

# AWAKENING PRACTICE



## GROTOWSKI YEAR BERLIN OCTOBER 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> 2009



Registration/inquiries: [grotberlin@test-traveler.de](mailto:grotberlin@test-traveler.de)  
Full program: [www.test-traveler.de](http://www.test-traveler.de)

## Welcome to Berlin

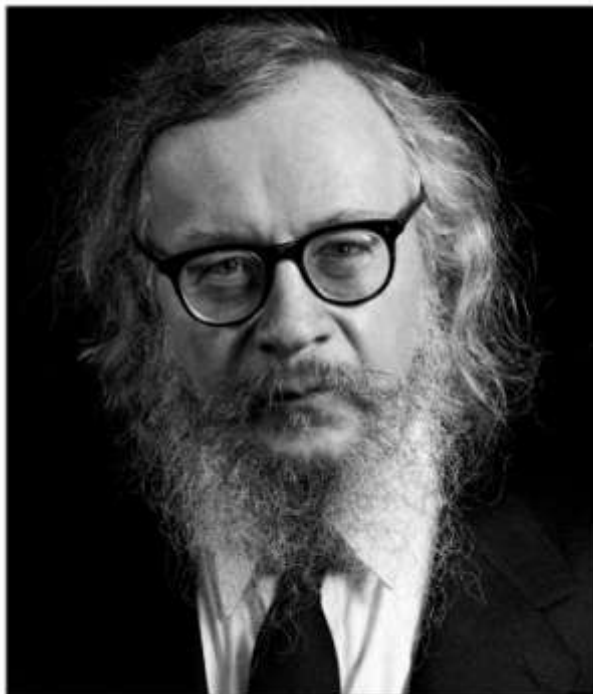
UNESCO has designated 2009 as The Year of Grotowski. Jerzy Grotowski, one of the most important and influential theatre and cultural innovators of his time, died ten years ago. 2009 also marks 50 years since Grotowski and Ludwik Flaszen took over the Theatre of the Thirteen Rows in Opole, later the Polish Laboratory Theatre – and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dissolution of the Laboratory Theatre in Wrocław. Awakening Practice celebrates the life and work of Jerzy Grotowski and recognizes the history and tradition of the Polish Laboratory Theatre with continued awe and respect.

That we create this event in Berlin is an opportunity and challenge reflecting my personal journey. I first arrived in Berlin in the winter of 1978 enroute to Wrocław to participate in *Tree of People*. This was the period of Para-Theatre/Active Culture. I chose to live in the walled city one year later after returning from *Theatre of Sources* in late August of 1980 in the wake of the Solidarność Movement. Nine years later the wall crumbled and the bridge building continued. My engagement as an artist continues to reflect these creative and historical sources.

Berlin is not an obvious choice for a Grotowski Year Event despite its close proximity to Wrocław. Still, the necessity to plant and nurture seeds of culture and community moved me toward this moment: closer to the meeting of head and heart – wherever the human work is – in the studio, university setting or in nature. I hope that Grotowski's profound offering as a visionary artist and master teacher will enter Berlin's cultural consciousness. And that the body/voice based training and the self-discovery process this work can ignite will establish deeper roots here.

Young people need access to the work. And then to do the work: endure the hardships, have patience and persevere. We develop the tools for creative and spiritual practice and this process is a challenge to our humanity and capacity to grow. It is a path that can bring one to an inner light, vulnerability and strength, love and unity – that which can make us whole and keep this city one.

Berlin curator, Peter Rose, 7/2009



**Jerzy Grotowski 1933–1999**

*With our expression what is necessary is silence. That is to say, to do, to accomplish. And not express. The expression, if it is not done or made in the premeditated sense, comes through through its own strength. It comes through as a kind of prize, a Grand Prize. Which gives us nature. Because nature always gives us something. If we are in a real process – if we are going toward the unknown, if we are penetrating the unknown, if I look at you, in spite of the fact that I already know you, I am not saying to myself: “I must express something.” I am not asking myself what are you expressing, I take your presence. And I react. In that case I enter into the unknown. Because in that case your presence is always unknown.*

[Unpublished text given to Peter Rose by Jacques Chwat, New York City, 1977]

## Jerzy Grotowski

Polish theatre director, cultural practitioner and thinker, researcher of human behaviour under 'extra-daily conditions'. Along with Ludwik Flaszen, Grotowski took over the Theatre of the 13 Rows in Opole in 1959. Together, they transformed it into the Laboratory Theatre, in which they realised their conception of 'poor theatre', most extensively articulated in the classic volume *Towards a Poor Theatre*, edited by Eugenio Barba and published in 1968. This idea emphasized the essential element of any theatre event: the intensified participation of actors and spectators in a shared space, which is shaped anew for each meeting between them. Peter Brook called Grotowski 'unique' – because 'no-one else in the world, [...], no-one since Stanislavski, has investigated the nature of acting, its phenomenon, its meaning, the nature and science of its mental-physical-emotional processes as deeply and completely as Grotowski'. The Laboratory Theatre, led by Grotowski and Flaszen, was not theatre in its usual sense, but rather an institute for research into the domain of theatrical art, and the art of the actor in particular. Its line of work centered on the great classical texts (by Polish Romantic authors: Mickiewicz, Słowacki, and Wyspiański, as well as by Marlowe and Calderon), whose function for Polish culture was close to myth. Grotowski's performances consisted of vivisections of those myths.

Grotowski emphasized the elimination of blocks rather than the accumulation of skills and named this approach *via negativa*. By means of this 'negative path' a human being could achieve 'a total act', about which Grotowski has said: 'It is the act of laying oneself bare, of tearing off the mask of daily life, of exteriorizing oneself. Not in order to "show oneself off", for that would be exhibitionism. It is a serious and solemn act of revelation. The actor must be prepared to be absolutely sincere. It is like a step towards the summit of the actor's organism in which consciousness and instinct are united'. The most advanced realizations of this phenomenon were his works with Ryszard Cieślak in *The Constant Prince* (1965) and with the whole ensemble in *Apocalypsis cum Figuris* (1968/69).

Grotowski pushed the boundaries of theatre in the paratheatrical projects of the 1970s. There, the separation between actors and spectators vanished, creating a shared domain of active culture. The main premise of this phase of work was a search for the conditions in which a human being can act truly and with the whole self – fulfilling his or her individual, creative potential.

In the late 1970s, Grotowski explored ritual techniques connected to diverse source traditions. Working in his *Theatre of Sources* project with an international team of practitioners, every member of which was ‘rooted in his native background related to tradition and culture’, Grotowski aimed at examining ‘techniques, archaic or nascent, that bring us [those actively involved] back to [...] organic primary experience of life. Existence-presence’. His approach in *Theatre of Sources* made Grotowski among the first to theorize the intersections between theatre and anthropology.

From 1986 until his passing in 1999, Grotowski dedicated himself to research that came to be known as ‘Art as vehicle’. This research focuses mainly on ‘actions related to very ancient songs, which traditionally served ritual purposes and so can have a direct impact on – so to say – the head, the heart and the body of the doers, songs which can allow the passage from a vital energy to a more subtle one’. Grotowski also wrote, ‘When I speak of [...] Art as vehicle, I refer to verticality. [...] With verticality the point is not to renounce part of our nature – all should remain in its natural place: the body, the heart, the head, something that is “under our feet” and something that is “over the head”. All like a vertical line, and this verticality should be held taut between organicity and the awareness. Awareness means the consciousness which is not linked to language (the machine for thinking), but to Presence’.

In 1996, Grotowski changed the name of the Workcenter to ‘Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards’, acknowledging the unique importance of his collaboration with Richards. In this final phrase of his life’s research, Grotowski was concerned with transmission: ‘The nature of my work with Thomas Richards has the character of “transmission”; to transmit to him that to which I have arrived in my life: the inner aspect of the work’. Today, Richards leads the Workcenter, continuing and

developing its research. Mario Biagini, a key member of the Workcenter since shortly after its foundation, has been the Workcenter's Associate Director since 2003.

Before the end of his life, Jerzy Grotowski traced back over the trajectory of his life and work as a Professor at the Collège de France in a series of lectures entitled *The 'organic line' in theatre and in ritual* (1997–1998).



# **4 Day Program**

OCTOBER 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> 2009

**In Appreciation**

**Antoni Jahołkowski**

**Jacek Zmysłowski**

**Ryszard Cieślak**

**Jacques Chwat**

**Zbigniew Cynkutis**

**Stanisław Scierski**

**Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 – 14:00**

**Performer Training with Peter Rose**

**Der Gelbe Raum** – Mariannenstr. 48, Kreuzberg

Contact: Cecile Rossant

**19:00 – 21:00**

Film Screening:

***The Constant Prince* 1965**

directed by **Jerzy Grotowski**

featuring **Ryszard Cieślak** and **Rena Mirecka**

introduced by **Luisa Tinti**

post-screening meeting with **Mieczysław Janowski**

**UNI.T Theater der Universität der Künste Berlin**

Universität der Künste – Acting Department

Fasanenstr. 1 B, 10623 Berlin-Charlottenburg





*Performer with a Capital letter is a man of action. He is not somebody who plays another. He is a doer, a priest, a warrior. He is outside aesthetic genres. Ritual is performance, an accomplished action, an act. Performer is a state of being. To Performer, knowledge stands as duty and knowledge is a matter of doing.*  
[Performer, 1997]

## **Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 – 14:00**

**Performer Training with Peter Rose**

**Der Gelbe Raum – Mariannenstr. 48, Kreuzberg**

**19:00 – 20:15**

**Origins: Meeting with Irena Flaszen**

**The Beginnings of Teatr Laboratorium**

**20:30 – 22:00**

**New Voices**

**Peter Rose – Introduction**

**Marek Musiał – Theatre of Sources**

**Marta Steiner – Grotowski Humanist**

**MAX und MORITZ**

Oranienstr. 162

10969 Berlin-Kreuzberg

U8 Moritzplatz oder Bus 129

*There is a point at which one discovers that it is possible to reduce oneself to the man, to the man as he is, not to his mask, not to his role, not to his game, not to his dodging around, not to his image of him-self, not to his clothing – only to him. And further: this reduction to the human being is possible only in relation to a being other than I.*

[A conversation with Grotowski, by Andrzej Bonarski, *Kultura*, 1975, np 13]

## **Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 – 12:00**

**Performer Training with Peter Rose**

**Session open to the public**

**Der Gelbe Raum – Mariannenstr. 48, Kreuzberg**

Contact: Cecile Rossant

**12:00 – 17:00 Meeting in Nature**

Kolberg am Wolziger See/Brandenburg

**14:00 Lunch – Gaststätte Alter Dorfkrug**

Dorfstr. 7, 15754 Heidensee/Kolberg

Tel: 033768 50300

(Transport to and from Kolberg is arranged)

**21:00 Evening Program**

**Performer Installations/Literature/Video**

*Fifty Years Laboratory Theatre*

*Ryszard Cieslak's Training at Odin Teatret*

*Cleansing the Senses* a film by Kenny Martin

**Gaststätte Alter Dorfkrug/KOLBERG**

*Me-You? I-Thou. Is it only a double person? I-Thou. It is not at all one who is two, neither two who are one. I-THOU. It is the experience where everything is included. If one arrives at this point, the earth, the star, the sun, the wind, the cries of birds, the light from within, the big tides, everything is present.*

[*Art of the Beginner*, Warsaw, 1978]

**Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**

**20:00**

Introduction: **Jarosław Fret**

**Ludwik Flaszen Presents *Acropolis***

Film Screening: ***Akropolis 1962***

directed by **Jerzy Grotowski**

with **Zygmunt Molik, Ryszard Cieślak, Zbigniew Cynkutis, Stanisław Scierski, Antoni Jahołkowski, Rena Mirecka**

**Maxim Gorki Theatre**

Am Festungsgraben 2, Studio Theatre, Berlin – Mitte

**22:00 Farewell /Max und Moritz/Oranienstr. 162**



## Biographies

**Ludwik Flaszen** was born in 1930 in Cracow. Co-founder of the Laboratory Theatre, he served as a major collaborator in the years 1959–1982 and as the theatre's general director in the 1980s. Critic, writer, and long-term creative collaborator of Jerzy Grotowski, Flaszen later became a theatre practitioner himself, leading paratheatrical experiments and workshops in many parts of the world.

During the Second World War, Flaszen lived in Lviv and then in Uzbekistan. He returned to Poland in 1946 and studied at the Polish Studies department of the Jagiellonski University. His debut as a critic came in 1948. Between 1950 and 1956, he was an editorial member of *Życie Literackie*. He also collaborated with *Przegląd Kulturalny*. In 1952, he published *New Zoil, or about schematics*, an analysis of socialist realism, in *Życie Literackie*. He was one of the first to do so in the Polish press. For the purpose of analysis, Flaszen coined the term *wszystkoizm* (*all-ism*), a word which has remained in the Polish language. He also invented the phrase *one actor's drama*, which he used in 1959 while reviewing a solo performance by Wojciech Siemion of *Wieża malowana*.

The nearly-final edition of his first book, *Head and Wall* (1958), a tome of sketches and pamphlets, was confiscated by the Polish censorship. Flaszen is also the author of *Pact with the Devil*, a series of essays and short stories exploring individual versus totalitarian systems (Wydawnictwo Literackie, Cracow 1971, 1974, 1996 editions; French edition – Edition la Decouverte, Paris 1990). His book *Theatre Sentenced to Magic* (Wydawnictwo Literackie, Cracow 1983) includes texts on his collaboration with Jerzy Grotowski and his role in establishing the creative doctrine of the Laboratory Theatre. Together with Carla Pollastrelli, he published a book in Italian, *The Laboratory Theatre of Jerzy Grotowski 1959–1969, Texts and Materials by Jerzy Grotowski and Ludwik Flaszen with a text by Eugenio Barba* (Pontedera 2001). His commentaries on the Laboratory Theatre's performances were published in 2006 in *Misterium zgrozy i urzeczzenia* (edited by Janusz Degler and Grzegorz Ziółkowski, the Grotowski Institute, Wrocław 2006).

Flaszen has lived in Paris since the closing of the Laboratory Theatre in 1984. He directed his first performance *Dreamers* after Dostoyevsky in 1989. He also directed *Biesy albo Mały Plutarch żywotów nieudanych* after Dostoyevsky at the Stry Theatre in Cracow in 1995. Flaszen continues to collaborate with the Grotowski Institute.

Ludwik Flaszen has been honoured with the Award of the City of Wrocław, Odra Magazine Award, and, in 2000, a Commander's Cross of the Republic of Poland.

**Irena Kozaczka-Flaszen** was born and raised in Cracow. She studied acting at the Cracow University in the department of Theatre and Acting in Wrocław. She applied her practical experience of acting gained during this period of study in her later work as a director. As a good friend of Jerzy Grotowski, she was witness to all the events produced by the Laboratory Theatre from 1963 to the end. In many cases, she accompanied her husband Ludwik Flaszen during academic residencies abroad – in France, Italy and in the United States. In 1978, she was invited to the Actors Studio in New York as an observer. During the time of the state of emergency in Poland from 1981–1983, she organized exhibitions for well-known artists from Wrocław. Her own work was, at that time, also an expression of her opposing views to the current political situation. She led youth workshops, which took place under the auspices of various cultural and educational institutions.

Her most important works are *Ars mundi* and *Nasz portret własny* (“Our own portrait”). These were group works, which were presented in the 90's in the “Apocalypsis Space” of the Laboratory Theatre. She has worked as the textual interpreter and staging advisor in the Dramatic Theatre in Wałbrzych. In March 2009, she was the curator of the exhibition *Dust: Apocalypsis cum Figuris in the photographs of Maurizio Buscarino*, which was presented during the Grotowski Year 2009 in Wrocław.

**Mieczysław Janowski** worked in Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre for eight years, playing in all their core productions, including *Faust*, *Acropolis*, and *The Constant Prince*. He traveled with the company to such theatre festivals as the Theatre Des Nations

in Paris, the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, and the Holland Festival in Amsterdam. After leaving the Laboratory Theatre, Janowski received a one-year scholarship in Paris from the French Ministry of Culture. He continued acting in the Dramatic Theatre in Walbrzych and the Współczesny Theatre in Wrocław, Poland. Janowski's acting was not limited to the theatre; from 1962 to 1986, he appeared in over 85 feature films. In 1999, he was honoured by the President of Poland for his artistic oeuvre with the Golden Order of Merit. Janowski leads educational youth projects and continues to speak about the actor's craft and his work with Grotowski at seminars and conferences worldwide. After a screening of *The Constant Prince*, Janowski will discuss daily life in the Polish Laboratory Theatre – from physical and voice training, rehearsals, role preparation, and performances, to what it was like to work with Grotowski at that time. A question and answer session will follow his presentation.

**Luisa Tinti** is a research fellow in Theatre and Performing Arts at the Department of Performing Arts and Sciences, Sapienza University, Rome. In 1980, she published the first Italian book on Georg Fuchs and the Revolution of the Theatre (Roma, Bulzoni). In 1982, she was the assistant and translator for Jerzy Grotowski when he held the Professor Ferruccio Marotti Chair of Theatre and Performing Arts at the University of Rome and gave a series of lectures on Actor's Original Techniques. From 1996–2006, Ms. Tinti was the Editor-in-Chief of *Biblioteca Teatrale* (Bulzoni Editore). From 2000 to 2008, she was the co-director with Ferruccio Marotti of *Biblioteca Teatrale* (Bulzoni Editore).

**Jarosław Fret** was born in 1971 in Turek. He is the director of the Grotowski Institute, and a founder and leader of Theatre ZAR. He graduated in Polish philology from the University of Wrocław in 1994. In 1994–1995, he collaborated with the Centre for Theatre Practices 'Gardzienice'. Beginning in 1999, together with Kamila Klamut, he organised several expeditions to Georgia, Armenia, Greece and Iran, conducting research into the oldest forms of religious music of Eastern Christianity. This research became the point of departure for the performance *Gospels of Childhood*, which has since been presented in Poland, the Czech

Republic, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Slovakia, Hungary, the United Kingdom and the United States. He has conducted work sessions in various countries including Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy and Brazil. He produced the world's first documentary film devoted to the Mandeans – the only ancient Gnostic group remaining in the south of Iran. Fret was co-editor of a special annual bound volume of *Pamiętnik Teatralny*, dedicated to Jerzy Grotowski (Warsaw, 2000–2001). He worked in the Centre for the Study of Jerzy Grotowski's Work and for Cultural and Theatrical Research from 1995, assuming the director's function in February 2004. He has been director of the Grotowski Institute since December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

**Marta Steiner** was born in Wrocław, Poland. In 1995, she obtained her MA in Polish philology from the University of Wrocław and in 2001, she defended her doctoral thesis at the same university. During her studies, she also worked as a theatre critic for local newspapers and all-Polish theatre periodicals. From 1995–1998 she worked at the archive of The Centre for Study of Jerzy Grotowski's Work and for Cultural and Theatrical Research in Wrocław. From 1999 to 2002, she conducted field research on traditional Chinese performances in the People's Republic of China and in Hong Kong. In 2002, she was tenured at the University of Wrocław.

She lectures on performance studies, theatre anthropology and Far Eastern theatre. She has authored a book entitled *Genesis of the Theatre – an anthropological approach* (2003) and was one of the Polish translators of *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* edited by Eugenio Barba. She also attended several sessions of the International School of Theatre Anthropology founded by Eugenio Barba. Within the scope of her interests are numerous disciplines situated in between theatre studies and anthropology. At present she is working on her post-doctoral thesis about traditional Chinese music theatre called *xiqu*.

**Peter Rose** was born in New York City in 1955. He graduated from Columbia University in 1977. In that year his first solo performance *The Circular Heavens* was presented. He also then met and worked with Ludwik Flaszen and Ryszard Cieślak in the

paratheatrical activities of the Polish Laboratory Theatre in the United States. He met Jerzy Grotowski in 1978 and was invited to Wrocław, Poland to participate in the Laboratory Theatre's work *Tree of People*.

Rose co-founded New York's Performance Space 122 in 1979 and helped introduce 'Open Movement' to the NYC dance and theatre community. He returned to The Laboratory Theatre in Poland to participate in the *Theatre of Sources* in 1980.

After spending a year in Berlin, he wrote and performed *Over the Wall Stories* in 1981. This work was followed by *Berlin Zoo* (1982/83) and *Loyaltown, USA!* (1984) From 1982–1983, he worked as an actor for 'Good Medicine and Company'. In 1984, he wrote and performed *Diamond Fever* at The Parish Hall of St. Mark's Church in New York.

In the following two years, his work was presented in West Germany at the Frankfurt Opera and on stages in Munich, Hamburg, Hannover, Erlangen and West Berlin. His performance trilogy was produced at Performance Space 122 in the spring of 1986. In 1987, he moved to Santa Monica, California. *The L.A. Dialogues*, written and performed by Lin Osterhage and Peter Rose, was presented at venues in L.A. from 1987–1989.

*Berlin Zoo* was revived for Highways Performance Space's inaugural season in 1989 and was produced for television by Santa Monica Cable Television in 1991. *Berlin Zoo* received honorary mention from The American Film Institute Video Festival in 1991.

Rose premiered *test traveler/polar star* in 1999 at PS 122 and in 2000 at Friends of the Italian Opera in Berlin and The Jazz Club in Prague.

Peter Rose's recent work *Cleansing the Senses* premiered at the Grotowski Center in Wrocław, Poland in November, 2005 and at PS 122 in New York City, May 2006 and at various venues in Berlin. In 2008, Rose directed and performed *Cleansing the Senses* with Annamaria Faraone and Renard Hoover. He leads an ongoing program of Performer Training and Performer Training in Nature.





We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all of our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time

Through the unknown, remembered gate  
With the last of earth left to discover  
Is that which was the beginning

At the source of the longest river  
The voice of the hidden waterfall  
And the children in the apple-tree  
Not seen because not looked for  
But heard half-heard in the stillness  
Between two waves of the sea.

Quick now, here and always  
A condition of complete simplicity  
(Costing not less than everything)  
And all shall be well

And all manner of this shall be well  
When the tongues of flames are in-folded  
Into the crowned knot of fire  
And the fire and the rose are one.

[T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets]

**Thank-you:**

Serok Park, Volkmar Hedicke, Prof. Marta Steiner, Izabela Mlynarz  
Cecile Rossant, Annamaria Faraone, Christina von Mickwitz

# CONTACT

## AWAKENING PRACTICE

People who want to participate in the events are kindly requested to register at the following e-mail addresses. There's no fee for registration or participation except for Performer Training.

Registration/inquiries: [grotberlin@test-traveler.de](mailto:grotberlin@test-traveler.de)

Full program: [www.test-traveler.de](http://www.test-traveler.de)

Performer Training registration

Cecile Rossant: +49 30 787 05588, [cecile@cecilerossant.com](mailto:cecile@cecilerossant.com)

Fee for Performer Training:

3 days full participation 25 €

Saturday open session 5 €

Press/public relations

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Cover: Lin Osterhage Archive, 1989

Back cover: Eckhard Schwiemann, 2004

Page 3: Maurizio Buscarino, Grotowski, 1997

Page 6: Maurizio Buscarino, *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*, 1979

Page 8: *The Constant Prince*, 1965, the Grotowski Institute

Page 11: *Acropolis*, 1962, the Grotowski Institute Archive

Page 17: Dirk Michael Deckbar, *Cleansing the Senses*, 2004

## Performer Training and Active Culture

Text culled from excerpts from Grotowski's classic *Towards a Poor Theatre* and comments by Ryszard Cieślak in 'Workshop with Cieślak', *Performing Arts Journal*, 1977 and Peter Rose.

I began this work in 1977. It was and continues to be clearly defined as a search around the human being. We want the experience to become evident – everything is created through the presence of those people who participate. There are no spectators. There is no separation between the creative process and the creative outcome. This is Active Culture. It comes from all the participants and is shared by all of them. There is no result or product of Active Culture: There is the direct experience of it, which can never be repeated and is different each time.

I work with the group as a living organism and create conditions for mutual sharing. What can happen is the simplest and most elementary: Recognizing someone, sharing substances, sharing as a space is shared, as water is shared, as fire is shared, as earth is shared, as touch is shared.

Contact is the essential thing. Contact is not staring; it is to see. Now I am in contact with you. I see which of you is against me. Contact is not only physical. Rhythm can be a deeper contact with somebody. Contact is to carry on a conversation with another without sticking to them or disturbing the flow of another's associations. In order to make contact, do something for somebody. There has to be an exchange. "I am with you", means sharing. Sharing is contact. Give and you will receive. There is nothing to understand – do and react. Something stimulates you and you react: Stimulations – Impulses – Reactions.

Work with your whole self. The question is only, which actions get in the way of creativity. We cannot hide our personal lives from the work. If we do any creativity will fail. The work is a practical meditation as a service to the meeting of one's life. One has the possibility to leave the confines of self-interest and fear. When there is contact, when one is no longer afraid of anything – it is as if one has been released from bondage, as if everything were joy, as if we ourselves were joy, as if we ourselves were the circulation of life.



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