

ACTOR - CHORUS - TEXT

A Workshop in Musicality, Movement and Shakespeare

25th-29th May 2009. Au Brana Cultural Centre, Southern France. www.aubrana.com

A dynamic, physical and musical theatre training that aims for the heart, awakens the spirit and opens the mind's eye. Led by actor, director and musician, Anna-Helena McLean with Indian Harmonium & 'cello, this work draws on elements of Gardzienice's training, acrobatic partner exercises, the art of gesture, indigenous folk & gypsy songs and original music. Participants will work on a scene from a Shakespeare play with chorus. The workshop aims to ignite a spark of inspiration in each individual, opening the body, thought and emotion through the group experience. The practice will be conducted in English but texts can be worked in the participant's first language. 5 days will culminate in a sharing or 'gathering' with local and invited guests, supported by collaborating actors and musicians in residence at Au Brana. This workshop is suitable for professionals and students of music, dance and theatre as well as practitioners interested in a psycho-physical approach to performance and text.



The participation fee is 250€. Accommodation is on-site, in the converted outbuildings of the farm and home-made food cooked is served with produce freshly bought from the local farmer's market. A single bed with all meals is provided for 25€ per day. Places are limited and a 100€ deposit is required before 1st May to secure a booking. To apply, please email Kate at info@aubrana.com requesting an application form, to be completed and returned by the 25th April. Participants will be selected, cast and asked to memorise text in advance of the session.

Anna-Helena is trained in classical 'cello, Music & Drama. 7 years a principal member of the Gardzienice Centre in Poland directed by W. Staniewski, played the title role in Electra (LaMama NYC; Barbican: BITE). Co-leader of the 'Ancient Orchestra' for 3 years from its inception, with T. Rodowicz. She leads a module on Ensemble and Shakespeare for the acting students at the RSAMD in Glasgow, runs international workshops, 'Archetypes, Voice, Musicality and Text' with Pamela Prather (Yale) & organises musical events with Luminescent Orchestrarii (NYC), Peter Reynolds (UK) & Le Trio Perdu (Belgium). Anna-Helena directed *The Lear*, based on Shakespeare's original & is currently working on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with her company Moon Fool. Anna-Helena is a performer in *The Awake Project* directed by Christopher Sivertsen.

PREVIOUS WORKSHOP FEEDBACK: *"The use of breath and movement helped me to open up my voice more, helping to achieve more variety of tone. It takes so much energy and hard work and engagement with the body to reach the best of your abilities. I can now sing in a group understanding better the level of concentration it requires to find a colourful vibration of sound - when it happens it is so fulfilling. Being able to 'play' through the text/work has felt so liberating and creative - not being afraid to 'have a go' and explore has resulted in the creation of something individual and really alive".*

"I feel so much more confident in my physicality, singing and in my understanding of Shakespeare. I absolutely loved this approach to text - the importance of finding a balance between purely relying on the text and improvisation and experimenting with body and voice. I've learnt a lot about allowing the text to really go through your body, ... speaking/communicating through my body".

"I have learnt so much about myself, how to work in an ensemble and to trust myself as well as the other actors".

Anna-Helena McLean develops her work with special thanks and credit to Wlodzimierz Staniewski, Gardzienice, Pamela Prather, Hugh Hodgart, Dawid Zakowski, Christopher Sivertsen, Benno Plassmann & Au Brana Cultural Centre