



ACTING TOGETHER ON THE WORLD STAGE

TOOLS FOR CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ON RECONCILIATION (ACT 3)

1. What aspects of these performances contribute to reconciliation?
2. What might reconciliation look like in your community?
3. If you were planning a performance linked with reconciliation, what might shape your decisions on whether to use theatre, ritual, or a combination of both?
4. If you were a member of a theatre ensemble which had been asked to work with a truth commission, which “do no harm” principles would you draw on to shape the collaboration? Explain why you believe these to be important in peacebuilding.
5. If you were working in one of the regions featured in Act 3 of the documentary, what could you do in your professional capacity to extend the reach of these performances?
6. How would you work with people, institutions, frameworks to extend the reach of ritual and ceremony, for example in regard to the apology of the Australian government to the Stolen Generations?
7. If the more powerful group in a conflict has very little understanding of the ways of knowing of an oppressed people, how can their understanding and respect be facilitated?
8. In what ways does performance create a space where the horrors of violent conflict can be engaged in ways that don't re-traumatize?
9. Augusto Casafranca says that there was a mutual reconciliation between him and members of the community who witnessed his performance in the plaza. What breach or separation was being healed? What do you think was symbolized by his offering of the flowers, candles, and dry leaves, and by the way these gifts were received by people in the audience?
10. Ana Correa shares an evocative description of the similarity between artists' preparation for their work and shamans' ritual preparations for connecting with the gods. How do artists prepare themselves for the transformative exchanges of energy that occur between artists and audience members/ritual participants? Why is this preparation important?
11. In the aftermath of violence and gross violation of human rights, communities seek justice and healing through different means, including ritual, theatre, truth commissions, and trials. All of these methods of justice-seeking have performative elements, in the sense that actions are taken with the intention that they be witnessed by others. How are rituals, theatrical works, truth commissions, and trials similar and different?
12. Who has the authority to choose which approaches a community will use? Who should have the authority?
13. In the aftermath of its civil war, authorities in Peru created a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and invited artists to perform theatrical works and construct rituals alongside the hearings. Do you know of other examples in which different types of justice-seeking performances have been coordinated?

discussion questions / act 3



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14. In the **Acting Together** collection, there are examples of theatrical works including elements of ritual (consider works by *Dah Teatar* in Serbia, *Yuyachknai* in Peru, works by Catherine Filloux and her students in Cambodia). Trials and truth commissions are also depicted on-stage (see the short video “Theatre in the Context of Repression,” and “Imagining Reconciliation Through Documentary Theatre.”) Can you imagine combining or coordinating two or more of these types of justice-seeking productions in ways that would benefit communities where you live and work?

discussion questions / act 3