

AU BRANA 2010 SUMMER RESIDENCY

12th July - 7th August

The Au Brana Cultural Centre, Southern France



A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSOLIDATE YOURSELF AS A PHYSICALLY AND VOCALLY EXPRESSIVE PERFORMER

Au Brana, in collaboration with a selection of associated artists, proposes 4 weeks of intensive theatre training culminating in a public presentation at the centre. Participants will work 6-day weeks and a minimum of 6 hours per day with theatre training led by OBRA Theatre Company, Matej Matejka (Theatre Zar, Farm in the Cave) and Christopher Sivertsen (The Awake Project, Song of the Goat). Another practitioner, yet to be confirmed, will also lead a two-day master class.

This is a unique opportunity for artists to plunge into their creative practice, in relation to an ensemble and guided by highly regarded international practitioners in an environment purpose built to support such total immersion.

The residency is limited to 15 participants, all of whom will live and work on-site at Au Brana, a formerly ruined farm now transformed into a beautiful haven offering a tranquil and focused creative environment.

THE STRUCTURE FOR THE RESIDENCY

Throughout the month long investigation, Ted Hughes' narrative poem, *Gaudete* will serve as a creative springboard. The aim is not to stage the entire story but to use the text as a means to focus the exploration. Each of the practitioners will impart their own approach to devised theatre practice; undertaking in-depth work on the individual and building up the ensemble. This material will be brought together in a final montage and shared with the public.

WEEK 1 – OBRA – LAYING FOUNDATIONS

OBRA will introduce participants to its training methods in order to establish a common theatrical language. This will include games and exercises to allow complicity in the group and physical training. The participants will be led through daily vocal exercises to increase understanding and confidence with the voice for text and song.

Participants will be led through OBRA's partnership and ensemble training which embraces psychophysical techniques to activate and embody imagination, increase performer sensitivity in relation to space, partner, group and inner life as well as improvised storytelling around the themes of *Gaudete*.

WEEK 2 – MATEJ MATEJKA – INDIVIDUAL EXPLORATION

The second week, participants will work with Matej to delve deeply into a personal response to the material. He will guide participants through his approach to building a physical gestural score and awaken an Intuitive body.

Matej's practice evolves from the centralizing of energy in the body, wakening the *centre* of the body and grounding the energy of the performer. Special attention is placed on isolation techniques as well as improving subtle expression, or inner-articulation of the body.

During the week he will use stimuli such as inner impulses or reflections from everyday life and *Gaudete*, as a source for improvisation and the creation of physical scores.

Participants will work with a partner to explore different qualities of physical contact and increase sensitivity.

By the end of this period, participants will have a precise physical vocabulary drawn from their imaginative response to character and text from *Gaudete*.

MASTER CLASS –TBC

This will be an intensive 2-day session on either polyphonic singing or interpretation of text and transformation through language.

WEEK 3 – CHRISTOPHER SIVERTSEN – BUILDING THE ENSEMBLE

Christopher will draw on his many years of experience in laboratory theatre practice to create an energetic group dynamic. Using the elements of rhythm, breath and musicality he will work with the group as chorus supporting each individual as protagonist. This work will stretch further the physical scores built up with Matej thanks to the dynamic and musical support of the chorus.

Participants will be guided through how to co-ordinate scenic elements with their inner life. Combining the choric scenes from *Gaudete* with his particular blend of musical and energetic ensemble improvisation, Christopher will develop new group material.

WEEK 4 – TOWARDS PERFORMANCE: RETRIEVAL

During the final week OBRA will assist participants to retrieve the material discovered during the previous sessions and begin to shape it towards a presentation. Together we will experiment with concepts of site-specificity, space design and architecture to frame the creative elements.

The aim of this week is to cement the month's learning, and to open up the work to the local community.

AU BRANA

Au Brana is a cultural centre created by artists in rural southern France and dedicated to the development of emerging artists and theatre companies. Founded in 2005 by Kate Hannah Perry and Oliviero Papi the centre offers two studio spaces with onsite accommodation and amenities in what were ruined farm buildings.

Surrounded by peaceful countryside and quiet nature, Au Brana is an ideal setting for rehearsals, residencies and as a workshop venue. At the centre, guests can benefit from 24-hour access to the spaces allowing them to work without distraction and with all food and facilities on site. The large dormitory space sleeps up to 15 people and has ample shower and bathroom facilities.



“The surroundings and the workshop were seamlessly connected... so it felt like a full, continuous experience, rather than something that just takes place in a studio and is over the moment you leave the workshop space.” – workshop participant

THE ARTISTS

OBRA is the theatre company in residence at the Au Brana centre. The Spanish word 'Obra' means both a work of art and a building site. Founded in 2006 the company earned its name as its members converted the 300-year-old barn into an ideal rehearsal and performance space. It was the mixture and balance of roles required for this endeavour that inspired and cemented the company's practical approach to creativity and strong bond as a group. OBRA has developed its own practice by drawing on the diverse approaches to creation of its four members.

OLIVIERO PAPI is an Italian born Australian actor and co-founder of Au Brana. He also is currently performing in *Perspectives* with the Awake Project. Within OBRA, Oliviero's particular area of research is in the embodiment of language, the interaction of intellect, instinct and imagination in the performer, to facilitate a revelation of meaning

KATE HANNAH PERRY co-founded Au Brana and is an actor, workshop facilitator and OBRA's musical director. As a practitioner she has developed an approach to singing to increase confidence and technique. She leads a body of work called the *alphabet*; an improvisational structure that allows the performer to increase their physical vocabulary and activate their imagination via the body.

HANNAH WHELAN is a Theatre Maker with experience of performance, directing, dramaturgy and facilitation. She specialises in the generation of stories and in finding different entry points into the imaginative world created by the ensemble. As member of OBRA Theatre, she was researcher, dramaturge and deviser on the company's debut performance *Transfixed*.

UNAI LOPEZ DE ARMENTIA joined the Au Brana Centre as a founding member of the company in residence, OBRA. His seven years of practice of the Afro-Brazilian martial art of Capoeira and his understanding of rhythm and space dynamics allowed him to develop *Mugideira*. He is also particularly skilled in the practices of clowning and physical comedy, which has become another area of OBRA's creative investigation.

** A more detailed description of OBRA's training is available upon request**

MATEJ MATEJKA was born in Bratislava, Slovakia in 1978. He studied music and drama in the State Conservatory, Slovakia and JAMU in Czech Republic.

He was a co-creator and actor in *Farm in the Cave*, Theatre Studio in Prague and performed in the projects: *Dark Love Sonnets* (2002) *Waiting Room* (2003) *Sclavi / The Song of an Emigrant* (2004). He also led numerous workshops focussed on physical expression and actor training with Viliam Docolomansky, leader of *Farm in the Cave*, in the Czech Republic and internationally.

Since 2005, Matej has been a collaborator of The Grotowski Institute in the field of research of physical expression in theatre and as a practitioner Matej leads his own work sessions, *Wakening the Listening Body*.

He is an actor and leader of physical training in Teatr ZAR and has performed in *Gospels of Childhood* and *Caesarean Section- Essays on suicide*, which he also co-created. He is currently working on the final part of ZAR's triptych *Anhelli – The Calling*.

CHRISTOPHER SIVERTSEN was born in Norway 1974. He was a long-standing member and principal performer of Song of the Goat Theatre from 2000-07. He has developed a system of physical theatre training called *The Breathing Performer*, and regularly conducts workshops throughout the world.

He is co-founder and associate artist of Timberlake Wertenbaker and Irina Brown's Natural Perspective Theatre Company in London, and was the music and movement director of their first performance *Jenufa* in 2007. He was a fire performer, dancer and associate movement director in *Bird of Night* at the Royal Opera House.

At RADA, Christopher has also worked as the director of *Antigone* and as movement director to Edward Kemp in *Penthesilea*.

Christopher is the artistic director of the *Awake* project, a group of international theatre artists whom he has brought together to create a performance, *Perspectives* and to lead large-scale youth exchange projects in Europe.

FURTHER DETAILS

The total cost of this session is €1250.00. This covers the workshop fee and all accommodation costs. Travel to the centre is not included in the price.

Places are strictly limited to 15 and a deposit of €200 is required to reserve a place before March 1st 2010. Participants will be considered based on the completion of the application form and are required to pay 50% of the total cost before arrival. Only applications for the full month will be considered.

For further information and reservations please contact Kate at info@aubrana.com

Please see www.aubrana.com for more information about the centre.