

## APRENDICES | T1: E1 María Doderá

### Desgrabación corregida - Inglés

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#### INTRO

The importance of realizing that your inspiration, passion, knowledge and purpose are inside you.

Teatro Uno taught me that creativity is infinite. That I could be wholly generous because it was never going to end and that it was inside you, that it began and ended within you.

#### PREVIA

How did this boy made me look?

Wonderful, right?

He's brilliant.

I love the initiative. I think it's fantastic.

Yes?

Yes.

The focus is on anecdotes, on experiences.

We hope to be able to talk to the teachers about the things they can teach today, considering what abilities... And to validate the teachers' work.

He's already filming, so...

Yes...

Pretend we're old friends.

I'm used to this.

This theatre... I love it.

The last show was The Accident and I'm always in the cabin or... never on the stage.

You're never on the stage!

So today...

This is thrilling. You know I'm thrilled, right?

To me, entering the theatre seems like...

I'm going to burst into tears.

Wow! This is beautiful!

Welcome.

Well, thank you very much.

Join us. Look, before taking a seat...

This is extraordinary!

Hello.

I'm excited because... I direct here...

The theatre is alive, it's expectant. When you say "go", we're all ready.

This will be our starting question: "How do you define yourself?"

To have fun, Dario. We're here to have fun.

## **CHARLA**

Look. I wouldn't exist without the theatre.

My essence is theatricality, the theatre, being an artisan of the theatre, a director, an artist...

In any place of the theatre, I think directing is what defines me essentially.

I believe the essence, the definition of a person, is immense. Because it involves being a person and there's no certificate for that.

In the theatre you never graduate either.

In the theatre, you begin your career on the outskirts, or causally, or not very academically, and you also end up on the outskirts because there's never going to be a certificate that says "OK, you may go, you're an actress". You'll keep learning and studying for life.

I'm from Florida.

Always... back then, I didn't know I was going to be an actress, but I was always trying to act or recite. I was a bore at reciting.

Or at school parties playing characters in English.

I came to Montevideo to see the dentist and the allergist, and one night I was taken to the theatre, the tiny Teatro Stella.

I went with my parents, and when I saw *Manual for Divorcees* I think it was, I immediately felt a great passion. Something tangible, physical. Like when you fall in love, but maybe stronger and I said: "I want to be there!", I mean, I want to be here.

I will never forget that. I was 7 or 8.

Afterwards life sort of...

In Florida you wouldn't dream of being an actress, much less a theatre director. When I came to Montevideo, it wasn't in the cards either.

There was no school for theatre directors. There was only an acting school.

So I started to branch out.

In Florida you had conventional degrees. In fact, I'm an Economics graduate.

As I was saying, I branched out when I came to Montevideo. After reciting in the schoolyard and boring everybody, I got into Economics because I had to do something and that's where I started to... Beginnings are very important. I began to be active in the CECEA, in the union.

Then I said: "Let's form a cultural group", and we formed a theatre group with people who were in the same situation as us.

Toja came to teach us...

And that's when I joined.

Of course. I felt the passion to be there and there I was as an actress, doing *Marcha* by Adellach, in all the university courtyards, in Architecture, Psychology...

It was an extremely creative time, mid-to-late 80s, when I began my career.

I went through a crisis of wanting to quit.

And they'd say: "Well, if you quit, you go back to Florida".

So I negotiated between one and the other.

Immediately I was in the theatres, and university theatres, trying to be politically active from the stage.

And that has shaped me, because my activism is now also onstage, in all the subjects I explore.

Whether it's feminism or ideological, it's part of my work...

It's the origin, the inaugural act that will direct you or be the paradigm of your life.

I also learned something else there: the importance of realizing that inspiration, passion, knowledge and your sense of purpose are inside you.

Theatre Uno taught me that creativity is infinite, that I could be wholly generous because it was never going to end, that it was inside you and that it began and ended within you.

**I want to go back to that moment where you were told that if you didn't pursue a traditional career, you'd go back to your native Florida. What did you learn about that moment? And what happened inside you that said "I don't want this, but I'll keep doing it because it will lead to something else"? What's the drive there?**

It wasn't always so clear to me.

What I did know was that the theatre was non-negotiable.

Then it was...

Crisis are part of art all the time.

Luckily, I get along well with the word "crisis", because when I direct, I'm always in crisis at the time of making big decisions.

The decision to pursue art is in itself a crisis... You fear your family won't take it well, that you haven't followed the expected path...

But I knew my passion would eventually convince and set in and flourish.

Restuccia made us do a monologue, a one-person show: The Little Fascist Inside Me.

I made my own one-person show.

It was the time of the Montevideo circus. I don't know if you remember. The circus near the Park of the Allies, which became very large. It was the early 90s. Juntacadáveres was also around. It was a very creative time.

I loved punk at the time and the whole punk wave. In fact, I even had a punk vibe going on.

Then Restuccia said: "Let's do everyone's one-person shows up there in the big stage", which was the Montevideo circus.

And in the Montevideo circus you had all the punkers... in the auditorium which I loved.

Then, I remember vividly how I got up onstage...

I was a bit plump.

Then I came closer and started... It was a very aggressive one-person show. I began reciting some lines from the fascist inside me, when someone screamed: "Get off the stage, fatty!"

That moment... Those instants were of immense significance to me. It was a moment of crisis.

I thought: "Is this what I'm good at? Am I wrong for this? What am I doing here?"

And in that moment, which was really critical because I was booed, I remembered that we are all essentially or to a large degree the same. Intimately, we have sensibility, love, passion. But outwardly we can be really different.

Then I remember I came closer and looked at the shouting man in the eye. It was... an instant which prolonged itself and left me shattered and not knowing if I'd ever get on a stage again.

That little girl who had looked and said a long time ago: "I want to be there", was now there, totally shattered. I managed to pull myself together, hold on to my passion and go on with my monologue very firmly... It still makes my heart race.

And you know, the punkers quieted down. They even laughed at parts of the monologue, and that gave me reassurance, so I kept going and the whole "Get off the stage, fatty" ended rather well.

But I'll never forget that because it was my "Do I belong here?" moment.

**Well, you went after the challenges yourself.**

**There's a constant search for stimuli, positive or negative, but you need a response from the others.**

**At some point I imagine you had the "Do I keep acting or move on to directing?" crisis, since they are very different roles.**

**And you told us you also perform other roles: teaching, mentoring.**

**How is it to reinvent yourself and what's interesting about it?**

It's a fascinating question.

Well, look, once a theatre director told me... We were doing Blanche DuBois, and I had a way of looking...

I went to theatre schools to forget about them, but I had a way of...

You have to do them, because it gives you freedom.

I had a particular way of seeing Blanche DuBois and I thought I didn't measure up to it.

That was another crisis.

And... I said: "Well, I can't be an actress. But how come I like the stage so much if I can't be an actress?"

I did Blanche DuBois later on and today I can tell you Blanche DuBois can be short, fat and not at all like the paradigm says.

I did a Blanche DuBois who achieved a truth. The truth María had. The bridge that ties María to Blanche's soul.

That was another moment of uncertainty.

Just as I had that moment of doubt, it turned out that my group... (I was studying in La Gaviota) was doing a play with a director from Buenos Aires who happened to leave. So, as I was known for organization, they said: "Maybe she can give us a hand".

And that helping hand turned out to be, also causally... The Second Original Sin, which was in 1991, won the Breakthrough Director award and I was lucky to go to Paris to study.

When I won the Breakthrough Director award, they called me "director" and I was like... What director? I was in school.

Then I told Nelly Goitiño, who had seen the play and loved it: "Nelly, I don't know a thing about this. What do we do?"

And she said: "Come with me to rehearse Dear Wolf by Vitrac", which was performed in the Alliance Française in 1992, "before going to Paris".

Nelly was my great teacher. I tried to soak up everything she had and later I left for Paris to try and steal from everybody else.

When I returned, I got on the plane and thought: "Damn, I don't know anything. I know as little as when I came because I have so much... Someone would tell me this, another would tell me that, and I have so much from so many great people, that I feel that I have no idea how I really direct".

I was on the plane with Ariane Mnouchkine and Lavelli going through my head, and I asked myself: "But, who am I?"

Then I remembered: the silence.

And I remembered the "Get off, fatty" incident and what Restuccia used to tell me.

The truth is inside yourself and that is where art is, like a spring. That is the word. It's a spring. It never stops giving, giving, giving.

You have to take, he'd say, that wide range of possibilities, and make them pass through you, through me, so as to get hold of a text, a group, with freedom, and to be.

And that was what soothed me.

I took that multiplicity of voices as a wide range of possibilities, as a wealth of possibilities through which to get at my truth, my feeling, my passion, leaving me with a continent of possibilities intact, so I may know that I have them and that they'll allow me to spread my wings and perhaps even fly. And if I fall, they'll pick me back up. But it's more likely that I will fly.

But never forgetting how I want to do it, what I think is the true way, the way that represents me.

It's that way, with my truth and in accordance to that continent that gives me freedom of being, that I can spread my wings and fly.

That is what I, for example today, try to teach my students who approach me for mentoring.

I try to see what the student wants to develop, to give them the tools and instruments so that they take the leap and jump into the void, and look beyond, and risk more, but above all, to strengthen one's own voice.

Strengthening the student's own voice with creative tools, widening their horizons.

With engagement.

It's very important that they are engaged.

Engaged with their material and then expand it.

And above all, to convince the students to incorporate these tools and that in a certain way, creation lies inside them.