which are in turn utterly related with self-consciousness. The common features are: physical and mental preparation, muscular and vocal expression, body control, an individual research for a personal and intuitive scenic language, organicity, breathing and improvisation. To conclude, I claim that these are the actor's training's spine at many Theater Training Methods which look for something beyond the particular play, as Grotowsky – who is omnipresent in every theatrical theory related with our own perception – did.

### Bio:

Constanza Garabatos Funes completed a degree in Classical Philology at Santiago's de Compostela University (2008-14) and a M.A. in Theater studies research at Barcelona's Autonomous University in collaboration with the Institut del Teatre (2016-17). Her career interests focus on attempting to relate theoretical and academic theater studies with scenic practice and experiential research, as well as different ways of expression or scenic languages. For this purpose, she uses a mixture of poetry, music, dance and theater. Constanza avoided official itineraries in her artistic curriculum; instead, she attended different private schools such as Vladimir Tzekov in Granada (2013-15) or Aartistica in Vigo (2016-today), both in Spain. She also attended various monographic

courses or laboratories in Spain and Italy (2011-12). Her training is based on contemporary theater and dance, vocal technique and writing and directing from personal experience. As a vital search she looks for those tools or skills that actor training would give to society in order to bring people closer to themselves and be in contact with their own body and whole mind. For this purposes she develops tools for experimental movement, expression and consciousness workshops.

## **Michal Kobialka**

(University of Minnesota)

Title: Of Space and Objects: A Historiographic Preamble to Margolis Method

### Abstract:

Jerzy Grotowski. Bertolt Brecht. Etienne Decroux. The need to challenge social norms and to push the instrument by breaking the boundaries. The desire to stimulate the audience to see other options and the politics of the moment. A true articulation of the specificity of the form and the process of molding raw matter into a precise gesture. These are some of the ideas, which materialize in Kari Margolis's artistic work. Even though they are so clearly manifested in performance, Kari often teases us: "Why a new method?" This conference will indubitably offer many answers to this question. I will leave it to the people who have been working with Kari for years.

This presentation is a historiographic preamble to Margolis Method. If indeed, it can be argued that historiography is the encounter with the Other—a space, a body, an object—in which the Other forces me to articulate a movement of thought; to marvel that it exists, to wonder what made it possible, to seek the traces that formed the landscape, to discover in this history supposedly laid to rest 'how and to what extent it would be possible to think otherwise,' let me ask: What is Margolis Method? How does Margolis Method intersect with practices, which she claims she had inherited, and those other practices, which have not yet been named? What does it mean to talk about Margolis Method historiographically, rather than on the level of practice?

Space. Body. Objects. These words epitomize the immanence of the topography of performance. And to be more precise: this topography, which includes every movement of bodies as well as every arrangement of sites of performance, is always accompanied by a certain experience of time, space, matter which is implicit in it and, maybe more important, conditions it. If, indeed, no new topography of performance, or a method, is possible without taking into consideration how space and body/objects are experienced mentally and physically under specific and specifiable historical circumstances and their representational practices, what is Margolis Method and how does it align itself with other poetics proliferating in contemporary performance space?

### Bio:

Michal Kobialka is a Professor of Theatre in the Department of Theatre Arts & Dance at the University of Minnesota. He has published over 100 articles, essays and reviews in *Årsberetning* (Denmark), *Assaph* (Israel), *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, *Journal of Theatre and Drama* (Israel), *Medieval Perspectives*, *Modern Drama*

(Canada), *Performing Arts Journal*, *Performance Research* (England), *Theatre Annual*, *Sala Preta* (Brazil), *The Drama Review*, *Theatre Journal*, *Theatre History Studies*, *Theatre Nordic Studies* (Sweden), *Theatre Research International* (England), *Theatre Survey*, *Slavic and East European Journal*, *Soviet and East-European Performance*, and *Modern Language Quarterly*. He has presented papers on medieval, eighteenth-century and contemporary European theatre, as well as theatre historiography at various regional, national, and international conferences. He is the author of two books on Tadeusz Kantor's theatre, *A Journey Through Other Spaces: Essays and Manifestos, 1944-1990* [University of California Press, 1993; the book was translated into Romanian under the title: *O Călătorie în Alte Spații: Teatrul lui Tadeusz Kantor* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2010)] and *Further on, Nothing: Tadeusz Kantor's Theatre* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009; the book received the honorary mention for 2010 ATHE Outstanding Book Award). He is the editor of *Of Borders and Thresholds: Theatre History, Practice, and Theory* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999), a co-editor (with Barbara Hanawalt) of *Medieval Practices of Space* (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), and a co-editor (with Rosemarie Bank) of *Theatre/Performance Historiography: Time, Space, Matter* (Palgrave, 2015). His book on the early medieval drama and theatre, *This Is My Body: Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages* (University of Michigan Press, 1999) received the 2000 ATHE Annual Research Award for Outstanding Book in Theatre Practice and Pedagogy. He has held the *McKnight Land-Grant Professorship* (1991-1993; University of Minnesota), the *Fesler-Lampert Professorship in the Humanities* (2003-04; University of Minnesota), the *Hoffman Chair* at Florida State University (2004-05), the *Belle van Zuylen Chair* at Utrecht University (2008-09), the *Imagine Fund Arts and Humanities Chair* at the University of Minnesota (2010-12); was designated as *Scholar of the College* in the College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota (2007-10); and has been awarded the *Paul W. Frenzel Professorship* in Liberal Arts (2016-21).

## **Kym Longhi**

(University of Minnesota)

**Title:** Margolis Method and Brechtian Theater in Practice: A Director's Notebook

### **Abstract:**

What is the relationship between Margolis Method and Brecht's dialectical theater in practice? How does Margolis Method offer tangible rehearsal approaches that implement Brecht's theories and evolve theater practice? I have been implementing Margolis Method for over 16 years in a University setting as a teacher and director, and have found the Method to be a crucial starting point for my projects because it evokes specific creative choices that balance committed physicality with intellectual clarity. As a theater maker, I resonate with Brecht's belief that theatre should challenge the audience to think beyond an emotional response and question what they see, existing in the dialectical tension between empathy and choice. Margolis Method's three-dimensional approach, which simultaneously strengthens the skillsets of the actor, director and playwright, provides practical exercises and new insights for

achieving a heightened level of awareness on the stage and evoking a dialectical dynamic for the audience.

I will offer case studies from my own director/writer's perspective of four different University of Minnesota productions that examine how Margolis Method can be utilized to develop new tactics for staging, inspired by Brecht's theater. The productions range from devised work to classic texts: *Oil! & The Jungle* (devised work), *Medea* (Greek tragedy), *A Penny for Brecht* (devised work) and Brecht/Weill/Hauptmann's *Three Penny Opera* (musical spectacle). By providing a detailed discussion of the workshop exercises, rehearsal techniques and staging concepts used in each production, I will analyze the practical and theoretical connections between Margolis Method and Brechtian concepts such as *Verfremdungseffekt* and *Gestus*. Reflecting on my own discoveries and evolving techniques, I will consider how theater innovators Kari Margolis and Bertolt Brecht continue to impact the evolution of theater practice.

Bio:

While Kym's 35 years of performing and directing experience range from classical speaking theater to experimental theater, her passion is creating highly physical theatrical work through a collaborative process. As a featured performer and ensemble member with Margolis Brown ADAPTORS Company from 1994 - 2006, Kym participated in the development of *The Bed Experiment*, *The Human Show*, *Vanishing Point*, *Vidpires!*, and *Starry Messenger*. She is currently active in the Twin Cities' vibrant theatre community – directing and developing new work. Directing projects include *SenseAbility* (Craig Harris/Interference Arts for Open Eye's Platform Series), *Bluebeard's Dollhouse* (Combustible Company), *Donald Giovanni in Cornlandia* (Mixed Precipitation's 2016 Picnic Operetta) and *Herocycle* (FTF Works/Combustible Company), for which she received a 2012 Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant. Current and upcoming projects include *Queering of the Shrew*, a critique of gender normativity in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* and a new translation of Moliere's *Imaginary Invalid* (Combustible Company) coming in April of 2018. Currently Kym is Co-artistic Director of Combustible Company and serves as faculty at the University of Minnesota, where she has taught Margolis Method since 2001.

## Jennifer Madsen

(Snow College / The Soundhouse / Jennifer Madsen Vocal Studio)

Title: The use of the Margolis Method in teaching vocalists musicality, interpretation, timing, and performance skills

Abstract:

Based on my work with a large group of vocalists at Snow College, The Soundhouse and in private practice in the Jennifer Madsen Vocal Studio, I would like to propose that the universal truths explored in the Margolis Method have auxiliary correlations to the work of vocalizing and performance for a singer/performer and that the work is a very efficient way of teaching musical concepts that were once thought of as being innate, but are actually learn-able and train-able skills. Drawing from the Margolis Method, I will include several key concepts and their actor prep exercises that directly

correlate to a singer's approach to expression, technique and performance. In conclusion I would like to prove the usefulness of the Margolis Method in a private and institutional setting for teaching once thought of as elusive qualities to vocalists, that learning and mastering the Margolis Method is a worthwhile pursuit for vocal teachers and performance coaches. I would also like to encourage the continued study of ancillary uses of the method that extends beyond the actor into the world of art, sculpture, music and vocal performance.

Bio:

Jennifer Madsen is a prized fixture on performing stages of the West. A lifelong singer and actress, her early career included being a cast member of Brigham Young University's famed performing group the Young Ambassadors. That experience founded her love of the art and afforded her the chance to sing, dance, and act for audiences across the globe. Using her strong foundational understanding for the craft, Jennifer left BYU and began to formally instruct students in all areas of performing. Her students from these early days have gone on to lead successful careers as Tony and Emmy Award-winning artists. One such student even went on to become a Star Search season finale winner. Her celebrated instruction continues to this day, as a former voice and musical theatre instructor at Utah Valley University and currently as part of Snow College's award-winning music department. Jennifer served for seven years the premier vocal coach for the performers of the Soundhouse. Jennifer Madsen studied voice with Jeri Clinger and big band vocalist from Stan Kenton's orchestra, William "Smiling Bill" Stoker. Her recent studies include spending several summers in New York City completing her professor's certification in the Margolis Method for Acting. Her continued studies in this methodology infuse her vocal performance studio with techniques and tools for helping musicians and performers to connect viscerally with their music, lyrics and performance.

## **Denise Myers & Katie Meyer**

(Millikin University, co-written paper)

Title: Analytically Balancing Fluid Emotions in Rehearsal

Abstract:

"In and Out of the Chair with Hope and Despair" is a Margolis Method acting exercise that allows students to investigate and to practice physical transitions between emotional states. A character rarely is driven by a pure emotion, but rather by a flow of emotions moving in two directions. Hope mixes with Despair on a scale of 1-10 that allows for specificity on the character's journey to win her objective.

In the context of directing, we use this exercise also as an analytical tool with actors to specify the change of emotional life of a character through a scene, from scene to scene, and between characters. After we have worked a scene in rehearsal, we ask an actor to note and to explain where and why her character begins on the Hope/Despair scale (a 4 of Hope and 6 of Despair, for example), and to decide where she lands at the end (a 7 of Hope and a 3 of Despair). Then the specific points of action in the scene can be found which cause these changes. Deliberately stating a beginning and ending point gives also a chance to compare the journeys of different character's



which reveal more emotional connections.

Hope and Despair are the perfect terms in this investigation because they are active nouns – implying both a process and a product. Characters pursue their objectives with Hope of success, which provides the forward motion in action. Despair gives emotional obstacles and supportive resistance with which to work dynamically.

We have used this exercise successfully in rehearsals for plays as diverse as *Blood Wedding* by Federico Garcia Lorca, *As You Like It* by Shakespeare, and *Intimate Apparel* by Lynn Nottage.

#### **Denise Myers Bio:**

Denise Myers has completed University Professor Level 3 Certification in Margolis Method at the Margolis Method Center in Barryville, New York. She is a Professor of Theatre and Dance at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois where she teaches a variety of courses in movement, acting, and improvisation and directs on the Mainstage season.

#### **Katie Meyer Bio:**

Katie Meyer is a current senior at Millikin University pursuing a BFA in Acting and a double minor in Communication and Dance. She has had the pleasure of working in theatre for most of her young life as both a performer and a director for youth theatre. Her outlook on theatre was forever impacted when she had the honor to be under the direction of Kari Margolis in the devised work of the production, *Headshot* when it was brought to the Millikin main stage. Meyer fell in love with the Margolis Method and continued to work with Denise Myers on productions and in classes to further her education on the Method. She was recently seen as Mrs. Van Buren in *Intimate Apparel* (Millikin University). Other credits include Audrey in *As You Like It*, Mara Love in *Headshot* (Millikin University), and Estelle in *No Exit*, (Pipe Dreams Studio Theatre). None of this would be possible without her loving parents, Denzel, and their endless support and outpouring optimism!"

## **Sadah Espii Proctor**

(Independent Artist)

**Title:** Bridging the Divide between the Real and the Virtual: Margolis Method treatment of space

#### **Abstract:**

Multimedia theatre opens up the possibility for multiple realities and fictional spaces to appear on stage. Among those possibilities, multimedia theatre should be able to bring together technology and performers before an audience, integrating them in a shared theatrical space. However, multimedia environments inhabit an intangible virtual space that is not necessarily connected to the three-dimensional reality of living bodies, which makes the integration between the virtual and the real challenging. As a professional of theatre and a designer of multi-platform experiences, I wonder how one brings together a disembodied technological environment with live bodies in the space. In this paper, I consider the treatment of space and spatial relationships proposed by Margolis Method as a useful tool to understand the main principles that

help us give meaning to space, thus applying them to virtual environments and making them useful tools in creative a cohesive live-multimedia experience. I specifically look at Margolis Method application of history and travel in space, and review some of my experiences in designing and performing my graduate thesis performance/installation *Sanctuary*, and designing my spatial audio composition *Preface of a Gray*. The intention of this paper is to look at Margolis Method as a useful tool for understanding spatial relationships, a tool that could be used beyond the actual consideration of three-dimensional real spaces and into the design of virtual environments that will be perceived by the audience with a greater sense of reality or integration with the real.

Bio:

Sadah Espii Proctor is the founder of Espii Studios, an experiential design studio that develops and produces multi-platform narratives, immersive experiences, and interactive audiovisual systems. As a director, dramaturg, and sound/media designer working in intermedia performance and virtual reality, her work is influenced by Visual Kei, Cyberpunk, and Afrofuturist movements. Proctor is a VR Filmmaker in Oculus' VR For Good Creators Lab and has been a resident of Spatial Music Workshop (Virginia Tech), Con Artist Collective, and VR Lab and VR/AR Studio (NYU MAGNET + Timewave Festival). Credits: *El Otro Lado Del Destino/The Other Side of Destiny* (Sound Designer), *This Sinking Island* (Sound/Projection Designer), *Moby Dick Rehearsed* (Sound Designer), *Marie Curie Learns to Swim* (Dramaturg).

## **Christina Schmutz**

(Institut del Teatre de Barcelona)

Title: Text usage, and the critical autonomy

Abstract:

Changes of social reality and perception patterns provoke new theatrical aesthetics and research methods. Traditional theatre has been attacked by a downright invasion of reality that finally became the new aesthetic rule and socially turned into a true hype. The need arose to set an autocritical and autoreflexive corrective against the blessing of immediacy and direct, barrier-free communication. Overcoming the postdramatic dispositive, André Eiermann proposed 2009 his "post-spectacular theatre" for debate, the practice and aesthetics of which unmask the postdramatic immediacy as affirmative and conformist art politics and practice, introducing alternative subversive aesthetics in the form of new distances between stage and audience, and the poetic mediation through a "third" instance. However, texts, particularly literary texts, were still considered as secondary – a return to dramatic text theatre was not intended. Criticizing postdramatic theatre, the new (postspectacular) formats are interested in creative playing – the applied text being but one aesthetic constituent among others. Thus acting, conceived as mediation between stage and audience, more than ever requires not only shaping abilities but also a ludic creativity in employing one's aesthetic means. This paper examines in what way the Margolis Method may promote the autonomy and creativity of an actor, opening up possibilities

to deal with text in an autonomous form. It asks how embodiment may be connected to such text usage, actualizing the old question: What does someone do who truly plays?

Bio:

Christina Schmutz Studied Economy and Philology in Freiburg (Germany). In 1998 moved to Barcelona with a scholarship on contemporary dramaturgy. In Barcelona puts on stage contemporary plays of German writers such as Falk Richter, Igor Bauersima, Sybille Berg, Roland Schimmelpfennig, Anja Hilling, and Elfriede Jelinek (for the Festival de Sitges, Nau Ivanow, Espai Escènic Joan Brossa, GREC Festival, Videoarte loop Festival, Teatre Tantarantana). Since the beginning of 2006 in conjunction with theatre director and theorist Frithwin Wagner-Lippok initiates research and stage projects on postdramatic and performative theatre. Since then also pursues teoretical-practical investigation of new theatre forms through various free projects. Resumes her theses career at the Universitat Autònoma Barcelona and Institut del Teatre Barcelona (director: Francesc Foguet). Lectures on new theatre forms at congresses and universities. Works furthermore as profesor at Eòlia, Institut del Teatre Barcelona and translator. Publications in *Punctum*, *Pompeu Fabra*, *Université Paris-Sorbonne* (2016), *Actes III i IV Simposi Internacional d'Arts Escèniques*, Universitat d'Alacant (2016, 2013), *Punctum&GRAE Universitat Autònoma*, Barcelona (2015), *Estudis Escènics*, Barcelona (2015; 2011; 2009), *Theater der Zeit*, Berlín (2010), *Pausa*, Barcelona (2016; 2012, 2010), *International Symposion on Contemporary Catalan Theatre 05*, Barcelona (2005), website [www.lecturas2go-performaticas.eu](http://www.lecturas2go-performaticas.eu) (2011)

## **Xana Sousa**

(Independent Artist)

Title: The Soul of Acting Technique: Comparing Margolis Method's *seed*, and Noh Theatre's *hata* (according to Yoshi Oida's take on it)

Abstract:

Acting techniques are usually focused on three main areas: body and movement; voice and text; and some intangible element that is sometimes characterized as emotion, intention, energy, or else. Each acting technique develops different solutions particularly for this third area of the intangible: mental images, affective memory, sensitivity to the atmosphere or quality of a character, etc. Some of these techniques locate the "motor" of this intangible force of the character in a specific area in the body, namely the center, the core, our guts, but too often in an abstract way that may result confusing for the actor.

These techniques rarely offer specific tools to work on this intangible element from a down-to-earth practical perspective. I've been fortunate to experience two forms of actor training that address this successfully, one of them Western and the other one Asian, sharing aspects with striking similarity. The concept of "seed" proposed by Margolis Method, and the concept of "hata" proposed in the Japanese Noh theatre, as described by Yoshi Oida. My first contact with Margolis Method was a practical experience, and from the very first exercise we were told that body, voice and

motivation should be worked in conjunction. They call this intangible emotional motivation “seed”, which has a particular timing of preparation and action. I immediately saw the parallel with Yoshi Oida’s writings.

Yoshi Oida, a Japanese Noh actor that moved to Paris at 40 years of age and realized the synergies of Japanese and Western theatre. In his books he shares this symbiotic vision. Even though the use of voice and body in Noh theatre is highly conventionalized and very different from the Western approach, I was particularly struck by the similarities between what Yoshi Oida calls “hata” and the concept of “seed” proposed by Margolis Method. This coincidence is the starting point for the exploration of similarities between both forms of actor training with regards to character motivation and ways to generate such motivation or intangible impulse. This paper stands as a preliminary approach to this subject.

Bio:

Xana Sousa Gómez is a communication manager, actress and performer. She recently completed a Master’s Degree of Theatre Studies at the Institut del Teatre and Autonomous University of Barcelona. Formerly living in México, where she studied Graduate Interdisciplinary Art called “Tránsitos” at Cenart (Arts Nacional Centre of México). She studied her Bachelor’s Degree on Audiovisuals Communication in Madrid while studying acting at Estudio Recabarren. Xana also completed a one year specialisation on acting for cinema with Eduardo Milewicks and Sara Torres. She’s trained in workshops on several techniques such as pantomime, directing, actor’s dramaturgy, improvisation, acting or movement with teachers and scene directors as Alberto Villareal, Boris Schoemann, David Hevia, Jose Alberto Gallardo, Pilar Villanueva or Laura Almela in México, or Carment Torrent and Boris Daussà in Barcelona. Xana has more than 10 years’ experience in theatre, in plays like *Gravity of Silence*, *Corpus*, *Tell me which is lie* or *Hotel Estrella y Media* in theatres like Salvador Novo, Foro Shakespeare or Teatro La Capilla. She is also a press manager for cultural events, and theatre manager, as well as teacher of workshops of theatre, acting for camera, public speaking and voice. She is written for several newspapers and websites.

## **Anna Vendrell Pleixats**

(Independent Artist)

Title: Training in Universal principles with Western and American theatrical structures

Abstract:

When observing the world of acting pedagogy in many European countries, some issues will soon be noticed. There is a grand eclecticism of approaches towards what acting is, how to do it and how to teach it. That eclecticism would not be a problem if it weren’t for a preoccupying tendency to spread options that do not take technique, technical skills and investigation of the universal principles of performance as an essential part of the craft. Margolis Method stands out as a very thorough and rigorous method that has, as one of its first and foremost axioms, the statement that it is based in the laws of physics. In other words, that the principles by which the method is

designed are universal. The following paper intends to explore the idea of universality of theatrical principles, both as a theoretical idea and as a practical outcome. The work of Eugenio Barba and other scholars of Theatre Anthropology is the theoretical basis to analyze these universal principles, to then focus attention in their practical application in Margolis Method. A final question springs from the confirmation or negation of the method's universality: do universal principles mean universal cultural cosmogonies? Can universal principles translate into universal poetics?

Bio:

Anna Vendrell is a Catalan actress born in Barcelona in 1991. She trained as an actress in physical theatre in Institut del Teatre de Barcelona and graduated in 2015. Since then she has focused her interests as a performer in the practices of Butoh, body weather and Margolis Method. She has been training for a year and a half in the latest, has attended the Margolis Method Summer Program 2016 with a scholarship and is now presenting her first academic contribution to the method. Her concerns on theatre are also connected to its essence as a collective experience and its capacity to question what a society is, and she is currently taking the Institut del Teatre's Performative Arts and Social Action post-graduate course.

CONFERENCE CREDITS

Conference Alma Mater: Kari Margolis

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| Volunteers            | Rosa Puig, Ana Bustamante, Margolis Method BCN students, Study Abroad students. |

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|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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