



PICCOLO TEATRO DI MILANO

PICCOLO

# VajontS 23

04 - 15 SEPTEMBER 2023 | MILAN - ITALY

*'Choral action of civil theatre.  
One story, a hundred tales of  
water and future.'*

Artistic coordination by  
Michele Dell'Utri

Day of the show: 9 October  
2023

## **AZIONE CORALE DI TEATRO CIVILE. UN RACCONTO, CENTO RACCONTI DI ACQUA E DI FUTURO**

*VajontS 23 is a choral action of civil Theatre.*

*On the day of the sixtieth anniversary of the tragedy of Vajont (9 October 1963), Piccolo has come together with the Committee to promote La Fabbrica del Mondo and other cultural and civil institutions from all over Italy for a large-scale collective memorial in the form of an account, to evoke the past by looking to the future, to the water crisis, and to the policies and individual behaviour that need to be adopted now in order to prevent the disastrous reduction in the availability of drinking water.*

*The memory of a tragic moment in the collective memory of Italy serves as a cue for a collective reflection on a series of differing situations, from theatre to academia, from schools to institutions, all centres on the water crisis and the future of new generations in the era of the climate disruption.*

# THE RESIDENCY

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*On Monday 9 October, at 8.30 p.m., on the Strehler's big stage, VajontS 23 was staged, a choral participatory tale to honour the memory of that mountain community wiped off the face of history and geographical maps in a matter of minutes.*

*During the artistic residency, Michele Dell'Utri prepared and coordinated the presence and the participation of a chorus of 200 people and 20 narrators – as expression and voice of civil society, the world of culture and environmental commitment - in dialogue with Marco Paolini [1].*

*“We are not scientists, nor engineers, nor judges. We do not tell to judge but because we know that storytelling moves, activates a powerful algorithm of our species: feelings, emotions.” (Marco Paolini)*

*[1] Actor, author and director, indeed one of the most famous on the Italian theatrical scene, Marco Paolini (1956) is particularly known to the public for the strong civil commitment which characterises his performances.*

## **N.B. EXTRA ACTIVITY IN DIALOGUE WITH SCIENCE:**

*Professors from Politecnico di Milano were also involved in the project and directly included in the chorus. In collaboration with Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASTU) in the person of Professor Antonio Longo (architect and urbanist), we scheduled a “Before/After Vajont: a dialogue at Politecnico 60 years after the catastrophe”, on October 9th, at 4.30 pm. A dialogue with professors Renzo Rosso (full Professor of Hydrology and Hydraulic Constructions), Giovanni Beretta (full professor of Hydrogeology and Applied Hydrogeology, Università Statale di Milano) and Valeria Fedeli (coordinating the DASTU Project of Excellence on territorial fragilities 2023-2027), in collaboration with the School of Theatre Luca Ronconi (readings from VajontS 23).*

*[Prima dopo Vajont – DASTU \(polimi.it\)](http://polimi.it)*

## **BIOGRAPHY OF MICHELE DELL'UTRI**

*1983. An actor and instructor, he began working at a very early age. He acted for the Teatro di Roma and for the Emilia Romagna Teatro Fondazione as part of the project and show *Il ratto d'Europa*. Per un'archeologia dei saperi comunitari (Ubu 2013 special award winner) directed by Claudio Longhi, for the Teatro della Toscana and ERT as part of the project *Carissimi padri* and in the shows *I pugni ricolmi d'oro* and *Istruzioni per non morire in pace*. *Patrimoni. Rivoluzioni. Teatro.* by Paolo Di Paolo. directed by Claudio Longhi. He has worked for ERT / Teatro Nazionale as an actor in *La classe operaia va in paradiso*, *La commedia della vanità* and *Il peso del mondo nelle cose* by Alejandro Tantanian, directed by Claudio Longhi; *Wet Market* by Paolo Di Paolo; *Lorca sogna Shakespeare in una notte di mezza estate* by Davide Carnevali, has created and curated theatrical and audience education projects, and has taught in the “Iolanda Gazzo” school for actors and higher education courses.*



## THE RESIDENCY

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**OCTOBER 9 2023: STAGING OF VAJONTS 23, PICCOLO TEATRO STREHLER / CREDITS - @MARTA CERVONE**

*He has also worked with the National Institute of Ancient Drama (Irene Papas, Giorgio Albertazzi, Massimo Popolizio, Mauro Avogadro, Elisabetta Pozzi), with the Teatro Massimo Bellini of Catania and with the Teatro Biondo of Palermo (actor and dramaturg in *Le voci di Didone* with Galatea Ranzi). He is the didactic coordinator for the “Fernando Balestra” section of the INDA Academy, for which he has curated numerous projects and events (in 2023, the World Refugee Day with UNHCR). For the Piccolo Teatro di Milan, he acted during the 21/22 season under the direction of Massimo Popolizio in *M Il figlio del secolo* and of Davide Carnevali in *Do it yourself and (We can be) Heroes*. He has also curated the project *Diario futuro. Un laboratorio di accoglienza teatrale* for the Ukrainian guests of the “Enzo Jannacci” shelter home and a number of workshops for students, teachers and citizens. For the 22/23 season, he participated in *Il barone rampante* by Italo Calvino, directed by Riccardo Frati, and the theatrical project *Il teatro tiene banco* and created a new edition of *Benvenuti al Piccolo!* entitled *Nel paese di Teatro*. For the 23/24 season, he will be in the cast of *Ho paura torero*, directed by Claudio Longhi.*

# THE RESIDENCY

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## MICHELE DELL'UTRI - THOUGHTS AFTER THE ARTISTIC RESIDENCY ON VAJONTS 23

*"The first goal I set for myself at the very start of the project was to try to find solutions to overcome the exceptional nature of the event. That is, to think of the initiative as a "step", a piece of a path already started or to be built.*

*For this reason, the public call was mediated by direct contact with many entities, associations, other institutions, with whom we shared a common civic commitment.*

*The starting point of every choice has been that theatre could flex to the needs of contemporaneity and, in the specific case, of the themes and goals of the project.*

*From there came the idea of a "continuous audience" and a civil chorus sitting on the stage, constantly illuminated, participating in the action also in listening to the additional chorus of intellectuals, artists, institutional representatives, teachers, activists and young graduates who mediated the Vajont story.*

*A chorus posing questions, another presenting answers, roles and choices that led to the catastrophe. A chorus in the civic function of "talking mirror" of the audience seated in the stalls.*

*The initial suggestion was to work on filling, because the story we told, was about this: a filling that breaks the banks, overflows and tragically saturates life. A physical filling of space - bodies becoming chorus - a visual and acoustic filling that wanted to transcend the boundaries of the theatrical space, which was confirmed, once again, as the space in which one can look, inhabit, furrow and shape the world outside the theater. The theater was also filled with the sounds of the musicians, the vocal ensemble, the words of the witnesses of those who believe that one can still learn from that history.*

*Dialogue has been a pregnant feature of the implementation of the project. Starting from the dialogue made with the theater management to the one with the citizenship. If we wanted to overcome the "limits" of the theater space/time we needed the contributions of everyone, experienced and aware of different areas of expertise, of different looks at reality, of different points of view. The same dialogue continued with people outside theatre: associations and individuals animated by a firm desire to know, deepen and be spokespeople for a community increasingly aware of the hydrogeological dangers and climate challenges we are facing that oblige us to delay no longer, to act soon and now.*

*Over one thousand two hundred people (between stage and stalls) acted together though with different roles.*



## THE RESIDENCY

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*What we experienced together with each of the hundreds of people involved in the project - who, even in the days and weeks following Oct. 9, continued to speak, write and openly discuss the issues that a story like Vajont's brought out or reinforced - confirmed to us that the urgency and awareness of contemporary risks and challenges are increasingly widespread among the population but still need adequate insights and solutions; and that theater can still be the place where these challenges meet tools and opportunities for improving reality, being able to upset and/or overwhelm our present."*



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### UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) LINKED TO THE RESIDENCY

