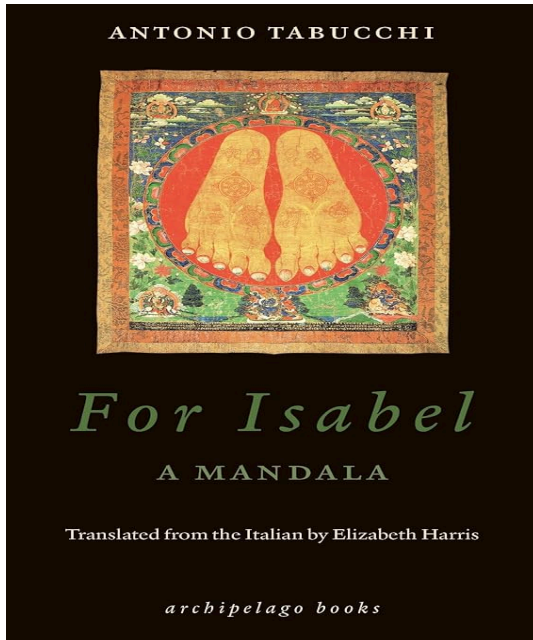


Collaborative Proposal: *Echo of a Thought in Transit***I. Collaborative Partner**

For this collaborative project, I have two individuals with whom I am joining forces. The first is a former dance student of mine, now 30 years of age, who has always shared my interest in both movement and the written word. Jillian Kravatz contacted me this past February and told me that she is working for a small book press, Archipelago Books, in Brooklyn, NY, where they focus on translating books from all over the world. In her own words, “[She has] always felt a deep kinship between movement and crafting the flow of sentences on a page.” She mentioned that many of the Archipelago Books would resonate with me and that “there’s a kind of breath and pacing you can just feel in your body” when editing books.

Ms. Kravatz was kind enough to share some of these “gems” with me as she terms them. They are square, small, and soft to the touch—truly tiny works of art. What I have found inside the one, *For Isabel: A Mandala* by Antonio Tabucchi, may be even more precious. Tabucchi’s work is a posthumous one, and I have found myself collaborating with him through his prose. He certainly adds layers to my current work with disembodied environments as his words come alive into pictures and circles as each chapter begins with “*First Circle*,” “*Second Circle*,” etc. Responding to his work has created layer upon layer to my research, and I find my own choreographic score for my practice-as-research thesis project will be a creative score which will inform and inspire my final product, a narrative dance film.



II. Your Awareness

First and foremost, Ms. Kravatz has been instrumental in introducing me to Tabucchi’s work, and Archipelago Books deserves much credit in that I am reading a work by an Italian author. Without the translation by Elizabeth Harris, I fear I may not have been granted the joy of collaborating with Mr. Tabucchi. The question may become, How does one collaborate with an author who has since passed? My answer would be that this is where art transcends life and death, and the circles to which Tabucchi continuously refers become truth. The word, mandala, literally “translates to ‘sacred center’ or ‘circle’” and there is a desire for unity, “balance and wholeness” (David). As I have been on a journey to unite my artistic selves—the dancer and the writer—I am finding many answers throughout this collaboration.

My approach was to first find out more about the author and what mattered to him, why he was drawn to the thematic content he chose, and what, out of all the books I received from Ms. Kravatz, drew me to this one in particular. Sam Sacks of *The Wall Street Journal* may have said it best: “[Tabucchi’s novel] illuminates a soul in transit, yearning to complete the story that

will release him from his suffering.” Here, I already feel a kinship with Tabucchi, and as I read his work, I am writing down words, phrases, and feelings that stick with me. Below are a few quotes from Tabucchi ...

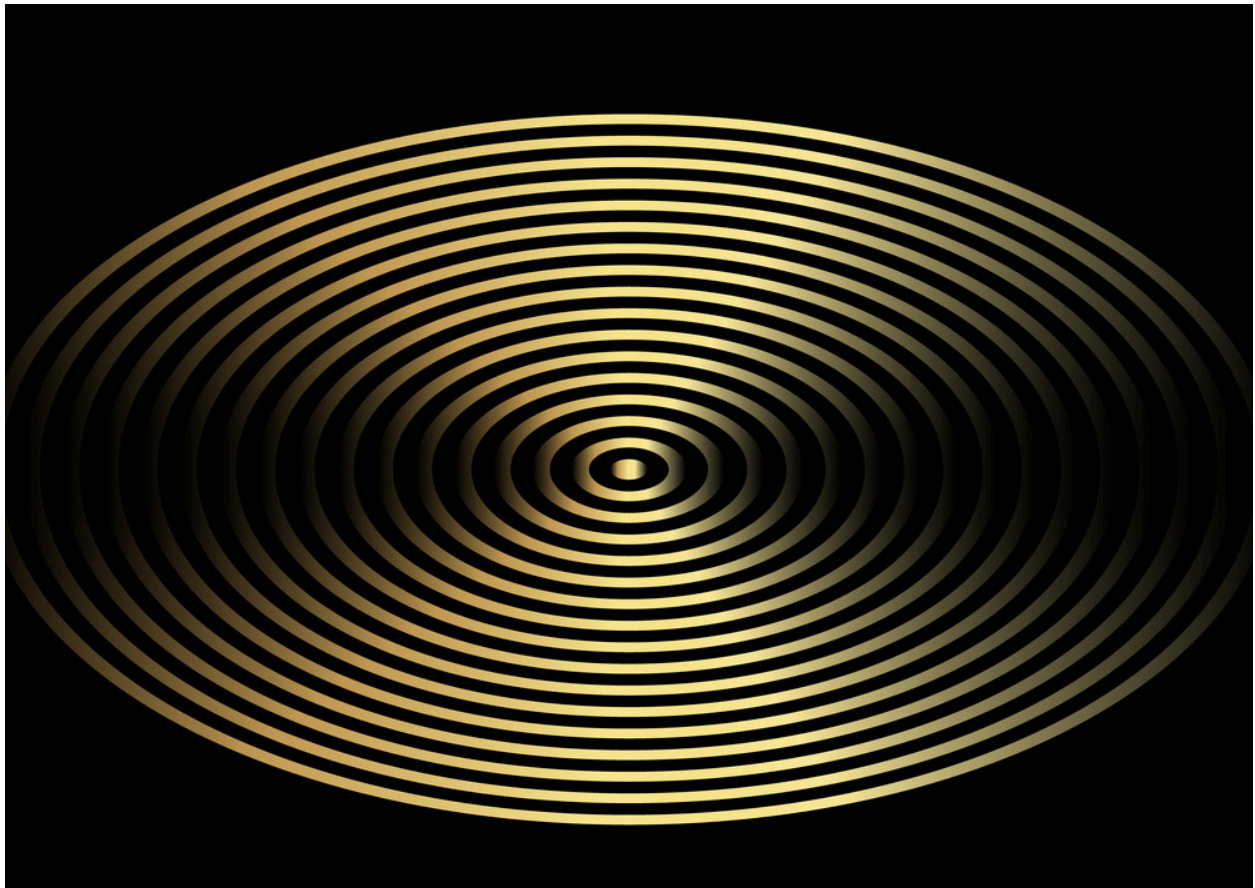
- “a straw hat” (170)
- “Because back then, everything was in quotes” (24).
- “And afternoons, you get caught in a little rain and wind up twiddling your thumbs” (46).
- “I’m working with colored dust, I answered, a yellow ring, a blue ring ... and meanwhile, the circle is tightening toward the center, and I’m trying to reach that” (77-78).
- “Where are you? he said, it’s like you don’t exist” (82).

Now, as the choreographer, I see a golden hat, fingers creating quotations, the feel of rain falling, the meandering of thumbs in circles, dust with hands clapping and circles everywhere. Yet, all the while there is a mystery, a nonexistence, if you will; but still, there is a force pushing the dancer to the center and towards the answer at the core. My realization becomes that words are the driving force but even more, it is the engagement of the five senses that will help create movement. You feel the dust, hear the rain, taste the yellow and blue however that manifests for you, smell the afternoon, and see the disappearance and reemergence of the cyclical.

III. The Collaboration

The point of entry can be nothing other than the dot at the center of the concentric circles. As Tabucchi says, “Maybe you can keep tightening a circle around that person you’re searching for” (82). I believe we are all searching for ourselves, and while in our youth we wish to find our person, our career, what we are good at, and even our why, I believe as we get older many believe we should be done, we should be happy. As I age, I find that I am searching, wanting to find my core, what made me who I am, and what continues to drive me so I can grow—achieve

more, become more, impact more. There are so many rings of beauty, trauma, hope, anger, etc., that make us who we are. Fabio Gambaro writes of Tabucchi's work praising the "pauses and delays, [the] realistic details and openings into the fantastic" (Tabucchi back cover). Therefore, like the diagram below, the solo will take on the pathways of the cyclical but will incorporate stillness and waiting, the true and the false. The image of concentric circles below represent the visual and physical path I propose (Vector Stock).



As I consider not only the movement but the overall impact of the environment and what is seen and heard, I delve further into Tabucchi's "way of being" and how his work is continually searching, hoping to find the central purpose and overall meaning of life, whether spiritual, emotional, psychological, or a combination. I see the surrounding circles as all that impacts an individual and also what makes him or her whole. The circles themselves present a collaboration.

When dealing with the impetuses or moving forces that spur us forward, I am reminded of the work of Claire and Antho, a French couple, who work with perspectives and specifically shadow dance. I believe Tabucchi would love this added layer to our collaboration and also appreciate the additional lens of using a projector to show these energies and forces that abound in the concentric circles. Below I will include a photo from Claire and Antho's work. I plan to include this concept of shadows and how the mover responds to these outside forces within the final solo work.



Finally, this project offers me another beautiful layer and additional entry point for my practice-as-research thesis project as I am carrying forward Tabucchi's work and penning a creative work to act as the choreographic score for the final product. I have found much inspiration in the posthumous work of Antonio Tabucchi. I appreciate both Jillian Kravatz and Archipelago Books for sharing this beautiful written art with me. I look forward to completing my response via a dance solo and the surrounding elements I include, be that props, lighting, spoken word, musical offerings, etc. Within this collaboration, entitled *Echo of a Thought in Transit*, the sum of the parts will create an exploration that each portion alone simply could not produce.

I leave you with a quote from Pythagoras:

There is no word or action but has its echo in Eternity. Thought is an idea in transit, which when once released, never can be lured back, nor the spoken word recalled. Nor ever can the overt act be erased. All that thou thinkest, sayest, or doest bears perpetual record of itself, enduring for Eternity. (Lib Quotes)

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