

The **NEON Cultural Association** was founded in Catania in 1989.

The founders were **Piero Ristagno and Monica Felloni**.

All NEON productions are based on the principle of recognizing, through art, the skills and capabilities of those who live in a condition of social, physical and psychological fragility and the consideration that we are all masterpieces and, as human beings, unique. Original. Extraordinary. In its performances, NEON places on the stage actors who are “free” to act out the beauty of human beings via co-participation, **no-one excluded**.

A “path made of shapes”, which focuses on the beauty of singularity and diversity, willing to acquire the culture of coexistence, with equal dignity.

Magnifying diversity means inventing relationships, transforming affinities, creating communities; creating theatre with disabled people demonstrates the beauty of mankind, expressing its variegated nature, the diversity of bodies and thoughts.

Behind NEON’s artistic choices there is the desire to construct civility , to share a common territory through a relationship which nourishes on art and the aesthetic quality of the results achieved coincides with its moral responsibility as it pursues the aim of giving new value to the skills and capabilities of those who live in difficult conditions to exalt their rightful dignity through art.

NEON has succeeded in asserting its concept of theatre, obtaining over the years various awards, notably the “Theatres of Diversity award in November 2013, which it shared with the National Association of Theatre Critics.

At the 1st International Book Show in Turin in 2014, held in the Pavilion of the Regione Marche, the volume "NèonTeatro. La grandezza di vivere" (published by Edizioni Nuove Catarsi) was presented. The book, which is devoted entirely to the activity of NEON, was the first to be published in the "Sentiero di(f)forme" Collection (Edizioni Nuove Catarsi together with the European Magazine "Catarsi-Teatri delle diversità").

The Theatre and Publishing

Through the languages of theatre and writing, the NEON Cultural Association has always worked to spread a culture based on the existential value of human beings.

Each one of us is a poem which manifests itself with all available means: the body, movement, immobility, encounters, solitude, voice, silence, emotions. Art becomes a place of discovery, where it is possible to achieve the artifice being “things” in the world.

Theatrical production and publishing 2013 - 2015

NESSUNO ESCLUSO (NO-ONE EXCLUDED) The Theatre of diversity

This is a book that should be about photography. And perhaps it is. But above all it is about an experience, or rather the work, of a group of people, including our photographer, who work in an apparently diverse reality and contact (in the sense that they touch) those who in everyday life search for the vibrant harmony of feeling common and shareable. These people, who want to use different sensitivities to make their sights and smiles heard, the ones I had come to listen to, ended up by listening to my thoughts. Jessica Hauf had photographed my thoughts. How she did so, I don't know.. *Pippo Pappalardo (from the introduction to "Nessuno escluso")*.

IL CORAGGIO È UNA COSA (COURAGE IS ONE THING)

A book and a performance to exalt daily life by valorising Diversity.

Dario Fo wrote: "A production of life, suffering, joy and knowledge. Because only those who can talk about their condition and experience it with others can achieve a work of art." *Il coraggio è una cosa* is a splendid line by Roberto Roversi and is much more than a simple phrase. It's a way of life, a vision of existence, a challenge and also the possibility of living life fully, which comes about through a book and a performance called *Il coraggio è una cosa*.

Il coraggio è una cosa – The book

Published by NEON, Danilo Ferrari wrote it thanks to the intermediation and "translation" of Maria Stella Accolla. In a sort of diary he wrote a story not only comprising a series of questions he asked himself but also answering a number of "common" doubts about his condition.

About himself he writes: "on two feet, or rather four wheels, I find it difficult to introduce myself in a few significant words: my name is Danilo Ferrari. Perhaps that is not much to imagine me, so I'll add that I speak a very rare language: I make signs with my eyes. It was natural for me to find this way of communicating (I have spastic-dystonic quadriplegia and no language – the brackets aren't random but derive from the difficulty I have with hearing this diagnosis pronounced, which has always hidden what I really am).

Il coraggio è una cosa – The performance

The play is based on the poem "L'Italia sepolta sotto la neve" by Roberto Roversi. In *Il coraggio è una cosa* the director Monica Felloni gives shape to courage, that is, the by no means easy attempt to face and overcome the various crises we encounter in life, our state as human beings. An exceptional choreography connects the dialogue to music, to the spontaneous sound of a mouth organ which caresses the voice of the actors and directly involves the audience, which becomes the absolute protagonist when the images "captured" and photographed by Jessica Hauf are

projected onto the backdrop of the stage.

In an interpretation of Roversi's lyrics, in *Il coraggio è una cosa*, music, script and photography interact with the actors and the audience. Of fundamental importance is the use of the body as a strong, intense, continuous physical relationship, which shows what it actually means to be close, to give life to a single body which dances in the harmonious expression of the individual imperfections of actors who alternate, change, mix together in one whole.

MAGNIFICAT – 25 years of the Theatre of Diversity

Magnificat is a unique performance because for the first time on September 9, 2014, a company of disabled actors – and a production about the Theatre of Diversity – went on stage at the Teatro Antico in Taormina. Created to celebrate the first 25 years of the association's activity, the show is a succession of theatrical actions full of music, dance and words in a passionate but light-hearted sequence which follows the artistic path of NEON, discovering new developments. On the stage we see humankind, in all its variegated forms, which mixes with language, looks for itself in words, shows itself in gestures, coexists in relationships made of ordinary and exceptional specialities and becomes a single body only then to separate again, dancing in the silence of signs trace in space. The nucleus is communication between individuals beyond any encoding.

The fulcrum of the performance is to be found in the words of Whitman – “Human bodies are words”. So the infinity of signs that the bodies on the stage express magnify the complexity of living as human beings. The poems chosen by Piero Ristagno interweave and resound in the creation of a theatrical reality in which what prevails is the sense and direction of any kind of praise: the person next to you. All deserving of attention, generous in the art of being as we appear to be.

Audience participation was great and intense (over 1.000 people and a standing ovation against the magical background of the Greek Theatre in Taormina), as was the presence of the media, with national channel Rai1 broadcasting part of the afternoon dress rehearsal live during the second episode of the programme *La vita in diretta*.

CIATU

A year after the big success of *Magnificat*, NèonTeatro chooses again the prestigious Ancient Theatre of Taormina to present its new 2015 production, *Ciatu* (Breath).

The show – which is part of Taormina Arte International Festival – took place on Friday August 21st 2015. Repeats of the performance are expected between the 2015 and the 2016.

Ciatu has not linguistic limits, it is an interlace of relationships, it is an experience for actors and audience, it is an exchange of emotions through different languages on stage.

Ciatu presents a scene-world belonging to the diversity of each actor on stage. This diversity turns into the panting in which art and nature work to generate beauty in every single form of being life.

The actors, the spectators and the Theatre are together, a single entity, which inspire life, eyes in the eyes, breath in the breath and the action on stage resounds all over the audience without distances or interruptions, giving birth to a reticulum of alive breaths.

Ciatu is the breath of human people, which survives from the amniotic fluid and so on, until the end. It is the story of that breath.

Main narrative point of the show is the life and thought of Giordano Bruno. The human life is on stage, from the birth until the old age and human relationships, more or less content they are, interlace themselves between these temporal extremes.

Body and soul form a single deep root in Bruno, a unified thought, looking for the totality. Body and soul are not two entities, they are the person.

The show registered a copious and intense participation by the spectator and by the media, which showed interest and gave high visibility to the event.

Training and Theatre Workshops

Removing the invisible dividing lines between “inside and outside”, joining up dots to reveal maps of this world and others on both imaginary and possible stages, speaking unknown languages and learning to hear – this is the path taken NEON in over 20 years with its theatre workshops.

Since 1989 NEON has held over 100 theatre workshops, focusing on bodily expression and writing poetry addressed to diverse participants.

But beyond any merely therapeutic aim, the workshops help to get to know and appreciate each other, to pass through , which is not always and only that of others.

A workshop is an ideal place to explore, invent and plan concrete projects, maturing the need to discover, express, communicate, gain knowledge. It is a place where it is possible to develop a personal artistic identity, by encouraging active listening and forms of expression linked to interaction, reciprocity and co-participation.

Theatrical activity, seen as workshop activities aiming at interpersonal relationships within a group, is a valuable workspace for mutual understanding, reflection and debate for all those taking part.

Acting seen as an instrument not only for inclusion but above all for giving new value to that wealth that is difference was the starting point and point of arrival of various NEON performances and has contributed to strengthen the network of relationships the association has with various local actors.

Theatrical Performances

1989

Antigone by Sophocles, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

Cori curreri by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno, with Alfio Antico

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

1990

I siciliani (The Sicilians) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro del Sole with the Ente Nazionale Sordomuti (National Institute for the Deaf and Dumb)

1991

Il sogno del marinaio (The Sailor's Dream) freely based on "Il marinaio" by Fernando Pessoa, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino and the Ente Nazionale Sordomuti (National Institute for the Deaf and Dumb)

Terradaranci (The Land of Oranges) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno, Scenography by Pietro Guccione

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

1992

Chissà se i pesci piangono (Who Knows If Fish Cry) freely based on the work by Danilo Dolci, directed by Monica Felloni, Piero Ristagno and Vito Minoia

Produced by the Teatro Aenigma in Urbino and the Teatro del Sole - Ente Nazionale Sordomuti (National Institute for the Deaf and Dumb)

1993

Il malato immaginario (Le Malade Imaginaire) by Molière, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro del Sole and the Ente Nazionale Sordomuti (National Institute for the Deaf and Dumb)

I canti by G. Leopardi, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino, 1993/1994

1994

La caduta della luna (The Falling of the Moon) freely based on “Lunaria” by Vincenzo Consolo, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro del Sole - Ente Nazionale Sordomuti (National Institute for the Deaf and Dumb)

1995

Medea freely based on “Euripides” by Pier Paolo Pasolini, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

Bar New York by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno, with non-EU actors

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

1996

Il Re muore (The King Dies) freely based on the play by Eugène Ionesco, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino,

1997

Studi sull' Amleto (Studies on Hamlet) taken from “Hamlet” by William Shakespeare, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

1998

Filottete (Philoctetes) by Euripides, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

2000

Quello che le balene pensano degli uomini (What Whales Think of Men), freely based on a short story by Antonio Tabucchi, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT, 2000

2001

Canto della terra che gira (Song of the Rolling Earth) freely based on Walt Whitman, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

Nudi e crudi by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno, with the patients of the S. Antonio Therapeutic Assistance Community in Piazza Armerina (EN)

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2002

Anfitrione (Amphitryon) from the play by Plautus, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

La ruota del pavone (The Peacock's Tail) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

Risonanze (Resonances) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno with the patients of the S. Antonio Therapeutic Assistance Community in Piazza Armerina (EN)

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2003

Passaggio d'ali (A Passing of Wings) by Piero Ristagno directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno.

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

Lettere a Theo (Letters to Theo) by Vincent Van Gogh, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno, with the patients of the S. Antonio Therapeutic Assistance Community in Piazza Armerina (EN)

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Le regioni dell'aria (The Regions of the Air) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno, with the patients of Aias Csr (Sicilian Rehabilitation Centre) in Nicosia (EN)

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2004

Elegie (Elegies) freely based on the “Duineser Elegien” by Rainer Maria Rilke, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Appassionati by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

2005

Diario 2005 (Diary 2005) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni and Piero Ristagno

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna - AIPD CT

La Torre (The Tower) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

2006

Antigone by Sophocles directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

2007

L'ombra delle parole (The Shadow of Words) freely based on a short story by José Saramago, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

Il fiore più grande del mondo (The Largest Flower in the World) freely based on a short story by José Saramago, adapted by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni, with the Compagnia C.S.R. in Catania.

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2008

In nome della madre (In the Name of the Mother) freely based on a text by Erri de Luca, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Teatro Scalo Dittaino

Quando ti chiedo di Venezia (When I Ask You about Venice) freely based on “Le città invisibili” (Invisible Cities) by Italo Calvino and “Othello” by William Shakespeare, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

2009

Sul nascere (About to Be Born) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Terra sconosciuta (Unknown Land) freely based on “Journey Towards the Unknown Island” by José Saramago, adapted by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Oltre il limite (Beyond the Limit) freely based on “Flying Above the World” by Angelo D’Arrigo, adapted by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

2010

Thank you Mr Down by Piero Ristagno and Stefania Licciardello, directed by Monica Felloni
Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2011

L'incanto (Enchantment) by Piero Ristagno and Stefania Licciardello, directed by Monica Felloni
Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Neve (Snow) freely based on the novel by Maxence Fermine, directed by Monica Felloni
Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

2012

Il fiore, l'acqua e il bambino (The Flower, The Water, The Child) freely based on "The Largest Flower in the World" by José Saramago, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association and the Fondazione Auxilium

Illusioni (Illusions) by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the Compagnia Bagnati di Luna – AIPD CT

2013

Il tempo della pazienza (A Time of Patience) freely based on "Of This World and Others" by José Saramago, directed by Monica Felloni, produced with The Parkinson's Association in Catania

Messa in scena della tua libertà (Staging Your Freedom) by Piero Ristagno and Santino Papotto, directed by Monica Felloni, with the patients of the Mental Health Department in Adrano (CT)

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Il coraggio è una cosa (Courage is One Thing) freely based on "L'Italia sepolta sotto la neve" by Roberto Roversi, directed by Monica Felloni, with Danilo Ferrari

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2014

Magnificat Texts chosen by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Production to celebrate 25 years of NèonTeatro

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Un'incantevole grande età (An Enchanting Old Age) texts chosen by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

The final result of a workshop by a group comprising The Social Cooperative "Nuova Socialità", The Education and Welfare Association in Rome and the NEON Cultural Association in Catania, in agreement with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Department of Family Policy, within

the Award for the European Year of Active Ageing.

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Il presepe vivente (The Living Nativity) texts chosen by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

I re magi (The Three Magi) texts chosen by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

2015

Ciatu texts chosen by Piero Ristagno, directed by Monica Felloni

Produced by the NEON Cultural Association

Media - June 2014/ May 2015

The media review of NEON activities includes, from June 2014 from May 2015, 89 online magazines, 17 television broadcastings, 2 radio broadcastings and 7 national press agencies.

Online magazines

Eighty-nine online magazines had already published news and articles about NEON activity. Most of it are web newspapers, which focus on themes linked to the regional territory (56). National web magazines represent also a huge part of it (33), above all concerning all NEON activities realized out of Sicily or for most important ones.

Newspaper

Sicilian newspaper had already given importance to NEON activity. A big visibility also into national press, above all thanks to the show called Magnificat and thanks to NEON initiatives in Lazio, after Danilo Ferrari's book launch. Excellent visibility also for *Il coraggio è una cosa*, with Danilo Ferrari as protagonist, who achieved, in Panorama, the cover and an insert.

Press agencies

NEON events were also subjects of different Press agencies, furthermore promoted into national platforms such as Adnkronos, Ansa, Italtpress, Reuters.

Broadcasting

NEON news had been reported by 19 radio broadcasting and regional and national televisions such as Rai 1, Rai 3, Rai Sport, Italia 1, Rete 4.

Social - June 2014/May 2015

In the last semester of 2014, NEON made a renovation plan concerning its online appearance, to improve the visibility of its activities and to increase its relationships with the external world.

The new website is online from June 26th 2014.

Statistics, last updated in June 2015, are reporting a good placement into Google (index: 216), with a significant increase in accesses.

Our website is also connected with the strategic use of the most important social media: Facebook, Twitter, G+ and YouTube, where there is a channel entirely dedicated to all the audiovisual documents that can be consulted also into our website.

On Facebook, NEON keeps a daily activity, which helped to increase likes until reaching, today, 3.100 likes, with 2.600 daily visits. From June to December 2014, the page shuttled from 621 to 1.277 likes, from January to May 2015 likes switched from 1.277 to 3.100 with 2.600 daily visits. Likes are continuing to increase, with around 50 likes per week. The main themes of posts concern the website update, the press review, the activities of the association and the promotion of new productions.

The same activities are repeated also on Twitter, which is going to be advantageous even though we made the account just a few months ago.

In the last days of May 2015, it has been created also an Instagram account, which reached 132 followers in a few days.

NEON has been presented by the most important national newspapers and broadcasters.

On the NEON website you can download the **press review** (over 260 articles from February 2014 to today).

Further information, photos, videos and a press review are available on:
www.associazioneculturaleneon.it