

Artaud and THE BALINESE THEATER  
Bali Purnati Center For The Arts and STUDIO 5 New York

**A fourteen day festival workshop, returning to the magic that Antonin Artaud found in the Balinese Theater.**

**June 2 through June 14, 2008**  
Bali Purnati Center For The Arts, Sukawati, Gianyar, Bali, Indonesia

Produced by  
Bali Purnati and STUDIO 5

Who am I?  
Where do I come from?  
I am Antonin Artaud  
and I say this  
as I know how to say this  
immediately  
you will see my present body  
burst into fragments  
and remake itself  
in ten thousand notorious  
aspects  
a new body  
where you will  
never  
forget me.

excerpt from Artaud's "To Have Done With The Judgment Of God," written shortly before his death, noted as the epitaph of one who endlessly made conscious of his principles.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF ARTAUD

**Antoine Marie Joseph Artaud** was born September 4, 1896, in Marseille, France. As **Antonin Artaud**, he became an established playwright, poet, actor and director, being one of the first to follow Surrealism in the 1920s. His dream was to create a new form of theatre, bringing the audience closer to actors, and facilitate the intimate communication between them.

Throughout his adolescence, Artaud was diagnosed with several illnesses, including meningitis, neuralgia, and depression. Unfortunately, his parents were clueless as how to raise him, so they ended up sending him to a long-term medical facility. Doctors believed Artaud suffered a mental illness when he took interest in magic spells, astrology charts, and disturbing imagery.

Despite his condition, Artaud took plenty of action. Along with Roger Vitrac, he ran the Alfred Jarry Theater between 1926-28. He produced and directed original works by Vitrac, as well as Paul Claudel and August Strindberg. However short-lived, the theater was attended by an enormous range of European artists, including Andre Gide, Arthur Adamov, and Paul Valery. In 1935, Artaud directed a version of Shelley's "The Cenci." It was extremely innovative, yet unfortunately a commercial misfire.

"Theater of Cruelty" was Artaud's leap into his new dream of theatre. His concept was published in 1932, dubbed as the "First Manifesto," and was immediately followed in 1933 with the "Second Manifesto." He finally brought his vision together with "The Theatre And Its Double," published in 1937.

The human face  
is an empty power,  
a field of death...  
...after countless thousands of years  
that the human face has spoken  
and breathed,  
one still has the impression  
that it hasn't even begun to  
say what it is and what it knows.

Excerpt introducing an exhibition of Artaud's paintings. Galerie Pierre. July 1947.

Artaud also harbored a great interest in cinema, writing the scenario for one of the first Surrealist films, "The Seashell and the Clergyman," directed by Germaine Dulac. He acted in Abel Gance's "Napoleon" in the role of Jean-Paul Marat. Artaud used exaggerated gestures to play Marat, and convey his fiery personality. In Carl Theodor Dreyer's "The Passion of Joan of Arc," he portrayed the monk Jean Massieu.

In January of 1948, Artaud was diagnosed with intestinal cancer. He died shortly after on March 4, alone in his pavilion, at the foot of his bed, allegedly holding his shoe. It was suspected that he died from a lethal dose of the drug chloral, although whether or not he was aware of its lethality is unknown.

# R A T I O N A L E

What did Artaud find?

What is the theater?

We sense it

We imagine it

and sometimes

We lose it

During the Paris Colonial Exhibition in 1931, Artaud was fortunate enough to see The Balinese Theater Troup in the Dutch Pavillion.

He was struck by a dramatic presentation of traditional theater which was different than what he knew from the rest of the world. He had seen something new, a powerful, rigorous force that was much closer to his dreams.

The Balinese Theater spoke to his inner self. He was touched beyond his intellectual view. "How can we deepen that in the theater? How can we get out of the head and into the body, and how can we get from there into the sub-consciousness and from there again into the audience archetypal substance."

From that moment on, he continued writing more and more about that experience. However, he didn't have the exercises or discipline to get him into the perspective of the Balinese. This roadblock lead him to a state of anger, darkness, and frustraion.

In many ways, his text about the Balinese Theater is cryptic and coded. That Artaud's text somehow speaks to us now shows the infinite truth in what he saw, and reminds us of how slow art moves forward.

And still, we remain trapped in our instruments. Composers, painters, writers, etc, have long since gone further, while the theater slowly limps behind. It is time to accept the existence of a rich perspective that brings us much deeper into ourselves than method acting or Stanislawski's misunderstandings...

**We must escape the modern desire to delve into pseudo-psychological experience on the stage, and bring awareness back to the instrument that has provided us with all the precision we have ever needed-- the body.**

This working festival will return to Artaud's text and fill in the blanks with a more fluid poetic description, providing an open visualization which one could possibly translate into practical work and exercises, bringing Artaud's frustration to a halt.

This festival will provide the tools necessary to reveal the treasures buried in Artaud's cryptic mind, exercises that have long since existed in traditional mask carving and Balinese Theater.

By participating, we may even be able to give back to the Island of Bali, encouraging younger generations to return to their traditional roots, re-establish the power of TAKSU, and attain the highly aesthetic state only achieved by their ancestors.

And most importantly, it is able to be taught.

## THE PARTICIPANTS

### WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

The workshop is targeted to actors, directors, artistic designers, students, and art lovers from all over the world to

- stretch their bodies and imagination to the edge
- journey through darkness and light in search of a higher energy, that if attained, will bring Artaud's text into the future.
- free the theater from its misunderstanding
- discover how far the rabbit hole goes, and how the product can be integrated into modern theater.

Seats are limited to 40 participants, and all applicants will be treated on first come first serve basis.

### HOW TO ENROLL

To obtain the registration form and payment procedure, write to:

Bali Purnati Center for The Arts

Jalan Gunung Abang

Br. Penataran, Negara Batuan

Sukawati. Gianyar. Bali.

Indonesia

[info@balipurnati.com](mailto:info@balipurnati.com)

### MAIN PROGRAM:

The main program is designed as a working program that will lead participants to understand Artaud's fundamental beliefs, and to incorporate the Balinese culture into modern/ contemporary theater.

The program is divided into 4 major sections

- **Workshop Exercise.** An extraction of mask work and Balinese dance which parallel Artaud's texts.

- **Performances** of classic Balinese dance.
- **Excursion** to artist villages, immersing the participants in the culture of what is being learned in the workshop.
- **Lectures and Discussions** stimulating constant intellectual activity.

#### **PRODUCERS**

STUDIO 5

BALI PURNATI CENTER FOR THE ARTS

#### **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

RATNA AMATSARIE TUNARNO

#### **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

PER BRAHE

RESTU KUSUMANINGRUM

#### **DIRECTOR OF MAIN PROGRAM**

AOLE T. MILLER

AKIL DAVIS

#### **CO-DIRECTOR**

JEFF PAGLIANO

AOLE T. MILER

#### **TEACHERS**

PER BRAHE, Theater Director & Master Teacher

KLAUS HOFFMEYER, Theater Director

NINA SCHLOETS, Set Director

IDA BAGUS ANOM, Mask Master

IDA BAGUS ALIT, Mask Maker

#### **STUDIO 5**

Studio 5 is an international acting studio based in Brooklyn, New York and Bali, Indonesia. The Studio 5 philosophy originated in 1988 in Irkus, Russia, after the fall of communism, during a theater conference held to extend its arts to a global community.

STUDIO 5 is led by teacher, director, actor Per Brahe and teacher, actor Aole T. Miller. Throughout the year, they develop and deliver high quality workshops for international audiences, with a specialty in Balinese Mask. Through the mask, the actor is set to experience a sense of totality and freedom that is typically limited in modern society, and placed in contact with the infinite flow of energy that rests within the body.

Whether an actor is speaking contemporary or Shakespearean verse, the connection to the body remains the same. Becoming deeply attuned with a power stemming from their core, the actor begins to react powerfully with an ever present reality.

The actor does nothing more and nothing less than is needed, revealing to the audience the simplicity of transformational acting.

STUDIO and Bali Purnati have been working closely together for the last four years, regularly conducting two-week workshops and month-long conservatories focusing on the transformation of the modern actor's imagination.

STUDIO 5

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